



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—October 2025

As I pick up my pen to write my fall report, "Enjoying Summer, Part II" and thinking of all the projects we have worked on for "This Old House", I am reminded of the wonderful support we've received from our membership, friends, and visitors!

This past Spring/Summer we completed the roof, siding, two door replacements, and all the new and informative displays that were added to your museum. The house is beginning to look more up to date while keeping its historic mission.

All of this, of course, does not come cheap. Most of you know how expensive it is to maintain a house, especially one that is 130 years old. Our resources have taken a major hit. Unfortunately, in addition to this, we will not be holding one of our biggest money makers...The Holiday Tea. However, we are doing our best to revive it in a more manageable format for next year.

Our monthly Open Houses are seeing increased visitors. If you have not visited lately, please join us and discover our collection of treasures of and about South Milwaukee.

Also, a friendly reminder—it is that time of the year to renew your membership. We look forward to your help by continuing your membership. It is our most dependable source of revenue!

Finally, all of us here at the South Milwaukee Historical Society wish you and yours a most blessed and happy Holiday Season!

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

Museum Updates

In August, Rick Maass donated a lamp to the museum. According to Rick: "I remember going to the South Milwaukee Library Book Sale. As I walked out to my vehicle across the street, I noticed two light bulbs on top of an NR recloser from McGraw Edison. (I worked there at the time) I thought: Why is it sitting on the curb to be disposed of? So I knocked on the front door and asked the sweet lady what it was doing out there on the curb. She said her husband Bob Braby had passed 2 years ago. She was cleaning out his items. It was a retirement gift from the engineers and model shop workers. They had all pieces chrome plated. It had a special on/off dimmer switch installed to operate the lights. I gave it to my dad, Glenn Maass, after he retired in 1987". Rick's timing was perfect because we had been working with Paul Stoving and Bob Dennis, current Eaton employees, to create a new display at our museum on the history of Line Material/Kyle Corp/ McGraw Electric/McGraw Edison/Cooper Industries/Eaton. The display they put together is incredible! Thanks to both of them for their hard work. The picture below doesn't do it justice—stop by during an Open House to check it out in person!



Rick Maass posing with the lamp he donated.



Paul Stoving, Kyle Historian, showing off the new display at the Museum. Great Job guys!!

So....what *IS* a recloser? A distribution power line circuit breaker that opens when there is an issue with a power line and then immediately closes again, creating a "blink"



We also created a new display showcasing the many shoe stores and shoe repair shops in South Milwaukee.

In early September we were contacted by Krista Haskins. Her 95 year old grandmother, Dolores Jonas, wanted to donate a wedding dress that was worn by her great-grandmother, Edith Adele Kamlah. Edith married Ernest Herbert Dibley on April 26, 1893. The dress is in remarkable condition for being 132 years old! Our thanks to Dolores and her family for their donation.



Krista Haskins, Dolores Jonas, Katie Kramp, Karen Emmons and Cindy Kramp posing with the wedding dress.



We have a new addition to our Midwest Pottery collection! Thanks to John Bazan for his donation of this impressive 11" tall fish. If you look closely you will see the white and gold version also in our collection.



In August, City Historian Nels Monson conducted a walking tour of downtown South Milwaukee. It was a beautiful day and approximately 25 people joined him for the tour. While the guided tour is always the most fun, if you missed it there is a self guided walking tour brochure available at the museum and on our website. ***Thank you Nels*** for sharing your knowledge of our city's history!

The Historical Society was part of Open Doors South Milwaukee again this year. Lack of a front door didn't stop approximately 75 people from visiting the museum. We got a lot of compliments on the displays.

Congratulations to the winners of the 5 raffle baskets.



Regarding the missing front door.... It was finally installed in late September and looks great!



No Door...



New Door!



As long as the front door was getting a makeover, we decided it was time to spruce up the front gardens!! Thank you to Joan Lindstrom for spearheading the project!



Thanks also to Joan, Judy Balestrieri, Karen Lyon and Richard Thinnies for their hard work pulling out all the old overgrown plants and putting in the new. Still have some work to do there, but it's already a big improvement!

We've also been busy updating the office. We now have a flat bed scanner, a picture scanner, a laptop dedicated to genealogy research, and flat storage files for oversized items - all thanks to Bucyrus Foundation Civic Grants received in 2024 & 2025. While our files may still need some tweaking, they're in

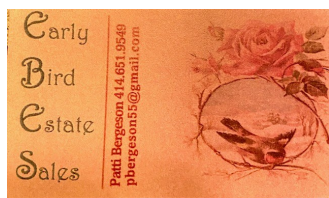


pretty good shape for anyone wanting to do research. Contact us through our website or by leaving a message at 414-520-1285 to set up an appointment.

Thanks also to Tom Balestrieri for donating the cabinet counter top—including cutting it to fit the new cabinets and installing them. We now have an efficient work and storage space in the office!

Vintage Rummage September 27

Thank you to everyone who stopped by to find a treasure and support the Historical Society. Also, a huge *THANK YOU* to Early Bird Estate Sales for donating their time and expertise for our first vintage rummage sale!! We couldn't have done it without them! If you ever need to have an estate sale we highly recommend them.



New addition to our website:

A digital version of Connie U'Ren's documentary about 30 years of musicals at the South Milwaukee High School. The documentary covers the musicals that were performed from 1957-1986.



South Milwaukee Historical Society

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone: _____

e-mail: _____

☐ I would be willing to receive the newsletter electronically.

Individual: ☐ \$15.00 - Annual

Family: ☐ \$20.00 - Annual

Business: ☐ \$25.00 - Annual

Individual Lifetime: ☐ \$125.00

Additional Donation: ☐ \$ _____

Please send completed form and check to:

South Milwaukee Historical Society

717 Milwaukee Avenue

South Milwaukee WI 53172

Thank you for supporting your local Historical Society!

TIDS & BITS

Reminder to New Members...

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

SENIORS CAN AVOID TAXES ON RMDs BY DONATING THEM TO QUALIFIED NON-PROFIT CORPORATIONS.

DONATIONS ARE 100% DEDUCTABLE
UP TO \$100,000
(\$200,000 FILING JOINTLY)

IRA custodians must arrange for transfer of funds

For more detailed information,
google: "IRS RMD QCD"

The South Milwaukee Historical Society
is an all-volunteer 501 C(3) Corporation.
PROUD PAST, PROMISING FUTURE

Come on in...we're open!

Upcoming Saturdays
10am—3pm

October 18
November 15
December 20
January 17, 2025
(weather permitting)

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

Hope to see you there!

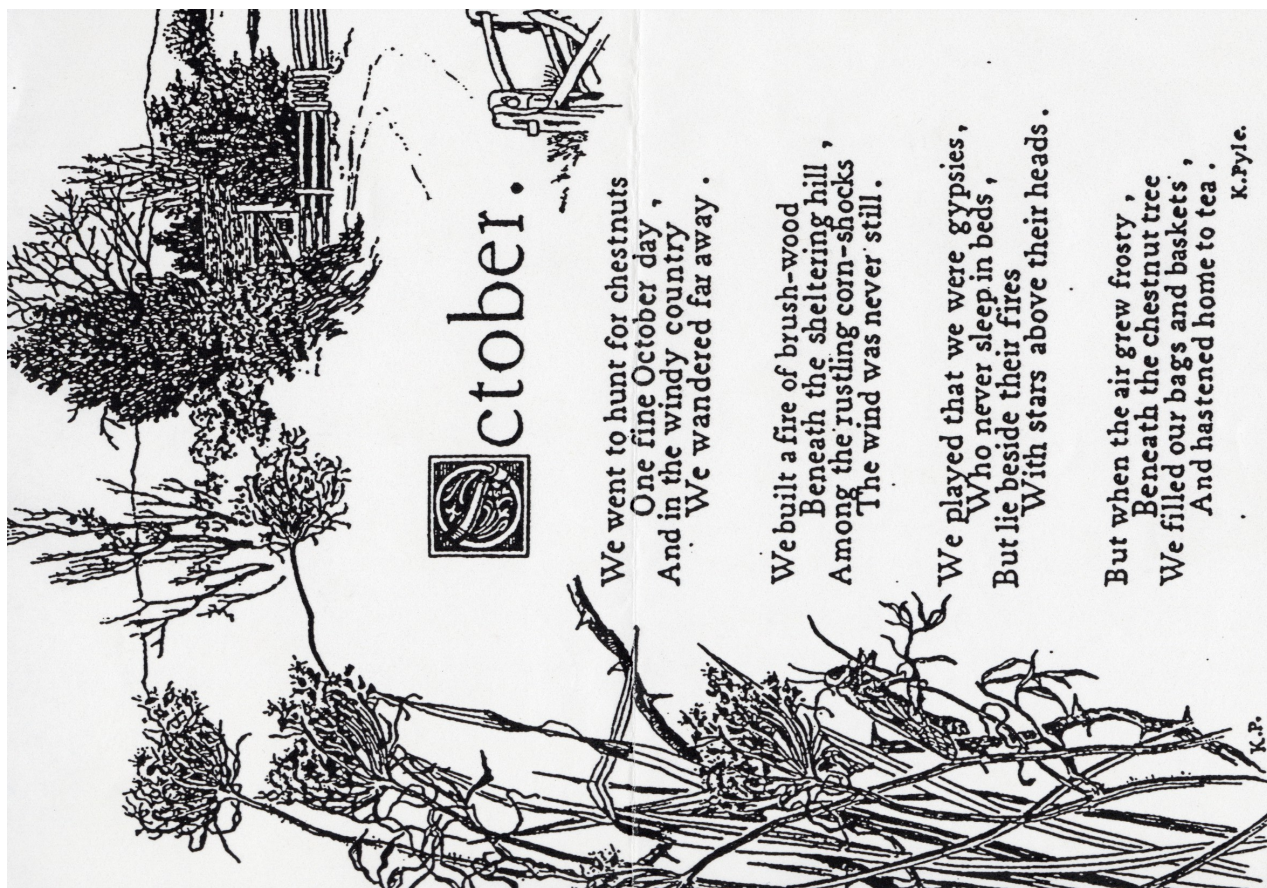
Tours

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

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.

The South Milwaukee Historical Society is a 501.c.3 organization whose mission is "to preserve, honor and promote South Milwaukee's rich history for generations to come."



October.

We went to hunt for chestnuts
One fine October day,
And in the windy country
We wandered far away.

We built a fire of brush-wood
Beneath the sheltering hill,
Among the rustling corn-shocks
The wind was never still.

We played that we were gypsies,
Who never sleep in beds,
But lie beside their fires
With stars above their heads.

But when the air grew frosty,
Beneath the chestnut tree
We filled our bags and baskets,
And hastened home to tea.

K.Pyle.

K.P.

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