



May 2018

# WARREN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Box 256 Indianola, IA 50125

Phone-515-961-8085

(Highway 92 West, 1400 West 2nd, turn north into fair grounds, then turn east)

E-mail- [contact@warrencountyhistory.org](mailto:contact@warrencountyhistory.org)

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### WCBS MEETING

**7:00 pm**

**May 22**

**Warren County  
Conservation  
Our Parks**

### WCBS EXECUTIVE BOARD

**Sat. at 9:30**

**June 9th**

### LCD COMMITTEE-

**Sat. at 10:30**

**June 9th**

### WCBS MEETING

**Tues. 7:00 pm**

**June 26**

**1980-1990s Video  
Memories from  
George Hladky's  
Cable TV  
David Kragkow**

### WCBS EXECUTIVE BOARD

**Sat. at 9:30**

**July 14th**

### LCD COMMITTEE

**Sat. at 10:30**

**July 14th**

**No WCBS General  
Meeting Due to War-  
ren County Fair**

## May 20th GENERAL MEETING



Come out to the museum on Tuesday May 22nd at 7:00 pm to learn about our Warren County Conservation Board and their plans for this summer. The Warren County Conservation Board manages 2, 200 acres of land in Warren County. Join us to learn about the Priscilla Gaumer Butterfly and Pollinator Exhibit.

Please continue to collect Indianola HYVEE receipts and bring them in to the museum. We have a large glass container near the kitchen where you can place them. We can use gas, pharmacy, grocery or any other HYVEE receipt. It is an easy way to raise funds for WCBS.



Also we still collect used printer cartridges to return and receive credit to purchase office supplies.

Thank you for remembering us with your HyVee receipts and empty printer cartridges.



Hooray! We received our \$3,363.28 Grant from the Warren County Philanthropic Partnership make repairs on the Carver Building.

Thanks to Deb, Juanita and Ruth for writing our grant application.

Deb Taylor (center of photo) attended and accepted the check for us at the reception in Norwalk.

## 2018 WARREN COUNTY FAIR, July 25-30

The WCBS museum will be open from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm during the Warren County Fair. If you would be willing to spend two hours staffing our museum desk- Call 961-8085 or E-mail [contact@warrencountyhistory.org](mailto:contact@warrencountyhistory.org)





New lift to our basement is installed



New library shelving added



2 new handicapped unisex restrooms

## WHAT'S NEW AT WCHS

Several changes to our main museum have been made in the last few weeks. Remodeling our restrooms, has opened space in our entryway. Dwight has purchased and installed new security cameras. The new lift can take wheel chairs up and down our stairs and also help save our backs by transporting heavy loads. With the new library book shelves we can place additional books in our library.

A special thank you to the Warren County Philanthropic Partnership for providing the \$3,368.26, Matching Funds Grant to help us repair the roof and concrete floor in our Carver Building. Again, we thank our local sponsors Overton Funeral Home, Tru Bank, Peoples Bank, and Warren County Oil. It is so important to stop water damage in our buildings. We are looking forward to the completion of this project.

## Thank You! WARREN COUNTY PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERSHIP

Two times this past week we have had heavy rains that have caused our museum roof to leak in the library, kitchen, new bathroom ceiling, 1st floor of the main museum and our main meeting room. Previously, we had patched around some of the roof bolts and last year was a dry year so we did not have roof leaks. Alas, we thought we had solved our problem. Our metal building is almost 40 years old and where the metal is bolted down we are getting leakage during heavy rain. To protect our museum we need to coat our museum roof with the expensive process we are using on the Carver Building. Had we known, we would have delayed other expenditures. Now, we must coat our museum roof, so we are asking for your help. If you are a life member at WCHS, could you send us a donation for the roof? If you have not renewed your annual membership for \$20, could you please send it (membership form on page 8). Or please send a donation to "SAVE OUR ROOF" at WCHS at Box 256, Indianola, IA 50125 **Dig Deep. Can you help?**



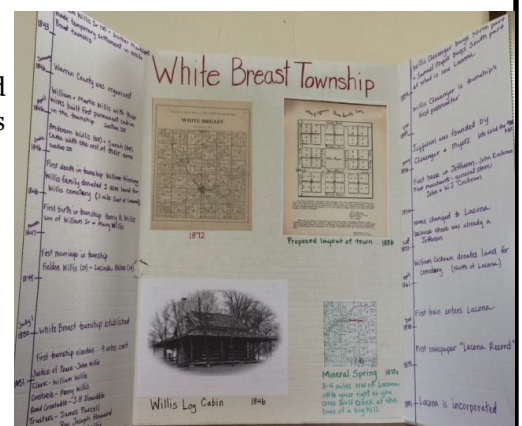
Nancy Dittmer, Jo Harmon, Steve Hall and Lila Konrad. In the background Lyle Goode examines some of the photos made from John Garbison's glass plate negatives.

**White Breast Heritage Society** holds first open house in former Nazarene Church on April 29.

The society has a major project in clearing a space and building displays in the former Nazarene Church in Lacona but its proximity to the Willis Log Cabin and added outdoor space for displays will eventually make it an important part of the township.

The Heritage Society meets in Lacona on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 4:30. Usual meeting place is at the

community center but in good weather it may be at the church. To verify the meeting place and for further information call Nancy Dittmer at 641-891-7551.



A trifold created by Barbara Ripperger and her daughter Renee shows the timeline for the history of White Breast Township.



**Douglas  
Duncan**



**Maria  
DiPalma**



**Robert L.  
Larsen**



**Michael  
Patterson**



**Anne  
Ogan Larson**

## SIMPSON COLLEGE'S MUSICAL IMPACT ON INDIANOLA

### The Des Moines Metro

**Opera Company** was founded by **Robert Larsen** as Artistic Director and **Douglas Duncan** as Managing Director.

In 1988, **Jerilee Mace** succeeded Duncan and became Executive Director, a position she held until 2006. In 2010, Robert L. Larsen retired after having served as conductor and stage director for well over 120 productions for all 38 years of his tenure. He was succeeded by **Michael Egel** as Artistic Director in 2010. **David Neely** was named Music Director and Principal Conductor in 2012. Egel took on the title of General and Artistic Director in 2013.



**Mildred Hult  
married Sven  
V. Lekberg in  
Indianola  
1940**



**Carol  
Stewart**



**Dr. Maria DiPalma** was born in 1950 and received her education and musical training at Temple University, The Curtis School of Music and The Philadelphia Musical Academy. It was there she met **Douglas J. Duncan**. Duncan was born Aug. 2, 1950 in Osage, IA and died Jan. 18, 1988. They were married in Indianola in 1974 where Douglas was teaching voice at Simpson and serving as the Managing Director of the Des Moines Metro Opera.

Maria began teaching voice at Simpson and returned to graduate school at the University of Indiana where she received her MA in Vocal Performance. She served as Chair of the Simpson College Music Department for 14 years. Maria was a long time supporter of the DMMO where she fundraised, sang, served as make-up artist and gracious hostess for countless operatic events.

**Sven Lekberg** was born in Chicago to Swedish parents. His father was a singer and his mother a pianist. Sven received his bachelor's degree from Northwestern and he traveled to Paris to study piano in 1920. He returned to the U.S. and taught at Westmar College in Le Mars, IA. Lekberg then headed the piano department at Ohio University and became chairman of music at Augustana College where he met Mildred. He completed his master's degree in composition from Eastman School of Music and later studied at Columbia Seminary. In 1940 he became chairman of music at Simpson where he composed over 70 pieces of music. In 1940 he married Mildred. Mrs. Lekberg had been music education director at Augustana College before their marriage. Mildred, a soprano, taught voice at Simpson for many years. The Lekbergs were known for their hospitality and invited students to an annual Christmas party and where a newly composed Christmas composition from Sven was shared. These Christmas Carols have been made into a book, with all proceeds going to the Sven and Mildred Lekberg Scholarship.



**The book,  
Lekberg Christ-  
mas Carols can  
be purchased  
from DMMO**



**Lekberg home and Mildred,  
Des Moines Tribune, Feb. 16  
1959**

In 1969 Sven retired after 29 years at Simpson. After retirement, he worked full time on composing. In 1976 Lekberg was named outstanding creative musician by the Iowa Arts Council.

**Robert L. Larsen** is Professor Emeritus of Music, having served as Chairman of the Department of Music for 33 years. He has been on the Simpson faculty since 1957 and teaches Piano, Music History, and Conducting. He founded the college's Madrigal Singers and still assists in the ensemble's direction. Dr. Larsen holds a Bachelor of Music in Piano from Simpson College, a Master of Music in Piano from the University of Michigan and the Doctor of Music with high distinction in the Coaching, Conducting, and Literature of Opera from Indiana University.

He has studied piano with Sven Lekberg (Simpson College), Joseph Brinkman, Eugene Bossart (University of Michigan), Rudolph Ganz and Walter Bricht (Indiana University), and he is well-known as a pianist and coach-accompanist throughout America. He was involved in the leadership training program in stage direction with Boris Goldovsky at

Tanglewood in 1961 and has acted as a coach with Mr. Goldovsky's workshop both there and at Oglebay Park, West Virginia. He has had additional study in vocal and chamber repertory at the University of Edinburgh and the Salzburg Mozarteum.

In addition to his work as an educator, he compiled and edited the Opera Aria Anthology in seven volumes for G. Schirmer, as well as recordings of piano accompaniments of Mozart arias and Joseph Marx songs. He was selected as a recipient of the first Governor's Award in Music, the 1999 Iowa Arts Award presented by the Iowa Arts Council for the State of Iowa, the Orpheus Award from Phi Mu Alpha.

Simpson Professor **Michael Patterson**, Simpson Alumnus, received his Master's Degree in Piano Performance from U. of Iowa and his PhD in Music Education from U. of Oklahoma. Dr. Patterson founded the Simpson College Workshops in Music Education and during summers helped with Simpson's Orpheus Summer Music for High School Students. He has been Des Moines Metro Opera Assistant Director for many years.

An active composer, Michael created the opera, *A Dream Fulfilled: The Saga of George Washington Carver*, for Opera Iowa in 2007. He has written choral works songs and opera, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. Dr. Patterson has received the Iowa Composers Forum and Iowa Choral Directors Association Award as well as Simpson College Distinguished Research Award.

**Carol Stuart Iverson** was born Carol Mae Petersen on May 26, 1933 in Des Moines, IA. She was a graduate of Altoona High School and Simpson College, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Vocal Performance. Carol was well known as a talented soprano, and was instrumental in the founding of Des Moines Metro Opera, along with Simpson College classmate Dr. Robert Larsen.

**Anne Ogan Larson**, a native of Indianola, graduated from Simpson College and joined the Simpson music staff in 1974. She was an Iowa District Metropolitan audition winner and a finalist in the National Federation of Music Clubs competition. She had various roles in Des Moines Metro Opera Productions. Robert Larsen said, "Anne Larsen was a singer who could hold an audience with the wonder of her voice and the sparkle of her stage magic; a teacher of voice practically without peer, and a lady as great as any I shall know."

Anne was married to Bill Larson and have a son, Dave and daughter, Beth.



**Carol Stewart, Robert Larsen, and Anne Ogan Larson** A Duet for *Two Cats*" by Giacchino Rossini at Finale to the 1991 recital at Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa. Carol Stuart and Anne Larsen (Alumni) sing this entertaining and amusing duet with Dr. Robert L. Larsen accompanying. This can be heard at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpa9l4-oJgl&feature=player\\_embedded](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpa9l4-oJgl&feature=player_embedded)

**FROM WCHS ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE:**  
Planned Legacy and Memorial Gifts ensure that your lifetime support and passion for Warren County History will be sustained into the future.

Video Memories From George Hladky's Local TV  
1980s and 1990s  
WCHS General Meeting  
Tuesday, June 26th



7:00 pm

David Kragoskow has been hard at work cataloging and watching the videos from Indianola's local TV station in the 80s and 90s. He will share this trip through memory lane with us. Come and see what David has gleaned from his many hours of research. Maybe you will see yourself in one of George Hladky's many local interviews. Who knows what surprises David has in store for us.



Grinding corn



Austin Freeman in Log Cabin



Museum Hunt



Don Sandy monitoring the two person saw



Quilts



Making rope with Dwight

Bill Larson, One Room School



To our many Pioneer School Volunteers. Without your help and preparation, we could not have four days of 5th Grade Pioneer School for 284 Indianola children.

Have an idea to share for LCD Festival 2018? Want to help plan part of this event? Can volunteer on September 29th or 30th? Want to bake a cake/pie for the auction? Would do calling to get volunteers? If you would like to do any of these tasks or others, join us June 9th at 10:30 for The Sing A Song of Warren County LCD Festival planning session.



## WARREN COUNTY DAREDEVILS



**Jimmy Kolsto** grew-up in Newhall, IA. In 1949 when he graduated from high school, he worked as a welder in Cedar Rapids. He started driving modified stock cars at an area track and since he didn't want his parents to know, he used the stage name 'Jimmy Canton' when he drove.

In 1951 he joined the Joie Chitwood Auto Daredevils for \$45 a week and \$5 for each show. He was recruited after one day on the job to do the "slide for life", where the stuntman lowers himself off the back of a speeding car and slides on his posterior through a circle of flaming gasoline. "You had the leather pad you slid on, gloves, coveralls and a helmet," he recalls. "You slid through the fire so fast you barely felt it. The trick was to keep your hands and legs up and just slide on your fanny till you stopped. The last show of the year the crew would hide the leather pad and you would want to roll instead of slide."

Canton also specialized in motorcycle stunts. "I usually jumped a 300 pound BSA 350 Scrambler with maybe 3 or 4 inches of suspension travel, and both the take-off and landing ramps were two feet wide over 3 or 4 cars," said Canton. "The guys used to tease me that I was showing off twisting the handlebars and my body in the air, but I wasn't. I was manhandling the bike so I'd hit that narrow little landing ramp." He also was part of the four-car precision "hell-driving" team driving up to 90 mph only inches from the other 3 cars. The other thing he did was drive on two wheels for up to 300 yards.



**James Kolsto**  
(Feb. 1, 1932-  
April 20,  
2018)

Jimmy lived in Indianola with his wife, Shirley and daughters, Kelley (Dave) Weihs, Kindra (Norm) Olson, and Kerri (Ben) Clark. He was on the thrill-show tour for six months but came home in the winter to spend time with his family. When in Indianola, he worked at Chumbley's. **Source: Bill Maurer, Des Moines Register, June 10, 1973**



**Leo E. Overland** was born in Minot, ND. He served in WW II and married Harriet Hartzler from Indianola in 1946. Harriet's father was in the sound amplifier business so Leo first met Harriet in Chicago at a convention.



**Auto Polo**

As a boy he loved fairs, first the horses and then chariot races. In the mid 1930s he and a friend sold pony rides at fairs and carnivals. Never a "daredevil" driver himself, he started being mallet-man for automobile polo. Then he switched to announcing and finally to thrill show management. He managed thrill shows for Jim Lynch's Death Dodgers, Joie Chitwood Auto Daredevils and eventually owned Trans World Daredevils with Al Gross. **Source: Nov. 22, 1964, Des Moines Register**

Safety was very important in the thrill car business. Drivers used safety belts during trick driving.

"Stunt car driving was safer than car racing, said Overland. "Car racers take more chances because they are competing; we use more control and speed regulation. Our men are trained in precision and teamwork. Our aim is to put on a show in a sportsmanship manner." From Jane Boulward, June 11, 1953, *Des Moines Tribune*

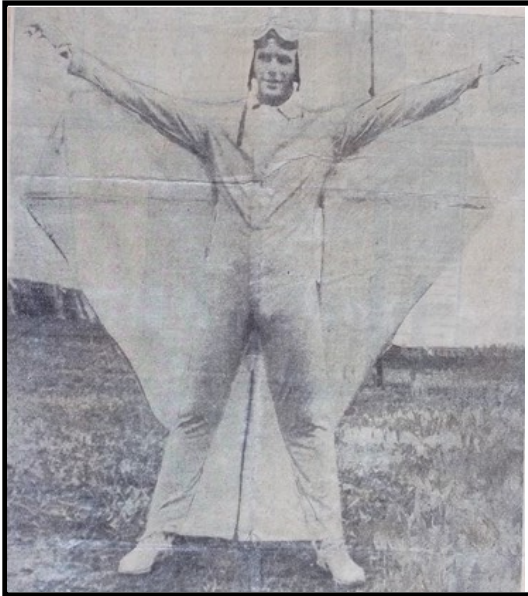
He toured through the country in the summer through September. In the winter he was back in Indianola scheduling next summer's events. In later life he worked for Staats Company in Mt. Pleasant. Staats has been a supplier of ideas and custom items in the awards and recognition industry for fairs, festivals and ag shows since 1898. He was also active in the Midwest Showmen's Association. **Source: WCHS Obituary**



**Leo E. Overland**  
March 22, 1916-Nov. 12,  
1983

## Wingsuits and Pioneers who Flew

On February 27, 1935, a 24-year-old daredevil named Clem Sohn stood in a plane 12,000 feet above Daytona Beach with a harness to his body, one that connected a metal bar across his chest to several feet of a canvas material that flowed behind his waist. He wore two parachutes. Before jumping, Sohn put on goggles that resembled a scuba mask. He raised his arms to his sides, which lifted and straightened the canvas into what looked like wings. This caused him to be called a human bird or batman. Within a few months young male skydivers across the country were trying to improve upon Sohn's stunt. The press called them "Bat Men."



**Caraway in costume before his fatal plunge**

leaping instead of the 6,000 feet which was the altitude attained this day.

Kenny explained that "chute" men count as they start their descent, while they count they ordinarily drop 9,000 feet, depending on atmospheric conditions. Perhaps Caraway forgot that today's plane was only flying at 6,000 feet instead of 12,000. You jump first, using only the batwings and later pull the parachute ripcord. Jimmie pulled the cord too late and plummeted to the ground to his death. He had been bat-flying for less than three years and is buried in the Indianola Odd Fellows Cemetery. Information from Don Sandy and WCHS obituaries.

### U-Tube Interview at last week's Knoxville race



Haase took up her racing hobby at the age of 12 in an outlaw sprint kart, then upgraded to the more muscular sprint model during her junior year of high school. She made national headlines when, as a high school senior, she became the first female sprint car driver to win a feature race in the 114-year history of Knoxville Raceway.

Last week on May 12, 2018 McKenna rocketed out from her pole position start to lead the 18 lap 360 feature at Knoxville Raceway. She cruised to win in an 18 lap record of 5:01.3 (breaking the five-year-old 5:09.0 mark of Joe Beaver). McKenna, the first female to win a sprint car feature here in the 305's (3 times), has now added a popular 360 win to her resume. **Source:** <http://www.heartlandmotorsports.com/mckenna-haase-first-female-to-win-360-feature/>

of DC Comics Batman used a wingsuit pioneer for his first batman designs. April 25, 1937 in Vincennes, France Sohn died jumping. **From:** [www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2014/06/the-original-batman/372100/](http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2014/06/the-original-batman/372100/)

**James J. Caraway** was born on a farm near Indianola in 1915 to T. Jeffery and Ada Caraway. He graduated from high school and joined the U.S. Navy. In 1935 returned to Indianola from his enlistment and began his aerial stunt flying at the Warren County Fair. His stage name was "Jimmy Jeffery". He toured with the Hollywood Daredevils as their batman after Clem Sohn's death.

During Jimmie Caraway's 23rd leap on August 30, 1938 in Fargo, ND at the Red River Valley Fair, something went wrong. Kenny McCord, show owner/manager and the only person who had flown the plane for Jimmie's jumps, had been injured and was in the hospital. McCord stated that Jimmie had been going up to an altitude of 12,000 feet before



July 1, 1857, The name of a new town in the southeastern part of the county was changed from Jefferson to Lacona

July 1, 1935, E.H. Felton, who has been a member of the Board of Control of State Institutions for four years became its chairman. The board is in charge of all state penal institutions, the hospitals for the mentally ill and the schools for the blind and the deaf.

July 1-4 1951, The city of Carlisle celebrated its centennial. One of the important events of the celebration was the crowning of Miss Norma Hooper as Centennial Queen by Warren County Governor William S. Beardsley.

July 2, 1917, The Warren County Board of Supervisors for the 1t time in its history applied for federal aid in the construction of roads and highways in Warren County.

July 2, 1935, A thousand feet of track on the Burlington Railroad at Norwalk was washed out by a flood. North River was all over the bottoms, as a result of the torrential rains in the western part of Warren County.

July 3, 1891, Alf W. Perrine began publication of the *Warren County Record*. He started the paper with an old printing outfit that had been stored under John Wells' second hand store. This outfit included a pony cylinder press, a "shirrtail full" of type, a stone and a table or two.

July 5, 1938, The Warren County Board of Supervisors accepted the offer of a PWA project allotment to help in the construction of a new courthouse for Warren County. The grant was not to exceed \$65,250.00 or 45 % of the cost of the project.

July 29, 1947, Some fifty people from Warren County attended the premiere of the motion picture "Rural Women" at Ames. The picture which was filmed in Warren County was made for the American State Department to show the development and achievements of farm women's organizations in the United States.

1945, Mrs. Fred Peck, Mrs. E.A. Fullgrabe, & Miss Mildred Edwards of Indianola have red faces for unwittingly they stole a dog. They were driving 8 miles from Indianola when they spied a dog, which they thought belonged to Prof. Sven Lekberg. Mrs. Peck called, "Come Lonie," and the dog rushed to the car & acted pleased that he was homeward bound.



### Grin big with a WCHS Annual Membership

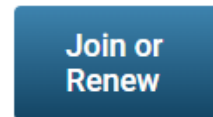
I would like to receive the WCHS Newsletter by E-mail

Membership is -

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- Renewal
- Gift

**Send \$20.00 & form to:**

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Box 256  
Indianola, IA**



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