MENASHA HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

April 2012

EASTER BLESSINGS

How time does fly! I was just wishing you all a Happy New Year and now we are going into the 4th month of 2012.

54 people attended the very interesting presentation of the past Century of Menasha High School Basketball. Many former MHS coaches and athletes, some of whom came from out-of-town, were in attendance. It was great to renew old acquaintances and re-live our past. Thank you, Bob Smarzinski, for the many hours spent researching, compiling and producing a book, plus the abbreviated DVD's, which he donated to the society and are available for purchase at the Resource Center/museum at the Memorial Building.

APRIL 12 – 7:00 p.m.
Rescource Center/Museum
(located inside the Memorial Bldg. across from Smith Park)
Open to the Public

Nancy Barker will be presenting the history of the Brin & Valley Theatres. It will be another evening to "go back in time" and recall the "good old days". I'm sure many of you have interesting and unusual events to share with us. We hope to see many of our newer members in attendance as this will be your chance to view our fascinating displays, pictures, and artifacts.

UPCOMING EVENT
Thurs., May 10

11:00 A.M. - Michaels Bar & Grill, Appleton Rd. for Lunch (on your own)
1:00 P.M. - Barlow Planetarium located on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley, Midway Rd.
Our discounted cost will be $4/person (collected upon arrival).
A tour of the new Communications Arts Center will follow the Planetarium program.
The Weis Earth Science Museum is also open for viewing.

CALL FOR HELP!!

We are still in need of board members so please seriously consider this opportunity to
"Keep Menasha's History Alive"
(We meet once a month for about 1-1-1/2 hrs.)
Call Katie 722-4364 or Jean 722-7349

HISTORY IN YOUR OWN BACK YARD

(written by Caryl Herziger)

Little did we know when we purchased our home on Park Street in Menasha that living history was right in our own back yard. Much was nearby: historic Smith Park, Indian mounds, Glory of the Morning village. In the early 1970's our personal venture with history began with the discovery by our young son, Mark, of a brick-lined well behind our garage. Since we had moved to our house in the 1950's we had always been aware of a square-shaped slightly mounded area in our yard but the discovery of the well began to confirm there had been a dwelling in the yard at some previous time. With our approval, Mark lowered a ladder down the well and began to bring up countless broken dishes and pans from the well bottom. When I think about it now, I think—what kind of a mother was I to let him go down continually into such a chance that the well might cave in?

What followed, of course, was Mark's imploring to dig out the hollow formed by the dirt piles in our back yard. (Mark was one of those youngsters who always had to have a "project"). Well, why not? His father and I agreed. So for several YEARS Mark dug, removed dirt to our "back forty", until he finally had uncovered and outlined a stone foundation of a building. Mark had sifted every shovel of dirt and collected shard, dishes, metal pieces and about 30 boxes of materials and stored it all in our basement.

Now came the history part and a trip to the library. There Mark discovered this site had been the log cabin home of Rev. O. P. Clinton, founder of the local Congregational church. He had arrived in this area in 1846 as a circuit rider. In 1849, Charles Doty, son of Gov. James Doty, had given Clinton ten acres and he had built his log cabin in 1854. (Most of the homes on Doty Island will have the name of Charles or James Doty on their legal papers.) Later when Rev. Clinton built a larger home facing Winnebago Street, the cabin had been abandoned and it had become a dumping ground.

Here's a good way to keep young kids busy
History can be local, interesting, and modern
You can find treasurers anywhere. Dig up your yard.
You can "dress up" your hole with flowers and have your daughter's wedding there (We did)

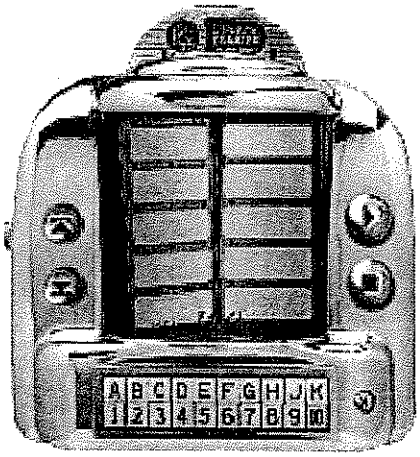
UPDATE

When we sold our home in 1985 our terrace in front of our home was covered with boxes of "digging treasurers". Mark kept a great collection of mended artifacts. His next "project" became the conversion of an 8 unit apartment building into a single family residence.

---------- On the island (of course) ---------- historic (of course)!

The "hole" has been filled in but for a number of years it was visited by friends, school children, and the curious.

HOW MANY DO YOU REMEMBER?
(continued from last month-just to keep your memory alive!!)



Coffee shops or diners with tableside juke boxes

Home milk delivery in glass bottles with cardboard stoppers

Newsreels before the movie

Telephone numbers with a word prefix (OLive-6933)

Metal ice cube trays with lever

Packards (cars)

Studebakers (cars)

Weekly baths (usually Saturday evenings) and often more than 1 person using the same water

After washing and drying clothes those that needed ironing (most everything including underwear) was sprinkled with water and put in the refrigerator or freezer until it was ironing day.

Those were the "good old days"!!!!

NOW SOME FROM THE PAST THAT HAVE MADE REAPPEARANCES

Pant leg clips for bicycles without chain guards

Blackjack chewing gum

Wax Coke-shaped bottles with colored sugar water

Candy cigarettes

Soda pop machines that dispensed glass bottles

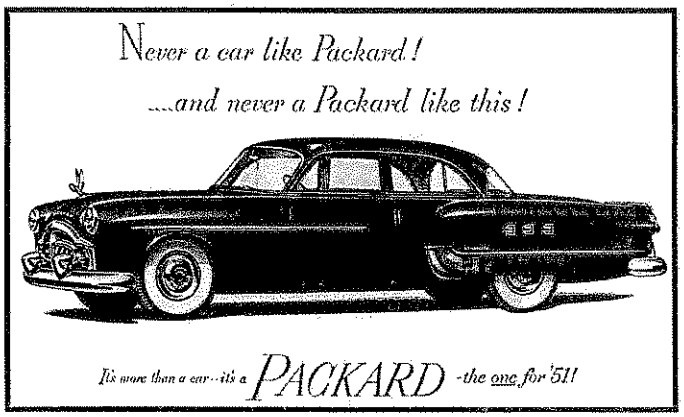
Peashooters

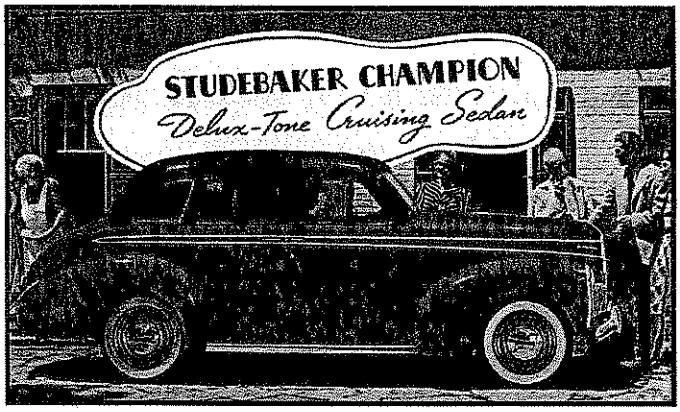
Howdy Doody

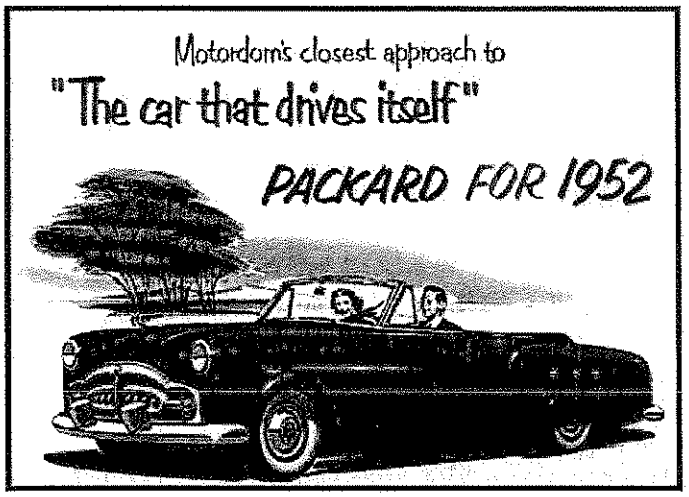
Drive-ins

MORAL OF THE STORY—"WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND"
So all of you "younger" folks-beware!

Auto Advertisements From the Past







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Menasha Historical Society

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