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The Mayflower Log



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703: The Future Grinnell Historical Museum



By Betty Moffett
Log Staff

The future new home of the Grinnell Historical Museum is located at 703 1st Avenue, the building that formerly housed Ullmann’s Furniture store. This visitor, walking in the front door, saw a very large, very clean, very empty space, a space that’s full of promise. Against the front wall are two small, handsome horse-drawn buggies, one being ‘driven’ by a plastic skeleton. In the opposite corner, a large hole has been dug in the floor. Frank Shults, a member of the Museum’s hard-working board, explained that plumbing is being installed for restrooms and a small kitchen. Plans also include solar panels in the new roof, made necessary by last year’s hail storm.

Ultimately, the Museum will display large items like the Randolph Header, a horse-drawn harvester manufactured by the Carver, Steele and Austin Company of Grinnell between 1878 and 1890. It will also offer year-round programs, lectures, and concerts for children and families and include a conference room and classrooms. According to board member Ann Igoe, \$1.7 million are needed to complete the project. Generous donations and grants from the community already add up to half that amount, and there are plans for a grand opening and celebration in mid-2025. Those who remember and love the ‘old’ Historical Museum can be reassured that the McMurray house on Broad Street will

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New Museum Home

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remain open (by appointment) and on display as an authentic Victorian home. In fact, the house has recently received a new roof, siding on the carriage house has been repaired, and the west side of the house has been repainted, damage again courtesy of the hail storm.

The McMurray house presents a stark contrast to the new museum building. Instead of a flat roof and straight walls, one sees angles, peaks, and corners. And the inside is anything but empty. Here is the ornate staircase; the living room containing J.B Grinnell's magnificent roll-top desk; the parlor with the framed hair wreaths decorating the wall; the dining room, its large table formally set with linen, china, silver, and a bouquet of (artificial) flowers in the center. And there are boxes everywhere, carefully packed, stacked, and labeled, ready to go to their new home. Other items are being donated. For example John Rommereim and Angela Voos gave the Museum a Zenith radio/record player which belonged to former physics professor Grant Gale and his wife, Harriet. As board member Barb Lease points out, the Museum collection has simply outgrown the McMurray house and there are plenty of fascinating historical objects to fill both venues.

The Museum board is deeply grateful to all who have contributed to and supported this project and they welcome and encourage additional gifts. Grinnell can look forward to the upcoming opening.



Ceiling work begins as old tiles come down, insulation is removed, and spray paint begins.



Openings will be cut for the new layout.



Museum Photos courtesy of Grinnell Historical Museum.



Welcome Sharp and Linda Lannom



By Gene Wubbels
Log Staff

Linda and Sharp Lannom began their remarkable lives in Grinnell in 1948 and 1938, respectively. They attended elementary schools and high school in Grinnell and have for the most part lived their lives here. They moved from their condominium in north Grinnell to the patio home at 503 State Street in mid-January.

Sharp was the eldest of four boys in his family, and Linda was an only child in her family. Sharp matriculated at Northwestern University as a National Merit Scholar in the study of accounting. After graduating, he won a Rotary Fellowship to do graduate study in international law at the University of Edinburgh. That effort was ended a few months after its start by the death of Sharp's father, who was running the family businesses in Grinnell. Sharp returned quickly to take his place. Linda started her baccalaureate work at Saint Olaf College. After a few years, she transferred to

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Sharp & Linda Lannom*(continued from page 3)*

Wartburg College, where she completed her degree with a major in elementary education. After one year of teaching at Fayette, Iowa, Linda moved to Grinnell where she taught 3rd and 4th grade students for 29 years. Linda counts among her former students familiar names such as Scott Gruhn, and children of Mayflower residents such as those of the Hunters, McClellands, McDonoughs, LaCasses, and Wubbels.

When Sharp and Linda married in 1989, they made a merged family from their previous marriages. Sharp's children are Sarah, Katie, and Meg. Their families include seven children altogether and live in Texas, Arizona, and California. Linda has two children, Alex and Nathan. Alex was recently married and lives in Grinnell. Nathan has two children and lives in Alabama. Linda and Sharp enjoy keeping up with their far-flung family.

The Lannom family businesses in Grinnell have historic significance. Sharp's full name is George Sharp Lannom, IV. Sharp is a family surname from the maternal side of Sharp's family. Sharp's Lannom ancestors were engaged in leather businesses in Tennessee for many years. When Sharp's grandfather came to Grinnell in 1912, it was to manage the recently acquired Morrison Shults company, founded in 1856. This was later renamed the Grinnell Glove Company and was last located across Broad Street from the Mayflower Harwich Terrace North homes. The building now houses Grinnell College offices. The business expanded in 1939 with the addition of a shoe factory. Chuck DeLong, who with his wife Kate later became Mayflower residents, started up with associates in Grinnell an independent company making and selling sportswear. Sharp's glove enterprise in 1964 bought that company and merged it with his operations. It became the DeLong Sportswear Company, which persisted successfully until the early 2000's. After 50 years of service as the CEO, Sharp retired from the company in 2011.

The Lannoms were fortunate to find one of the few patio homes in Mayflower that was fully accessible, including an elevator. Sharp suffered a stroke ten years ago, and he now uses a wheelchair. The Lannoms are avid readers and travelers, and they are rediscovering decorative plants for use in their yard this Spring. Linda learned to draw and paint several years ago, and their house has many of her paintings. She is curious about opportunities to reactivate that interest at Mayflower.

It is a pleasure to welcome the Lannoms to the Mayflower.



Say Hello to George Barlow

By Judy Hunter

Log Staff

George Barlow, renowned poet, retired Grinnell College professor, member of a large and close family, has moved to the Mayflower, and he is happy to be here.

If you should go and talk to him, you will probably emerge happy as well. This voluble, accomplished, gentle man envelops visitors with warmth and energy.

George arrived at the Mayflower after suffering several health problems, but after experiencing Mayflower's physical and occupational therapy, and the help offered him by staff, he is feeling better and considers himself lucky to be in a place with so many activities and welcoming people.

George Barlow grew up and attended college in California. Early in his career, he received several prestigious fellowships and attended the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop.

After teaching for 10 years at a community college in California, he returned to Iowa to study in a graduate program in American Studies. He was recruited to teach at Grinnell after he did a poetry reading at the College, and he describes himself as "smitten" with the college and community.

For 25 years George taught both poetry and American Studies at Grinnell College; during that time he taught in Grinnell in London 3 times, and participated in faculty seminars that took him to China, Germany, and Poland.

George and his ex-wife, with whom he remains "family," have two children: son Mark, who lives in Grinnell, serves as one of five managers of the Grinnell College Food Service. Daughter Erin, who lives in New York City, is assistant director at the Henry Street Settlement, a project that helps people through social service, arts, and health



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Hello to George Barlow

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care programs. George has been in a 15-year relationship with native Iowan and fellow poet Patty Underwood, who visits often.

Below is a poem, "Neptune," that George wrote about the journey to distribute his father's ashes at sea. This poem was selected by the Iowa City's 2006 Poetry in Public Project to be printed on posters and displayed in downtown kiosks, on City buses, and in other public places.

Neptune

By George Barlow

My father had to love the sunlight & cool air
spreading the beige stain & carnations on those easy waves
that day just inside the Golden Gate, had to love the prayer,
the fat seals waiting for us back at the pier,
the toast for a sailor gone home, our clinking cocktails & puffy eyes
had to love hanging with us in the bar, like always, full of it,
cracking us up—Barlow, his buddies called him, *here here*.

**Meet Pat and Bob Larson**

By Mary Schuchmann
Log Staff

Pat and Bob Larson met as students at Wartburg College and married during their senior year. Only in recent years did they discover, thanks to Ancestry.com, that they are distant cousins, on *both* the maternal and paternal sides of the family.

"It's no wonder we get along so well," Pat said with a smile.

The Larsons moved to Mayflower (Buckley 308) last September. As longtime Grinnell residents, they have strong ties to the community. Through business relationships and their children's school activities, they know a host of people in Grinnell, including many at Mayflower.

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Meet the Larsons

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And it was at Mayflower that Pat became reacquainted with resident Orlan Mitchell. Pat grew up in Clarion, Iowa, where Orlan was pastor of the Congregational (UCC) church for 10 years. Orlan and Pat's father served on the Clarion School Board together, Pat recalled.

Bob is a native of Austin, Minnesota.

At Wartburg, Pat majored in speech and drama. She was active in music and theater, with major roles in several college productions. Her favorite role? Nellie Forbush in *South Pacific*, Pat said without hesitation. Bob was a history major and played football.

After graduation, the Larsons moved to Parkersburg, Iowa, where Bob took a teaching and coaching job. (At age 21, Bob was one of the state's youngest head football coaches, only three years older than the seniors on his team.)

When Bob was drafted in 1969, he chose to enlist in the U.S. Air Force and was assigned to the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, to serve (after training) as a dental technician. After discharge, he worked in sales in New Hampton, then in 1979 took a job with Grinnell Mutual, bringing Bob and Pat and their family to Grinnell.

In 1982, Bob became a State Farm agent with an office in downtown Grinnell, a job he held until retirement in 2015.

Pat worked at Brenton Bank (now Wells Fargo), starting as a teller and later serving as a customer service and marketing officer. Health issues forced early retirement in 1990.

The Larsons have a daughter, Kama Small, who lives in Grinnell and works at Grinnell Mutual as director of commercial underwriting. Kama and husband Tom have two daughters, Emily, 22, and Amanda, 19.

The Larsons' younger daughter, Angela, died in 2022. A memorial fence and plaque at the high school pay tribute to her many years of volunteer coaching (various sports and all ages).



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Meet the Larsons

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During their years in Grinnell, Pat and Bob have been active in a variety of civic organizations, including PTO, high school booster clubs, community theater, and the Grinnell Historical Museum. Pat is also a longtime member of the D.A.R.

As parents, then grandparents, of kids involved in Grinnell sports, the Larsons recall countless hours on bleachers surrounding athletic fields, courts, and pools. Those days are a fond memory for both of them.

Their mutual interest in history and Pat's love of genealogy have led them on many trips to historic sites and national parks throughout the United States.

Ken Williams...Home Again

By Gene Wubbels
Log Staff



Ken Williams remarked that his move to the patio home at 531 State Street in mid-December felt like coming home. He was born in Oskaloosa, Iowa, in 1944. He lived in many places, most recently near Monterey, California, in a long career in accounting and management.

Ken's great-great-grandparents settled on a pioneering farm in Poweshiek County in 1855. His parents farmed in Jasper County eight miles southwest of Grinnell where he grew up with two sisters. He graduated from Lynnville-Sully High School in 1962, where he participated in many sports. His older sister, Mary, graduated from Grinnell High School in 1957.

Ken studied accounting and business administration at Iowa State University and graduated in 1967. His younger sister Pat graduated from Iowa State a couple of years after Ken. He first worked at International Harvester in suburban Chicago. After active military duty with the Army, he received

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Ken Williams... Home Again

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his MBA degree from Northwestern, worked in public accounting, passed the CPA exam, then pursued a career in corporate accounting and management.

Ken met his wife Diane in suburban Chicago, where they married in 1971. They have two children, Bethany and Robert, who are both married and have families. Bethany lives with her husband and three children in Woodlands, Texas, and Robert lives with his wife and two children in San Francisco, California.

When his employer was acquired in 1986 by a Houston company, Ken and Diane moved their family to Houston, Texas, where they lived for seven years before moving to California. Diane died of cancer in 2017. For the last 16 years Ken has been in financial management with a Community Health Center in California. He is transitioning into retirement after traveling back and forth to the Bay area over the past few months to direct financial matters. He is now living full time in his patio home where he is looking to re-engage in lifelong leisure activities like reading, physical fitness, walking his dog Hunter, and tending the landscaping around his house.

We are happy to welcome Ken Williams back home.

Welcome New Residents Diane & Bob Fuller & Mazie

By Nancy Cadmus
Log staff

Diane and Bob Fuller, together with their Labrador Retriever Mazie, moved into their Buckley apartment on January 16. We all remember that cold spell with temperatures in the minus teens and wind chills way beyond that. Their move, in fact,



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Welcome the Fullers*(continued from 9)*

was slightly delayed-postponed in hope of a *somewhat* warmer day. The Fullers came to Mayflower from their home in nearby New Sharon, where they had lived for 18 years, and where one of their sons and his wife still live.

Diane and Bob both grew up in Rock Island, Illinois, and met there as teenagers, through church: both sang in the choir. They dated for a bit, then drifted apart when Bob went off to the University of Illinois to study engineering and Diane finished high school, then trained as a beautician. She worked fixing hair, and later took courses to become a teacher. After two years of college, Bob moved back to Rock Island and accepted a job with a civil engineering firm. Diane and Bob reconnected, eventually married, and had three children about 18 months apart. They built a house in Rock Island and felt settled. The thought of leaving was hard.

However, when the children were in elementary school, the Fullers moved to Grand Mound, Iowa, a small town in Clinton County. Diane's father owned an engineering machine shop with a partner, and he was ready to retire and turn his share of the business over to Bob. It was in Grand Mound that the Fullers raised their three children, Doug, Tim, and Marlys, who attended school in Grand Mound and nearby De Witt. Bob served as president of the School Board in De Witt for 12 years. Diane, who has a talent for fine handwork, did floral design for flower shops and weddings, for a time had her own floral design shop, then later worked for a similar business in a nearby town. She sewed most of the family's clothes all through the children's growing-up years, as well as stuffed animals and dolls, and even made bridesmaid dresses as an in-home business. Bob cultivated a large vegetable garden and Diane canned and froze quantities of produce. They lived in Grand Mound for 35 years.

With their children grown and gone, Diane and Bob decided to move near their son Tim and his wife Gina in New Sharon to help with grandchildren. Tim worked for PepsiCo, and stayed on when the company's name changed to Mahaska Bottling. Gina worked for some years in the radiology department at the Grinnell hospital, and now works as an X-ray equipment inspector for the State of Iowa. Bob and Diane were very active in their grandchildren's lives. Bob worked as an inspector for the City of New Sharon, as well as for Garden & Associates Engineers and Surveyors. Eventually, with the grandchildren grown, the Fullers decided to move to Mayflower, in part for its location, roughly equidistant between Tim and Gina in New Sharon and other relatives in Newton. Their eldest son, Doug, lives in Tennessee, and daughter Marlys lives in Long Beach, California; each of them has two children.

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Welcome the Fullers

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Diane and Bob feel like they are still settling in and learning about the Mayflower Community and Grinnell. They appreciate the exercise classes, Senior Strength and Theraband, the many events, and the social life.

My Pets

By Mary Schuchmann of our Log Staff

Written March 2023 at 531 State Street

I live alone. Well, not exactly. As of today, I have a dog and 24 house plants. I regard all of them as pets, companions that require care and offer comfort.

Jack, the dog, is the more active, even in old age. But the plants are not inert. My four giant ferns continually shed dried leaves. A slight brush against a frond will cause a shower of leaf bits. Ditto for the large begonia and its tiny pink blossoms. My five coleus cuttings in the east-facing bedroom window reach toward the light and require turning several times a week.



Mary with a "pet" fern.

All the plants need regular watering and constant monitoring. Drooping leaves cause concern, just as would a listless dog or cat.

Like a pet, each plant has a story to tell, if it could. When I look at a plant, I am reminded of the friend who gave it to me or the experience I had when acquiring it.

For example, my five-foot schefflera was orphaned after a funeral at our church at least a decade ago. When no one offered to take it, I volunteered. The prospect of relocation must have been traumatizing. On the way home in the car, the plant dropped nearly all its leaves. After a week or two in the horticulture ICU, the plant began to put out new leaves on the bare branches.

One of my plants, an unknown variety, is a remnant of a raid on the Grinnell College greenhouse shortly before the structure was dismantled to make way for an addition to the science building. Anne Geissinger, my energetic young next-door neighbor on Broad Street, was a co-conspirator. It all started when Anne heard that the plants left in the greenhouse were free for the taking. She called me immediately and we drove quickly to the campus and stuffed her minivan with greenery. The unidentified plant is still alive, and it blooms each spring with tiny orchid-like flowers that last just a single day.

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Photos by Bill Pollack and Grinnell Historical Museum

My Pets

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My four ferns initially belonged to my current next-door neighbor, Nancy Reinecke. She buys a new fern every spring, decides not to overwinter it indoors, and offers it to me. I accept gladly. Displayed in front of the floor-to-ceiling windows facing west, the ferns dazzle in the sunlight on a cold winter afternoon.

The enormous rubber plant was a discard from the woman who helped me clean at one time. It is now so wide that I wonder if it will fit through the door when the time comes for it to relocate to summer camp outside on the patio. I know that, given continued care and devotion, some of my plants will likely outlive me. I hope they can find new owners who feel about them as I do.

Update January 2024

In October I moved from 531 State Street to Buckley 218. Jack is gone but the house plants are thriving, I brought along my favorites, about 15 in all. I received permission to place the rubber plant and two ferns in the common spaces at Mayflower. The rest are clustered in front of the large east-facing windows of the apartment. Like me, they needed a period of adjustment to their new surroundings, but most have made the transition nicely, just as I have. All will head to my balcony in the spring, just like they once summered on the patio on State Street. I look forward to joining them there.