



# Families of Couillardville

*Merry Christmas*

**Togetherness Helpfulness Friendliness**  
*It is about the people!*

Fifteenth Edition—Fall 2017

Price \$1.00

## Machine Shed Reunion 15



*Thanks Lynnee for the beautiful decorations, to your team for the perfect arrangements, and to the Couillardville bakers for the amazingly DELICIOUS pies!!!*

PIE & ICE CREAM SOCIAL  
and  
"SQUARE DANCE"  
COUILLARDVILLE  
FRIDAY EVENING Aug 25  
7-9 pm  
Square Dancer Caller - Mark Seaman  
Families of Couillardville - 2017



*Thanks Mark Seaman for MAKING OUR DAY!!!*

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Thanks!!!  
Photographs  
By  
Nick Jevne

*We Remember  
We Celebrate  
We Believe!!*

### Great News! Mark Your Calendar

**Mark Seaman** has agreed to return to Couillardville and headline another

***Ice Cream Social and Square Dance***  
**Friday Evening August 24th, 2018.**

***Machine Shed Reunion 16***  
**Saturday, August 25th, 2018**

At Meadow Brook Farm

# Threshing event stirs memories of yesteryear



**During the months of August and September, enthusiasts across Wisconsin get out their antique threshing machines to re-enact one of the great rural Wisconsin traditions—threshing.**

On Aug 26, the families of Couillardville, a small rural community a few miles west of Oconto, gathered at their 15th annual Machine Shed Reunion at Meadow Brook Farm to celebrate the long history of their farm culture.

A special attraction this year was an actual threshing demonstration done just the way it was in the days before the advent of the modern combine.

The story began last year when I started searching for a Belle City threshing machine similar to the one operated in our area in the 1940s and early 1950s by former neighbor and dairy farmer Norb Carey. Eventually, I connected with Bob Accola of Mondovi who was willing to part with his Belle City machine and his McCormick-Deering grain binder. As Accolas said at the time “After many years of threshing, my crew was just getting

too old to continue his work.”

In anticipation of the threshing demonstrations, one of our Couillardville neighbors, Mike Donlevy, took on the task of working the field and planting the necessary oats. When it came time to cut the oats, Carey’s son, Ron, who bought the family farm, ran the grain binder while a group of neighbors and friends, old and young alike, pitched in to shock the oats.

Volunteers also helped load the dried bundles on to the wagons for storage until threshing day. Dick and Joe Konkol, Jack Debauche, Bill Funk and Tom Kussow brought their enthusiasm and energy to the process from the early planning to the harvest.

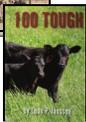
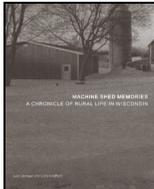
On threshing day, following a noon “dinner” prepared by all of the families attending, Lyle Nichols supplied the power for the threshing machine with his Farmall M, the same model use by Norb Carey in the later years

grabbed a pitchfork or helped in other ways, reminding themselves of their family’s connection to the threshing tradition.

Unfortunately , the otherwise successful demonstration was shortened when rain came before all of the oats were threshed.

So why is this particular rural farm event so remembered and talked about? Perhaps because it marked the end of an era of neighbors helping neighbors, a time during which a special culture was formed in rural crossroad communities across the state. This era began in the 1850s with the establishment of the farming communities by immigrants from many countries and cultures. They typically had a church, a one room school, a store, a cheese factory and many had a tavern. The era ended in the 1950s, in part driven by the combine replacing the threshing machine.

(Continued page 4)



**Books about the families of Couillardville make great gifts!**

Help family and friends remember the people who made their growing up years special.

Available at

Roberts Hometown Hardware or  
www.machineshedmemories.com or  
Lulu.com.

## Other Couillardville Books

Available at [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com)  
Search on “Couillardville”

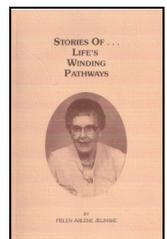
**Printed books available for \$9.95 \***

- Joseph and Julia Jacquart Family
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## Stories of Life’s Winding Pathways

by Helen A. Jelinske

Available on  
[www.machineshedmemories.com](http://www.machineshedmemories.com)



**Merry Christmas**

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## DEDICATION August 26, 2017

### FRIENDS OF COUILLARDVILLE PARK DEDICATE MEMORIAL AND HISTORICAL MARKER IN COUILLARDVILLE PARK

The Families of Couillardville, the farming community on the Oconto River about six miles west of Oconto, gathered on Saturday, August 26, for a special event in “downtown” Couillardville – the dedication of a new memorial and Wisconsin Historical Society marker in Couillardville Park at the corner of County Road J and Funk Road.

The Couillardville Park, established and maintained by the Oconto County Department of Forestry and Parks, has now been enhanced with the installation of a memorial plaza featuring a field of personalized bricks honoring past and current Couillardville families and individuals. The Wisconsin Historical Society has also approved the development and erection of a new historical marker recounting the significance of the area from Paleo-Indian times to the present day. The memorial place, in the shape of an arrowhead, points toward the nearby site where three conical Indian mounds once stood.

The dedication ceremony began with a touching performance by Charlotte Ihde, singer and autoharpist, as well as long-time Couillardville resident, of “We Have This Moment.”

Several featured speakers discussed various facets of the Couillardville story, beginning with Monty Brink, Oconto County Director of Forestry and Parks, who noted the commitment of Oconto County to increase the value and use of its many parks. “I am particularly pleased with this opportunity to enhance the little known Couillardville Park,” he said. In addition, he praised the pursuit of the Wisconsin Historical Society marker and committed his department

to further park improvements in the future.

Diane Nichols, the Oconto County Supervisor from District 10 and a long-time resident of the Couillardville area, said she was confident that the expanded Couillardville Park would serve to recognize the lives of the ordinary citizens of this rural Oconto County crossroads community. She also predicted it would set a precedent for other communities in the county to recognize and memorialize their own past and current residents.

Pete Stark, President of the Oconto County Historical Society, was on hand to provide insights into the early occupations of the area from the original Paleo-Indian residents to the arrival of the first European settlers in 1851. Stark, who was also instrumental in researching the text for the new Wisconsin Historical Society marker, seconded Mrs. Nichols’ prediction that the success of the expanded Couillardville Park would encourage other small rural communities around the County to consider ways to ensure that their own unique histories would be preserved for future generations.

Particularly touching were presentations by two namesake brothers who grew up in Couillardville. Doug Couillard, the youngest of the last family to live in the former Presbyterian Church parsonage, which occupied the site of today’s park, provided a historical overview of the community from its founding by Jacob and Susan Couillard in 1851 to the present day. He also remarked on the many ethnicities and religions that melded into a community that created memories that have flourished for some 160 years.

His older brother, Ken, thanked all the former residents for the incredible support given to his family after his father, Andrew, passed away in 1950. He noted that the later conversion of the Presbyterian Church to the Community Hall really said everything about the spirit of Couillardville: “It was *community!*”

Leon Janssen, the organizer of the park enhancements praised all the individuals and organizations that came together to make the new Couillardville Park possible. **“This memorial is dedicated to the caretakers of the land and spirit of Couillardville who came before us,”** he stated. “This memorial and park are here to serve as an enduring inspiration for the descendants of the early families of Couillardville for generations to come.”

A limited number of locations are still available for new bricks in the memorial. Individuals, families, and organizations interested in adding a personalized brick at Couillardville Park can find ordering instructions at [www.fundraisingbrick.com/couillardville](http://www.fundraisingbrick.com/couillardville).

#### 2018 Prices

4X8 Bricks \$150  
8X8 Bricks \$250  
Sponsors \$500



## Machine Shed Reunion 15



**Ed & Mary Ann Couillard descendants celebrate 125th Anniversary of their arrival at Meadow Brook Farm in 1892.**

L to R below. **Thomas Edwin Couillard** by Paul Janssen, **Mary Ann Matravers Couillard** by Virginia Janssen Trzebiatowski, **Asa Couillard** by Paul Jacobson, **Zora Amber Couillard Laduron** by Amber Runnels and **Nellie Couillard Fox** by Julie Barthels.



Could it be Norb Carey? Great job Dan!



Lyle Nichols & Ruth Thome



Detaeges: Paul, Rita, Michelle, (Mark Seaman) & Trent Miller

Welcome Back Lavin Johnston Frazier



Ken Couillard, Julie & Helen Roznowski, David Matravers



Doug Couillard is teaching...



Parin Schmidt and Lynnee Schmidt Valley lead attendees in the religious hymns of our parents.

### Threshing continued from page 2

Before, threshing required a large crew and everyone depended upon their neighbors to get the grain into the granary.

Threshing also was a community social event. Everyone talks about the great meals served and about the gatherings at the end of the day. Youngsters, boys and girls alike, remembered driving tractor to haul the wagons because they weren't quite big enough to pitch the bundles.

The combine changed all of that by making it possible for individual farmers to independently harvest their own grain. Unfortunately, it also meant they relied less on their neighbors, breaking the long cord of community cooperation that had bound them together for so many decades.

Could it be that we all deep down long for that time of the fun and satisfaction of neighbor helping neighbor? The social time together? The celebration of neighborhood accomplishments?

This story was written by Leon Janssen and published in **The Country Today** newspaper on September 20th, 2017.

**Update or add your email address for electronic updates**

send to [leonpjanssen@yahoo.com](mailto:leonpjanssen@yahoo.com)

## MEMORIALS We Remember

In the past year five dear members of our community have joined the Couillardville Family in heaven. Please remember them and their families.

- ◆ **John Konkel**
- ◆ **Bernard Donlevy**
- ◆ **Pauline Janssen**
- ◆ **Ray Detaege**
- ◆ **Don Glynn**

Flowers were sent for the funerals from the **"Families of Couillardville"** for those individuals who grew up in Couillardville. Thanks for the contributions to these FOC Memorials.