

# THE DEPOT DISPATCH

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## 2015 Calendar of Events

Dec. 6: Santa Sunday Open House at 1022 Blue Mounds Street 2-4pm.

WATCH FOR UPDATES IN THE NEWS-SICKLE-ARROW. THANK YOU!

### TAX TIME IS COMING!

As 2015 closes remember that your contributions to the BEHS are tax deductible and put to good use. It takes about 10 Brat Fry's to pay for the new boiler we installed last Fall.

## Executive Officers

President Paul Skalet  
Vice Pres. Wayne Barsness  
Secretary Jan Cowan  
Treasurer David Cooper

### Board of Directors

Term Expires 2018

Wayne Barsness  
Paul Skalet

Term Expires 2016

David Cooper  
Shirley Danz  
Jan Schroeder  
Shirley Williams  
Term Expires 2017

LaVonne Clasen

Harold Miller  
Steve Webber

Archivist

Needed!

### Annual Dues

Personal \$10.00  
Family \$20.00  
Business/Patron \$35.00

*For those who itemize taxes,  
the Black Earth Historical  
Society is a not-for-profit, sec.  
501(c) (3) corporation.*

## President's Message

Greetings members and supporters of the society, and Thank You!

At a recent board of directors meeting the topic of trying to assemble the history of older homes in the Black Earth area was discussed. Several inquiries have come our way from people that have purchased these homes and have asked about them.

It would be ideal if the abstract of title to these properties could be available to review and copy. As a start, if anyone reading this newsletter is aware of there being an abstract of title to an older home in the area, or knows of someone else having the same, please contact me at 608-767-2289, 1430 Ray Street, Black Earth, WI 53515, or [pjsbe765@charter.net](mailto:pjsbe765@charter.net).

Rumor has it Mrs. Santa will be joining us on Santa Sunday December 6<sup>th</sup>. She will be reading to kids waiting and returning from the popular carriage rides.

Your membership dues for 2016 are now due. If you have not made payment as yet please do so now. Please also consider a special gift contribution to support the Society in addition to your membership. You will help us safeguard Black Earth history for future generations.

Many Thanks for your past and continued support.

Paul Skalet, President

## HISTORY IN THE REMAKING

*This is an article about Bulldog Recover and Restore that appeared in the News-Sickle-Arrow earlier this summer. Thanks to NSA and To Erin Vander Weele, the Editor, for letting us reprint it.*



Ken Meigs recalls working in his grandfather's shop since he was four-years-old.

His grandfather Melvin Huset, who was a longtime resident of Black Earth and lived to 101 years old, built barns and was a carpenter.

"He taught me a lot about woodworking and life," Meigs shares.

He continued to follow in his grandfather's footsteps through adulthood with a hobby of refurbishing items and furniture. He recently opened a new business, Bulldog Recover and Restore, last Friday evening in the former Premier Cooperative property, 1009 Mills Street.

Premier donated the building to the village, which was leased to Meigs for three years. The village received a community development block grant (CDBG) of \$30,000 to jumpstart the redevelopment. The grant is a matching grant, which will come both from tax incremental funds and from Bulldog.

Meigs thought it would be fun to open a store in Black Earth with hopes to also help the community. The Wisconsin Heights alumnus who has lived in Black Earth all his life wants to create jobs and promote growth in the area.



He also owns the construction company, Meigs Inc., and decided to pursue the new endeavor to share his pieces with others while putting his long-time hobby to practice.



"I just do what I grew up doing," he says.

The old building is now filled with repurposed materials and upcycled furniture. One of his pieces is a bed frame he received 10 years ago, which he turned into a bench. He also made a table from aged barn wood and a lamp using a dated wood stove door.

"[I enjoy] saving old things and turning them into something that's useful again," Meigs says. "And connecting with the past."

The business is family-run with his wife Susan, son Adam and daughter Amanda. Meigs works collaboratively with his wife to refurbish pieces they find at garage sales or flea markets from around the country. He describes her as a creative person with "a good eye".

"I think my wife and I make a good team," he reflects. "I'll come up with an idea, she'll tweak it a little bit and it's a lot better."

Other unique items in the store include an antique gas pump and a quaint table radio he transformed into a wine rack. There are also vibrant paintings made by his wife's sister and colorful pottery from Stuart Wakeman.

Meigs currently works on the pieces in the shop at his home, but aspires to one day have a shop in back of the store and possibly a second location for a warehouse. To start, the store will be open during weekends.

### **DEPOT TO DEPOT, BRAT FRY'S & GARAGE SALE**

Our 23<sup>rd</sup> Run/Walk on August 8<sup>th</sup> was successful but participation was down due to competition from other events. The weather was cool and we are looking forward to 2016 when we plan to use the Heights to Mazo portion of the Wolf Run Trail.

We had good weather and turn out's for our 2 Brat Fry's at the Shoe Box this summer and even sold out by 2:30 on August 29 thanks to big orders from hungry farmers.

Our Garage Sale was down as too many bargains were available. We hope to do better next year and hope you will keep us in mind if you clean house. Donations are deductible too.

### **HISTORY REMEMBERED**

How about sharing your memories and recollections with us? In addition to starting a House History File, which President Skalet suggests, please share interesting tidbits you recall that we can share with our members. Too often things are mis-remembered and we lose track of things we should try to preserve.

Since our museum is a depot, train stories would be appreciated. When did the last passenger train stop? Have you any railroad memorabilia we can add to our collection?

How about events we should try to save? When did Harold Handel move the "Library" house to Cross Plains? The Dance Hall/Grocery Store and Fire . . . ? Anything Historical is appropriate. Thanks.

### **NEWSLETTER NEWS AND NEW STUFF**

Life and paid members are receiving this newsletter in color thanks to a generous donation to the Society. If your newsletter is in black and white we do not have a record of your paid dues.

Ann Sarbacker-Wick's donation in her mother's memory allowed us to buy a Color Printer/Scanner, a Digital Projector, and supplies we need to protect items in our collection. Postage is a major expense in producing a newsletter. Please request e-mail delivery of your newsletter if you can. We hope to have your suggestions and remembrances to help continue our efforts to collect, preserve, share and educate the community on the history of the Black Earth area.

The Black Earth Historical Society receives NO funds from any source other than through the generosity of our members and friends in the community and donations from individuals who are seeking information about their early Black Earth relatives.

We are, therefore, grateful for the donations of items for our annual sale. Please stop by to say hello and see what we have to offer.

### **DONATION OF ITEMS TO BEHS COLLECTION**

If you have photos, historical items or other archival materials you feel we may like for our collection please call Paul Skalet, 608-767-2289, to discuss or arrange for a time to meet. Or send us an e-mail and we can put it on the agenda for our next meeting.

### **THANK YOU!**

Volunteers, members, and friends who contributed funds, time, and equipment, we need and appreciate your support.

### **Membership Dues**

Please Pay Dues as soon as possible. The fiscal year runs Jan. 1 through Dec. 31.

Newsletter of the Black Earth Historical Society

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The Black Earth Historical Society  
P.O. Box 214  
Black Earth, WI 53515-0214



**The Depot Museum had many visitors this year thanks to Bill Rettenmund's Farming Heritage display. If you missed seeing it please let us know. It is a work in progress and Bill has been very happy to answer questions of visitors. Perhaps next year?**