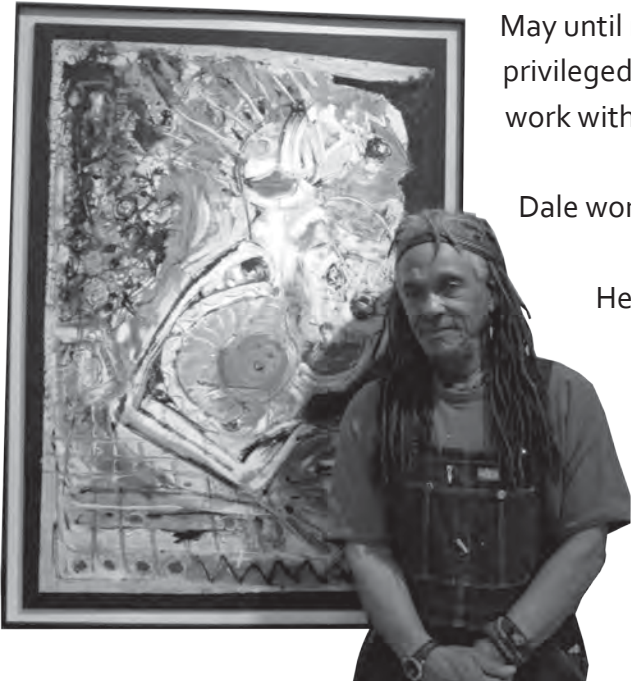


# Dale Edwards on Display

Dale Edwards, local artist of vision and talent, put up a display of his work in the Historical Society's front lobby. The display of his work as a sculptor will be available through mid-June. His sculptures were on display from May until mid-June. The Society is privileged to share a few photos of his work with you.

Dale works in a variety of mediums: metals, woods and porcelain.

He is a 1958 Beloit Memorial High School graduate who went on to serve in the U.S. Army, following which he moved to Los Angeles where he learned to weld. He opened a studio there and produced a wide range of creations which were prominently displayed. Dale moved back to Beloit after many years in Los Angeles and has ever since, had showings of his work at various sites throughout Beloit.



## No Cookin’ Tonight, We’re Goin’ Out!

### *A Sketch of Some of Beloit’s Restaurants*

There were thirty in Beloit in 1924, thirty six in 1933, thirty eight in 1946, fifty six in 1952 and one hundred and ten some fifty three years later. Earlier in the 1850’s there were a few. Hotels had them but there were also some independents. During the 1890’s these Beloit businesses became more visible promoting and advertising themselves: Vales, Perkins, and Sanford hung their shingles out. Charles Willard ran an ad talking his place up in 1893. Sounded like a real nice place for lunches and ice cream. Sadly he vanished from the scene two years later. By the early 1900’s there were nine such businesses in downtown Beloit. As time progressed these places became ever more present dotting the landscape from east to west and from north to south. They became popular attractions and they still are. Today we have ninety nine listed in the 2011 City Directory.



Restaurants were enticements for escape, not from prison or anything like that, but a getaway from the humdrum of cooking and the concomitant clean up afterwards. The Nan King Lo, The Rex Cafe, Moseff Angelo and the Limmershirt could have accommodated you in 1924. James Leeson, manager of the Spanish Tavern back in the late 1920’s, might have greeted you at his restaurant door and ushered you to a seat at his restaurant located at 410 State St. Maybe not and maybe the Spanish Tavern wouldn’t have been to your liking, seeing how it was popular for the students of Beloit College and High School. But then you could have gone to the Oriental Cafe at 304 State. There guests were invited to visit the kitchen where George Smith, proprietor, loved to show off his “refrigeration plant” that made ice for the restaurant. But ketchup for Chinese dishes would have cost you an extra 15 cents. If this was too much for your pocketbook, guess you could have tried William Acker’s place at 411 North State called the College Inn- “Home of the best coffee in town” - and open day and night. Or maybe the greasy spoon at Plumb’s Lunch where Lawrence and Fern Plumb would have had their staff serve you at either the 203 East Grand location or the other one at 436 Broad. So perhaps the 1920’s would have suited you for your big escape from the kitchen. And there would have been more restaurants to choose from in the 1930’s.

The 30’s are when Prohibition ended and there’s no relation between it and the burgeoning restaurant population, but it’s when Frank Beimer of the Beimer Smoke House started serving liquor and beer along with lunches at his place at 4th & West Grand. The big items at Frank’s establishment were beer, smokes and newspapers. Before it was known as the Beimer Smoke House, it was the Luety Cement Block business (1900), lasting a few years until Jimmie Menhall bought it, revamped it, and opened his new business calling it Ye Olde Smoke House in September of 1907. Frank bought it one year later and though it was dubbed a restaurant, which is questionable, it certainly was popular, long lasting and at a great location. The trolley of old ran past it every day for a quarter of a century. The Beimer closed in 1980 and in 1983 it took a half hour to tear it down. Some of the other restaurants of the 1930’s were Nichwander, Plaza Gardens Barbecue(1344 E. Grand), Manhattan Lunch (611 4th St.), Copostules, the YMCA Cafeteria, Eagle Tavern (443 E. Grand), Harry and Rose Demus’s Travel Inn Cafe, Hamburger Limited, Cozy Cafe and the Bridge Inn, which would serve you at 432 East Grand from 6 a.m. until 2 a.m.

The restaurant business grew from the 1930’s through the next few decades. Those decades bring you The Do Drop Inn (208 Park), The Gabat Grill (441 E. Grand), The Beloit Grill (317 State St.), The 615 Club (615 Broad), Strong’s Kopper Kettle, Walt’s Little Bungalow, Al’s Snack Shop (now D’s Snack Shop), The Royal (112 West Grand), Terry’s Restaurant (132 West Grand), and The Pop House to mention a few. Through the forties, fifties, sixties and seventies

*Continued inside*

BHS Lincoln Center hours are noon to 4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and by appointment on Saturday. Call 608-365-7835.

Beloit Historical Society  
Confluence  
845 Hackett St.  
Beloit WI 53511  
Address Service Requested

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.  
Visit our web site at [beloithistoricalociety.com](http://beloithistoricalociety.com)

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Paul Kerr, Dwight Alton,  
Molly McCracken and  
Dick Gerhard; layout by  
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Hackett Street.

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inform readers of Society  
activities as well as educate  
them on the history of Beloit.  
The Beloit Historical Society  
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at 845 Hackett St. and Hanchett-  
Bartlett Homestead, 2149 St.  
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or e-mail us at  
[Pkerr@beloithistoricalsociety.com](mailto:Pkerr@beloithistoricalsociety.com).  
Or see our web site at  
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# From the President...



I'm honored to serve as President of the Beloit Historical Society and look forward to working with the Board and members.

My roots go deep in Beloit history as Caleb Blodgett [Beloit's Founder, 1836] was my great-great-great-grandfather. I was born and raised on a dairy farm east of Beloit. The land my father farmed has now become the expansive Gateway. My grandfather and I used to ride horseback over the fields and sit overlooking the white mansion where he lived - later to become headquarters of Kerry Ingredients - the beautiful private home [the Freeman Home] that became the popular Manor restaurant and over all the area that is now the Industrial Park.

This is why I love history and believe it is important to preserve the past, as we work to improve the present. -- Nancy Wallace

Nancy Wallace was elected to serve as the Beloit Historical Society's next President at the Society's 101st Annual Meeting this past 6 May 2011.



Beloiters started to see chain restaurants move in. Among the first of these were A & W, McDonald's, Burger King and Taco Bell. There were still privately owned restaurants that drew a devoted crowd, including The Manor, The Corral, Doner's, Dutch Kitchen, Geri's and Benedetti's.

Patrons to the Manor might remember Michael Bonafede getting the place going in 1958, and the hey day years of 1966-68 when Nino Germono, his wife Geneva and manager John Fiorello ran it. They might even remember the devastating fire of 1970 and the reopening that followed with seating for 500. And Michael would be running the Corral, another popular restaurant in Beloit, later in his career. That establishment ran at 1771 Park Ave. and served, according to our volunteer Ron Klein, the best crab legs ever! Another Park Avenue eatery located at 1006 was Geri's managed by Violet Larson. Hamburgers were the specialty and it was running strong into the seventies. Then not so strong. There was an attempt in 2002 to get it going again but today the restaurant is gone and the property is now owned by Beloit College. To stick with the Park Avenue restaurants, there was Doner's which operated in the present day vicinity of Old Fashion Bakery. It was managed by Howard Wright. There was also a Doner's Market on Colby Street. Proprietor Donald Preston brought Beloit the Dutch Kitchen at 144 W. Grand in the early sixties. It disappeared in the late seventies, not a very long run. Not so with Tosca and Elmer Benedetti's place which started up in the late 1940's and still runs today. It was first called Club 51, then in 1974 changed its name to that recognized today as Benedetti's. Its popular Friday night fish fry has been served since 1947.

We haven't mentioned scores upon scores of restaurants like the Toot & Tell which served a pound of hamburger on a 12 inch bun, or the curiously titled restaurant Pope's Green Gables or Schultz's German Restaurant. This article is a sketch, just skimming the surface of Beloit's restaurants from mostly the 19th and 20th century. No complete history is available. We would delight in having you readers share with us information and photographs about this topic. In the meantime go to the window, open it up and shout "*Hey kids, no cookin' tonight, we're goin' out!*"

## Past Events

The Historical Society threw a little thank you party for its dedicated force of Volunteers on 14 April 2011. **The Volunteer Brunch** was well attended and the group heard a musical program by Jeff Pockat (the last name rhymes with "Beloit") who played his hand made

Gaelic Harp. He preceded many of his musical pieces with a story of the music to be played as well as informed us about the history of the harp throughout his performance.



**The Annual Dinner** was another well attended affair on 6 May 2011. The Society conducted a brief meeting at which our new President, Nancy Wallace, was elected and at which the other officers agreed to stay on in the capacity they presently serve: Nancy Alseth-V.P., Bill Bolgrien-Secretary and

Maggie Janke-Treasurer. Craig Mellem, the retiring President, was sincerely thanked for a two year job well done and the Society then sat back for a great program by Bill Jamerson who spoke and told stories about the impact of the CCC's (Civilian Conservation Corp) on the State

of Wisconsin and the country as a whole.

The third grade classes from Beloit's elementary schools toured historic Hanchett-Bartlett Homestead. Docents and kids enjoyed the interaction of this year's **May School tours**. This year near 400 students, teachers and adult chaperones participated. Our seasoned docents did an admirable job as usual. We thank Ann Martin for coordinating with the schools and conducting tours, we also thank Ron Klein, Virginia Knutson, Barb & John Sabaka. These annual tours which have been on-going for nearly 40 years would not be possible without good hearted volunteers like these.

## Upcoming Events

For years, as a fund raiser for the Historical Society, we conducted bus tours. Then for a variety of reasons quit.

Now we are back with a **Barn Quilts of Green County Bus Tour** planned for 22 July 2011. Quilt pattern blocks have become very popular in Green and Rock counties these past few years. Though first among the states to popularize this new art form was Ohio, Wisconsin has arguably taken the lead with bus tours to areas where barn quilts proliferate. Green and Rock counties are among the best of Wisconsin



counties with barns to show off. The tour focuses on barns in the Green county area and leaves our building here at 845 Hackett

St. 22 July 2011 at 8 a.m. A tour guide will join us for part of the day explaining the art at a variety of sites. Cost per member is \$55 and for non-member \$60. Lunch is in New Glarus. Join us for an enjoyable day that Friday and be on the road with your Beloit Historical Society. Please call us at (608) 365-7835 if you have any questions.

**The Sports Hall of Fame**, an annual event, is slated for 4 August 2011. There will be a dinner and induction of five of Beloit's most accomplished past athletes. They are: Katie Connelly, Bill Goetzke, Gene Winger, Chris Pearson and Jeff Stovall. The event starts at 6 p.m. at a cost of \$25 for members and \$30 for non-members.

**Heritage Days** will once again be held at the Society's historic Hanchett-Bartlett Homestead 11 September 2011. The Homestead is located at 2149 St. Lawrence Ave. The hours are yet to be decided but the opening hours have been 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. We will keep you posted on further plans.