



Published by Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society
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Open Thursday afternoons from 2-5 p.m. and by appointment.
For research, call archivist Bev Silldorff: 262-242-3290



Exciting Times for the M-T Historical Society

By Bob Blazich, President

Thanks to the broad support of the Mequon-Thiensville community, our historical society has grown and prospered. It has been three years now since we lost our rent free home of over 25 years in the Logemann Community Center. Moving to our current offices on Green Bay Road in Thiensville and coming up with an \$800 per month rent payment proved to be a major challenge. Not only did we meet that challenge, but we moved on to new opportunities for growth and service to the community:

- **Old Firehouse** -- We are continuing to work with the Village of Thiensville to renovate and use the upper floor of the old firehouse. Due to Village budget constraints, the initial work will be to make the space useable as secure and climate controlled storage. A future move of our archives to the old firehouse is probably 4-5 years away.
- **Past Perfect** -- Thanks to a Wisconsin Historical Society grant and matching funds from a very generous member in Maryland, Fay Walker of our board has been digitizing and organizing our collection using

museum-quality software.

- **Oral History Project** -- Board member Tom Streifender has taken on a long-overdue Oral History Project to build a story-filled archive of personal recollections. We are in the process of purchasing special equipment to make this a reality.
- **History Co-op** -- The various historical societies in Ozaukee County continue to meet on a regular basis to support each other, share information, promote each other's events and exchange items that fit best into each other's collections.
- **Isham Day House** -- After three years of effort, board member, Sam Cutler, will be opening his long-awaited Mequon River Postal Museum and Stamp Gallery in the society's 1839 Isham Day House opposite the Mequon City Hall. Invitation to the opening this June will be sent to all MTHS members.
- **"You Know You're From Mequon-Thiensville If ..."** -- We have been working closely with students from an Internet Marketing class at Concordia College to start up a historic-themed discussion group on Facebook. The students will also help us build participation in the discussion group as part of their marketing class.



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MT Historical Society 2018 Board of Directors

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Treasurer: Rachel Muchin-Young
Membership : Mary Sayner
Archivist: Bev Silldorff
Members: Sam Cutler, Jr.
Doug Hansen
Ron Knaus
James Schaefer
Paul Schreiber
Tom Streifender

Member Emeritus: Gordy Hinrichs
Don Molyneux

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Website: www.mthistoricalsociety.org

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MTHS Phone: 262-242-3107

Join Us

Join today. It's easy. Memberships also make great gifts!

Annual Membership:

Individual\$15
Family.....\$20
Contributing.....\$30
Business.....\$80
Sustaining\$100

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

Send your check to: MTHS, 216 Green Bay Road,
Suite 102, Thiensville, WI 53092. Membership form
located on page 7 of this newsletter.

MTHS Wish List

Please consider sponsoring one or more of the following archival storage items. We need at least ten of each item on the list, so any sponsorship will be greatly appreciated:

Archival Print Boxes	\$20.45 each
Post Card Boxes	\$16.49 each
High Capacity Photo Boxes	\$40.00 each
Photo Hanging Bars	\$27.90 box of 50
Photo Sheet Protectors	\$27.95 box of 50



Tracy Springer Activates Quickbooks

Tracy Springer, who has a Master's Degree in accounting, has become our latest super volunteer. Tracy spent much of the spring reviewing our past year's financial records and setting up a responsive accounting system for MTHS.

Working with our treasurer, Paul Schreiber, Tracy organized our credits and debits into a form that will easily generate financial updates and reports for the society. Tracy and Paul continue to work together to fine tune our Quickbooks system.

Opening of the Isham Day House

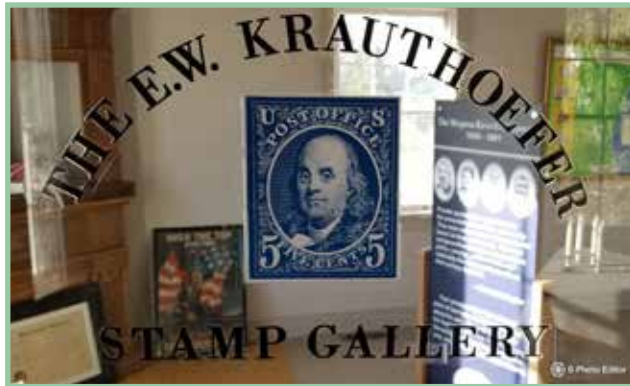
Contributed by Sam Cutler, Jr., Board Member, MTHS

It's hard to believe it's been three years since MTHS President Bob Blazich and I sat down for a cup of coffee to discuss what could be done to save the Isham Day House. The plan we hatched will finally be coming to fruition in June with the opening of the Mequon River Postal Museum and Stamp Gallery at the Isham Day House.

This long neglected "jewel box" that once served as an ante bellum post office, has been repurposed in order to tell the stories of five local postmasters and to provide a sanctuary for postage stamps collected by loyal philatelists from past generations.

While the original plan has remained unaltered, the

stories the museum has to tell have undergone major revisions over the past three years. I experienced what UW Professor Bill Cronon described as "the pleasure of playing Sherlock Holmes, of following clues and leads down improbable pathways to discover evidence of events we'd never even heard of when we began the backward journey"* And, of course, the search is ongoing and has really just begun.



One half of the restored Isham Day House is the newly created E. W. Krauthoefer stamp gallery. The Post Office Museum and Stamp Gallery are scheduled to open this June.

The list of those who helped on our project is incredibly long, and hopefully they will

be suitably acknowledged in short order. Please join us this June in bringing an important part of our local history back to life.

**William Cronan, "Why the Past matters," Wisconsin magazine of History (Autumn, 2000)*

MTHS Opens Discussion Forum on Facebook

Contributed by Bob Blazich, President, MTHS

The MT Historical Society has started a unique opportunity for people in the Mequon-Thiensville community to share local pictures, stories, information and ask questions. This type of Facebook page has drawn 1000s of followers in communities like Cedarburg, and we are hoping that it will prove to be as popular with those with ties to our area.

You Know You Are From Mequon Thiensville If ... was developed by Autumn Harrington, a Digital Marketing student at Concordia University in Mequon. Autumn initiated the project for the historical society as part of her course requirements and will continue to work with the society to promote the Facebook page.

We hope this will become a very entertaining and informative vehicle to share both current and historic information. Please find us on Facebook, click LIKE to

follow the page and most importantly click SHARE to help us to spread the word.



LIKE us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MTHistory/>



Autumn Harrington, Digital Marketing Student at Concordia University and Volunteer for MTHS.

Tragic Times in Early Mequon

Contributed by the late Don Silldorff, Founder of the Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society

Recent editions of the MTHS Newsletter have featured reprints of articles written in the early years of the society by our founder, Don Silldorff. For this newsletter, I found a rather long but very powerful article in our June, 1994, newsletter describing the extreme hardships endured by the early settlers who were drawn to Freistadt. Due to the length of the article, I will only be able to summarize portions and include key paragraphs which will be in quotation marks. The full text of the article is available at our website, www.mthistoricalsociety.org.

-Bob Blazich

chose was three miles west of the Green Bay Road. They made the trek through the weeds and swamp to their new home which was later named 'Freystatt'."

While on the trip to join the men in Freistadt, Christian Knuth's wife, Charlotte, and their remaining two daughters took shelter in a home on Green Bay Road. Charlotte died there on November 28th and their five year old daughter died in the same home on January 4, 1840. Christian went on to marry 20 year old Wilhelmine in September of 1840. Wilhelmine died two years later after giving birth to two children who died as infants. Christian Knuth married for a third time, had a son in 1844, and died in 1855 at the age of 50.

"Henriette (Radue) lost her first husband, Friedrich Wilhelm Bartlet, during the trip from Germany. He died September 9th on the Erie Canal at the age of 38, leaving two sons Carl and Wilhelm and a daughter Emilie. In July of 1840, the first summer in Freistadt, Henriette married widower Ernst August Gottlieb Radue after his first wife, Ernestine Caroline Charlotte (nee Klug), had died on June 14, 1840 at the age of 35. Ernestine's 9 year old daughter, also named Ernestine, Caroline Charlotte (nee Klug), had died on June 14, 1840 at the age of 35. Ernestine's 9 year old daughter, also named Ernestine, had died March 1, 1840."

In May of 1839, approximately 960 Pomeranian emigres assembled in Hamburg for their trip to America. They sailed to Liverpool, England, in five steamboats and went on to New York in early September of that year. Some families stayed in New York, and many went on to Buffalo. From Buffalo, about 40 families decided to continue on to Milwaukee where there was a promise of cheap land at \$1.25 per acre. The group completed the nine-day steamboat trip to Milwaukee on October 4, 1839. Prices in Milwaukee itself had been driven up by speculators, so half of the weary group continued on to what was then part of Washington County and now know as Freistadt.

In part of this article, Don Silldorff chose to focus on the hardships encountered by the family of Christian Knuth, a blacksmith, and his wife Friedericke. They left Hamburg with their three daughters, the youngest of which was born in February of 1839. "On October 4th, the day the tired passengers are believed to have disembarked from their long journey, Christian's youngest daughter Caroline died. She was only 7 months 26 days old."

"Under the leadership of (Captain Heinrich) von Rohr, the men went into the wilderness and began constructing dwellings for their families. In November, the families were sent for and moved in to Mequon by way of the Green Bay Road. The settlement they



This historical marker in Freistadt tells a very brief story of the early settlers of their community.

The Don Sillardorff Archive

Contributed by Mary Sayner, Board Member (262-242-3290 or 262-242-3107)

The Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society thrives on the generosity of donors and local organizations. Below is a list of recent acquisitions.

Areas of recent research:

- Haas Family in Thiensville (Shoemaker, Tavern-Dance Hall on Green Bay Rd., 1890's owned 2 properties)
- Gerlach-Zimmerman-Opitz-Brewery
- Rocco Bonino
- Interurban railroading
- Property at 12328 Wasaukee Rd.
- Alpine Village early land ownership
- Mequon Turner Hall
- Thien-Heidel families
- Henry Meyer
- Kutter, Leonard & Louise
- Hilty farm location 1873
- Kroenke Family: owner of Thiensville Mill and extensive land on Milwaukee River

Recent Acquisitions:

Look Donation: Family documents, school items, family photos

OCHS: Copies of Morhrhusen photos (10), booklet – "The Henry Meyer Family"

Judy Helgeland: Postcard of Otto Hadler Hardware Store

Bob and Jan Blazich: Book – "Studying Wisconsin, The Life of Increase Lapham"

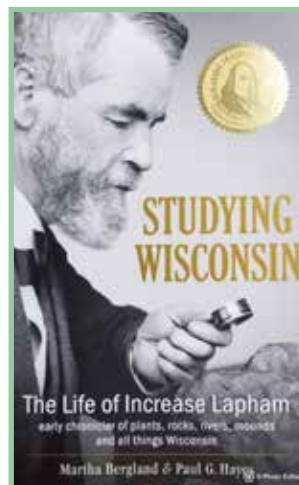
Louise Seifert: Soft cover book – "The Homestead Bands"

Nina Look – Fred Derr: "For Love of the Game" (Golf at Oz. Country Club), "Back from Duty-Oz Vets Share Stories," "One Room Country Schools"

Attorney Don Levy: Box of Thiensville-Mequon related items collected by his late brother, Lowell Levy



Attorney Don Levy donated a box of Thiensville-Mequon related items collected by his late brother, Lowell Levy.



"Studying Wisconsin, The Life of Increase Lapham," donated by Bob and Jan Blazich.

Calling All Oral History Buffs! MTHS Launches Oral History Project

MTHS has launched an oral history project to collect recorded memories and first-hand accounts of significant events, times or experiences with ties to the Mequon-Thiensville area. MTHS has a great collection of physical artifacts like photographs, maps, newspapers and other documents that help us understand our history. Oral history collects a different kind of artifact: the recorded voices or images of present and former community members recalling their personal stories, whether of personal or family life, work, school, church, or community activities. Everybody has a story. Our challenge is to find, preserve and share them.



We can use your help. If you know about a story we should record, please pass it along. If you'd like to help finding stories, setting up or recording interviews, please let us know.

For information or to check out volunteer opportunities, contact MTHS Board member Tom Streifender, tstreifender@wi.rr.com, or talk to any MTHS Board member.

Volunteering at the M-T Historical Society

Contributed by Mary Sayner, Volunteer Coordinator & Board Member

Volunteers continue to work on clipping, filing, updating the membership, responding to researchers via telephone/email/personal contact, recording donations, entering data on Past Perfect, planning events, writing articles or finding interesting pictures for local publications and taking small steps in organizing the archive. If any of these activities interest you, know that you are welcome as a volunteer at MTHS.

Barb Johnson is a positive and committed addition to the volunteer staff. She is upbeat and a contributor. Having grown up in this area is a big plus.



We welcome back any past volunteers who because of vacations, illness, family obligations or other reasons had to end their helping out at the archive. We will make a time for you to help.

Interested in volunteering? Contact Mary Sayner at the following places: mcsayner@yahoo.com; 262-242-3107; 608-881-9935; MTHS, 206 Green Bay Rd Suite 102, Thiensville, WI 53092.

Being a Part of the M-T Historical Society

Contributed by Fay Walker, Vice President

My in-laws moved to Mequon in January, 1970. I started dating my husband February, 1970. Our first date was skating on the ice rink in Thiensville Village Park on the Milwaukee River. How exciting that was, with the warming house and music playing. His parents lived on the river; so many things happen on the river. I remember watching a sea plane land on the river back in the 1970s. There was always something happening in the Village Park. Hose fights with the various Volunteer Fire Departments at the Fireman's picnics, softball tournaments, a hockey rink with boards; fireworks on New Year's Eve when they were cancelled at Fun b4 the Fourth; the darkness of Mequon in the 1970s when you could easily see the Milky Way.

Sommers Motors was in Thiensville; and the Sentry and Kohl's Food stores were on the corner of Freistadt Rd. and Main.

When both of my husband's parents passed away, we purchased the home. Since we live now in Mequon, I wanted to learn more about Mequon and Thiensville. How else, but becoming a member of the Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society.

Since I enjoy history, being a member has opened many conversations. I started out by volunteering to cut out articles regarding the schools. It doesn't sound exciting to be cutting articles out of past newspapers,

but wow! When your cut out the articles, you read them and find out more about both communities.

I meet new people every week that I am in our office. Many people come in to find out some of their family history, or to bring in their family history to share. By sharing their history, it enriches my knowledge and history of these communities.

Besides being in the office I have found that when I mention that I am part of the Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society it opens the door to interesting conversations to many individuals. I was down in Florida when I met a gentleman who said he was from Mequon, and proceeded to let me know that his great-great uncle had named the streets in Mequon! Wow, that was something, but when I mentioned this to our board, I found out that this great-great uncle may have been the third owner of the Isham Day House! How intertwined we are...talk about 6 persons removed.

With your membership to the Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society, we are able to follow our mission to collect, preserve and share the rich history of the City of Mequon, the Village of Thiensville, and the former Town of Mequon. Preserving history comes at a cost, that cost can be time, talent, treasure and personal memories that may include pictures. Please consider giving to your fellow residents in the coming year.

I Would Like To Be a Mequon-Thiensville Historical Society Member!

Name _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

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

I would like the newsletter sent by Mail Email

Email Address: _____

I am interested in volunteering for the Mequon Thiensville Historical Society Yes No

Annual Membership Levels:

- Individual\$15
- Family.....\$20
- Contributing.....\$30
- Business.....\$80
- Sustaining\$100

Please Mail Checks to: M-T Historical Society, at 216 Green Bay Road, Suite 102, Thiensville, WI 53092.

Your Renewal is Due

Become a Volunteer!

Contact Mary Sayner, Volunteer Coordinator, at 262-242-3107 for more information.



Recent meeting of the
Ozaukee County Historical
Cooperative at MTHS

