

# PORTAGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

January 2015



Time to renew your membership ... please return enclosed membership card, and invite friends to join us too! And be sure to attend the annual meeting Jan. 26.

Museum at the Portage  
804 MacFarlane Rd. PO Box 727  
Portage, WI 53901  
608-742-6682  
[www.portagemuseum.org](http://www.portagemuseum.org)  
open April—October

## Annual meeting January 26

The contractor who spearheaded the restoration of the *Museum at the Portage* after the April 13 fire will talk about the process at the annual dinner meeting of the Portage Historical Society on Monday, January 26 at Trail's Lounge.

Gorman Contracting of Pardeeville specializes in restoration projects, and Jim Gorman will provide some insights about the complexities of restoring a historical structure. An electrical short was determined to be the cause of the fire, and similar damage to a standard property would have called for rather straightforward clean-up and repair, but because the Museum is a historic property, the process was much more complex. Specialists from Wisconsin Historical Society visited the museum in April and provided instructions about cleaning historic artifacts (such as dabbing with sponge instead of wiping a surface) and ServePro, the Janesville company

contracted to do more extensive cleaning was meticulous.

According to Kathy Rowley, PHS vice-president and one of the volunteers working to bring the museum back into operation, said there have been some unexpected outcomes from the fire, such as finding letters to Zona Gale tucked into old books in her study.

The Museum will reopen, probably in April, and plans are underway for a reopening celebration in the summer.

The annual meeting will start with a social hour at 5:30 followed by dinner at 6:30 and Gorman's program at 7:30. The menu for the event includes chicken cordon bleu, steamed cod or Swiss steak. All meals are \$17 and include beverage and dessert plus gratuity. **Call Kathy Rowley at 697-9631 by Friday noon, Jan. 23** to indicate your menu choice.

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PO Box 727, Portage, WI 53901  
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### 2015 Board of Directors

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## Upcoming Area Events

**Feb. 3:** "History Sandwiched In" program with WISC-TV investigative reporter Adam Schragger who discusses his book "The Sixteenth Rail: the Evidence, the Scientist and the Lindbergh Kidnapping" 12:15 -1 @ Wis. Historical Museum

**Feb. 14 & 15:** Mid-Continent Railway Museum Snow Train™ with several departures daily, Call 608-522-4261 for details.

**April 23** Brown Bag Lunch Series, noon-1 at Portage Center for the Arts. Amateur historian Pat Grahn combines her love of history and bridal gowns.

# Plans back on track for walkway to rose garden

The plans to install a walkway leading from the front entrance of the Museum at the Portage to the rose garden behind the building were put on hold after the April fire, but the restoration has been largely completed and walkway plans have been revived. That means it's time to order your memorial brick to honor individuals, families and businesses associated with Portage history.

Portage Historical Society member and past president Ted Rebholz has taken the lead in developing the plans and working with vendors who have experience with this type of project. A 4" x 8" paver with up to three lines will be \$125, and an 8" x 8" paver with up to five lines will be

\$150. All details are on the order form below.

The rose garden, which was part of the property when Zona Gale Breese made it her home, has been tended and expanded over the years by members of the historical society but access to the garden has been limited generally to special events. One of the stipulations made by William Breese when he donated the property to the city was that the rose garden be maintained.

The entire walk will be paved in 2015 with both plain and engraved stones. Over time, more engraved pavers may be added as orders are placed, and the engraved pavers will replace the plain pavers.

*Please print clearly*

## 4" x 8" Paver


## 8" x 8" Paver


Paver Request Instructions:

### 4" x 8" \$125

- 3 line maximum
- 13 characters each line (includes letters, spaces & punctuation)

### 8" x 8" \$150

- 5 line maximum
- 13 characters each line (includes letters, spaces & punctuation)

Complete form at left and mail with your check to:

**Portage Historical Society**  
P.O. Box 727  
Portage, WI 53901

Purchaser's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

