

BAILEYS HARBOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Fall 2014

**P.O. Box 336
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**in-
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-Suzanne Bauldry
Vice-president
-Marianne Newton
Secretary
-Mary Moran
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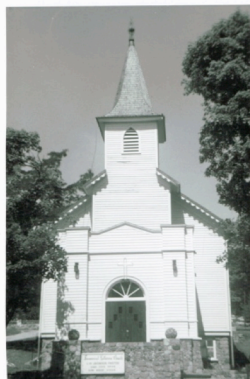
BOARD OF DIREC- TORS

Suzanne Bauldry
Roy Cole
Leann Despotas
Mary Moran
Marianne Newton
Kristen Peil
Nancy Rafal

Town Board Liasion
Roberta Thelen

2015 MEETINGS TOWN HALL

June 19, 7PM
July 22, 7PM
August 19, 7PM
September 23, 7PM



Lost Baileys Harbor:

Built in 1893, this steepled church was replaced by the current church at 7973 Hwy. 57. (See page 2.)

SPRING & SUMMER ACTIVITIES

BHHS has embarked upon some new enterprises this spring and summer. Our first ticketed event included a lecture and trolley trip to tour the Bradley Folk Art Collection. We also held our first raffle fundraiser, putting the Community Quilt on the raffle block. Both were successful and have their own articles in this Newsletter. We now have access to the Toft House and look forward to configuring it in an interesting and informative way. The Board is looking forward to expanding our activities in 2015, and, as always, we welcome ideas from our membership.

The Flood of 2014 did minimal damage to our holdings, equipment, and supplies, but did allow some of us to get together as a work detail to move everything to the auditorium level of the Town Hall. We also had to find another time and place for our final event which caused a bit of confusion, but Bjorklund came to the rescue, and all went well.

Just a reminder – All of our events are recorded, and DVDs are donated to the McArdle Library after the season ends. Our videographer, Laddie Chapman, also posts them on YouTube soon after they are done. No need to miss anything!!

Tentative 2015 Events Schedule

June 19, 2015-7PM: General Meeting – Historic Tavern Trawl

July 22, 2015-7PM: General Meeting – Churches of Baileys Harbor

August 19, 2015-7PM: Nominating Meeting -- History of the Baileys Harbor Cemetery

September 23, 2015-7PM: Election Meeting -- Open House Toft House

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Baileys Harbor Historical Society currently has 90 memberships representing well over 100 individuals and includes 27 Lifetime Memberships. Eleven new memberships have been established since our Fall 2013 Newsletter. Renewal reminders are sent each month as yearly memberships expire. Membership levels are Business \$50, Family \$25, Individuals \$15, and Lifetime \$150. Members' dues help support our continuing research, displays outside the Baileys Harbor Library, our events and presentations, and our newsletters. Beginning this November we will include activities at the Toft House in the above list. Please encourage your friends, neighbors, and family members to join BHHS so they can enjoy supporting the dissemination of our local history, sharing information, and exploring the history of our community. A printable membership form can be found on our website <www.baileysharborhistoricalsociety.org>; just fill it out and mail it in.

AFTER THE FLOOD

BHHS was fortunate to come out of the (dare I say) historic flood of September 4-5 with little or no loss or damage. This was due to the town crew moving tables in our basement office away from the walls, and our intrepid Board Member, Kristen Peil, who rushed to the site on the night of September 4th. To raise the tables and other items, she employed dozens of "slices" of birch branches (that were earmarked for a future project) under table legs and other items, elevating them from the floor.

As plans were being implemented to repair the basement damage, it became necessary to move all of our equipment, files, and archives to the auditorium level. I sent an email to the membership to help bring everything upstairs the next morning. On the morning of September 11th, with little or no notice, I found ten willing workers, complete with dollies, at the Town Hall ready to get the job done. We were finished in less than an hour, and all was neatly stacked and arranged in the auditorium and the north vestibule of the building. This is a big thank you to the town crew, Kristen, Roy Cole, Jay & Nancy Dickson, Fred Johnson, Mary Moran, Kriss Schorer, Bonnie Smith, Jane Whitney, Carol Williams, and Randy Zahn.



Because the Town Hall Auditorium was taken over by the Clerk-administrator's office as well as all town records, it was necessary to change the date and place of the Tishler – Built event. At first, we thought we could retain the original date, but even that became impossible. Finally, thanks to Kim Eckstein at Bjorklund, who invited us there for September 24th. She saw to it that Vail Hall was set up and helped me understand the A-V system so that everything went off without a hitch.

Leann Despotes

THE BAILEYS HARBOR FIRE DEPARTMENT: FROM BUCKET BRIGADE TO RESCUE BOAT



The July 16th program, researched and presented by Leann Desportes, was a fascinating history of major fires in Baileys Harbor and the founding of the local fire department.

On May 22, 1868, passengers on a ship in Lake Michigan, noting a raging fire on shore, reported, "Baileys Harbor is gone." The town did lose four houses, two barns, a cooper shop, cords of wood, and acres of wheat. Had it not been for a providential rain, that mistaken conclusion would likely have been correct. The cooper shop belonged to Miles Carrington, whose home was also lost. After the fire, he rebuilt what was later known as the Toft House, now the Red Geranium.

The 53-year-old Prueter's Mill, located behind the present Kiehnau's Garage, burned to the ground in just two hours on February 16, 1923, despite what the Advocate reported as a "most efficient bucket brigade." Ironically, the fire occurred just a few weeks after owner Carl Prueter had refused to take out fire insurance.

Another major fire on May 3, 1928, destroyed the Brann Bros. general store, despite the efforts of a large number of townspeople. Nelson's Shopping Center was later built on that foundation.

Still, Baileys Harbor had no firefighting equipment. The last straw was the Burnt Hollow fire on the McArdle estate on August 4, 1935. A town meeting was held the following Saturday, and it was decided to purchase a state-of-the-art Peter Pirsch pumper. Its \$4,408 cost was principally covered by Donald and Winifred Boynton, whose summer home had so recently been threatened at Burnt Hollow. A volunteer fire department was established with Chief Arnold Prueter, Asst. Henry Schultz, and Engineer, Bernard Boettcher who also housed the pumper in his service station at the beginning. The original truck can often be seen parked at the Florian II supper club and is owned by proprietors Joe and Jerry Kwater-ski.

In the early days, residents and volunteer firemen were made aware that a fire had broken out by the horn and siren of the fire truck parked at the intersection of Highway 57 and County F. Men jumped on, and off they went. Others called the telephone operator and asked, "Where's the fire?" Later, special "fire phones" were installed in firefighters' homes, and a siren was installed on the firehouse. Nowadays, each volunteer has a pager to receive information.

Housing the truck was a problem, and for years various businessmen provided space with the understanding that whoever housed the truck got to be fire chief. In the late 1940s and early 1950s Otto John kept the truck in his garage, which was on the site of the current marina. That was followed by a long residence in the basement Gordy Nelson hand-dug under his shopping center.

In 1965 a firehouse was built on Park Street just northwest of the Town Hall, and truck storage was taken over by the town. This structure contains a 20,000-gallon cistern under the floor to fill tankers when needed. There is a dry hydrant at the marina to provide wa-

ter, and water from local lakes and creeks is often used as well. Our trucks and other cooperating town trucks may arrive at a fire with as much as 40,000 gallons of water. Today, the Baileys Harbor department owns seven pieces of equipment, including a 27-foot water rescue boat.

Gary Nelson followed his father as fire chief. Gary started our First Responder organization, and also oversaw the cooperative agreements between towns to assist each other in firefighting. During his tenure the first woman firefighter, Melanie Hoffmann Hass, joined the department. Former chief, Fred Anderson, was in charge when the firehouse was expanded and larger tankers were purchased. Chief Don Prust instituted a schedule for replacement of equipment so that the town wouldn't be faced with replacing multiple vehicles all at once. Current Chief Brian Zak is very proud of the fundraising annual pancake breakfast that provides for additional specialized equipment.

Some of the greatest challenges faced by the volunteer fire department have included the Florada Club fire (now the Florian II) in August 1972, which even required draining the swimming pool for water; a \$1,000,000 fire at Maxwellton Braes in 1984 followed by another in 1997; and the Baileys Harbor Yacht Club fire in 1993. In 1994, Lawrence University's Bjorklunden campus was significantly destroyed. Ironically, this was the former summer home of the Boyntons, who financed the town's first fire truck.

Through the years, there have been several multi-generational families in the local department, including the Zaks, Nelsons, and Kiehnaus. The audience was impressed with the fact that it takes 120 hours of training to become a certified firefighter and that the cost of a pager and two complete sets of gear (so that one is always ready while the other is being cleaned after use) is close to \$8,000. Baileys Harbor had one of the first active First Responders groups in Wisconsin. There are currently 24 active firefighters in the department, half of them certified as First Responders.



Those attending the program were enthusiastic in expressing their appreciation to Chief Brian Zak and the firefighters and First Responders who also attended. (Leann would like to especially thank Mark Merrill for information provided.)

Patty Williamson

Ooops!

Our apology to John and Jane Whitney. Their donation of a Destroyers Inaugural Football Flyer was mistakenly attributed to another in the spring Newsletter. Thank you, Jane & John.

COMMUNITY QUILT RAFFLE WINNERS



After traveling all around the county this summer, being displayed at numerous festivals and farmers markets to sell raffle tickets, the Community Quilt has found a home! On September 27th at Baileys Harbor Autumnfest, Pat Flaherty of Baileys Harbor was the Grand Prize winner! When Pat came to claim her prize she had tears in her eyes! In a little more than three months, 426 tickets were sold. The final total of money raised was \$1,456.00. This project did not start out to

be a fundraiser, but the right people came together and their success and commitment resulted in a financial bonus for BHHS! Thank you to the quilters, all those who donated fabric and supplies, and to the Peninsula Pulse for all of the promotion!

These are the ten ticket holders who won a quilt or quilt-related item created at the Community Quilting Bee....

Grand Prize - the Community Quilt– Pat Flaherty of Baileys Harbor

1st Prize - The Baileys Harbor Wild Flower Mini Quilt – Ted Despotes of Evanston, IL

2nd Prize - The Framed Bejeweled Square – Sue Fedenia of Denver, CO

Pillows – Marianne Newton of Baileys Harbor, Cheryl Anderson of Delafield, WI, Kriss Schorer of Baileys Harbor, Bernice Lindley of Killeen, TX

Purses - Joyce Carlson of Baileys Harbor, Nancy Wiltgen of Winona, MN, Marilyn Bradley of Egg Harbor, WI

Kristen Peil



Quilters at work

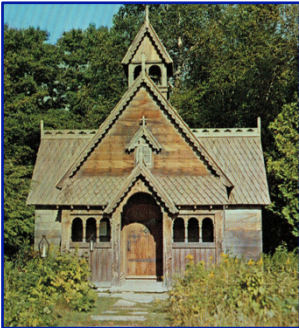


Selling tickets in
Jacksonport

Finishing
touches



BOYNTONS' BJÖRKLUNDEN: A CONTINUING GIFT TO DOOR COUNTY



At the August meeting, Mark Breseman presented a brief history of the place just south of Baileys Harbor that Winifred Vail Boynton named Björklunden vid Sjön or, in English, Birch Forest by the Water. In 1928, Winifred and Carleton Vail of Highland Park, Illinois, bought 330 acres at the end of what is now Chapel Lane. The property included more than a mile of Lake Michigan shoreline, and the price was \$2,000. Their imposing stone home, begun in 1929, was built by Frank Oldenburg.

Winifred was a fine artist, mostly self-taught, and she decorated the house with large murals, based mostly on Bible stories or Scandinavian myths. One of them, 24 feet long, depicted her fanciful version of the creation story. Rather than showing Adam and Eve being ousted from the garden, she painted herself and her husband leaving Björklunden – she wiping a tear because it was October, time to return to their winter home. Her interpretation of Elijah ascending into Heaven depicts him waving his top hat and driving a Norwegian sleigh over Björklunden.

After Carleton was fatally injured in an auto accident near Institute in 1932, Winifred and her son took a nine-month trip to Europe, where she was impressed with the stavkirke (medieval wooden churches) in Norway. In 1934, Winifred married Donald Boynton, an old family friend and a widower with four children.

For years, Winifred dreamed of building a stavkirke on the grounds of Björklunden. On the day local farmers, working with plow horses and a scoop, dug down three feet to bed-rock, they uncovered a perfect cross, formed of crevices in the limestone – a good omen, Winifred felt.

It took a summer to build the outside of the chapel. The cornerstone was laid on August 1, 1939. Winifred spent the next eight summers painting 41 murals with Biblical themes on the inside plastered walls. Her book, *Faith Builds a Chapel*, describes in detail the years of work that went into the chapel's completion.

In the winters, back in Highland Park, both Winifred and Donald studied woodcarving in evening classes at the local high school and, with practice, became very adept. They carved the massive door, the six five-foot-high pews, the raised pulpit, the stand to hold Winifred's family Bible, the altar and the baptismal font that took 656 hours of work and depicts the 12 disciples doing the jobs they had in their earlier lives. Finally, in 1947, the chapel was completed.

Björklunden's wonderful gardens, maintained with the help of local gardener, Hedwig Peil, were showplaces. The Vail-Boynton family had many wonderful summers at Björklunden, but as the parents grew older they wanted to ensure that it would always be available to be enjoyed by the public.



It was first offered to St. Olaf's College, but when officials said they planned to move the chapel to their campus, the deal soured. Northwestern University was interest

ed, but wanted the gift to be accompanied by a \$1 million endowment. In 1962, the Boyntons gifted the estate to Lawrence University in Appleton. Donald died four years later and Winifred in 1974, and the university took possession of the property the following year.

An electrical fire that began in the kitchen in August 1993 destroyed most of the Boyntons' home. To replace it, Lawrence built a new facility that opened in June 1996. A \$4 million fund-raising campaign more than doubled the size of the building. Bjorklunden has offered a series of adult-education seminars since 1980, as well as a series of Lawrence University student-faculty seminars since 1996.

Audience members who shared memories of their own or family members' employment at Bjorklunden were Nancy Barnowsky Goss, Faye Flaeschel Blue, Ruth Newman Stretch, Barbara Henquinet Prigge, Lynn Mattke, and Suzanne Bauldry.

Patty Williamson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTED

Our September meeting is our Annual Election Meeting. So that there is never a complete turnover of the Board, half of the members are elected each year. In 2014, Suzanne Bauldry, Roy Cole, Nancy Rafal, and Howard Williamson were elected by acclamation. Earlier this year, Nancy finished Steve Hey's term, appointed by the Board after his resignation. That position was scheduled for election this fall. Howard Williamson volunteered as a candidate and was enthusiastically included on the slate. All four bring talents in many areas, including creative arts and experience in local history, as well as tremendous enthusiasm to see BHHS develop and grow.

The other Board Members are Leann Despotes, Mary Moran, Marianne Newton, and Kristen Peil.

Leann Despotes

FOUR GENERATIONS OF TISHLER BUILDERS . . . 250+ LOCAL HOMES



At the Sept. 24th meeting, the audience learned that four generations of the Tishler family have built or remodeled more than 250 homes in northern Door County. The program was given by the only non-builder in the family, Dr. Tim Tishler, a dentist with offices in Sister Bay.

The patriarch of the clan, William Tischler, Sr., and his wife, Augusta, emigrated from Germany in 1883 and farmed the acreage that is now Birch Creek Music Performance Center. His youngest son, William, Jr., eliminated the "c" from his last name because he got tired of having it misspelled. After serving in World War I, he spent several years logging in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, then went to work for Frank Oldenburg, a

well-known builder in Baileys Harbor's early days. (Interestingly, in German the word *tischler* means carpenter or joiner.)

After several years, William set out on his own. The first house he built was on Highway 57 for William Sieker, an attorney from Madison. The site was two miles from William's home in Baileys Harbor and, having no car, he walked to and from work every day. The second Tishler-built home was in Baileys Harbor for Hannah and Carl Prueter, his sister and brother-in-law, across the street from Carl's sawmill and service station.

Among the many other structures William built were homes for the well-known Viste, Heald, and McArdle families, the "house of seven gables" on Chapel Lane, the lounge and dining room at Schmitz Gazebos on Ridges Road, several of the small buildings at Toft Point, the building that's now the clubhouse at Moonlight Bay Estates, and the original Spikehorn Lodge.

William died suddenly while working on his last project, the Cook-Reynolds house on Kangaroo Lake. His son, Charles, whom everyone called Pat, was 19 and had worked with his dad for two years. Pat finished that house – the first of 55 on Kangaroo Lake, 22 on Ridges Road, and 70 others in and around Baileys Harbor that he built or remodeled over the next 50 years.

Pat Tishler's skills evolved over the years. His early houses were simple square structures like the Cook-Reynolds house. In the late 1950s, we see more elegant buildings like the Top Deck Lounge at Gordon Lodge. Perhaps the most innovative home he built was the Stuppia home with its curvilinear ceilings and design, and miles of heating wire under the floors. Pat set a standard of quality for building in Baileys Harbor and beyond. Those who live in a "Tishler-Built" house know their home is something of which they can be proud.

"My dad said the only tools he needed to build a house were a rectangular pencil and a folding ruler," Tim says. "He never trusted tape measures." Most of Pat's work was in the Baileys Harbor area, but it stretched north to Gills Rock and south to Cave Point. He retired in 1990, and it wasn't easy for him after 50 years of being on the job. He was almost 84 when he died in February 2006. When Tim was cleaning out his dad's desk, he found a note under the blotter with the wording Pat wanted under his birth and death dates on his tombstone: "He loved his work."

Shortly after Pat retired, Stanford "Tank" Sholem, whose house was the last Pat built, drove him around to take pictures of all his creations. Inside the album Tank put together, he wrote, "Your career has enriched the lives of many, and yet your wealth is the greatest of all – a good name – a legend for all time."

Pat's sons, Charles, Jr. "Jumbo" Tishler, and the late Jim Tishler, worked with their father and continued his legacy. Jim's son, Matt, carries on the family business today.

Patty Williamson

TOFT HOUSE UPDATE

The Town of Baileys Harbor will take possession of the Toft House on November 1, 2014. The house will be closed down for the winter, and plans will be made for any renovating that may need to be done. Next year, the Community Association's Tourist Information office, as well as the Historical Society, will be located in the historic house. This arrangement should be mutually beneficial in terms of sharing technology and phone use. The Information Office is staffed from Memorial Day until October, which will also be helpful.

Staffers at the Information Office have reported that visitors always enjoy their collection of vintage pictures and are generally interested in local history. We are looking forward to developing an appealing display that will illustrate the history of Baileys Harbor.

Leann Despotes

FOLK ART FUNDRAISER

The Folk Art Fundraiser was a huge success! At the end of the day, the total dollar amount raised was \$2,517.00. A huge thank you goes to Marilyn and Orren Bradley for opening up their home and sharing their extensive folk art collection. Also, Margaret Andera of the Milwaukee Art Museum, our speaker, Carrie Baldwin Smith of Door County Event Planner, A.J. Frank of Door County Trolley, Jody & Patsy Wuollett of Pasta Vino, Randy Zahn for sharing his folk art carvings along with his great grandfather Albert Zahn's carvings, Kaye Wagner for being everywhere she was needed and then some and Caleb Whitney for IT support! The money raised will go towards public access of the Zahn Family Archive donated by Randy Zahn. Thank you to all who believed in the project. Your support made it happen!

Kristen Peil



Orren and Marilyn Bradley



Randy Zahn and his Carvings



D. C. Trolley to the Bradleys



Carvings of Edward and Albert Zahn