



# South Milwaukee Historical Society

717 Milwaukee Avenue

South Milwaukee, WI 53172

NEWSLETTER October 2006

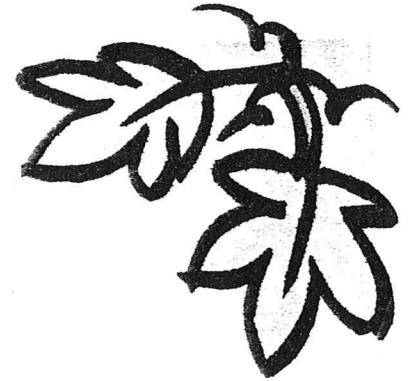
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## OFFICERS

President	Dean S. Marlowe, Jr.	768-8790
V. President	Addie Becker	764-2118
Secretary	Lois Schreiter	762-5214
Treasurer	Theresa Aghbashian	762-5623
Past President	J.B. Bulley	762-7605
Curator	Lois Schreiter	762-5214

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS (Term Expires)

Jewell Heise	2008	762-4650
Barb Mueller	2008	762-2712
Eunice Hahn	2007	764-3689
Dolores Kowalski	2007	762-4231
Betty Chovanec	2006	762-3428
Cecelia Pomahac	2006	768-0167
Barb Mueller is Sunshine Chairperson		762-2712



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**Dates to Remember: February 10, 2007 Annual Dinner**

**Greetings from the President's desk!**

**Thanks to those who made contributions to the Society's building fund! Your donations will be put to use this month for much needed plumbing repairs to all three floors of the museum building. We hope that no unforeseen problems pop up that would require additional expenditures.**

**Thanks also to those of you who attended our September Pot Luck. Everyone was entertained by Dolly Merten's talk and the discussion by Alice Klaybor regarding her children's book, Meet the Robins: thank you Dolly and Alice!**

**The society's website will be undergoing significant changes in the coming months. South Milwaukee resident and UW-M Graduate Student, Lynda Citro, will be working on a Master's project to provide a digital library on the website. This will include a virtual tour of the museum, photos and other items to be accessible at your fingertips. Thank you, Lynda!**

**The society will begin raffling off a kid's chopper bike in the coming weeks. Barbara Mueller and Theresa Aghbashian are working out costs. Tickets will be available shortly. The drawing will take place at our May Pot Luck. Stay tuned for details. Thanks to Addie Becker for her donation.**

**Donations of items and time are always welcomed and appreciated. The Board is working with our new Curator, Lois Schreiter to continue the daunting task of organizing the many documents, pictures and other items into archival files, as well as planning additional displays for the public.**

FOUNDED MARCH 1972 BY MR. AND MRS. DENNIS RANKIN

INITIAL DIRECTORS — DENNIS RANKIN • PENNY RANKIN • GEORGE HOOK • MARY McCARRIER • BRUCE RAYESKE  
DORA LEE SZEWCZUGA • WILLIAM DOMOE • LILLIAN DISHONG • CHESTER GROBSCHMIDT

The Board of Directors is also interested in saving the Lawson Airline Building, and designation of the building as a local historical landmark. The Historical Preservation Commission will be meeting on this subject Wed, October 18 at 6:30 PM; the South Milwaukee Common Council must give final approval of this landmark. Come and make your voices heard! Have an enjoyable fall season!

Historically Yours,  
Dean S. Marlowe, Jr., President

**Museum Visitations:**

Call Dean Marlow, Jr. allow 45 minutes. The South Milwaukee Historical Society Museum is open Sundays, Memorial Day to Labor Day, 2 to 4 PM and by appointment. Visitors, school groups, scouts, families, clubs and individuals are welcome. Your support of our Historical Society is appreciated.

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**Museum Roof and Plumbing Repair Fund**

Donations from M/M Chet Grobschmidt, Janice Tangen, H. Hempel, E.Krisberg, J. Hugel-Ttee, K. Stanic THANK YOU!

Four of the large trees around the Museum were pruned by Luke Strachura to keep the squirrels further away from causing damage to the roof. Lisa Strachura, Richard Thinnes, Steve and Lois Schreiter moved branches to the alley for 2 hours Mr. Strachura's fee was donated by Steve and Lois Schreiter.

Welcome to New Members: Janice Tangen, Sue Ziarek, Carol Braby, and Mary Totushek

**Curator's Report:**

Nels Monson resigned in August. Lois Schreiter was appointed by the Board of Directors to fill the Office. Lois Schreiter will resign as curator on Dec. 1, 2006.

Lois' Letters: This August my high school class had its 50<sup>th</sup> reunion. The committee planned a full weekend of activities including touring the new Discovery World Pier Wisconsin on Lincoln Memorial Drive. It was a joy to see Dr. Nolan's magnificent tree sculpture gracing the inside of the building with wood chips still on the floor.

Genealogy by Steve Schreiter: Steve has graciously offered to do one hour of genealogy for anyone with the new \$10.00 membership dues. Basic information forms must be filled out and returned to Addie Becker with dues. Forms may be obtained from Addie Becker (see membership form) and also on the Internet at [www.ci.south-milwaukee.wi.us](http://www.ci.south-milwaukee.wi.us)

Inventory of Museum and updating the docent tour book (last done by Gertrude Endtthoff and me in 1989) is progressing. The living room, dining rooms and Lincoln rooms of the museum are completed and ready to put on the computer. The inner room is in progress and the kitchen has not been started.

National Historic Register Lawson Building is now owned by the city. The South Milwaukee Preservation Committee would like to see it designated at a City Landmark also. It is the site where Fisk Rubber Co existed. The Fisk Company was the first to make synthetic rubber in the USA. When they moved on, the Lawson Airliners were made there. The first airliners made in the USA. Then a company named Continental Faience and Tile made decorative tile there; and when raw materials were difficult to import during the war, pottery was made there. Now the building is used for cold storage and auto restoration. It has 28000 sq. ft of space. There is a lot of room for parking, offices, and green space. A place where a visionary person could say this could be an awesome place.

## CONTINENTAL FAIENCE AND TILE COMPANY

Faience refers to a fine grade of painted or glazed pottery or porcelain. Name comes from Faenza, Italy the original place of manufacture. Continental Faience and Tile was formed in 1925 and operated until about 1940 at 909 Menominee initially using the old Lawson Aircraft building to the rear and later constructing the building nearer 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The front door of that building, which can be seen from the street, has decorative tile in an arch shape over the door.

Both of the buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places and are currently owned by the City of South Milwaukee.

We are researching the tile company and its owners and officers and need information from anyone who recalls or has documents related to the business. Apparently they had sales offices in New York, Chicago and Detroit in addition to South Milwaukee and were known by architects throughout the United States. We would especially like to acquire a catalog (or copy of same) of the various types of tile offered by Continental.

Whitney Gould, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel architectural reporter, wrote about the buildings in an article of December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2005 entitled "Inside old factory, tiles a riot of color." She mentioned several sites that have or had Continental tile including: The old Eagles Club (now The Rave), Avalon Theater, St Stephen church, Milwaukee Water Treatment Plant, First Baptist Church in West Allis, and many older homes in our area. Even Society member Barbara Mueller has discovered Continental tile in her home. Apparently some officers and employees of Continental built homes in South Milwaukee and they need to be located and the tile photographed if at all possible.

According to the 1935 South Milwaukee Centennial Booklet, names associated with Continental were: Carl Bergmans, president and treasurer, Werner Lehman, vice-president and Verna Piellusch, secretary. The 1930 census of South Milwaukee also identifies William Ouweneel (wife Irene Ouweneel) living at 707 Marshall as commercial salesman for a tile factory. Any information on these people would also be greatly appreciated.

Researchers Kathy Roberts and Kelly Dudley of Phoenix Arizona have been collecting data on Continental for several years, Kathy grew up in South Milwaukee and her father, Frank Roberts was a merchant on Milwaukee Avenue for many years. They hope to some day write a book about Continental and Carl Bergmans.

Call or write or email Lois or Steve Schreiter -414 762-5214, [sfs@execpc.com](mailto:sfs@execpc.com), 104 Brookdale Drive. SM., 53172

*Images of America, South Milwaukee*, a picture history book is for sale at the SM Historical Society. Authors are Nels Monson and Dean S. Marlow, Jr. \$19.99.

Newsletter via the Internet: We have not tried mailing the newsletter by Internet yet.

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**Support your Historical Society——It is the best bargain around!**

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**For only \$100.00 you will never have to remember to send in your dues again.**

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**The South Milwaukee Historical Society would like to extend our wishes, condolences or congratulations to its members. If you know of someone who should be remembered, please contact Sunshine Chairperson Barbara Mueller, 762-2712. If you leave a message, please indicate if the card should be sent to their home, hospital or nursing home. The name of the hospital or nursing home would also be appreciated.**

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**South Milwaukee Historical Society Membership form:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of membership: \_\_\_\_\_ amount: \_\_\_\_\_  
Form of payment: cash \_\_\_\_\_ check \_\_\_\_\_

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**Single, \$10.00; Family, \$15.00; Life, \$100.00; Business, \$25.00;  
Make checks payable to South Milwaukee Historical Society. Send membership dues and dinner reservations to Membership Chairperson, Addie Becker, 526 Sycamore Ave., South Milwaukee, WI 53172 (414) 764-2118.**

**Jelly Jars with covers wanted—Call Jewell Heise, 762-4650.**

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**News Editor: Lois L. Schreiter**

**Labels by Stephen F. Schreiter**

**Printing: Lois L. Schreiter**

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