



DE PERE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Pillars of the future,
built on the foundations of the past.

White Pillars Museum • 403 North Broadway • De Pere, WI 54115
Open Monday – Friday • Noon to 4:00 PM
Other times by appointment: 920-336-3877

Volume 19

Issue 1

Winter 2007

De Pere Historical Society Board Members

President: Fran Dimmer, Vice President: Bob Boyer, Treasurer: Dolly Van Sistine, Secretary: Mark Reinhart.
Members: Cindy Barnett, McKim Boyd, Patricia Enright, Tony LaLuzerne, Lynn Lee, Anne Mattern, Gerald Mattern, Mary Kay Milquet, Mary Ann Schumerth, Dick Smits, Tom Walsh. Curator: Laurel Towns.



The Lasee family - Front row: Louise (Verheyen) Lasee (mother), Viola Lasee Walsh, Doris Lasee Woulf, John Bernard (JB) (father). Top row: Eugene, Francis, Reuben, Joan Lasee Reis, John (Jobie), Raphael, Urban (Jeep), and Vincent.

2006 Historical Award Winners!

Michael and Jean Egan received the *Historic Preservation Award* for their efforts restoring one of the Polo Resto cabins. In the 1930s, polo matches were played just north of De Pere on a field owned by Charles Hockers. During that time, little cottages like this one were used by the polo jockeys that stayed overnight while waiting for the match. Today, Minahan Stadium is located on the property, where De Pere's polo matches were held.



Left: Restored Polo Resto cabin

Top right: Historic Preservation Award winners Jean and Michael Egan.

The *Nan Workman Award* is given in memory of Nan Workman, charter member, charter director, and long time friend of the De Pere Historical Society. This annual award is given to a De Pere citizen or citizens who give untiringly to the De Pere Historical Society.

This year the award was presented to **Frank and Agnes Woods**. Frank, former owner of the De Pere Journal, donated the old De Pere newspapers to the Historical Society and Agnes is a past member of the Historical Society Board. The Woods received the award at the annual dinner this past fall.

Lower right: Frank and Agnes Woods, recipients of the Nan Workman Award.



Santa's House - 2006!

The first weekend in December over 600 people passed through the festively decorated rooms of the White Pillars Museum, to visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus.



The De Pere Historical Society would like to thank the De Pere Garden Club for decorating the Museum, Stowes Drugs for donating the bags for candy treats, and the De Pere Women's Club for their financial and volunteer support. We also thank all those who made donations, baked cookies, bagged candy, or donated their time and talents to make this year's event a success!



A special "red suit" thanks to Bob Phillips and Terry Bero and their holiday "wives" Eileen Vander Zanden and Kathy Van Sistine.

Photos

Top left: Anxiously waiting to visit with Santa.

Middle right: A list for Santa and Mrs. Claus from two very good girls.

Lower left: Baby's first Christmas.

De Pere Historical Society Membership

To all our Current Members, Former Members, and Potential New Members of the De Pere Historical Society,

As we begin this 37th year of the De Pere Historical Society, I ask that you join with me in renewing your membership for the year 2007. What better way to participate in and preserve our own local history than to belong to our active Society. Being a member is not all give and no take. On the contrary, our Board has been very busy lately providing members with benefits that are hard to find elsewhere.

- Historic picture shows are presented regularly for your enjoyment and you are invited to attend to view and discuss our computerized collection of over 20,000 photographs of old De Pere, its people, and places. Our photo collection continues to grow as people like you share your photos.
- The White Pillars Museum is open from noon to four, Monday through Friday. Admission is free and you can stop in to do family research, view our historical artifacts, our extensive collection of funeral cards, etc.
- A new project starting soon will add a digital archive at the Museum. Computer terminals will allow you to electronically browse photos, ledgers, De Pere newspapers dating back to the 1880s, and other databases, with the capability to print most any item you want. Genealogists will love that.
- The Polo Resto filling station at the entrance to Voyageur Park, which was saved and preserved by the Society with much assistance from the membership.
- As a member, you can continue to take pride in these accomplishments, and attend Santa's House, held every December; a big hit with the younger set.

A return envelope is provided for your use. You might also want to consider a gift membership for that special person or relative who may no longer reside in our community, but would enjoy receiving the newsletters. Please keep in mind that all membership dues are fully tax deductible.

I join with the other members of the Board of Directors in sincerely thanking you for your continued support.

Fran Dimmer

Fran Dimmer
President

2006 De Pere Historical Society Annual Dinner



The 2006 Annual dinner was held at the Swan Club at Legends. At the banquet, the Historic Preservation and Nan Workman awards were bestowed, followed by a special presentation by the Heritage Players.

Thank You!

The following people have made recent donations to the archives of the De Pere Historical Society:

West De Pere High School - 2005 and 2006
Yearbooks
Rita Houston - Janssen Family Tree &
Cookbook

Mary Lom - Two books
Mary Creviere Turner - De Pere Video from
the 1960s

2006 De Pere Historical Society Facts!

- There were 1,740 visitors to White Pillars Museum.
- At the world premier of the "Films of old De Pere from the 20s and 30s," 132 people gathered at the De Pere Cinema Café in May to enjoy this unique event.
- The De Pere Historical Society Annual Dinner drew a crowd of 102 people at The Swan Club at Legends in October.
- Throughout the year, 615 people attended the photo shows held at the Community Center and De Pere and West De Pere High Schools.
- During Santa's House in December, 307 children, accompanied by 311 adults, visited with Santa and Mrs. Claus.
- The 2006 Historical Society membership reached a record high of 375 members!

EARLY DE PERE NEWS

De Pere News - January 28, 1903

George W. Wright, of the West side, had a narrow escape from death Tuesday noon, by being run down by a freight train. The accident happened at the railroad crossing at the Dousman mill. Mr. Wright was leaving the mill and attempted to cross the track as a freight train was leaving the switch for the south at that place. Mr. Wright did not see the train in time to get out of the way, and the engine struck the horse in the side. The train was going very slow, probably not over three miles an hour.

The horse and buggy was forced along the track for a distance of thirty or forty feet before the engine came to a stop. Strange to say, the rig was not overturned and Mr. Wright was not injured in the least. Nor was the buggy damaged except for a few scratches. The horse, however, was so badly hurt in the leg and hoof that he was killed after hobbling home. The animal was valued at over \$200.

Mr. Wright is over 80 years of age and was greatly shaken up and unnerved by the accident which was witnessed by a number of parties, who momentarily expected to see him crushed under the wheels.

De Pere News - July 15, 1903

Robert Phimister, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Phimister, of De Pere, received injuries in Chicago June 29, from which he died July 10 at the Alexian Brothers hospital. Mr. Phimister was employed as teamster for Kemper & bros., hay and grain dealers. While assisting another teamster in starting a heavily-laden coal wagon, which had become stalled, the coal wagon tipped over, falling on Mr. Phimister, inflicting injuries to his back and spine that proved fatal. He lingered for ten days in the hospital, never regaining consciousness.

The family here received no news of the accident until last week. His father and brother James immediately left for Chicago, but did not reach there soon enough to find him alive. The body was brought to De Pere Sunday for burial.

William Robert Phimister was born in De Pere Dec. 26, 1869.

Robert was one of four brothers, three of whom, Charles, James, and John, with the father and mother, remain to mourn his untimely death. We remember him when a boy in the home, as one possessed of most excellent qualities, both of mind and heart, and often pictured for him a future full of usefulness and the best success, and if the boy is any prophecy of the man, we feel confident that he could hardly fail to realize even the fondest hopes of a loving mother. At about 18 years of age he went out from the home life to make a way for himself in the world. He soon found employment in Chicago, where he made his home for the past fifteen years. While during these years his life was isolated from the home of his boyhood, the gratifying intelligence comes from his employers and those who knew him best, of his faithfulness and trustworthiness, so that he never lacked for friends or employment.

The funeral was from the house and was largely attended. The floral tributes were many and beautiful; the service, conducted by Rev. T. W. Sprowls, was brief but impressive. The interment was at Greenwood.



October 2, 1912

Groom **Henry Hendricks**, son of **Henry Hendricks**, bride **Mary Lasee**, daughter of **John & Elizabeth Lasee**.

Attendants **Herbert Hendricks & Tillie Lasee**

Acquisitions from the Historical Photo Presentations



1934 Nicolet High School

Back row: Robert Vercauteren, Earl Staeven, Clarence Yeager, John Marquis, Paul Miskella, Stanley Vincent, Alphonse Konshak, Robert Johnson, Leo Kee, Robert Janssen, Art Camper.

Middle row: Mabel Hildebrand, Louise Ropp, Dorothy Rae, Ruth Schrieber, Guy Teske, Wanda Fruzen, Tom Cavil, Idabell Hartjes, Clarence Hoffman, Pearl Powless, Lawrence Martindale, Margaret Laurentz, George Ferris, Mary Bakken, Katherine Goggins, Laverne, Latus, Eleanor Kellerman, Vera Leroy.

Front row: Vernal Plog, Eunice LeClair, Blanche Savageau, Agnes Duckett, Carolyn Reblitz, Jane St. George, Dorothy Baeten, Audrey Klass, Carolyn Zirbel, Donna Deacon.

Mark Your Calendar!

Wednesday, January 31 - The De Pere Historical Society will present old photographs of people, places, and events around De Pere. The presentation will be held in the auditorium of West De Pere High School, 665 Grant Street, will begin at **7:00 PM**. This event is free to the public.

De Pere Historical Society
403 N. Broadway
De Pere, WI 54115
(920) 336-3877

Membership Application Form

If you would like to join the De Pere Historical Society, forgot to renew your membership, or would like to send a friend a gift membership, use this form. All members will receive the newsletters regarding families and events in De Pere history and Historical Society news.

Please check one:

- \$20
- \$50
- \$100
- \$200
- Other

Mail To:

De Pere Historical Society
403 N. Broadway
De Pere, WI 54115
(920) 336-3877

This membership is for...

Recipients Name _____
Street/Apt _____
City, State, Zip _____
Circle one: Birthday / Christmas / Other: _____

If this is a gift membership, this gift is from...

Your Name _____
Street/Apt _____
City, State, Zip _____

*A special gift notice will be mailed to them with your name on it.

Membership Expires: December 31, 2007.