

# MENASHA HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

December 2011

## DECEMBER 8 - ANNUAL CHRISTMAS GET-TOGETHER

LOCATION: GERMANIA HALL -

5:00 P.M. SOCIAL HOUR

6:00 P.M. DINNER

7:00 P.M. "HISTORY OF TAVERNS IN MENASHA"

Presented by past/present owners and relatives

(BRING YOUR OWN STORIES TO ADD TO THE ENTERTAINMENT)

\$15.00 PER PERSON

SEND CHECK TO:

MENASHA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P. O. BOX 255

MENASHA, WI 54952

DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS IS DECEMBER 2

Due to our usual inclement weather we will not be having meetings during January & February. However, please give some serious thought to becoming more active in our society by volunteering to help in the office, Mondays in the resource center/mini-museum, (this remains open throughout the entire year except for holidays) serving on the Board of Directors, overseeing our Web page to bring it up-to-date, (adding pictures, and any other additional information that would be of interest to citizens of Menasha and throughout the state.) Many people have visited the site and have requested that we expand it. It is amazing how being involved keeps that brain active by reminiscing with others, filing, or working with the material that is available at the center. We also appreciate receiving program suggestions for the 2012-2013 year and the willingness to assist in bringing them to fruition.

We conclude our meetings for 2011-2012 with the following:

March 8 - 7:00 p.m. at the Menasha Public Library where we will be entertained by our own, Bob Smarzinski, speaking on Menasha High School Basketball from years past. He also has written a book which will be available for purchase that evening. We're looking forward to it, Bob.

April 12 - 7:00 p.m. We will again be meeting at our Resource Ctr./Mini-Museum in the Memorial Bldg. (for anyone who hasn't been there yet). Nancy Barker will detail the history of the Brin and Valley Theatres. (How many of you have stories to tell about those two places? Could be very interesting if you're willing to share!!)

May 10 - Annual trip - We will be visiting the UW Fox Valley Planetarium to view an exceptional program after having lunch at a destination TBA later.

**REMINDER: If your dues are not paid a yellow line on your envelope will indicate this will be your final newsletter.**

### THANK YOU

Mark Ropella for all of his time preparing such an outstanding program honoring our Korean War veterans. Many hours were spent interviewing each of the participants (Leroy Schuff, Dick Dahms, Ralph Kuhr) and then transferring those to DVD's for our keepsakes. Copies are available at the Resource Ctr. for \$10. He has been such an asset to our historical society. Please give him a verbal thank you when you come in contact with him. Thank you also to all of our "cookie bakers" for this month: Beverly Strong, Kathryn Babbitz, Mary Jane VanLieshout, Rosalie Terry. Monetary donations to the society were received from Alexander Turner, Jr. & Paul Brunette. Rosalie Terry donated bead bracelets, made by her granddaughter, which were sold at the November meeting.

### PUBLICITY

Oct. 29 Trick or Treat: This event is held annually for children (most of whom are in costume) to receive a treat (not trick) as they walk from 1 participating downtown merchant to another. It also includes a merchant/carving pumpkin contest at which everyone gets to vote on their favorite one. Nancy Barker and Jean Chew represented the Menasha Historical Society in manning that booth. Nov. 10 Recognizing our Veterans: Katie and Jean set up a display at the Sr. Center, in conjunction with the Y, which included The Menasha Historical's wartime collection of pictures, scrapbooks, uniforms, etc. to recognize and honor our veterans. This also was an opportunity to "spread the word" as to the valuable history we have to offer the public. It was very well received and several attendees were also in the audience at our evening meeting.

### WELCOME

New Members: Sylvia Biebel, Jack & Joyce Speech, Alexander Turner, Jr., who visited the Resource Ctr. looking for genealogy information. He was so grateful and impressed he became a member (even though he lives in Indiana).

## CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

(from members of the Menasha Historical Society)

*My grandparents, on my father's side, had 7 children and each sibling alternated hosting the Christmas party. (A tradition that my siblings and I still continue to do each year). On Christmas Eve we would all get together and open the present from the person who had drawn your name. The best part of the evening was when we returned home we got to open one of our presents from under the Christmas tree. On Christmas morning we would wait until our parents got up to open our presents. My father would ask one of us to play Santa and pass out the presents to each family member. We all watched anxiously while each person opened their presents. We then played with our toys before enjoying a Christmas dinner. It was a time spent with family, which is still a favorite part of Christmas for me.*

*Debbie Peterson*

*Every Christmas Eve my dad and I would go out to buy our Christmas tree because they only cost \$.50 then. There weren't many left so we often came home with skinny, bare, funny-shaped trees which would be decorated after my sister and I went to bed.*

*This tradition was carried on in the first couple years of my marriage and was always a conversation piece in our home.*

*Jim Chew*

*My most vivid memory happened when I was around 7 yrs. old. My childhood friend and I were playing with her handmade and beautifully designed paper dolls pretending it was Christmas. When "pretend" Santa was to make an appearance my friend abruptly blurted out that there was NO Santa sending me into tears and disbelief. (She remains nameless, except she is a board member of this society)!!*

*Beverly Sund*

*My most memorable Christmas is also my saddest. It was the Christmas I discovered the truth about Santa. At 6 or 7 years of age I was still a believer when I learned that Dr. McPhee, our neighbor in Ames, Iowa, was that "man in red". When he entered our house I recognized Santa at once. With tears in my eyes, I knew I could not spoil things for my 2 younger brothers. That was a responsibility I had to endure. What a burden—to know and not to reveal! Although I have always loved Christmas, the one I remember most vividly is that one – a tragedy to lose Santa and my childhood dreams.*

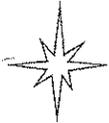
*Caryl Herziger*

*My favorite day of the holiday season is the day after Thanksgiving when the Christmas tree is decorated. On this special day my fondest Christmas memories, which have been stored in the attic most of the year, are brought down and hung on the tree. Thanks to the women in my family our Christmas tree is actually a history tree. My children unwrap each ornament as my husband and I recall the history of each one. There are hand blown glass ornaments brought over from Germany when my great-great grandmother immigrated to the United States, an ornament my grandfather gave to my grandmother on their first Christmas together, ornaments that celebrate baby's first Christmas, important vacations, or family member's hobbies. The most precious ones are those that were handmade by children and brought carefully home from school and Sunday School. Every year the Christmas tree stands in the living room twinkling and holding forth the holiday history of our family.*

*Stacey Hoekstra*

## TWAS THE MONTH BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Twas the month before Christmas when all through our land  
Not a Christian was praying, nor taking a stand,  
Why the PC Police had taken away the reason for Christmas – no one could say.  
The children were told by their schools not to sing  
About Shepherds and Wise Men and Angels and things,  
It might hurt people's feeling, the teachers would say  
December 25th is just a 'Holiday'.  
Yet the shoppers were ready with cash, checks and credit  
Pushing folks down to the floor just to get it!  
CDs from Madonna, an X Box, an I-Pod  
Something was changing, something quite odd!  
Retailers promoted Ramadan and Kwanzaa  
In hopes to see books by Franken & Fonda.  
As Targets were hanging their trees upside down  
At Lowe's the word Christmas – was no where to be found.  
At K-Mart and Staples and Penny's and Sears  
You won't hear the word Christmas; it won't touch your ears.  
At the top of the Senate, there arose such a clatter  
To eliminate Jesus, in all public matter  
And we spoke not a word, as they took away our faith  
Forbidden to speak of salvation and grace  
The true Gift of Christmas was exchanged and discarded  
The reason for the season, stopped before it started.  
So as you celebrate 'Winter Break' under your 'Dream Tree'  
Sipping your Starbucks, listen to me.  
Choose your words carefully, choose what you say  
Shout MERRY CHRISTMAS,  
NOT Happy Holiday!  
Please, all Christians join together and wish everyone you meet  
MERRY CHRISTMAS



Christ is The Reason for the Christ-mas Season!

### RESOURCE CENTER & MUSEUM

(Located at 640 Keyes Street)  
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