

# The Garland City Gazette

June  
2021

The Ashland Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 4  
Issue 2

## ELLIS SCHOOL Early Pioneers of Ashland

By Rita Kovach

**E**llis School was built in 1900 and is one of the Ashland schools named for prominent founders of the city. In the early 1960's, Ellis School was one the six elementary schools in the city. The Ashland School District also included the Marango Valley Elementary School and for some time the school on Madeline Island. During this time Ellis School already had its addition to the school which consisted of the kindergarten and first grade classrooms plus a gymnasium with a stage for school productions.

Located next to the Ellis Fire Station and across Stuntz Avenue from Ellis Park, Ellis School was home to students from the neighborhood as well as students from rural areas of the school district who were bussed there. Rooms on the first and second floors, plus the two classrooms in the addition were used for classrooms and the principal's office, while the basement housed the coal furnace, the small kitchen and lunch room, the teachers' lounge, the boys' and girls' bathrooms, storage rooms, and was the home base for the schools' maintenance crew and their equipment.

This was a time when classrooms had a teacher's desk, students' desks, chalk and bulletin boards, book-cases and a small table and chairs for reading groups. There were no televisions, computers, not even



overhead projection screens hanging above the chalkboards. Paper copies were run off on mimeograph machines and the students hung their coats on hooks in the adjacent coat room.

The Sixties had traveling teachers who came to the classrooms for music, art, and physical education. Some former students may remember Mrs. Rundquist, Mr. Westlund, and Mr. Weikal to name a few.

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# President's Corner



With Tory Strohane

**{ THANK YOU! }**

The museum opened on April 30<sup>th</sup> for three days a week- Fridays, Saturdays and Mondays from 10am to 3pm. Research requests and Gift Shop items are still available through our web page and email.

Once again, I need to thank our loyal supporters for their outstanding donations and membership renewals. You have made it possible for us to handle the rent and utilities and keep us up to date with technology and supplies.

The decision was made to cancel plans for the Cemetery Walk once again. We know how popular it is, but the safety of our volunteers is too important to risk at this time. We certainly hope that the Covid-19 issues will settle down soon and we can get back to what is 'normal' for everyone. Thank you for your concern and patience.

It is with deep regret that I mention we have lost two of our museum family this spring.

Elizabeth Preston passed away on May 10<sup>th</sup> of this year. She served the Ashland Historical Society Museum (AHSM) for many years in the capacity of volunteer, board member and researcher. Her skills with genealogy and technology have been a huge asset to us. Her upbeat personality always brightened the day when she was at the museum or doing other projects. She served on the OLOL Cemetery Board as well as devoted hours to organizing and recording the deaths in the church files. She will be greatly missed.

Jane Tolliver passed away on April 26, 2021. Jane was very active for many years in both the Girl Scouts in the area and the Ashland Historical Society. She served the AHSM in many capacities, including creating the index for the book *Looking Backwards, Moving Forward-Ashland The Garland City of the Inland Seas*. This book celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1987 of the incorporation for the city of Ashland. Jane's many contributions helped to keep the ASHM viable through some financially tough years. We owe her a debt of thanks.

## AHSM Board

<b>Tory Strohane</b>	<i>President</i>
<b>Sam Solberg</b>	<i>Vice President</i>
<b>Barbara Suminski</b>	<i>Treasurer</i>
<b>Mary Grube</b>	<i>Secretary</i>
Jeff Cate	Mary Gruper
Rita Kovach	Bob Klamerus
Ed Monroe	Elizabeth Preston
Glenn Samuelson	Jon Walworth

## Have A Story?

History is nothing without stories (in fact, we would argue that history is nothing *but* stories!), and we want to share yours! Ask relatives, family friends, or coworkers to share their own histories of Ashland and the surrounding area for a chance to appear on our website.

Email all inquiries to [wadziash@gmail.com](mailto:wadziash@gmail.com) with the subject "ASHLAND STORIES", pictures welcome! Please include stories in article format of 500 words or less.



# Memorials & Honorees

March—June 2021



In Remembrance Of:	By:
Marge Woolworth	Robert & Carol Reneau
	John & Sophie Cate Jeanne Myerson
	Robert & Mary Lou Oschenbauer
Richard “Dick” W. Anderson	Gail R. Anderson
Earll & Margaret Goeltz	Dick & Jim Goeltz
Patrick Durkin	John E. Snow
Carmen & William Griffiths	Sue Griffiths Wesley
Conrad Johnson	Ruth Lunquist
Richard Klamerus	Hilding Branzell, D..D.S.
	Leonard & Barbara Suminski
	Robert & Shelby Klamerus
Craig Haukaas	Leonard & Barbara Suminski
Warren & Edna Mae Smith	Tim Smith

In Remembrance Of:	By:
Kenneth C. & Eleanore M. Johnson	Lyle A. Johnson
Elizabeth Preston	Tory & Jim Stroshane
	Leonard & Barbara Suminski
	Rita & John Kovach
	Jeff Cate
	Bob & Shelbey Klamerus
	Ever & Roger Bergman
	Mary Woods
	Sarah Stroshane & Tim Burke
	Catherine Meschievitz
	Caroline Basley
	Bill & Michelle (Boheim) VanVlack

**Ashleigh Wadzinski**

*Newsletter Editor*

*Cruciverbalist*

If you would like to make a donation in memoriam or to honor a loved one, please see the attached form at the very last page. Donations, memorials, and honorees are honored every quarter in our newsletter.

In addition to this quarter’s donors, our newsletter editor would like to thank the following from *TheNounProject.com* for the use of this issue’s graphics: “Star” by Ethelia Lung and “Location” by supalerk laipawat,

# ELLIS SCHOOL

– continued from Page 1

Often, students and teachers would gather outside the classrooms on the main floor for programs and sing-alongs or to share a television when historical events were taking place as when President Kennedy was assassinated or when something or someone was being launched into space.

Because Dr. Ellis, the school's namesake who donated Ellis Park to the city, had the foresight to stipulate that the park shall always remain a park, Ellis students were able to use the park for its playground. This meant having school crossing guards to stop traffic on Stuntz Avenue so students could cross over to the park, always crossing at Fourth Street so as not to interfere with the fire station on the Third Street side of the park. Ellis Park was not only used for recesses, but



also provided the area for all-school activities such as Halloween costume parades and photo shoots.

Behind Ellis School was the deep ravine of the Bay City Creek. Children from the kindergarten and first grade classrooms played on swings between the back of the school and the ravine. More than once a teacher would have to go down into the ravine to retrieve a student who wandered down and needed help to climb

back up. There were no fences to keep the children out of the ravine and none to separate the students from the fire station next door, but students who played on that side of the school knew their boundaries and did not dare go near the fire station!



Ellis School was one of the schools with a circular fire escape attached to the side of the building. It was a round metal tower with a circular slide inside which students, in the case of a fire, could access from the second and first floors and after sliding down the tube could exit through a door at the bottom facing the fire station – how convenient!



Today the Ellis School building is privately owned and is occupied by several businesses.

# OLIVER RASMUSSEN

By Tory Strohane

Serving on the air craft carrier *Shangri-La*, Oliver was in a Curtiss SB2C Helldiver on July 14, 1945 when the plane crashed into a mountain-side in rural Hokkaido, Japan. The pilot was killed, but Oliver was injured, and able to leave the site of the crash with the clothes on his back and an empty backpack. He spent 17 days trekking to the coast, evading capture. He built a boat to try to head out to sea, but wasn't able to get past the hazardous coastline.



Having found a shack and later creating a site with salvaged lumber, where he wouldn't be spotted, he survived on raiding the farms in the area when he could, milking a cow he found and eating raw rice, frog

legs, bird eggs and raw onions. He used his high school track and football moves to avoid capture when being chased. Rasmussen made it 68 days without being captured, but finally decided to find out why there were so many aircraft overhead that didn't draw fire. On September 19, he walked into the city of Tomakimai and found out that the war was over and had been for several weeks.

Rasmussen was a career Navy man, serving in the Korean War and during the Berlin airlifts. During WWII he served as a pilot and gunner in the Pacific Theater. He retired as a chief petty officer in 1962. A family friend taped his experiences, but didn't get to write the planned book before Rasmussen died in 1980. His wife gave the recordings to Donald J. Norton, who made them into a book: *Chippewa Chief of World War II*. Two copies of this book were donated to the Vaughn Library. It is also available at amazon.com.



*Oliver Rasmussen in the back seat of the Helldiver*





# The Bright Spot

With Jim Goeltz



**W**hen Dad was born in the late 1890s, he came into the world in his Grandfather Adam's Goeltz Block. That building was built by Adam and was the first permanent building in Ashland on the corner of Second Street and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue West. At that time Adam was running a hotel in the upper floors and the family lived on the second floor. The bottom floor was called the Barrel House as the Ashland Brewery stored their beer kegs there.

Dad spent his early few years at that location. Around 1901 his folks, Louis and Mary, bought a farm on the end of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue West. That is where Dad grew up with the cows, chickens, ducks and pigs. He learned about farming into his teen years. Then his folks, who had learned the hotel business when they lived in the Goeltz Block, purchased a hotel on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue West, a block north of the Chicago and Northwestern depot.

After grade school at Ninth Avenue they went to Ashland High School, which at that time was located in a three-story black building on 3rd Street and Second Avenue east. Dad became good friends with Margaret. As a young lady, Margaret Bowron was good with music. She could sing and her mother taught her how to play the piano. Dad and Margaret were paired going through high school.

After graduating from the new Ashland High School on Ellis Avenue and 11<sup>th</sup> Street in 1917, Dad and Walter Bowron joined the Navy. Neither saw any action overseas and both were discharged in the spring of 1919.

Dad found a job in Chicago with the Chicago and Northwestern railway as a dispatcher. He and Margaret continued a long-distance relationship. Marriage was discussed but Margaret told him in no certain terms that she wasn't living in Chicago.

Dad eventually returned to Ashland, married Margaret, and opened the Bright Spot in April of 1923. The Bright Spot featured Bridgeman-Russell's Velvet ice cream, the only outlet in Ashland. Dad also sold candy bars and bulk candy. Also for sale were magazines, Christie's bread, cigars, cigarettes, and tobacco. But ice cream was the big seller. Dad and Margaret lived in the flat above the store and began having children: first Marilyn, then Virginia, then me, all three of us by 1928. Later on, to add to the family, Dick was born in 1935 and Margaret (Rusty) in 1943.

Dad once told me running the Bright Spot was enough but wondered why he got into the 'chicken racket'. But that move paid off because Mother fried chicken upstairs in the flat, sent it down via dumb waiter where Dad sold a mug of tap beer for a nickel, along with a free lunch of a piece of chicken and a slice of bread. And he made a profit with this.

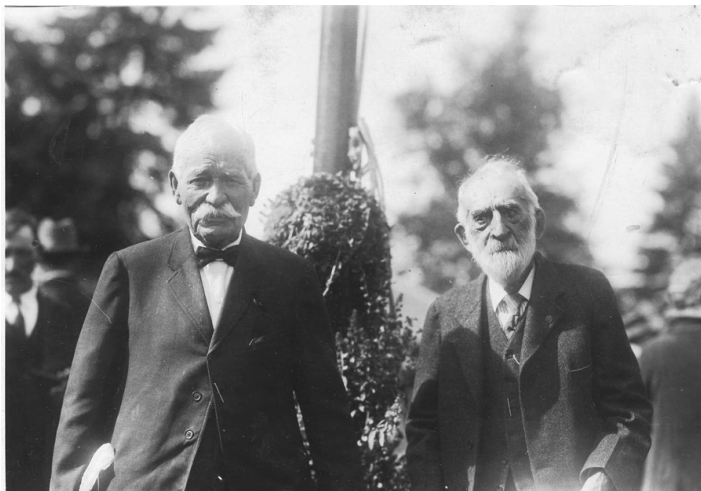
When Prohibition ended by repeal in 1933, Dad obtained a beer license. He told me that the day Prohibition ended, a train car loaded with Schmidt's City Club from Duluth was parked on the siding next to the Bright Spot. Dad told me: "Was business ever good that day!"

# CHARLES JUDD

## Last of the Boys of '72

By Tory Stroshane

Charles Lee Judd was born in Cape Vincent, New York on 8-16- 1836 to Philetus and Louisa (Holcomb) Judd. His grandfather Elnathan Judd was one of the original settlers in the area, arriving in 1809. Charles Judd's father Philetus was a farmer, but Charles learned the trade of ship carpentry. Cape Vincent is located where the St. Lawrence Seaway and Lake Ontario meet and the start of the Thousand Islands in the St Lawrence River.



Charles went sailing at the age of 17 and piloted ships through the Thousand Islands on the St. Lawrence River. Judd enlisted in the Union Army in 1862 during the Civil War and was transferred into the Navy in 1864 because of his sea experiences. He served on the gunboat *Albatross* with Fleet Admiral Farragut and the ship stormed the forts of Morgan and Gaines in Mobile Harbor. The enemy was firing torpedoes at them, but Admiral Farragut said, "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead." Judd served on seven different vessels in the war and he lost two brothers, Benjamin and Elnathan, to the fight.

Judd came to Ashland in 1872 with a group of

twelve Civil War veterans who were eligible for special veteran homesteads granted by a June 8, 1872 act. They stopped in Ashland, but then went to Duluth. While Judd was there, a surveyor convinced him to go back to Ashland. By 1873, his family joined him in Ashland. He rented a log cabin on the corner of Third Street and 6<sup>TH</sup> Avenue West. Later they lived in a home on Twelfth Ave West and Front Street.

He and his wife Evaline Lee of Essex County, New York, were married there in 1858 and had six children: Etta (Arthur Osborn), William C. (Maude Synder), Benjamin F., Myrtle (Laurie Nourse), Emma and Seth., who both died young while the family was living in Cape Vincent, NY.

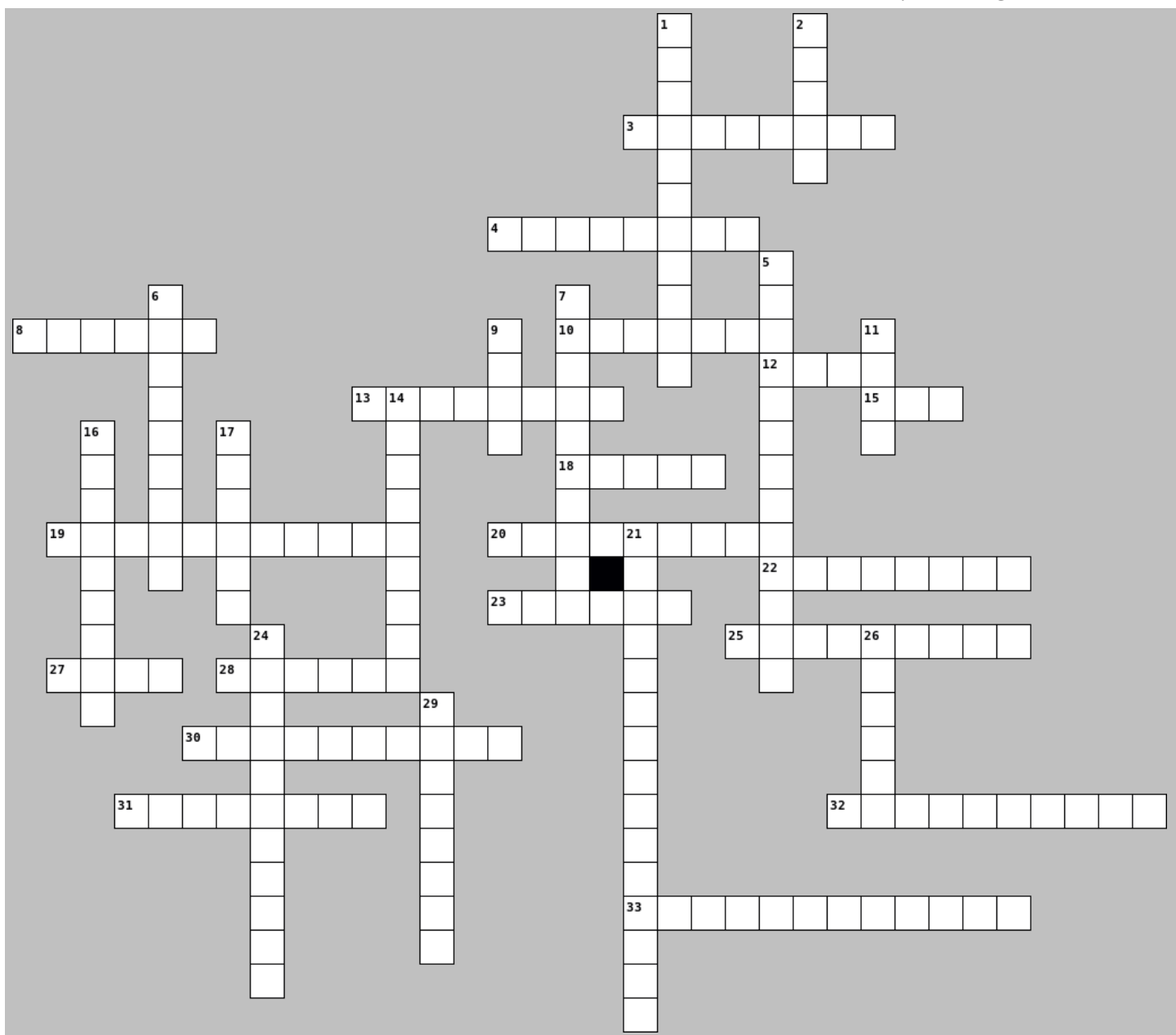
He helped build the Wilmarth bank and block, brought brownstone from Bass Island to Washburn, and ran passengers to the local towns.

Judd served as a justice of the peace in Ashland from 1878 to 1888. He belonged to the General George Custer Unit of the Grand Army of the Republic, serving as Commander for many years and was its last living member in Ashland. When his wife became ill and needed a dry climate, the family went to live in Galveston, Texas from 1892-1903. While living there, they survived the infamous hurricane and flooding of 1900. His wife passed away in July of 1903.

During the Ashland Jubilee celebration in 1929, Charles was honored in the Old Settler's parade. Charles Judd died on 10-23- 1931 at the age of 95. He was the last living member of the Boys of '72. He is buried with his wife and two of their children at Mount Hope Cemetery, Ashland.

# QUARTERLY CROSSWORD

By Ashleigh Wadzinski



## Crossword Key

Find our crossword key on our website:

[www.ashlandwihistory.com/crossword](http://www.ashlandwihistory.com/crossword)

## Mission Statement

The Ashland Historical Society is a non-profit volunteer organization that promotes the appreciation of local history and community pride through a visual connection to the past. We carefully curate and preserve a vast collection of memorabilia, artifacts, articles, stories, and traditions awhile functioning as an educational resource for the community.

Enjoy crosswords? Past editions are available online for print. Head to our website above to find them! Our newsletters are digitally archived at [www.ashlandwihistory.com/newsletter](http://www.ashlandwihistory.com/newsletter)

**Across**

3. Charles' father's name.
4. A city in Japan.
8. A mug of tap beer sold for how much?
10. The eighth month of the Gregorian calendar.
12. Charles' first daughter.
13. Oliver Rasmussen was born here.
15. How many elementary schools did Ashland have in the 1960's?
18. Oliver participated in this sport in high school.
19. The city where Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence meet.
20. An aircraft carrier.
22. The structure on the corner of Third Street and 6th Avenue West.
23. General George \_\_\_\_\_.
25. This crashed on a Japanese island in the Pacific.
27. A branch of the US armed forces.
28. A fort in Mobile Harbor.
30. The round metal tower attached to the side of Ellis School is what?
31. Forced to survive, Oliver ate these along with raw rice and onion.
32. Oliver retired with this rank.
33. Frank LaFernier was one of these.

**Down**

1. What ended in 1933?
2. On which block did Adam Goetz live?
5. This school was part of the Ashland School District for a time.
6. How many days it took Oliver to hike to the coastline.
7. Veterans were eligible for these granted by the US government.
9. A carpentry specialty.
11. Brownstone brought from this island helped build the Wilmarth block.
14. A gunboat from the Civil War.
16. Oliver ended up here after 68 days of survival.
17. Children often played here at recess.
21. This started in 1929.
24. Where the Ashland Brewery stored beer.
26. Charles lived here for a time.
29. Fleet Admiral.

Thank you to  
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**THE GARLAND CITY GAZETTE**

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**Ashland Historical Society Membership Form**

Membership includes family or single member. Includes the quarterly "Garland City Gazette" news-  
letter and 10% off of Museum Gift Shop purchases.  
Memorials and honorees donations kindly accepted.

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership is \$15 per calendar year. Memorial donations can be any amount.

Membership fee:	Memorial Donation:	Total Enclosed:
\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

Memorial or Honoree Name (s):  
\_\_\_\_\_