
Burlington Historian

Winter 2023

A publication of the Burlington Historical Society
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Calendar

January 15 *Open House of "Don
Vande Sand Historical
Research Center", 1 pm -3pm*

**OPEN
HOUSE**

Burlington Historical Society Board of Directors

Officers

President Julie O'Neill
Vice-President Jackie Heiligenthal
Secretary Priscilla Crowley
Treasurer John Smith

Directors

Stephanie Rummler
Sarah Sullivan
Dennis Tully
Lisa Wagner
Cory Weithaus
Ray Ziebell
Jeff Lettow

The Burlington Historical Society will be hosting an Open House to dedicate the "Don Vande Sand Historical Research Center" on Sunday, January 15, 2023 from 1 pm - 3 pm at the Museum.



Our volunteers have been working to organize the many articles of Don's research to allow the public access to all that Don had to share.

Did you know the Burlington Historical Society has a Facebook and Instagram page? Dennis Tully posts many photos of Burlington in the past! Search for our page titled - Burlington History Museum

Be sure to "Like" the page so you do not miss any posts!



Please stop by and visit with us and view the archives!

*please
join us*



Welcome New Member to the Board of Directors

At the November 2022 Board meeting, Jeff Lettow was unanimously elected to the Burlington Historical Society's Board of Directors. Jeff has volunteered as a Docent at the Pioneer Log Cabin, helped with the Hidden History Hunt event, assisted with maintenance issues at the museum and gave a presentation at the Volunteer Appreciation Evening about the history of the Pioneer Log Cabin and World events during the 1860s.

We are excited to have Jeff join the Board!

I am Jeff Lettow, 42 years old and a native of the Chicago area. I have lifelong ties to Burlington and Brown's Lake through my grandparents and have always considered Burlington home. I am a Marine Corps veteran and a graduate of Southern Illinois University Carbondale where I earned a bachelor's degree in history. Currently I am working on my master's degree in history with Arizona State University and I teach History and Geography at Waukesha South High School..

When I was 9 years old I fell in love with history when I discovered my family's Civil War letters in my grandfather's attic. I felt a connection to the people who wrote those letters and that spawned the deep interest in the past that I have had since. I remain fascinated about the past and am constantly reading, discovering, investigating, and questioning about the things that happened in the days before I lived. I hope to bring my passion for history to Burlington Historical Society as I join this amazing team of directors to uncover the mysteries of Burlington's past as it relates to local, national, and global history.

Thank you to the members who recently renewed their memberships. Remember, membership expiration information is on the mailing label of this newsletter.

Bev Baker, Burlington, WI
Mary Block, Burlington, WI
Debbie Bluett, Delavan, WI
Tamara Brever, Burlington, WI
Gary Bronson, Burlington, WI
Sharon Butler, Manhattan, KS
Kathleen Poritz-Craig, Burlington, WI
Joe & Peg Fox, Cincinnati, OH
Bob & Victoria Gariepy, Burlington, WI
Peter & Lori Hintz, Burlington, WI
Don & Joan Kerkman, Burlington, WI
David & Marie Kuemmel, New Berlin, WI
Mike & Dawn Lewandowski, Rochester, WI
Delores Spitzer, Burlington, WI
Kathleen Thate, Burlington, WI
Donald V. Uhen, Burlington, WI
Pamela Wanasek, Burlington, WI
Pat Sullivan, Burlington, WI
Michelle R. Wilder, Burlington, WI
Lewis R. Zwiebel, Louisville, KY

Thank you to the following individuals who made a monetary donation to the Historical Society. Your support is appreciated!

Bev Baker, Burlington, WI
Eric & Bonnie Erickson, Burlington, WI
Don & Joan Kerkman, Burlington, WI
David & Marie Kuemmel, New Berlin, WI
Nancy Osmolak, Burlington, WI
Kathleen Thate, Burlington, WI
Donald V. Uhen, Burlington, WI
Pamela Wanasak, Burlington, WI

Artifacts Recently Donated to the Historical Society

- Scrapbooks dated 1924 - 1976 of Elizabeth Vos Oldenburg, donated by Jim Oldenburg, Burlington, WI. The scrapbooks include WWII ration books, programs from events at local schools and churches and many newspaper articles



- LP Album of Frenchy Boutan at the Plush Horse Lounge and BHS Sings 1969, and a garment bag from Stag Shop, donated by Corina Krestschmer, Burlington, WI.



- ChocolateFest items including buttons, advertising flyers, chocolate cookbook and misc. items, donated by Burlington Area Chamber of Commerce



- Photos and Scrapbook with schedules, photos, newspaper articles, and tournament programs of various Burlington sports teams, 1932-1957, collected by John Haas, donated by Jodi Haas Mara, Grayslake, IL.



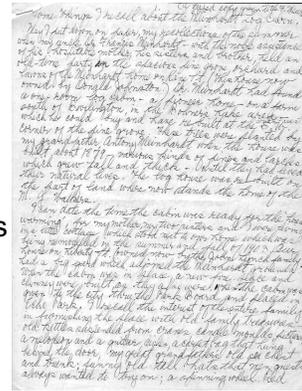
- WAC Skirt, Scrapbook, Army Songbooks, WAC newsletter and other misc. items belonging to Mary Marjorie DeGrave Dantzer, donated by Katherine Dantzer-Olson, Dawson, MN



The following memoir was written by Cornelia Pettibone Dudley, granddaughter of Anthony Meinhardt, in September 1964. She shares her memories of the Meinhardt Cabin.

The Meinhardt family donated the cabin to the City of Burlington in 1960 and it was moved to Echo Park. In 1997 it was restored and moved to its current location in Wehmhoff Square. The Historical Society maintains the cabin and opens it to the public during the warmer months.

The original copy of the memoir is in the archives at the Burlington Historical Society Museum.



Some Things I Recall About the Meinhardt Cabin

May I put down on paper my recollections of the summer when my uncle Dr. Francis Meinhardt - with the noble assistance of his hospitable mother, his sisters and brother, held an old-time party in the spacious fine grove, or orchard and lawns of the Meinhardt home on Kane Street. (This house now owned by Donald Johnston.) Dr. Meinhardt had found a one-room log cabin - a pioneer home - on a farm south of Burlington, in the Bohners Lake area - which he could buy and have re-built at the southwest corner of the fine grove. These trees were planted by my grandfather, Anthony Meinhardt when the house was built about 1879 - various kinds of pines and larches which grew tall and thick - until they had lived their natural lives. The log house was re-built on the part of land where now stands the home of M.G Walkers.



LOG CABIN - ECHO PARK - ABOUT 1975

I can date the time the cabin was ready for the house warming, for my mother, my two sisters and I were living in a little cottage which stood next to our home which was being remodeled in the summer and fall of 1903. Our house on Liberty Street (owned now by the John Lynch family) had a big yard which adjoined the Meinhardt grounds. When the cabin was in place a new fireplace and chimney were built as they also were when the cabin was given to the city through the Park Board and placed in Echo Park. I recall the interest of the entire family in furnishing the place with old family treasures - old kettles suspended from cranes, candle moulds, pictures, a melodeon and a guitar, dishes, a carpet bag that hung behind the door, my great grandfather's old chest and trunk; funny old tall hats that men guests always wanted to try on; a spinning wheel. Red checked curtains were made for the casement windows. The front door was in two sections so the lower part could be bolted to keep out animals! The lock was about five inches

square and had a long heavy key which was hung along the edge of a back door inside the Meinhardt house. Uncle Francis owned the lock and key before he found the cabin. Whenever any of us in the relationship had out-of-town guests we all proudly exhibited the beautiful house, took the key from the nail, and took them up the path that had wildflowers and ferns, at the south edge of the pine grove, to see the log cabin. Often my grandmother served afternoon coffee out there. This recalls the waffle breakfasts and Sunday mornings, up in the grove beside the fountain, where waffles were brought from the house by “Violet” who did not think it too much work to run back and forth as she baked on the kitchen range.

The party itself was in the summer of 1903 - I was thirteen years old, and we all dressed up. My older sister Louise Pettibone, arrived, sitting in front of the saddle on a big horse that was ridden by Ernest Badenoch. I can see them in my mind's eye now - Ern with a tall hat, cravat, spats and Louise in a woman's riding habit. The McCumbers came in a lumber wagon, the Zalm family from Vienna in a hay rack. It was a big party - probably well over a hundred. Uncle Francis had had a floor built in a clearing of the grove, above the fountain - for dancing - had rented many wooden shoes - had fiddlers. The one thing my Aunt Leonore Meinhardt Van Cleve recalls (she had been away teaching that year during the building and preparations) was that the wooden shoes were rough inside, and had no rights or lefts, and were not conducive to animated dancing. There were long tables and benches permanently built at the east end of the grove, where a supper of great platters of meat and many home made foods, including ice cream, were served. There were singing, charades, other “stunts” and a very successful (but strenuous party came to an end) before dark. These are the things I recall. My younger sister Dorothy, who was nine, helped me in some details of memory.



Pioneer Log Cabin, Wehmhoff Square, Burlington

The construction of the cabin is of a distinct type. I have heard the family say it was a perfect example of that type of construction of pioneer homes. Later, a section of old rail fence with a gate was put up along the south side of the path beside the cabin. I can also in my mind's eye see the climbing rose that framed the window frames. This was a favorite place to take pictures when between 1907 and 1911, and later too, college friends came to visit and to have house parties out at Brown's Lake, following Beloit Commencements.

As the years went by there was more and more vandalism, and the “pioneer home” was not left un-molested.

Cornelia Pettibone Dudley Sept. 1964
(My mother was Alma Meinhardt, the oldest daughter of Anthony Meinhardt)

