

'NOJOSHING'

The official Newsletter of the St. Francis Historical Society

Fall 1989

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St. Francis, Wisconsin 53207
(414) 481-2300

1989 - 1990 OFFICERS

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ST. FRANCIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY: WE ARE "SERIOUS ABOUT NOJOSHING"

ST. FRANCIS/OLD TOWN OF LAKE AREA TRAILS" *by Chris Barney*

"ST. FRANCIS' CHURCH MAN"

If it weren't for a lack of work opportunities farther west, and a bridge-building catastrophe in Milwaukee, St. Francis' beautifully designed Henni Hall might never have been built, according to recently uncovered written sources.

The man behind that design, Victor Schulte, came to America from his native Prussia in 1830, at the age of 19. He initially settled in Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley and, after learning the carpentry trade, found a steady diet of work building railroad bridges during the 1830s.

In 1840, a desire to migrate westward landed Schulte in Milwaukee where he initially found no work opportunities.

GENERAL MEETING - OCTOBER 29th

A very special general meeting of the St. Francis Historical Society will be held on Sunday, October 29, 1989, when St. Francis Seminary will host an Open House for our Society at its newly and beautifully renovated **Henni Hall**, which was designed by noted area church architect, Victor Schulte. The Open House/Tour is scheduled to be given from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.. A separate mailing is planned to notify Society members of the Open House and give RSVP instructions. The restoration is a gift of **Conrad Schmitt Studios**, noted area restoration specialists. If you come to only one general meeting this year, this one is worth attending . . . bring the family!!

RE-CAP OF JULY 31st GENERAL MEETING

Noted automotive historian, Matt Joseph, gave an hour-long talk on the evolution of the automobile and its effect on American society. The fascinating history was enthusiastically received by the cozy gathering of Society members and their families. We applaud Mr. Joseph's efforts in this important area of history, and thank him for his very special presentation.

He continued on to Janesville, where he fared no better. The following year brought Schulte back to Milwaukee, where bridge building opportunities had opened up. He opened a large shop on East (now North) Water Street, just south of Juneau Avenue, employing 13 men. Listed in early city directories as simply a 'builder,' Schulte initially did not care for designing buildings. His son, Adolph, would recall in later years that, at first, his father "wasn't very good" at designing dwellings, but "... big places like churches always entranced him."

Perhaps what happened to one of Schulte's bridges convinced him to give church building a try. The span which connected Division and Chestnut Streets (East and West Juneau Avenues), spanning the Milwaukee River, one day, with a great clatter, fell into the river simply from its own inept design and the excessive weight of its superstructure.

In any event, the decade between 1846 and 1856 thrust Schulte into prominence as the Catholic Church's favorite architect in the Milwaukee area. During that period he built a number of churches, four of which still exist today: Old St. Mary's at 836 North Broadway Street; St. John's Cathedral at 812 North Jackson Street; Holy Trinity-Our

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BOARD DIRECTIONS

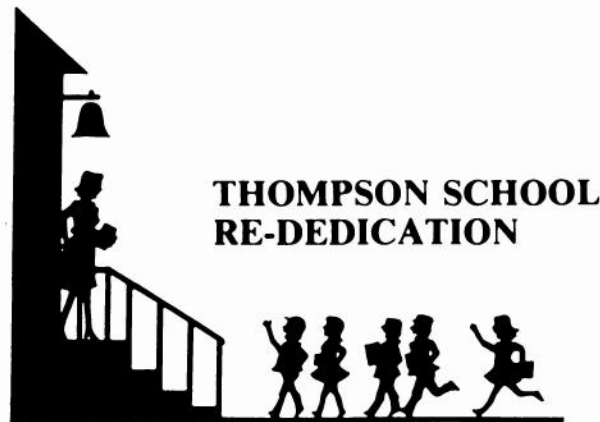
The following are items discussed at recent SFHS board meetings:

- President Ron Tessmer reported that a committee is being established to gather the information and photos necessary to set up a display of the history of the **Lakeside Power Plant**, at the St. Francis Public Library this fall.
- Ron also stated he would contact St. Francis city officials about obtaining permission for our Society to move the **Lakeside Power Plant Gatehouse** to St. Francis Memorial Park, with our Society picking up the tab for reasonable moving expenses. (At this writing, no action has yet been taken.)
- Our Society has received filing cabinets, desks, shelves and pedestals from the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Co. at a cost of \$550. The expenditure was approved by the board in August. The equipment will greatly aid our Society in the organizing and preserving of our archival material.
- Board member Joanne Richards has volunteered to be chairperson of the Arts and Crafts Fair Committee this year, replacing Margie Heidenreich who will be unavailable during the fall. Board members Diane Johnston and Millie Schimelfenyg volunteered to co-chair the Food Committee.
- Father Raymond Fetterer, former SFHS board member, has moved from St. Francis Seminary to a retirement home in Sheboygan. Father has made outstanding contributions to our society over the years. Our board decided to award him a Life Membership in our Society. We will miss him greatly, and wish him God's blessings and a long and fruitful retirement!!
- Due to a long-running conflict with family and work schedules, board member Adele Lenz has reluctantly decided to resign from the board effective immediately. Adele was also our Publicity Chairperson. We will miss her expertise and enthusiastic input to our Society's growth, and extend our heartfelt appreciation to her for her faithful service. Ron has received suggestions on a replacement to serve for the remainder of Adele's term on the board, and a decision is to be made soon.



LET'S GET CRAFTY . . .

The 12th annual **Arts and Crafts Fair** will once again be held at the St. Francis Community Center, 3476 East Howard Avenue, on Sunday, November 5, 1989 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Our Society will once again be represented, and we will be selling sandwiches and coffee in addition to the craft items on display. We are, however, looking for donations of baked goods (donuts, cupcakes, etc.) to sell, and a few volunteers to donate their time at the Fair. If you or someone you know can help in these areas, please call Joanne Richards at 744-3167 or Kathy Schwingle at 744-0873. Come and see us at the Fair!



The 50th anniversary re-dedication of Thompson Grade School, 3120 East Norwich Street, will be held Wednesday, October 18th for parents and guests, with a dance scheduled to be held in the school's gym on Friday, October 20th. A special mailing is expected to be sent out giving more specific information on the events. In the meantime, Ron Tessmer reported that the school's Re-dedication Steering Committee has asked our Society to furnish any artifacts or pictures from the 1930s through the 1980s which could be used in the classroom displays which will be arranged by the students and their teachers. Our Society will be responsible for setting up displays in the school's gym and corridors. Any last-minute donations of time or loans of historical artifacts for use during the re-dedication will be welcomed. All loaned items will be appropriately tagged and identified to insure prompt return to their owners. Displays will be adequately supervised and/or safely locked up at all times before, during, and after the re-dedication. If you can donate your time or loan an item, call Ron Tessmer at 483-5100 or 744-0653. This will be a unique one-time historic event, try not to miss it!!

LAKE WATER TOWER RE-DEDICATION

Old Town of Lake Area Historical Society founder and SFHS board member Chris Barney reports that the Water Tower Building at 4001 South 6th Street is scheduled for review by the City of Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission for approval as an historic structure sometime this fall. If approved, the ceremony commemorating the event will be combined with a 50th anniversary re-dedication ceremony tentatively scheduled for Saturday, January 20, 1990. Details have not been finalized at this writing, but will be sent out in a special mailing or included in the next issue of this newsletter. Chris has collected photos and historic information and has taken several recent photos of the tower/hall, from which St. Francis received water service from 1940 to 1954. If further information is desired or can be contributed, please call Chris in the afternoons during the week. His number is 744-5833.

WE'RE PROGRAMMABLE . . .

If you have a suggestion for a future program or display, give board member Marge Tessmer a call at 744-0653.

GOING, GOING . . .

After a long delay, final demolition of **Lakeside Power Plant**, 3744 South Lake Drive, is expected to resume, according to a recent news item. Discovery of small pieces of asbestos at the site had hampered completion of the project, which has been in process since 1986. The widening of Lake Drive, combined with higher than anticipated construction costs, has delayed development of the northern portion of the site, which has been purchased by a new investment group, St. Francis Joint Venture. The remainder of the site is still owned by the original investors, St. Francis Lakeside Group. Completion of the plant's demolition is now estimated to be sometime in the first three months of 1990, according to the article *History Around Us* . . .

The following is a look at other Historical Society news:

The 1989 Metropolitan Regional Convention of the **Wisconsin Council for Local History** will be held on Saturday, October 14th at historic **Turner Hall** in downtown Milwaukee. This year's topic will be "German Presence in Milwaukee: 150 Years and Continuing." Welcoming remarks will be provided by Milwaukee County Executive David F. Schulz. Our Society will be represented by President Ron Tessmer, who will also chair the business portion of the meeting. The program will also include a lesson in German sausage making given by Debra Usinger of the 109-year-old sausage-making family, and a walk to the Milwaukee County Historical Center where guests will see a video presentation and hear a discussion of the "Panorama Painters of Milwaukee," a popular 19th-century attraction. The convention is hosted by the **Milwaukee County Historical Society**. The WCLH's Annual Convention takes place on November 10th and 11th in Madison. For information on



WHERE'S THE BELL?! WHERE'S THE BELL?!

Come out, come out, wherever you are! You (pre-1938) Thompson kids know the one - the Big Brass One - that rang in the old (church) school to call all of you to class every day! We only want to borrow it for the re-dedication and take a few pictures of it . . . if you want to remain anonymous, that's OK, too! Just give Bobby Schwingle a call at 483-4424 weekdays or 744-0873 evenings, and "mum" will be the word - you could even leave it on his porch while he's sleeping . . . would ja?!huh!??

the annual convention, contact Tom McKay at (608) 262-3266.

Black storyteller **Tejumola Ologboni** of Milwaukee will spend six weeks in residence at the State Historical Museum this fall and winter, focusing on the black experience in Wisconsin with hopes of inspiring others to recall and tell stories of their own cultures. Ologboni's residency, sponsored by the **State Historical Society of Wisconsin** and supported by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board, will include workshops on storytelling techniques, school class visits to the museum, giving students a chance to work closely with Ologboni, visits by him to core-area school classrooms in Madison; and two hour-long free public performances at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 10, 1990 in the museum's headquarters building auditorium. To make a reservation for the class visits, to be held on Wednesdays in November and December, call (608) 262-7700.

Awards of Merit were given to the authors of four books and to one organization for its historical achievements at the Society membership's annual meeting in Manitowoc on June 16th. They are:

- Curt Meine for "Aldo Leopold: His Life and Work"
- Alice Judy Behrend for "Burning Bush: Including Many Rivers to Cross," concerning the Peshtigo fire of 1871
- Ruth Kreihn for "Fisherfolk of Jones Island," a Milwaukee neighborhood
- Juneau County Historical Society Book Project for "Juneau County: The First 100 Years"
- Manitowoc chapter of the U.S. Submarine Veterans of World War II for large bronze plaques honoring each of

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DO YOU REMEMBER?

It was 20 years ago, November 16, 1969, that the current **Tippecanoe Library**, 3912 South Howell Avenue, was dedicated. The structure, designed by Darby, Bogner and Associates, replaced a structure on the same site which was used as a library from April 1960 to November 1968. The former structure had functioned as the old Town of Lake Town Hall, Fire Department and Highway Department from 1924 to 1940, and as Fire Department and Highway Department only from 1940 to 1954. It was a City of Milwaukee Fire Station from 1954 to 1959. The original Tippecanoe Library operated out of a storefront building at 3835 South Howell Avenue from 1931 to 1960.

St. Francis' Church Man (continued from page 1)

Lady of Guadalupe at 423 West Bruce Street; and Henni Hall at St. Francis Seminary - Schulte's last major project. It was not until the completion of Henni Hall that he felt confident enough to change his title to "architect" in the city directory, in 1857.

Schulte not only designed all of his projects, he helped build them and acted as a supervisor during their construction. In the case of St. John's Cathedral, he even cut down the oak trees that were used for the roof timbers.

Henni Hall, however, was Schulte's crowning achievement. The large domed central dormitory and chapel building was designed to be the heart of the seminary complex. With the fervor that Schulte showed during the project, combined with its wilderness setting, Henni Hall's construction was a reminder of the European cathedrals built during the Middle Ages. The project employed 80 workmen, with the bricks made from clay on the site and lumber hauled from the lake front.

By the time the Henni Hall project was in progress, Schulte, who had been an alderman and councilor in addition to his architectural endeavors, was growing increasingly tired of city life and yearned for the quiet, beckoning lifestyle of the Town of Lake's St. Francis area. It had become familiar territory to him, and his entire family had spent considerable time there during both the construction of Henni Hall and the building of his cream city brick, two-story, Italianate-style farmhouse. Upon the home's completion, in 1860, the 49-year-old Schulte retired and he, his wife and six children settled into their country abode.

Despite a lack of written records, Schulte is considered to have designed his house, owing to the fact that certain of the home's characteristics distinguished it from similar designs, indicating the style of an architect.

The house had a central wing to its rear, and nine large windows on its south front in addition to six large ones on its east and west sides, an unusually excessive number of windows for a dwelling of its size.

Schulte's dwelling also had a studio balcony in the rear from which he could walk directly onto the hillside. However, this feature of the house was lost when the Chicago and North Western Railroad ran its right of way directly through the

OOPS — WE GOOFED!!

In the **Lake Band** article in our last issue, it was reported that the Lake Junior Band changed its name to Lake Cadets in 1987. Actually, according to Lake Band parent Carol Roge, the name was first changed to Lake Band Cadets in 1977, and shortened to the present title of Lake Cadets about 1980. Thanks, Carol, for setting us straight!



Schulte farm which forced him to move the house to a lower position on the east side of the small hill, which turned out to be its last location, on the northwest corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Norwich Street.

The house once received a direct hit from lightning, in 1877, knocking off the chimney to its base, splitting several roof rafters and tearing off shingles on both sides down to the eaves. The house survived the blow, however, and was repaired.

Schulte grew, in spite of his middle age, to enjoy the simple pleasures of farming. He was also a cultured man who in later years spent much of his time going through his library of classical literature.

Schulte died in 1890 at the age of 79, and his son, Adolph, took charge of the family farm. However, Adolph, who had nine daughters, abandoned the farm early in this century for the more lucrative (and presumably less burdensome) prospect of running a general store in St. Francis.

The Schulte farmstead was eventually sold and changed hands several times, finally being purchased by Dittmore-Freimuth Corp., who used the now deteriorating old home as a warehouse for a period of time.

Finally, in 1974, the City of St. Francis Building Inspector ordered the Schulte house to be restored or razed. The latter option was chosen and the St. Francis Fire Department used the structure extensively as a practice site for putting out fires before a bulldozer finally leveled it. Another home has been built on the Schulte site.

It seems fitting that a beloved architectural achievement such as Henni Hall, which is included in the U.S. Registry of Historical Places, should be designed and built by a man who grew to love the area in which it stands and who chose to live the 30 remaining years of his life there. Victor Schulte was just such a man, and his life and accomplishments deserve a rightful place in the annals of St. Francis and Old Town of Lake area history.

Author's Note: See the "General Meeting" notice on the front page of this newsletter for the date and time of our society's tour of Victor Schulte's recently restored Henni Hall!

the 28 subs made in Manitowoc during the war, placed along the riverwalk adjacent to the submarine *Cobia* at the Manitowoc Maritime Museum.

More than 30 bird's eye views of Wisconsin communities - from as large as Milwaukee to as small as Darlington and Elroy, plus related paintings, photographs, posters and artifacts - are on view through November 26th at the J. C. Radell Family Gallery of the State Historical Museum on Madison's Capital Square. Geraldine Strey and Howard Kanetzke curated the show for SHS of Wisconsin.



Restoration will begin soon on **Frank Lloyd Wright's** famed Romeo and Juliet windmill located at his home, **Taliesin**, near Spring Green. The windmill, the earliest surviving structure designed by Wright on the Taliesin property, was built in 1897 to provide water for Hillside Home School, a co-educational boarding school run by his aunts. The restoration project is the first of several planned at Taliesin, a complex of buildings situated on 600 acres and owned and operated by the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation. Wright died in 1959 at the age of 90.



The **Bay View Historical Society** presented awards to four Bay View High School students for essays pertaining to historical topics on Bay View at the awards ceremony in the school's auditorium on May 31st. First prize (\$100) went to Hue Tran, second prize (\$50) went to Michelle Buchs, third prize (\$25) was awarded to James Schneider, and Paul Kutz received fourth prize (\$10). Abstracts of the winning essays will appear in future issues of the Society's newsletter, **The Historian**.



The one-millionth visitor to **Old World Wisconsin** walked through the gates on Saturday, May 20th. He was 10-year-old Jason Reinholz of East Troy, a Civil War history buff. Old World Wisconsin opened in June 1976.

Vivian Guzniczak of Franklin was re-elected to the Presidency of the **Wisconsin Trust for Historic Preservation** at a June Board of Directors retreat in Wausau. She begins her third year as head of WTHP. The Trust has endorsed the plans of Alan Pape of Greenbush for the development of a rural heritage trail, designed to identify and protect the state's diverse rural architecture, including the rich, ethnic area of I-43 in Eastern Wisconsin. More details will be offered in subsequent WTHP newsletters. For further details, write the trust at P.O. Box 32002, Franklin, Wisconsin 53132. WTHP has publicized the following events:

- **October 24** - Preservation Day, State Capitol, Madison. An opportunity to meet and talk with state legislators on preservation issues.
- **November 2, 3** - Design Conference, "Guiding Design on Main Street" co-presented by WTHP and the National Main Street Center, Hotel Pfister, Milwaukee.
- **November 4** - WTHP Quarterly Meeting, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Hotel Pfister, Milwaukee.
- **February 9 & 10, 1990** - WTHP Quarterly Meeting, Wisconsin Rapids.



The owners of Wisconsin's 150 Bed and Breakfast Homes and Inns have joined together to establish their own statewide organization called **Wisconsin Bed and Breakfast Homes and Historic Inns**, for the purpose of promoting the philosophy of bed and breakfast lodging in Wisconsin. The group's first step was the publication of a brochure listing 93 of the state's Bed and Breakfast names and historic inns, many of which operate from elegant, historic homes and furnished to reflect their original grandeur. The brochure was scheduled to be available at state-line waysides by mid-June and through the Wisconsin Department of Tourism's toll-free number: 1-800-TRIP. For membership information on the new group, contact Dan and Loretta Zimmerman, 700 West Main Street, Merrill, WI 54452.



1989-1990 DATES TO REMEMBER

- October 4** Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Thompson School
- October 14** Milwaukee County Historical Society
Regional Convention
Turner Hall - 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- October 18** Thompson School
50th Anniversary Open House
Time to be announced
- October 21** Thompson School
50th Anniversary Rededication
Time to be announced
- October 29** Open House at Henni Hall
at St. Francis Seminary
as guests of the school. Open to all
society members and friends. Come see the
new remodeling and restoration work
that the school is so proud of
1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
- November 1** Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Thompson School
- November 5** Arts and Crafts Show
St. Francis Community Center
11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- November 11** Wisconsin Council on Local History
Annual Convention, Madison
(place and time to be announced)
- January 3** Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
Thompson School
- January 29** Annual Membership Meeting
St. Francis Community Center, 6:00 p.m.
Potluck Supper (Program to be announced)

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