

THE WAPSIPINICON

A newsletter published quarterly by the
TISKILWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
*Named "Volunteer Institution of the Year" in 2010
by the Illinois Association of Museums*

VOLUME 13

DECEMBER 2018

NUMBER 4

MUSEUM ON MAIN

Our collection includes more than 6,800 artifacts, displayed to preserve and interpret local history. Our museum is housed in an 1855 Illinois Historic Landmark Building (the former Methodist Church) at 110 East Main Street, Tiskilwa.

**MUSEUM HOURS
EVERY SATURDAY
9:00 TO 2:00**

**Admission is free,
and our volunteers
will show you
around.**

For private or group
tours,
call Ed Waca
at 815.646.4016.

Board of Directors 2018-19

Charlie Waca, Pres.
Ed Waca, Vice Pres.
Julie Sampson, Sec.
Judy Wright, Treas.
Connie Kauffman
Gail McCauley
Randy Senneff
Bill Wendle
Museum Director
Cecille Gerber

CATCH THE SPIRIT! COUNTRY CHRISTMAS IS COMIN' TO TOWN

At press time, we're still toying with different names for Tiskilwa's December 8 event. Hmmm, shall we call it **Country Christmas** or go back to **Walk Tiskilwa**? No matter the name, mark your calendars for **Saturday, December 8**, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. to delight in some down-home fun. The stage is set for a holly-jolly holiday event. With the **Tiskilwa Community Association** once again lining Main Street with fresh fir trees (decorated by local organizations) and traditional street-light decorations provided by the **Village of Tiskilwa**, you can walk your way through Tiskilwa with any or all of these activities.

8:00: Begin your morning at the **Tiskilwa Community Church** with free coffee, treats, and fellowship, all while you have a chance to purchase baked goods, rag rugs, and great big bottles of vanilla. The sale will continue until the goodies run out!

9:30: Bring along your kids and your creativity when you cross the street to the **Tiskilwa Public Library** to have fun crafting your own holiday decorations.

11:00: Popular local musicians **Phil and Pam Kaufmann** will fill the halls of **Museum on Main** with the sound of music. Don't forget to bring along a few items for the Bureau County Food Pantry for your concert "price of admission" as well as a good way to get into the spirit of the season.

9:00-2:00: The museum, with its special displays and decorations, provides a place where "The Past Is Present" to savor. One highlight will be the Lionels – engineered by the **Waca brothers, Ed and Charlie** – as the model trains chug around a Christmas tree in Gallery One throughout the day.

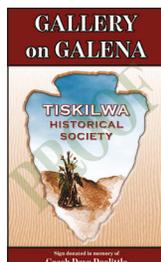
12:00: Our newest business, **The Tiskilwa Inn**, will host a "Meet the Innkeepers" gathering in their newly restored 1848 Bed & Breakfast at 155 High Street, just south of the post office. **Ric and Jeremy Gassen** will be serving up hot chocolate and tasty snacks along with lively conversation.

Along the way and in-between times, visitors can stop at **Zig's Station** for hot chocolate and Tiskilwa's three eateries, **Kelly's Place**, the **Indian Valley Inn**, and **Piccolo's Pizza** for lunch specials from 11:00 to 2:00.

With a tip o' the hat to Tiskilwa Historical Society's first major public endeavor of "Walk Tiskilwa," our little gem of architecture, the Bible Church, [pictured at right] will again be open to visitors. Many may recall that late December day in 2006 when 85+ folks stopped in to admire holiday decorations in our four churches: the **Bible Church**, the **American Baptist Church**, **St. Mary's Catholic Church**, and the **United Methodist Church**.



Like our new sign? As you see, using the same visual as Museum on Main, it introduces our added location of the "Gallery on Galena," just south of the railroad tracks. Projects have been progressing apace, but as those who toured the old Legion Hall during our September 22 Open House know – there's a **WHOLE LOTTA** work to do! You'd be amazed to see all the interior projects accomplished by volunteers, with **Bill Wendle, Ed Waca, and Randy Senneff** leading the charge. Despite well over 200 volunteer hours in the past two months and the generosity of numerous donors, we need to raise more funds to continue the renovation. Please read more details on page 4.



To you early birds who've already joined or renewed, THANK YOU! A list of the entire 2019 membership will appear in our March issue.

REMINDERS: If you are retired from or currently employed by a company with a **MATCHING GIFTS** Program, such as **Caterpillar** or **Exxon-Mobil Corporation**, we'd happily complete the paperwork for your matching gift.

Also, if you have **Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from an IRA account**, please remember that we are a 501(c)(3) [a non-profit organization]. Will you join with others who contribute this way? **Direct gifts to Tiskilwa Historical Society from an IRA rollover can benefit you and help us, too. It's an easy, convenient way to make a gift. Also, THIS TAX-FREE ROLLOVER IS EXCLUDED FROM YOUR TAXABLE GROSS INCOME.**

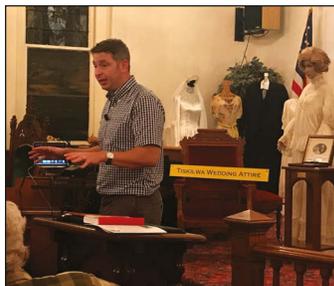
Anna Mae Stowe's Family Donates Trumpet; Jim & Jane Jones Provide History, Restoration

Upon hearing about a trumpet that we'd recently received from the Stowe family, legendary THS band director **Jim Jones** really tuned in! (*Yes, he IS smiling.*) He recognized it as a special



model and research revealed it to be a 1928 Holton Llewellyn Trumpet. (*Edward Llewellyn was first-chair trumpet in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in the 1920's and 30's and one of the best-known trumpet players of his time.*) In checking with **Janice Stowe Johnson (THS '64)**, we have not yet

been able to uncover much history on this specific instrument, only that her younger brother **Leland Stowe (THS '66)** played it in the Tiskilwa Grade School band. We send a hearty THANK YOU to **Jim and Jane** for covering the cost of restoring this 90-year-old beauty to its former (and now playable) glory! This instrument makes an excellent addition to our "Making Music" display area, joining the cornet belonging to **Holton Rosenquist** and the trombone belonging to **Laurence Brown (THS '13)** and later played by **Steve Longman (THS '71)** in the 1960s and '70s.



On October 8, we hosted University of Illinois associate professor, **Robert Morrissey**, whose visit was made possible through the **Illinois Humanities Council**. Bob's program "The Power of Indigenous Illinois" was warmly received by an audience of more than 55 visitors, ranging in age from junior high kids to long-long-ago graduates. And, yes, in

Annual "Salute to Vets" on November 12 Packed with Memorable Moments



Seemed like a "Pack the Place" night on November 12 when **Marlene Rivero** of Grand Chain entertained and educated almost 90 history buffs about a little-known part of Civil War history. In a program sponsored by the **Illinois Humanities Council**, Marlene's "3-D History" portrayal of Ann Stokes, former slave and Civil War nurse on the *USS Red Rover*, captivated the audience with stories and songs.

During our annual "Salute to Veterans," several members of the **Valley Quilts of Valor** followed Marlene's program with a touching ceremony, specifically honoring two veterans of the World War II era. The IVQV is part of a national 501(c)3 foundation whose mission is to provide the comfort and healing of quilts to veterans as well as to active-duty service members. Since forming in April, 2017, the local IVQV group has presented an amazing number of 54 quilts.



(Photo at left, L to R) **Brad Oeder**, veteran; **Ed Magnuson**, with quilt made by **Julie Kern**; **Terry Johnson**, IVQV group leader; **Hector Gomez**, veteran; **Liz Piacenti**, quilter.

Center: **Pompeyo Flores**, 93-year-old veteran of World War II, was congratulated by his daughter, **Daria Ozburn**, and many other family members after the ceremony.

Right: The family of U.S. Army veteran **Ed ("I'll be 90 in six months") Magnuson** proudly hold his Quilt of Valor. During his time in the service, Ed participated in the famous Berlin Airlift after Stalin's Soviet Blockade on West Berlin following the war. *From L to R:* **Connie Kauffman**, niece; **Ed**, the honoree; **Larry Magnuson**, son; **Janice Magnuson**, daughter-in-law.

Holiday Gifts? Collector's Corner

Suggested donations: Directory & T-shirt \$15, Long-sleeved shirt \$20 (Please add \$2 postage)

ALUMNI DIRECTORY: Reprint of 2009 booklet with listing of all THS graduates, plus a history of Tiskilwa Schools and Alumni Association. Only 39 available!

LONG-SLEEVED GRAY SHIRT, with TISKILWA written down the sleeve in black italic letters

SHORT-SLEEVED T-SHIRTS IN NAVY BLUE OR GRAY, with an image of the traditional Chief Tiskilwa on the front and the logo of the Tiskilwa Historical Society on the back. Available in all sizes, including youth shirts.



Hear the Angel Voices

by Monica Jamison Morris

Editor's note: In late October, we asked Monica if we could reprint her Christmas memory. Her dear dad passed away November 6 at the age of 92, making this memory even more poignant.

My favorite time of year was fast approaching. Actually, for the Jamison kids, the Christmas season began a tad bit early. We celebrated my **Grandpa Nye's** birthday in the middle of November and for us, the race to Christmas Eve began the night of Grandpa's party. The days afterwards were filled with Christmas chores. Christmas school projects were finished, lists finalized, letters to Santa written, cards mailed and cookies baked.

Finally, Christmas Eve was upon us. As the day progressed, my anticipation grew and grew. For on this night, unlike any other night of the year, we got to stay up late. Not to wait for Santa Claus, because Santa would only come while we were sleeping. No, we had another reason for staying up until way past midnight on Christmas Eve.

This was when the true magic of Christmas took place. Even though we were still young enough to believe in Santa, we were old enough to go with Mom and Dad to Midnight Mass at **St. Mary's Church** in Tiskilwa. There was something almost mystical and quite divine about the midnight service, and it wasn't hard to imagine the birth of Christ on such a solemn and special occasion.

We all dressed in our finest for the midnight service. My brothers were miniatures of my dad in their little suits and I smoothed the snow-white skirt of my Kate Greenaway dress. My sisters had similar dresses and Mom looked beautiful in her best red dress and coat with the Christmas tree pin and matching earrings.

Off we went, all packed together in the car. We'd gone a few short miles when my sister **Julie** began to hum a Christmas song. Pretty soon, I joined in and my mom picked up the harmony. All the way to town we sang our favorite Christmas carols, as we practiced the music we'd perform during Midnight Mass.

In between songs, we stared out at the frosty night and the passing homes, lit from the inside and bubbling over with Christmas lights on the outside. Overhead were the bright, cold stars and a sharp-sided crescent moon. Just like the night when Jesus was born, I thought and wondered if I'd ever hear the angels sing the way they did that first Christmas night.

Down the hill, around the bend and into town, Tiskilwa was all wrapped up in twinkling lights and glitter and snow like the best present under the tree. Dad parked the car in front of the church and we kids tumbled out of the car, racing to see who could reach the Nativity scene first. The crèche with its statues had been put up outside the church the week before and we gazed at it with delight. Mary with her sweet expression, Joseph

protecting her, the worshipful wise men and shepherds and the angel with her outstretched wings seemed to almost come alive on this night of all nights.

"But where's Jesus?" asked my little sister **Cathy**.

"He's not born yet," my brother **Joe** replied. "That's what happens tonight."

"Nuh-huh," she denied. "Tonight's the night when Santa comes."

My sister **Julie** told her, "So does Baby Jesus. Wait and see."

"C'mon, kids," Dad was growing impatient. "Let's get inside."

Holly wreaths decorated the front doors, and the church was warm and glowing with candles in the windows and on the altar. Garlands of greenery hung from the ceiling and another Nativity scene decorated the side altar. My dad and brothers found their places at a pew midway down the aisle, while Mom took us girls upstairs into the choir loft.



Father Casimir Ruibys and eleven of his merry band of altar servers pose at the nativity scene inside St. Mary's in 1981.

My aunt **Catherine Ary** met us at the top of the steps. She was wearing a pretty green dress and we whispered our Merry Christmas greetings before she flipped on the switch that powered the massive pipe organ that embraced the entire choir loft. We smiled at the other members of the choir and admired each other's Christmas finery. I gave a small wave to **Julie Smith** from my class at school. She was with her mother **Celia**, along with her sister **Janet** and brother **Marty**. I decided that everyone liked to sing Christmas carols just like me, for the choir loft was full that night. **Ann** and **Cathy Longman**, the **Butte sisters**, **Mrs. Hunter**, my third-grade substitute teacher, plus **Bernie Cotter** and **Don Sims** who added their deep voices to our sopranos. **Barb Grebner** joined us and had brought with her baby **Beth Ann**, who was adorable in a red velvet dress.

While we followed that song with "Away in a Manger," **Father Ruibys** and the altar servers processed outside to place the statue of Baby Jesus in the crèche with Mary

[Continued on page 5]

**UPDATE ON GALLERY ON GALENA
(FORMER AMERICAN LEGION HALL)**

As noted on page 1, extensive renovation and restoration work is underway on our “Gallery on Galena.” In light of our stated mission to collect, preserve, and display items that are part of our heritage, this expansion fills the bill! Though quite a daunting task, breathing life back into the old Legion Hall helps to preserve an important part of Tiskilwa’s history. As a bonus, it affords us the opportunity to honor the memory of our veterans as well as our country-school heritage. And so it begins.

Once the initial sorting, identifying, and preserving of items and the



general clean-up of the main floor was complete, **Ed Waca, Bill Wendle** and **Randy Senneff** put together a four-page data base listing the needed repairs and replacements, prioritizing each item and labeling tasks as contract or volunteer work, estimating hours and costs, and setting up a check-off column for completion. In early October, **Rick McCauley’s** construction crew replaced the roof and the front-door overhang.

At press time, numerous projects are complete: acquisition of insurance and fire extinguishers; replacement of the old basement stairway; removal and disposal of debris, including ceiling material and non-functioning appliances; demolition of the bathroom and realigning walls; installation of window wells and grading of soil to prevent water problems; replacement of five basement windows and twelve main-floor windows with repaired window frames; removal of cabinet doors and drawers for sanding and repainting; enlargement of east door for handicap accessibility; rewiring the building; and additional minor tasks. Next up – drywalling the bathroom area. A local veteran has offered to install the insulation, so our only cost will be for material.

Quite an impressive list, we hope you’ll agree! Despite volunteer work for everything but the roofing and main-floor windows, we’ve raised only half of the renovation cost, and we’re excited to continue with our work. Read on!

Since our September issue, our list of Building Fund donors has grown to include **the family of Jack Yepsen, Bill & Margaret Wendle, Dorothy Ary,** and **the family of Dave Doolittle.** With **Bob Sash’s** matching donation for our first \$5,000 in individual donations, plus our proceeds from our “Voices from Mount Bloom” fundraiser and **Lee Helle’s** special donation, our total was over \$10,000.

Did you notice the word “WAS”? As we install a new furnace and continue other renovations, we’re asking the community to keep our funds moving toward the goal of another \$5,000, also to be matched by Bob Sash.

IN THIS ISSUE ONLY: In addition to inserting the usual forms for membership/sponsorship, which are so important for keeping the home fires burning at the MoM, we’ve included a separate sheet for Building Fund contributions. We’re hopeful that our readers can find it in their hearts and their budgets to make a special, one-time contribution to our Building Fund.



Left: Retiring Board members, Elaine Burress Bowers and Jan Pruitt Lohaus were honored at our September 10 program for their good and faithful service to the society.

Center: For our “As Is” Open House on September 22 Board members Ed Waca, Gail McCauley, and Connie Kauffman served treats.

Right: Board members Randy Senneff and Bill Wendle pondered the demolition of the existing bathroom walls.



Left: Who is that masked man? None other than our newest board member, Bill Wendle, as he worked on scraping old paint from cabinets at the old Legion Hall.

Right: We found some fascinating artifacts stashed in the big wooden chest at the south end of the room. Can you help us identify/explain these flags? We have only guessed at this point. The one that Margaret Ioder Wendle is holding might be a WW I flag symbolizing 114 local soldiers serving in the war and the gold star at the top for one who lost his life. At right, Cecille Gerber displays a huge 48-star flag, possibly from a military ship.

**Folks from Far and Wide:
500+ Visit Museum This Summer!**



In mid-August, we hosted more than 50 visitors from the **Charlotte Mason Family Group** at our Museum on Main for a couple of hours. These families from throughout the nation were attending a school-year kick-off conference at **Camp Mennohaven.** In order to help them learn more about our village and area, we prepared a lively activity guide for interacting with items throughout the museum.

IN MEMORIAM

*Thank you for memorials received since our September newsletter.
JACK YEPSEN and NOAH BICKETT*

THE WAPSIPINICON, DECEMBER 2018
Korean War Era Veterans
from Our November 2009 "Salute to



We wanted to share this 2009 photo of Tiskilwa-area veterans from the Korean War era. Many of these great guys have passed away, but we truly continue to honor their service and their memory.

(From left) Top row: Clarence Compton, Joe Kunkel, Fran Ary. Middle row: Keith Nye, Jim Schertz, Lee Sidebottom, Harold Graff, Alan Walker. Front row: Don Lawson, Gene Gustafson, Mick Kunkel, Mervin Polson.

In a program called "Voices from the Forgotten War," our society honored area veterans who served in the Korean Conflict era on November 9, 2009. Several veterans or veterans' widows shared stories of training, deployment, and combat. In addition, society members read excerpts from letters sent home by service members and published in the *Tiskilwa Chief* during the 1950s. As always, the society videotaped the event and this program is available for viewing at the museum.

June 25, 2018, marked the 68th anniversary of the beginning of the U.S. involvement in this unofficial war. With North and South Korea in the news once again in recent months, it's a chilling bit of history to recall that there was neither a declaration of war from U.S. Congress nor has there been an official truce.

DECEMBER'S HISTORY MYSTERY



This 1912 photo shows the "New Mennonite Church" on the corner of Main and Galena Streets. Name the Tiskilwa native who designed this structure and prepared all its plans.

MYSTERY solved: Edward Quick (THS 1910) earned his degree from the University of Illinois. Legend has it that Ed designed this church as part of his final project to earn his architectural degree. He was **Peggy Quick Johnston's** dad and grandfather of T-H-S member **Mark Johnston.**

Hear the Angel Voices *(Continued from page 3)*

and Joseph. Then they came back in and placed another Baby Jesus in the nativity on the side altar.

I nudged my little sister as we watched the procession from up above. "Now Baby Jesus is with his folks," I whispered to her before Mom pulled us away from the railing to a safer place by her side.

At a nod from Catherine, we all stood up. Aunt Catherine's hands touched the keys and her feet danced on the pedals as we opened the mass with our rousing rendition of "Joy to the World."

I remember the rest of the night as filled with song. Soft, somber songs, beautiful Latin responses and joyful hymns overflowed from the choir loft, and everyone in the church joined us in our celebration of His birth.

Then my mom took her place by the organ and whispered to my Aunt Catherine. I sat forward with anticipation, knowing what was going to happen next. Her solo was "O Holy Night," and Mom's lilting soprano soared all the way to the rafters as the parishioners received Holy Communion.

Not long after that, the midnight service came to an end. The choir sang its last song of the night, "Angels We Have Heard on High," and we shrugged back into our coats. I yawned, feeling a sudden desire for my pajamas and warm bed. We hugged Aunt Catherine and waved our good-byes to our fellow choristers.

But the magic of that midnight service remained with me, from the ride home until Mom and Dad tucked us into our beds. As I drifted to sleep, it wasn't with visions of sugarplums. When I closed my eyes, I saw the golden halo from the candlelight on the altar. Baby Jesus was with his folks now in the Nativity scene and we all sang *sleep in heavenly peace*. I recalled the organ's majestic accompaniment to our voices blended in a joyous chorus of celebration and I smiled as I fell asleep. I had heard the angels sing, after all.



With a family brimming with musical talent, the Jamison kids always heard music in their home.

Note: Monica recently wrote: "Although we've lost our leader of the band, we will never lose the music that was his life. How blessed we all are."

TISKILWA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

110 EAST MAIN STREET

P.O. Box 87

TISKILWA, IL 61368

www.tiskilwahistoricalsociety.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Left: As Ole Man Winter makes his way back into our Valley, we're sharing a familiar Tiskilwa sight that was captured by **Warren Searles** last winter. Recognize it as the east side of the HydroTech business, formerly the Hughes Hardware store? Thought so.

Right: We're seeking an assist on the origin of the moniker for "**Owl's Head**," the "singleton" promontory east of town. We're wondering if it was a Potawatomi name, a European settler's label, or perhaps even a name bestowed by the early 20th-century Boy Scouts who built a cabin on its summit?

JOHN F. HEDRICH
Trial Lawyer
726 South Main Street
Princeton, IL 61356
815-872-1010

Piccolo's Pizzeria
127 E. Main St., Tiskilwa, IL
815-646-4661
DINE-IN CARRY-OUT DELIVERY
OPEN Wednesday - Sunday 4-10 pm CLOSED Monday & Tuesday

Central Bank
ILLINOIS
PRINCETON 317 S Main St 815-875-3333
GENESEO 101 N State 309-944-5601
FULTON 1404 14th Ave 815-589-3232
www.central-bank.com
Search App Central Bank Illinois
Member FDIC

Kelly's Place
222 W. Main Street • Tiskilwa
Ph: 815-646-4773

THESE BUSINESSES DONATED POSTAGE FOR SEPTEMBER.

Wapsipinicon Editors:
Cecille Gerber, cecillegrbr2@gmail.com
Jane Jones, jjones215@gmail.com