

# GERMAN AMERICAN MUSEUM, LIBRARY AND FAMILY HISTORY CENTER

## ST. LUCAS HISTORICAL SOCIETY



PRESERVING THE PAST  
CELEBRATING THE PRESENT  
EMBRACING THE FUTURE

Newsletter # 8  
Autumn 2019



As we enter the holiday season and look forward to the beginning of a new year, we pause to reflect on what has been a very exciting year for the museum. It has been a year of tremendous growth and activity. The continued success of the Museum is due to the hundreds and thousands of volunteer hours devoted to the many projects, in particular the on-going window restoration project, the planning and support for the workshop, seminars and speaker events, Oktoberfest and Christmas Reflections, special events, group and family gatherings and tours. The dedication and hard work of the volunteers to upgrade the Museum exhibits and maintain the facilities is apparent throughout the museum.

Many thanks to all those volunteers and supporters who made this past year so very successful.

The Museum website is an integral and important part of providing information about the museum. Interested people can access our website "[stlucasmuseum.org](http://stlucasmuseum.org)" to learn more about Museum activities, events, newsletters and more. To keep pace with the continued growth and visibility of the museum, we are updating the website and adding new categories. Nathan Dietzenbach has designed, set up and maintained the website since its beginning. Nathan is now adding several new categories such as: biographies, founding members, business supporters, past events, family histories, and facility information. With a more robust and active website we will reach a wider audience, both domestically and internationally, and be able to publish information and events in a timely manner. It will also reduce Newsletter printing costs. Many thanks to Nathan for his efforts in setting up the website and keeping it current.

This Newsletter issue contains many excellent essays to spark your interest in local history. Many thanks to Joyce Schaufenbuel, our editor, for her many hours of loving attention to bring these essays to life.

Check out the enhanced website at "[stlucasmuseum.org](http://stlucasmuseum.org)."

Have a relaxing and joyful Christmas and New Year season.

On behalf of the Board of Directors  
Clair Blong, President of the Society

### THE BLACKSMITH SHOP REVISITED

Peg Hauer

Peg Hauer is the granddaughter of Joe Hauer. Joe established the blacksmith shop in the early 1900's in St. Lucas. Peg wrote the first part solely from her Grandpa Joe's log. The second part was written with information provided by her brothers and her sister Darlene.

#### PART ONE

The reverberating ring of a hammer on anvil and the smoky smell of hot coals coaxed into flame by billows on the forge were sensations familiar to St. Lucas residents since the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They came from Hauer's Blacksmith Shop. But since Edmund Hauer retired in 1981, those sensations have become a relic of the past. Now, because of the imagination and the dedicated work of a group of St. Lucas history enthusiasts, the memories are being revived. "The Shop" is now being restored. It is an effort that invites us all to remember the people who lived and worked in this farming community. It gives us an opportunity to honor their legacy of hard work, respect for the environment, their care for one another, and their shared German heritage and deeply rooted Catholic faith.

Joe Hauer, Edmund's father, was a German immigrant who sailed from Bremen, Germany to New York in 1893 at the age of 18. From there he made his way to northeast Iowa and hired out to German immigrants who had settled in this area until he purchased the shop in St. Lucas around 1904. A careful reading of one of the ledgers he kept contains work done from 1909 through 1911 and describes the daily routine of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century blacksmith, providing a nostalgic window into the culture of the community.

**Joe Hauer and a customer at the blacksmith shop, early 1900s**



St. Lucas farmers and townspeople were not given to reckless consumerism. Repairing and reusing the items needed in field and farm, home and school, and transport in and around was the standard of the day. A typical day of ledger entries included the name of a customer, the transaction conducted and the charge. One example from his journal lists 'Young Henry Bodensteiner, 4 shoes set, 2 old and 2 new, \$1.20. A new horseshoe cost 40 cents; an old one, 20 cents and the lesser used, never-slip shoe was 50 cents, including installation. There was no need to purchase a new item when a well-worn pick, hoe, spade, fork, shovel or corn sheller could be outfitted with a new handle for 10 cents and sharpened for just a few cents more. Setting shoes, sharpening and pointing plow lays and making myriads of repairs

constituted the blacksmith's bread and butter. Charges often amounted to less than a dollar. Most of the names are familiar to anyone raised in St. Lucas.

Transportation centered on the horse, buggy, wagon, sleigh or cutter, and the blacksmith who kept them all in working order. In addition to ensuring proper footwear for the horse, he could provide and attach new sleigh shoes and runners. He repaired harnesses, neck yokes, hames, singletrees and eveners, fixed springs in seats of vehicles and bolsters on wagons and sleighs, set tires, installed spokes in wheels and replaced worn out rims and pinions. He repaired or replaced the tongues on sleighs, buggies and wagons (\$2.50 new) and could repair or make new boxes for any of them. On occasion, he would cut down an old wagon add new tires and sell it for as much as \$14.15. A June 1911 entry reported "Greteman, piece welded on auto, 10 cents."

The blacksmith's role in keeping farm machinery operating filled much of his workday but just as important were his contributions to the community, the occasional pump or pump handle repair, new hoops to stabilize a leaking, wooden washing machine, a wringer repair, attaching hooks on an icebox and fixing an iron stove. Joe was called upon by the Telephone Co. to provide preses\*. He supplied rods and shafts for a barn raising in September of 1910. In May of 1911 the new schoolhouse called for iron by the pound, dozens of braises\*, anchors and 8 pieces of flat iron. The parish priest, Father Boeding required buggy repairs, horse shoeing, and iron accoutrements for the chapel. Local youngsters loved watching the occasional reluctant horse put up a spirited fight over having shoes set. The battle between man and beast made for a rousing spectacle in front of the shop on an otherwise uneventful day.

Though shop business was most likely conducted in German, Joe kept his ledger in beautifully scribed English. There were just a few questions as to spelling. For example, the Telephone Co. was charged for 4 'preses' at one time, for 'prease' at another and also for 'presses.' It is assumed the word braises refers to braces, which appear to be an item he furnished.

**Hauer's Blacksmith Shop - Center of Commerce**



## PART TWO

Joe Hauer died in 1955 at the age of 80. Though he had stayed involved in the business, his son Edmund had taken over most of the daily routines of the shop by then. By the 1950s the tractor had replaced the horse and the business of shoeing and harness repair had been phased out. A part of the old shop was demolished and a larger cinderblock addition with a cement floor rather than a wooden one was added. Still the heart of the operation, the forge and heavy-duty tools stayed in the old shop. A gradual transition to modern machinery took place. With that evolution the blacksmith had to know the new equipment well enough to fix it when it broke.

By the 1950s a gas engine, (later an electric motor) powered a complex system of wide belts that traversed the shop's wood beamed ceiling and operated a series of pulleys that drove a drill press, grinders, an impact hammer and a rolling hammer, all used for different aspects of the evolving trade. The forge remained a mainstay for heating steel to bend, straighten and temper and to prepare plow lays for sharpening.

There were occasional disagreements between father and son. One was over the purchase of an iron bender, a sprawling contraption that employed long levers to do some of the work previously delegated to the forge and hammer. Over Joe's reservations, Edmund purchased the iron bender which occupied a large plot of real estate in a front corner of the old shop.

Another conflict arose over the dramatic change that welding methods underwent with the introduction of the acetylene torch. Joe's welding involved heating metals in the forge and fusing the red-hot pieces by hammering them together. While Edmund schooled himself in the art of torch welding, Joe was skeptical that a method taking much less time and effort could stand up to stress. The final transition came with the electric arc welder which Edmund purchased and used until the end of his career.

Edmund parlayed his investments into a new line of business, making decorative iron railings for homes and buildings across northeastern Iowa. The design was his own; the quality, superior to anything that could be purchased commercially, and installed the railings himself. His proudest undertakings were curved and spiral railings for stairways indoors and outside. Those jobs required mathematical calculations well beyond what his formal education had provided. Nonetheless, he managed to build and install them with flawless precision. Edmund customized decorative porch columns, country club gates, steel bars to mimic window frames to protect the famous Biley clocks in Spillville, Iowa. His iron work still adorns many homes, businesses and churches in the area.

As farming practices evolved so did the demands on the blacksmith. When hay bales were replaced by huge rolled hay bundles, Edmund designed and made dozens of heavy-duty bale movers that attached to the hydraulic system of tractors. When the expensive new "self-sharpening" chopper blades were worn down he could double their life span by carving a new edge on each blade. This service, called 'grinding back' took hours but drew customers within 50-miles.

Just as the case with his father before him, Edmund's work varied with the season. Because farmers all needed similar services at the same time, by necessity sparks from the forge and the grinding wheel would sometimes light up the night as well as the day. The job of sharpening seemed never ending, plow lays in the springtime, mower blades for cutting alfalfa and oats in the summer, chopper blades for hay and silage in the fall. On any given day, a corn plow, combine, manure spreader, hay bailer, feed grinder, tiling machine, anything from a tricycle to a tractor sat in front of the shop waiting for repairs, adjustments or installations.

Walk-in business slowed in the winter, but there was always plenty to do. Custom sheet metal products were made, hundreds of anhydrous ammonia knives were repaired and coated with hard-surface welding to dramatically extend lifespan, grain bin stirring augers were hard-surfaced.

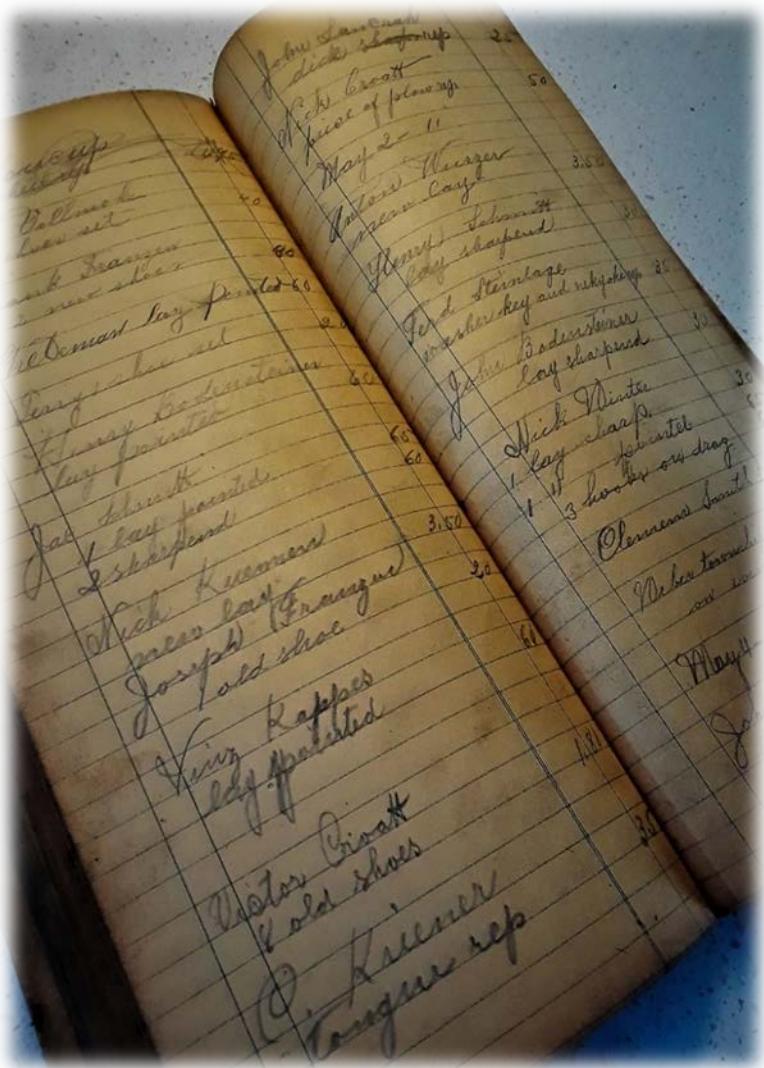
**Hauer Brothers in center of photo. Many of Joe's brothers worked in the shop as they immigrated in the early 1900s.**



Loading chutes were built, loader buckets were straightened and re-edged. The week between Christmas and New Year's was special as many of the shop's steady customers would stop in to pay their bills for the year. It was not uncommon for Edmund to take in half of the business' annual income in that week. He would often offer a small gift as a token of his appreciation. Many customers would take time to share a sip of holiday spirits next to the old wood-burning stove. The blacksmith's skill, his tools and his wares were the lubricant that greased the wheels of commerce of his day. He was the "fixer" of last resort, the supplier of metals, and a maker of necessities for life in rural America. The forge and the anvil and even the ungainly iron bender have gone the way of the corn crib, the chicken coop, the haymow and the root cellar. With them has gone an era of self-sufficiency and of creative improvising. Gone is the idea that the implements of daily life are meant to last, and that thoughtful repair, reuse and repurposing is worth some time and effort. Gone is the village blacksmith whose skills to that end, once considered essential, are no longer called for.

Many thanks to the St. Lucas Historical Society for their time and effort toward keeping our history alive. As we reminisce about a way of life that has disappeared, we can be grateful for the lessons learned from the hardy, resourceful, and engaged community that has given us our roots.

Joe Hauer's journal and sample of a page inside.



Joe Hauer's journals are available for viewing at the German American Museum in St. Lucas, Iowa.

A sample of Joe's routine activities, September 1909 through September 1911:

**Repaired** ice racks, wheelbarrows, wood racks, seeders, corn binders, plows, planters, lane mowers, hay forks, drags, windmills, spreaders, a rifle and a gun, scales, a cream wagon, locks, a saw frame, hinges, side deliveries, lane sides, iron stove door.

**Sharpened** plow lays, disks, axes, shovels, hatchets, stone drills, croppers, colters, shovels for potato plow, picks, drag.

**Welded** rods on feed grinder and various other rods, presses, croppers, iron on wagon boxes, sickles.

**Made** barrel hoops, bolts, chain links, wrench, axes, hayrack with clips and clamps, guard plates, barn hooks, single knee hooks, door tracks, chisels, colters.

**Supplied** pieces of iron, new and old horseshoes, chain hooks, bolts, washers, rods, bolster irons, spokes and rims for tires, flat iron, anchors, rods, new lays, iron for a chicken house, gate hooks, gate iron.

## POSTSCRIPT

Edmund believed that in some ways the horse was superior to the tractor. "When you approach a gate with a team of horses, dismount and open the gate, the horses will walk right through. A tractor won't do that." He considered the horse a more dedicated partner in the operation of a farm while the modern equipment seemed noticeably less committed.

For some, the shop was an impromptu place for gathering to chew the fat, second perhaps to the local tavern. In spite of all the flying sparks, the burning coals and the red-hot steel, the shop was never known to have caught on fire. The community fire truck housed across the road was called upon only after times when the adjacent creek overflowed its banks, flooding and caking the shop and its contents in mud. As local fire chief, Edmund took advantage of the fire hose to evacuate the residue.

## MAINTAINING GERMAN AMERICAN TIES FOR OVER A CENTURY

### THE JOHN AMELING FAMILY

Bernice (Ameling) Einck, Arlene (Ameling) Huinker,  
Barbara (Wurzer) Reicks and Clair Blong

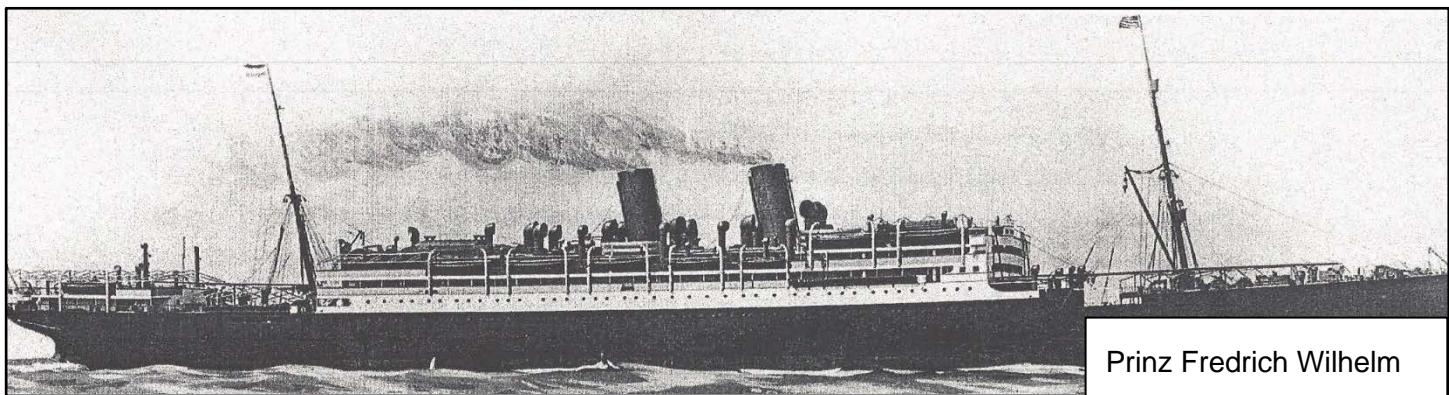
John Ameling was born on June 16, 1891 in Varensel, Gutersloh district, North Rhine Westphalia, Germany. John's parents were Josef Ameling (1854-1931) and Elizabeth Kulage Striethorst (1861-1951) who lived on a farm near Varensel. Josef and Elizabeth married on May 8, 1890.

John was the oldest son in his family. His siblings included Christina Ameling (1893-1950), Anna Ameling (1896-1952), Christian Ameling (1898-1990), and Katharina Ameling (1900-1982). John had three step siblings by his mother Elizabeth Kulage's first marriage to Chrisoph Striethorst (1830-1890). These step siblings were Karl Striethorst (1881-1964), Heinrich (1884-1915) and Anna Maria Striethorst (1886-1950).

John grew up on the family farm in Varensel, Germany. Since John would not be able to assume responsibilities for the farm with so many young siblings, he decided to go to America. John came to America with Louise Schwammann. It appears these families had close ties.

### Travel to America

They travelled on the Prinz Fredrich Wilhelm, a steam ship from Bremen, Germany, to Ellis Island, New York. The Prinz Fredrich Wilhelm's displacement was 17,000 tons and could carry 2,500 passengers. The passengers arrived at Ellis Island on May 31<sup>st</sup> and were processed into the United States on June 1, 1909. According to his intake papers John Ameling's last residence was Neuenkirchen, Germany, and he was 17 years old. John and Louise travelled from New York to Northeast Iowa by train.



Prinz Fredrich Wilhelm

### Beginnings in Iowa

The first year in Iowa, John lived at the John Schwaumann family farm 3 miles south of St. Lucas. While John lived with the Schwammans, he worked for other farmers for 5 years to save money. Bernice remembers John saying the 2<sup>nd</sup> year here, he worked for John Franzen Sr. (4 miles east of St. Lucas) and saved his money so he could start farming on his own. Then John and Joe Ludman rented the Otto Setter farm that is near the Henry Kruse farm. There he met Matilda Kruse.

### Marriage to Matilda Kruse



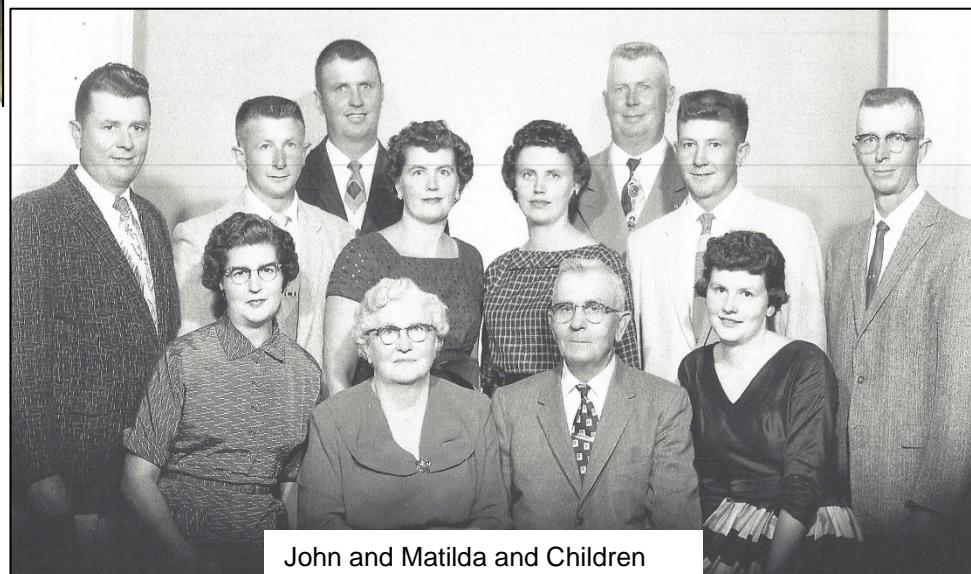
John and Mathilda Marriage, May 25, 1915

Through the decades of the 1930s - 1950s John and Mathilda raised a large family including: Joseph (1916-1991), Marcella (1918-2012), Clarence (1920-2008), Richard (1923-1993), Viola (1925-1999), Felix (1927-2010), Alfred (1929-1986), Irvin (1932-2010), Arlene (1935-) and Bernice (1937-).

John married Matilda Kruse on May 25, 1915, in St. Lucas, Iowa. They rented the George Bieber farm 3 miles west and 3 miles north of St. Lucas. Joe (1916) and Marcella (1918) were born there. In 1918 they rented the George Kruse farm where Clarence was born in 1920. This Kruse farm was later purchased by John and Minnie Winter.

In 1923 John and Mathilda purchased a 60-acre farm east of St. Lucas, known as the Vorderbrueck farm, 2 miles east of St. Lucas. Richard (1923), Viola (1925), Felix (1927), Alfred (1929), Irvin (1932) and Arlene (1935) were born there. This farmstead was just east of the Luke and Agnes Blong farmstead and these buildings were standing until the 1980s.

In 1935 John and Mathilda purchased the Pete Stammeyer (later Stammeyer) farm across the creek from the Vorderbrueck farm 2 miles east of St. Lucas. Bernice was born there in 1937. John and Matilda lived there until 1960 when they bought the Stammeyer house in St. Lucas. Interestingly, back in Germany, John's sister Christina Ameling married an Otto Stammeyer.



John and Matilda and Children

## John's Citizenship Petition and World War 1

John made a declaration of intention to become a U.S. citizen on May 31, 1909, and a petition for naturalization on September 14, 1914. As background, World War I had just begun in Europe in August 1914. On January 26, 1915, John's petition was dismissed by the district court without prejudice and he was permitted to withdraw his declaration of intention.

When the military service draft was established in 1917, John stated he would not sign up for the military draft because he was not a citizen and "I do not want to fight and kill my cousins over in Germany."

John did not register for the draft, but he may not have been eligible for military because he already was married and had one child, Joe born April 8, 1916. During all this turmoil of war and the draft Marcella was born on May 6, 1918.

The Fayette County court records indicate John made a petition for naturalization on December 3, 1919, in Decorah, but such petition was denied because the petitioner had claimed exemption from military service because he was not a citizen. At this time anti-German attitudes were very strong in America, especially in Iowa, where two years earlier the Governor proclaimed that the German language could not be spoken in public meetings and places.

## Becoming a Citizen

With the rise of the Nazi Party and the established Third Reich in Germany in the early 1930s, John again made a petition for naturalization on January 25, 1935, in the Fayette County District Court. Interestingly, John claimed residency in this country since February 11, 1926, the time of his return from his first trip back to Germany since his arrival in America on May 31, 1909.

John's petition was supported by Peter Stammeyer and John C. Mihm. They affirmed that John was of good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the United States and that in their opinion the petitioner is in every way qualified to be admitted a citizen of the Union States. In mid-November 2019, Lee Stammeyer who was a neighbor child in the 1920s, recalls John as a very hardworking farmer, the very best kind of neighbor and a man of integrity.

On September 7, 1937, in the District Court in West Union, John took his oath of allegiance to the United States and renounced absolutely and entirely all allegiance and fidelity to the German Reich. John was now a U.S. citizen after 28 years of enduring many setbacks.

## Maintaining the Trans-Atlantic Family Ties

1925-1926 - John maintained a strong interest and love for his large extended family in Germany. After 16 years in America, John had established his family farm as a means of economic well-being, was married and had 5 children, and saw the wartime anti-German feelings defuse. John travelled by rail and steam ship to Germany to see his family in the Autumn of 1925 and returned to America in mid-February 1926.

The Ameling family recalls this story. John's mother had sewed a set of silverware in his overcoat to take with him to America, because they were not allowed to take anything out of the country. When he got to customs, he saw inspectors take away what the man ahead of him had sewed into his coat. John stepped out of line, cut the silverware out of his coat, and laid it in his trunk under some shirts. They never checked his trunk.



Ameling Family Tombstone, Varensel, Germany

1945 - Arlene recalls that John's siblings in Varensel were not in favor of the Hitler regime but his cousins had to serve in the German Army during World War II. When the war ended John's sister Katherina, knelt and said "Thanks be to God. The Americans are coming." When the Allied troops arrived in Varensel they ordered all residents out of their homes and used their homes as troop quarters. The family was allowed to use only some rooms. The Amelings were impressed that the Allied troops incurred no damages to their house or property.

1947 - John's next trip to Germany was in 1947 to visit his elderly mother who was quite ill. John travelled by plane to shorten the journey time. Father Reynold Cigrand, the assistant pastor, helped John make the travel arrangements on short notice.

Once in Germany John witnessed the terrible wartime destruction of Germany and sadly learned of sons of his siblings who were lost in World War II. John was distressed by his mother's illness, loss of family members in the war and the wartime destruction.

Possibly due to all this stress, John was hospitalized in Germany for some weeks with an enlarged heart. Meanwhile Matilda and the family back in St. Lucas waited anxiously to hear from him. After some months John finally arrived home, the same day a postcard arrived at the farm telling of John's medical condition and his extended hospital stay. The family was greatly relieved to see him home again safe and sound.

**1955** - Christian Ameling, John's youngest brother, came in April 1955 to visit John's family in Iowa. Christian's visit Iowa lasted from April to October and he was here for John and Mathilda's 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. According to Arlene, Christian helped cultivate John's cornfields and got sun burned in the hot June weather. Christian liked America but doubted he could convince his family to move here.



Dining room on board the ship going to Germany, August 1958.

Martha Grage, Bill Grage, Frank Mueterthies,  
John Ameling, Henry & Katherine Zimmermeier



John and Mathilda 40<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary

**1958** - In 1958 John traveled with a group of good friends back to Germany. The friends included Henry and Katherine Zimmermeier of St. Lucas, Frank Mueterthies of Lawler, and William and Martha Grage of Waucoma. They travelled by ship to Europe for the six-week trip. (See photo above.)

**1970s** - In the 1970s John Ameling, the son of Clarence and Ida (Smith) Ameling served with the U.S. Army in Germany. John used his leave to visit the extended Ameling family in Varensel. John really enjoyed his visits with his cousins in Germany. Barbara (Wurzer) Reicks states "John carved his name in the bark of a tree on the Ameling farm in Germany. You can see it today."

**1978** - The exchanges continued. In 1978 Carl Wurzer and Tony and Marcella (Ameling) Wurzer of Lawler travelled to the Ameling homestead in Germany. The Carl Wurzer family also hosted a German exchange student that year and visited her family in Germany.

**1979** - In the 1980s Hedwig Baba (a niece to John Ameling) and Marie Graute's daughters, Ruth and Hedwig Graute (nieces of Hedwig Baba) travelled to Iowa for a visit with the Amelings. They toured the Western states and marveled at the spacious skies and endless farm and ranch lands and compared that to the much smaller 50 to 100 acre farms in Germany.



Christian Ameling meeting John Ameling family members

**1987** - In May 1987 a St. Lucas group accompanied Whilomena Kuennen's German class from North High School in West Union on their student exchange program. Cletus and Viola (Ameling) Mihm, Margaret (Mihm) Smith, Lee and Marion Stammeyer and DeVere and Virginia (Winter) Manderfield visited the Amelings in Varensel. Virginia recalls it as a very rewarding experience all participants.

They celebrated Christian Ameling's birthday and saw other St. Lucas names in that area: Kruse, Vertelsteffen and Stammeyer. Lee Stammeyer recalls the house and barn were connected as one structure and that the Amelings were quite successful farmers then and today.

1989 - In April and May 1989 Bob and Arlene (Ameling) Huinker, Pat and Bernice (Ameling) Einck and daughter Karla Einck Pierson travelled to Varensel to visit the Amelings. Arlene states they learned so much about German agriculture, their way of living, and the beautiful flowers—the tulips were everywhere. This area is very near to Holland.

1999 - Harry and Barbara (Wurzer) Reicks of Waucoma, Shirley (Wurzer) Bush of Cedar Rapids and Marcella Wurzer of Lawler, travelled in 1999 to Varensel, Germany to visit the Amelings.

2005 - Harry and Barbara (Wurzer) Riecks hosted Davina Kundrus (Ruth Graute Kundrus's daughter) as an exchange student for a semester. Barbara recalls "Having an exchange student was a great experience. Davina did very well in English, but would pronounce some German words differently, so it was great that Harry could speak German to her and that way we were all on the same page."

Marcella (Ameling) Wurzer said to Barbara (her daughter) many times while she was still alive, "When I am gone, I wonder if we will maintain and continue the connection between the Amelings here and in Germany?" Barbara says "I did not know at that time, but now am sure it will continue. We just love to have them come and visit us, and they are very welcoming when we go to Germany to visit them."

2017 - In 2017 Merle and Sheila Reicks family, including McKenna, Travis, Kelby and Dylan, and Merle's parents, Harry and Barbara Reicks travelled to Varensell and stayed with Ameling family members for a week. They found the stay rewarding because several of the Ameling family in Varensell knew both German and English which greatly facilitated conversation on many topics including family, farming and other local business activities.

2018 - Harry and Barbara Reicks and their daughter Jenny Koudelka visited Germany to attend the wedding of Davina Kundrus. In 2005 Davina stayed with them as an exchange student for a semester.

This listing is representative of the extended Ameling family trans-Atlantic visits over the decades. We are aware of other family visits and college student visits fostered by this strong family desire to remain connected across the Atlantic Ocean and vast landscapes.

### Support of Education

Arlene (Ameling) Huinker recalls John's heartfelt desire for his family to receive a good education. On those snow filled winter roads in the 1930s and 40s, John would hitch up his horses to the sleigh and take his children, and neighbor kids, and journey through the drifts to St. Luke's School no matter what the weather conditions.

On a dark autumn evening in 1958, Clair Blong recalls walking across the Bass Creek and through pasture and woods to the Ameling farmstead to visit John who just returned from Germany. John shared some pumpernickel he brought home for family and friends. John told of his family and the situation in that part of Northwestern Germany. This visit fired Clair's lifetime desire to study the German language and learn more about Germany and its history.



Ameling Family Photo 1925.

John Ameling is the 4<sup>th</sup> from the left in the back row.  
John's parents, Elisabeth Striehorst and Joseph Ameling  
are in the center of the first row.

John would read German language weekly newspapers to stay informed of trans-Atlantic relations, especially with Germany. Clair recalls "Memorable were the rides to St. Luke's School with John plowing his Ford car through snowdrifts to get us there on time. John wore a distinct German cologne that filled the car with a sharp aroma. We wanted to open the back windows a tiny bit, but then we would freeze. We all hung on for dear life when John hit a snow drift in winter or a deep rut in the muddy spring road and plowed right on through them".

## A Century of Fostering Family Ties

The Ameling family has maintained family ties between Germany and America across five generations. This awesome feat was accomplished through peace and war, economic prosperity and depression, and occasional language barriers. This endeavor was started by John's strong desire to remain tied with his parents and his many siblings in Germany. John Ameling's personal travel and letter writing endeavors have reaped an outstanding example of maintaining and strengthening family ties. John's lifelong feat demonstrates the absolute importance of individual initiative and perseverance to maintain and strengthen family ties over several generations and many, many decades.

### BOEDING QUIET CREEK BARN

Jim Boeding, September 2019

The 136-year-old barn on the farm of Jim Boeding of rural Decorah, Iowa, was recently included in the 'Iowa Barn Foundation Tour.' This barn, known as the Mickelson barn, was built in the summer of 1883. It was one of the largest barns in the area at 36 feet wide and over 80 feet long. It had 18 feet-high side walls that added to its storage capacity.



The hay mow featured one-inch pine flooring which has been replaced with two-inch oak planks to accommodate modern skid loaders and big, square bales of hay.

On the barn roof are two beautiful cupolas that are very functional to help cure the hay and allow moisture to escape up the hay chutes. The livestock in the basement of the barn would naturally generate both heat and moisture. The barn roof had wooden shingles. They were replaced in the 1950s with galvanized steel. In the early 2000s the roof was painted white to set off the rich red side walls.

The barn limestone walls started leaning northward. In 2005 we launched a barn wall straightening project. The pine trees in our front yard served as anchors. After the walls were plumb, several cement buttresses were poured inside the barn basement to hold the walls in place. Water was supplied via the windmill. The water was pumped first to the milk house to cool the cream and then by gravity to the stock tanks for the livestock to drink.

The lumber used in the construction was cut in far northern Wisconsin and was floated down the Mississippi River in log rafts. The logs were then cut into timber beams and boards at Prairie du Chien to supply the lumber for the barn. The lumber is probably a pine species.

The style of the barn is considered a 'bank' barn which is a barn that is built into the side of a hill (bank). This two-story barn had an entrance on both the first and second floors. This allowed access to the hay mow for storing loose hay to feed the cattle in the upper floor, and room to house the horses below.



## HONORING CIVIL WAR VETERANS

Clair Blong

On the soggy, windy and cold morning of Wednesday, October 2, 2019, thirty local citizens slogged through the wet grass to gather together at the Oak Ridge Cemetery at the top of a large hill near Auburn overlooking the Little Turkey River. They huddled together in the cold wind to honor and commemorate four of the 18 Civil War veterans buried on this lonely graveyard outpost reaching between earth and sky. Overall, 28 veterans from our many conflicts are buried in this high, hill-top cemetery.

Each of the four unmarked veteran gravesites recently received a new marble tombstone and American flag. The program opening remarks were given by Arlene Soppe of the Oak Ridge Cemetery Association. Arlene welcomed and thanked everyone for braving the bad weather to honor our veterans and for their tremendous effort to prepare the site for the new tombstones.

The Rt. Rev Terry Landsgaard presided over the gathering and beseeched everyone to remember these souls who served their Nation in its hour of peril. The Civil War was the most disastrous American conflict, claiming thousands of causalities on both sides, either killed or wounded in the four years of raging war across the country.

The forgotten soldiers honored included:

- David Olmstead, Corp Co F, 7 Iowa CAV
- Ezra Brimmer, Co A, 33 Wis INF
- William M. Tripp Jr., Corp Co C, 6 Iowa CAV
- Calvin C. Herrimann, Co F, 9 Iowa INF

Their unit identifications will help trace their war time experiences. Many Mexican War and American Civil War vets came to the Auburn area for land grants for their service to the Nation.

American Legion posts from St. Lucas, West Union, and Wadena provided the flag ceremony and taps for the deceased.

Rt. Rev Terry Landsgaard offered special thanks to the Fayette County Pioneer Cemetery Commission members for their monumental efforts to restore this very historic cemetery and to the veterans from these American Legion posts for providing such a memorable military service.

Arlene Soppe of the Oak Ridge Cemetery

Association, stated: "We are very pleased with the

progress we are making in restoring the cemetery and reaching this point today where we are honoring four veterans with this special ceremony. We had to mow tall grass, remove dead trees, stumps and roots, clear fence lines of brush and weeds, restore broken down tombstones, identify graves sites and apply for new tombstones for veterans. I want to thank the awesome volunteers: Steve Story, Donna Story, Don Bright, Niels Boehmler, Joe Schott, Leon Soppe, Cyril Steinlage, Marty Stanbrough and Bruce Stanbrough and others for their many volunteer hours in restoring this historic cemetery.

Mel Bodensteiner, Adjutant, American Legion Post 691, the Father Aloysius Schmitt Post in St. Lucas said, "I feel very honored to be able to pay my respects to these men long forgotten to history." Mel was flag bearer for the ceremony.

Steve Story, member of the Fayette County Historical Society and the Fayette County Pioneer Cemetery Commission, stressed the importance of knowing our conflicted history and getting active in local history projects such as this cemetery restoration project.

"This volunteer effort to restore the beautiful Oak Ridge Cemetery is to be highly commended," stated Clair Blong, head of the German American Museum in St. Lucas, Iowa. "The Association may wish to consider planting new oak trees so the cemetery lives up to its name in the future," Clair added.



Pausing to honor the gravesite of Civil War soldier  
David Olmstead, Corp Co F, 7 Iowa CAV

Bill Moellering, former Fayette County engineer for 40 years, was delighted to see this project coming to fruition to properly honor our veterans of all wars. Bill has been active in researching the history of early wrought iron bridges in Fayette County and their significance for commerce and also for societal movement.

After the formal program was concluded, the attendees visited the four new tombstones and recalled stories of the early history of the Auburn area.



Mel Bodensteiner carrying the flag in strong 25 mph wind.



Attendees at the ceremony to commemorate the Civil War soldiers from the area.



**JAN HUS**  
(c. 1369 - July 6, 1415)  
**A Brief Look at the Czech Religious Reformer**  
Steven A. Klimesh  
Spillville, Iowa

If you have ever been on Highway B16 between Spillville and Protivin, Iowa, you may have noticed a small cemetery about 5 miles west of Spillville and 3 miles east of Protivin; the **ČESKO NÁRODNÍ HŘBÍTOV** or the **Bohemian National Cemetery**. Prominently in the near center of the grounds stands a statue of Jan Hus. You may have found yourself asking the question; who was this man? The short answer is that Jan Hus was one of the earliest and most important Czech religious reformers; preceding Martin Luther by 100 years. On July 6, 1415, at the Council of Constance in Germany (1414-1418), he was charged with being a heretic by the Catholic Church, convicted of that offense, and sentenced to be burned at the stake that very same day.



The statue (center above) in the Bohemian National Cemetery was donated by Anna Mladý in memory of her parents, František and Veronika Mladý and was unveiled on November 6, 1904. It is one of only two statues of Jan Hus in the United States of America; the other is in Bohemia, N.Y. The Jan Hus (right above) Memorial Statue in New York was unveiled on September 26, 1893. It was the first official memorial in the United States to honor a foreigner and stands in Union Cemetery.

### **Early Life and Studies of Jan Hus**

Jan Hus was born at **Husinec Bohemia** (German: **Hussinetz**) 75 miles south west of Prague c. 1369 (The exact date is uncertain). Hus is an abbreviation from his birthplace made by himself about 1399; in his earlier life he was always known as Jan, Johann or John Hussinetz, or, in Latin, Johannes de Hussinetz. His parents were Czechs.

At an early age he traveled to Prague, where he supported himself by singing and serving in churches. His conduct was positive and his commitment to his studies was "remarkable." He was a well-educated man. In 1393, Hus earned the degree of Bachelor of Arts at the University of Prague (founded in 1348, it also known as Charles University and Charles University of Prague). In 1394 Hus received a Bachelor of Theology degree and earned his master's degree in 1396. He was ordained as a priest in 1400. In 1401 he became dean of the philosophical faculty, and in the following year he was appointed rector of the University. In 1402 he was appointed preacher of the Bethlehem Chapel (capable of seating 3000) in Prague where he conducted services in Czech, contrary to the Church's practice of Latin.

### **Positions and Teachings of Jan Hus**

So, why with such a distinguished start to his life would Hus come to such a shocking end, being labeled a heretic and being burned at the stake only 13 years later? The answer lies in the fact that Hus had publicly thrown his lot with those who were calling for reform in the Church.

Hus was intrigued by the writings of the early English reformer John Wycliffe (c.1320s - December 31, 1384), though he did not agree with all Wycliffe's teachings. He preached actively against the worst abuses of the Roman Church of the day and Hus was capable of developing his ideas and was able to state them clearly. Several of his positions follow:

1. Hus declared that all his teaching was grounded in the Bible and that no one could go beyond the Bible as it was the source of truth and the rule of faith.
2. Hus concentrated particular attention upon an understanding of ordination. The church believed that at the moment of ordination a priest received a special kind of grace which meant that everything he did as a priest was effective for his congregation even if he lived an immoral life. Hus argued that while there are proper procedures for educating, ordaining and certifying priests, the process alone does not make a true priest. The true priest is one who possesses the spirit of Christ and shows this in his life. So, among the clergy, Hus said, there are those who are legitimate merely because of church procedures and there are those who are true servants of God. Moreover, the true priest's function was to minister to others in the name of God, not to take the place of God. In particular, the priest did not forgive anyone his sins, only God could do that. The priest simply declared them forgiven when all the required conditions were met.

These two views, 1) on the supremacy of scripture, and 2) on the necessity to consider the character of the clergy brought Hus into conflict with the supreme teaching authority of the Church. He argued that it was the responsibility of all believers to judge for themselves the orders of popes, bishops and priests on these grounds. Thus, he himself refused a papal order to cease preaching at Bethlehem Chapel in 1409 based on the grounds that it resulted from inadequate information given to the Pope, and that it was his duty not to deprive his congregation of the word of God. This belief, along with others, fostered the spirit of "free-thinking" among the population.

3. Hus preached about what he felt was wrong with the practice of buying indulgences in order to get into heaven. Especially offensive to him was the fact that the priests urged widows and orphans, those least capable of affording them, to pay huge sums to ensure their departed loved ones would have safe passage to heaven and not have to languish in purgatory. This also lost Hus the support of the king, who received a percentage of the sales. Hus believed that man obtains forgiveness of sins by real repentance, not for money.
4. Hus defined the true church as a spiritual fellowship of those possessing the spirit of Christ, not as a legal corporation or as a society with a membership list which one entered in some purely formal way. As far as Hus was concerned, there were true Christians – those possessing the spirit of Christ – in all religions. This was especially threatening to a church which too often equated salvation with formal church attendance and which was still trying to assert its authority over all Christians everywhere.
5. He did not agree with the practice of separating religion and religious practice from the people, including the practice of offering communion wine only to the clergy and giving the people only a scrap of bread. Hus believed literally in the gospel mandate which said, "Take this cup, all of you, and drink from it." Hus, via Jakobek of Stribo, introduced utraquism (lay communion in bread and wine) in Prague in 1414. The council of Constance condemned utraquism in 1415. Only recently, in a historical time mindset, did the Council Fathers of Vatican II, conclude that it was beneficial (from a pastoral perspective) to encourage Communion under both Species.
6. Hus opposed the relatively new doctrine of Papal infallibility when Papal decrees contradicted the Bible. He asserted the primacy of the Scriptures over church leaders and councils. While in "exile", Hus wrote *The Church* and put down in writing the expositions of faith for which he was fighting. He asserted that Christ alone was the true Head of the Church, that the true Church needed neither cardinals nor Pope, that even a Pope "through ignorance and the love of money" may make mistakes, and that to rebel against an erring Pope is to obey Christ.
7. Hus called for a higher level of morality among the clergy and priesthood. Financial abuses, sexual immorality, and drunkenness were common among the priests of Europe. While the clergy preached to the people of the time the need to lead a pure and holy life, many failed to set the example and often led immoral lives. It was not unheard of that brothels existed exclusively to serve the clergy.

### The Last Days of Jan Hus

At this time in history, the Church was in turmoil. There were as many as three individuals claiming to be pope and there were reform movements. The Council of Constance (1414-1418) was called to put an end to the papal schism and to address the long-desired reform of the Church. The Emperor Sigismund, brother of Wenceslaus, (not to be confused with Wenceslaus I - duke, martyr, and patron of Bohemia, born 903; died at Alt-Bunzlau, 28 September, 935) and then heir to the Bohemian crown, was anxious to clear the county from the blemish of heresy.

He encouraged Hus to attend the council and to resolve the issues. Sigismund issued a document of safe conduct for Hus to travel to and from the Council, as well as safe conduct while at the Council. Hus began his travels to Constance on October 11, 1414. He arrived on November 3<sup>rd</sup> and was given assurances by the Pope that he would not be harmed while at the Council.

On December 8<sup>th</sup> Hus was thrown into a dungeon. He was tried for heresy the first time on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1415. On July 6<sup>th</sup> he was taken to the cathedral and there sat Prince Sigismund, who had been false to his promise of protection. Hus was condemned and burned at the stake that same day. Hus was never allowed to defend himself in the proceedings.

Why did Hus die a violent death when a large number of other zealous men who proclaimed the need for Church reforms died peacefully, like ordinary men, in freedom? Why were not Erasmus, Luther and Calvin condemned to die a martyr's death?

Today we know, for history has instructed us. Hus died a martyr's death because he did not keep secret the fact that he considered not only the Church, and the dignitaries of the Church, but also the representatives of the State, to be the cause of the corruption in the Church and in society. He regarded Emperor Sigismund as the chief offender. Hence it was in vain that he made an appeal to human reason, and to the Scriptures. Hus placed himself in opposition to the theocracy of the Church and the absolutism of the State and therefore he was doomed. Luther upheld feudal views, and therefore the Elector supported him against the Council of Worms. Calvin became a ruler, and therefore he did not die. Hus was in advance of Europe, and being isolated, he died at the stake.

Jan Hus is recognized as a saint in the Orthodox Church. His saints' day is July 6<sup>th</sup>. The Czech people continue to adore him as a saint, martyr and nationalist reformer. In honor of Jan Hus, July 6<sup>th</sup> is a public holiday in the Czech Republic.



The Flaming Chalice of Jan Hus is a historic symbol that transcends mere denomination or geography. It is a symbol of history and hope. It protests "the way things are" on behalf of those people who are left out of their own conventions, disenfranchised from the systems and governments which restrain them, the biblical widows and orphans and the disempowered of our own world. It is a compelling image that our proud history sets before us. It is the ancient communion chalice totally reinterpreted.

There has long been a cloud hanging over the death of Jan Hus. The injustice was finally addressed almost 600 years after his death. Pope John Paul II was not ignorant of Church history, and he realized that various peoples had been wronged by the Church throughout the years. On 18 December 1999, he publicly apologized for the execution and cruel death of Jan Hus in 1415 and praised Hus for his "moral courage." During his tenure as Pope, John Paul II apologized for over 100 similar mistakes.

### Conclusion

Hus was asked to recant his teachings on several occasions; something he could not do for he believed them to be sound and grounded in the Bible and the teaching of Christ. His accusers never provided evidence that his teachings were in error. Hus was a threat to the power and wealth of the clergy and civil authorities of the time and he needed to be silenced; he was a heretic as pronounced by the authorities and that was that. Jan Hus was burned at the stake on 6 July 1415.

May he rest in peace.

"God is my witness that I have never taught or preached that which false witnesses have testified against me. He knows that the great object of all my preaching and writing was to convert men from sin. In the truth of that gospel which hitherto I have written, taught and preached, I now joyfully die."

**John Hus**  
1369 - July 6, 1415

*"Seek the truth  
Listen to the truth  
Teach the truth  
Love the truth  
Abide by the truth  
And defend the truth  
unto death."*

## WHAT IS THE DRIFTLESS AREA?

Terry Landsgaard



valleys laced with streams. The flora and fauna in this area contains representatives of the Pleistocene past including yews, Pleistocene snails and Monkshood were preserved.

The Iowa Pleistocene snail, once thought to be extinct, was rediscovered in this area in 1980. Besides the Iowa Pleistocene snail, many other land snails make their homes on these slopes, including eight additional species that have been proposed for endangered species status.

Caves are numerous in these bluffs, which were often used as shelters by native peoples. This was the land of the "mound builders," the HoChunk, Sauk and Dakota. Later, the French lead miners and European farmers came to make this land their own.

The Driftless Area is a multistate region consisting of parts of four states; southwestern Wisconsin, southeastern Minnesota, northwestern corner of Illinois and northeastern Iowa. The Driftless Area is one of the most unique features of the northeastern corner of Iowa.

The glaciers of the last Ice Age 10,000 years ago bypassed this area and left this region untouched. The glaciers did not scrape the terrain leaving mild rolling hills as it did in neighboring areas. Instead, it left a terrain of rugged hills, limestone caves, impressive bluffs and deep valleys. In addition, because the glacier did not move across this area, it did not leave glacial deposits of debris, or 'drift', thus preserving ancient landscapes of sharp ridgetops and deep



Driftless Area Terrain

## SEA TURTLES: AS OLD AS THE DINOSAURS?

Dr. Gale Bishop

Gale Bishop, a renowned scientist and life-long student of sea turtles, spoke of his recent breakthrough discoveries in Croatia and Turkey on sea turtles, both earliest and contemporary, at the German American Museum in St. Lucas, Iowa.

Dr. Bishop spoke about the Pula nesting suite in Croatia that is one of the most significant sea turtle trace-fossil nesting suites found to date. Gale explained that these new discoveries push our knowledge of the development of the sea turtle ethogram and behavior back in time 40 million years.

Gale's recent research illustrates the awesome power of science unencumbered by specific disciplines and the importance of crossing discipline lines to work collaboratively and internationally on sea turtles to discern their evolutionary history.

Gale notes that the nest covering behavior by sea turtles had already evolved in these 110 million-year-old sea turtle nests that are 40 million years earlier than we previously knew. Gale noted this indicates that depredation (probably by dinosaurs, using the nearby dinosaur migration trackways) had already evolved and the sea turtles were already actively camouflaging their egg chambers by covering activity 110 million years ago!

Gale and his geological colleagues collected the first known fossilized sea turtle nest, from the 74-million-year-old western shoreline of the Cretaceous Western Interior Seaway, SE of Denver Colorado in 1997. He and his colleagues are searching North America and South America for the nests of the ancient giant sea turtles Archelon and Protostega. In his latest line of research, Gale and his colleagues have submitted a manuscript to The American Museum of Natural History (New York City) describing the over 30 sea turtle nest structures from the 110 million-year-old limestones of a dinosaur track-bed along the ancient shoreline of the Early Cretaceous Proto-Adriatic Sea in Pula, Croatia.



Green Sea Turtle

Dr. Gale Bishop

Dr. Bishop is a Research Associate of the American Museum of Natural History in Invertebrate Paleontology, and Anthropology and Director of the Wildlife Conservation Kashmir World Foundation.

Dr. Bishop's 55-year academic career has impacted innumerable students and produced a body of published work consisting of 113 papers, 11 websites, and hundreds of talks on science, science education, and sea turtles. He earned a B.S. (1965) and M.S. (1967) in Geology from South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. He went on to earn a Ph.D. (1971) in Geology from University of Texas (Austin). His career included 28 years teaching at Georgia Southern University (1971–1999), followed by five years as Director of The Museum of Geology and Paleontology and Professor of Geology at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology (2001–2006), and 25 concurrent years as Director and Co-Director of the St. Catherines Island Sea Turtle Conservation Program (1990–2016) now known as the Georgia Southern University Sea Turtle Program at St. Catherines Island.



Bishop served as Associate Editor for the Journal of Crustacean Biology and Associate Editor for Invertebrate Paleontology for the Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington 2001–2008). He is currently Director of Wildlife Conservation for the Kashmir World Foundation and President of GeoTrec LLC of Fayette, Iowa. Upon retirement, Bishop became Director, Museum of Geology and Paleontology at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and continued to Co-Direct the St. Catherines Island Sea Turtle Program until 2017 and runs GeoTrec LLC, Fayette, Iowa. Under the mantra of “Conservation, Research, and Education,” the Program taught sea turtle conservation to 326 interns, 275 of whom were K-12 teachers who impacted more than 312,401 K-12 students, conserved 3,613 sea turtle nests, helped put 217,546 hatchlings into the Atlantic Ocean, and shared those experiences through numerous talks, publications, and websites. The Sea Turtle Model merged “Conservation, Research, and Education” to maximize public impact, leading to enhanced stewardship and appreciation for coastal environments and sea turtle conservation.

## FROM MODEL ROCKETS TO SOLAR PROBES AND LAUNCH ABORT SYSTEMS

Matt Johns

There is something captivating to the six-year old mind about rockets, moon rovers, and space travel. I was six or seven when I read my first space book with big, colorful illustrations showing astronauts in white suits and off-road vehicles on gray dirt against a dark sky. Studying space then created bewilderment in my mind that remains with me today.

I was born in 1981, exactly nine days after the first manned space shuttle was launched. The moon landing days were a few years gone at that point, but America’s space program was abuzz with the newer, sleeker, reusable space airplane. Space shuttles were exciting. Growing up in the 1980s we had space shuttles everywhere. They were on TV, in books, on stickers, shirts, in classrooms, everywhere.

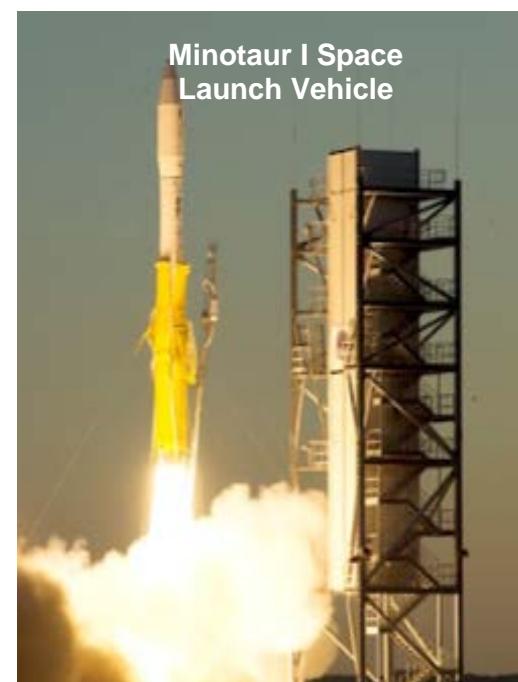
To say that January 28, 1986 was a bad day for America’s space program would be a gross understatement. I remember watching pieces of the Challenger streaming through the air on a 10-inch TV, not quite understanding why my mom (Mary Lee Stammeyer Johns, daughter of Leander Stammeyer, long time resident of St. Lucas) was so upset. At five years old, I had no way of knowing that someday I would work so close to the Challenger disaster.

During my school years, I became fascinated by space vehicles and airplanes. It became clear to me that space was a long-distance trip, and pretty dark and cold. Going there, while exciting to daydream about, probably was not a good primary career plan. My excitement changed to airplanes and helicopters over time. I remember other kids being obsessed with fighter planes and war machines while I was collecting Boeing 727s and 737s. There was something exciting to me about anything that flew, but mostly about passenger jets. I made it a point one summer to memorize the max take-off weight of every airplane in the hardcover commercial aircraft book that my dad brought home. Some Summers are more exciting than others.

In 1999, I started Mechanical Engineering school at Northern Arizona University. This was partly driven by my aerospace interests, but at that point had become driven by an interest in all things that move. I was into cars, bicycles, and little handheld devices. I needed to know how they worked. For my senior Capstone project, I worked on a team tasked with fixing an F-16 missile launcher for an AMRAAM missile. The missile launcher rails would wear over time, causing the missile to rattle while in carriage. Our job was to fix that. This project took us from college students into the world of functioning engineers. It was exciting and scary.

Arizona probably doesn’t register in most Americans’ minds as a hotbed for aerospace and defense. But due to a significant lack of humidity, precipitation, winter, and other problems faced by most of the United States, coupled with vast expanses of empty land, it has become an important player in the industry. Today, companies like Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, Boeing, Honeywell, General Dynamics, and United Technologies have significant operations in the Phoenix and Tucson areas.

After graduating from NAU in December of 2003, I started work at Orbital Sciences Corporation in Chandler, Arizona, as a mechanical engineer. I was



then assigned to the Minotaur I Space Launch vehicle program. A Minotaur is a decommissioned Air Force nuclear missile with the warheads removed and adapted to launch satellites into space at low earth orbit.

There are two variants; one that uses decommissioned Minuteman missiles and one that uses decommissioned Peacekeeper missiles. Both serve similar purposes, but the Peacekeeper variant is more powerful and can lift heavier payloads. During my first two years of working here, I conducted integration activities and attended launches for three Minotaur I vehicles.

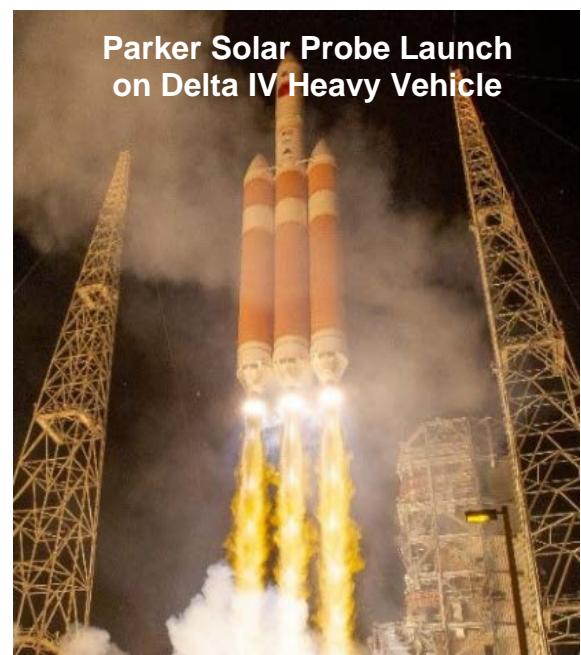
After two years at Orbital Sciences, I enrolled in the Arizona State University MBA program and pursued my degree while continuing to work full time. After graduation in 2008, I became the lead Mechanical Engineer on two launches

of the Minotaur IV vehicle carrying the Hypersonic Technology Vehicle - 2 (HTV-2) flight demonstrations.

These flights proved the capability of the Minotaur IV vehicle and demonstrated advancing technology in hypersonic vehicle re-entry.

After the conclusion of the HTV-2 program, I worked a few other projects before landing on the mechanical engineering lead role for the Parker Solar Probe (PSP) Upper Stage. When NASA was

formed in 1958, there were eight "charter" missions identified. The PSP was the final of the original eight to launch. My role in the project was to lead the mechanical engineering team to develop a third stage that would be placed atop a Delta IV Heavy vehicle to provide additional velocity to the payload for its journey to the Sun, during which it became the fastest moving man-made object of all time. This iconic mission successfully launched on August 12, 2018 from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. It has since made two close approach passes to the Sun, returning data that has significantly increases mankind's understanding of solar weather and solar physics.



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At launch, the SLS will be the largest vehicle ever launched. One of its primary improvements over the space shuttle will be a Launch Abort System, or LAS. In the event of a failing launch vehicle, the LAS will activate and pull the Orion Capsule and astronauts safely away from the failing vehicle and parachute them into the ocean.

Partway through my activities on the PSP mission, I accepted a role as Program Engineering Manager (PEM) over all engineering disciplines working on the Abort Test Booster (ATB) for the NASA Ascent Abort 2 (AA-2) Mission to test the functionality of the LAS.

The AA-2 Mission successfully launched from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on July 2, 2019 and proved that the LAS will save the lives of astronauts in the case of a failing SLS rocket. The plan is to never have a repeat of January 28, 1986.

Rockets will forever captivate minds of all ages. When the AA-2 mission launched, I was indoors conducting launch activities while my wife of seven years, Sarah, and my children, Andrew (6) and Paige (3) were on the coast watching the show unfold in front of them. All three had excitement about what they had seen that could not be contained! An Internet search of the AA-2 launch will return some impressive launch footage.



2019 SPEAKER SERIES  
German American Museum  
St. Lucas, Iowa

[The American Bison: Its History, Survival And Sustainment](#)

Dave Roselien

Dave Roselien of Decorah spoke on "The American Bison: Its History, Survival and Sustainment" on May 15, 2019, at the German American Museum in St. Lucas, Iowa.



Dave traced the prehistoric migrations of bison from North Asia to North America, the role of bison in the lives of the Native American tribes, the nearly successful late 19th Century campaign to destroy them, and their contemporary comeback throughout the West and Midwest. This tragic story contains art, agriculture, biology, behavior, conservation, commerce, government, history, politics, hatred and greed.

Dave is a retired veterinarian expert who worked with the US Park Service on the brucellosis problem in the buffalo and elk herds in Yellowstone National Park. He is an emeritus professor of biology at Luther College.

Dave taught vertebrate and invertebrate biology and conservation for 15 years and spent 20 years in college administration. Dave has a doctorate in wildlife biology from Iowa State University. Bison natural history has been one of Dave's keen interests for over 50 years.

## Early Montana Photography

### Duane Fenstermann

Duane Fenstermann, retired Luther College Professor and Library Archivist Emeritus, spoke on May 22, 2019, at the German Historical Museum. His presentation focused on two early Montana photographers, one of whom came from Winneshiek County, Iowa.

Fenstermann served on the Luther College faculty from 1966 to 2001. Duane received a Bachelor of Arts from Morningside College, a Master of Divinity from Duke University, and a Master of Science in Library Science from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Fenstermann held library positions as acquisitions librarian, head of Technical Services and archivist.

He was director of Northeast Iowa Union List of Serials for 19 years; faculty meeting secretary for 17.5 years; and gave presentations on paper preservation during Luther College's Congregational Heritage workshops for almost 20 years. Fenstermann founded the Iowa Library Association Foundation, was named Iowa Library Association member of the year in 1991 and is a life member of several organizations. In 2006, Fenstermann published the definitive history of Decorah's Congregational United Church of Christ.

## Historic Bridges Of Northeast Iowa

### William Moerlling

Bill Moellering, retired Fayette County Engineer of 40 years spoke on the "Dietzenbach Bottom Bridge" and 3 other historic wrought iron bridges in the area. The Dietzenbach Bottom Bridge was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the State of Iowa in 1986.

The Dietzenbach Bottom Bridge stands as an important example of the pin-connected wrought-iron Warren truss. Wrought-iron Warren trusses were never common for roadway bridges. As a pin-connected Warren truss, the Dietzenbach Bottom Bridge is one of only three left in the state of Iowa. Riveted steel Warren trusses, however, became very common in Iowa after the turn of the century, particularly ones built after 1913 to the Iowa State Highway Commission standards. The Historic American Engineering Record report states its significance: "The Dietzenbach Bottom Bridge is an excellent example of the now rare late nineteenth century pin-connected, wrought-iron Warren truss." It seems to be the work of the creative and well-known engineer Horace Horton, the founder of the Chicago Bridge and Iron Company. While the bridge has been moved from its original location, both sites show the transportation roles played by bridges in Iowa".



## The Driftless Area

### Rt. Rev. Terry Landsgaard



The Driftless area is one of the most unique features of four Midwestern states. Parts of southeastern Minnesota, southwestern Wisconsin, northwestern Illinois and northeastern Iowa make up the Driftless area.

Glaciers bypassed this area 10,000 years ago preserving the ancient landscape of sharp ridgetops and deep valleys laced with streams. The flora and fauna contain representatives of the Pleistocene past; with yews, Pleistocene snails and Monkshood found in association with alpine talus slopes.

This was the land of the "mound builders," Ho-Chunk, Sauk and Dakota. Later, the lead miners and European farmers came to make this land their own.

## Sea Turtles: As Old As The Dinosaurs?

### Dr. Gale Bishop

Gale Bishop, a renowned scientist and life-long student of sea turtles, spoke of his recent breakthrough discoveries in Croatia and Turkey on sea turtles, both earliest and contemporary, on November 13 at the German American Museum in St. Lucas, Iowa.

Dr. Bishop spoke about the Pula nesting suite in Croatia, one of the most significant sea turtle trace-fossil nesting suites found to date. Gale explained that these new discoveries push our knowledge of the development of the sea turtle ethogram and behavior back in time 40 million years.

Gale's recent research illustrates the awesome power of science unencumbered by specific disciplines and the importance of crossing discipline lines to work collaboratively and internationally to discern the evolutionary history.

## **SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP ON PRESERVING AND CELEBRATING CULTURAL HERITAGES IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

This workshop was held on Wednesday, June 19th, 2019, from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM at the German American Museum, Library and Family History Center, St. Lucas, Iowa.

### **Morning Keynote Address: German Heritage**



Dr. LaRaw Maran, Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois at Urbana, at Champaign, Illinois, spoke on "Glimpses of Preserving Germanic Cultural Heritage in the Upper Midwest." Dr. Maran has studied many German groups in the United States and outlined the defining characteristics of these groups attempting to preserve aspects of their cultural heritages, such as language and Oktoberfest. LaRaw stated that Oktoberfest is becoming thoroughly Americanized and noted its use in many different popular culture and commercial settings.

### **The African American Experience in Iowa**

LaNisha R. Cassell, executive director, African American Museum of Iowa in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, provided an overview of "Freedom: Relevance and Social Justice in Preserving African American History", the theme of a major new exhibit at their Museum.

Felicit Wolfe, curator at the African American Museum of Iowa, spoke on "Bringing Vision to Life Through Exhibition", an examination of the challenges and evolution of black culture in the Iowa historical milieu. Felicit provided an excellent and incisive approach to museum exhibits as change agents in societal perceptions of historic events and peoples.

Rt. Rev. Terry Landsgaard, adjunct professor at Upper Iowa University, spoke on "Susan Collins: A Lady of Many Firsts". Susan was the distinguished Upper Iowa University (first woman, first black) graduate who became the renowned black missionary in Africa. Susan's many firsts were a major victory for all women of that 19<sup>th</sup> century era. Terry also spoke on the history of the black farming community near Fayette. These individuals and families came North via the Underground Railway of the pre-Civil War period and made a lasting imprint on this area, even today.

### **The Czech Slovak Experience in America**

David Muhlena, library director, the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, gave an excellent overview of "Czech and Slovak Cultural Heritage". David emphasized the historical evolution, revolutions and world wars shaping these ethnic heritages and the national level role of the Museum in active outreach to the many scatter Czech and Slovak communities in the Midwest and American.

Eileen Tlusty, director of the Family History and Documentation Center, Czech Heritage Partnership, Protivin, Iowa, spoke to the role of the CHP in preserving their cultural heritage with "Masopust, music concerts, language classes and immersion travel" on the Czech homeland. Eileen also emphasized the importance of the family history document center in preserving family ties in America and across the ocean.

Connie Koshatka, the head of the Czech Days Fest in Protivin, gave an overview of "40 Years of Czech Heritage Celebratio." This is a major grass roots effort by the Czech community to preserve and celebrate cultural heritage with music, dance, food and sports. The annual event draws thousands from across Iowa and the Midwest.

### **The Swedish Experience**

Louise Unkrich, the director of the Swedish American Museum and Historical Society in Swedesburg, Iowa, presented on "Swedes in Swedesburg: How We Did It." This small community has created a very high-quality ethnic heritage museum that fosters community spirit and awareness with a first-rate coffee shop and book shop in its midst. This critical mass of community minded persons is essential to the enterprise, plus close access to the local well-travelled highway really helps.

## Afternoon Keynote Address: The Lakota Nation Experience



Ashley Pourier, curator of the Cultural Heritage Center and Museum at the Red Cloud Indian School, Pine Ridge, South Dakota, spoke eloquently to the “The Lakota Nation: Preserving and Celebrating Our Cultural Heritage.” Ashley provided an overview of the century long effort by Red Cloud Indian School to collect, preserve and share their rich cultural heritage of artifacts and arts. Ashley plays a lead role in the rapidly growing annual Red Cloud Art Exhibit that showcases young Native American artists. This show attracts art museums and collectors from across the Nation.

## German Heritage and Language Experiences

Kelly Lao, the executive director of the German American Heritage Center and Museum, Davenport, Iowa, addressed “Highlights in Preserving and Celebrating German Cultural Heritage.” Kelly stressed the importance of active community and business involvement in the growth of a museum enterprise, the creative use of museum programs as outreach into an urban community and the focus of the museum as a touch stone for German heritage minded folks. Russell Baldner, a German linguist and historian associated with the German American Museum in St. Lucas, Iowa, delivered a compelling account of “The War Within: World War I and the Assault on German Identity in Iowa.” When America entered World War I, Russ recalled the rising anti-German sentiment and the devastating proclamation by the Iowa Governor on the German communities in Iowa, requiring only English in public addresses, churches and schools. In response, Baldner’s home congregation, St. Peter Lutheran, gave up the use of its church and moved Gottesdienst, German worship services, a few miles north into Minnesota. Although the anti-German hysteria had a lasting effect on German communities and their schools, the Supreme Court later ruled such language restrictions to be unconstitutional.

## The Norwegian Experience

Jennifer Kovarik, registrar and head of youth education at Vesterheim National Norwegian American Museum, Decorah, Iowa, presented on “All Tradition is Change: Challenges and Opportunities for Preserving and Sharing Norwegian-American History and Culture.” Jennifer noted the wide range of arts, crafts and language outreach programs for youths and adults, provided by Vesterheim to awaken and maintain the Norwegian cultural heritage in the Driftless Area. These outreach programs are as vital as the mission of the Museum as its many outstanding exhibits and collections.

Mildred (Midge) Kjome, president of the Decorah Genealogy Society, spoke to “Destination Decorah: The Norwegians Come to Town”. Midge highlighted the 4 decades of the Nordic Dancers as a major community effort in preserving and honoring their cultural heritage. Midge also stressed the importance of the annual Nordic Fest as a community event of 50 years and its wide impact on the entire Driftless Area, and especially name recognition for Decorah.

## The Polish Experience



Fr. Paul Breza, director of the Polish Cultural Institute and Museum in Winona, Minnesota, spoke to “Establishing a Cultural Center and Museum: Trials and Errors.” Father Breza in an entertaining manner, shared the story of establishing the cultural institute as a means to help the Polish community develop a more positive attitude of their heritage and themselves. This 4-decade long effort has led to a very fine ethnic heritage museum and the flourishing of Polish community spirit, not only in Winona, but among persons of Polish heritage throughout the tri-state area. The annual Apple Festival draws huge crowds tasting traditional Polish food, craft persons demonstrating traditional skills and Polish dance, band and song groups. An amazing accomplishment demonstrating the power of one individual in changing perceptions of self and community.

## German Iowa and the Global Midwest Exhibit

The University of Iowa exhibit came to the German American Museum for the workshop and stayed through September. The large exhibit display panels covered: coming to Iowa, the welkommen decades-1850s to 1910s; one language-many identities; working for a living; community life; German Iowa in crisis-the years of neutrality; German Iowa in crisis-the World War I years; brewing, prohibition and politics; new footing-continuing connections; the economic and political crisis of the 1930s, World War II and its aftermath; the story continues. The exhibit was well received by the Workshop participants and many visitors in the following months.

**WORKSHOP 2020 -**  
**"PRESERVING AND CELEBRATING GERMAN CULTURAL HERITAGES IN THE MIDWEST"**

The Workshop will be held on Wednesday, June 17, 2020, at the German American Museum, St. Lucas, Iowa. Please mark your calendar now.

We are focusing on German heritage and language groups including Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium, South Tirol (Italy), Austria, Switzerland, Alsace (France), Czechoslovakia and Russia.

We are inviting a number of historical and culturally focused German heritage groups in Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and Wisconsin, to participate in the workshop. Many historical German-speaking areas of Europe are represented in the American Midwest.

We also intend to have sessions on family genealogy research and writing family histories. We may ask some individuals to highlight their experiences in preparing a family history. Some possible family histories may include: Schaufenbuel, Baldner, Wurzer, Langreck and others.

Please consider participating or attending this exciting workshop on different German cultural heritage experiences in the heartland. Consider volunteering to help prepare and deliver the program.



German American Museum, Library and Family History Center

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