

# ECHOES OF CEDARVILLE FEBRUARY 2015

*Cedarville Area Historical Society*



## *Year End Contributions Hit New High*

Year end extra contributions to the historical society by members hit a new high of \$5,480 with a half dozen members yet to hear from. This tops the previous high of \$4,750 in 2011. Eighty per cent of the gifts were unrestricted; the rest were for capital improvements.

In 2014 the Cedarville Area Historical Society had 152 memberships represent-

ing approximately 260 persons in 23 states and one in France. These financial contributions are in addition to the approximately \$3,000 in annual membership dues and volunteer labor.

Currently funds are being used to restore the old village jail and meeting place on Cherry Street. Almost \$6,000 has been used for a new metal roof and gutters.



*Near white-out conditions didn't stop the Scott Helms family from enjoying the historical society lunch. More photos on page eight.*

## KING PERSIFER'S CROWN

Title of Play Presented by the  
Cedar Cliff High School at  
Cedarville

### WISE'S ORCHESTRA FURNISHES MUSIC

The Parts Are Taken Very Acceptably  
In the Comedette — Something  
About This School

L. G. Wise celebrated orchestra drove out to Cedarville last evening where it furnished music for the exercises given by the Cedar Cliff high school. They made a very favorable impression.

The school presented the pleasing comedette "King Persifer's Crown. In scene one the Goose girls are discovered talking on the village green. In the second scene the wise men chant a prophesy, after which, they call in the prince and tell him the prophesy. In scene three the red crones are deciding what to do. One of them in hunting herbs found the crown. They determine to employ the Goose girls to work for them in order that they may learn which is the most worthy to become the princess. By a plan they understand in leaving the maids alone they find one whom they can trust. In the fourth scene this Goose girl is introduced to the prince as the princess.

The orchestra gave the overtures and the necessary musical sandwiches.

At the end of the program the school gave its class yell.

Blue and white  
Blue and white  
Cedar Cliff high school  
We're all right  
Rah! Rah! Rah!  
Watch and wait  
M.D.C.C.  
C. X.C. eight

The caste of characters was as follows:

Queen — Miss Alma Richart  
Wise men — Harry Nafe, George Bruce,  
Roy Nesbit, Allington Shafer  
Pages — Fred Thompson, Lonnie Fink,  
Eddie Pifer  
Lords and ladies — Miss Myrtle Clingman,  
Harvey Nafe, George Bruce, Emma Hixson,  
Roy Nesbit, Miss Olive Richart  
Goose girls — Misses Mabel Clingman,  
Myrtle Clingman, Olive Richart, Grace  
Richart, Alma Hixson, Emma Hixson, Olive  
Barber, Bertha Smith  
Jester — Earl Smith  
Old crones — Misses Olive Richart, Emma  
Hixson, Hahn, Richart, Myrtle Clingman  
Herald — Robert Bruce  
Prince — Allington Shafer  
Princess — Miss Olive Barber  
The organist was Miss McCammon.  
Wright's hall, where the exercises took  
place, was prettily decorated in blue and  
white.

Miss Hahn, formerly a teacher at the River School, in this city, is the principal of the Cedar Cliff high school. Howard Hahn has charge of the drawing department. Mrs. Hahn is at the head of the preparatory department. The school is private and the pupils pay a tuition. The class this year numbered ten. It will be greatly increased next year. The first graduating exercises will be held in 1898. The school is held at the delightful rustic home of the Hahn's and promises to become very popular. A new building will soon be erected to comply with the needs of the school.

## Let's Play History Sleuth

By Jim Bade  
CAHS President

Making sense of a historical mystery is similar to assembling a picture puzzle. You start with pieces on the table and then you move them around until they form a recognizable scene.

The mystery posed by the 1897 story of the Cedar Cliff high school play was exciting because it offered a chance to make use of the several thousand pieces of information and photographs stored in the historical society's computer. The number of names, especially, was a treasure.

Let's dissect the article, not necessarily in the order it is written. Admittedly, there will be some speculation involved.

The play was pure nonsense with so many characters that all of the students took many parts.

It was presented in Wright's Hall, probably on the second floor of the building that still stands on the northeast corner of Mill and Cherry streets. The hall was also used for dances and parties. The frame building was owned by John Wright, a former partner of John Henney of Henney Buggy Company fame. Henney had moved the company from that building to Freeport 20 years before. In the 1920s Strohm's store was on the first floor. Now the two floors are rental residences.

I could find no record of the Wise orchestra, but I hazard to guess it was from Freeport.

Cedar Cliff was a private school run by three members of the Hahn family. It was new with its first graduation class scheduled for 1898. The principal was formerly a teacher in River school in Freeport. I don't know whether this school was also private. Cedar Cliff school was located in "the delightful rustic home of the Hahns".

Although the location of the school is not identified in the article, the name and description as "rustic", leads me to speculate the Hahns were renting the main house or coach house on the wooded cliff overlooking Cedar Creek that was owned by John Weber Addams and his wife. Weber, the brother of Jane Addams, at that time was often in a mental hospital and his wife was spending much of her time at Hull-House.

Cedar Cliff was not a high school in the normal sense of the word. The ages of the students attest to that. Who were they and what happened to them?

Alma Richart, 34, was the daughter of Jackson and Charlotte Richart. The parents owned one of the first general stores in Cedarville. Located at the northwest corner of Mill and Second streets, it opened in the mid 1850s shortly after the family moved to Cedarville from the northern part of the township. In the 1920s it is believed to have had two short-term new owners before the building burned down. A single story house is now at that location.

*(Turn to the next page)*

***So You Want To Be A Historian!***  
On the left page is a fascinating article that Ladona Wardlow found in the July 8, 1897, issue of the Freeport Weekly Bulletin. The names were familiar to me, but I had never heard of this Cedarville school and could find no reference to it in the historical society's library. I decided to use the society's very large computer collection of Cedarville names and facts to learn more about the people and the school. If any reader can add to this story, please do.  
*Jim Bade, Editor*

(From page three)

When the father's health began to fail, Alma and her brother Henry took over the business until it was sold. The 55-year-old spinster surprised many

when in 1919 she married Charles Johnson, 51, a prosperous Fostoria, Ia., farmer and widower with four adult children. He survived her when she died at the age of 90 in 1954.



Alma Richart

Alma's sisters Grace, 16, and Olive, 19, were also Cedar Cliff students. Historical society records indicate Grace married

Thomas Bell. She died a year before Alma at the age of 72. Her husband was 70 when he died in 1949. Olive Richart Troxel was 82 at the time of her 1960 death.



Undated photo of Richart store on Mill Street

Like Alma Richart, Edward Lincoln Pifer was a 34-year-old student. He died in 1926 at age 63.

The age of Fred Thompson is not in the historical society's data base, however we know he later was a member of three generations of medical professionals. His grandfather was Dr. S. R. Bucher, one of Cedarville's early physicians. Fred's father was Dr. S. C. Thompson of Cedarville. Fred served as

a doctor on the staff of the Mayo brothers for two years before leaving the position to return to Cedarville to take care of his ailing father. The fact that Fred's brother, Ethol, was a prominent dentist only adds to the family's luster.

We know about Robert and George Bruce only by indirect means. They were the grandsons of William "Billy" Bruce and the sons of William's only child, John. The 1909 obituary of William mentions that Robert and George came from Chicago to attend the funeral.

Based on the 1827 birth of William and the estimated 1855 birth of his son, I estimate the two men were either in their late teens or early twenties. They obviously lived in Cedarville until their adult years.

William Bruce moved to Cedarville after the death of his first wife, the mother of John. William remarried in 1864. For years he lived on the southeast corner of Mill and Second streets.



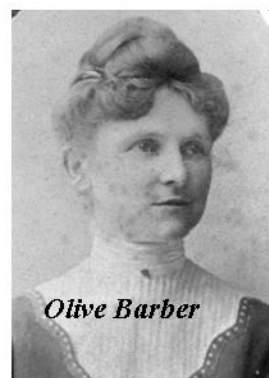
Home of William Bruce on Mill Street

Earl Smith was 17 when he was a student at Cedar Cliff. He lived until he was 93, dying in 1973. His wife, the former Luthera Angle, died in 1952. She was 71. Both were cremated.

Mabel Clingman, 14, was perhaps the youngest student. After her parents died she was brought

up by her brother Abner Clingman on his farm near Cedarville. Her obituary said she attended Cedarville schools and later the private academy at Dakota. In 1907 she married August Deuth. A son Howard died at the age of three. Mabel died in 1955 at the age of 72.

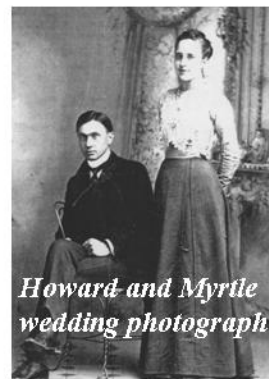
Born in 1880 the daughter of George and Ida (Smith) Barber, Mary Olive Barber was 17 at



Olive Barber

Cedar Cliff. Almost always known as Olive Barber, she became one of the best known teachers in the Cedarville area. She was the sister of Earl Smith. She died in 1973.

And now we come to Myrtle Clingman, only 17. I am familiar with Myrtle because she was the younger sister of my wife's grandmother Nellie Clingman. However, I didn't know that Myrtle found her future husband — the then 26-year-old drawing teacher Howard Hahn — at this



Howard and Myrtle wedding photograph

private school run by his sister Laura, 32, and his widowed mother. The teacher-student were married in 1900 when she was 20. They had five children.

Howard apparently was an amazing man. Born in Freeport in 1871, he was graduated from Freeport High School and then from the school of architecture at the University of Illinois. Later he studied at Armour Institute in Chicago. He returned to Freeport as an architect and reportedly was involved in the design and construction of at least one major downtown building. This activity apparently coincided with his Cedar Cliff school work.

Following his marriage in 1900, the couple moved to Kenosha, Wi., where they lived until 1925. There he designed many private and public buildings while still doing work throughout the country for a Chicago firm. Leaving Kenosha, the Hahns moved to Chicago where he began a private practice. He died at the age of 57 in 1928 after suffering a head injury as the result of a fall on a Chicago street. Myrtle, 93 died in 1974.

At the time of Howard's death, his sister Laura was principal of the schools of Winthrop Harbor, Il., just north of Waukegan. She died in 1949 at the age of 84.

What are some of the unanswered questions before the puzzle is more complete? Did the 1897 students graduate in 1898? Was the school located in the John Weber Addams home? Did Howard really design several Freeport buildings? Now is your chance to be a historian.

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*The society is recognized as a non-profit organization by Illinois and the U.S. government and has been designated as eligible for tax deductible gifts under IRS tax code regulation 501 (c) (3).*





*Cedarville Cemetery water color by Harlan Corrie. It's eerily similar to this January 9, 2015 photograph below.*



*Cedarville School — December 29, 2007*



*280 Mill Street December 29, 2007, looking west and ....*



*..... 280 Mill Street January 9, 2015, looking west toward 1889 school that is now the museum.*



*Real oldtimers will remember when Henry Taft provided bobsled transportation.*

## *Winter in Cedarville*

The membership of the Cedarville Area Historical Society can be found in 23 states and France. Those members currently living in the immediate area of the village know that December, January and February mean snow, snow, snow. Most members far away — especially those in the southern states — are former residents who might have forgotten the thrill of the first snowflake or the questionable joy of shoveling snow. Here's some memories for you. *The Editor*



*Looking north down Mill Street December 29, 2007, toward .....*



*.....the Jane Addams house on the hill January 9, 2015*



*The first sign of winter: Cedar Creek begins to freeze over*



*The favorite Cedar Creek ice skating area. (undated photo)*



*Mill Street back yard by Duane Smith*





*Rev. Gene McIntosh of the Baptist Church and his wife, Marilyn, didn't seem to be bothered by the weather*



*Oh, those delicious pies!*

*It snowed and snowed and blowed and blowed, but not even ever shifting drifts could stop the 45 brave souls who made it to the historical society February 1 lunch and annual meeting in the village community center. People who live in the Cedarville area tend to be very hardy individuals.*



*Jim and Sharon Barmore show how sandwiches are made in their own kitchen.*



*Dale Prieve had a hard time selecting from one of the five delicious soups.*



*Mary Reed and her son, John.*



*Ingrid and Don Heilman were surprised by the photographer*