

A Publication of the Mt. Horeb Area Historical Society

Home Grown Talent and Entertainment

In the early part of the 20th century, neighborhood "Fields of Dreams" dotted the rural countryside. A recent interview with Don Henderson, the last of a long line of Henderson sportsmen to live in Springdale Township, brought back his memories of playing ball in local cow pastures and wherever a plot of ground could be set aside.

Henderson recalled hearing of a ball field on the Stuessy farm north of Riley, but the field he remembers most as a young boy was his home field, a stone's throw from the family's farmhouse. The backstop was placed against a small hillside with the road running above it. Fans could park along the road and sit on the hillside to watch the Sunday afternoon games.



Members of the Huegel-Hyland team

"Everyone looked forward to baseball on Sunday afternoons," he recalled.

In 1931 his dad, Forest, along with Leo Eagan from Paoli and Alford Olson of Montrose and others organized the Sugar River Valley Baseball League. The league continued until 1943 and over those years teams from all over the area would play when they could operate a team. The teams covered an area from New Glarus to the south, Verona to the east, Barneveld to the west and Cross Plains to the north. The Civilian Conservation Corps of Mount Horeb even fielded teams, Henderson said.

"Our fields were nothing compared to today's fields," said Henderson, who avidly watches his granddaughters play softball at the Mount Horeb parks. "Dad did sell the sod off of our infield and the buyer had to level and groom it to be a skinned infield. Of course, all the mowing was done walking with a reel-type lawnmower, not very wide. Our bases were gunnysacks filled with hay or straw and neighbor T.G. McCaughey would sell what he said was ice-cold pop. But without the ice, it was quite warm."

In 1941 Riley team won the state championship for amateur baseball, winning 23 games in a row. Uniforms were generally a mix of whatever was available.

In 1943, the Riley team joined the Industrial League in Madison. Riley had played exhibition games before in Madison at Breese Stevens Field and the city folks enjoyed seeing the team made up of farmers. A sponsor

stepped up from Huegel-Hyland shoe store and purchased new uniforms for the team. They became known as Huegel-Hyland Riley's.

"It was great," Henderson said. "Those folks in the stands would bring hamburgers down to the field for us because they knew we didn't have time to eat at home, we had field work and chores to do and then try to make it into Madison for our night game. That lasted until 1947 when we just couldn't get there on time anymore."

After that, team members wanting to play branched out to area teams in the Home Talent League.

Baseball wasn't the only game out in the countryside; however, Riley had a basketball team in 1918 whose members borrowed (stole) the railroad handcar to get to Verona for a game. There was at one time a young boys' team and women's team as well.

The 1920s saw the creation of a rifle shooting league and tug-of-war team. In the 1930s, the Sugar River Euchre League was formed. The Riley Hall was home base for many of these sporting events, but it also hosted dances, plays and social gatherings. Local talent provided the music.

Competition and socializing were a healthy complement to hard farm work in the Riley area, where neighbors worked together and played together.

Book Provides Challenges

In the discussion stage it sounds easy: Find an old photo, take a contemporary view and place them side by side in a book titled "Mt. Horeb Then & Now: Celebrating Mt. Horeb's 150th, Southwestern Dane County's 175th."

When the history book committee met for the first time on Jan. 23, 2010 it was quickly realized that this was going to be no easy task. Out of the archives holdings of 20,000 images, which ones would best represent the area's rich and diversified past, and how could the committee possibly review them all? Which places were still there to photograph? How could this all happen by spring 2011?

A decision was made not to view the old photos first, but rather make a group selection of the places that best represented Mt. Horeb, the area's townships and small villages. Once this was done photos were selected to fit the subject categories. In some cases it was discovered that there were no old photos to choose from, so a new place was added to the roster. All the photos were "tested" for importance using a series of 39 questions that gave points for such things as history, ethnicity, political, county, state and national relevance, artistic composition and ability to provoke thought.

The photos were then pulled from the main files and placed in acid-free binders where they were numbered. Then the real work began. Color photocopies were made of each to be used out in the field. Book committee representatives were assigned different views and charged with getting photographers lined up and notifying property owners or individuals who would appear in the new photos.

Then came the additional challenges. In one case

family descendents were brought back from as far away as California. In other cases, such as a barn raising in rural Pine Bluff, the site had to be located using plat books, farm directories and additional reference sources. Large trees, road changes and building alterations created additional obstacles. Finding appropriate angles and heights or duplicating these with ladders, car top perches, and climbing to the top of church steeples or bramble-filled hillsides have made for some amusing moments. One creative setting included the use of a live horse, complete with rider and family furniture housed in the Museum's collections.

Because of the varied times of year that the old photos were taken, many will need to be photographed when leaves fall or the first snow flies. In the case of the Mt. Horeb Evangelical Church, the exact date that the photo was taken was selected for the retake 94 years later. Another had to be timed so that a farmer harvesting his ripe grain could be captured on film. To date seven photographers have given their time to the project.

While all this has been taking place the captions for each photo are being painstakingly researched. Pages dedicated to the chronological development of southwestern Dane County will also play a major role in the book's text. This format has never been created before, much like the actual new and old photos of the area have never been placed side-by-side in a book before. Each local township and small village will also have a page dedicated to its very own history. Additionally, publishers are in the process of review and costs are being considered. Application for grants and additional fundraising to ensure the book's publication is ongoing.

The limited-edition coffee table book is scheduled for release in the spring 2011.

Right side of photo
- Donald (Jones) and
Sweet family members
pose in front of their
Springdale Township
home about 1896.

Left side of photo -
Descendents of the
Donald and Sweet fam-
ilies pose approximately
114 years later.

See full views of this
image when the book is
published in early 2011.



History of the Duluth Trading Company Buildings

The former Mount Horeb Mustard Museum building, and home to Duluth Trading Company at 100 E. Main St., was erected in 1882 to house the Allan Ruste and Company hardware store. From 1883 to 1885 P.G. Krogh took over the store, and also operated the post office in the building. Julius Heisig, Andrew Grinde and Niels Evans operated the hardware store from 1893 until 1909, when Robert Beat bought out Andrew Grinde and renamed the business Mount Horeb Hardware Company. Robert Beat's sons Roy and John joined the firm in 1911. John's son Lowell joined the business in 1953. The store remained under Beat ownership until it closed. Through the years the Beats offered farm machinery and parts as well as a general line of hardware. In recent years Ron Derge took the exterior of the building back to its approximate 1914 appearance and the Mount Horeb Mustard Museum occupied the building until 2009.

Prior to 1926, Robert Beat started to offer automobiles as part of the hardware store business. To house the cars he had a brick commercial building constructed just west of the hardware store at 102 W. Main St. in 1926 and opened the business on Jan. 19, 1927. The building had large glass show windows along the street and offered Ford automobiles. The Beats operated the auto dealership until 1954. Robert Stare operated it from 1954 until 1971. In 1971, the Beats' plumbing business moved into the building. Larry O'Connell took over the plumbing business in the building from 1986 until 2010. The building's new owner, Steve Schlect, plans to restore the exterior of the building to its 1920s appearance.



Winter Transportation Gifted

A circa-1900 one-horse cutter has been gifted to the Mount Horeb Area Museum by Richard, William and Roderick Skindrud and Rebecca Mostrom, the children of Jerome and Alma (Martinson) Skindrud.

Martin Skindrud, who lived on a rural Springdale Township farm located on the corner of present-day Highway S and Town Hall Road, originally owned the cutter. When the sleigh was in use, two of Martin's children, Eric and Ruth (Ousterling Lindeman) would hitch it up and use it for transportation to Mt. Horeb to attend high school. After its useful days for school and social transportation, the sleigh was stored away at the farm until another of Martin's children, Jerome Skindrud, had the cutter restored by an Amish craftsman living near Brodhead.

We thank the heirs of Martin and Jerome Skindrud for this beautifully restored addition to the Museum's horse-drawn vehicle collection.



The Skindrud family with restored cutter recently added to the Museum collections.

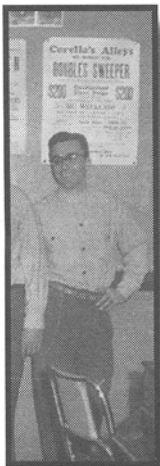
Community Icon Passes

Dr. Raymond L. Guenveur O.D. passed away at Ingle-side Nursing Home on Wednesday, Aug. 11, 2010.

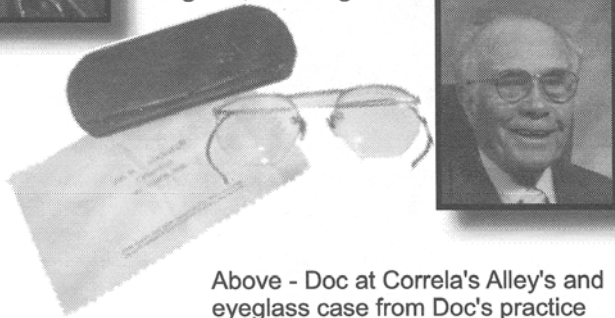
Many of us grew up getting our first eyeglasses pre-scribed and fitted by Dr. Guenveur, so we knew him as Mt. Horeb's eye doctor. But "Doc" as he was fondly referred to, was thoroughly and passionately involved in the community. After his arrival in 1940, where he opened his office in the Gonstead building at 200 E. Main St., he immediately began volunteering his services with Mt. Horeb's organizations. His first two organizations were Rotary Club International and the Mt. Horeb Chamber of Commerce in 1940.

Over the years he served in various capacities as secretary and president.

At various times he also served as president of the Mt. Horeb Industrial Development Incorporation and the Mt. Horeb Community Chest. He was also active in St. Ignatius Church. Ray was instrumental in setting the tone for a new slogan for Mt. Horeb when local citizens worried about the effect of the Highway 18-151 bypass around the village. He was involved in the early stages of the Troll Capital of the World theme and in a playful exchange of hand-crafted trolls with Rujkon Norway, which also claimed the title of Troll Capital. In 1985-1986 Guenveur served as president of the Mt. Horeb Quasquicentennial Committee, which oversaw the 125-year anniversary of the community.

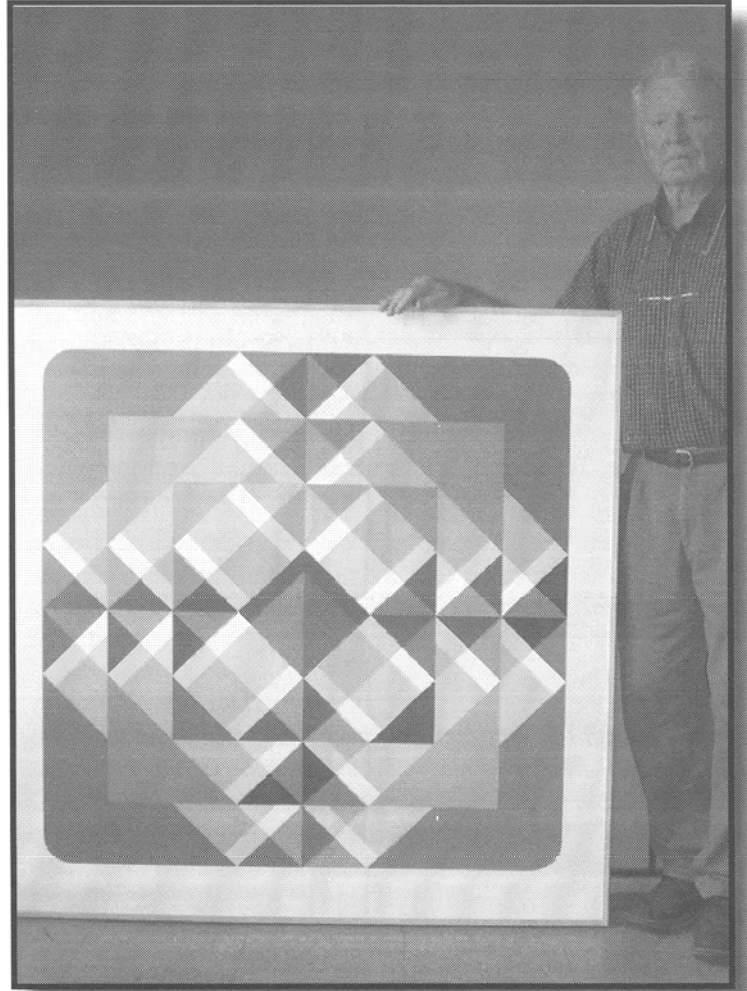


During his early involvement with the Historical Society, Doc contributed artifacts from his profession to the museum. He later served as the president of the Friend's Group when the new museum opened in 1996. Many of this group's members began serving as the Museum's first core of volunteers, with Guenveur as the coordinator. As part of his duties Doc wrote "awareness" articles for the Mt. Horeb Mail, which created interest in the Historical Society. Doc's funeral was held on Monday, Aug. 16, at St. Ignatius.



Above - Doc at Correl's Alley's and eyeglass case from Doc's practice

Art Added to Collection



Jerry Schubert of Mt. Horeb recently enriched the Museum's holdings of locally created art when he gifted a 4-foot by 4-foot painting by Marko Spalatin. Spalatin, who resides in rural Blue Mounds, is recognized throughout the nation and beyond for his large geometric abstractions. Marko is a native of Zagreb, Croatia and came to the U.S. in 1963. His work is in collections throughout the world including Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Tate Gallery in London, the Milwaukee Art Museum and the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

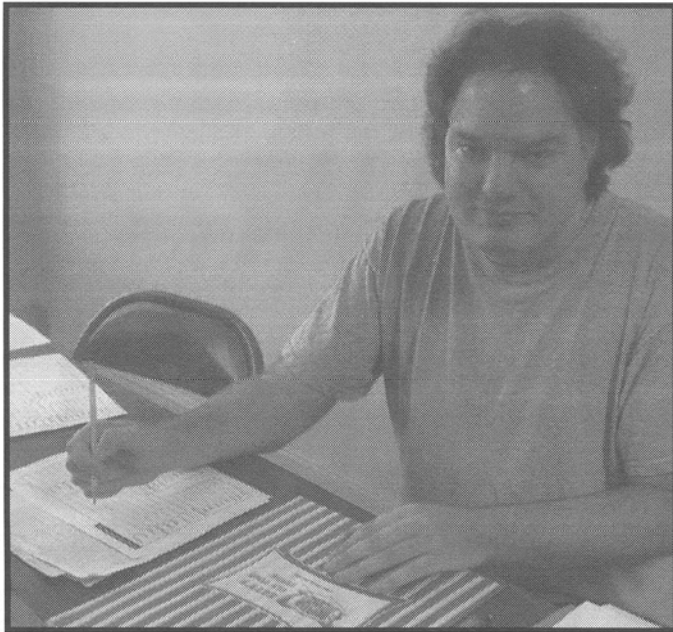
The Historical Society actively seeks locally created art in all forms for the Museum's art collections. The works can be historic or contemporary and by everyday individuals or those who have made a name for themselves. Items in all media, written, photographic, recorded, painted, carved or sculpted are desired. In the case of past artists tools, props, and other pieces of equipment of the trade are also sought. The work must have been created in southwestern Dane County, or have association to an individual who once resided in the area. We greatly thank Jerry for this major addition.

Summer Volunteers

The Historical Society was fortunate to have had the assistance of two enthusiastic volunteers this summer. Their work at the archives and the museum allowed us to forge ahead on cataloging and to have an additional day for the museum to be open for visitors.

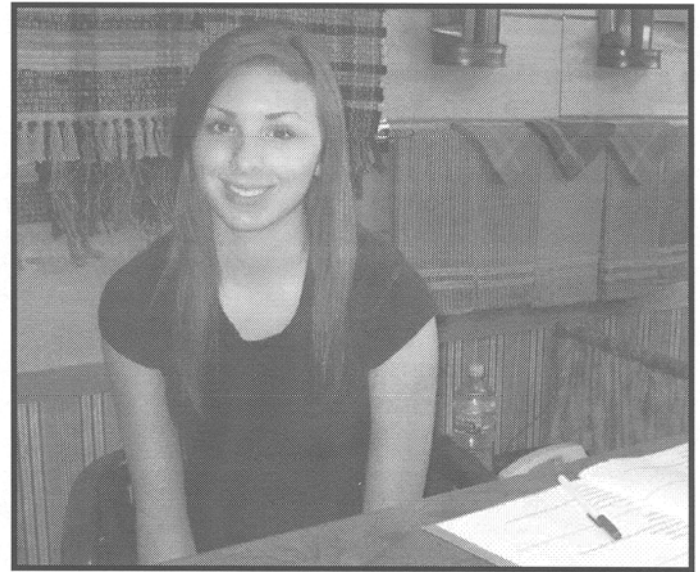
There are always projects on the back burner that are in need of completion. With the help of one of the volunteers, Chris Carter, we've made a dent in the cataloging of our "Business Novelties" collection. These artifacts are giveaways or souvenirs from businesses, institutions and organizations from the area ranging from china plates to ashtrays to pens and pencils to calendars – all sorts of objects that identify their place in history.

Originally from Michigan, Chris moved to the area and completed High School in Oregon, WI. He lived on the east side of Madison before moving to Mt. Horeb in 2008. He is currently looking for work in computer support and with time on his hands, came to the archives to do research on a historical building in Mt. Horeb's downtown. He became intrigued enough by his own interest in histo-



ry and the busy environment to ask if there was anything he could do for us. Throughout the summer on Wednesday afternoons, Chris helped to complete the cataloging process of several boxes of "Business Novelties".

Mt. Horeb High School student, Julie Boyden, is hoping to complete her Silver Cord Award by this Spring when she will be graduating in the class of 2011. The Silver Cord is awarded to students who log a minimum of 140 hours of volunteer time throughout their high school years. For the last 2 years Julie has been volunteering at the museum. In 2009 she helped as a cataloging assistant



inputting artifact information into the computer using a museum software called "Past Perfect". This summer, with Julie's assistance, the museum was open an additional day, Thursday from 12 – 4 p.m. Her duties included opening and closing the museum, greeting visitors and directing them to the exhibit, taking care of customer transactions in the gift shop and handling any questions about the local area. Opening the extra day also helped our visitor numbers this year.

The Historical Society would like to thank these two volunteers for their time this summer and note that we have great support from all our volunteers and appreciate everything they do for the organization. If you haven't yet volunteered and are interested in doing so, call Laurie Boyden at 437-6486 or 437-8901 for more information.

Museum and archive hours and locations can be found on the back page of the newsletter.

Museum Objects to Reach Larger Audience

Several objects from the Museum's decorative arts collections will be featured in the forthcoming exhibit "Handmade Meaning: The Value of Craft in Victorian and Contemporary Culture". The exhibit will open on Dec. 17, 2010 and run through Feb. 6, 2011 at the James Watrous Gallery of the Overture Center, Madison. The exhibition is a collaboration between the Watrous Gallery and the UW-Madison Department of Art History. Objects chosen from the Museum's holdings are attributed to Hazel Hanneman, Ida Arneson Nace, Anne Marie Kittleson Dahle, Ragnhild Skarthum Goli, Leona Offerdahl and Anne Barton Rue. More on this in the next newsletter.



Tool Collection Comes Out of Basement and Into Public View

All in the Mt. Horeb area are familiar with the whimsical sculptures of local artist Wallace Keller. We also know that Wally was a kind and giving individual, and a forerunner in creating the thriving antiques business that once dominated Mt. Horeb. In addition, Wally was involved in many other trades and volunteer duties, including the early years of the Mt. Horeb Art Fair.

But, unless you were a frequent attendee of local farm and estate auctions, you probably do not know that Wally had another passion – collecting old hand tools, lots of them. For years Keller quietly filled the basement recreation room at the family home along Highway 78 with a well-ordered, well-rounded collection. Wally's wife, Shirley, said the tools began arriving in the basement right after the home was completed in 1970, and the collection eventually grew to 3,147 pieces.

In July 2009, Wally held a garage sale where he offered up duplicates of his collection and additional items he no longer needed for the construction of his whimsical sculptures. Through the years Wally's garage sales had become reunions of old friends and new acquaintances that became smitten by the ever-smiling host. Steve Schlect, the owner of Duluth Trading Company, a catalog and web retailer of practical, ingenious and unique work gear and clothing, attended Wally's July sale. When Keller saw that Schlect enjoyed tools, he invited him in for a viewing of his private museum, where Steve was overwhelmed by the impressive collection.

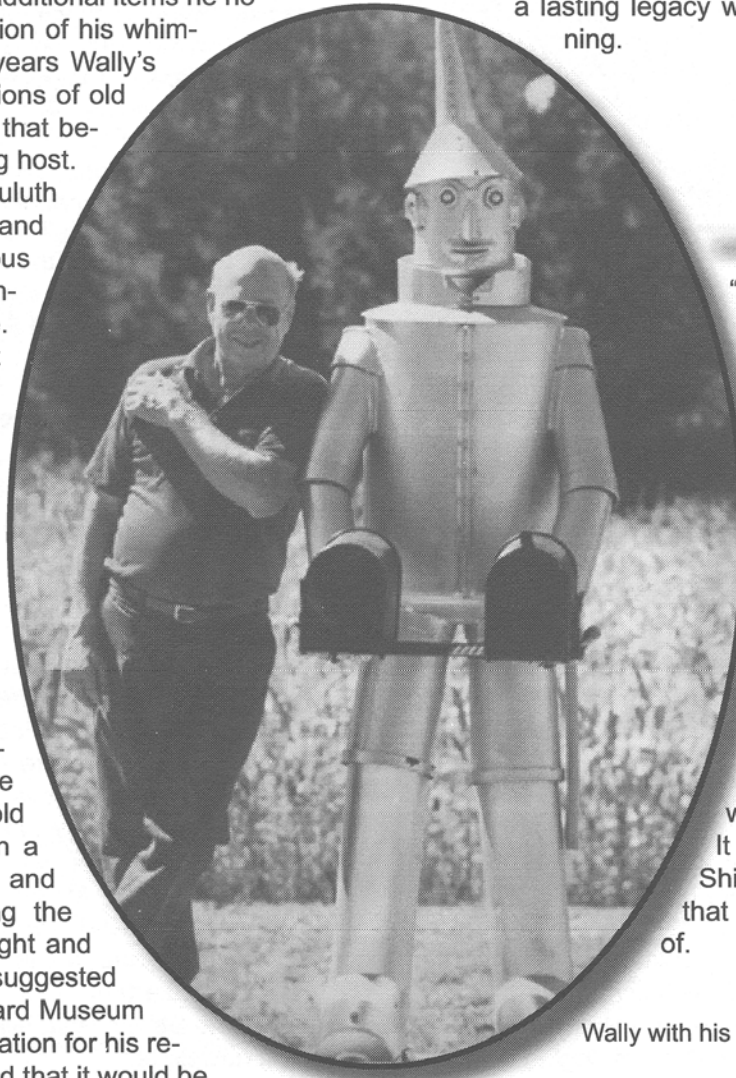
Just two weeks after Schlect's visit Wally passed away. Steve, like so many others, stunned by the news of Wally's sudden death, sent a card of condolence to Shirley, and mentioned the tool collection in the correspondence. Schlect told Shirley that he wanted to open a retail store, the first of its kind, and had great interest in exhibiting the collection. Shirley gave it thought and in a conversation with Steve suggested that the former Mt. Horeb Mustard Museum building would make a great location for his retail setting. Shirley further added that it would be

Building Fund Challenge

Fundraising for the Southwestern Dane County Heritage Center is still on track. Tell your friends and family about this great opportunity to feature and preserve more of the area's unique history. To do this project correctly will take a large cash commitment from the Society and it is hoped that more than three-fourths of these funds will be raised prior to construction starting. The board also wants to ensure that an additional contingency fund to operate the facility will also be in place when the building is completed.

In the meantime, research continues on the best types of preservation systems to employ and additional visits to institutions with similar facilities will take place during the winter months.

Remember, all cash and stock donations are tax-deductible. Gifts of tangible property are also greatly encouraged, such as household contents that can be sold, real estate and even vehicles in good working condition. Talk to your attorney about the many ways you can leave a lasting legacy when doing your estate planning.



Wally with his "Tinman" creation

"really nice to have it {Wally's collection} in Mt. Horeb.

As it is said, the rest is history. Schlect purchased the tool collection, the former Mustard Museum building, as well as the old plumbing building next door. The buildings are undergoing extensive remodeling with emphasis placed on saving the historic details of the structures. Wally's collection will become a main feature, an actual mini museum within the new satellite store. It will be a setting, according to Shirley and those who knew him, that Wally would be most proud of.

The Mount Horeb Area Historical Society

Annual Meeting Digs Into History

Encourage your friends to join you at this year's annual meeting of the Mt. Horeb Area Historical Society. Archaeology will be the topic of the program, but no shovels will be necessary. The program begins at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 17 at the Mt. Horeb Community Center, 105 N. Grove St., Mt. Horeb.

Guest speaker UW-Waukesha Professor and retired State Archaeologist Bob Birmingham, will talk about discoveries related to two major archaeology projects of Southwestern Dane County: Fort Blue Mounds and most recently, Donald Park.

Birmingham has an engaging and often humorous way of presenting the secrets that the earth has revealed about the area's former inhabitants, from the period when local lead miners sought refuge during the 1832 Black Hawk War to a devastating fire of 1893 that leveled a Mt. Vernon family's log home and most of its contents. You will certainly be moved by his presentation. Birmingham is author of a forthcoming book relating the history and discoveries at Fort Blue Mounds.

In addition to Birmingham's discoveries, Matt Marty, a descendent of the family that lost their home in 1893,



Birmingham speaking at the rededication of Blue Mounds Fort

will relay what it has been like to literally unearth his ancestors' history. For the past several years Matt has become emotionally and physically involved with the excavation of the Foye and Marty Families cabin site of Donald Park. The cabin is one of numerous sites of archaeological importance within the park's borders. The Mount Horeb Area Museum has been designated by Dane County Parks as the repository for the archaeological finds at the park.



Generations Of Memories

The Mt. Horeb Area Historical Society

New Membership

Renewal Membership

Society Membership Levels

Individual \$15.00

Household \$25.00

Individual Lifetime Membership \$250.00

Benefactor \$500.00

Building Fund Donation _____

E-Mail _____

All contributions to the Society are tax deductible.

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Laurie Boyden - Museum Director /Coordinator
Tim White - Newsletter and Website Editor

Archives Hours:

2nd & 4th Wednesday each month 12:30 – 3:00
3rd floor of the Municipal Building
138 E. Main St. Mt. Horeb WI, 53572-2195
608-437-6486

Museum Hours (thru December)

Friday & Saturday - 10am - 4pm,
Sunday 12:30 - 4pm
200 South Second St., Mt. Horeb, WI 53572-2195
608-437-6486

F. Y. I. Your membership expiration date is printed on the mailing label of this newsletter. Please check to see if you are up to date through Jan. 11 or beyond. If not, your membership is due. We appreciate your renewal and don't want you to miss a single issue of our newsletter or any important information about Historical Society events.

***Afternoon & Night at the Museum:
The Sequel***

Back by popular demand and with a twist, Afternoon and Night at the Museum, the sequel to last year's Nights at the Museum will take place from 3-8 p.m. on Oct. 30.

Characters from the past will once again appear at the Mt. Horeb Area Museum. Come meet new arrivals: Dr. Evans as he prepares for a home delivery; Alvah Webber as he readies to take your photo or sell you the latest in 1899 cycling gear; and a young farm girl laboring over her clothes-washing as she laments the back-breaking chores. There will also be Oljanna Cunneen, Ebenezer Brigham, a 1970s snowmobile racer, Uncle Joe Henderson, a schoolteacher and her disgruntled student, a 1900 storekeeper, women's suffrage participant and Belle and politician husband Bob LaFollette. Be further prepared to meet many others on your guided tour through living history.

This unique event drew many at its 2009 debut and for that reason, organizers are asking that Scout groups and other interested groups make reservations for time slots. The general public will be admitted as they arrive.

Cost is \$3 for children and \$4 for adults.