

# Germantown Historical Society Newsletter



INCORPORATED - 1974

3RD QUARTER 2010

## GERMANTOWN OKTOBERFEST!

SEPTEMBER 25 & 26, 2010

FESTIVAL & PARKING FREE!

½ off Bast Bell Museum admission with  
canned food item 1-4 pm Sat & Sun of the Festival only.

Dheinsville Historic Park  
N128 W18780 Holy Hill Rd, Germantown, WI  
(Holy Hill Rd, Hwy 145 & Maple Rd.)

German Music & Dancers  
Great Authentic Food  
Silent Auction both days

2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dheinsville Dachshund Dash

Robert's Custard Social

Inflatable for Kids

Kids Pumpkin Painting & More!

Sunday Bake Sale

Gift Haus for Souvenirs

WI Power Reunion Tractors & Classic Cars

Genealogy Research Sat & Sun 1-4 pm

### SILENT AUCTION ITEMS & BASKET SUPPLIES

Please Drop Off ANY supplies/items at museum.



Can you work a 4 hr shift?

**TEEN/ADULT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Setup Friday, Festival Sat. & Sun,

Grounds Clean Up Thurs, Fri, & Festival Sat AM

Call Kevin Nash at 262-227-7908 to be scheduled.

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25 Noon – 10 PM**

12:00 – 3:00 pm Music Vendors

3:00 – 4:00 pm Dheinsville Dachshund Dash (To support  
the Midwest Dachshund Rescue [www.mwdr.org](http://www.mwdr.org))

4:00 – 6:30 pm Austrian Express

6:30 – 7:00 pm Pommersche Tanzdeel Freistadt

7:00 – 10:00 pm Copper Box (Sponsored by Homer's Towing)

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 Noon – 8 PM**

12:00 – 3:00 pm Julida Boys

3:00 – 3:30 pm Pommersche Tanzdeel Freistadt

3:30 – 7:00 pm River City Blaskapelle



### ATTENTION BAKERS!!

Bakers Wanted to help make our  
bake sale at Oktoberfest the best!  
Goods can be packaged whole or  
individually. For more information  
to call 262.628.3170. THANK  
YOU!!

### 2<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL DHEINSVILLE DACHSHUND DASH

Dheinsville Dachshund Dash supports the MidWest Dachshund Rescue

**Grand Prize:** One Year Supply of Fromm's Dog Food

Registration: \$10 per dog accepted up to 2:00pm race day.

Dog Raffle both days...Drawings at 5:00pm Sunday  
(Do not need to be present to win.)

Forms online or Call Sandi at 262-305-7399.

NEW this year – a donation kennel will be set up. We are hoping  
that everyone might each bring an item for the kennel. All items  
collected will be donated to MWDR for the fosters. You can see  
the items most needed by visiting [www.mwdr.org](http://www.mwdr.org). Items  
usually needed include collars, leashes, flea/tick preventative,  
gift cards for Petco/PetSmart, Nature's Miracle, potty pads, toys..

## OKTOBERFEST UPDATE

Hello everyone, just a quick note to give you an update on our festival.

The Germantown Fire Dept. Auxillary Inc. will once again be hosting our children's area.

Since our last newsletter we have surpassed last year's total for sponsorship money. Thanks in large part to Pick N Save for their generous gift. This will allow us to have a larger tent for the music/bar area.

New for this year will be Wisconsin Deep Fried Cheese Curds. They will be located right next to our potato pancake wagon, in the food court area. The wagon will be in it's permanent position on a new concrete slab. Special thanks to Glenn Guenther and his crew for donating all of the labor to make this happen.

Some added seating will be in place at the Dachshund Dash area. A second set of bleachers has been made available by the Germantown Park & Rec Dept. (Thanks Brett A.) You are welcome to bring your own lawn chairs.

If anyone has any ideas or want to Volunteer, please contact Jeff Dhein or the Society headquarters.

**P.S. Remember this is our largest fundraiser of the year, so come early, stay late, and help us raise some major geld.**

## DONATIONS

Thank you to the following for donations in support of the Germantown Historical Society:

- Jamie Thorson
- Gladys Muehl
- James Neu
- Ruth Ackmann

Thank you and congratulations to Life Church, who donated \$1000 and are celebrating their 10th Year Anniversary.

Thank you to Bill Wetterau for the donation received in memory of James McCaffrey.

Thank you to Carolyn Preber for her donation to Genealogy.

## HISTORICAL PRESERVATION

Congratulations to the Germantown Historical Society for achieving historical preservation status on the Christ Church and the Valentine Wolf Homestead!

Please join us on Saturday, Sept. 25 at the opening of Oktoberfest for the presentation of the plaques.

The Wolf Haus and Christ Church are on the growing list of Germantown Historical Preservation Commission sites. To view other local sites, visit the Village of Germantown website link to the Germantown Historical Preservation Commission.

If you know of any local site that would like consideration, contact Mary Brownell at (262) 677-3177 or attend a meeting at the Village Hall at 6:30 pm on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of every month.



A worker is shown above working on the cross at the top of the Christ Church in attempts to get it lighted once again. Unfortunately it could not be illuminated as it used to be, but thanks Bill Wetterau's ideas and work, the front of the church and cross are now lighted. Thanks for your help and dedication Bill.

## NEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERS

Welcome to the following new members:

- Germanic Genealogy Society
- Gerald Capelle
- Sandra Gissal
- Sue Justesen
- Harold & Lois Lutz
- Mr. & Mrs. James Ramthun
- Jean Murray
- James Neu
- Arleen Klug
- Marilyn Hagerstrand
- William Schlichting
- Julie Reichert



# Stories of Interest

## 30 year GHS member - Oliver Schowalter

Oliver Schowalter has been a board member for quite some time; in fact he can't quite remember how long. He joined the Germantown Historical Society approximately thirty years ago at the suggestion of a friend.



Oliver was born and raised in Rockfield and attended a one room school there. He has lived in Rockfield his entire life and one thing that hasn't changed is that Rockfield is still unincorporated.

He and his wife, Shirley, have been married for forty-eight years and have two children, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Oliver has worked at Liesner Top Soil for the last forty-nine years. Oliver is also a member of the Wisconsin Antique Power Reunion and a collector of antique tractors. His brand of choice is Oliver, of course! He has several Olivers and one Farmall B although only one of his

tractors is currently running. You can find Oliver at our Oktoberfest as well as local tractor shows with his impressive tractor display.

Oliver rings the bells at the Christ Church Museum of Local History each Saturday at 5:00 pm. He has been doing that for at least the last ten years although this is not the first time he has helped with ringing the bells. He used to ring them when his dad was the janitor.

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## Update on the Germantown Historical Society Season

The Germantown Historical Society has clearly seen the results of the sluggish economy, of people preferring to stay close to home, or home period. The visitors that we have seen prefer to visit our free museums, the Christ Church and the Wolf Haus on Wednesday and Sunday, rather than pay the entry fee for the Bast Bell Museum.

The good news is that we believe this is a temporary condition. It is also one that we feel we can manipulate by approaching groups that have a genuine interest in what we have to offer. It is also why the Society depends heavily on word of mouth, active and dedicated volunteers and the activity that has measurably impacted the majority of our visits.

The Museum Director has focused on public relations, membership and securing reliable volunteers to conduct tours, to greet guests and to help clean and organize the society's belongings and artifacts.

While tour numbers are down, the fact that there have been almost 50 press releases in the local paper and two interviews at the request of the Shepherd Express and The Examiner/My Community Now. The Examiner Editor noticed that the Germantown Historical Society was getting lots of press and he wanted to know why? Why was the Historical Society suddenly so active?

The two interviews generated many drop in visits and comments to past president Irene Blau when she was out and about. Coupled with the consistent press releases and the activity on Social Networking, (Face Book, Twitter and Foursquare), the interviews gave a great deal of credibility to the Germantown Historical Society and its recent outreach to the community.

It seems that the public relations blitz has hit its mark. Visitors have said they saw the articles in the paper and "just had to visit". Also mentioned many times is the AAA Travel Guide. In these difficult economic times, it is important that we reach the most appropriate audience with the least cost possible. Therefore the press releases, the online communication and the word of mouth are our best to survive the economic times.

Our database for tour operators is a bit outdated and the harsh times have actually caused many of them to close their doors. Consequently, we have focused on local nursing homes, extended care homes, assisted living centers and senior apartments. Scouting groups are now booking for fall meetings and a scavenger hunt in and around the Christ Church at dusk.

These are tough times and we are doing the best that we can. Slow but sure wins the race and the attempt to build a strong foundation for the outreach and building of membership and interest in our tours will take time.

As members, your input is important.

What do you think will encourage interest in new members? Are there programs or fun events that you would like the Society to offer for members? (Remember, these will require volunteer time.....can you help us with any of your suggestions?).

Please give your feedback to Jane Riley Best @ [ghsmuseumdirector@gmail.com](mailto:ghsmuseumdirector@gmail.com)

We are also attempting to go green and deliver our newsletters and other announcements via email and Facebook, so your email information is vital, as it will impact the environment and also help us cut costs when it comes to mailings.

## The Birth of Dheinsville: Home of the 2nd Dheinsville Dachshund Dash

What would Johann Phillip Dhein and his wife Maria Magarita Klumb Dhein think of the nine acres of Dheinsville Settlement populated with what is considered to be the National Dog of Germany?

In August 1842, Phillip Dhein and his bride Maria purchased 800 acres in what we now know as Dheinsville Settlement. Johan Phillip the son of Phillip and Maria also accompanied them on their adventure with his young bride Catherine Elisabeth. Elizabeth's brother, Peter Sinz and her sister Katherina Maria and her husband, Peter Jacob Dix were also first among the Dheinsville settlers.

Peter Dix purchased 400 acres and eventually added another 240. Phillip and Maria Dhein purchased 240 acres and Phillip, Jr. and Peter Sinz each claimed 80 acres. Thus the Dheinsville Settlement was born.

The Settlement was conveniently located between the two thoroughfares to the army fort in Fon du Lac. The current highways 175 and Fon du Lac Ave both led to the fort. Fon du Lac Ave was considered the Indian Trail to Don du Lac. The area between these two roadways resembled the highly wooded land of their home in the Hunsrucker Region of Germany.

As pioneers to the area, the Dhein, Dix and Sinz families became acquainted with the local inhabitants: Indian tribes. There appears to have been harmony, as there are no tales to say otherwise. It seems to have been a peaceful cohabitation of what was to become the original business district of today's Germantown.

An addition to the Dheinsville Settlement was the Evangelische Kristus Kirsche (Christ Evangelical Church). Services were held in the schoolhouse, but community growth made it necessary to build a small log building and a parcel of land that Phillip Dhein Sr donated in the early 1850's. By 1861, the small log church was rebuilt of local limestone to accommodate the ever growing community. The church still stands and is the Christ Church Museum of Local History, one of the buildings operated by the Germantown Historical Society.

The Valentine Wolf Haus is across the street from Christ Church, on Maple and Holy Hill Roads. Valentine Wolf was a shoemaker who learned his trade in New York. Wolf bought 10 acres of land from Phillip Dhein and he and his wife Elizabeth Klumb raised 12 children in the tiny log home that also served as Wolf's workshop. Currently the Historical society uses the home as an example of an authentic settlement home. The Jeffris Genealogy Research Center is housed here as well.

The Germantown Historical Society has set a long range plan for Dheinsville Settlement. The dream of the Jeffris Research Center has been realized. The Society hope to accomplish many of the following with the continued help and support of community, society membership and the generous teamwork of the Village of Germantown. Historic plantings, orchards, a fully operational blacksmith shop (run as it was in 1875 by Phillipp Neidlein) flower gardens, vegetables, all with traditional plantings that would have been used by the original Dheinsville Settlers. An open meadow area that would host festivals such as the Hunsrucker Oktoberfest, craft fairs, games and sports would complete the 9 acres of the Settlement.

It is quite possible the Phillip Dhein, Sr and his wife Maria would be very pleased to see that their dream continues. The preservation of their Settlement, the celebration of Hunsrucker Germany and the Dachshund Dash are all part of a strong community. That is what the Dheins came here to build. It continues by the hard work of committed volunteers of the Germantown Historical Society. Especially proud they would be to know that a descendant has planned and put on a successful Oktoberfest for many years. Jeff Dhein would make his ancestors proud.



*Bast Bell Museum 10th Anniversary*

On June 30, 2010 the Sila Lydia Bast Bell Museum celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Since 2000, the Bell Museum has welcomed local visitors as well as those from as far away as Germany.

In 1998, the estate of Ernella Hunziker came to the attention of the Society. Hunziker was the niece of Sila Lydia Bast, from the Dheinsville/Germantown Bast Family. Hunziker's estate included the extensive bell collection of Sila Lydia Bast and was the inspiration for the restoration of the Wolf/Shuster Barn on the Historical Society property on Holy Hill Road at Maple.

The project first began with members of the Historical Society traveling to Hunziker's house in Whitewater where the bells were located to inventory and pack them to be stored until the barn restoration was complete.

To date, the restoration of the barn, including the raising of funds and the project as a whole, has been the biggest

challenge, as well as accomplishment of the Germantown Historical Society. Funds were used from the Hunziker Estate, a M&I Bank Loan, three year pledges, in-kind donations, financial donations and five years of Museum admissions and sales. The successful completion of this project shows what can be done when people work together for a shared goal.

The Bast Bell Museum has brought more visibility to the Historical Society and provided new direction for education and informational opportunities. The Bast Bell Museum hosts a Kaffee Haus the first Wednesday of each month. At 2 pm, the Bell of the Month program is led by an experienced and knowledgeable volunteer. Tours of large groups and individuals from all over the Midwest arrive and leave with a greater appreciation of not only bells, but the history of Germantown and our surrounding area.

Sila would be pleased to know that her lifelong collection of bells is being viewed by hundreds of guests each year.

## VISITOR FEEDBACK

Hi Jane. Thanks for the great tour of Dheinsville. The boys are still talking about ringing the bell. We missed a few buildings on the walking tour, so it's a good excuse to come back and visit again. We hope to make it to the Oktoberfest. We were waiting for Dylan's hockey schedule to come out. Hopefully he won't have hockey that weekend. Keep training Shelby. We would love to watch the race.

Thanks again Jane.

Daryl (& Lynn Dhein)

Hi Jane, Yes, we all enjoyed the tour very much. Your well informed staff made our visit so great. The stories behind the various bells, the history, and the church were so interesting. I have already recommended it as a place of interest to several people, and some that were there are already thinking about bringing their friends.

Hilda  
The Friendship Club

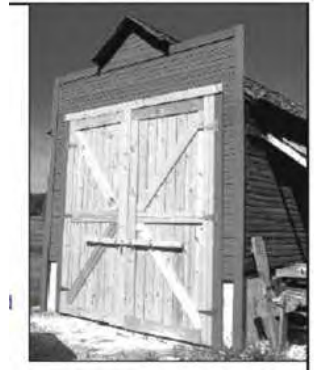
Hi Jane. We really enjoyed the afternoon and have told a lot of friends about the museum. Hopefully you will get some visitors from our friends. I am definitely considering coming with our HCE home makers group if they agree.

Thanks again for the great tour.

Judy and Mel Shafel

## FUTURE BLACKSMITH SHOP GETS NEW DOORS!

Thanks to Brett Altergott and the Village of Germantown Parks, Buildings & Grounds these doors were built and replaced this Spring after our existing ones were damaged and fell off the building this past winter.



The new doors are outstanding and will last for many years! This building is currently used for storage for our blacksmith artifacts. If you have time and would like to stop by and organize a setup for the public it would be appreciated.

If you have any blacksmith tools, artifacts, photos you can donate or historic stories to share, we could use them to make the area more appealing. Thank you!

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GERMANTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 31  
Germantown, WI 53022  
262-628-3170

# SUPPORT OUR 2010 OKTOBERFEST SPONSORS

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