



South Milwaukee Historical Society

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717 Milwaukee Ave, South Milwaukee, WI

Meetings are held the second Monday in even numbered months at the Museum. Please join us to learn more about South Milwaukee's history.

The Museum is open on the third Saturday of each month from 10am to 3pm. You may also call 414-520-1285 for questions or to arrange for a private tour.

From The President's Pen—July, 2024

Greetings to all our readers of this month's newsletter. As you read through this newsletter you will see a lot has happened since we last reported to you.

We had a problem with our flagpole that was holding the City flag. However, with the help of members George Becker who aided in re-flying it and Daniel Suszek who helped in the disposal of the tree branches that were interfering with it, we are back to normal.

We hope you are having a wonderful summer and that we will see many of you at our monthly Open House, the Heritage Days celebrations, and the Open Doors event in September.

We thank all of you for your continued support!

Richard Thinnies – President

Preserving our Proud Past since 1972

Founders: Dennis Rankin, Penny Rankin

Initial Directors: George Hook, Mary McCarrier, Bruce Rayeske, Dora Lee Szewczuga, William Domoe, Lilia Dishong, Chester Grobschmidt

Play Ball!!

*Congratulations to the South Milwaukee Little League celebrating it's 70th Anniversary
Enjoy this memory from city historian Nels Monson*



In 1969 I was a member of the SM American All-Stars, and we were the first Little League team from South Milwaukee to go to state. Playing with the Twins, I remember our run up to the state tournament. The District 1 Championship game was against Hales Corners on their home field. Rain kept postponing the game until—in desperation—the umpires and coaches resorted to pouring gasoline on the large puddles in the infield then setting them on fire. I can still see those plumes of black smoke! Anyway, we played on a soggy Sunday morning and won 1-0.



As we were the only team from the Milwaukee area to get to state that year, I remember being one of the players interviewed by Channel 12 sportscaster Duane Dow at the first base dugout of Diamond #1. State was at Perkins Field in Green Bay, so we were loaded aboard a school bus and headed north. Since we were spending a night there, we were divided up and assigned to stay the night in local people's (i.e., complete strangers) homes—one player per family.

One other memory of that trip was somehow managing to get into Lambeau Field and playing an impromptu game of football on the famous, but not-so frozen tundra. Since we didn't have a football, we used an old sixteen-inch softball that someone came up with. We lost the first game against K. I. Sawyer, 4-3. After taking third place we piled aboard that old bus again and went home. Whatever disappointment we may have felt at the time would come to be *far* offset by the lifetime of great memories of that summer of '69.



In honor of the South Milwaukee Little League's 70th Anniversary, we put together a baseball themed display at the Bucyrus Museum and we are in the process of creating a similar display at the museum. Stop by and check them out.

Bucyrus Museum display shown to the left



The weather wasn't very cooperative for the garden tour. Attendance was significantly down from past years but the dedicated garden lovers who came out had nothing but good things to say about this year's participants. A huge thank you to them and to the volunteers who put it all together and kept things running smoothly despite the bad weather. Special thank you to the Garden Club committee members Patti Bergeson, John Bazan and Donna Bundalo who are already working on putting together next year's tour! Have a garden you want to show off? Contact Patti at 414-651-9549



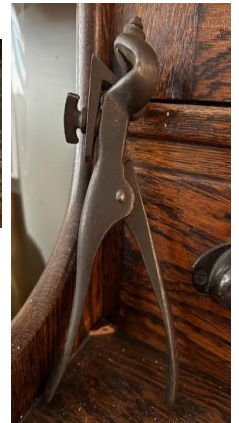
The Bucyrus Museum invited the Society board members to a Volunteer Appreciation Dinner held at Barbieri's on July 17. After dinner we were presented with a plaque thanking us for our support.



What is it ???



We still don't know!



Help us Preserve our Proud Past

If you drive down Milwaukee Avenue you can't help but notice how many of the businesses we grew up with are gone. Frank's Cycle Shop where you could rent a bicycle built for two; Richard's Shoe Store and that wonderful treasure chest you could hunt thru when you got a new pair of shoes! Grand Discount where you could go every winter to exchange your ice skates because you outgrew them; Segall's where you got your gym suit; Acme Wall Paper Store; F. W. Woolworth's (later Drew's). Dretzka's Furniture Store. Fenger's Bakery & Sally's Candy Cupboard!! Sadly, not only are the businesses long gone but we aren't finding many records of them in our files so we're asking for your help. Does anyone have pictures of Milwaukee Avenue from the 1950s, 1960s, even the 1970s that you could share with the Society? What about other businesses from that era that are gone? All those corner grocery stores or the neighborhood bars. We have a fair number of promotional items from those places but it would be wonderful if we had pictures to go along with them. If you want to donate what you have that would be great but we can simply scan whatever you have to an electronic file and return the pictures immediately. History isn't just the things from looooong looooong ago! History is alive and constantly evolving. Please help us preserve ALL of our history. If you have something to share reach out to us. You can text or leave a message at 414-520-1285, email us at southmilwaukeehistory@gmail.com, or stop by during an open house.

Open Doors South Milwaukee September 7, 2024, 10am-3pm

Join us for a public celebration of South Milwaukee's arts, architecture, culture, history and people with behind-the-scenes tours of buildings throughout the city.

The Historical Society will be participating again this year. Stop by and check out the improvements and new displays we've been working on this past year. There will be refreshments and a raffle to raise money for a new sign!

Come on in... we're open!

Upcoming Saturdays
10am—3pm

July 20
August 17
September 7*
October 19
November 16

Hope to see you there!

Visitors to the museum get a coupon for \$5 admission to the Bucyrus Museum

***We will be open during
Open Doors South
Milwaukee instead of
our usual 3rd Saturday of
month in September**

TIDS & BITS

Storms in early May damaged the siding on the house and garage, the roof on all three buildings as well as gutters and downspouts. We received an insurance settlement check and are working to have the repairs made in the near future.

We're also have C-R Electric come in and update the outlets in our office and put up a ceiling fan. Being at the back of the museum the office doesn't get a lot of air circulation. They are also going to take one more stab at getting the doorbells to work! We're keeping our fingers crossed...



We continue to work on updating our website. Recent additions are postcards from our archives, biographies written by city historian Nels Monson and memories contributed by residents. If you haven't checked it out recently, please do! And if you have a memory you'd be willing to share please send us an email or give us a call. We would also be interested in any postcards you might have. We can scan and immediately return anything you're willing to share.

Watch for the Society in the Heritage Days Parade!! We will again be represented by former President and Charter Member Lois Schreiter and our dinosaur mascot.



Thank you to everyone who signed up for the electronic newsletter. So far it's a big success! If you'd like to give it a try let us know. You can call or text 414-520-1285 or email us at Southmilwaukeehistory@gmail.com You can always go back to a paper copy if you decide you prefer that.

Reminder to New Members...

Your membership comes with one hour of free genealogy research. Contact Steve Schreiter at 414-762-5214 for details.

Tours

The Museum is available for tours to Scout Groups, Civic Organizations and School Groups.

It is also available to individuals for research or tours. For more information or to arrange a tour, please call 414-520-1285



Mark Your calendars!
Open Doors South Milwaukee
September 7, 2024, 10am—3pm

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717 Milwaukee Ave
South Milwaukee, WI 53172