



Resource Center

Historical Perspectives

Port Washington



Port Exploreum

Historical Society



1860 Lighthouse

VOLUME 30, ISSUE 4

FALL 2019

SHE'S BAAAAAAAACK!

Thanks to the generosity of charitable benefactors, our historic lifeboat from the *SS Milwaukee* is now back home—albeit in temporary safe storage—until we have finalized plans for a structure in which to display it on the Light Station grounds. Many thanks to Historical Society friend, Tom Jacknow, who loaned us his boat trailer to ferry and store the lifeboat to and from Sturgeon Bay, to Mark Koenig for transporting and helping with the planning for display of the boat, and to Phil Uttech and crew at Calibre Boat Repair in Sturgeon Bay for their expertise and beautiful craftsmanship in bringing this artifact back to life.

Kathie Gordon
Light Station Co-Manager

Newsletter's now more computer friendly—click on hyperlinks throughout!



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Contact information

P.O. Box 491
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Port Exploream

118 N. Franklin Street
 LS & PE: 262-284-2406

Resource Center

205 N. Franklin Street
 RC: 262-268-9150

Website

www.pwhistory.org

Click

Historical Perspectives

is published four times a year

President's Message

Dear Members,

*Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth
 who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring,
 patience, and just plain loving one another.*

— Erma Bombeck

*Truly great friends are hard to find,
 difficult to leave, and impossible to forget.*

— Unknown



When you go to the Society's website, www.pwhistory.org, and click on membership information, you will read the following benefits of membership: "With all of our membership plans you will receive free admission to both the *1860 Light Station* as well as the *Port Exploream*. Additionally, members enjoy program discounts, special member-only events, rental discounts and more! By being a member, you and your family can help support our mission of preserving the history of the area, the stories of its people, and assist in sharing it with others through our exhibits, programs and projects."

While this makes the excellent case to become a member, I have, over the last ten years, discovered, that for me, there are more meaningful benefits, more compelling reasons. These may be summarized in two words – volunteerism and friendship.

The comedy writer Robert Orben described volunteers as dedicated people who believe in all work and no pay. Yes, there's a grain of truth in that description, but I prefer Erma Bombeck's definition above. Volunteering provides the opportunity to define the kind of community you want to live in.

At the Historical Society, volunteering involves both exploring and preserving the past and then linking it to the future. Volunteering provides the opportunity to touch the lives of school children and shape their future. Volunteering keeps the memories of loved ones alive and stories not lost. And volunteering so often leads to friendships.

Recently over a cup of coffee at the Dockside Deli, Mark Schowalter spoke of Port's history and how so much of it was tied to friendships. Decisions were made and deals were sealed with a handshake. For that to occur, it took more than trust. It required friendship. Sure, those times of handshakes have mostly been replaced with contracts. And yet many of these contracts have a foundation built on friendship.

When you volunteer at the Society, you can expect to have fun, learn stuff you didn't know, make Port a better place to live, and most importantly, the odds will be in your favor that you will find lasting friendships. And that means everything.

And so I say thank you for membership, your volunteering and your friendship.

Bill Moren, President

Port Washington Historical Society Board of Directors

THANK YOU, ANN!

After many years of assisting with the PWHS newsletter, Ann Flierl is stepping down. She will be missed, and someone is needed to take her place! Her shoes will not be easy to fill... her successor will be responsible for:

*Planning newsletter contents with the Executive Director
 Preparing an agenda and meeting with PWHS managers and others
 Scheduling deadlines for articles, layout, assembly and distribution*

Supplying photos for the newsletter

Organizing articles and photos

(another volunteer is responsible for layout and printing)

If you are interested in filling this volunteer role, please contact the *Port Exploream* at 262-284-2406.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

What a smashing success the Gala was. With a theme of *Let Us Entertain You*, guests were serenaded throughout the evening by Mary Broad at the piano and film clips featuring Hollywood's dancing greats.

Many, many thanks to our sponsors, donors, board members, guests and especially to event volunteers. Kathie Gordon and Amy Clark were once again at the helm and key to the success. Huge thanks also go to Silent Auction Chair, Pat Kozak. Again, Jeff Morgan deserves a huge round of applause as the lead for sponsorships and many auction donations. There are so many other volunteers to thank, from those who gathered auction items to those who helped with setup and checkout. Thank you! Thank you!

It was so much fun this year, we're already planning for 2020. If you couldn't attend in 2019, we hope you can join us next year! Keep your eye out for our "save the date card" which will be in your mailbox soon.

Dawn St. George, Executive Director



THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!

Our dedicated docents and volunteers are one of our Society's most valuable resources. All of our volunteers have a special interest in Port Washington's history and our three facilities. Some docents lead our visitors through the museums' exhibits. Tours at the *Light Station* and *Port Exploreum* are tailored for school students, special

interests, local, out-of-state, and foreign visitors. Other docents also act as greeters at the *Resource Center* on Fridays and Saturdays, as cashiers and docents at the 1860 *Light Station* throughout the season, and docents at the *Port Exploreum* for our special exhibits.

Other volunteers assist in archival and clerical tasks at the *Resource Center*, as well as maintaining the *Light Station* grounds, or assisting with the annual Gala.

We welcomed two high school students at the *Light Station* to our crew this summer, due to our outreach into the sur-

rounding high schools for students who wished to pick up some community service hours for their resumes. Kalyn Diercks is now into her Junior year at Port Washington High School, and Ellaya Kucharski is a Senior at Cedarburg High School. It was wonderful having them on board and we hope to add to our

student volunteers in future seasons. Jill Cavanaugh is off to college after helping in the RC archival office this past summer.



We also welcomed new Historical Society member, Joyce Harms, as a volunteer at the *Light Station*. Her background experience in national park service lends itself well to being a great guide.



Many thanks to all our wonderful volunteers, some of whom do double (or triple) duty.



*Kathie Gordon,
Volunteer Coordinator*



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NIGHT AT THE LIGHT

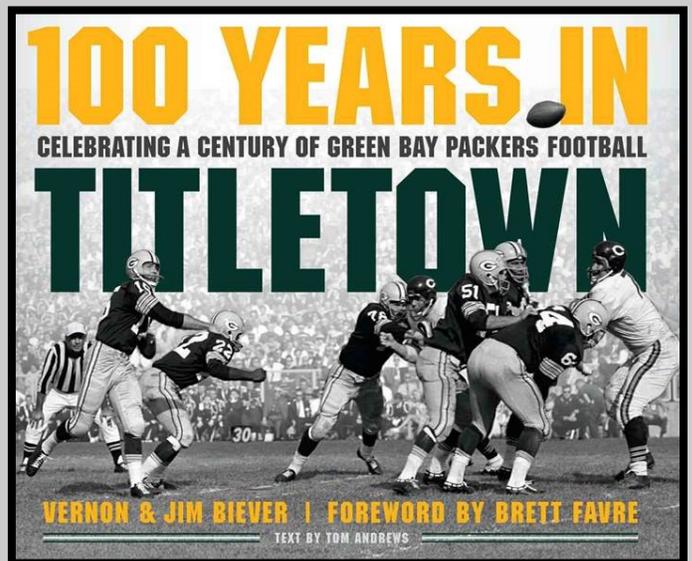
Once again, we celebrated the 1860 Light Station with our annual *Night at the Light* party. This year the picnic-themed event brought a wonderful crowd to enjoy delicious picnic fare prepared by Miss Katie’s Diner, listen to music by Green Sails, and participate in the kid-friendly games. All of this took place on the newly acquired and freshly landscaped west lawn of the LS. Of course, tours of the light station and a climb to the tower for the spectacular views capped the evening. Thanks to all who sponsored, donated, and volunteered to make the evening a success, and to all who participated.

Kathie Gordon, Co-Chair



BIEVER BOOK SIGNING

The presentation and book signing for Jim Biever's new book, *100 Years in Titledown*, will take place on Thursday, November 7, between 7 and 8 in the evening at the *Port Explorem*. Guests will have an opportunity to purchase a copy of the book.



WHAT'S UP AT THE RESOURCE CENTER?

As a historical society we collect the stories of the people who currently live or have lived within our community. Sometimes we are lucky to acquire items to go along with their story. One such story is that of Clarence Becker, aged 32, and Barbara Lanser Becker, aged 20, who married on January 7, 1939, at the Catholic church in Holy Cross, Wisconsin.



Beckers' 1939 wedding

Clarence and Barbara were married for 57 years and worked a dairy farm for 55 years in the Town of Port Washington. Clarence attended Lincoln School in the Town of Port Washington in 1947. Living on County Highway KW, Clarence's parents were Frank and Mary Karrells Becker. Barbara's parents lived on County Highway LL and were Frank and Lillian Lanser.

Clarence bought his farm on County Highway LL when he was in his twenties and farmed it for 70 years. During that period of time he also operated a farm tilling business for 30 years, helping to drain the land so it could be used productively.

Clarence enjoyed reading and fishing when he was able. Barbara, an active part of the farm, was well known for her gardens and vegetables. The Beckers had four children, numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Clarence died in 1997 followed by Barbara in 2001.

The Becker donation included Barbara's first communion dress, a photo of Barbara in her dress and her

first communion certificate. Barbara's wedding dress, slip, veil, marriage certificate and the couple's wedding photo along with several other photos were also donated.

Another recent donation came from the Milwaukee County Historical Society. As an organization that acquires items that are relevant to our area, we operate under a set of collection guidelines that provide the framework for what we accept. MCHS passed on to us some fabulous pieces of Port Washington's brewery history, items that will certainly appear in future brewery exhibits.

This summer the *Resource Center* was busy with research requests, many of them from people that walked into the center. The exhibits of Shirley Schanen Gruen's Studio and the Bienlein-Burke Maritime display have been well received by visitors.

Volunteers kept the building open on Fridays and Saturdays throughout the summer. The current exhibits will extend through the winter and will be replaced with new exhibits the spring of 2020. The *Resource Center* will follow winter hours beginning November 1, opening Monday and Thursday afternoons and by special appointment. We celebrate our volunteers in October and want to extend a hearty thank you to this vast group that does so much.



57 years of marriage

Jackie Oleson and Geri Zehren

THANK YOU, KATHIE!

More heartfelt thanks go out to Kathie Gordon as she approaches the final weeks as a staff member. Kathie plans to take one step away to spend more time with family. Though my time with Kathie has been short, I can say without reserve that I am thrilled she and Todd will continue in the future as volunteers.

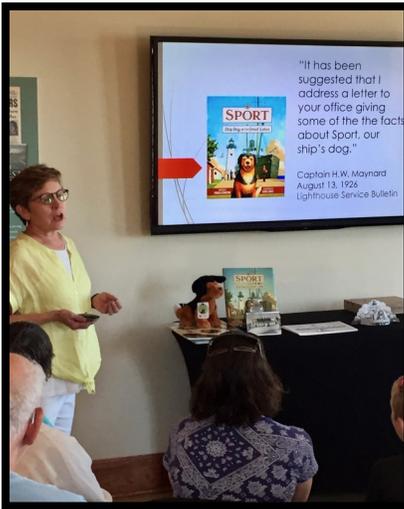
Before we open the Light Station next year, plans still need to be finalized for the reimagining of the Light Station Museum in the "Generator Building" and the placement of the lifeboat on the Light Station grounds after its fabulous makeover. Kathie and Todd will be major decision makers in those plans. Kathie, thanks for your years of service and here's to many more!

Dawn St. George, Executive Director



PRESENTATIONS AND BOOK SIGNINGS

On Thursday afternoon, August 1, author Pamela Cameron told a standing-room-only crowd how a single bit of information regarding a rescued puppy became the basis for her newest children's book, *Sport: Ship Dog of the Great Lakes*. This information led to months of researching historical documents, photos, letters and newspaper accounts before her enchanting story of a charming Newfoundland retriever could be told.



Sport author, Pamela Cameron

The book is beautifully illustrated by Renee Graef, who explained her process, which started with Pamela's manuscript, then moved to thumbnail outlines, next to sketches and finally to the published illustrations.

After their presentations, Pamela and Renee signed copies of books purchased by the attendees.



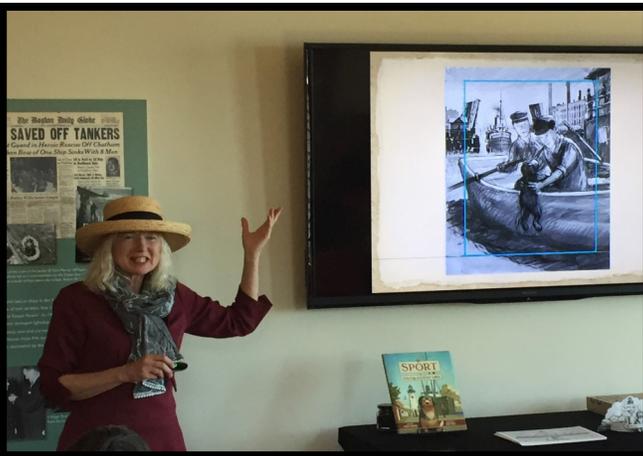
Author John Jensen

On Monday evening, August 5, a second author presentation occurred with another standing-room-only audience. Stories from the *Wreckage* author John Jensen told dramatic tales of disaster, heroism and folly connecting to stories about the frontier, the environment, immigration, politics and industry. The book features the underwater photography of Wisconsin State Historical Society

maritime archeologist, Tamara Thomsen, who also provided the photography and content for our current *Murmurs from the Deep* exhibit at the *Port Exploreum*. Following John's presentation, a book signing was held.

If you wish to purchase either of these books, please contact Amy Clark at the *Port Exploreum*.

Bill Moren, President, Port Washington Historical Society



Sport illustrator, Renee Graef

Port Washington Historical Society's Mission Statement

To create opportunities for inspirational discovery through preservation, education and exploration of the Port Washington area's history and its maritime environment with sustainable programs that honor the past while looking to the future.

SEASONAL HOURS

Port Exploreum

118 North Franklin Street
Please call for hours
Phone: 262-284-2406

Resource Center

205 North Franklin Street
November — May
Open Monday and Thursday 1pm to 4pm
Also open by appointment
Phone: 262-268-9150

1860 Light Station

311 Johnson Street
Closed for the season — October 13
Reopening May 22, 2020

*Facilities will be closed on holidays
Refer to pwhistory.org for specifics*

LOCAL WWII PILOT STILL MISSING AFTER 75 YEARS

On the morning of September 17, 1944, thousands of aircraft filled the skies of southeastern Holland. Over 1500 transport aircraft, mostly C-47 Skytrains and nearly 500 gliders, carried a mix of US, British, and Dutch airborne soldiers and support equipment deep into German-Occupied Holland. This was the first day of Operation Market Garden. Their objective: secure a series of bridges which would allow the Allied armies to liberate the nation, skirt a heavy German defensive line and drive directly into the industrial heart of the Nazi war machine.

At the controls of one of these unarmed and unarmored transports was my grandfather, 1st Lt Paul Gerhart Wienen, copilot on this flight. He was one of five young men who made up the crew of this particular C-47, which carried soldiers of the US 82nd Airborne destined for a landing near Groesbeek, just a few miles from the German border. German resistance was expected to be light, mostly rear-line troops composed of old men and young boys, with minimal air defenses.

This expectation proved false as the transport planes encountered heavy anti-aircraft fire. Several planes were shot down, including my grandfather's. He died that September morning, along with many other Airborne and Air Corps soldiers. He was never found, and officially he was listed as "Missing - Presumed Dead."

He would never return to his home in Port Washington, to the people whom he had wowed when he flew his plane low over the city multiple times during what the local paper dubbed "The Bombing of Port Washington." He would never return home to the pregnant wife who waited for him, carrying his child, Paul Gerard Wienen, my father.

For nearly 75 years, this was the extent of what my family knew to my grandfather. His wife, Dorothy John Wienen, who died twenty years later, seldom spoke of what happened to him, and in her grief destroyed the letters he'd sent to her during the war. My father grew up knowing only a picture on the wall for a father. The army shared scant information. In 1945, one year and one day after he had gone missing, he was de-

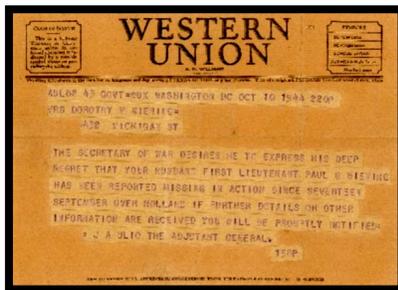
clared KIA. No details were provided.

Three years ago, the army contacted our family. Identification of unknown soldiers who died in World War II and other conflicts, and who could not be identified by means available to investigators at that time, is now aided by DNA technology. The research teams were investigating several unidentified remains from the area where my grandfather's plane went down. They provided long-withheld information on the case, including reports from other members of my grandfather's squadron: after all paratroopers successfully exited the craft, his plane caught fire under intense anti-aircraft flak. The pilot, Captain Parker, held the controls steady as the engines cut out, and two other crew members jumped to safety before the plane crash-landed. Parker survived the crash but was taken prisoner along with two other crew members. My grandfather and one other crew member went missing.

How exciting to hear this, to be given even this meager description of what happened to him after so long! Even though there were still many unanswered questions, and his remains were still unidentified, our family buzzed with excitement over these new developments. This was more than we ever knew! Like many families who lost loved ones to war, we had only guessed at where he was serving, where he was killed, what had happened to him. For seven decades, all we were given was a date and a country. Now, we had a few details. And we knew someone was still trying to find him.

During a family trip to the Groesbeek area two years ago with my sister, Toni Wienen Krick, and our mother, Michele Weiland, we had the amazing coincidence to meet several local historians who had more information about what happened on that fateful day. Many Dutch locals vividly remember the day British and American soldiers arrived, risking and often giving their lives to liberate a country of strangers. Several locals continue to study the history of the events and serve as amateur battlefield archaeologists, searching for remnants of the battle, including the remains of missing soldiers. While they had no additional information about our grandfather, they

(Continued on page 9)



Lt. Wienen (far left) with his C-47 plane he named after his wife, "dot" Dorothy

(Continued from page 8)

shared plenty of other details of what happened that day.

We were invited to return to the Groesbeek area last month for the 75th anniversary of Operation Market Garden. Several other American families attended, including a fought over seven During a service two captured men who by a drunken in the Ger-Kranenburg, of reading a ing those who died, Corps sergeant during the war.



Several other American families attended, including a fought over seven During a service two captured men who by a drunken in the Ger-Kranenburg, of reading a ing those who died, Corps sergeant during the war.

I had the privilege of speaking with Eugene Metcalf, a veteran of the 82nd Airborne who was captured by German forces near Nijmegen. Metcalf's story is told in the book, *Left for Dead at Nijmegen*. Clearly and coherently, the 96-year-old vet told me his story. He emphasized that of all the countries in which he'd fought, the Dutch were the only ones to come out of their homes and greet the Allied forces with gratitude. He was deeply moved to see how the locals, sometimes three generations of the same family, continue to keep the memory alive, embracing the freedom they'd won back after years of Nazi oppression and atrocities. They never forgot that day, and each year they hold commemoration ceremonies to keep the memory alive.



The author and his sister with the wreath they placed in Kranenburg, Germany, to honor the US troop carrier crews from Operation Market Garden

We have yet to learn more about my grandfather. The army continues its research aided by our family's DNA samples, but updates are often slow due to the sheer volume of cases under investigation. A missing soldier is identified nearly every day, but there are thousands of unidentified soldiers just from that region alone. More than 72,000 Americans remain unaccounted for worldwide from WWII alone.

Earlier this year, on the basis of a partial dental

match indicating he may have been my grandfather, the DNA of an unknown soldier from a mass grave was tested. It turned out to be the remains of Sergeant Ruble, the other "Missing - Presumed Dead" crewman from my grandfather's plane.

Until only a few years ago, my grandfather was little more to me than a picture on the wall and a few second-hand stories rarely spoken by my father, who passed away in 2005. But thanks to researchers with the US armed forces and the dedication and passion of many Dutch historians and amateur archaeologists, I have a



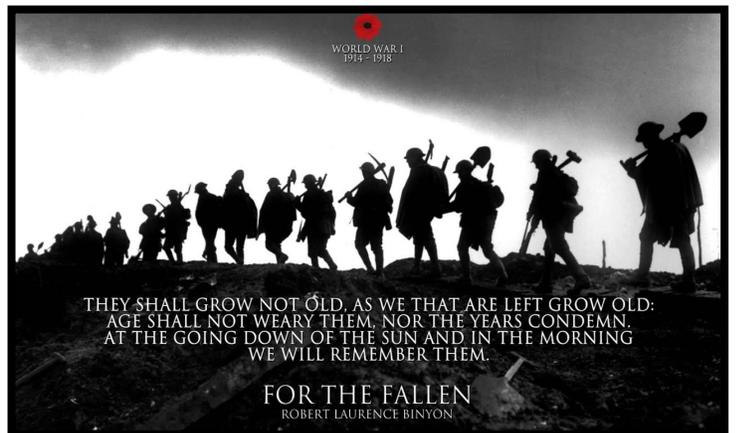
Toni Krick and P. Gus Wiening at the site of their grandfather's 1944 plane crash near Kranenburg, Germany

more complete picture of the role my grandfather, 1st Lt Paul G. Wiening, served in Operation Market Garden.

My family developed friendships with people on the other side of the world and heard amazing stories. We were given several battlefield mementos from some of our new Dutch friends. And for the first time, my family tread on the site of my grandfather's plane crash.

Perhaps most importantly, I believe it is only a matter of time before my grandfather will be identified, and we can finally bring him home to be laid to rest between his wife and the son he never met. Then, for the first time and forever, their family will finally be together.

Paul Gustave Wiening, Port Washington Native





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 Pear & Simple
 Poco Loco Cantina
 Potawatomi Hotel & Casino

GIFT MEMBERSHIPS

Thanks to all current members! When thinking about gifts for the coming holiday season, please consider a gift membership to the PWS.

If you have not renewed your membership, we encourage you to join.

Photos in this issue by:

Amy Clark

Ann Flierl

Todd Gordon

Missy Hockeman

Bill Moren

Please Join Us!

Society Membership Levels & Benefits One Society -Three Destinations	Individual \$35	Family \$50	Honor Donor \$250	Patron Donor \$500
1-year FREE Unlimited Admission to the Port Exploreum, the 1860 Light Station and the PWSH Resource Center	Individual	2 Adults & children under 17	Immediate Family	Immediate Family
FREE admission to special exhibits	•	•	•	•
Complimentary admission passes	4	8	12	20
Invitations to all programs, Speaker Series and special events	•	•	•	•
Discounts in gift shops in all locations	10%	10%	10%	10%
Discounts on rental of the Port Exploreum	10%	10%	15%	20%
Quarterly <i>Historical Perspectives</i> newsletter & members-only communications	•	•	•	•
Free Admission to the Research Center of the Luxembourg American Cultural Center in Belgium, WI	•	•	•	•
Free Admission to annual Society Gala			2	2

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Additional Gift Amount: \$ _____

Total Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

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Check payable to: Port Washington Historical Society \$ _____

OR Charge my credit card \$ _____

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: ____/____ CWV Code: ____

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Signature: _____

Yes, I'm interested in volunteering. Please contact me.

Return this form to:

PWSH PO Box 491 Port Washington, WI 53074

QUESTIONS? 262-284-2406

Become a member of the Port Washington Historical Society. A Family Membership can pay for itself in just a few visits!

FOUR WAYS TO JOIN	
Online	pwhistory.org
On-site	Port Exploreum
Mail	P.O. Box 491 Port Washington, WI 53074
Phone	262-284-2406

The Port Washington Historical Society receives no financial help from the City of Port Washington or the State of Wisconsin. As a 501 (c) (3) organization, we rely on our generous donors and Society members to provide the day-to-day funding we need to fulfill our mission. Thank you for your support!

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- Professional Services
- Robin's European Cottage
- Sharbuno Jewelers
- The Shinery Moonshine House
- Angie Sikowski
- Skylight Music Theatre
- Dawn St. George
- The Stilt House
- Studio 231
- Tello's
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- Twisted Willow Restaurant
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- Washington House Inn
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- Catherine Hazzard

- James and Beverly Konzal
- Randall and Gail Krajewski
- Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Kroening
- Jacquelyn Loeder
- Colleen Pagel
- Bill and Becky Shavlik
- Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Skow
- Lynn and Suzanne Voeks
- Robert and Caroline Wedin

IN HONOR OF HOLLY AND BOB WILKE
ANNIVERSARY

Todd and Kathie Gordon

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

- Brian Barber
- Ben Chrusciel
- Wayne Chrusciel
- Dave Koslakiewicz
- Eric Olsen

RESOURCE CENTER

Lloyd Smith

RC IN KIND DONATION

Geri Zehren

BOOKS/PAPERS/PAMPHLETS/ ABSTRACTS/MAPS

- Ardyce Ahsmann
- Charlotte Arendt

- Ned G. Bartelt
- Leroy Bley
- George Franks
- Ann Horton
- Marie Zirbes/St. Mary's Parish

BUSINESS ARTIFACTS

- Ned G. Bartelt
- Leroy Bley
- Milwaukee County Historical Society
- James T. Riley
- JoEllen Schlereth

PHOTOS/ NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS/ PRINTS/POSTERS/POSTCARDS

- Charlotte Arendt
- Leroy Bley
- Richard M. Breest
- The Harborview
- Jan Young

ANTIQUE METAL & WOOD/GLASS/ FABRIC

- Charlotte Arendt
- Richard M. Breest
- Don and Barbara Gilmore
- Todd and Kathie Gordon
- The Harborview
- Brandon Kranska



Port Washington Historical Society

P. O. Box 491
 Port Washington, WI 53074-0491
www.portwashingtonhistoricalsociety.org

Upcoming Events

ANNUAL MEETING & BOARD ELECTION Wednesday, October 16, 7-9 pm

*Social hour with snacks and beverages to follow
 Port Exploreum, 118 N. Franklin St., Port Washington*

For a complete list of PWHS
 events, click here to visit:

[www.facebook.com/
 PortWashingtonHistoricalSociety](http://www.facebook.com/PortWashingtonHistoricalSociety)
 or
www.pwhistory.org

Click

1860 Light Station Closes for the Season

Sunday, October 13

Volunteer Appreciation Gathering

Thursday, October 17, 5-7pm, *Port Exploreum*

Trick or Treat Downtown Port

Saturday, October 26, 10am-1pm
RC and Port Exploreum

Winter Hours in Effect

Friday, November 1, *RC and Port Exploreum*

Jim Bieber Presentation & Book Signing

100 Years in Titledown
 Thursday, November 7, 7-8pm, *Port Exploreum*

Christmas on the Corner

Monday, December 2, 3pm
RC and Port Exploreum

Paul Timm Presentation & Book Signing

Lost Lady: The Lady Elgin Tragedy
 Saturday, January 18, 1:30pm, *Port Exploreum*

Speaker Series: Todd Gordon

The SS Christopher Columbus: A Whaleback...
 Wednesday, February 19, 7pm, *Port Exploreum*

Note: There are an array of private events as well as group tours and school groups throughout the year. View our website www.pwhistory.org or call the *Port Exploreum* for information.