



Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society Historic Times

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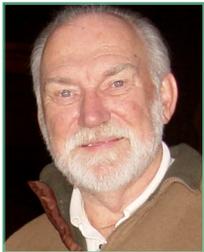
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Open Thursday afternoons from 2-5 p.m. and by appointment.

For research, email archivist Bev Silldorff: dondorf@execpc.com.

Entrepreneurs Take Thiensville Back to the Future President's Message



Thiensville has a lot of intersections, but none is more historically important than Old Firehouse corner on Main Street. The four jewels on that corner are the Old Firehouse and Village Hall (1914), the Bublitz Furniture Store and Funeral Home (1913), the Oscar Bublitz Grocery Store (1920) and the

Van Alten House (1890). Today, we identify these buildings as The Firehouse Museum, Stardust Records, Schmitt Ford and "The Chinese Restaurant".

The structure on the southwest corner was built in 1890 as a private home for the Van Alten family. Around the turn of the century, the building was converted into the Commercial House saloon and hotel by a man named Nick Wilson. Mr. Wilson operated his hotel as one of four popular resort hotels in Thiensville and also sold locally milled flour and general merchandise west of his hotel and along the railroad line. In more recent times, the Van Alten building has housed a number of businesses including French, Chinese, Italian and Mexican restaurants.

Starting this summer, the building will be home to a Nepalese-American fusion restaurant, "Cheel", operated by Thiensville residents Jesse and Barkha Daily. The Dailys own CORE Consulting on Green Bay Road and are two of the driving forces behind the successful move of the Farmers' Market to Thiensville Park.

As self described "foodies", the Dailys will offer a variety of dishes including distinctive offerings from Barkha Daily's native Nepal. While this restaurant will be a great

addition to the community, their business plan includes an extensive restoration of the Van Alten home to its Victorian-era Queen Anne beauty. The landmark tower over the entryway will be returned to the structure and will be capped off with a bronze eagle by Thiensville artist Allen Caucutt.

As president of the Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society,



Image above is of the Commercial House Hotel, originally the Van Alten home, built in 1890. On left, a rendered image of the same structure as the new Cheel Restaurant established in 2014.

I would like to thank Mr. Ken Moy for his many years of care and stewardship of the Van Alten home. Without his efforts, this jewel of our village may well have faced the wrecking ball years ago. And now, thanks to the efforts of Jesse and Barkha Daily, the Van Alten home/ Commercial House Hotel will be restored and saved for future generations to admire and enjoy.

Inside ...

Volunteer Opportunities. See Page 2

Society Wish List. See Page 2

Civil War Bounties Paid. See Page 3

Acquisitions. See Page 3

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Grow with Us

The MT Historical Society has grown rapidly during the past two years. We have approximately 250 voting members including members from several states. Join today. It's easy. Memberships also make great gifts!

Annual Membership:

Individual	\$10
Family.....	\$15
Contributing.....	\$25
Business.....	\$75
Sustaining	\$100

Tax deductible 501(c)(3) donations are appreciated.

Send your check to: MTHS, 6100 W. Mequon Road, Mequon, WI 53092. Don't forget to include your name, address, phone number and email. For more membership information, please call Membership Chair, Amanda Heintskill, at 262-227-9316.

Volunteer Opportunities

The Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society Board is hard at work organizing the archive research center for use by members and guests, but help is needed to accomplish the task.

Could you help with clipping and filing, indexing materials, planning fund raising, setting up displays, organizing advertising, updating the web page, or editing the newsletter?

Call Mary Sayner at 262-242-2623 or 262-853-7376 to discuss your volunteer interest.

Wish List

The Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society is greatly in need of the following office item and numerous furnishings for the Isham Day House:

- Large Format Office Copier
- Simple Farm Table and Chairs (circa mid-1800's)
- Plain White Dishes (cira mid-1800's)
- Simple Cutlery (cira mid-1800's)
- Cooking Utensils (cira mid-1800's)
- Small Butter Churn
- Small Spinning Wheel
- Old Post Office Box (cira mid-1800's)

Please contact Bev Silldorff, 262-242-3107 on Thursday afternoons, if you would like to donate any of the above-mentioned items to the Historical Society.

Document Preservation Grant

The Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society is in the process of creating additional archival storage for many items included in our collection of local documents and pictures.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Wisconsin State Historical Society, and matching funds generated through a sale of artwork donated by Tarq Durante, the owner of Cedarburg Auction Company, we are now able to purchase additional shelving and acid-free archival storage boxes to better preserve our historical materials.

Please feel free to stop by any Thursday afternoon to meet our team of volunteers and learn more about our collection and its preservation.

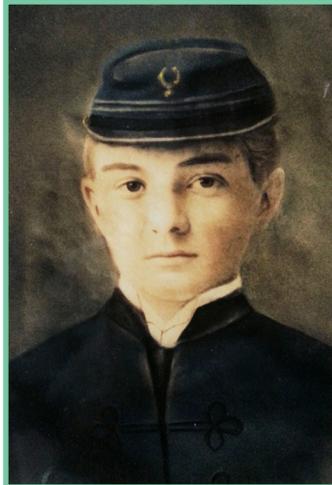
Civil War Bounties Paid to Meet Local Draft Quota

The onset of the U.S. Civil War provided quite a dilemma for residents of the Town of Mequon. Mequon consisted mainly of immigrants from Europe who came to America to practice their religion without government interference and to avoid being forced to join the military. Local German settlers in particular were opposed to President Lincoln and his war.

Following the bombing of Fort Sumter in April of 1861, the attitude toward the war and Lincoln changed. From that point on there was growing support to oppose Jefferson Davis and the Confederate Army. Ironically, Jefferson Davis, the President of the Confederate States, had been a U.S. Army officer at Fort Winnebago near Portage, Wisconsin before becoming involved with the Confederacy.

To build the forces needed to oppose the Confederate Army, The Town of Mequon was required to provide recruits to fill the draft imposed by the government. The early draft presented a hardship for families, particularly those on farms where manpower was hard to come by. By 1864, the Town found it impossible to fill their quota with volunteers.

Since a number of towns elsewhere in the state recruited outside their jurisdiction, twelve "free holders" in Mequon petitioned the Town Board on January 27, 1864 to convene a special meeting to raise a tax to finance the payment of a bounty to recruits to fulfill the Town's draft quota. The date of the special meeting was set for February 15, 1864 at the



*Private William Hausburg,
Company A - 26th Regiment of
Wisconsin Infantry Volunteers.
Service date from 8/21/1862 to
6/13/1865.*

School House of Mequon Village (Thoreau School). The purpose of the meeting was to vote to raise a tax, not to exceed \$6,200, to pay a bounty of \$200 each for 31 recruits. The bounty issue passed 304-94.

Mequon had a quota of 51 troops to be supplied to the Union Army by March 10, 1864. To advertise the bounty and meet the troop requirement, a notice of the payment being offered to recruits was placed in several area German and English newspapers. On February 22 and 23, 1864, Town Chairman Adolph Zimmermann went to Milwaukee to offer recruits a cash advance of \$50 and a "Town Order" in the amount of \$130 from the Town of Mequon.

The Town of Mequon was able to meet its March, 1864, recruitment quota and actually supplied a total of 94 troops to the Union Army during that year. The total for 1864 included 36 troops who did not receive a bounty payment. Local residents provided loans of \$2,500 to provide the cash advances to the March recruits. In total, \$10,692 was paid to volunteer soldiers from 1864 tax collections.

In 1865, the final year of the Civil War, 36 volunteers enlisted in the Federal Army to fill the majority of the Town of Mequon's quota for that year. To complete their quota, the Town paid a few bounties of \$300 to recruits from the Fond du Lac area.

Don Silldorff, Historian
Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society

Acquisitions

Thanks to the generosity of donors and local organizations, the Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society has recently acquired:

- Index of two Plat Maps donated by the Ozaukee County Historical Society
- 5 books written and donated by Karl Hertz
- Brother Label Maker from Ruth Renz
- Two issues of Town Talks circa 1936 and 1937 from Lisa Podewils

The following genealogies have been donated:

- The Life of Dr Kuang Shim Kim from Dr. Michael Kim, D.D.S. of Mequon
- History of Johan Gotthelf Moritz Wittig from Catherine Wittig-Eisch
- Research regarding the Family of John Boesch from Keith John Keehn

Do you have a copy of your genealogy record or old photos that you would like to donate to the society? If so, please contact Bev Silldorff, Archivist, on Thursdays between 2:00 and 5:00 p.m. at 262-242-3107.

The Commercial House Hotel at 105 S. Main Street in Thiensville. 1890's to 2014!

Thiensville...Back to the future



Historic Times

Megunon Thiensville Historical Society's

Your Renewal is Due

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

6100 W. Megunon Road, Megunon, WI 53092

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