

Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society Historic Times

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6100 W. Mequon Road, Mequon, WI 53092

262-242-3107 | mthistory1839@gmail.com

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For research, call archivist Bev Silldorff: 262-242-3290

A Tribute to Donald Silldorff, Founder of the Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society President's Message

For my President's Column in this edition of the MTHS newsletter, I have decided to pay tribute to Don Silldorff who passed away in late August of this year.

As most of you know, Don was the founder of The Mequon Historical Society in 1988. Don met with the members of The Mequon Men's Club in the late 1980's at which time he shared items from his collection and facts from his profound knowledge of the history of our community. He made such an impression on the members of the organization that they decided to work with Don to help collect, preserve and share our local history.

The Men's Club's actions included devoting their assets and the major funding of their member, Ottomar Logemann, to working with Don to create the Mequon Historical Society. The City of Mequon joined the effort by agreeing to allow the Men's Club to renovate the former Mequon Police and Fire Department building into a home for this promising historical society.



Don Silldorff. Recipient of the Wisconsin State Historical Society's Achievement Award for Distinguished Service to History, June, 2002.



Bev and Don Silldorff flanking Dorothy and Ottomar Logemann at the dedication of the Logemann Community Center in 1988.

Now 26 years later, the Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society, as it's now named, continues to collect, preserve and share Don's legacy in a large room provided by The City of Mequon through The Logemann Community Center. At the Annual Meeting of MTHS in early November of this year, the membership took action to name the main room at the historical society The Donald E. Silldorff Center for Historical Research.

Don's high standards for accurate and unbiased historical research will be a part of everything that takes place in the room now so fittingly named for him. Don's passion for accuracy and detail can never be duplicated, but my hope is that the efforts of those who work in the center which now bears his name will be inspired to do their best to continue the legacy Don started over 25 years ago.

Bob Blazich

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Contact Us

President: Bob Blazich, rblazich@gmail.com
262-242-4653

Historian: Ruth Renz

Address: 6100 W. Mequon Road,
Mequon, WI 53092

Website: www.mthistoricalsociety.org

Email: mthistory1839@gmail.com

MTHS Phone: 262-242-3107

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 our office at 262-242-3107.

Volunteering: M/T Historical Society Style

The Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society is grateful to the volunteers who worked to promote, organize and expand the reach of the Society in 2014. Everything from planning events, assessing and indexing historical materials, clipping newspapers and magazines, filing clippings, representing the Society at meetings/events, cleaning the Isham Day House/research room and putting up posters were part of some volunteer's contributions. Although these tasks seem mundane and boring, one learns the history of Mequon and Thiensville through this work. Often the pace is slowed as the volunteer takes time to read an article rather than just file it or add information to an index. One often hears, "Oh, I didn't know that" or "Where is that building/farm/cemetery/road located?" or "Who are these people in the picture? And what event are they part of?" "When did this happen? Why can't this be done again?"

Thank you for the help in 2014. It was awesome! We look for more people in the community to make the Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society viable by offering their help in this great cause: collecting, preserving, and educating the present and future generations in the history of this great area.

To volunteer contact Mary Sayner at mcsayner@yahoo.com or by calling 262-242-2624. Please leave a message if I am not available. If you are unable to volunteer on Thursday, we can arrange for a suitable time for you to contribute to this historic cause.

Consider an MTHS Membership as a Gift!

Everyone has at least one "hard to buy for" person on their gift list. MT Historical Society memberships make the perfect gift for those who love history and the Mequon Thiensville area, and they are tax deductible too!

Members get our newsletter delivered to their door along with special invites to events hosted by the MT Historical Society. This is truly the gift that will keep on giving. *See insert for a membership application.*

Get Children Interested in Genealogy

Some children are naturally curious about their past. But those who have not yet been exposed to the wonders of their own family history are liable to get hooked once they experience the bite from the "genealogy bug." Consider sparking their interest in the following ways:



- Take a trip to the cemetery to visit relatives buried there. They will ask questions. Perhaps a visit can include a rubbing of a tombstone that they can put on their bedroom wall. They will want to know all about that relative.

A chart or family group sheet is a good start, but children soon lose interest if it's only names and dates. They want to know much more.

- Visit Grandma and Grandpa. Ask them what life was like when they went to school. Grandpa will have lots of stories to tell. Follow Grandma into the kitchen. She'll talk about what she learned from her mother. She might even share a few recipes with you. Ask about what clothes they wore to school.
- A family reunion is another great opportunity to get the relatives to tell about things they remember from when they were children. Be sure to take a

recorder and a camera along. They can pretend to be Barbara Walters and interview them.

- Kids like to relate history that they learned at school. They would be interested in the ancestor's part in a certain era or war. The Civil War History will come alive to them if they can report that a relative was in it.
- When studying about Ellis Island, they will want answers such as what was it like to come to a new country. Their interest will spark when talking about ethnic background. What does it mean to be Irish, Hispanic, Asian, Italian or Native American? This would be a good time for a trip to the library.

Genealogy helps give children an identity and connection to other people. Be a mentor. Help them find answers in immigration and census records. Give them books and get them to write the stories they have heard. It's easy to start with your Mom and Dad, brothers and sisters, and then reach out to Aunts, Uncles, cousins, Grandmas, Grandpas and their sisters and brothers. Be prepared, because when the genealogy bug bites, there is no cure.

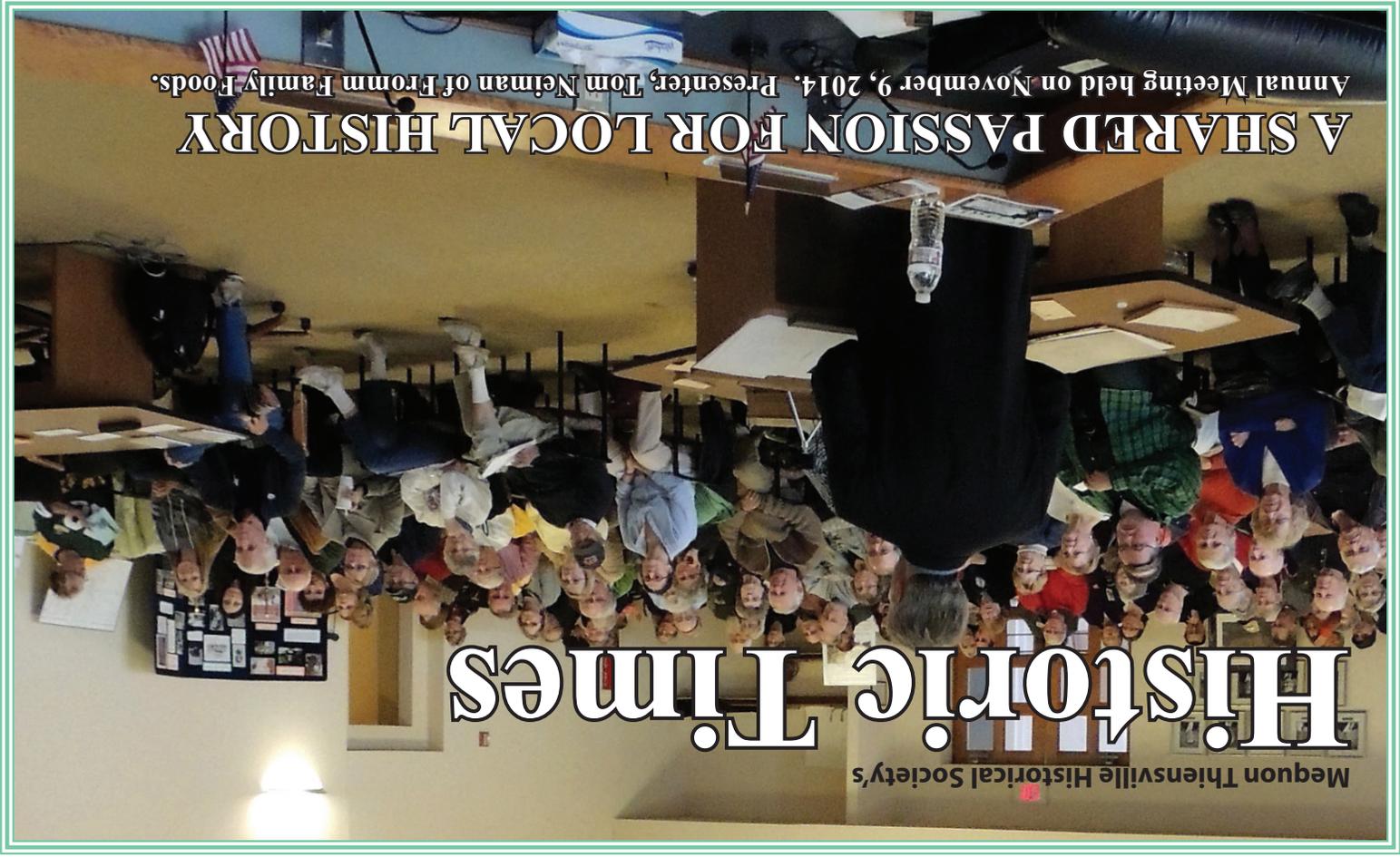
Contributed by Ruth J. Renz,
MTHS Researcher

Holiday Wish List

The mission of the Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society is to collect and share our local history. When making your holiday shopping list, consider giving a gift to the Historical Society. You can help by donating historical documents and images to our collection, or by providing volunteer or monetary support to aid in the archival process. Your generosity will ensure that future generations will have access to our precious local history. Below is a list of items that the Society could use:

- Homestead High School Commencement Programs, years 1959-66 and 1977.
- New metal 4 drawer letter size filing cabinet.
- Cardboard bankers storage boxes with lids.
- Document and image scanner with multipage feeder.
- Label maker tape for Brother P-touch 1100QL.
- Large format office copy machine.
- New letterhead design.





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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Your Renewal is Due