

Confluence

The Winter of our Founding- February 1910

Nearly one hundred years ago the Beloit Historical Society had its beginning. The month was February and the year 1910. A group of Beloit enthusiasts banded together to establish an organization with the purpose of saving Beloit history, preserving it for future generations. They discussed and planned in each others' homes until a building could be found in which they could meet and where the public could come to visit. In the summer of 1910 they found their building on West Grand Avenue. It was into the Carnegie Library that they moved. The Beloit Historical Society resided there for forty four years.

The Beloit Historical Society was born in a time so different from our own that a sketchy reminder of what it was like should prove interesting. To appreciate that time one hundred years ago let us take a look through the pages of the Beloit Daily Free press and see what the publishers had to report on certain days through February 1910. What follows are headlines and brief articles of information that will, we hope, give you a flavor of the time in 'The Winter of Our Beginning.'

February 2

Butter climbs up one penny. A pound of butter now selling for 35 cents.

Miss Lena Lathers, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. C.F. Lathers, underwent an operation for appendicitis at the H.P. Strong Emergency hospital today.

Pay for fit, style and good workmanship at H.L. Hulburt the Tailor. Located at the Hotel Hilton block.

Haley's Comet visible in Beloit about April 1

Haley's Comet probably will begin to be visible to the naked eye about April 1 and will pass the face of the sun at 8:00 p.m. May 18th.

Free Shampoo

Every lady in Beloit may have a free sample of *Fluffy Fluff* the dry shampoo by simply calling at our store and asking for it. *Fluffy Fluff* is a dry shampoo. No water-No trouble. You simply can't catch cold and does the work just as well as a liquid preparation. Frank Van Wart



February 3

The Overland

From \$1000-\$1500. The hundreders bought last year now available at Vale Automotive Co - 440 Broad Street

February 4

The sale still moves- Ladies' and Men's shoes 10-33% discounts- Gibson Girl shoes for women: \$4.00, \$3.50, \$2.95 and \$2.70- Brothers Stanton, the money-saving shoe store.

Worth Cogitating

The first theft was committed by Eve, but who was the first receiver of stolen property? Let that always be remembered.

February 9

Parents have last chance to purify home

One of the worst cases of imposition on public and private charities was disclosed today in Municipal Court when Lewis Layton was brought before Judge Rosa on a charge of neglecting his little daughter whose bodily health and moral welfare it was alleged were being injured. Layton, it was shown, was a lazy drunken brute who spent all his money on liquor and used the vilest language at home in the presence of his little girl, and compelled his wife to support the family. Both appealed to the poormaster, City Relief and Catholic Ladies' Aid Society for help.

Thank You, Ron!

Ron Klein has served three full terms – the limit – on the Historical Society's Board of Directors. From all of us at BHS, Thanks Ron for 9 full years of dedicated service to the Beloit Historical Society- you're the best!

Beloit Historical Society

Founded 1910

Officers

President Craig Mellem
Vice President Sue Drevdahl
Treasurer Maggie Janke
Secretary William Bolgrien

Board of Directors

Nancy Alseth David Collins
Deb DeHart Nora Gard
Martin Kades Terry Karow
Steve Kinkade Craig Mellem

Lincoln Center Staff:

Executive Director Paul Kerr
Facilities Manager Dwight Alton

Newsletter edited by Jen Scott
Contributors: Paul Kerr, Ann Martin, Judy Nichols, Dwight Alton, Joanne Ciulla, and Shirley Gelfers

Dates of Next Board Meetings:

September 17, 2009, 4 p.m.

The Newsletter, *Confluence*, is published quarterly for the membership of the Beloit Historical Society to inform readers of Society activities as well as educate them on the history of Beloit. The Beloit Historical Society manages two sites, Lincoln Center Museum with main offices at 845 Hackett St. and Hanchett-Bartlett Homestead, 2149 St. Lawrence Ave. For further information please call (608) 365-7835 or e-mail us at Pkerr@beloithistoricalsociety.com. Or see our new website which can be found on the web at beloithistoricalsociety.com.

The Winter of our Founding *cont'd*

February 14

Iron here for Turtle Bridge

The iron for the new bridge over Turtle Creek, on Milwaukee Road near the Babbitt Farm, has arrived and is being transported to its place. Work will be pushed on the new structure as fast as weather conditions permit.



Watches, clocks, jewelry, silverware, cut glass at prices that are always right. Visit the jewelry shop of P.S. Larson- East Grand Avenue.

Dry lumber, hard and soft coal, solvay coke, maple trimmings, phone 13-Keeler Lumber & Fuel Co.

Personal Mention

C.A. Knill, representing the Charles Besly Machine Company, left for the east this morning, and will cover the New England territory and all the large eastern cities.

February 16

Wanted

By a girl 15 years old, to work for board and room while going to high school. Address G.C., care of Free Press.

Work of any kind; painter by trade. Address I, care of Free Press

Position as Janitor in some hall or church; have had experience. Call or Address-934 Ninth Street

A lady with one child would like to keep house for widower or single man. Call at 1410 Merrill Street

February 18

Rex J. Dowd victim of heart failure

Founder and head of R.J. Dowd Knife Works passes away after ten days of illness. Identified with the city activities for over thirty years and one of most beloved citizens.

February 24



One death from Scarlet Fever

Later developments in scarlet fever hysteria. Child dies from severe case of scarlet fever. Five cent theatres fumigated by city health officer. Street cars fumigated by the city health officer. New case of scarlet fever in the high school, where no attempt has been made to fumigate. Special meeting of the school board called for tonight at which question of closing the schools will be discussed.

These snippets from the Free Press, we hope, give an impression of what life in 1910 was like. In future issues of *Confluence* we will write on other decades through which the Society has passed in this city of ours and bring you to the end of 2010 with a contemporary article. It'll be a memorable trip through the hundred years of our existence and we will be able to make it because of the foresight of our founders back in 1910 who came up with the brilliant idea of establishing an historical society.

From the Director

We have had a great start to our **Centennial Campaign** attracting twenty five contributors who gave \$3000. We have added members to our membership but still have a way to go to reach our goal. Among those who gave were eight who asked that their contribution be made in memory of a loved one. Memorials were made to: Ruth Irvin, Thomas & Edward Brown, Myron Clark, William Dilworth, Robert Stacy, Arthur Adams, and Ruby Bond. We thank all of our members for continuing to support us.

Hail to the new chief: Craig Mellem, President of the Beloit Historical Society!



Upcoming Events

Bus Tour: The Newberry, St. John Cantius Church and the Chicago Fire- house Restaurant

The Newberry Library was founded in the late nineteenth century from a bequest by Walter Loomis Newberry (1804-1868), a Chicago land developer and city leader. Over the years it has developed into a world class resource center specializing in illuminated medieval manuscripts, rare early maps, rich genealogical sources, historical sheet music, and personal papers. It so happens that during the month of October a rare exhibit on Abraham Lincoln entitled "With Malice Toward None" will be on display, making the visit more interesting. The Newberry is only one of five locations this Library of Congress exhibit will visit.

Then we will visit the St. John Cantius Church founded by Polish Immigrants and completed in 1898. The Romanesque Church is ornamented by a rich Baroque design, examples of art in inlaid wood floors, altars, carvings, murals, and stained glass windows. It is one of Chicago's unique churches.

Between the two stops we will dine at the ever popular Firehouse Restaurant on South Michigan Avenue. The Restaurant was initially a fire station built in 1905 to serve the Prairie Avenue Community which at that time consisted of the Marshall Fields, the McCormicks, the Palmers and the Glessners. The Society made this stop on one of its previous tours.

So join us for an educational and entertaining tour this 16 October 2009 and take a look at the accompanying flyer. Reserve your seat today! Price for members is \$80 and non-members \$90.

The Gala Auction

Plans for the 14th Annual Gala Auction are in full swing. This year's event has a 1940's theme so mark your calendars for a visit to the Gala Cabana which promises to be an extraordinary evening filled with fun and surprises. Let us entertain you with live music, food, raffles, silent and live auctions and more.

Friday, 2 October 2009 has been set aside for this exciting event, sponsors are responding and items are being donated by local merchants. Tickets are \$50 per person.

You can make this annual event a success and help us continue to enlighten the community about its history through exhibits, programs and events by attending the Gala Cabana and making a donation to the auction such as business services, gift certificates, collectibles, or new merchandise. If you would like to make a donation of an item or funds to support the Historical Society please contact Paul at 608-365-7835.

More interesting details to follow and watch for your save-the-date card in the mail.

*Submitted by Nancy Alseth,
Gala Chair.*

Heritage Days

The City of Beloit will be celebrating Heritage Days the 11th, 12th & 13th of September. We will have an open house at Hanchett-Bartlett Homestead on the 12th and also have a scarecrow competition. The Grand Prize is an overnight stay at Key Lime Cove for four with admission to the water park and with a shuttle to Great America and four admissions. Kids and young adults are encouraged to participate in constructing the best scarecrow they can and have them on display at the

Homestead. Pop corn and lemonade will be served.

On the following day, Sunday the 13th, the Historical Society in conjunction with the Welty Environmental Center will sponsor a **Recipes of Old** tasting and recipe swap, to be followed by a lecture on the value of cookbooks as historical documents. The presentation is by Traci Nathans-Kelly of the UW system. The event is at Lincoln Center and begins at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. respectively. We are working on the final details of the event but further publicity will be made available to keep you up-to-date.

O Tannenbaum

The **O Tannenbaum Christmas Tree event** is scheduled for 27 & 28 November and for 4 & 5 December. These are Fridays and Saturdays with Friday hours 5-9:00p.m. and with Saturday hours 11-4:00p.m. Light refreshments will be offered and there will be no cost for attending. This event is held at the Society's Hanchett-Bartlett Homestead. Join us for a celebration of the history of the Christmas Tree throughout the years from the 19th century to present day. Please call 365-7835 for any questions you may have.

A Family Resource

Were your ancestors some of the Civil War soldiers who were quartered in the American House at Broad and Pleasant in Beloit? Did your early family members listen to Abraham Lincoln's political speech at Hanchett Hall on October 1 1859? Do you know if you descended from "Shoe Peg" Wood? Or what circumstances lead to that nickname? Does Caleb Blodgett, first permanent settler of Beloit, figure in your family history?

These intriguing questions can be answered by genealogical research. The Beloit Historical Society is rich with information on the families that were here in the beginning of Beloit's history. Files bulge with information about the founders and the first families of Beloit: The Hacketts, the Blodgetts, the Cranes, the Tuttle and many more. Many followed after them and some stayed to develop with Beloit, others moved further west.

The Luebke Family Library at the Historical Society contains volumes of books, maps, city directories, family histories and photographs that define the history of Beloit and its people. Old newspapers tell in many flowery accounts of the births, marriages and deaths of the area's inhabitants. Obituaries abound with information. Maybe the resources at the Historical Society have something for you and your family tree. Check us out.

Did you know?

Shirley Geffers has been cataloging for the Historical Society for nearly ten years. In that time she has handled 1,995 assessions. An Assession can, and usually does, have more than one item to it. For example a person donates a uniform with shoes, ties and hats. It is one assession but numerous pieces that go with it. With that in mind Shirley has entered information on 4,010 pieces. What a job! The Beloit Historical Society thanks you, Shirley!

Membership Update

The Society has 421 memberships which amounts to 630 individuals. Since the last issue the Society has gained 8 new members.

Visit our web site at
beloithistoricalociety.com

Address Service Requested

Confluence
Beloit Historical Society
845 Hackett St.
Beloit WI 53511

The Vision of the Beloit Historical Society is to
make history a focal point of community pride
and to serve as a constant reminder to the
community of its great and diverse heritage.

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Beloit, WI
Permit No. 87