

TOMAHAWK AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

18 E. Washington Ave., PO Box 655, Tomahawk, WI 54487

tomahawkhistoricalsoc.org • facebook.com/TomahawkAreaHistoricalSociety/
715-966-4801 • Highlights 2024

OLD KINDERGARTEN REUNION

2024 saw a new event – A reunion July 5, 2024, for former students of the Old Kindergarten Schoolhouse which now serves as our primary museum. The building was constructed in 1888 and served as a school until 1970. More than 90 alumni, who came with family and friends, stopped by to share memories, view special displays, look for themselves in class pictures and yearbooks, and reunite with friends. People listed their homes from throughout Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and Illinois, as well as Texas, Florida, California, Pennsylvania, Alabama, Tennessee, Arizona, South Carolina, and even British Columbia, Canada. Donna Smerz was from the Class of 1937 and Betty Raveret, Class of 1939, with students from every decade thereafter until the school closed. Most visitors had Mrs. Mullin as their teacher. Another former teacher and historical society board member, Terry Derleth, helped plan the event and was on hand to greet some of her former students. In all, about 150 people toured the museum and enjoyed the day.



Above: Elaine Koth shares some information with Ed Nystrom, an Old Kindergarten alumnus. Elaine has compiled a wealth of historical information that's on display at the museum. Elaine also was an Old Kindergarten student. Left: Former students look at class pictures and yearbooks at the reunion.

KEEPSAKE MUG: 'I'M SO OLD..'

A special mug was created for the Old Kindergarten Reunion and beyond. It says: "I'm so old my kindergarten is now a museum!" It certainly was a big hit. Fun for anyone whether you went to kindergarten there or not, mugs will continue to be available for \$15 each. They can be mailed elsewhere. All proceeds go to the new museum project.



HELP US MAKE (PRESERVE) LOCAL HISTORY!

The Tomahawk Area Historical Society plans to build a new museum at its East Washington Ave. complex to house an irreplaceable collection of famous Tomahawk Boat Co. Boats (owned by Gene Winter) and an Antique Printing Shop (owned by Louie Heuser). The latter features a rare working Linotype, presses and Letterpress type and equipment. **This is an unique opportunity to preserve local history.** But it comes with a hefty pricetag. If you'd like more information or know someone who'd be interested, please share or contact us at PO Box 655, Tomahawk, WI 54487, email: kathyatobin@gmail.com, website: tomahawkhistoricalsoc.org. Tax deductible donations are sincerely appreciated. Can we afford to lose these community treasures?

BRATS! BRATS! BRATS!

The historical society held its share of **Brat Fries** this year, making use of the new Brat Hut at Trig's. In all, board members and volunteers manned the grill 12 different days, including a day at the Old Kindergarten Reunion site. Two events raised funds for the new museum, and the rest were for upkeep of current museums. Identified needs for the Old Kindergarten, in the near future, include foundation work, a furnace, and deck/ramp replacement. That means a lot more Brat Fries!



Tomahawk Loses Dear Friends, Historians

Our dear friend, long-time board president and local historian, **Dixie Zastrow**, 90, passed away April 11, 2024, after an extended illness. She and her husband, Andy, have been long-time supporters of TAHS and also were founding organizers of Yesterfest and Music on the River. She wrote and published three local historical books, two with Andy. She is dearly missed.



TAHS, and Tomahawk in general, lost another precious friend Sept. 15, 2024, with the passing of **Elaine Koth**, 85. She spent countless hours researching and putting together binders that traced the histories of Tomahawk building ownership. She also helped publish two books "Souvenir Views of Tomahawk, Wisconsin" and "The Story of Tomahawk's Saloons, Bootlegging, Taverns and Bars."



HISTORICAL NUGGETS

Earlier this summer **grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Wm. Bradley**, the founder of Tomahawk, were in town for a visit. We provided a tour of the city and museum. A most delightful and fun family.

In July, Tomahawk Main Street and the Tomahawk Area Historical Society hosted **TomaWalk**, a stroll down our historical streets to celebrate days gone by. "From comments, we felt it went well and would like to do it again next year," TAHS President Pat Pietila says.

In August, TAHS had a table at **National Night Out**, promoted by the Tomahawk Chamber. National Night Out features police, business and community partnerships with a variety of activities for the whole family. Next year's event will be Aug. 5, 2025.

TAHS is joining the celebration of the **150th Anniversary of Lincoln County**. There will be items in a Tomahawk Leader special edition. Bootleggers and oldest families in the Tomahawk area are some of the topics. The Keg farm story is amazing. Mac Winker shared the book with us. WJJQ also will be involved with trivia questions. The celebration will include a morning parade in Merrill Oct. 19. The museum will be open 9 a.m. to noon. There also will be geocaching.

To accommodate people who can't visit our museum during our limited hours, we hold special evening **Wine and Cheese Nights**. Teachers new to our school district were among the visitors Aug. 21. Our next event is from 4-7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 25. Please join us!

You may have heard of the **Shoe Drive** we're holding as a fundraiser for the new museum building project. A company in Florida pays us per pound for gently-worn shoes. It's a win-win. The shoes are then sent to developing countries. If more come in during these final days we could donate close to **5,000 pairs of shoes!** Trig's is the drop-off location.

We received a \$3,000 grant from the **Tomahawk Community Thrift Stop** for the new museum, and a \$525 donation from the **THS Class of 1969** following their 55th reunion. **The Grill**, a new restaurant on Hwy. 8, donated \$500 to the current museum for continued upkeep. An earlier \$5,000 grant from the Thrift Shop helped with current building repairs. Thanks so much for the needed support!

TAHS featured the Lake Ice Bear, Bill Sparr's Chevy Corvette Convertible and a walking "shoe," calling attention to our Shoe Drive in this year's **July 4 Parade**.

Bumper To Bumper in downtown Tomahawk graciously allowed window displays throughout the summer.

As we start thinking ahead to this year's **Hometown Christmas** events, thanks go to **Ed Nystrom**, who last year provided a tire for our featured celebrity, the Lake Ice Bear, and his pal, Tom Seavy, who rode along.

A kind, anonymous donor also provided **Tomahawk Area Historical Society T-shirts** to board members.