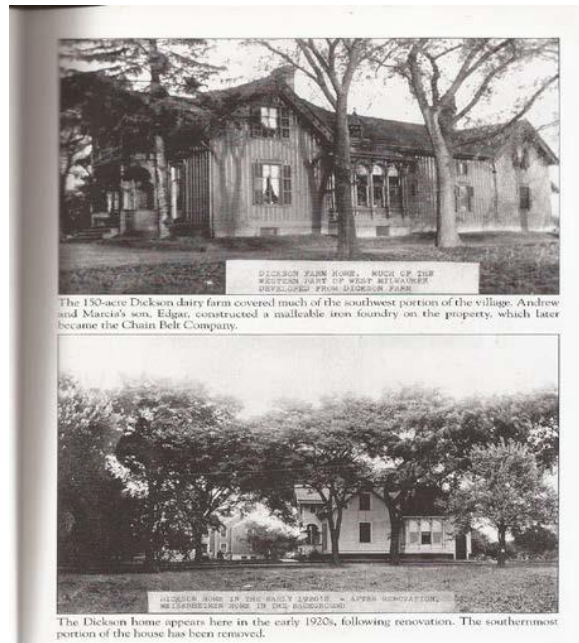


The Dickson family: have you ever heard of them? Maybe not, but you probably have been on their land and didn't know it. Part of their land is now West Milwaukee Park, part of the Milwaukee County Park System. It is 21.1 acres in size and located at 5000 W. Burnham Street. The Dickson's donated this land to the Village of West Milwaukee, but later the Village turned it over to Milwaukee County.

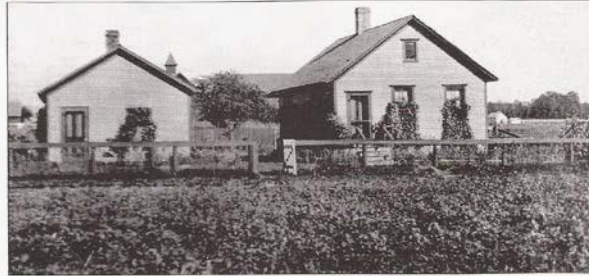
Story: Andrew & Marcia Dickson owned 150 acres of farmland many years ago that is now occupied by the Rexnord Corp. The Dickson home stood west of the present village Hall, on 47th and Beloit Rd, on the site of the Stana Apartment Andrew died in 1900 & Marcia in 1932.



Their 50-acre dairy farm covered much of the Southwest portion of the village. Their son, Edgar, constructed a malleable iron foundry on the property which later became the Chain Belt Co. The picture below is of their home photo taken in the early 1920s.



These homes used to be on Dickson Lane (south of Beloit & Greenfield). The house on the top belonged to Edward Richards, a Civil War Veteran who often fired a cannon east of the building at sunrise and sunset. The bottom photo is the home located at 4739 W. Beloit Rd. (East of the Dickson farmhouse). It was built by Andrew Dickson for his son, Edgar, and was later occupied by E. J. Meisenheimer, the second village president and his son, Gilles. Today, it's rented out as an apartment.

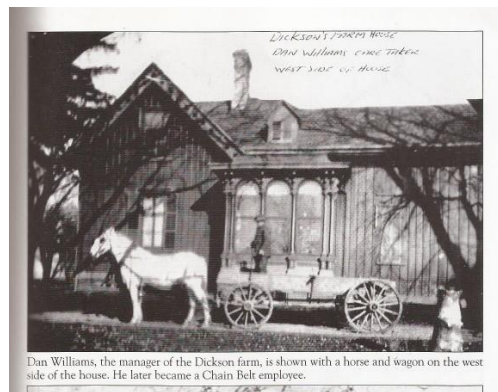


These houses are located on Dickson Lane, south of Beloit Road and Greenfield Avenue. A horse barn can be seen in the background. The house on the right belonged to Edward Richards, a Civil War veteran who regularly fired a cannon east of the Soldiers' Home main building at sunrise and sunset.



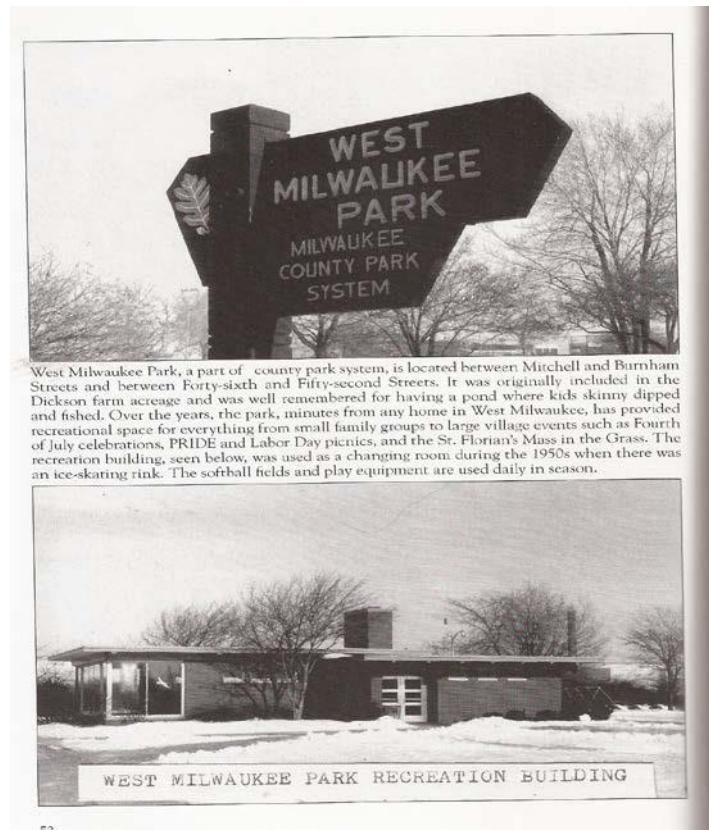
The Meisenheimer home stands at 4739 West Beloit Road, east of the Dickson farmhouse. Built for Andrew Dickson's son Edgar, the house was later occupied by E. J. Meisenheimer, the second village president, and his aviator son Gilles. The house remains today and is rented out as apartments.

The manager of the Dickson farm was Dan Williams, who later became a Chain Belt employee.



Dan Williams, the manager of the Dickson farm, is shown with a horse and wagon on the west side of the house. He later became a Chain Belt employee.

When it was the Dickson Farm acreage the property had a pond where kids swan and fished. Many events were held there such as the West Milwaukee 4th of July, PRIDE, Labor Day picnics and the St. Florian Mass in the Grass. In the bottom picture, the recreation building was used as a changing room during the 1950s when there was an ice skating rink.



Other parks have recognized people of the past. Union Square is dedicated to Carl Zeidler, Milwaukee's 33rd Mayor. I wonder if someday someone might re-name our park or put up a plaque about the Dickson donation.

Many spent a day at West Milwaukee Park as it had many attractions: wading pool, tot lot, sandbox, slide, monkey bars, swings, tennis court, baseball diamond, fire engine (to play on), restrooms and vending machines in the lobby.

A gift from one family that is used and appreciated a lot. You can tell by the amount of people using the park for baseball games and by the number of cars parked on the street. Have you ever visited West Milwaukee Park?

Courtesy of the West Milwaukee Historical Society and Mrs. Omick.