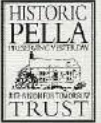


A Newsletter from the Historic Pella Trust

PRESERVE PELLA



PELLA, MARION COUNTY, SCHOLTE & CIVIL WAR

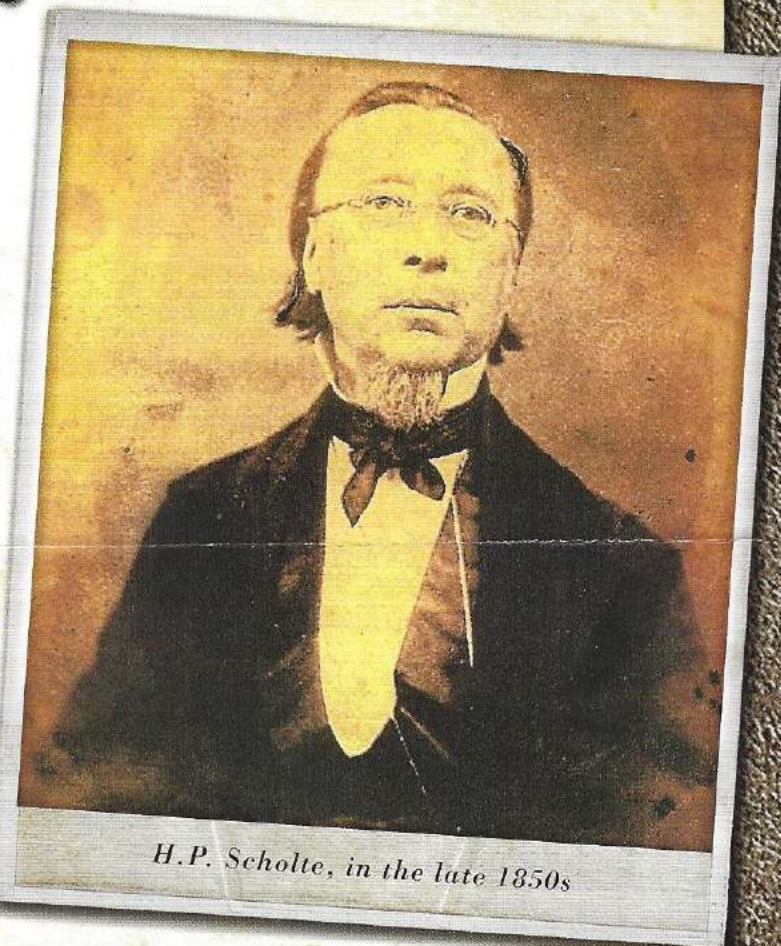
Dr. Ronald D. Rietveld, Emeritus Professor of History, California State University, Fullerton, and a home-grown Pella boy

The American Civil War was our country's coming of age. Out of the nation's tragedy and bloodshed, the deadliest war in all of our history, emerged a unified country, progressive and, in time, more mature.

The new results of the latest research on Civil War casualties indicate that the war killed approximately 750,000 soldiers. In the middle of this American holocaust, the State of Iowa played an important role, along with the City of Pella and Marion County—in battle, but also politically, socially, economically, and in leadership.

On the morning of April 12, 1861, South Carolina guns began firing on the federal fortress in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. It was war—devastatingly violent—on American soil by Americans themselves, and the nation nearly perished. However, the war ended the legalized use of human slavery in this country. It is to be remembered that the Southern forces fired the first shot that April of 1861. Many viewed secession as a way to preserve the southern way of life, including that of slavery. Within 24 hours, Iowa, Pella, and Marion County became deeply involved, despite the fact that initially the war seemed so far away and Iowans had their own problems.

Early on Tuesday, April 16, 1861, Secretary of War Simon Cameron, in President Lincoln's Cabinet, sent a telegraph to Governor Samuel Kirkwood, calling on him to raise one Iowa regiment of 1,000 men for the first call. Within 14 hours, there were enough men to fill two Iowa regiments. Thousands more quickly volunteered.



H.P. Scholte, in the late 1850s

The governor was embarrassed, not because of a lack of men, but that too many Iowans were “anxious to serve their country.” There was no way that he could clothe and equip all of them and so he had to say no to so many eager companies. Kirkwood wrote Secretary of War Cameron: “Ten days ago we had two parties in this state: today we have but one and that one is for the Constitution and the Union unconditionally.” He added, “Our whole state seems to be volunteering.” But Iowans would likely have been horrified if they had known that 13,000 Iowans would die in this war.

At the outbreak of the war, Marion County had a population between 16,000 and 17,000 people, with 3,127 voters. When

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the first call came for volunteers on April 15, 1861, Pella and the Marion County vicinity furnished its full quota of troops requested. Marion County soldiers were on the forced march, the prolonged siege and the hotly contested battlefield. It was declared that they were "the peers of any soldiers who fought in the war." More than 256 volunteered for the war from Pella in Lake Prairie and adjoining townships, an incredible amount.

One of the youngest enlistees was "Tommy" Cox from Pella. The 13-year-old had enlisted in the 33rd Iowa Volunteer Infantry Regiment on September 4, 1862. He had a dark complexion, hazel eyes and auburn hair, and stood only four feet ten inches tall. Tommy was Company G's drummer, always cheerful, courageous, and a spirited drummer who

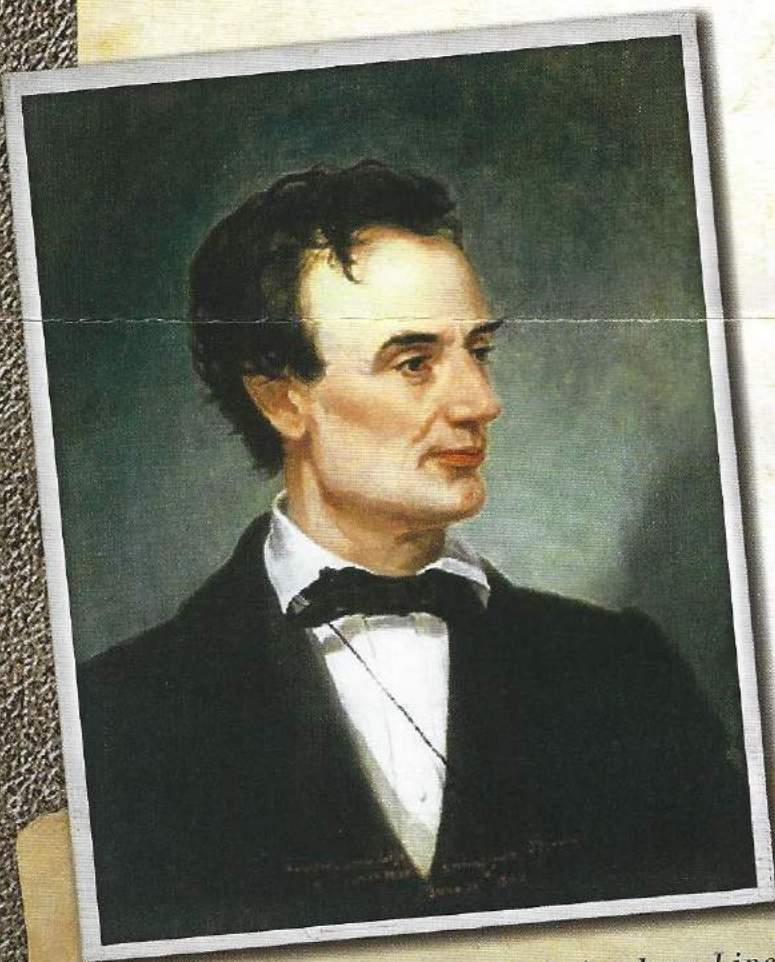
endeared himself to his company. He even declined a furlough in deference to a comrade who had a more acute case of home sickness. When the 33rd Iowa had to cross flooded rivers, the older men volunteered to carry Tommy on their backs.

During the four years of war, the Marion County volunteers fought at Wilson's Creek and Pea Ridge to keep Missouri in the Union. They were with General U.S. Grant at Fort Donelson and went on south with him to Shiloh, Iuka, and Corinth. With Grant they encircled, laid siege to, and conquered Vicksburg, opening the Mississippi River to the sea and then north to Columbia, South Carolina. They marched to war across states whose names were familiar—Missouri, Tennessee, Mississippi and Georgia. Quotas were easily met in Iowa and thus Lincoln's draft in August, 1862, did not involve any Iowans. Records show that Iowa supplied all the men required without drafting, except for a short period in 1864, when in spite of efforts it was necessary to draft about 4,000 men. But all this time, undisturbed by distant battles, Iowa's population continued to expand, and Iowa was allotted four additional congressional seats in 1862.

The Rev. H. P. Scholte remained active in recruiting young men for service from the Pella and surrounding area as early as February 14, 1862. He hoped to establish a recruiting office in Pella, which later opened at the log cabin in the Garden Square (Central Park today). As early as December 1861, Scholte was studying Army regulations. He swore in volunteers to the Iowa regiments and handled passes for enlisted boys. However, Scholte finally received his recruiting commission on February 24, 1862. Thus, he presented Wyatt Earp's father, Nicholas Earp, then living in Pella, his commission to recruit a company for the 17th Iowa Regiment.

During those years of war, H. P. Scholte continued to carry on his correspondence with the much beleaguered president. None of Lincoln's letters to Scholte have survived in Pella, but there still remains five copies of Scholte's letter to Lincoln, four of which he kept for his own reference. Scholte's letter to Lincoln regarding Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania's possible appointment to the new administration is currently housed in the Abraham Lincoln Papers in the Library of Congress.

In a letter from Pella, written probably sometime in 1861, Scholte warned President Lincoln: "I am convinced that, if the war is not prosecuted with the utmost vigor, the South will be recognized by European Powers and our Nationality at an end," a warning from a Dutch-American. Scholte had first met Lincoln on June 13, 1860, in Springfield, Illinois as the Republican candidate for President.



Thomas Hicks' portrait of Abraham Lincoln. It was the first painted portrait of Abraham Lincoln to be used for his Presidential campaign, and Scholte likely was able to see the portrait finished during a visit to Lincoln at the Illinois Governor's office on June 13, 1860.

On August 8, 1861, Scholte sent another letter to the president, in which he began: "Since your inauguration of your Administration I have followed closely the history of our Country." Then he recalled, "During my stay in Washington [for Lincoln's inauguration in March 1861] I discovered that your administration was surrounded by greedy office seekers, and the means to obtain success was not much different from the former Democratic Administrations, and I must say I turned in disgust from our National Capitol." He counseled: "Dear Sir, Your present position is one of the most difficult and critical in the world, but if you put your trust in God [,] He will give you wisdom and strength to hold the helm of our Ship of State with a strong hand."

In that dark summer of 1862, with heavy Union losses, Scholte continued corresponding with the president and wrote another letter from his Pella study on July 17, 1862, less political and much warmer than his previous correspondence. He began: "In the acknowledgment of the heavy burden resting at present upon your shoulders, I wish to address you a few words of Sympathy." With a tender heart, he wrote: "Dear Sir! In the solitude of my study room I often reflect upon the dangers surrounding you, but I can also assure that my unobserved prayer often rises for you to the throne of Grace, for wisdom, discernment, fortitude and perseverance in the present critical struggle for our National existence."

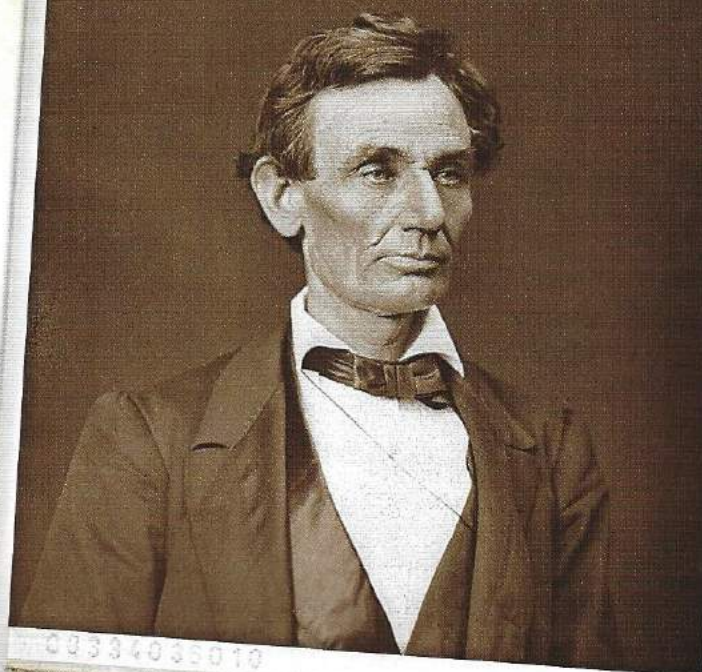
Scholte also wrote Lincoln: "Dear Sir! Human wisdom can not save our nation, and you are not unaware that calculations of human wisdom in our difficulties have already oftentimes failed. There is however a Supreme Wisdom and Power who will not disappoint any man who puts in reality his trust in Him, who can save with few as well as with many."

Then he concluded his letter with a prayerful desire for Lincoln's spiritual strength: "Dear Sir! It is my earnest wish and prayer that you may be strengthened against all pressure of every ultraism, and that you may retain your yet unsullied name [character], and carry t[h]rough your very dangerous and troublesome administration the very honorable name of honest old Abe—You can rest assured that you have at least in me one praying friend in Iowa. Truly yours, Henry P. Scholte."

Probably in response to his letter, Scholte received a letter from President Lincoln on July 30, 1862. Sadly, we do not have that letter.

The Pella minister continued to write President Lincoln to encourage him. Again on August 6, 1862, Scholte concluded his letter to the President: "With earnest prayer to God for the success of your Administration."

Scholte served the State of Iowa and the soldiers from Marion County by serving as a commissioner to take the soldiers' votes. He was commissioned to take the soldiers' votes of the



Republican Presidential candidate Abraham Lincoln. Taken on June 3, 1860, in Springfield, Illinois. H.P. Scholte first met him June 13, 1860.

33rd Regiment on October 14, 1862 at Oskaloosa's Camp Tuttle. And the following year, on October 13, 1863, Scholte traveled to Helena, Arkansas, once again, to take the votes of the 33rd.

General U.S. Grant finally broke the Vicksburg, Mississippi, defenses, and the city fell on July 4, 1863. The citizens of Pella and Marion County rejoiced. However, in the midst of the "loyal citizens of Pella celebrating the victory of our gallant army," someone threw two fire-balls among the ladies in Garden Square, Scholte reported. One fireball, aimed at the speaker, missed, and struck a lady on the head. During the night, "some miscreants," as Scholte called them, "stole into the Garden Square" at night and set fire to the boxes and boards used for seats. For Scholte and others, this simply was too much! Despite believing in "the widest range of free speech," this simply could not be tolerated—those "miserable sympathizers with rebellion."

The presidential campaign of 1864 was held in the middle of the Civil War. Although Lincoln carried Iowa easily with 88,966 votes, General George B. McClellan received 49,586 votes, winning 12 counties, and came close in several others. There were nearly 50,000 votes cast against Lincoln; however, his majority came from Iowa soldiers away from home. This gave the President a 9-to-1 margin in absentee ballots. In Marion County, Lincoln received 1,459 and McClellan received 1,453, a difference of six votes for the President.

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On April 9, 1865, news came to Pella by telegraph. General Robert E. Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia had surrendered to General U.S. Grant at Appomattox Court House in Virginia. Celebrations began—in Pella and Marion County, too! Again, the center of activity was Garden Square, surrounded by a high Osage Orange hedge on all sides. There were no entrances or exits except at the corners. A high platform was built on the east side on which was gathered a large consignment of fireworks. The celebration event was widely publicized and drew an immense crowd. They came by the hundreds as night came on. The celebration was to begin by the display of fireworks. But at the very start of the celebration, sparks from a shooting skyrocket set the entire supply of fireworks on fire, and a wild and dangerous situation occurred. The explosives flew in all directions right in the middle of the entire crowd, wounding and burning many, some seriously. Pandemonium at once broke out, and to escape, all rushed for the hedges. In getting through or over them, many were injured, while in the rush, many others were trampled to the ground. The well planned celebration ended in dire disaster and confusion, but fortunately there was no loss of life. This was a tragic celebration for Pella at the end of the war.

Five days later, another tragedy struck. "President Lincoln Assassinated—with deep emotion we write these words....," shouted Pella's Weekblad. The telegraph brought word to the Pella Railroad station that President Lincoln had been shot and had died. The City's aanspreker—a man who worked for the undertaker and went about announcing who had

died—brought the tragic news door to door. People walked about town, speaking softly and even whispering. Flags appeared, draped in black crepe or some black cloth of sorts.

Pella's public buildings were draped in mourning crepe for 30 days. On the very day of Lincoln's death, April 15, 1865, Governor William Milo Stone, who was from Knoxville, issued a proclamation to the people of Iowa setting aside April 24th as the day on which Pella and all of Iowa should jointly, as one nation, humble themselves before Almighty God. Governor Stone was in Washington, D.C. He had been present at Ford's Theatre when Lincoln was shot and was present when the President died that following morning, April 15, at 7:22. He and an aide accompanied Lincoln's Funeral Train all the way from Washington, D.C., to Springfield, Illinois for the President's final funeral service on May 4, 1865.

All Iowans—Pella and Marion County as well—observed the day of mourning on April 24. All business houses and public places were closed in Pella, and a funeral ceremony was held at Scholte's Church on West First Street for president Lincoln of whom Dominie Scholte said the citizens of Pella "consider to be the embodiment of true democracy,—an honest, upright, and unselfish American Statesman whose memory will live in our hearts forever."

The war was over! The Boys in Blue returned home to Marion County in the Great State of Iowa! And they picked up the pieces of their lives and returned to their way of life, building homes and shops, farming, and doing what people do in Pella and Marion County.

GREETINGS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Lynn Hinga Branderhorst

What an amazing year it has been at the Historic Pella Trust! So much has happened, and many dreams have become realities for our organization.

The Thomas and Nancy Tuttle cabin at 608 Lincoln has undergone a comprehensive restoration! Donors, grant awards, craftspeople, gardeners, educators, and an army of volunteers joined together to make it possible to open the doors of Pella's oldest structure and allow people to learn the amazing tale of where Pella began in 1843. Second Graders, 240 students strong, toured the Tuttle cabin this past spring and enjoyed an educational program written by Pella's own Jan Vandenberg. This program was such a success that it will be an annual Pella second grade field trip event as well as being offered to other area schools.

Education was a common thread this year in other areas of our organization as we offered Introduction to the Dutch Language classes and elder education programs about Pella's oldest architectural treasures to all of the Pella area retirement and assisted living facilities.

It has been a year for Historic Pella Trust to imagine new possibilities, including a new location for our office at 621 Franklin Street, where we moved in April of this year. It is located in the heart of the beautiful Dutch community that we call home.

ORIGINAL LINCOLN SCHOOL 1905-1995

Bruce Boertje

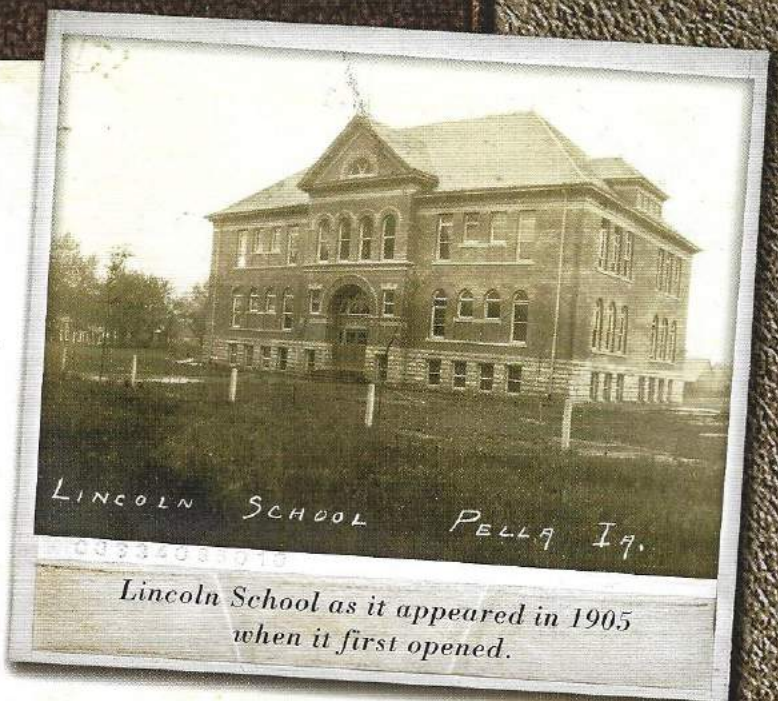
Lincoln School, opened in 1905, was the city of Pella's third building dedicated entirely to public education. This impressive two-story brick structure had a rich and storied history throughout its 90-year lifespan. To better understand Lincoln School's place in Pella's education, we need to go back to the early days of the town. In 1855, just eight years after Pella's founding, the first building dedicated to educating the community's young people was constructed. Named Park School for its proximity to Pella's Central Park (then known as the Public Square or Garden Square), it was a two-room, two-story brick building measuring 30' x 45'. The school, located just west of today's post office, was later expanded into a four-room 30' x 90' building. Former students vividly recalled the large pot-bellied stoves located in each room, a cinder-covered playground, and most strikingly, teachers struggling to teach students who spoke a variety of tongues and dialects, from Dutch to Fries to English.

Twenty years later, additional class space was needed. In 1876, the first Webster School building was erected. This building was located four blocks south of Park School on the northeast corner of Broadway and Peace streets. In addition to "ample, airy rooms elegantly furnished and conveniently arranged," it featured living quarters for a janitor and his family in the basement. In addition, Webster School's second floor housed Pella's first public high school department.

At the time, Central College also operated its own equivalent of a high school department. Called "Central Academy," it was a college preparatory school for outlying students. Central's entire educational facilities were housed in one large three-story brick building located just west of today's Jordan Hall, barely one diagonal block southwest from Webster School.

Over time, Pella's school enrollment continued to increase. By 1901 it had reached 570 students. Park School was dilapidated—the *Pella Chronicle* called it "a disgrace to its people"—and Webster School was filled past its capacity. In desperation, the Pella school system resorted to renting a third-floor classroom from Central College in which to house one of the overflowing grades.

In 1903, after a few failed votes, the citizens of Pella approved an increase in their property taxes to pay for a new school. Land was purchased from Dominie Scholte's son-in-law, P. H. Bousquet, and an architect was hired from Mankato, Minn. A new school building "not to cost over \$20,000" was to be constructed of stone and brick.



The location chosen for the new school was an interesting one. The *Chronicle* reported that the school was to be located in what they called "the park on the west side of North Main street". At that time, the two blocks immediately north of the Scholte house contained the late Dominie Scholte's extensive gardens—the *Chronicle* even referred to them as a "forest". (See diagram for an idea of how the area looked.) The new school was to be located at the foot of that "forest" midway between Main and Broadway streets.

The city displayed no qualms about placing this educational facility in an existing industrial block. On Main Street, barely 75 feet northeast of the school, stood the Pella Steam Laundry. North of the laundry was the privately-owned Pella Electric Light and Power Co. Adjacent to the power plant was the Roorda feed mill.

When the school was built, Pella had no paved streets, no cement sidewalks, no sewer system, and a barely-functioning rudimentary water supply. In fact, the water system was installed more for fire fighting than for drinking. The *Pella Chronicle* once infamously referred to the water from the city's first water plant as "that brown liquid."

By July 1904, the foundation and most of the first floor of the new school had been completed. Prior to the school year, Superintendent Farmer placed a notice in the newspaper reminding parents that all children between the ages of 7 and 15 needed to attend school for at least 16 consecutive weeks during each school year—although it was hoped that they would remain longer.

In September, the school board decided that the new school should be named "Lincoln School." In October the city council ordered that boardwalk street crossings be built over the dirt

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streets near the school. Finally, on December 8, 1904, it was announced that the new school had been completed and the public was invited to attend an open house that Friday afternoon.

Classes opened in the new school building for the first time on Monday, January 2, 1905. With the increased room that the new facility offered came the introduction of Pella's very first kindergarten classes. The *Pella Banner* explained how the classes would operate: "In the forenoon the [kindergarten] children of the north division will meet at the Lincoln school for a half day's session, and in the afternoon those of the south division will meet at the Webster school for a half day's session."

Simultaneous with Lincoln School's opening came the closing and sale of the Park School building. Also, Webster School was extensively remodeled that summer. In its basement, the five rooms originally built for the janitor's quarters were removed and remodeled into one large room to house the kindergarten class.

In 1906 Lincoln School had an enrollment of 301. The school had one teacher for each grade from kindergarten through eighth grade—an average of 33 pupils per teacher. Webster held classes for grades K – 6 while continuing to provide all four high school grades. Historically, class sizes at Lincoln School remained large. In 1915, Miss K. Verhuel had 45 pupils in her class while Miss Harmsen had 40 students and Miss M. Verheul had 37.

By 1912 Webster School's high school department was so overcrowded that a bond issue was floated to construct Pella's first high school building. It took a couple of years, but the issue passed in 1914. In 1915 the cornerstone for the high school was laid and in 1916 the new high school (today's

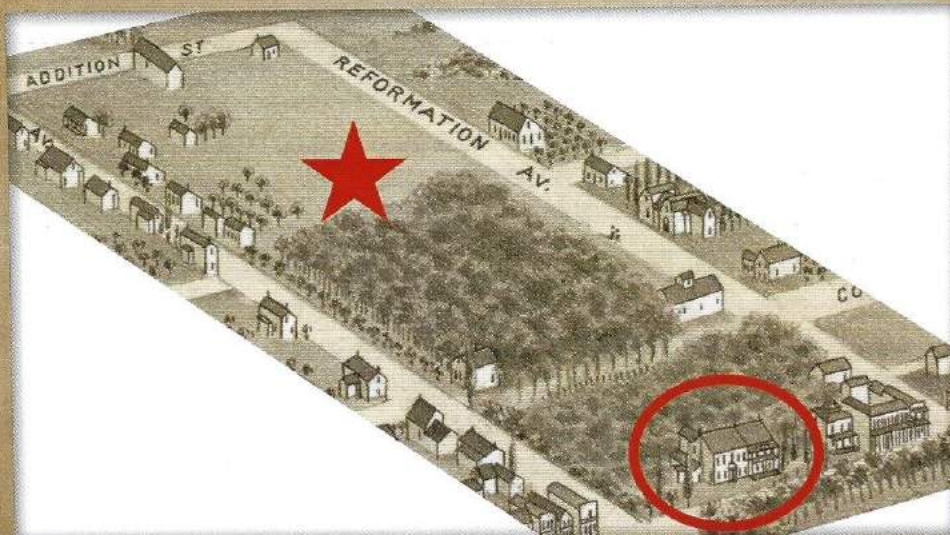
Community Center) opened at the northeast corner of Union and Broadway streets.

The city was rapidly moving into the modern era. In 1913, the city of Pella began the installation of several life-changing improvements: an upgraded waterworks with drinkable water, the first sanitary sewer system, and the first paving of city streets. 1914 saw bids being taken for the installation of indoor plumbing for both Lincoln and Webster schools.

In 1921 a room in Lincoln School was "fitted up with three special grades as nearly like a country school as possible." This room provided Central College student teachers with a setting where they could hone their fledgling abilities as instructors. The paper noted: "This is an excellent time for directors of some of the country schools near Pella to secure a teacher for next fall, and incidentally, see the teacher at work before she is employed."

In 1961 a new stand-alone wing was added west of Lincoln School. In addition to several extra classrooms it included a gymnasium and a kitchen in which—for the first time—hot lunches could be prepared and served. Within a few months, 300 of the 475 Lincoln School students were taking advantage of these lunches.

For 90 years Lincoln School faithfully served Pella's students. But by 1994, the school board felt that Lincoln had outlived its purpose and was no longer needed. That November, the Historic Pella Trust was formed "to aid in the preservation of old Lincoln School, and other historic structures and sites in Pella." Many proposals were introduced for potential uses of the building, but it was for naught. On February 15, 1995, the Pella Community School Board voted to tear down Lincoln School. By June, demolition was under way. Within a few months, old Lincoln School had joined Park School, old Webster School, and the "Old Central" building as nothing more than a memory.



This image shows the relative locations of the Scholte House (circled), the Scholte Gardens, and the future site of Lincoln School (star). The sketch is taken from the 1869 Bird's Eye View of Pella map. In this view, Reformation Av. is now Main Street, and Addition St. is now Jefferson St.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Current and Prospective Historic Trust Supporters,

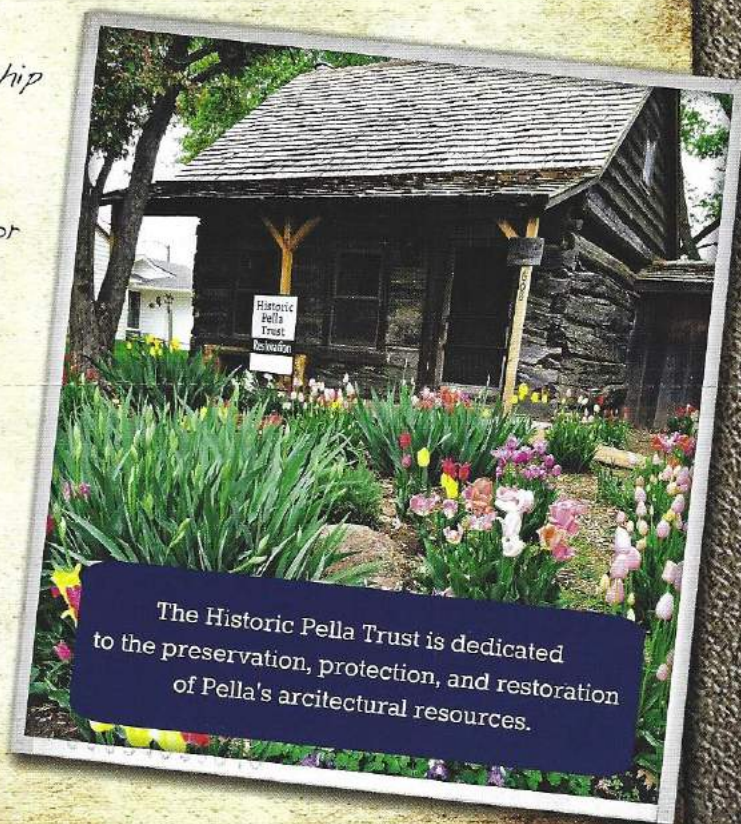
Historic Pella Trust is continuing its preservation efforts to help maintain Pella's distinctive charm. Many of our older buildings provide a special link to our Dutch heritage and also give our village a comfortable, gracious feel. We have also enjoyed a large economic development benefit as we welcome countless visitors who come to enjoy our scenic Dutch town.

HPT is now working on three main projects: a) the restoration of the Tuttle Cabin where H.P. Scholte negotiated the land deal for much of Pella, b) working closely with the City of Pella on the creation of a historic district in one of our most charming older neighborhoods, and c) the restoration of the Stegeman Store. In these projects we are bringing a special focus to use them to help educate our young people and visitors on our history, which began with a small band of Dutch immigrants who arrived over 150 years ago in search of religious freedom. Each of these projects requires substantial investment, and we are embarking on a capital fundraising campaign so that we can bring them to a timely completion. HPT is now more than 20 years old, and this is our first large fundraising project of this type.

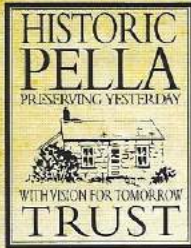
With our new director, Lynn Hinga Branderhoorst, we are growing our membership and bringing new faces into our day-to-day activities. This has brought energy and a renewed sense of purpose that is helping drive our efforts to have a bigger impact for our town. We are also being blessed with several new members on our board who bring enthusiasm and new perspectives.

We hope that you see the value of our work to the Pella community. Our board and I trust that you and your friends will find ways to generously support these projects and our general goals of maintaining our special Pella charm.

Het aller beste, Bob Zylstra



The Historic Pella Trust is dedicated to the preservation, protection, and restoration of Pella's architectural resources.



HISTORIC PELLA TRUST
621 Franklin Street, PO Box 1
Pella, IA 50219

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RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2017

Historic Pella Trust Membership Renewals for 2017 are underway now. We'd love to keep you updated on the current activities of the Trust. Your support is crucial for us to continue the work of preserving and protecting the rich architectural resources of Pella. We deeply appreciate your support. Please complete the form below and mail it with your contribution to the Historic Pella Trust office.

Historic Pella Trust | PO Box 1 | Pella, IA 50219

I would like to receive information on Historic Pella Trust and become a member.

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____

Membership Level: _____ Single \$35 _____ Sustaining Family \$100
 _____ Senior \$20 _____ Patron \$250
 _____ Family \$50 _____ Benefactor \$500
 _____ Business \$75 _____ Preservationist amounts over \$500

I would like to volunteer. Please call me at _____

If you are giving the above named person a gift membership, please include your name and address.

MAIL TO: Historic Pella Trust | PO Box 1 | Pella, Iowa 50219

KEEP IN TOUCH

EMAIL: If you would like to be added to our email list so you receive current updates, please send your email address to us at office@historicpellatrust.org



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