



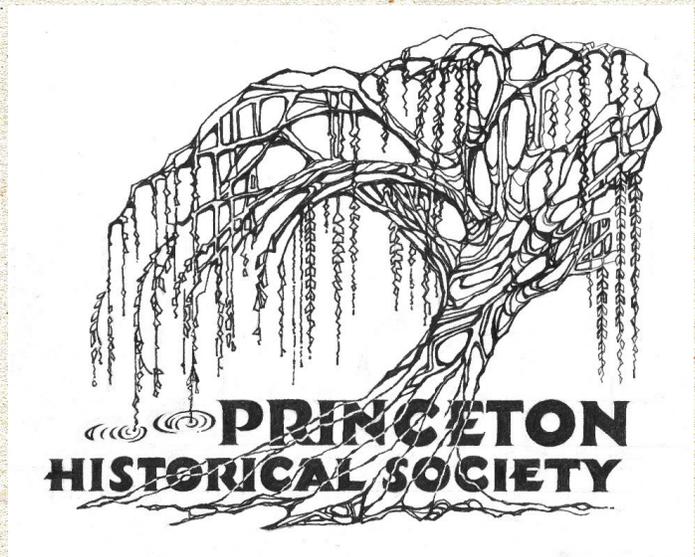
## OUR NEW LOGO

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The willow tree has been the inspiration of folklore and legend because it symbolizes strength, flexibility, power, spirituality, celebration, worship, and death.

The willow's adaptability allows it to bend and not break. However, if it *is* broken, a single branch can develop roots and grow into a new tree.

Accordingly, all of humanity relies on its past to grow its future.



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

# FIELD TRIPS



The Oak Grove schoolhouse on highway J is now privately owned and possibly unsafe to enter, but represents memories many still cherish.

This spring, Jerry Disterhaft generously volunteered to lead several local history field trips to locations including Huckleberry Road, Mount Tom, and Father Marquette's cross and holy springs (also the site of a Masoutin/Kickapoo/ Miami village). Jerry will offer these again next year in April or May. Stay tuned!



Mr. Disterhaft has also done many talks this year, for both adults and children. He has visited local libraries and historical societies, plus the "From the Land" festival with his business partner, Glen Gorsuch, and their replica voyageur canoe, tepee, and trade goods. Jerry Disterhaft also has an extensive collection of maps, photos, artifacts, and local history knowledge which he is glad to share with any interested group. He can be reached at 920-229-3360 or [huckleberry39@yahoo.com](mailto:huckleberry39@yahoo.com).

# COL. JOHN SHAW & FAMILY



On June 21st this year, we were fortunate enough to receive a visit from the descendants of one of the area's first pioneers, Colonel John Shaw. Richard Shaw is the great-great-great-great nephew of Col Shaw. Richard brought his sister, Sidney Evans, his wife, Ellen, and his son, John Alexander (Alex) Shaw to our museum to deliver a fascinating lecture on the Colonel.



Colonel John Shaw's family were early settlers in America, and their lineage can be traced back to 1622 in Stonington, Connecticut. Shaw's father fought in the Revolutionary War, and Shaw himself fought in the war of 1812 and the Black Hawk War. Born in New York in 1793, he was a trader, scout, spy, soldier, and interpreter who participated in many skirmishes. During his lifetime, he met many prominent Native America leaders, including Menominee leader Tomah, Ho-Chunk warrior Red Bird (who led the so-called "Winnebago War" of 1827), Sauk chief Keokuk, and Sauk chief Black Hawk. However, his war experiences were only part of a life filled with adventure.

At various times, Shaw was land speculator, trapper, trader, farmer, lead ore speculator, and steamboat owner. He visited New Orleans, the Rocky Mountains, St. Louis MO, Prairie du Chien, and many other places, swapping goods, furs, and political banter along the way. In 1821, while living in Pike County Illinois, he even got into the legislature (although it seems that some wished he hadn't). He helped found Calhoun County in Illinois, where in 1836 he and his brothers built their own small kingdom in which he became known as "The Black Prince."

In 1840, Shaw built a steamboat he named after himself, filled it with trade goods, and sailed away. The steamboat apparently sunk, and Shaw somehow wound up in Sacramento, WI, just north of Berlin, where he intended to settle. His neighbors took a strong dislike to him, however, and through cattle thefts and other harassments, provoked him into leaving. Shaw arrived in St. Marie, the one-time village north of Princeton, in 1846. Shaw wanted to develop the area, but more political shenanigans doomed his plans, with legal wrangling that went as far as the Wisconsin Supreme Court. Sadly, St. Marie died out. Shaw spent his remaining years in a cabin nearby.

He never married, but did have some children with a Native American Woman. He died in 1871 at nearly 89 years old, and was buried in a now hidden cemetery just off of Huckleberry Road. **You can read more at [coloneljohnshaw.com](http://coloneljohnshaw.com).**

Richard Shaw lives in Houston, Texas. He would like to find more descendants of Colonel Shaw, and is pursuing DNA matching. He would also love to find a photograph or drawing of the Colonel. Contact him at [richardshawtrek@aol.com](mailto:richardshawtrek@aol.com).



# DONOR RECEPTION

On Friday, July 16th, we were delighted to host an afternoon reception for the many people who donated significant money, labor, and materials to the building of our new Folklore Museum. The catered event was meant as a thank-you to these stalwart friends who are too numerous to name here, but who appear on our donor wall. Thank you from the bottoms of our hearts! You have helped us preserve history forever.



We were delighted to see so many guests enjoying the museum.



Our wall of photographs was a huge hit. It's like playing "I Spy" with people from our town's history!



Fine weather meant the tents weren't much needed, but cooling drinks were appreciated.



Our memorial wall is meant to resemble a flowing river, with the names of donors inscribed on stones and pebbles. Some of our dearest supporters have framed portraits here.

# GRAND OPENING

On Saturday, July 17th, we hosted the official Grand Opening of the Folklore Museum. The event was open to the public, although representatives from many state and local organizations were specifically invited. Approximately 300 people visited from between 10am and 4pm to view the exhibits, take part in a raffle, peruse the Gift Shop, and enjoy treats.



Right: A young man listens to the voice of Jim Frasier describing the general store exhibit behind him, as well as Princeton's commercial history. Most of our museum exhibits have these audio tour features, which guests can use simply by picking up the "candlestick" receiver on reproduction crank telephones.



Above: Robin Wallenfang holds up our new outdoor sign, which she designed.



Right: Treasurer Vicki Wielgosh expresses relief and joy in front of the transportation mural and associated artifacts. The mural was also created by Robin Wallenfang.

# Suds, Speakeasies, and Scofflaws



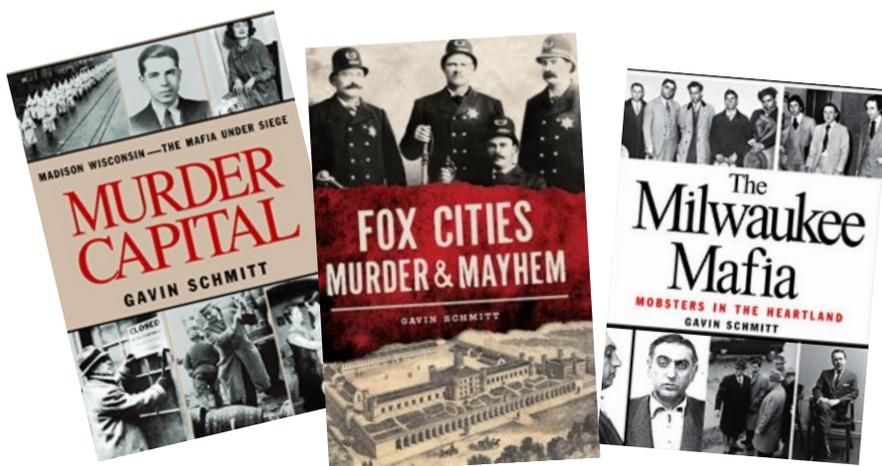
Some pretty fancy dames and fellas turned up in their glad rags, including Jim and Chris Frasier (above) and Lois Zuehls (below).

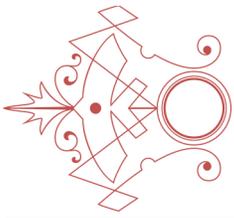


Our sold-out “Suds, Speakeasies, and Scofflaws” fundraiser on Aug. 28th was a real wingding, pos-i-lute-ly the bee’s knees!

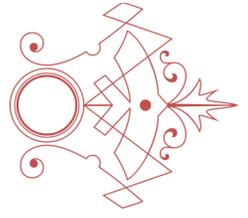
Local author Gavin Schmitt delivered a humdinger of a presentation on bootlegging, crime, the mob, and Prohibition in Wisconsin. He brought several of his books along as backup, which were available for purchase after the shindig. (They are also available at the Princeton Public Library.)

The combined lecture and dinner was held in a swanky speakeasy called Knickerbocker Landing, at 609 W. Water Street in Princeton. Themed cocktails like the “Mary Pickford” helped guys and dolls have a copacetic time, although nobody got spifflicated. A three course dinner was catered by Christianos of Green Lake, with the help of students from the National Honor Society. Tickets were \$35, and all proceeds went to the museum.





# Roaring 20s Princeton



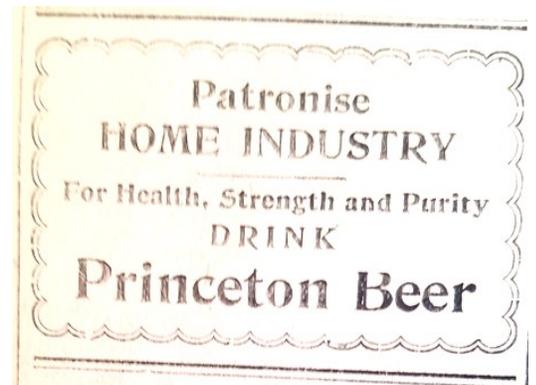
Stories researched & compiled by Jim Frasier.

In July 1927, Princeton soft drink parlors owned by Henry Stelmacheske and Edward Sullivan were raided by federal agents and illegal liquor was seized.

December 5, 2021 marks the 88th anniversary of the end of Prohibition. During Prohibition it was never illegal to drink. The 18th Amendment and the Volstead Act barred making, selling, and shipping alcohol mass production and consumption.

Stories abound of the escapades of Paul Ladwig, Sr. Apparently Paul saw it as his “duty” to help people out during the government created “liquor shortage.” In 1930 Wild Rose, a Deputy Sheriff became suspicious of a car being driven without license plates. The vehicle belonging to Paul was found to contain not only a supply of liquor but his book listing his customers’ names. This earned him one year of confinement and a \$500 fine. Paul was again in the limelight in August of 1932. He had recently purchased the former overall factory on the west side of the Fox River, and there were reports that alcohol was brewed or stored there. The establishment was raided.

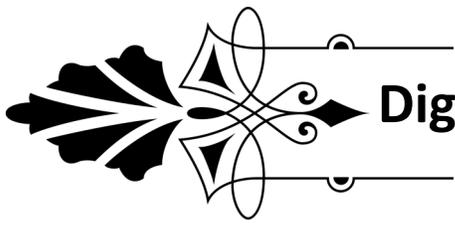
Randy Mirr told an interesting variation of the “Al Capone” stories. These stories are common to Wisconsin (especially in the North), but this one hits close to home with pretty strong facts. Out in the middle of the marsh along White River Marsh Road, there was a piece of higher ground – difficult to get to in the best of times. Here Capone ran a major still in a complex of shacks known as Phelp’s shanties. Work was hard to get during prohibition, and the marginal farms in the area were doing poorly. Mirr’s dad and a friend of his were engaged by the Capone empire to unload two truckloads of sugar per week at the Phelps still. They were blindfolded at the start of the trip from Princeton so that they would not recognize any landmarks on the way in. Mirr says this was useless, since both men knew exactly where they were at all times, even blindfolded!



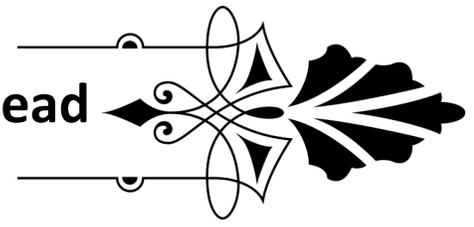
Prior to Prohibition, Herman E. Megow, Princeton Justice of the Peace, was quoted in the Princeton Republic as saying, “The liquor business is a cog in the great industrial wheel of the village of Princeton.” He went on to say, regarding the impending Prohibition, “Are we going to kill the goose that lays the golden egg? Are you, Mr. Voter, going to be party to help by your vote to destroy an industry that pays annually into the treasury of the village over \$2,600, which is over 1/3 of the whole amount required to pay the running expenses of the village for one year? Who paid for our cement sidewalks all over our beautiful village equal to any in the state? Was it the dry business? No! But it was saloon money that did it.”



Tiger Brew became available “on tap” in Princeton on Sept. 9, 1933.



# Digitization Project Leaps Ahead



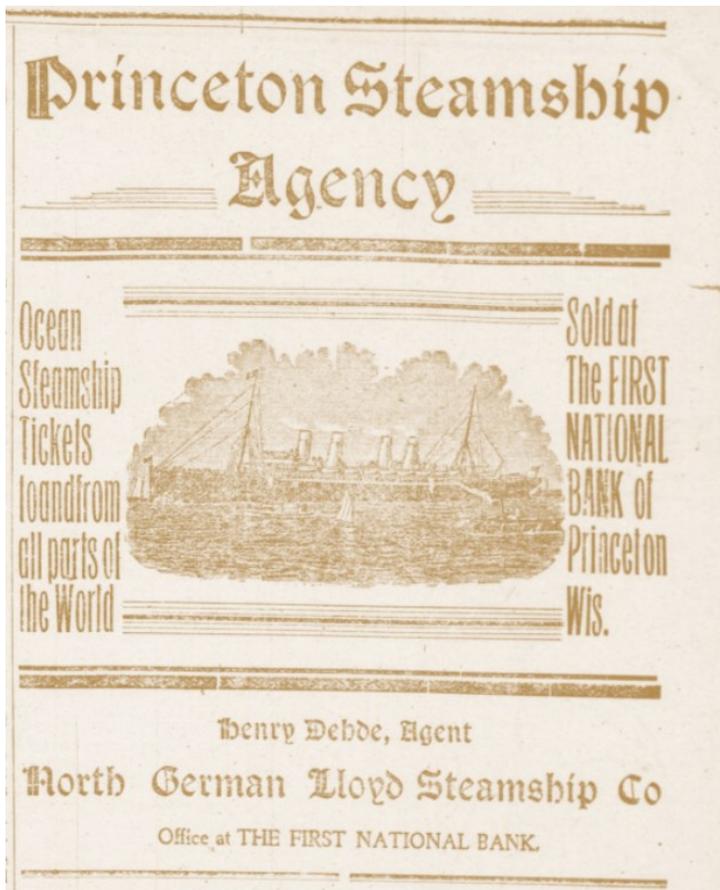
In our October 2020 newsletter, we told you about how, after many years, the microfilm records of *The Princeton Times Republic* were returned to us. These records include material dating back to the 1800s. Since then, we've been working to try to get them digitized, so that they would be easily searchable and available online for public research.

Now we can proudly say that our efforts have resulted in a major leap forward in the digitization process.

After weeks of work, the Crowley Company has scanned all of the microfilm we have. We now have four external hard drives of newspaper scans dating back to the late 1800s. They are large, high-quality files in both pdf and tiff formats, and the combined data takes up eight TB (terabytes) of space. For comparison, it would take 728,177 floppy disks or 1,498 CDs to store just 1 TB worth of information. A standard, new computer has space for up to 2 TB of data.

The next step in this process is to sort through all of the scans, label them correctly, and prepare them to be catalogued. The scans will then need to be attached to "metadata," which will make the scans searchable by name, date, or keyword. This will be very laborious, and we are looking for volunteers to help us with this once we have the input format ready to go.

We are very fortunate that the Winnefox Library System will not only host all of this data free of charge (similar services cost \$50 or more per month) but actually help us organize and upload it. Right now, a Winnefox staff person is in the process of applying to the Library of Congress for an organizational MARC Code (official recognition and coding for the project). This will be used in naming files, and is required in order to put the scans online. No library card will be required to access the scans, and anyone with an internet connection will be able to do so.



This 1902 advertisement is just one small piece of the stunning scans.

We would not have made it this far without generous donations from several people, the most notable of which was a stunning gift of \$5,000 from a single couple. These wonderful people have asked to remain anonymous, and only want to be identified as Princeton Public High School Alumni. We cannot express our gratitude enough for this amazing act.

An additional \$5,000 for this project has been awarded to the Princeton Public Library via a grant from Wisconsin Humanities, with funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. Wisconsin Humanities strengthens the roots of community life through educational and cultural programs that inspire civic participation and individual imagination. Librarian Laura Skalitzy wrote the grant application, which included a promise to hold more history related programs in the future.

Finally, \$3,000 has been contributed by the Caestecker (Green Lake) library from the Tom Gnewuch memorial fund. Readers may remember him as the author of "Green Lake Memories" and "Green Lake Memories II." With all of this wonderful support, we hope to eventually digitize other materials as well.

# HALLOWEEN AT THE MUSEUM

We celebrated Halloween in high style this year, with three events:

On October 13th, we held an event we called "Ghostly Encounters" with the East Oxford Paranormal Society. Local residents were asked to come to the Folklore Museum to share their stories of supernatural encounters. Many of these stories can be found on a video on our Facebook page.

Trick or Treat on Water Street on October 22nd was a blast. We gave away small prizes to children who played our Halloween games, including witch hat ring toss. We made a lot of kids happy, and got many people to check out the museum! Special thanks to the National Honor Society students who volunteered to run games and hand out prizes.

Throughout October, we participated in the Princeton Chamber of Commerce's Halloween Window Decorating Contest. Our double entry of "Grandma's Haunted Attic" and "Grandpa's Haunted Garage" won second place! We will receive half off of the next year's Chamber member dues.



# Donations Generously Given

We can't possibly thank all of the generous people who have contributed time, money, and artifacts to the museum, but we would like to list a few here. We are deeply grateful to all of you!

Detjen's Piggly Wiggly recently allowed us to participate in their charity Round Up program. For an entire month, shoppers at the grocery store are asked if they would like to round up their purchase total to the nearest dollar, with the difference being given to a local non-profit organization. This simple and easy but highly effective fundraiser netted us about \$1,900! Thank you, Al Detjen and the Piggly Wiggly staff!

Chad Wagner donated his time and expertise to engrave our name and logo on many items that are now in our gift shop. Thank you, Chad!

Pulvermacher Enterprises provided invaluable help in putting up the new sign on our museum building. They had one of their employees operate a cherry picker to place the sign on outside of the second story.

Right: Donn Wright donated some lovely artifacts, including a souvenir or reward for pupils in the Princeton Township in the winter of 1897-1898. He was also able to provide valuable information about the displaced grave of a young boy.



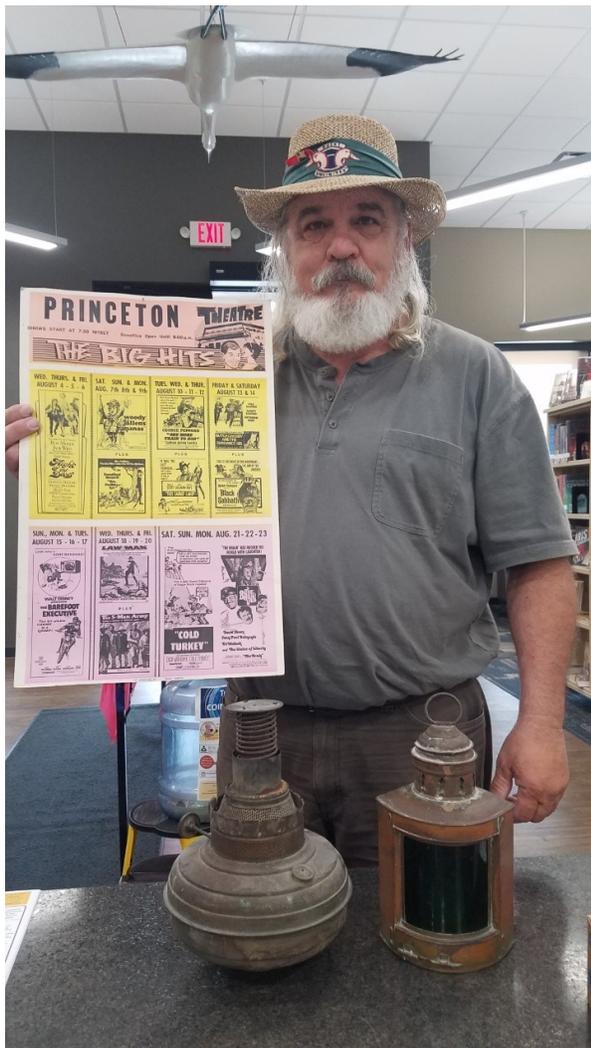
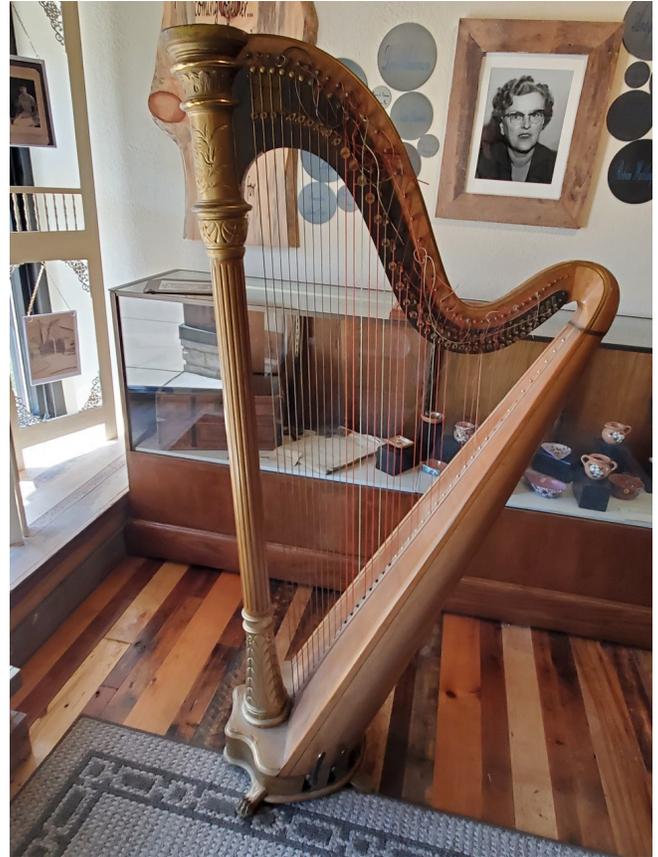
Jerry Disterhaft and his 4H group donated this wooden marker for the former site of the St. Mary church. They hope to erect the marker, with the blessing of the landowner, this spring. An additional wooden plaque was presented by Jerry Disterhaft to the family of Colonel John Shaw, commemorating his contribution to the community. He gave a duplicate plaque to the museum as well.



# Donations Generously Given

Recently, a huge and gorgeous harp was donated to the museum by Dan Wacholz, a descendent of Dr. Geise. The harp was owned and played by Dr. Geise in the early 1900s. The Lyon & Healy Style 11 Single Action harp has 45 strings, and was made in Chicago around 1903. The single action was a holdover from European makers, and was quickly phased out, as it only gave you two positions for each note (flat to natural or natural to sharp depending on your tuning). Production of this style ceased circa 1910, so this truly a special object.

Although the harp is in remarkable shape for its age, there is a structural crack in the top piece, called the neck, and other deterioration which means that it cannot be played. The harp appears to be all original except for some bronze paint.



Thank you to Glen Gorsuch for donating some wonderful items from our city's past!

The Princeton Theater movie poster is from 1971. The Theatre was in the building across from the library and began life as Turner Hall. It is now the Fox River Mercantile.

The kerosene heater (missing a piece or two) was said to have been used in the caboose of a train.

The copper lantern, which Glen has donated in honor of Arnold Manthie, has a green glass shade. It was used (along with lanterns of other colors) as a signal for trains.

Glen also donated a menu from Barnekow's Supper Club (not pictured).

## COMING SOON:

Crossroads Market and Ace Hardware of Ripon have agreed to include us in their roundup programs in 2022. Stay tuned, and keep shopping local!

# *Your Legacy?*

We don't like to think about the ends of our lives, but each of us will have to face that time. One way in which we can make this process easier is to celebrate our contributions to the future. Most of the time, the things that we pass on aren't physical— they are memories, wisdom, knowledge, friendship, and love. These are absolutely the best gifts to leave behind. However, it's also nice to know that physical artifacts will honor our lives after we have passed on. Sometimes these are family heirlooms, or things we have made. Unfortunately, however, these things often aren't as appreciated as they should be, and end up disused.

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**



**CONNECTING  
COMMUNITIES  
TO PRESERVE & SHARE  
HISTORY**

**LHP  
Conference**      **OCT. 20-22**

## **Conference Call**

One of our Historical Society board members, Jim Frasier, attended the annual Local History & Historic Preservation conference put on by the WI State Historical Society. The conference was virtual this year. Jim made some good contacts, and learned a great deal. Topics offered at the conference included grant writing, exhibit planning, marketing for heritage tourism, incorporating Native American experiences into museums, and using research and stories as exhibits in themselves.

# CHRISTMAS IN PRINCETON

## Visit with Santa at the Folklore Museum— Fri Nov. 26th 4pm – 6pm

Children can sit on Santa's lap and tell him what they want for Christmas, while adults **browse our gift shop**, check out museum exhibits, and **view a special installation of antique glass Christmas ornaments**.

## Mrs. Claus's Kitchen— Saturday Dec. 27th 9am-3pm at the School

The Holiday Bounty Craft Fair is once again taking place at Princeton's public school from 9am-3pm, with two gyms full of handmade items. We will be selling delicious food for hungry shoppers all day long.

## Christmas Centerpiece Raffle— Nov. 15th-Dec. 6th

You could win one of 11 delightful handmade Christmas centerpieces! Each one is unique and made with love. They will be on display at the Princeton Public Library until the raffle ends, except for Nov. 26th, when they will be on display at the school where we are having our food booth fundraiser. Centerpiece raffle tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5 or 15 for \$10. The raffle ends Monday December 6th. You need not be present to win.

## Christmas Cards for Sale NOW— Hosted at the Library

Christmas cards with scenes from Princeton's history are available at the Princeton Public Library for \$2. There are more than a dozen different designs, each handcrafted and donated by Louise Malter.



## Member Christmas Party— Sun. Dec. 12th at Noon at the Pizza Factory

Join us to celebrate a successful year, and wish each other the best for the coming year. **We will also be voting on several officer positions.** Choose from two kinds of pizza (sausage or chicken alfredo) and you'll also get a side salad, cheese cake, and coffee. The cost is \$15 per person (includes tip). Cash bar.

**Please RSVP by Tuesday, December 7th: call 920-295-9008 or email [princetonhistsociety@gmail.com](mailto:princetonhistsociety@gmail.com).**

## Looking for the Perfect Present? Visit Our Gift Shop!

Vintage postcards, cheese/cutting boards, collectible history plates, engraved coasters, USB charging banks, local history publications, high quality pens, cloth bound journals, and more!

SAVE  
THE  
DATES!

# FUTURE PLANS...

## Member Christmas Party

**Sun. Dec. 12th, Noon, at the Pizza Factory**

Join us to celebrate a successful year, and wish each other the best for the coming year. **We will also be voting on several officer positions.** Choose from two kinds of pizza (sausage or chicken alfredo) and you'll also get a side salad, cheese cake, and coffee. The cost is \$15 per person (includes tip). Cash bar. Guests welcome.

**Please RSVP by Tuesday, December 7th: call 920-295-9008 or email [princetonhistsociety@gmail.com](mailto:princetonhistsociety@gmail.com).**

## Spring Benefit Concert

**Tentative Date: Sat. May 7th**

Local musician Bradi Woulf has volunteered to spearhead a new kind of fundraising event for us: a benefit concert to feature a number of local artists. If you are interested in helping or performing, please contact us or Bradi herself at [bradiwoulf@gmail.com](mailto:bradiwoulf@gmail.com).

## Phase II of the Folklore Museum

There's no rest for the wicked!

As soon as we held the grand opening of the Folklore Museum, we began planning Phase II. This will entail major remodeling of the entire back half of our museum building, then putting in new exhibits. This back area is at least as large as the front part, and contains a loading dock, rear exit, and dozens of stunning artifacts just waiting for their day in the sun. These include a printing press, Native American materials, and relics of many local civic groups. Phase I of the museum cost about \$70,000 (with much of the labor and materials donated). Phase II will not cost less. Please contact us if you are willing to help with time, treasure, or skills!

## Museum Hours

After Christmas in Princeton on Nov. 26th, the museum will be mostly closed for the winter. We will reopen for regular visits in May.

However, we are delighted to schedule visits by appointment!

## Upcoming Meetings

After December 12th, we will not hold member meetings again until April 18th, 2022. However, members are welcome to come to Board meetings, which will continue to take place on the third Monday of each month at 6:30pm. Board members will continue to work on many projects, and would welcome your input and assistance.

At one of our recent membership meetings, board member Joe Wyse gave a fascinating presentation on the history of the railroad in Princeton. We have had other guest speakers as well, and we hope to continue this trend at regular meetings in 2022. If you would like to hear about a topic, or have one to present, please contact us!

Please accept my deepest apologies for not publishing a summer newsletter. I will make no excuses, but hope that this doubly-large edition will in part make up for my negligence. Many of the fonts and fripperies used in this newsletter edition were purchased with a commercial license from the Heritage Type Co. of Berlin, Germany. Artist Tobias Saul created the Blackriver typeface and others.

-Laura Skalitzky



## 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

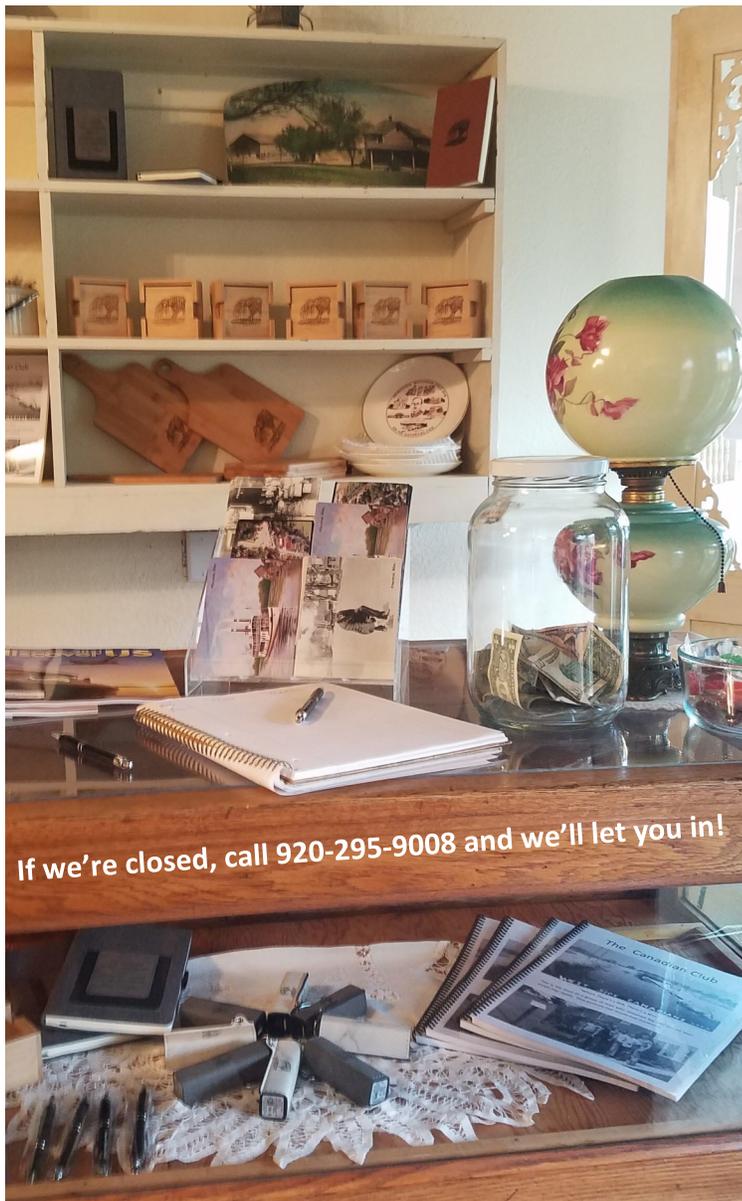
Princeton, Wisconsin 54968

or call 920-295-9008

Looking for the perfect present?

# VISIT OUR GIFT SHOP

- Vintage postcards
- Cheese/cutting boards
- Collectible plates
- Laser engraved coasters
- USB charging banks
- Local history publications
- High quality pens
- Cloth bound journals



## We Need These: Can You Help Us?

- A nice large chair for our Santa to sit in on Nov. 26
- 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
- Large leaded glass lamp shade, 18" in diameter or more, for a special display
- Sturdy yard signs



## Volunteers Wanted

### WE NEED YOU!

Baked goods are kindly requested for sale at our upcoming fundraiser.

We need help setting up and running Mrs. Claus's Kitchen on Nov. 26th/27th, plus staffing the museum on the evening of the 26th (during Santa's visit). We also need regular office help.

Please call 920-295-9008 for more information on volunteering.

**DON'T FORGET** **MEMBERSHIP**  
**TO PAY YOUR** **DUES**

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!**