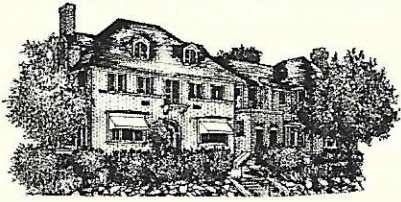


PORTAGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Museum at the Portage
804 MacFarlane Rd., Portage WI
608-742-6682

www.portagemuseum.org

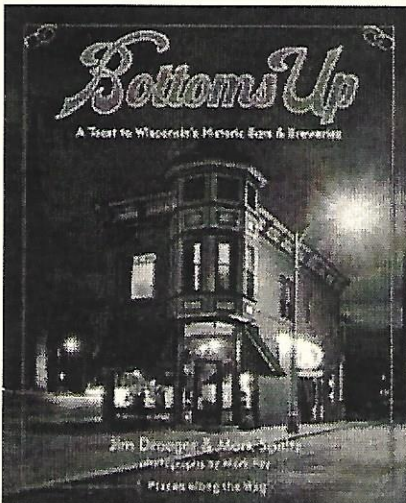
Re-opening for the season in early April

'Bottoms Up' author guest at annual meeting

Jim Draeger, the co-author (along with Mark Speltz) of Bottoms Up: A History of Wisconsin Taverns and Breweries, will be the guest speaker at the Portage Historical Society annual dinner meeting January 14. The book was recently published by Wisconsin Historical Society press and a companion documentary was produced by Wisconsin Public Television and debuted in October.

According to the WHS promotional material the book "... celebrates Wisconsin's taverns and the breweries that fueled them. Beginning with inns and saloons, the book explores the rise of taverns and breweries, the effects of temperance and Prohibition, and attitudes about gender, ethnicity, and morality. It traces the development of the megabreweries, dominance of the giants, and the emergence of microbreweries. "

Draeger is an architectural historian and deputy State Historic Preservation Officer. He is no stranger to Portage Historical Society: he was the guest speaker at the 2008 annual meeting, talking about mid-



century domestic architecture and Lustron home; and in 2010 he spoke on the topic of gas stations as told in his book, Fill 'er Up.

The annual meeting will be held at Trails Lounge Supper Club, with social hour at 5:30, dinner at 6:30 and followed by a brief business meeting before Draeger begins his presentation at 7:30. He will also have copies of the hardcover book for sale at \$29.95 each.

The menu for the dinner is choice of Swiss steak, tilapia, or baked chicken. All dinners are \$15 and include non-alcoholic beverage, dessert, tax and tip. Reservations must be made by noon on Friday, January 12 by calling Peg Amend at 429-9214 or Kathy Rowley at 697-9631, or by emailing to info@portagemuseum.org

A brief business meeting will precede Draeger's presentation. Following his presentation, board members will meet to vote on the slate of officers. Current officers are Peggy Amend, president; Kathy Rowley, vice-president; Richard Lillie, treasurer, and Peggy Malone, secretary.

Thanks to Richard Lillie and Jerry Indermark for their contribution to Portage Historical Society during their terms of service on the board of directors. Their dedication has been impressive!

Memorial walkway proposed

At a recent Portage Historical Society meeting it was proposed that the organization begin to develop plans for a brick walkway to honor men and women who cherished their Portage roots and contributed to the community. Board member Ted Rebholz has been spearheading the initiative by researching the projected cost for a walkway that would wrap from the main sidewalk to the north side of the house, ending at the entrance to the side yard. A similar project is the memorial at Blue Star Park. Standard paving stones are set in the ground, then replaced with engraved stones bearing the names of the honored individuals or families, or the name of the donor. Details regarding the cost of the total project and the cost of individual engraved stones is expected to be available Spring 2013.

Mary Langbecker joins board

At the PHS November board meeting museum docent and longtime PHS member Mary Langbecker was nominated and approved to join the board of directors.

There are several vacancies on the board; interested PHS members may contact president Peggy Amend to learn more about qualifications, the nomination process, and the role of board members.

2012 Board of Directors

Peggy Amend, President	Elayne Hanson
Kathy Rowley, Vice President	Jerry Indermark
Richard Lillie, Treasurer	Merwyn Jenkins
Betty Christenson	Mary Langbecker
Jane Peggy Malone, Secretary	Nancy Kreier
Considine	Ted Rebholz
Kathryn Curtis	Florence Schieber
Fred Galle	John Waldman

State Historical Society to archive newspapers

In a dark room in the basement of the Museum at the Portage are dozens of books containing old copies of the Portage newspapers. At about 2'x3' in size, the books are cumbersome to use, though genealogists and local historians consider them to be invaluable resource.

At its November meeting the Portage Historical Society board approved donating the books containing the Portage Daily Democrat (published 1886 – 1916) to the State Historical Society where the newspapers will be microfilmed and then available in a much more usable format. Ron Larson, Serials Resource Librarian at the WHS, speculates that there could be as many as 75 microfilm reels when the project is complete.

WHS staff will move the large books from the museum basement, and as part of the microfilm process the individual pages will be removed from the large books. The process is expected to take 18-24 months to complete. At the conclusion, WHS will donate a copy of microfilm along with a digital copy of the collection.

In the meantime the board will make a decision as to whether it wants to pay about \$3000 extra to have a searchable copy of the digital file. The board will also consider if that it wants the many unbound newspaper pages returned for possible use as a fundraiser.

Time to renew PHS membership

Like many organizations Portage Historical Society is struggling to keep a balanced budget. Public sources of funding are reduced. (Portage Common Council approved a tourism grant of \$6,000, down from \$7,500 last year) while operating costs increase. And there are other worthy organizations and projects simultaneously bidding for financial support from the community.

The Portage Historical Society board of directors has made an intentional effort over the last couple of years to provide members with value for their membership contributions, according to President Peggy Amend.

"We have hosted a genealogy workshop and plan to have another one in 2013, and we have offered a members-only event each of the last two years," Peggy says. "And the board decided to approve offering a 20% discount to members on all publications purchased at the museum."

"Our annual meetings have featured speakers who bring quality program to members, with the only cost to members being the price of their dinners. I think this year's program will continue the pattern."

"And the Society has been able to successfully lobby for maintenance and improvements to the Museum."

"Member support through annual contribution is important for us to be able to demonstrate the base of support we have for continuing the work of the Portage Historical Society, and for bringing together people who have a love of history, especially the history of Portage and its people."

"We hope that all current members will mail their contributions soon, and also invite others with similar interests in history to join the Portage Historical Society, visit the museum and participate in special events."

		Ck. Number _____
Historian \$500 or more _____		Family \$30 or more _____
Benefactor \$250 or more _____		Single \$15 or more _____
Patron \$100 or more _____		
Enclosed is my check for \$_____, my annual membership contribution		
Name _____		
Address _____		
City, State ZIP _____		
Phone _____		Email _____
Yes, I may be interested in		
<input type="checkbox"/> helping with garden		<input type="checkbox"/> providing refreshments for museum events
<input type="checkbox"/> assisting with setting up displays/exhibits		<input type="checkbox"/> other projects, please contact me
<input type="checkbox"/> No thank you. I support the Portage Historical Society but am not able to volunteer to help		
Return this form with your check to PHS, PO Box 727, Portage, Wisconsin, 53901- 0727		

Museum attendance up in 2012

The annual report of museum attendance shows that attendance was at 931, up 3% from 2011 and above the nine year average of 910. Walk-in visitors (not in tour group or for special event) were down a bit from 2011, and tour groups and special events brought in more visitors. Fifty-seven percent of the registered visitors were from Portage and surrounding Columbia County; 24% were from within an easy day's drive of Portage, and 18% were from out of state.

The data is based on tallies from the museum docents, and compiled by Richard Lillie, PHS treasurer. The report will be available at the annual meeting.

Upcoming Area Events

Toasting our Fermented Past, Wisconsin Historical Museum, Madison, 1-2:30 pm, Jan 12. Exploring the archeological evidence of brewing and the evolution of brewing in Wisconsin

Civil War Quilts and Stories, Wisconsin Historical Museum, Madison, 12:15 – 1 pm. Feb. 19 Presenter shares her knowledge of the stories of quilts during the Civil War.

History workshop, Hoard Museum, Fort Atkinson, March 16; How to care for your photographs and historic documents. Call 920-563-7769 for details.