

Germantown Historical Society **Newsletter**



INCORPORATED – 1974

AUGUST, 2024

From the GHS President Jim Dix

The summer of 2024 has been a wet one with regular periods of rainfall. Our local plants and crops have grown abnormally large and vibrant. Here at Dheinsville our spirits have not been dampened. We continue to have local visitors, as well as from more distant locations like Thiensville or even the State of Maryland. Whether their interests are genealogy or general history, we aim to help them see and learn new things here at our 3 museums and resource center.

In mid-July the GHS held its 50th Anniversary Biergarten event. The weather was hot and humid, but it did not rain. The turnout was lighter than Oktoberfest, but those who attended had a pleasant afternoon visiting and reminiscing about past experiences. The beer and brats were provided from Old Germantown Brewery and Sausage Shop and the music by the Ryan Kautzer Band. In the gazebo we continually showed a slideshow with many old pictures of events during the GHS's last 50 years. Antique farm equipment was on display by Lavern Schmitz, and vintage artifacts were displayed by Al Dobberfuhr and the Charles and Oliver Schowalter families. All three museums were open free of charge. Bill Gay spoke about his memories of working with Irene Blau, and he reminded us that her spirit is still being kept alive here at Dheinsville Historical Park. Another special guest was Alan Pape who shared his experience at Old World Wisconsin with us and talked about the significance of our own 1854 half-timber Wolf Haus and Cobbler Shop.

Soon the bell tower entry to the Christ Church Museum will have a new display. We have been working on creating a timeline of the main events in the history of the Christ Church building and congregation from 1842 to present. Professional designer Cynthia Arbiture is putting the finishing touches on the display, and we hope to have it in place by Oktoberfest. Included in this newsletter is an article about the timeline.

Our next future project involves the 1975 wooden storage shed attached to the rear of the original 1862 limestone Christ Church building which is now used as a Museum of Local History. The rear wooden structure needs some repairs, but we are hoping to replace it with a slightly larger structure to improve the display area for our farm artifacts from the 1800's. We are hoping to take advantage of two very unique and timely opportunities to turn this space back into the 1800's. We may have access to repurposed original 1899 barn boards from the Schottler family homestead, and repurposed original 1850's log cabin materials from the Loos family homestead in Germantown.

The congregation's first two buildings were log cabins in 1842 and 1850. The existing 1862 stone building had a wooden structure in the rear that would have used materials like the authentic original homestead materials we may have access to. The GHS is still in the process of obtaining the special permits required to proceed, and we need to cover the estimated costs of around \$60,000.

If in any way you would like to help, please give me a call to discuss it, or send me an email.

Jim Dix, cell phone 262 853 1953, email ghsjdix@gmail.com

PICTURES FROM THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY BIERGARTEN



Alan Pape was instrumental in restoration of The Wolf Haus



Bill Gay worked with Irene Blau on the GHS History Books and many other tasks

Laverne Schmitz and his grandchildren exhibited antique farm implements





Rex Milius Cemeterian demonstrated in the Cemetery behind Christ Church

Sandy Hug, Oliver Schowalter's daughter, and Charles Schowalter exhibited farm artifacts



Ryan Kautzer Band entertained the crowd

Germantown history and genealogy.....

By Mary Herrick, Volunteer Genealogist

Evangelisch Kristus Kirche † *Christ Ev. Church*

The History of Christ Church Through the Years

The families who formed the congregation:

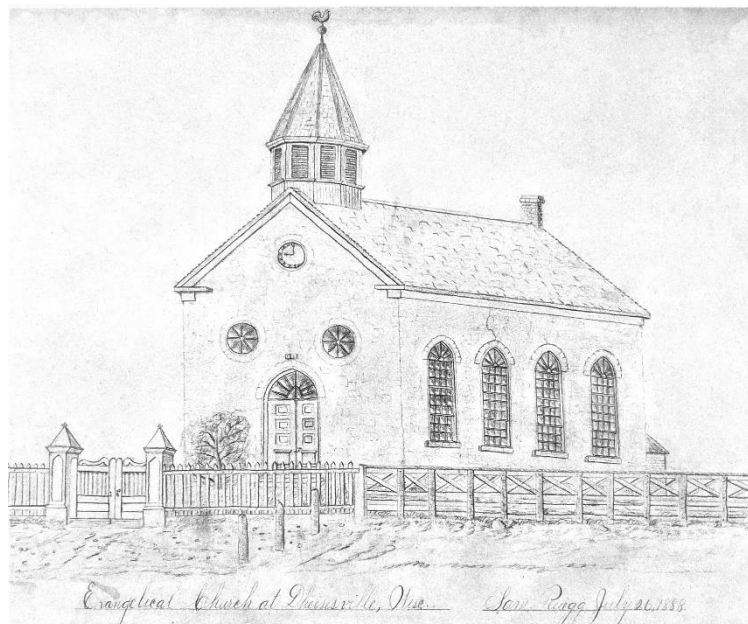
Bast, Boeker, Caspar, Dhein, Dix, Gerhard, Hoeltz, Henrich, Konrad, Kraetsch, Klumb, Rheingans, Schowalter, Sinz, Staats, Strack, Wasmuth, Weimer and Wetterau

1842 Evangelical Christ Church congregation was founded by Philipp Dhein, William Wasmuth and Andrew Wetterau. Rev. Christian Schmidt was the first Pastor. He traveled from Milwaukee to hold services once every four weeks in a one room log cabin. Christ Church is one of the oldest congregations in Washington County in the Territory of Wisconsin.

1850 In the 1850's due to the increase of settlers, a larger church was needed. The parcel of land was donated by Philipp Dhein. It included acreage on this location for the church and cemetery.

1861 In the early 1860's the existing church was constructed of limestone from the Rockfield quarry.

Picture drawn by
Samuel G. Ruegg, son of
Pastor Casper and Amelia
Ruegg



1868 The Rev. Casper Ruegg became pastor of Christ Church and served this community for 47 years.

1888 The existing bell tower was added to the church. The ringing of the bells at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday evening continues as a tradition to welcome the sabbath.

Pen and ink drawing by Irene Blau, Founder of the Germantown Historical Society.



1895 The congregation splits and Pastor Ruegg resigned to start Zoar Evangelical Church.

1898 New parsonage was built

1901 New pulpit, altar and pews were acquired, and plaster added over stone walls.

1914 The Ladies Aid donated the stain glass windows.

1925 Electric lights were installed in the church and parsonage.

1927 Services in English began on every second Sunday of the month.

1962 Last service was held at Christ Church. The congregation merged with Our Saviour's United Church of Christ.

Congregation's Pastor over the years

1842-1850	Rev. Christian Schmidt
1851-1857	Rev. Ernst Fleischer
1857-1864	Rev. William Binner
1864-1867	Rev Joseph Eishenbauer
1869-1895	Rev. Caspar Ruegg
1895-1896	Rev. Niefer, Pastor after Rev. Ruegg started Zoar Ev. Church
1896-1960	Various short-term Pastors
1960-1962	Last Pastor until church closed Rev. James Westpfahl

1974 The Germantown Historical Society is formed with Irene Blau as President. The Society leased the church for \$1 and restored the interior to be used as a museum.

1976 The church was open to the public as a museum with artifacts which tell the history of Germantown and its early settlers.

1983 Christ Church was placed on the National Register of Historic Places

2012 The church interior was refurbished and painted to closely resemble the original colors.

2023 The exterior of the ten stained glass windows were restored.

Over the last 50 years the church has been maintained and updated to retain its original character and history. This has been possible because of the generous donations from the members of the Society and the Community of Germantown.



Betty Fuller (left) passed away June 16, 2024 She is seen here with her sister Shirley Schowalter (right).

These sisters' grandmother was part of the Ladies Aid who raised the money to install the original stained-glass windows in Christ Church in 1914. Betty and Shirley made a substantial donation for the recent restoration of these windows.

If there is an Oktoberfest in heaven, I'm sure Betty and Shirley would be found there.



Robert's Frozen Custard Booster Night

N112 W16040 Mequon Road, Germantown

Tuesday, September 24th, 4-8 pm

**Percentage of proceeds to go to GHS
Christ Church restoration project**





July 16, 2024 the Germantown Historical Society received a Washington County Tourism Grant of \$10,000 to assist in our Biergarten event and our Oktoberfest event. Present at the presentation were Board Member (BM) Judy Bast, Supervisor Jodi Schulteis, BM Mary Bykowski, Supervisor Carroll Merry, BM Barb Lutz, BM Marge Miller, BM Phil Fritsche, BM Peggy Bast, and BM Jim Dix. Taking the photo was BM Sue Dix and absent was BM Fritz Gierach.

THANK YOU Washington County for your support!!!

July 24, 2024 Sue and I welcomed the Peter and Gloria Dhein family to Dheinsville. They had travelled from



Seibersbach, Germany and were touring parts of America. Of course, they insisted on seeing Dheinsville where Johann Philip Dhein settled in 1842 along with several other families from Seibersbach. Their visit at the park and museums lasted several hours, and then we ate lunch at Old Germantown and sampled some of our local beer and pizza.

After being refreshed we visited Holy Hill where the more adventurous climbed the tower for a terrific view of the area. It was a clear and beautiful day, and we could see all the way to Milwaukee and beyond. Later we were joined by Brian Dhein and some of his family at our home for a relaxing backyard barbeque and more local beer. This day will never be forgotten, and we wish the Dhein family safe travels in America.

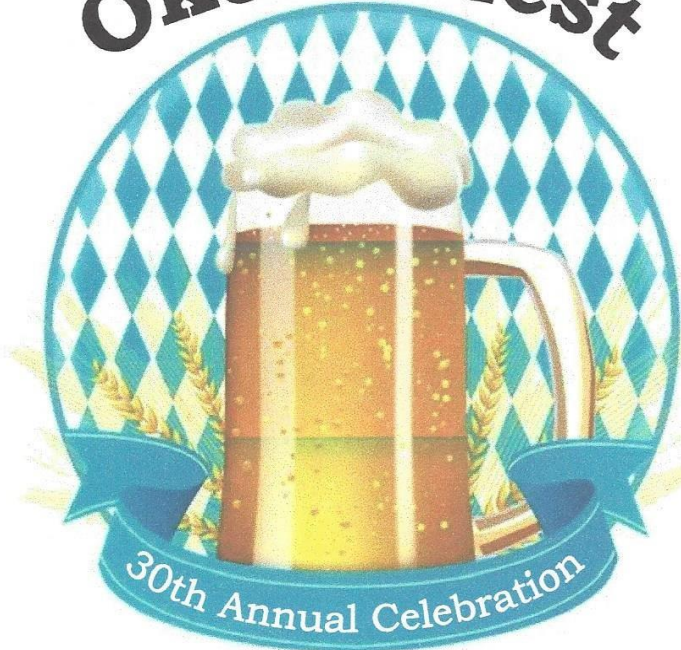
Saturday & Sunday
September 28 & 29
2024

Germantown Oktoberfest

Held at Dheinsville Historic Park
N128W18780 Holy Hill Road
Germantown, WI 53022

**FREE
ADMISSION**

**FREE
PARKING**



Including
locally
made
beer from
Old Germantown



Hosted by the
**Germantown Historical
Society**

Great family fun!



Authentic
food and
drink!

Sponsored by
Window World



Supported by
**Village of Germantown
Tourism Funds**



Don't miss the **Dachshund Dash**
at 3:00 pm, Saturday.

DANKE IHNEN SEHR --- THANK YOU 2023 SPONSORS

2023 Thank You! to our Sponsors

Oktoberfest Presenting Sponsor
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 Window World of South East Wisconsin
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WASHINGTON COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY ALL THEY NEED IS YOU.	WISCONSIN BREWERY	LEE N-4-107 Lattitudes Cafe	MEDULLA Medulla Chiropractic

2024 Dates to Remember:

June 5 - Wolf Haus Open for the Season, Wednesdays 1-4 pm

June 5 - Bast Bell and Church Museums Open by Appointment; or dates to be determined

September 24th – Robert’s Frozen Custard Booster Night, 4-8 pm

September 28 & 29 - 2024 Oktoberfest – 30th Anniversary

September 30 — Wolf Haus, Bast Bell and Church Museums Close for the Season

The Wolf Haus & Genealogy Research Center will be open on Wednesdays from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm from June 5th thru September 30th

The Bast Bell Museum and Christ Church Museum of Local History can be toured during Wolf Haus Museum hours, inquire there. Also, groups are welcome to tour all three museums by appointment.

We Hope to See You
