FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

As I write this issue, the temperature is 13 degrees & the wind chill...well, let’s just say it’s COLD!!

We welcome Chris Farrell to our Board of Directors. Chris was elected @ our annual meeting in September, and replaces Kathy Gross who decided not to run for re-election. Chris has served as a board member & secretary in the past. Thank you, Chris, for saying “Yes.” Thank You, Kathy, for your dedication and hard work as a member of our board & it’s secretary. Your time & talents were much appreciated.

Jean Stedman was elected secretary. Thank you, Jean, for accepting this challenge.

Keep watch in the spring for a new outdoor sign @ the Museum. David Clark, who constructed the new porches @ the museum, has volunteered to rout the letters on cedar left over from the re-do of the building.

Any volunteers to paint the sign?

Due to changes in state regulations, we now have to pump the septic system @ the museum every three years. For that & other ongoing maintenance, extra donations to our maintenance fund are always appreciated.

Receipt upon request.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to all!

Olive Gross - gross622@gmail.com
920-563-4773

Board Members: Olive Gross, president; Matt Foelker, vice-president; Jean Stedman, secretary; Don Gross, treasurer; Chris Farrell, Ric Rowley & Elmer Keske, directors

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Next Board meeting - January 16, 7 pm at the Hebron Community Center. All are welcome.

Sunday, May 7, 2017 - Annual Pie Social
12 noon Barbeque lunch - 1 pm Pie Auction.
MARK YOUR CALENDARS! INVITE YOUR FRIENDS & RELATIVES. This is our major fundraiser for the year. It would be great to have 50-plus in attendance! Members are asked to bring @ least one pie.

Barrie Park Band Concert Ice Cream Social-TBA
Donations of pies or bars please.

CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE! (Bark River Woods Historical Society.) Like us, message us; read news of society happenings. Or, if you prefer, go to the Hebron Township Website -http://www.rmr-us.com/hebron & see society news posted.

Please consider a donation to our society’s Legacy Fund in honor of or in memory of someone special. A receipt for tax purposes will be provided upon request. The Legacy Fund is similar to an Endowment; we would like to build it up to at least $10,000 & use the interest toward funding our needs. Thank you for your continuing support.

T-SHIRTS FOR SALE! Help Promote our Society & Museum! Sizes S, M, L & XL, Forest Green with White Logo, $15.00 each. (XXL will be $20.) Place your order by phone or email. All orders must be prepaid.

We now have on display in the museum TWO cutters/sleighs! One is similar to a 1905-06 sleigh manufactured by the Northwestern Manufacturing Company, with it’s beginning roots in Hebron Township. This artifact is compliments of the Hoard Historical Museum, acquired in November of 2015.

The newest acquisition is a smaller cutter
made to order for Edward & Sophia Hilker, great-grandparents of Judy Reu, Dean Melcher & Susan Schultz, who had the sleigh restored for their mother Eva (Hilker) Melcher’s 90th birthday. She had many fond memories of riding in this sleigh as a young girl with her parents, Herman & Minnie Hilker. We are delighted to have this precious artifact added to our museum collection in November of this year!

We are also very grateful to Judy & Earl Reu for the many artifacts they have recently donated from family estates & the estate of Loris “Bunny” Westphal. Included in the donations are a concertina, cook stove, hand-made adult “potty chair”, kitchen items and more. Thank You!

All these items will be on display during our 2017 season, beginning on Sunday, May 7th with our pie social. Our entire upstairs hall has many new & exciting things that have been taken out of storage. Come and see!

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Memberships paid as of December 31, 2016 (for the 2016-17 membership year)
Individual - (10) - $30
Family- (15) - $180
Business - (25) - $25
Supporting - (50) - $150
Contributing - (75) - $75
Historian - (100) - $200

We welcome these new members:
Hebron Knights ATV Club
Sherry (Hebbe) Lethcoe
Clare & Darlene Sampley
Carl Zentner

If you missed sending in your membership, there’s still time! Membership amounts are listed above & can be mailed to: BRWHS, W4080 State Rd.106 E Fort Atkinson 53538. Checks payable to: BRWHS. Thank you for your support!

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WWII will be commemorated in 2017. We will keep you informed of what’s happening as planning continues among the societies in our area. We hope to have a display of artifacts, news clippings, pictures & other memorabilia for this special event. Our society has a very limited collection of these items. Does anyone have things they would be willing to lend for this project? Contact Olive @ 920.563.4773 or email gdo682@compufort.com.

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Our photo shoot with the 1905-06 sleigh saw four participants, all of whom have a unique Christmas card this year! This project netted a profit of $100. Thank you, Ric Rowley, for your expertise & hard work in setting up & taking the photos (very professional!) to Kelli Rowley for her assistance to husband Ric, & to Jean Stedman for helping with the sleigh decorating.

Deepest Sympathy is extended to the family of Sam Kuykendall who passed away recently. He was a life member of our society.

The editor welcomes any news from members, as well as memories of past events,
people, businesses, etc. for sharing in this newsletter.
Items can be e-mailed to: gross622@gmail.com or sent to: BRWHS, W4080 State Rd. 106, E. Fort Atkinson, 53538. Please put “ATTN: Newsletter”
Be sure to include any credits if it’s something that you copied.

Notes ‘N News From the Past

The following is a letter written to Mary Hoard, wife of William D.Hoard, from Frank Brewer:

"Dear Mary,

Are you really looking for ancient houses? (in our town), I mean? The house we live in was once a livery barn, built sometime in the early 1840’s. It stood back from where it now stands, near Bark River. Later it served as a local post office and still later as a storage house for grain and what not.

Sometime between 1850 and 1855 my great, great grandfather (Sylvester Miner) and his son, (James Barzil Miner) bought the place from John Powers, moved the barn up to the street and made a house of it. Both Sylvester and James Miner migrated to Hebron from Unadilla county, New York.

My grandmother, Josephine Miner, was married here to Franklin Bradley Brewer, a country school-teacher (according to Jefferson county records, known as “teacher Brewer”). The house has been in possession of my family, except for a few years, ever since. Seven generations of my family have “slept here.”

When Annie Laurie and I bought the home back from the temporary owners, there were no windows in the second floor. It had been a hay-mow. The well in the back yard contained a ledge on which milk and butter were kept cool. There were no facilities except for electricity with which the house had been equipped somewhere along the line. It is, without a doubt, the oldest standing building in the Hebron community, except, possibly the Oddfellows’ Hall, two doors to the east, and now occupied by John Masters.

“Sincerely,
(S) Frank"

From Frank Brewer to Jeanette Telfer,
September 10, 1980:

“...Regarding the cement slab in the backyard: it is the cover over a supplementary dry well which is connected with the main dry well at the rear of the garage, by a line of tile extending diagonally across the lot. The vent should be apparent unless the mowers have destroyed it. The last time I looked it over it appeared to be operating. (As it turned out, however, I think it was an unnecessary piece of precaution.)”

Some other historical facts about “the Brewer house” gleaned from Frank Brewer and written (perhaps by Jeanette Telfer?):

“Things you should know about basement (of the Miner house“)

“This building was constructed in the early
1840’s well back on this land. ...it’s main support is by 2 spliced 12x12 hand hewn oak beams. The splice is made so it expands and contracts. Some bark is still on beams which are over 100 years old. And very solid yet. (The floor had not sagged more than 8-10 inches when the Brewer’s rebuilt.)” The foundation is very solid with field stone and brick.”

“In about 1852 Sylvester Miner, his wife Elsie Wood Miner, their son James B.(and) his wife Arminda, daughter Josephine, along with the second son William H. (his) wife Belinda and daughter Mary migrated to Hebron. They purchased the house from Joseph Powers and moved the barn to its present location with the help of H.A. Robbins and converted it into a residence.”

“Frank bought the home in 1945 and rebuilt it in 1948. At that time they found the floor was dirt hardened to the likeness of concrete and there was evidence of its former occupants’ occupation. Shavings & remnants of lumber from Barber Miner’s ship building & decoy making.”

“Shelves lined the walls with scores of empty fruit jars and even dehydrated remains of Aunt Ida Hayes’ numerous cats. (Aunt Ida died here.) Frank’s grandmother Josephine told him that Blackhawk’s main route north when he was being pursued by American troops followed the Bark River right across the very land where the Miner house now stands.”

More interesting facts from Frank:

“At the time of our purchase of the home from Daisy Noyes, it had been occupied by Vic Westphal but no improvements had been made and it stood just as it had at Aunt Ida’s death... The second floor consisted of six small rooms with no real windows...light was furnished by several narrow slits cut into the sides of the building (and glazed) in the first few inches of space between the sloping roof and the floor of what, after all, had been the haymow.”

“The east half of the first floor contained three rooms-a small front parlor (...in which Mark Curtis, town clerk, conducted the inquest over the body of James B. Miner following his accidental death at the Hebron Mill on the morning of April 6, 1894,) a second room...for storage and the dining room in the rear where my great grandmother Miner, a stoic and stout hearted woman was sitting with the places set for their breakfast when her husband’s body was carried into the house was said to have remarked as she picked up his plate,” Jim will not be needing it.”

“The west half of the first floor consisted of a front bedroom, a very small second bedroom (the room I am told my father was born in on June 22, 1863,) a large pantry, and the kitchen...”

“The first memories I have of the old place were visits in the fall of the year during hunting season. We were living in Fort Atkinson...where my father had moved the family from Chicago and had established his office as a practicing physician. We would drive out to Hebron where he and Uncle Barber Miner would do their hunting, at the Big Marsh, I suppose.”

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EARLY PIONEERS IN HEBRON AS LISTED BY JAMES BROWN, life member of our society. He is descended from the following:
**Charles Caesar Brown** - 1836-1908,
Wife- Caroline M. (nee Jones) Brown - 1838-1894

Sons: **George Washington Brown** - 1861-1923
Wife-Lucy Jeanette (nee Eales)

Brown

**Charles Edward Brown**
Wife-Anna (nee Eales) Brown

**William Brown**
Daughter-Cora Brown died 1894

Dennis DeWitt Brown
Samuel Brown
James Brown
Ida Brown married Ed Sergeant

**Thank you, Mr. Brown, for this information. Genealogy is an important part of history!**