

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

www.deperehistoricalsociety.org

Volume 19

Issue II

Spring 2008

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, Mike Fleck, Tony LaLuzerne, Lynn Lee, Anne Mattern, Gerald Mattern,
Mary Kay Milquet, Mary Ann Schumerth, Dick Smits, Tom Walsh. Curator: Laurel Towns.



This photograph taken about 140 years ago shows a row of mills spanning the dam and bridge across the Fox River in the late 1860s. The first building in the upper left corner is the E.E. Bolles Woodenware Mill, which was once the Hub & Spoke Factory. The second structure is a flour mill built when J. Fleck had bought the property. Next are the G. S. Marsh Mill and a mill that was not in use at the time of the photograph. The Ellwood Loy Mill was built about 1865 on the site of what had been the old Stephen Barrows mill and later the Randall Wilcox mill, The last building on the right is the William O. Kingsley Mill. The people in the foreground are standing near the reconstruction of the first lock.

De Pere – Incorporated 1857

There are many significant events in De Pere's early history. 2007 marked the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of the Village of De Pere. At the time, the west side and east side of De Pere were separate communities.

The consolidation of De Pere and West De Pere began in the late 1880s when the communities needed a new bridge. De Pere, which had become a village in 1857 and then a city in 1883, was able to afford their portion of the costs. The City of West De Pere, which had begun as a village in 1870, changed its name in 1883 to the City of Nicolet, and then in 1887 became the City of West De Pere, could not afford their portion.

There was much discussion and debate, but eventually the west side men voted to annex into the City of De Pere. That is what Celebrate commemorates, during Memorial Weekend since 1990 - the union of the two communities as one.

Below is a timeline of significant events in the history of De Pere

- 1829** – William Dickinson became the first permanent white settler on the east side of what would later become the City of De Pere.
- 1836** – The Fox River Hydraulic Company is founded and began construction of the first dam across the Fox River.
- 1857** – March 6, 1857, the State of Wisconsin approved the incorporation of the Village of De Pere. Chapter 276 of *“Private and Local Laws passed by the Legislature of Wisc. in the year Eighteen Hundred and Fifty-Seven”* describes the act to incorporate the village of De Pere.”
In the first election eighty-nine men were eligible to vote and after the ballots were counted, Randall Wilcox was elected president and William Field, Jr., John O. Roorbach, T. C. Morgan, John F. Lessey, Gustavus Marsh, and E. C. Merrill trustees. Other positions filled included assessors Dominicus Jordan and William Wakeman, Justices of the Peace William Wakeman and A. R. Martin, constables, William Armstrong and A. H. Davis, and John F. Lessey as superintendent of common schools.
- 1870** – The Village of West De Pere is incorporated and Andrew Reid is elected Village President.
- 1883** – The Village of West De Pere changes its name to the City of Nicolet, after early voyageur Jean Nicolet. Mayor Charles A. Willard presided
- 1883** – The Village of De Pere becomes the City of De Pere. Mayor Dr. Melancton H. Fisk leads the first year the village became a city.
- 1887** – The City of Nicolet becomes the City of West De Pere under the direction of Mayor William Workman.
- 1890** – The City of West De Pere annexes into the City of De Pere. Richard A. Meiswinkel was the last mayor on the west side and Jeremiah S. Dunham was the last mayor on the east side. The first mayor of the two consolidated communities was Milton P. Persons.
- 1990** – The City of De Pere celebrated 100 years as a consolidated city. Nancy J. Nusbaum was the mayor.
- 2007** – De Pere celebrates the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of the community. Michael J. Walsh serving as mayor.

Thank You!

- **James Brady** - Funeral cards
- **Gerald Garrity** - Photos of Nicolet Airport
- **Jeanne Guerin** – Two straw hats from Beaver’s in De Pere
- **Blanche Kidney** - Photos of Lusha Trucking Company
- **Manitowoc County Historical Society** - Two De Pere postcards
- **Ann Schippers** - De Pere aerial photos
- **Armond Ullmer** - 129 Wisconsin History Magazines, 210 Then & Now plus 21 other magazines
- **Jim and Mary Jo Van Den Heuvel** - Silver plate of First Congregational Church & framed photo of SNC Main Hall

1857 – 2007 Sesquicentennial Celebration and Time Capsule

Please join us at the entrance to Voyageur Park on Saturday, May 17 at 10:00 a.m. to celebrate the City's Sesquicentennial. To commemorate the event the De Pere Historical Society will bury a time capsule to be opened in the bicentennial year of 2057. The ceremony will take place at the Polo Resto on the corner of Front and William Streets, De Pere. The mayor, other dignitaries, and Historical Society Board members will be present.

While 2007 officially marked the community's 150th anniversary of the incorporation of the Village of De Pere, the Historical Society wanted to ensure that all items pertinent to 2007 were included in the time capsule. This allowed us to include items from one of the biggest events in De Pere's history, the dedication of the new Claude Allouez Bridge in October.

May is National Historic Preservation month and the theme is "*This Place Matters.*" Burying a time capsule provides an ideal opportunity for us to honor De Pere's first 150 years and let future generations know that "*This Place Matters.*"

To view the contents of the time capsule, stop by White Pillars museum in the next few weeks, before they are buried for the next 50 years. Below is a list of some of the items that will be in the time capsule. **Note: This list is not all inclusive.**

- | | |
|---|---|
| Sesquicentennial Proclamation | De Pere Hi-Lights – School Newsletter |
| De Pere – 1857 – 2007 – Sesquicentennial | De Pere High School Activity Handbook |
| Mayor /City Council Members 2007 | West De Pere High School 2007 Fall Honor Roll |
| City Budget – 2007 | West De Pere High School 2007 Commencement Program |
| De Pere City Directory and Map | Phantastic News – 2007-2008 School News |
| City of De Pere Street Map and newsletter | West De Pere High School Fall (2007) Sports Guide |
| Mayors of De Pere – 1857 -2007 | The Phantom Foundation – brochure |
| De Pere Police Dept. Team Policing Program | West De Pere High School Phantoms – T-Shirt |
| History of De Pere Dam, Locks & Bridges | Elementary Schools in De Pere |
| “Bridging Our Community” – Invitation Bridge Dedication | List names of all De Pere Elementary Schools |
| De Pere Bridge Celebration – Program of Day’s Events | Notre Dame Elementary School - Brochure |
| Pieces of old Claude Allouez Bridge (1933-2007) | Our Lady of Lourdes School - Brochure |
| “Bridging Our Community” Medallion | St. Norbert Abbey Brochure |
| Pin – Bridge Dedication | The De Pere Churches Welcome You - Brochure |
| Brochure – Driving Tips – Roundabout | Sister City - Amal, Sweden, November 8, 2007 |
| Photo – Both Bridges | Sister City International Board of Directors |
| De Pere Boat Launches and Fees | Brown County Federation of History Museums Directory |
| Photos of Fishing on the Fox River | Green Bay / De Pere Antiquarian Society Assets of Brown |
| 2007 – 2008 Brown County Directory | County Library |
| De Pere Historical Society 2007 Membership | Celebrate De Pere 2007 List of Events and Photos |
| White Pillars Museum Brochure | Brown County Fair – 2007 Brochure |
| Polo Resto Dedication | U. S. Postage - Book of Forever Stamps and explanation |
| Photo – De Pere Historical Members | Green Bay Packers Training Camp – St. Norbert College |
| Memorial Day Parade, 2007 | Green Bay Packers Article – Use of St. Norbert’s |
| De Pere Historical Society Newsletter | Lambeau Field – Celebrates 50th Anniversary |
| St. Norbert College Brochure – College Facts | De Pere Journal– Oct. 4, 2007 Edition – Bridge Dedication |
| St. Norbert College Commencement Program – 2007 | Then and Now DVD |
| Miriam B. and James J. Mulva Library | List of Oldest Continuous De Pere Businesses |
| Unified School District of De Pere 2007-2008 Budget | Gevers Barber Shop |
| Unified School District of De Pere Enrollment Figures | Union Hotel – Ad and Menu |
| Unified School District of De Pere Teacher Salary | Seroogy’s Chocolates – Ad and Price Sheets |
| West De Pere Middle School 2006-2007 Yearbook | Photo of current gas prices |
| Hemlock Creek Elementary School | Weekly ad – Piggly Wiggly |
| De Pere High School 2007 Commencement Program | Weekly ad – Festival Foods |

De Pere Historical Society 2008

Business Membership Gold: \$250.00 or More

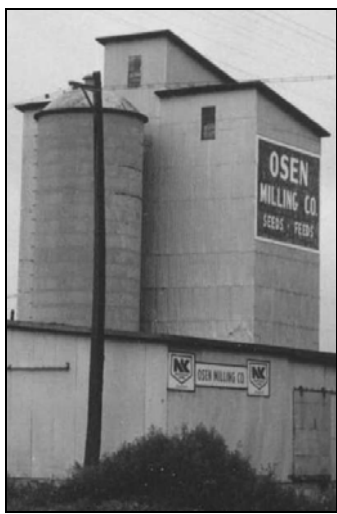
City of De Pere
Plan Administrators Inc.
Ryan Funeral Home
Union Hotel & Restaurant
Van Gemert Memorials Inc.

Silver: \$100.00

Classic Dimensions
Cotter Funeral Home
Roels, Keidatz, Fronsee &
Danen, LLP
Seroogy's Chocolates
Sidekicks Bar & Grill
Systems Furniture
The C.A. Lawton Co.
Walsh & Walsh, S.C.

Bronze: \$50.00

Allen County Public Library
Alpha Delights, LLC
Badgerland Printing Inc.
Bilotti's Pizza & Italian
Garden
Brennan Buick Inc.
Legends/Swan Club
Niocet National Bank
Pack and Ship, LLC
The Abbey Bar
Wm A. Hein Construction
Co. Inc.



Osen Milling Co

Individual/Family Membership Levels

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Robert & Karen DeGroot
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Edna Hibbard
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Millennium:

\$500.00 or More

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Founder: \$250.00

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Dr. Richard Horak
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Patron: \$100.00

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Scott & Kate Janssen
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Lucille Feher
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Sponsor: \$20.00

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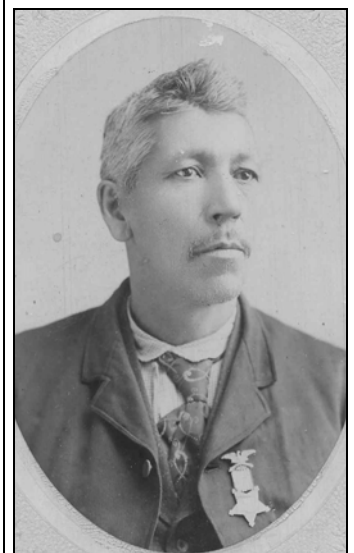
Civil War Veteran Fred Matzke

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 Randall & Doris Cavil
 Dick & Dar Christensen
 Pete & Dee Clover
 Pat Cochran
 Bob & Ellen Coenen
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 Ann Williamsen
 Sue Williamsen
 Greg & Mary Wilson
 Diane Daul Wodzinski
 Paul Wozniak
 Carol Wright



Civil War Veteran Henry Webster

De Pere in the News around the United States

Green Bay Democrat – February 5, 1839

MARRIED

On Monday, the 28th ult, by the Rev. Mr. Bonduel, Catholic priest, Mr. J. B. Langlois of Depere, to Miss Sophia Pauquette of Green Bay.

Green Bay Republican – March 12, 1844

At Depere, forty feet of the dam and waste gate on the west side of the river were swept away, and a large quantity of saw-logs drifted off. This break in the dam, upon the whole, must be regarded as a providential occurrence, as otherwise the whole dam, mills and all, would have been swept away. We are glad to learn that this breach will not retard or hinder the Grist Mill from running; and that the Saw Mill will shortly be in operation again. The water on Friday morning, notwithstanding the breach was four feet higher than the dam, an occurrence never before known, and rushing by with a fearful impetuosity. J.S. Fisk, Esq. the enterprising lessee of this hydraulic power, will lose altogether, (including 1200 logs on East river which drifted into the Bay and are a total loss,) almost \$3,000.

On East river, two dams belonging to Gen. Dickinson, together with a quantity of lumber and saw-logs, were washed away by the water and are a total loss.

Bismarck Daily Tribune - April 17, 1911

FLORENCE LAKE ITEMS

Clarence Doherty has returned after spending some time visiting his parents in De Pere, Wis.

Chester Gokard of De Pere, Wis., is visiting friends in this neighborhood.

Ogden Utah Standard-Examiner – Sep 9, 1920

MILDRED GOEMAN

When Mildred Goemans of De Pere, Wis., was five years old she was taken down to the beach back of the Goeman's home and given her first dip. Her instructor was John Goemans, proud father.

At the age of eight Mildred swam across the Fox, 1200 feet wide, and swift of current, as the water dashes down the channel to plunge over a huge dam

at the American Writing Paper mills.

There are seven children in the Goemans family. All are expert swimmers but none so promising as Mildred.

The father is an expert in the water, being particularly famous for his diving stunts. He taught the kids all about it.

Mildred swam the Fox without resting on her back once. She used a breast stroke. Her father followed in a rowboat and she chatted merrily with him all the way across. She wanted to swim right back but he insisted she ride.

If she continues to make such rapid progress in the aquatic sports Annette Kellerman and the other well known mermaids had better look to the laurels, for Mildred has a good start towards fame.

The Helena Montana Independent - Nov 18, 1929

Three Ships Sail To Rescue Of The Depere

Ketchikan, Alaska, Nov. 17--(AP)

--Three ships were steaming today to the aid of the officers and crew of the freighter DePere of the Alaska Steamship company; beached at Port Arthur last night in a sinking condition after hitting a reef out from Fairway island near Cape Decision.

The vessel, which flashed S.O.S. calls immediately after the accident but later notified ships to proceed on their courses as it would be possible to make Port Arthur, was lying on the beach there with a great hole in her hull, meager dispatches received here today indicated. A few of the crew were still aboard while the remained were camped on the beach, the reports said.

Fresno Bee Republican - May 10, 1954

Remember Triplane? It is Back Again.

DE PERE, Wis.—UP – George Frisbie, a De Pere aerial photographer, has designed, built, and tested a one seat triplane he hopes to market in build it yourself kits.

The three winged plane, which harkens back to the early days of flying is called the American Flea Triplane. Flea because it is 16 feet long with a 21 foot wingspread and has only one seat, for the pilot.

Frisbie said his plane's three decker wing arrangement gives box kite buoyancy in the air. The lowest wing also serves as aileron, giving greater stability in flight and safety. The design calls for a cruising speed of 100 miles an hour and a range of more than 200 miles.



From top left: The Deep Rock Gas Station, Photographer Thomas D. Bowring, father of Photographer Thomas R. Bowring (middle left), The Vander Zanden family - back row Ben, Ada (Adrianna), front row: Mary Berendsen-Vander Zanden, George, Harriet, Florence, Henry, and Agnes. Bottom: A child rides his bicycle westward down Main Avenue.

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-\$49
- \$50-\$99
- \$100-\$249
- \$250-\$499
- \$500 or more

Mail To:

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

This membership is for...

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

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

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

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

Membership Expires: December 31, 2008