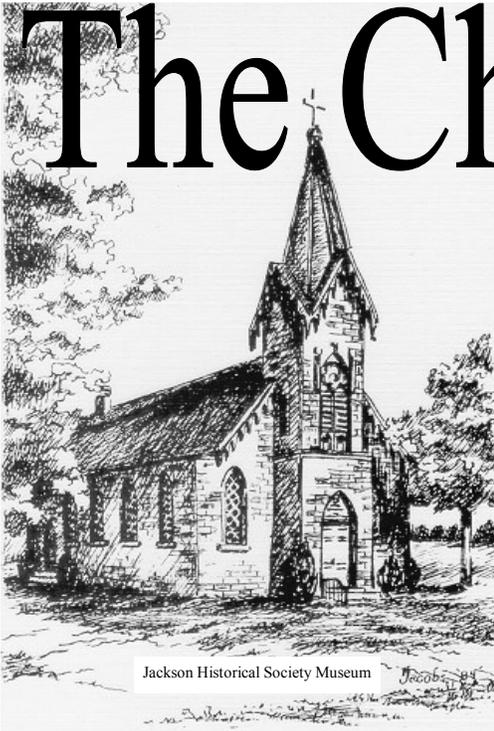




The Church Mouse

Volume 21 Issue 1 Jackson Historical Society February 2016



Jackson Historical Society Museum

IMMIGRANTS AND THEIR MONEY

During the 1800's when many immigrants arrived in the United States, they paid for their passage in their own currency. The Pomeranians who arrived in Jackson in the mid 1800's brought with them the money they had accumulated in their home country from earnings and the sale of their property prior to emigrating. As the value of world coinage was generally based on gold and silver content, the Pomeranians brought with them Prussian gold and silver *Thalers* and smaller coins called *Groschen* or *Pfennigs*. Many of the transactions these "new" Americans made were carried on using these familiar coins. However, foreign coins were also circulating in America due to the lack of a robust supply of American money.

In 1792, the Congress of the United States passed legislation establishing the U. S. Mint in Philadelphia, and in 1794 began to produce a series of coins. The Half Cent and the One Cent were copper; while the half disme (dime) and the disme (dime), the quarter, the half dollar and the dollar were all silver. Other coins included the \$2.50 Gold Quarter Eagle, the \$5.00 Gold Half Eagle, and the \$10.00 Gold Eagle. As America established its currency, many silver and gold foreign coins continued circulating in the United States based on their value in gold or silver.

For years, the Spanish silver dollar was as common a currency in the U.S. as our own and circulated along side our own silver dollar. In our area, many purchases, including land, were made based on the value of the Prussian gold or silver *Thalers* the immigrants brought with them. And so it continued for years.



U.S. Dollar



Spanish Pillar Dollar



German Silver Thaler

In 1843, a large contingent of Pomeranian immigrants arrived in Jackson bringing with them their Pastor and Teacher. During the long voyage, much of their money was carried in a wooden chest under the control of Johann Kressin. The chest is on display in our museum. The group settled in Kirchhayn. With their *Thalers*, they purchased and cleared land for farming and established David's Star Lutheran Church. Other immigrants settling in Jackson included Irish, Yankees from the eastern part of the United States, and a few other nationalities. When Jackson was incorporated as a Town in 1846, names such as Devereau, Kinney, and McDonald, along with many families of German descent reflected the mix of immigrants settling in Jackson and the mix of currencies being used.

And so it went for many years, with foreign gold and silver coins circulating alongside American money until replaced by our own currency.

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MEMBERSHIP DUES

Your annual **\$15** dues cover a calendar year starting in **January**. The current year for your membership is shown on The Church Mouse address label to the right of the zip code.

Your dues include a subscription to the Church Mouse and help us preserve Jackson history.

JHS MEETINGS TIMES

The Jackson Historical Society meets the 2nd Monday of every other month, Jan/Mar/May/Jul/Sep/Nov, at 7:00pm.

JHS meetings are held at 1860 Mill Road, Jackson, in our restored, Karl Groth log home. Visitors are welcome.

JHS OFFICERS

Royal Natzke—President
Jerry Prochnow—Vice President
Lenore Kloehn—Treasurer
Jim Kliese—Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS

JHS Officers, Russ Hanson, Elmer Kloehn, and Rob Mielke



WHEN GANGSTERS ROAMED WISCONSIN

APRIL "FREE" PROGRAM

Chad Lewis on Thursday, April 7th, at 7:00pm takes you back into Wisconsin in the 1920's and 1930's when Chicago gangsters "hid out" up north when things got too hot down south.

LITTLE BOHEMIA



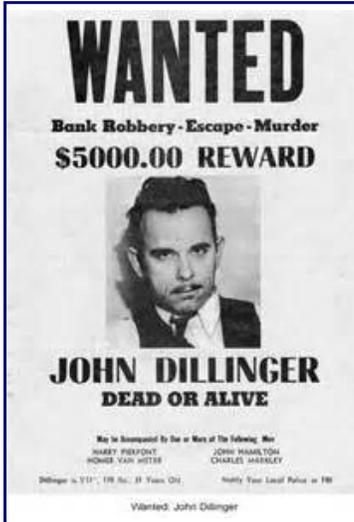
John Dillinger along with Baby Face Nelson and various other gang members and girl friends arrived at the Little Bohemia Resort on April 20th, 1934. All was peaceful until Sunday evening, the 22nd. Unbeknownst to the Dillinger gang, word had been sent to the FBI that the gang was staying at the resort. FBI agents from Chicago and St. Paul arrived at Little Bohemia on Sunday evening just as the last of the regular dinner guests were leaving.

For the rest of the story, and a look back at the bank robberies, murders, kidnappings, and shootouts, that make up Wisconsin's gangster past, put on your zoot suit and follow in the footsteps of America's most infamous gangsters as they turned Wisconsin into their own criminal vacationland.

Join Chad Lewis for this entertaining presentation of the Jackson Historical Society, Thursday evening, April 7th, 7:00pm, in the Jackson Town Hall, upper level. Doors open at 6:30pm.

When Chicago bootleggers and bank robbers were looking to lay low during Prohibition, they headed north to the seclusion of Wisconsin's small towns and backcountry.

Gangsters like Al "Scarface" Capone, "Polack" Joe Saltis, and George "Bugs" Moran turned Wisconsin into their own personal criminal vacationland, entertaining associates in their up-north fortresses while running illegal speakeasies, gambling halls, brothels and bootlegging operations. On any given night, law-abiding Wisconsinites could eat, drink, dance and mingle alongside some of the nation's deadliest criminals.



What: In the 1930s, the bootleggers gave way to the bank robbers. Soon, crooks like George "Baby Face" Nelson, Alvin "Creepy" Karpis, and John Dillinger were frolicking around their Wisconsin playground.

Who: Join Chad Lewis, researcher, author, and lecturer, as he tells the story of the gangster era in Wisconsin.

Where: Jackson Room—upper level
Town Hall—Town of Jackson
3146 Division Road

When: Thursday, the 7th of April 2016, at 7:00pm

Cost: Free

Sponsored by THE JACKSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
***Jackson Town Hall is south of Highway 60 on Division Rd. (CTH. G)**

LAKE COMO HOTEL



It was built in Denmark in the 1880's and transported to Chicago as the Danish Pavilion for the 1893 Columbian Exposition. After the fair the buildings were purchased and transported by rail to its current location on shores of Lake Como.

Christian Hermansen acquired the property in the 1920's and turned it into the Lake Como Hotel. Although it remained a family-friendly lake resort, it was also a favorite getaway for such well-known gangsters as George "Bugs" Moran and Baby Face Nelson, as well as their molls, wives, and members of the John Dillinger gang. The inn's secluded location and the owner's discreet hospitality made it a perfect place to escape the summer "heat," including federal agents. Lake Como is just minutes from the city of Lake Geneva.



BIRTH OF THE DOLLAR

Although silver had been mined in the country for centuries, it was the discovery of a rich vein of silver in Jachymov, a Bohemian village at the head of a steep valley (*thal*) in the Ore Mountains in the western part of what is now the Czech Republic that begins our story.

At the opening of the sixteenth century, Jachymov came under German administration when Bohemia became part of the Holy Roman Empire. Count Hieronymus Schlick and his family ruled the remote area. Rather than mining the silver and selling it to others, Count Schlick secretly began minting silver coins called *groschen*. He apparently made the very first coins in 1519 in his castle, although he did not receive official permission for such minting until 1520.

From the German name of the valley, Joachimsthal, the coins were called *Joachimsthalergulden* or *Joachimsthalergroschen*, names that were too long for daily use even by German speakers. The coins became more widely known as *thalergroschen* and eventually as *thalers*, or *talers*. Because of a good supply of silver in the mines of western Bohemia, the heavy and substantial *thalers* readily increased in number, and with the economic and political connections throughout the Holy Roman Empire, *thalers* spread to all parts of it, including Spain.

In the century between 1519 and 1617, when *thalers* were minted in Jachymov, production began with about 250,000 *thalers* the first year. At maximum production from 1529 to 1545, the mines supplied silver for 5 million *thalers*. It is estimated that by the end of the century, Jachymov had put nearly 12 million *thalers* into circulation.

The coins of Jachymov spread around the world, influencing the names of many different coins. Initially, for example, the *thaler* was a large silver coin worth three German *marks*, but it eventually gave its name to any large silver coin. The word passed into Italian as *tallero*, into Dutch as *daalder*, into Danish and Swedish as *daler*, into Hawaiian as *dala*, into Samoan as *tala*, into Ethiopian as *talari*, and into English as *dollar*.

The most famous and widely circulated of all *thalers* became known as the Maria Theresa *thaler*, struck in honor of the Austrian empress at the Gunzburg Mine in 1773. The coin bearing the portrait of Maria Theresa became so popular, especially in North Africa and the Middle East, that even after she died, the government continued to mint it with the date 1780, the year of her death. The Maria Theresa *thaler* continued to be minted until 1937. Numismatic historians estimate that a total of 800 million silver Maria Theresa *thalers* were struck between 1780 and 1975, all bearing the date 1780!

The name *dollar* came to the English language via Scotland. Be-

tween 1567 and 1571, King James VI issued a thirty-shilling piece that the Scots called the *sword dollar*.



The Scots used the name *dollar* to distinguish their currency, and thereby the country and themselves, more clearly from their domineering English neighbors to the south. Thus from the beginning, the name *dollar* carried with it a certain anti-English bias that many Scottish settlers took with them to their new homes in the Americas and other British colonies. The emigration of Scots accounts for much of the subsequent popularity of the word *dollar* in British colonies around the world.

In 1695, Britain did not permit the exportation of gold or silver coins to anywhere in the world, including their own colonies. They wanted to increase the supply of gold and silver money in Britain. This forced the American colonies to use foreign silver coins rather than British pounds, shillings, and pence. The Americans found the greatest supply of coins in the neighboring Spanish colony of Mexico, which operated one of the world's largest mints.

Because of the great wealth produced in Mexico and Peru, Spanish coins became the most commonly accepted currency in the world. Although called a *Peso*, the Americans preferred the already familiar word *dollar*.

Despite the widespread use of the *thaler* or *dollar* from the 16th

(Dollar continued on page 4)





“SHAVE AND A HAIRCUT TWO-BITS”

Toward the end of the 1800’s, a seven note “riff” or “lick” was added to the last song that closed a performance. Those seven notes passed into American folklore. In music, the call **"Shave and a Haircut"** and the associated response **"two bits"** is the simple, 7-note musical riff often used to end a musical performance. However, it took on a life of its own and has returned in many forms, from car horns to door knocks to cartoons. What may not be known is that the “two-bits” part came from the history of American coinage.

After the passing of the coinage act in 1792, the American



silver dollar coin and Spanish silver dollar

coin circulated side-by-side in the United States. The American silver dollar was divided into 10 parts, dimes, while the Spanish dollar was divided into eight parts called *Reals*, which were referred to as bits.

Each bit was worth 12 1/2 cents when compared to the American dollar. So, two-bits became folklore for an American quarter dollar. Of course, we then added four-bits for a half dollar, six-bits for seventy five cents, and eight-bits for a dollar, often referred to as a “buck,.” and that leads to more American coinage folklore.



When trading with Indian tribes, the item often offered in payment was a tanned deer hide. The traders would offer their manufactured goods for so many buckskins, later shortened to “bucks”,

which some folks believe became folklore for a dollar. The axe will cost you two “bucks.”

While we’re on the subject of bucks, a \$10 bill was often referred to as a “sawbuck” because that’s what the Roman numeral X on an early version looked like.



It has been suggested that the American dollar sign, “\$”, was adopted from the Spanish Pillar Dollar because the ribbon wrapped around the pillars is shaped like the letter S.



The language of money in American folklore is interesting and worth a look back. History provides the opportunity.

(Immigrants continued from page 1)

The Coinage Act of 1857 passed by Congress forbade the use of foreign coins as legal tender and repealed all acts authorizing the currency of foreign gold or silver coins. Certain foreign coins were accepted by the Treasury to be melted down and re-minted as U.S. coins. However, some foreign coins continued to be used in rural areas of the United States, although the 1857 Coinage Act effectively brought to an end the use of foreign coins in the United States.

ONE-ROOM SCHOOL VISIT

Plan a class field trip to the Jackson Historical Society’s restored one-room schoolhouse this spring. Teacher led classroom experience. Reservations being accepted now.

Please contact Royal Natzke at

(Dollar continued from page 3)

century onward, no major country adopted it as its *official* currency until the formation of the United States. The currency act of 1793 passed by the congress, established the dollar as the official currency of the United States. Production of United States coins began in 1794.



1804 Silver Dollar

In the 1800’s, the continued use of Spanish, Mexican, and American *dollars* spread north into Canada, where because of popular usage, the *dollar* became the official currency of the Dominion of Canada in 1858.

In the Pacific Basin the Spanish and Mexican *dollars* became so closely associated with commerce that in the Nineteenth century, other countries began minting their own coins, which were known as “*trade dollars*.” By 1873, the U.S. issued special *trade dollars* for American commerce with China and other Asian nations. The use of *trade dollars* in the Pacific area solidified the word *dollar* throughout the region, and aided the adoption of the name *dollar* for the currency of many Pacific nations.

And so, from the minting of the first *Joachimsthalergroschen* in 1519, with its name shortened through popular usage to *Thaler*, it spread throughout the Holy Roman Empire and eventually around the world with many nations including the United States basing their currency on the name *dollar*.

Much material for these articles on money was sourced from the internet, journals, and from an excellent book, *The History of Money* by Jack Weatherford. This book should be on everyone’s reading list.

rdnatzke@yahoo.com or the society
at jhsheritage@sbcglobal.net
Jackson Historical Society
1860 Mill Rd.
Town of Jackson, WI



JACKSON HARDWARE HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

In 1872, the railroad rolled into the small hamlet of Reisville and began the change of a wide spot on a gravel road into the Village of Jackson. Although only one of a number of hamlets in the Town of Jackson, it grew where the others faded.

It began with a large general store, saloon, and elevator, built by Franz Reis for whom Reisville was named. Later a second elevator was built and before long the community had two blacksmith shops, a carpenter shop, a number of stone homes, a hotel, and a hardware store.



Reis General Store and Saloon

In the early 1880's, George Jenner bought a piece of land from Jacob Klumb and began the hardware store. George Jenner and his wife Mary eventually sold the business to Philip and John Roll.

Julius and Louis Kannenberg acquired the business about 1913, and in 1915 sold it to Gustav Schoessow and Henry Liesener. Alfred and Herbert Liesener and their father, Henry, incorporated Liesener Hardware in 1916. In the 1940's the Lieseners employed 22 men and had ten trucks do-



Kannenberg Hardware Store



Liesener Hardware Crew Preparing to Leave for a Day's Work in 1938

ing plumbing, tinning and heating work in the community.

In 1946, when brothers Chester and Alfred Rheingans began operating the business as Rheingans Hardware, they bought additional land from the Lieseners to enlarge the store and add storage sheds. In addition to the hardware and plumbing and heating services, Rheingans sold paint, household products and small lawn and garden equipment. Among Rheingans employees were Gene Weinand, Marv Race, and Clarence Kurz. The store was located on Highway 60, Main St., in the Village of

(Hardware continued on page 6)

JHS DISPLAY AT WEST BEND LIBRARY

World War II has ended and life is normal again. More and more items are reappearing on store shelves.

It's Christmas time and the Gierachs wanted to get their 10 year old son, Kenny, something special for Christmas, something nice to put under the Christmas tree.

They discovered just the toy. It was a Keystone Service Station, made in Boston, MA, and sold by the Frankfurth Hardware Co., Milwaukee. It was the deluxe model and it cost \$7.95. So, they ordered it and had it shipped to West Bend in time for Christmas.

This really was deluxe as it came with working doors, lifts and elevators, a car wash with water spray, gas pumps, and Packard cars with hoods that open.

Christmas 1948 was enjoyed by all, particularly Kenny.



Keystone Manufacturing Co. made everything from doll houses, to steel "RIDE 'EM" toy cars and trucks, to wooden boats, to cameras and projectors, and of course Masonite and teak model service stations of the kind Kenny got for Christmas in 1948.

Come visit Kenny's Keystone Service Station display at the West Bend Community Memorial Library. He'd like that.

AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETIES EVENTS

RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY February 21st, Antique Appraisal and Chili Lunch. March 26th, Maple Syrup Family Day. Mark your calendar. Please Contact www.richfieldhistoricalsociety.org for more information on events and meetings.

GERMANTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY Please contact the Germantown Historical Society at germantownhistoricalsociety.org for more information.

POMMERSCHER VEREIN FREISTADT For information and events, Contact—pommscher.org

WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY March 9th, and April 6th, Knit-In. March 1st, Show 'N Tell with Mike Paul, April 7th, The Road is Crooked: Bones, Names, & the Search for Chief Kewaskum. at www.historyisfun.com. Click EVENTS for more information and other events.



The Editor welcomes comments on the newsletter. Please mail all suggestions for articles, etc., to The Church Mouse, 1921 State Road 60, Jackson, WI 53037, or phone (262) 677-3888, or e-mail jhsheritage@sbcglobal.net. Russ Hanson, Editor

(Hardware continued from page 5)

Jackson, on land originally home-steaded by William Reynolds. Today, the old hardware store is the Royal Oak Antiques store.

In 1976, Rheingans Hardware was sold to Eldred and Marylyn Gierach, and was renamed Jackson Hardware, Inc. They moved the operations to a new location on Industrial Drive and continued to operate the hardware store and the plumbing, heating and air conditioning business from that location.

In 1989, the Gierachs sold the hardware part of Jackson Hardware, Inc. to Gerald Boldt who operated it as Jackson "Do It Best" Hardware on Industrial Drive.

Jackson Hardware Heating and Air Conditioning, Inc., was purchased by Gary Wedeward and moved to its current location on Highway P, just south of the village. Gary, with help from his father, operates the business.



So, the business begun in the early 1880's continues in Jackson today.

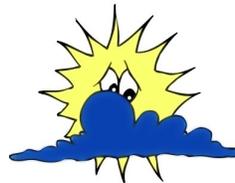
SPRING IS COMING Really!

Winter still has a pretty good grip on us. It's still snowing and blowing and the thermometer



seems to prefer 20 degrees to 70. The sun only peeks out now and then. But,

stay positive. It won't be long before winter's icy grip will loosen,



and the sun will revisit us and help melt winter's excesses. It won't be too many more weeks before the spring flowers begin to



peek out of the ground. Then, just as we begin to sit back and relax, and enjoy the new life blossoming around us, we realize it is **SPRING CLEANING** time. Its time to spruce up the place and get rid of all the stuff we don't need. Now, instead of just disposing of all that stuff, consider donating the good stuff you no longer need to the Jackson Historical Society for our

Silent Auction at this September's Raspberry Festival. We'll be happy to accept it from you and store it until then. All money raised at the silent auction goes to help maintain and improve our society. So, if you have items to donate to the Jackson Historical Society this spring, please give Lenore Kloehn a call at (262) 377-2142 and she will arrange to accept your donations. Or, you can send an e-mail to the society at jhsheritage@sbcglobal.net. Thanks for your support.



OLD BECOMES NEW

Historic Home to Become Coffeerville Coffee House

Valentine Koenig and his family arrived in Jackson in 1848, bought 40 acres on what is now the south side of East Main St., began farming and built their home. The farm was passed on to their son George, then to his son, Valentine, to Valentine's daughter, Marie, and eventually to a niece, Ruth Metzko.

Jack Kulwikowski purchased the historic home and is incorporating it into an historic log coffee house and kitchen.. Grand opening is expected in April 2016.

Thanks to Jack's interest in preserving Jackson's history, the old Koenig/Metzko farm home is to become new again. Thanks, Jack.