

Tidings of Joy: Holiday Events Recap Laura Ingalls Wilder Birthday Contributions What's the Hiawatha Trail? Spring Cleaning at the Stone House Museum 150 Years Since the Railroad Came to Princeton Steinbring Family Legacy : Generosity & History Remembering Gordon Debruin Tech Corner: Amazon Smile & Digitization Project Donations Generously Given Upcoming Events: Local History Lectures & More

Princeton Historical Society and Folklore Museum 630-632 West Water Street • PO Box 71 • Princeton, Wisconsin 54968 920-295-9008 • princetonhistsociety@gmail.com









Thank you to everyone who made it to our annual meeting on December 12th! It was sure nice to see you all. Our new and enthusiastic member Mike Goulet was unanimously elected to the Board- welcome Mike! He and his wife Chris Goulet have had a cabin in the area for several years, but have now moved here permanently. Special thanks to the The Pizza Factory for hosting us-- the dinner was great!

Over the holidays, we put on several fundraisers:

- Christmas cards with historical scenes donated by Louise Malter sold for \$2 each
- 10 handmade Christmas centerpieces were raffled
- We sold great hot food and tasty desserts to folks at the Holiday Bounty Craft Fair again this year during Christmas in Princeton. "Mrs. Claus's Kitchen" served cheesy potato brat soup, chicken or brisket sandwiches, loaded nachos, cake, pie, and cookies.

Thank you to all who helped us! We're always working hard to keep the museum going and preserve history.



A LITTLE HOUSE BIRTHDAY

On Saturday, February 5th, we helped provide some fun and education for the Laura Ingalls Wilder Birthday Celebration at the Princeton Public Library.

Laura Ingalls Wilder was a real person who wrote the beloved semi-autobiographical fiction books "Little House on the Prairie," "Little House in the Big Woods," "Farmer Boy," and many more.

We brought a dozen artifacts from Wilder's time for the public to see, so they could get a small taste of pioneer life. This included a spinning wheel, candle mold, double calf yoke, rug beaters, butter churn, scythe with wooden hay cradle, corn planter, and other objects. About 35 people attended this event, which also included a corn dolly craft, a reading from one of Wilder's books, and a presentation from teacher Sara Geisthardt about Wilder homesteads she has visited with her family. Laura Ingalls Wilder was born in Pepin, Wisconsin, where there is a re-created log house, representing Laura's1867 birthplace. The Little House Wayside, which is not furnished, can be visited any time. In Pepin, the Laura Ingalls Wilder Historical Museum is open May 15 through Oct. 15.

It is so important to teach kids about history. The best way to do this is not just through dates and facts, but with tangible artifacts and personal narratives that they can really relate to. We heard many comments at this event from kids who were glad they don't have to work as hard as their ancestors— or Laura Ingalls Wilder!



THE STEINBRING FAMILY LEGACY Generosity & History

Professor John ("Jack") and Sandra Steinbring have long been supporters of the Princeton and Ripon historical societies. Not so long ago, Jack did a series of lectures for our membership meetings that were as fascinating as they were well-informed.

Jack and Sandra also did two archeology digs in Princeton, one on the site of the former high school building (now the triangle parking lot) and one at the "Janes property," a residence on Short Street that was rumored to have been a part of the underground railroad. The papers documenting this dig as well as some of the findings (mostly pottery shards) were donated to our museum.

Sandra Steinbring passed away in September of 2019 at the age of 80, and her husband passed away soon afterwards in November 2019.



While we were aware that the couple had left us a gift in their will, we were unprepared for the reality of that fact. Recently, when the Steinbrings' affairs were totally wrapped up, we were stunned and deeply grateful to learn that these lifelong history lovers left us 3% of the proceeds from their estate in their will. We were not the only beneficiaries; locally, the Ripon Historical Society and Ripon American Legion Post 43 also received 3% each. Each of us will be receiving just over \$13,000. This amazing donation will be put to very good use in Phase II of our Folklore museum, where we plan to have a special memorial to the Steinbrings. We are extremely grateful to Jack, Sandra, and the Steinbring family as a whole.

Recollections of Princeton by John Steinbring, Written March 19, 2008

The following article was found in our archives, and we share it with you in memory of Jack.

The most memorable Princeton events to remain with me were the 4th of July and the Labor Day picnics. These took place at the west end of town on the St. John's Catholic Church grounds. People came from far and wide to attend these. I think there was food and beer enough to supply the whole state. At about age 10, I always went with my dad and mother and my uncle and aunt, and two of my cousins who lived on Green Lake Prairie. I lived in Ripon. There were droves of people, and lots of activities. Sometimes our parents would let us have just a tiny taste of beer in a very small glass. From time to time, these picnics were greatly enhanced by "Heine and His Grenadiers," a very smart German band from Milwaukee. Their uniforms were awesome; white with gold braid everywhere, and sharp military hats. They were a spectacle in themselves, but their music was positive inspiring; grand military marches, wonderful Straus waltzes, and, of course, polkas. These polkas seemed to be in the blood of all who attended; German, Polish, and even the Irish!

When the start of World War II came on, a great scare arose in the country. We were said to be infiltrated by Nazi spies, the "Fifth Column." So a German military band obviously became suspect. This ended that wonderful cultural phenomenon. But, if left me, and many hundreds of others who were children at the time, with a stirring memory that has never dimmed.

Consider Leaving Your Own Legacy

If you would like to leave a lasting memorial for yourself or a loved one, please consider donating to Phase II of our Folklore Museum. We can offer you a sort of semi-immortality (as well as immense appreciation!).

We can add your name to our permanent donor wall, or even name an entire exhibit in your honor with a tasteful, permanent plaque or portrait. Phase II of the museum will include exhibits on Princeton veterans, schools, pandemics and other disasters, Native Americans, outdoor pursuits (fishing, hunting, trapping), agriculture, the arts, communications, and civic groups (including the Women's Club, Rotary, Lions, etc). If you are interesting in sponsoring an exhibit, leaving us a gift in your estate planning, or making a donation, please contact us. We can help preserve your legacy for generations to come. **Contact us: princetonhistsociety@gmail.com** • 630 W. Water St. • PO Box 71 • Princeton, WI 54968 • **920-295-9008**



This large announcement in the Princeton Times was published on April 3rd, 1872 to celebrate the arrival of the railroad in Princeton. It was a momentous occasion for the city, allowing easy transport of passengers, agricultural products, store-bought goods, and cattle. The article reads:

150 Year Ago

THE RAILROAD CAME TO PRINCETON

S.&F.R.R!

The Iron Laid to Princeton

The Construction train reached the corporation limits on Wednesday, the 3rd of April The people of Princeton have a right to

BE GLAD AND REJOICE!

We have been shut out from the world 22 years, and the Sheboygan & Fond du Lac Railroad has opened the gate, and our people are invited to ride out and in at pleasure. The iron is laid, but it will take some time to get the road in order for Business.

When this is done, the people propose to have

A GENERAL GOOD TIME

And will extend to our neighbors an invitation to come in and rejoice with us. Of this, due notice will be given.

Remembering Gordon Debruin

We are deeply saddened to hear of the passing of longtime dedicated Historical Society member Gordon Debruin. He will be greatly missed.

Gordon dedicated many hours to helping us preserve history. He created scrapbooks and displays, helped oversee investments, and did a great deal of carpentry and "heavy lifting." Even in his later years, when he could have easily bowed out, he was always ready to roll up his sleeves. Gordon also helped forge some personal connections that make up the bedrock of our current board of directors. Truly, Gordon's life legacy proves that the humble actions of one man can make the world a better place in big ways.

Historical Society transforms



GORDON DEBRUIN, Princeton Historical Society volun-GORDON DEBRUIN, Princeton Historical Society volum-teer, checks a display of advertising pieces from the city's past. With many displays out for enjoyment, work contin-ues on the rooms of the society's second location at 1009 W Main Street W. Main Street.



SO CTON said Wick, "will a lot of things that we couldn't put out."

nation f hobsled was acquired by the Historical was acquired by the Historical Society, through funds obtained from the Hazel Spooner estate. Step inside the graceful build-ing, past the old-fashioned porch. a du

in 1865

and come face to face with three



On June 15th, 1982, our bylaws were officially passed by the first Princeton Historical Society Board. Stay tuned for a special newsletter edition featuring our origins and accomplishments over the last four decades. In the meantime, mark your calendars, we're putting on a totally rad event!

Where Were You in '82?" You're Invited to An 80s Themed Picnic Celebration of the Historical Society's 40th Anniversary

Sunday June 12th, Noon—3pm

at Princeton's City Park (flea market park) Help us celebrate our 40th year as the Princeton Historical Society! Bring a dish to pass and/or some meat to put on the grill.





920-295-9008 or princetonhistsociety@gmail.com **NEW FACES WELCOME!** We want YOU to join us! Bring friends, family, and strangers.



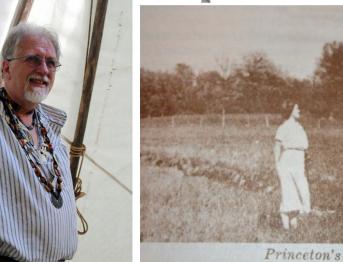
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WANTED:

1980s Pictures of Princeton People and Places for our newsletter, party, museum, and social media.



LOCAL HISTORY TRIP





Princeton's Legend of the Cross

Friday, May 6th

Do you love local history? You'll want to come with us!

Local legend Jerry Disterhaft will lead a car caravan to several sites around Princeton, and give a talk at each. We will meet at the Princeton Public Library and leave promptly at 4:30pm. Carpooling is available if you wish.

Stops will include:

- Site of former Village of Saint Marie, original location of St. Patrick's Church and Father Marquette's cross

- Five minute road and Mount Tom overlook
- Oak Grove School House
- Site of the former railroad station and sand pits
- Chief Highknocker's second burial grounds



Afterwards, Jerry Disterhaft invites all attendees to a potluck campfire dinner at his home on Huckleberry Road. This historical homestead is located on the Fox River, and Jerry will talk about the history of the land here as well as spring night sounds. Please bring a camp chair and dish to pass.

WHAT IS (OF WAS) THE HIAWATHA-PIONEER TRAIL?

One of our readers recently asked us this question, having seen the "Hiawatha -Pioneer Trail" on Google maps running right past Princeton's City Park. We decided to share our answer with you!

The 2,400-mile Hiawatha Pioneer Trail, touted as a tourist-promotion route, once traversed the states of Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Although called a "trail," the route only follows highways— including our highway 23/73. Each state was asked to identify sites that were significant in Native American or early European history to be highlighted on the route. The trail was dedicated by the governors of all



four states on May 15, 1964, connecting historic sites, scenic areas, natural features, state parks, and museums in the four states. The trail was originally only 2,070 miles, but was expanded in several areas.

Although the trail was officially endorsed by the four governors as a way to boost tourism and economic development in their states, establishment of the trail was actually the marketing brainchild of the American Petroleum Institute (API) and was a way to get more people to drive (and buy gas) on vacations. API was also behind establishment of the Lincoln Heritage Trail in 1961, and New England Heritage Trail and George Washington Heritage Trail in the east. The name "Hiawatha Pioneer Trail" was chosen because every state had pioneer heritage, and because "Hiawatha is the best known Indian named of the region..."



Wisconsin's trail had four sections: The Four State Trail, the Capitol Branch or Capitol Loop (also called the Madison Loop), the Northwoods Branch, and the Door Branch or Door Swing. Yellow road signs marked the route of the trail through all four states until the project was abandoned in the 1970s. Signs were then either removed or abandoned.

Locally, the highlights on the trail were as follows:

NEENAH-MENASHA — Best known of state's twin cities. Many paper mills, allied industries. Doty Island was meeting place for Indians, early explorers.

OSHKOSH—Once-famed lumbering town, then rail center, now industrial, trading community with excellent lakeshore park.

RIPON-Birthplace of Republican party with site on Ripon College campus.

GREEN LAKE—Deep water fishing, resort area; famed Lawsonia golf course at American Baptist center.

PRINCETON—Site of Mecan-Princeton canal built in 1850s. MONTELLO—Site of famed Montello granite quarry in center of town; popular fishing, resort area.

GLEN OAK-On Highway F south of Montello; now crossroads, community once boyhood home of famed Naturalist John Muir.

PORTAGE—Portage canal between Fox, Wisconsin rivers; Ft. Winnebago; Indian Agency House; Birthplace of Frederick Jackson Turner, famed historian.



Despite the fact that the trail is no longer officially recognized by states, it appears on Google maps as a series of unconnected segments.



On Saturday, Feb. 12th, lots of volunteers gave up their day off to clean up the Stone House. They painted, dusted, swept, hung curtains, arranged displays, washed windows, and in short, did all the spring cleaning they would have been doing at their own homes.



The Stone House museum is the original historical society museum. It is set up to represent a typical house from the 1940s. It contains artifacts from many local families donated over the years.

We'd like to have BOTH museums open to the public this summer, but we need volunteers to keep them staffed. Could you help us at least one Saturday per month? Please contact us! 920-295-9008 or email us at princetonhistsociety@gmail.com



THANK YOU to all those who have helped us get ready for opening!



Digitization Project Update

Lent.

"arriv."

Princeton.

wheat yet?



Efforts are continuing on this front, but another unexpected obstacle was thrown in our path. We need to get our newspaper scans "rescartified," a process of massaging the data so that it can be uploaded to the ResCarta software that will enable online searches. Librarian Laura Skalitzky wrote a successful grant request to the Winnefox Library System, which will cover the additional cost of \$3,153.

In the meantime, enjoy these excerpts from the March 13. 1879 issue of the Green Lake County Democrat. More pictures can be seen on our Facebook page.



Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad, RIPON STATION. Going South	Mrs. Sarah Measick has sold her res- idence in this village,opposite the Cong. church, to Mrs. Beaumont, daughter of Samuel Hayes, of St. Marie. The M. E. Society will hold their Social at the residence of the Rev. T. M. Ross, this (Thursday) evening. All are cordially invited to attend. Dr. DeVoe has leased the front room in the Radway building, and has moved his office thereto, thus bringing his office and residence under one roof. Assemblyman Barter is just as genial and pleasant, and waits on his custom- ers, the same as he did before he help-	
esday and Friday at 6 a. m., returning ame day.	ed to elect Matt. Carpenter.	
LOCAL MATTERS.	Tramps had better give Markesan the go-by in future. A huge tread-mill has	
A little cooler this morning.	been erected for their benefit. It runs	
OL. Russell is again at home.	a lathe in the blacksmith shop.	
The raging Fox is on a "high."	H. H. Harmon has built an extension	
Prof. Fricke's little boy is better.	to the rear end of his furniture store	
The ice is moving out of the river. Sewing machines for sale at this office.	this week. By-the-way HI. keeps the best furniture store in the county.	
S.of T.convention to-day at Westfield.	Markesan has a good Brass Band.	

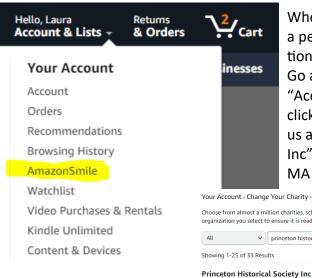
d Brass Band. We heard them "blow their horn" last Saturday. Geo. Dart seems to have a remarkably good lip for the bass-drum.

Our village election does not occur until after Town mee'ing this spring. The month comes in on Tuesday, and village election is the first Monday in April.

Tech Corner: Amazon Smile



Help us at No Cost to You! Use Amazon Smile When You Shop Online



Whenever you buy anything from Amazon, the company will donate a percentage of the cost of your purchase to a non-profit organization of your choice. However, you have to tell Amazon to do this! Go amazon.com and sign in. In the upper right hand corner, under "Account and Lists," look for "Your Account" and then further down, click on "Amazon Smile." Now you need to search for us and select us as your preferred charity. Search for "Princeton Historical Society Inc" and make sure you select the one in Princeton, Wisconsin, not MA or NJ! Thank you SO MUCH for doing this. Every little bit helps!

Select

Ham and eggs make a good diet for

The indications are that spring has

The Leadville fever has not yet struck

Wonder if Rourke has sowed any

Your Account - Change Your Charity - Search Result

Princeton, WI Historical Societies, Historic Preservation

Choose from almost a million charities, schools, and other nonprofits. We will reach out to the organization you select to ensure it is ready to accept donations from Amazon princeton historical society Search Sort by: Relevance 🗸

amazonsmile You shop. Amazon gives. Donations Generously Given 💏



So what does this thing actually do? It's an early anti-fraud device!

Handwritten checks could be easily altered by an unscrupulous payee looking for a larger payout. This machine ensured that such cheating was impossible, because it punched the dollar amounts through the paper itself!



Here is how it works. You push down on the thumb plate on the left side of the machine with the machine setting in front of you. This raises the check holder. You put the check in and release the thumb plate and that holds the check in place. You begin by using the \$ sign punch, then put in the dollar amount by pushing down on the wood handles that correspond with the correct numbers. The check automatically advances left with each punch. When done, you push the thumb plate down and remove the check. Talk about high tech!

Note: The image on the right is a slightly different model.

This amazing donation to our museum collection came from the Zodrow family. It is an early Automatic Bank Punch made by Brady Manufacturing of Brooklyn, New York. The last patent date shown is in 1885. Despite its age, and one missing knob, the machine is fully functional.

Over 22,000 of these were made and sold, but most of these went to government entities like the treasury, plus a few commercial banks.

Very few private businesses could afford one, as they sold for \$20—\$25, and it is estimated that as few as 1,000 were in public circulation.





Donations Generously Given 💣



Do you have any artifacts that you believe should be preserved in the museum? Contact us! We are planning many new exhibits for Phase II of the Folklore Museum. Some are: - Agriculture

- Service Organizations
- Schools and churches
- Pandemics and disasters
- Native American culture

The Mevis family kindly donated several artifacts recently, which will be used in our museum.

Left: One of two large streetlamp shades, in nearly perfect condition, came from downtown Princeton several decades ago. Reid Mevis, father of John Mevis, preserved them when the lights were replaced. They will be used in Phase II of our Folklore museum project to illuminate vignettes. Reid Mevis was the president of the Farmer & Merchants bank (taken over in later years by US Bank).

Below: This large metal shipping box once belonged to Lee Mevis, who who attended college at UW Madison in the 1960s. His parents would fill the container with "care package" items any college student today would appreciate— food, clothes, money, and personal supplies. Unlike a cardboard box, the shipping container could be reused hundreds of times without falling apart, shipped back and forth for years. The cost for delivery (still stamped on the package) was only 60 cents.





- Bonus History —

Our city's name has two possible origins. We may have been named after Princeton, Illinois, which was in turn named after Princeton, New Jersey, which was possibly in honor of King William III. Alternatively, we may be named after Princeton, Massachusetts, which was named in honor of Reverend Thomas Prince, pastor of the Old South Church in Boston, MA in the 1700s. Which one's better?





Sat. April 2nd, 10am at Ripon Historical Society

Share information, knowledge, concerns, ideas, and a love of history! Tour of the Ripon Historical Society to follow.

Local History Field Trip Friday, May 6th

We will leave from the Princeton Public Library at 4:30 pm sharp. Carpooling available. No fee. Stops will include the site of the former village of Saint Marie, the "five minute road" and Mount Tom, Oak Grove School House, and Chief Highknocker's second burial grounds. Afterwards, Jerry Disterhaft invites all attendees to a potluck campfire dinner at his home on Huckleberry Road. This historical homestead is located on the Fox River, and Jerry will talk about the history of the land here as well as spring night sounds. Please bring a camp chair and dish to pass.

Brat Fry Fundraiser Sat. May 7th 10am—?

Come on down to the Piggly Wiggly parking lot for a fabulous lunch! This is also the city-wide garage sale day. Please volunteer to work a shift if you can!

Sip and Shop on the Fox: Sat. May 21st, 3-6pm

The Folklore Museum will be a stop on the wine and beer walk this spring! Your hosts will appear in vintage clothing and give you a guided tour of the museum. Get your tickets from the Chamber of Commerce before they're sold out! Must be 21 or older. Tickets \$25.

Special Exhibit in June: Wedding Dresses

Celebrate the month of weddings with us! Many stunning historical wedding dresses and accessories on display all month long at the Stone House and Folklore museums.

We will reopen for regular visits starting Saturday, April 23rd. We're open every Saturday after that from 11am—3pm.



"Where Were You in '82?" An 80s Themed **Picnic Celebration** of the **Historical Society's 40th Anniversary** Sunday June 12th, Noon—3pm at Princeton's City Park (flea market park) Help us celebrate our 40th year as the Princeton Historical Society! Bring a dish to pass and/or some meat to put on the grill. Wear your best 80s fashion and get ready to rock to some great 80s music!



princetonhistsociety@gmail.com **NEW FACES WELCOME!** We want YOU to join us! Bring friends, family, and strangers.

or



We will hold regular membership meetings on the third Monday of each month.

We are bringing back the tradition of having a speaker at each meeting to give local history lectures!

April 18, 5 PM

Meeting at the Princeton Library Lecture: Genealogy Talk from Ancestry Researcher Brian Podoll "Internal Migrations Across Germany"

Join us for the first Princeton Historical Society meeting of the year! Due to space and AV equipment requirements, we are meeting at the library. Please come and find out what we've been doing, and what you can do to help preserve your local history!

We are very lucky to have a guest speaker from one of the largest genealogy research companies in the world. Brian Podoll's genealogy talk is very relevant to people who settled in the Princeton area. Afterwards, we will walk down to the museums to give you a peek at museum exhibits before the Historical Society opens to the public in May. This meeting/event is open to the public, and there is no charge to attend. Light refreshments will be served. Bring a friend!



May 16th, 5 PM

Meeting at the Folklore Museum

Lecture: Outreach with the Wisconsin Historical Society's Southeast Coordinator, Kristen Leffelman. Kristen has a Bachelor of Arts degree from UW/Madison as well as a Master of Arts in Museum Studies from San Francisco State University. Local History Outreach staff provide support and technical assistance to over 400 affiliated local historical and heritage organizations and museums through consultations, webinars and workshops. They also partner with the Wisconsin Council for Local History to offer a mini-grant program, regional meetings and the annual Local History-Historic Preservation conference.

June 20th, 5 PM

Meeting at the Folklore Museum Lecture topic to be determined.

July 18th, 5 PM

Meeting at the Folklore Museum Lecture topic to be determined.



Is there a local history topic you'd like to see presented at a meeting? Or is there a topic you know a lot about and would like to do a talk on? Let us know!





Engraved Pens \$2.50 Vintage postcards \$1.00 Cheese/cutting boards \$20.00 Collectible plates \$5.00 Laser engraved coasters \$20.00 Portable Phone Charger \$18.00 Canadian Club History Book \$20.00 Assorted 8X10" Prints \$5.00 Cloth bound journals \$20.00





8X10" prints of historic Princeton photos are only \$5.00

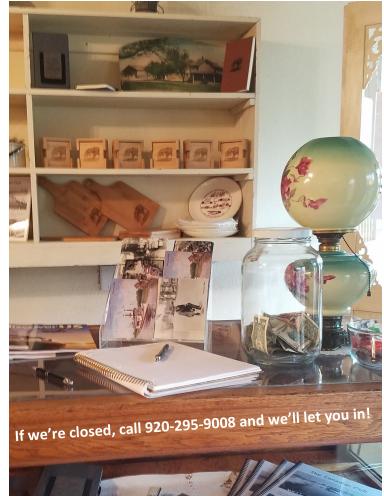
Contact Us!

Have a question about local history, genealogy, or our organization?

Interested in donating? Want a topic featured in the next newsletter? Please let us know!

princetonhistsociety@gmail.com

630 West Water Street PO Box 71 Princeton, Wisconsin 54968 or call 920-295-9008





We Need These: Can You Help Us?

- Metal shelving units
- Sponsors for new exhibits in the Folklore Museum
- A volunteer to label newspaper scans
- Vintage and antique communications equipment, preferably from the Princeton area. Examples: switch board, rotary dial phone, telegraph, early cell phones, etc.
- Volunteers to sort, file, paint, dust, clean, and move artifacts
- Tool box and tools for every day maintenance and repairs
- A pot belly wood stove

TO PAY YOUR

• Large leaded glass lamp shade, 18" in diameter or more, for a special display

DON'T FORGET MEMBERSHIP

- Sturdy yard signs
- Volunteers with carpentry skills

Volunteers Wanted

WE NEED YOU!

Please call 920-295-9008 for more information on volunteering to staff our museums, help with raffles and food both fundraisers, speak at meetings, and more!

Don't Forget to "Like" Us on Facebook!

Princeton WI Historical Society

Become / Remain a Historical Society Member!

- ____ \$2 Annual Student Membership (high school and lower grades)
- ____ \$10 Annual Individual Membership
- _____ \$15 Annual Family Membership (parents + children under age 18)
- ____ \$100 Lifetime Individual Membership
- ____ \$250 Lifetime Family Membership
- ____ \$500 Charter Membership
- ____ \$1,000 Donor Membership
- ____ \$5,000 Patron Membership
- ____ \$10,000 Founder Membership

I am interested in helping with
(please check one or more):
Computer Entry
Special Events
Building Construction
Giving Tours at the Museum
Staffing Our Fleamarket Booth
Fundraising

Name:			_
Street Address:		Apt. #	
City, State	ZIP:		
Phone:			
Email:			_

Cut out this form and send in your membership today! Make checks payable to the Princeton, WI Historical Society, and send them to PO Box 71, Princeton, WI 54968. All donations are tax deductible. Thank you!