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# DANE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER



The Dane County Historical Society Office and the Otto Schroeder Records Center are located in the lower level of the Lussier Family Heritage Building on Lake Farm Road just south of the Beltline near Lake Waubesa.

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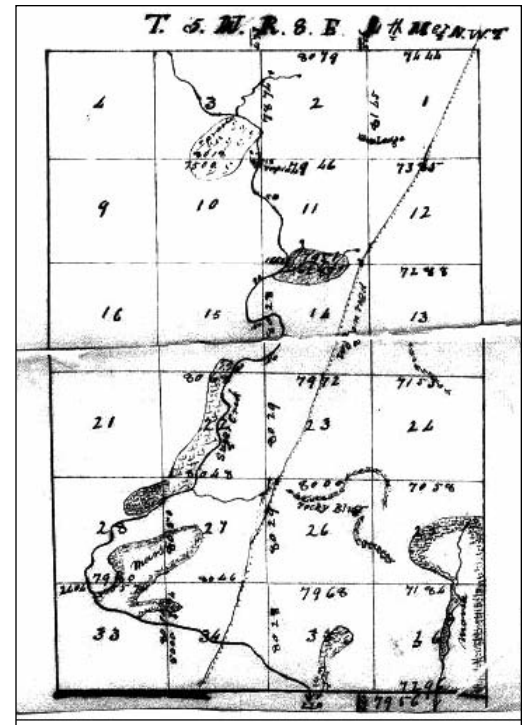
## Wisconsin Public Land Survey Records: Original Field Notes and Plat Maps

### Indian Trail Shown on Original County Survey Map

In 1833, surveyor Loren Miller, referenced and sketched an Indian trail which crossed the Sugar River in Dane County's Montrose Township, (Township 5 North - Range 8 East - Section 34). After crossing the river, coming north from what is now Green County, the trail split; one trail going east to Waubesa (the second lake) and one north to Mendota's western shore. This segment of the trail, in later years, became a wagon road which reached Fort Winnebago and further north to the state's "Pineries."

That original hand drawn survey map (*right*) has been digitized and is available to view via the Internet. The Wisconsin Board of Commissioners of Public Lands, the oldest state agency, maintains an archive of historical records related to land holdings in Wisconsin. The archive includes original surveys and field notes from the Public Land Survey of Wisconsin.

The land area that is now known as the State of Wisconsin was surveyed by the federal government between 1833 and 1866. The survey was done in order to divide the vast public domain into salable-sized lots that could be sold to raise funds for the federal government and to encourage settlement in the territory. The original surveys are often referred to collectively as the *Public Land Survey*.



### Townships, Ranges and Sections

The basic units of the public land survey are six-mile square townships that are further subdivided into one-mile square sections. Just as on a sheet of graph paper, the townships are regularly arranged across the state.

The starting point of the public land survey in Wisconsin is located on the Wisconsin - Illinois border about 10 miles east of the Mississippi. The east-west lines that cross the principal meridian every six miles are known as township lines. The north-south lines that intersect the baseline every six miles are known as range lines.

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Wisconsin Public Land Survey Records (Continued from page 1)

The six-mile square block of land between the adjacent township lines and the two adjacent range lines is called a township. Each township is numbered based on how far north it is located from the baseline, and how far east or west it is located from the principal meridian. For example, the city of Madison is in a township that is seven townships north of the baseline and nine ranges east of the principal meridian, thus it is in what is known as Township 7 North, Range 9 East.

Within each six-mile square township are 36 one-mile square sections. These are numbered starting with number one in the north-eastern corner of the township and then moving westward with sections number 2 through 6 along the northern edge of the township with section 6 in the

6	5	4	3	2	1
7	8	9	10	11	12
18	17	16	15	14	13
19	20	21	22	23	24
30	29	28	27	26	25
31	32	33	34	35	36

northwest corner. Section 7 is immediately south of section 6 and the numbering moves back eastward with section 12 immediately south of section 1. Section 13 is immediately south of section 12 and the numbering then progresses westward. This back and forth pattern is repeated until reaching section 36 in the southeast corner of the township.

**Field Work for Wisconsin Public Land Survey**

The actual fieldwork for the Wisconsin Public Land Survey was done under the direction of a Deputy Surveyor. General Instructions provided the basic procedures for how the public land surveys were to be performed. The Deputy Surveyor hired a crew of assistants that normally included two chainmen and an axman.

The exterior lines of the townships, the east-west township lines and the north-south range lines, were surveyed first to establish outlines of the townships. When this work was completed, a different crew of surveyors would do the work of running the section lines, or interior lines to subdivide the township into the thirty-six sections.

The work of the public land surveys was recorded in small notebooks that became the official record of the surveys. Collectively these are known as the field notes. Within an individual township notebook, there is a predictable progression of entries. Most field notebooks include the following basic entries.

Sketch Maps drawn in the field as part of the fieldwork, such as our example on page 1 that shows the Indian trail.

Section Line Notes are the details of the work done as the surveyors ran the individual section lines. The entry will also list the species and diameter of the bearing trees as well as the direction and distance to those trees. Other entries include entering or leaving fields,

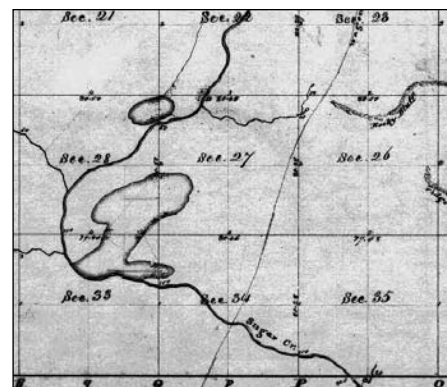
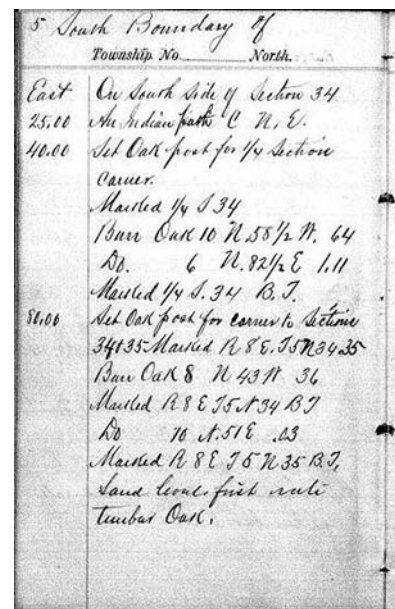
swamps, timber or other major landscape or other vegetation types, crossing streams, or intersecting trees directly on the survey line. In our example (above), there is notation made of "An Indian Path." The section line notes also include description of the surface of the land, the quality of the soil, the tree species along the line in order of dominance, and the undergrowth.

At the end of a township's survey, the surveyors wrote a general description of what they had observed during the survey of the township.

From these original survey measurements, cartographers located outside of Wisconsin drew the original plat maps of the state; these plat maps are also available online.

All of these materials (1500 original survey maps, 650 volumes of handwritten field notes, and 400 resurvey maps) have been digitized and are available free online. The online records can be searched by township, range, and section numbers or by county. Once a township / range / section are identified, complete maps and field notes can be viewed.

To view the online field survey records, visit <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/SurveyNotes>.



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# Dane County Students Win Honors at National History Day

Here are the national finalists and honorable mentions from Dane County, for the 2010 Wisconsin History Day State Event held on May 1, 2010. The national finalists represented Wisconsin at the national contest June 13-17, 2010, at the University of Maryland-College Park.

Each finalist designs their entry to reflect the annual theme. The entries below reflect the annual theme for 2010: Innovation in History: Impact and Change.

## National Finalist Projects:

- Senior Paper – Elizabeth Stephens, *“Adapt or Die: The Impact of Revolutionary Changes in Agriculture in the 20th Century”* (Mount Horeb High School)
- Junior Individual Documentary – Madeleine Smith, *“Jigs Do the Work Much Better: The Impact of Mechanization on the Anthracite Breaker Boys”* (St. James School, Madison)
- Junior Individual Documentary – Tom Compas, *“Frank Lloyd Wright: Innovations in Green Architecture”* (EAGLE School, Madison)

## Regional Awards:

- Junior Paper, 1st Honorable Mention – Mara Blumenstein, *“The Beatles: The Most Influential Band in History”* (EAGLE School, Madison)
- Senior Paper, 3rd Honorable Mention – Elizabeth Wendt, *“The Daughters of Liberty and the Innovative Roles of Women During the American Revolution”* (Monona Grove High School, Monona)
- Junior Individual Exhibit, 1st Honorable Mention – Sanjana Kumar, *“Bird Respirators: A Breath of Life for Millions”* (EAGLE School, Madison)
- Senior Individual Exhibit, 2nd Honorable Mention – Monica Sieg, *“Broadway Presents: Rodgers & Hammerstein, Innovators of Musical Theater”* (Mount Horeb High School)
- Junior Individual Performance, 4th Honorable Mention – Elizabeth Harth, *“Bra Burning: Miss America Pageant 1968”* (EAGLE School, Madison)
- Junior Group Performance, 1st Honorable Mention – Katherine Gerdes & Malaika Flores, *“Lasers: The Light that Transformed the World”* (EAGLE School, Madison)
- Senior Individual Documentary, 1st Honorable Mention – Kayla Huemer, *“Thermus Aquaticus: A Truly Revolutionary Microbe”* (Mount Horeb High School)
- Senior Website, 2nd Honorable Mention – Anissa Lynch & Lucy Wallitsch, *“Coco Chanel: Changing Fashion, Changing Lives”* (Mount Horeb High School)
- Senior Website, 3rd Honorable Mention – Erin Niemisto & Abby Lois, *“American Bandstand: The Show that Shaped a Generation”* (Mount Horeb High School)

## Special Awards:

### Wisconsin Council for Local History Award

Anna Stoneman, (Junior Individual Exhibit) *“The Babcock Test: Revolutionizing the Dairy Industry”* (EAGLE School, Madison)



Senior Paper student Elizabeth attends the state parade with her brother.

### Robert and Carroll Heideman Award for Outstanding Archival Resources

Jena Bliss, (Junior Paper) *“Guglielmo Marconi’s Innovation: A Major Change in the World of Communication”* (EAGLE School, Madison)

### WI Society of Mayflower Descendants Award for Early American History

Elizabeth Wendt, *“(Senior Paper) The Daughters of Liberty and the Innovative Roles of Women During the American Revolution”* (Monona Grove High School)

### American Labor History Award

Madeleine Smith, (Junior Individual Documentary) *“Jigs Do the Work Much Better: The Impact of Mechanization on the Anthracite Breaker Boys”* (St. James School, Madison)

### American Military History Award

Wesley Berg, (Senior Individual Documentary) *“Admiral Hyman Rickover”* (Mount Horeb High School)

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# Mt Horeb Teacher Honored at National History Day

By Barbara Furstenberg

Mount Horeb High School teacher Beth Maglio was recognized as Senior Teacher of the Year at Wisconsin's state National History Day (NHD) state on May 1, 2010. As such, she became a candidate for the national Patricia Behring Award. The Patricia Behring Teacher of the Year Award recognizes outstanding NHD teachers.

Beth, in cooperation with several colleagues, has spearheaded a program of curriculum development that has culminated in the establishment of the National History Day program as the centerpiece in freshman history at Mount Horeb High School. This program grew out of Beth's 2003/4 Master's Degree project, which focused on ways to build community in the schools by integrating subjects and sharing students among teachers in various disciplines. The initial phase involved collaboration with an English teacher on a NHD project that integrated freshman Modern United States History and English I. There were forty-eight students in that first project. Beth guided the research process while the English teacher worked with the students on writing and bibliography skills. This arrangement worked well, but scheduling was difficult, so NHD projects are now conducted solely within the History Department.

Currently, Beth and her colleague John Malecki use NHD to teach the research process to freshmen.

Beth comments: *"NHD empowers students to take charge of their own learning by allowing them choices in what topic they will research and the medium they choose to present their findings. This is really the first time in their education that the ownership of a project is placed in students' laps. They determine what facts are important, and locate the evidence necessary to demonstrate what is significant about their topic."*

The history projects are very time-consuming for the students. NHD also requires a significant commitment from Beth and John, who schedule individual meetings with all of the freshmen. The current class has approximately 175 students. Beth invites Wisconsin Historical Society staff into Mount Horeb classrooms and she takes students on a field trip to the Historical Society Library. When the projects are completed, they are presented during the Mount Horeb High School History Fair, which is held in the gymnasium and auditorium. This year fifty independent judges were recruited to determine which projects qualify for the regional level. The school rents a bus to take forty-five students to the regional competition.

Several Mount Horeb projects received recognition at the 2010 regionals. Over the years, the school has



Beth Maglio shown with her colleague John Malecki.

had more than a dozen projects advance to the national competition. In 2005, an exhibit on "Rosie the Riveter" by Jessica Sielaff took thirteenth place nationally. Beth commented that the competition has become stiffer over the years as more and more schools participate in NHD.

In addition to this year's award, Beth was chosen as the 2009 Mount Horeb High School Peer Choice Educator. She has been a member of the Wisconsin Historical Society, Office of School Services Advisory Committee since 2008. She has made presentations at the "National History Day Extravaganza" to introduce area teachers to NHD and she has mentored some teachers. Beth was one of twenty-five educators selected to participate in the 2008 Campaign Educators' Conference at C-SPAN Headquarters in Washington, D. C.

In addition to the course in Modern United States History, Beth teaches classes in American Political Systems and Social Problems. A Madison West High School graduate, Beth attended the University of Minnesota and received her B. A. from Edgewood College and her M. S. from the University of Wisconsin - Madison. Her personal favorite historical topics involve women's history. She has taught at Mount Horeb High School for fifteen years.

Jean M. Sielaff, Jessica's mother, reports that *"Beth Maglio radiates energy and always has a smile on her face. She got excited for each student and was very proud of each of the projects produced by her students. You could see in her face the love that she has for her students and the passion that she has for the subject of History."*

Congratulations Beth!!

# Dane County Board Corner

By Mary Clark



This is the first in what will hopefully be a series of articles written by different DCHS Board Members to inform and communicate with the membership, about activities of the Board of Directors.

The Dane Co. Historical Society is in need! We need to become serious about enhancing and strengthening our board of directors. The organization's bylaws call for a 15 member board; the current DCHS board consists of seven members. We lost two board members in 2009, and only gained one new member. The board is keenly aware of this need, and continually discusses strategies to increase the board numbers. However, we are running out of ideas for what to do about this.

We are working on a strategic plan for revitalizing the DCHS board of directors; we have set a goal and a time frame for recruitment of new board members; we must actively pursue that goal, in order for the Society to be able to take on new projects and activities.

Two of the actions we have taken toward this goal of enhancing our board of directors are:

- 1) The Board has passed a motion to reduce the number of board members from 15 to 11 members. This action was designed to help us work with a realistic recruitment goal and to get the board down to a "lean and mean" size. This number allows us to move forward and act on issues with a smaller quorum.
- 2) DCHS is calling an ad hoc membership meeting (separate from our spring annual meeting) to convey the board situation to the membership, to vote on the above bylaws change and to do some strategic planning.

As DCHS moves into our fiftieth year, the board looks forward to an infusion of new volunteers and new board members to help us carry out our mission.

## DCHS Membership Meeting

Saturday, September 11, 2010

9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Fitchburg Community Center  
5510 Lacy Rd, Fitchburg, WI 53711

Program – Wisconsin Public Lands Survey

Vote – Bylaws Changes

Networking Meeting

Coordinated Planning Anniversary Celebration

## BYLAWS Change Proposal

July 2010

The Dane County Historical Society Board of Directors has approved the following changes to the organization bylaws. A full membership vote on these proposed changes will take place at a meeting of the membership on September 11, 2010.

### 1. ARTICLE III. BOARD OF DIRECTORS,

Section 1. Composition of the Board

CURRENT TEXT:

- a. The Board of Directors shall consist of **fifteen** members in good standing from among whom the officers shall be chosen.

PROPOSED CHANGE:

- a. The Board of Directors shall consist of **eleven** members in good standing from among whom the officers shall be chosen.

### 2. ARTICLE III. BOARD OF DIRECTORS,

Section 1. Composition of the Board

CURRENT TEXT:

- c. In order to insure countywide representation, every effort should be made to ensure that at least **five** members of the Board shall have residence outside of Madison.

PROPOSED CHANGE:

- c. In order to insure countywide representation, every effort should be made to ensure that at least **four** members of the Board shall have residence outside of Madison.

### 3. ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS,

Section 2. Meetings of the Membership

CURRENT TEXT:

- c. A number equal to the number of elected Directors (**15**) plus one shall constitute a quorum at any annual, regular or special meeting of the membership.

PROPOSED CHANGE:

- c. A number equal to the number of elected Directors (**11**) plus one shall constitute quorum at any annual, regular or special meeting of the membership.

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# DCHS Membership – Renew Today!

Membership dues provide essential resources that keep the Dane County Historical Society functioning. Your membership helps the Society carry out its mission of preserving Dane County's heritage for tomorrow's generations. Memberships and private support are increasingly necessary to ensure the work of the Society.

*Your support does make a difference!*

The following people have already renewed for 2010. If you are not on the list, please send in your renewal today!!

Allen Co. Public Library	Jacobs, George F., Jr.
Arbogast, Thomas & Jane	Jensen, Joanne V.
Baumann, Karen J.	Jensen, Carol J.
Bean, Robert	Kanetzke, Howard
Bennett, Sandra	Karbusicky, Kurt & Dana
Birrenkott, Suzanne	Kelly, Joanne
Bovre, Michael	Kneebone, Beverly
Carson, Meridith Rhodes	Levine, Shirley
Clark, Mary & Glenn	Littlewood, Roland K.
Corry, Joe	Milwaukee Public Library
Cottom, Mrs. Melvin C.	Montague, Randall & Doris
Dallman, John & Vera	Morrill, Stefanie & Joshua
Danielson, Richard	Mulrooney, Tess
Downs, Alan & Cindy	Nagle, Joan
Engelberger, Michael	Nichols, Viginia
Ewald, Mabelle	Phelan, Joan
Faster, Karen	Punwar, Alice J.
Finley, Arlene	Remy, Mr. & Mrs. Jerald C.
Fox, Thurman & Betty	Riley, Vera
Furstenberg, Barbara & Jim	Sayles, William
Genealogical Society of Utah	Schairer, Jack & Marilyn
Gorman, John & Bernice	Schwierske, Beverly
Gottman, Heidi	Short, Anne
Grimsrud, Dee	Sinnott, Ann
Haglund, Ruth D.	Waidelich, Ann
Hall, Gertrude	Westergard, Marjorie
Hartung, Ann	Whitcomb, Bill & Dorothy
Hessman, Paul	Zellers, Ledell
Hillebrand, Jerome	& Simon Anderson
Hornung, Jim & Lucille	
Imilkowski, Adrienne	

## DANE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Please renew your membership if you have not already done so. Your continued interest and support enables the Society to carry out its goal of preserving Dane County's heritage for tomorrow's generation.

*(Circle your choice.)*

Individual - \$15.00

Family - \$20.00

Contributing - \$45.00

Sustaining - \$65.00

Business/Professional - \$40.00

Student- \$10.00

*Make your check payable to:*  
Dane County Historical Society.

*Mail to:*  
Dane County Historical Society  
3101 Lake Farm Rd. • Madison WI 53711

The Dane County Historical Society has an office and archive room in the lower level of the Lussier Family Heritage Center, Lake Farm County Park at 3101 Lake Farm Road.

Phone: 608-224-3605  
e-mail: [dchs@danecountyhistory.org](mailto:dchs@danecountyhistory.org)

## Dane County Historical Society Elects Board Officers 2010/2011

At the Board of Directors meeting on June 14, 2010, the board elected the following officers:

President: Mary Clark

Vice-President: Joanne Jensen

Secretary: Barbara Furstenberg

Treasurer: Stef Morrill

The board of directors thanks them all for their past and continuing service to the society.

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# Dane County Historical Society Annual Meeting

- Charles Drew was an African-American doctor and researcher who developed a system for the storage of blood plasma that revolutionized the medical profession; ironically, Dr. Drew died in a car accident due partly to the lack of a blood transfusion.
- Breaker Boys were child workers in the coal mining industry at the turn of the last century whose job it was to separate impurities from coal by hand; in the 1920s a process was invented that allowed the task to be handled by machine rather than by small children.

What do these two nuggets have to do with Dane County history? These are just a couple of the interesting historical facts unveiled by some very bright and committed local Dane County students who presented their projects at the National History Day Preview Open House hosted by the Dane County Historical Society on April 18, 2010.

National History Day is an exciting academic enrichment program that helps middle and high school students learn about historical issues, ideas, people, and events. This academic adventure provides teachers with an innovative teaching tool and fosters students' enthusiasm for learning.

For the second year in a row, the Dane County Historical Society hosted an open house for qualifying NHD students from Dane County. DCHS feels honored to be able to present these students' work to a wider audience.

Two exhibits, four documentaries, one live performance, one paper, and one web site were presented at this year's National History Day Tie-in Preview Open House. The projects came from La Follette High School (Madison), Wisconsin Heights High School (Mazomanie), St. James School (Madison), and Parker High School (Janesville).

The audience included DCHS members, members of other Dane County historical organizations, parents, students, and the public. Each student commented about his or her project and answered questions from the audience. It was evident that the teachers had done an excellent job of exciting their students about history and creating an esprit. Parental support was also an important factor. Several students chose projects that explored topics related to their parents' professions. The afternoon was very stimulating.

The audience was impressed by the hard work and dedication of these young historians. We can all take comfort in knowing that we are entrusting the study

and interpretation of history to a talented and interested new generation.

DCHS extends special thanks to the following teachers: Kate Casey (La Follette High School), Stephen Streiker (Parker High School), Therese Stevens (St James School), Kathy Haig (Wisconsin Heights High School). Sarah Clement, National History Day State Coordinator, Wisconsin Historical Society, provided valuable assistance.

The following projects were presented at the open house:

- "The History and Innovation of the Pabst Brewing Company" exhibit by Adam Child (Wisconsin Heights High School)
- "Innovations of Frank Lloyd Wright" documentary by Nicholas Genthe, Ryan Howe, and Vincent Charles Breitzke (Wisconsin Heights High School)
- "Dr. Charles Drew" exhibit by Maetraclare Maaneb de Macedo and Lauren Tatus (St James School)
- "RADAR" documentary by Philip Hunerdoss (La Follette High School)
- "Jigs Do the Work Better: The Impact of Mechanization on the Anthracite Breaker Boys" documentary by Madeline Smith (St. James School, Madison)
- "Knights Templar" documentary by Kali Thibault, Renee Hegge, and Shelby Hill-Killerlain (La Follette High School)
- "Samurai Warriors" website by Kyle Marquardt (La Follette High School)
- "Mental Illness through History" paper by Evangeline Smith (La Follette High School)
- "The Innovative Life of Judy Garland" performance by Britni Pettitt and Carisa Burnsand (Parker High School)

## Business Meeting

A short general membership meeting was held at the Lussier Family Heritage Center prior to the open house presentations. DCHS President, Mary Clark, welcomed the members in attendance, and handed out copies of the 2010 Annual Report. She discussed highlights and activities from 2009, and answered questions from the membership.

A board member election was held. There were five board seats up for election; there was just one name, Beverly Kneebone, put forward by the Board Nominating Committee. A motion to re-elect Beverly to the board was passed on a unanimous voice vote. This left four additional vacant seats open for election. There were no nominations from the floor. The vacant seats remain vacant for now.

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Dane County Historical Society  
3101 Lake Farm Rd.  
Madison, WI 53711

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## President's Message from Mary Clark



Mary Clark

Mark your Calendars!! Typically, the society hosts an annual membership meeting in the spring. This year we will host a second meeting for the membership on **Saturday, September 11 at 9:00 am** at the Fitchburg Community Center. The program will be very interesting (see details inside this issue). We really hope to get the membership involved and turning out for this event. I know that not everyone can attend these membership meetings, but I urge you to at least take a look at the program and check your calendars. **PLEASE PLAN ON ATTENDING** if you can!!!

Dane County Historical Society has a long and prestigious history. We are all very proud of the work the society has done to raise awareness and understanding of the history of Dane County. Next year will be a very busy one. As the Society approaches its 50th anniversary in 2011, Dane County itself is getting ready to celebrate its own 175th anniversary. Did you know that a 175th anniversary is also known somewhat obscurely as a *dodransbicentennial* anniversary? "Dodrans" is a Latin contraction of *de-quadrans* which means "a whole unit, less a quarter" ... we'll just call it 175th!

Dane County Historical Society will be involved with the County and a number of other organizations to plan a wonderful celebration for 2011. Watch for more information about these celebrations. It will be a milestone year for our county and for our society.

The Dane County Historical Society Newsletter is published quarterly (Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter), by the Dane County Historical Society and printed by The Printing Place. Submissions are due 15 days prior to publication. Reader reviews, testimonials, flak and flattery, are also welcome. Send to: DCHS Newsletter, 3101 Lake Farm Rd. Madison, WI 53711. E-mail: <a href="mailto:dchs@danecountyhistory.org">dchs@danecountyhistory.org</a> Mary Clark, President, Howard Sherpe, Editor, Dane County Historical Society
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