

# Burlington Historian

A quarterly publication of the Burlington Historical Society

232 N. Perkins Blvd, Burlington, WI 53105 [burlingtonhistory.org](http://burlingtonhistory.org) / [burlingtonhistory@core.com](mailto:burlingtonhistory@core.com) March 2004

## Calendar

### March

3 Board Meeting  
7:00 p.m., Museum

17 Genealogical Society Meeting  
7:00 p.m., Museum

### April

7 Board Meeting  
7:00 p.m., Museum

16 & 17 Underground Railroad  
Concert and Quilt Exhibit  
in Racine - see article, p. 3

21 Genealogical Society Meeting  
7:00 p.m., Museum

### May

5 Board Meeting  
7:00 p.m., Museum

26 Genealogical Society Meeting  
7:00 p.m., Museum



Kimberly Simmons (right), GGG Granddaughter of Caroline Quarles, the first "passenger" on the Underground Railroad through Wisconsin, speaks to students at an area school on January 19, 2004. Quarles was sheltered at farms just west of Burlington during her 1843 escape to Canada.

## Descendant of Caroline Quarles Visits Burlington

Kimberly Simmons, great-great-great granddaughter of Caroline Quarles, the first slave to come through Wisconsin on the Underground Railroad in 1842, visited Burlington on Martin Luther King holiday, January 19, 2004.

During her visit, Ms. Simmons, a resident of Detroit, Michigan, spoke to a large group of students at an area school who had recently completed a study of the Underground Railroad. She also visited the Museum as well as a couple of sites near Burlington where Caroline Quarles was hidden.

It was at one of these sites - probably the former Josiah O.

Puffer farm on what is now Highway 11, a short distance west of County Trunk DD - that Dr. Edward Galusha Dyer of Burlington, an ardent abolitionist and Commander-in-Chief of the Underground Railroad in the Burlington area, met Caroline and her "conductor" Lyman Goodnow.

Dr. Dyer then returned to Burlington and gathered a pillow-case full of cakes, pies and cheese to be used on their journey to Detroit, where Caroline crossed into Canada. Dr. Dyer also collected money from his friends and wrote a recommendation - which Goodnow called the best he every read - asking those along the way to assist Quarles and Goodnow.

## Burlington Historical Society Board of Directors

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Kimberly Simmons, great-great-great granddaughter of Caroline Quarles, at former Josiah O. Puffer farm, west of Burlington, where Quarles was sheltered during her 1842 journey on the Underground Railroad.

## President's Message

### Membership Cost Increased

After many years of avoiding the issue, we have found it necessary to raise Society dues. At the same time, we reduced the number of classifications from three to two. General membership has been set at \$10 per year and contributing membership at \$25. Of course, any donation above that amount is greatly appreciated.

Over the years, the cost of operating our museum and fulfilling our Society's mission has become a history lesson in itself. Twenty years ago, for example, our board of directors could not have imagined how technology would improve our ability to provide historical resources to our members and the public.

Check out our website at [burlingtonhistory.org](http://burlingtonhistory.org) and you will get some idea of how far we have come. These advancements, impressive as they are, all come with price tags that surprise no one, including such things as service provider fees, additional telephone cable, software upgrading and associated supplies.

### Volunteer Appreciation Dinner (see page 4)



Enjoying themselves at the Society's annual volunteer appreciation dinner held at Veronica's Italian Cafe on February 8, 2004, are Arlene Hoganson, Barb and Wally Gabriel, and Forest Hoganson. Looking on in the background are Nick King and Dorothy Ide.

In addition, to provide an improved "environment" for our collections, we have upgraded the Museum's heating and ventilating system to include air conditioning.

Your membership dues and contributions, therefore, are vital to allow the Historical Society to continue to be an important asset to our community. Thank you for all your support, past and present!

### The Old Town Cemetery

The Burlington Historical Society will again be coordinating an annual spring cleanup of the pioneer plots located at the far east end of the Burlington Cemetery. The call for volunteers last spring resulted in an overwhelming response with very measurable progress being made. During the summer, Society volunteers periodically mowed the grounds to prevent nature from staging another "take over." Those efforts will make this spring's task easier.

And speaking of that task, our Old Town Cemetery clean-up will be on Saturday, May 1, 2004, from 8 a.m. until about noon.

Volunteers should bring a leaf rake and a pair of gloves to protect the hands. Note: the cemetery does not have any restroom facilities. To have an idea of how many are planning to attend, we would appreciate a call to the museum at 262-767-2884 and leave a message. Media announcements will appear late in April as a reminder.

Readers should understand that there are no funds available at this

time for the Burlington Cemetery Association to maintain the pioneer plots. The Burlington Historical Society has accepted the challenge to restore and maintain the grounds with volunteers. Our goal is to restore with dignity, the memory of those first settlers who came to this territory so long ago. For many of us, the work remains personally rewarding. High school students needing community service hours are welcome again this year.

### Treasures Lost

The Burlington Historical Society's quest to collect and preserve artifacts is a never-ending task. Unfortunately, from time to time we learn of instances where the contents of attics or basements ended up in the trash heap. While some the "stuff" may be real trash, sometimes items of importance get overlooked and are lost forever.

Limitations in storage and display space as well as duplication are reasons the Historical Society must decline some donations. However, other items are always welcome.

For example, artifacts that were manufactured in Burlington in the past are of interest, including any literature or photographs that accompanied them. Family photograph albums often contain views of the city and surrounding areas. Such views are often important to our research and that of others. Keep in mind, photographs can be copied by museum staff with the unharmed originals returned to the owner.

Doug Lind, President

## Underground Railroad Concert and Quilt Show

### Concert - April 16 & 17

A concert of "Spirituals & Stories from the Underground Railroad" will be presented at the First Presbyterian Church at 716 College Avenue in Racine on Friday, April 16, and Saturday, April 17, 2004, at 7:30 p.m. on both days. The tickets, at \$10 each, include admission to a 6 p.m. pre-concert viewing of the Underground Railroad Quilt Code Exhibit at the church and a reception following the concert.

The concert will feature the Caroline Quarles story told by her great-granddaughter, Charlotte Watkins. Caroline left St. Louis, Mo., on July 4, 1842, when she was only 16 years old and, with the help of several people in the Milwaukee, Waukesha, Pewaukee, Spring Prairie, and Burlington area, as well as in Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan, eventually made her way to Canada and freedom.

Ms. Watkins, a piano virtuoso trained at the Julliard School of Music, will be accompanying her daughter (and Caroline Quarles' great-great-granddaughter), singer Heidi Walls, performing spirituals that were sung on the Underground Railroad.

The performance will also include Soprano Janice Bowman accompanied by Tim Johnson, Adrienne and Mark Paffrath on guitar and violin, Michael Cobb and John Garner on African drums and Pat Badger on trumpet.

Jacqueline L. Tobin, author of *Hidden in Plain View*, will also

talk about Ozella McDaniel Williams' family story of a quilt code used to instruct slaves fleeing north toward freedom on the Underground Railroad.

The concert will end with a special candlelight healing



MARIE KINYON (left) AND TESS EISENHAUER OF LIBERTY HOUSE QUILTS DISPLAY THE LIBERTY QUILT THEY HELPED CREATE TO COMMEMORATE BURLINGTON'S 2002 DOWNTOWN HISTORIC WALK. THE QUILT HONORS THE BURLINGTON AREA'S ROLE IN THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD.  
(Ed Nadolski photo)

ceremony performed by Pastor Randy Bush of First Presbyterian Church and Bishop Lawrence Kirby of St. Paul Baptist Church.

Tickets to the concert, at \$10 each, can be ordered from Kathi Wilson, 1432 S. Wisconsin Ave., Racine, WI 53403. Checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian Church/UGRR.

For more information call: The Quilters Studio 262-681-2000 or e-mail to [ugrr@quiltersstudio.com](mailto:ugrr@quiltersstudio.com)

### Quilt Exhibit - April 16, 17, 18

"Ozella's Story," an Underground Railroad Quilt Exhibit, will

be held at the First Presbyterian Church on Friday, April 16, and Saturday, April 17, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and on Sunday, April 18, from 1 to 4 p.m. Admission to the exhibit, payable at the door, is \$5.

Eighty-year-old Ozella McDaniel Williams, an African American quilter from Charleston, S. C., was the keeper of an important part of American history. Passed on through many generations of women in the oral tradition, Williams knew a secret code of quilt patterns which was in jeopardy of being lost. This code was used as a map to instruct some of the slaves fleeing north toward freedom on the Underground Railroad.

In 1996 Ozella revealed this family code to author Jacqueline L. Tobin, who was told to "write this down!" Out of much research and Ozella's story came Tobin's book *Hidden in Plain View*. Ms. Tobin will be present for book-signing at the quilt exhibit from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Friday and Saturday.

Ozella's Story has come to life through the efforts of a Peace-in-Community Quilt Project developed by Kathi Wilson of Racine. Each quilt pattern in the quilt code has been hand-stitched in 12-inch blocks for a museum display by the Monday Night Big Dogs. "Friends of Ozella," a group of diverse women came together specifically to hand-stitch ten quilts, all patterns of the quilt code.

**Website Update**

To mark the 100th anniversary of rural mail delivery in Burlington in February 1904, the Society has added to its website - [burlingtonhistory.org](http://burlingtonhistory.org) - information from newspapers showing the names of the patrons on each of the first six rural routes, the routes the mail carriers followed, and the names of the first regular and substitute carriers on each route.

Also included is a photo of the building in which the Burlington Post Office was located in 1904 - the building still stands near the bend on Chestnut Street - and a photo of one of the first carriers and his horse-drawn vehicle.

If your ancestors of a hundred years ago lived "in the country" around Burlington, look for their family names on one of the six routes. Or look at the route descriptions and see if you can guess where the routes went and who now lives at the places that were the carriers' "landmarks."

**Appreciation Dinner**

Our annual volunteer appreciation dinner, held this year at the new Veronico's Italian Café in downtown Burlington, recognizes the extraordinary volunteer work done by museum staff members, directors, Pioneer Cabin docents, Legacy and Vintage Garden and technology contributors, and others who have been particularly helpful in furthering the Society's mission. During the year their paths do not often cross, so the event brings them together to renew acquaintances, share ideas, and acknowledge their efforts.

**Bits and Pieces . . .**

**Lipton's "Other Tea" - A Burlington Product**

From the Whitewater Register: A fellow in this (newspaper) business can learn from one to a dozen new things a day . . . new facts are always popping up and occasionally one is of more than passing interest. For instance: The McCanna people at Burlington sell all their condensed milk and have for twenty years to Sir Thomas Lipton for sale in his string of stores in England. The brand is the "White Fox," a label better than any other in the British Isles. A picture of a beautiful white fox adorns it, but the name originated in Burlington and was suggested by the White and Fox rivers which join near there.

-- Free Press, March 20, 1919

*The Historical Society does not have the Wisconsin Condensed Milk Co.'s "White Fox" label in its collection, but it does have labels for the "Lion" and "Fox" brands, which are quite colorful. The images below, although in black and white, provide some idea of the attractiveness of the labels. Note that some information on the "Fox" label is in German.*



**Girls Rule !!!**

**High School Notes - Junior Meeting:** Last Wednesday the Juniors held a class meeting in regard to the "Junior Prom." It was voted that the Junior girls are to be allowed the privilege of inviting any one of the four classes; the Senior girls anyone in the high school, a brother, or Burlington high school alumnae; while the Junior and Senior boys are not given any privilege except that of inviting someone of the Junior or Senior class. The meeting was one of the worst ever held, as the majority of those present were girls and most of them showed their jealousy by voting in the way they did.

-- Free Press, April 4, 1918

**Bits and Pieces . . .** *(continued)***CIVIC IMPROVEMENTS AND "MUNICIPAL" SERVICES WERE NEWS IN THE 1800s, TOO**

**DIRTY STREETS:** *Imagine Burlington in 1869 - dirt streets; a few "sidewalks" of stones or planks; most of the village sparsely populated; empty lots between some downtown buildings and between most residences; wood-burning stoves; no garbage pick-up service; hitching posts; buggies and wagons pulled by horses or mules; dogs and cats loose on the streets; cows, chickens, and perhaps other animals kept by many families. Imagine how the streets would look - and smell. One citizen of that time, noticing the condition of the streets, sent the following letter to the local paper, then called "The Standard," of June 3, 1869.*

Mr. Editor: As a citizen who has the interest and reputation of the village at heart, let us call attention to the fact that all along the business streets from sidewalk to sidewalk, the way is strewn with a miscellaneous mixture of straw, manure, ashes, old boots and shoes, broken crockery, etc.

As we have neither rag pickers nor street sweepers, it would seem to be the duty of those who occupy the buildings facing the street, and who are generally the persons guilty of filling the streets with such rubbish, to clear the streets from their fronts to the center.

As we believe the unwholesome condition of our streets is purely the result of oversight, and not on account of any natural love of filth on the part of our citizens, we trust that their love of cleanliness and town pride will induce them to make a change on having their attention directed to the fact.

Two men with shovels and hoes and a team for about twenty minutes in front of every store in the village, besides many residences, would make a very noticeable improvement in the appearance of the town. Yours, A CITIZEN.

**LOOSE ANIMALS:** *While dogs and cats sometimes run loose today, roving cows were of concern in the 1870s, as evidenced by the following editorial comment in The Standard of May 4, 1876.*

In all kindness would we say to owners of Cows that run in the streets, that some of them will open a gate full as quick as a young lad. Passing on Dyer street the other day we noticed a cow at the gate of Deacon Billings; she had the gate nearly open, and would have had it entirely so, had we not been passing at the time and stopped her. Last season quite a number of fine shade trees were despoiled by them. Owners of cows should see to it that they do not let unruly cows run in the roads and streets.

**STREET SPRINKLING:** *One of the discomforts those working or living in the downtown area would experience each year was the dust raised on the dirt streets during the hot and dry season. Since there were no air conditioners, doors and windows would be open and the dust would be everywhere. To combat the dust, the streets were sprinkled. But it was not a tax-supported operation. The Free Press of May 1, 1883, explained the procedure in the following article.*

To the great satisfaction of our business men, Barney Brehm's street sprinkler made its appearance yesterday morning for the first time this season, and the dust which has been filling people's eyes, and covering show cases and counters, shelves and goods for the past week or two, was thoroughly laid. This is one of the many conveniences of our town, and there are but few who fully appreciate having the streets nicely sprinkled and the dust laid in front of their respective places of business. Mr. Brehm requests all who do not wish to pay for this service and accommodation to notify him at once, otherwise he shall expect pay for the work. Offices and dwelling apartments in the second stories on Chestnut and Pine streets, will be charged at the rate of \$2.00 per season for this convenience hereafter, and it is hoped that this reasonable price will be satisfactory to all. It is certainly worth \$2.00 to every person on the second floors along the principal streets to have the streets nicely sprinkled and the dust laid during the hot and dry season. Those who do not wish to pay for the accommodation, however, will notify Mr. Brehm at once.

Please check the "Membership paid thru:" line at the top of the mailing label. If your membership has expired or is due for renewal, please consider renewing it at this time. Dues are in two classifications: general - \$10 and contributing - \$25. Additional donations are always welcome.

Dues are a significant source of income for the operational expenses of the Museum, Pioneer Cabin, and Whitman School. We appreciate your attention to this matter. To pay your dues, please clip the coupon below and mail with your check directly to the Museum, whose address is on the coupon. Thank You.

Become a member of the Burlington Historical Society or renew your current membership. It's easy . . .

General Membership - \$10.00

Contributing Membership - \$25.00

I'd like to make an extra donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

I can help: \_\_\_\_\_

*Send with your check to: Burlington Historical Society, 232 N. Perkins Blvd., Burlington, WI 53105*