



Volume 8 Issue 2 | April 2019

WESTPHALIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MUSEUM NEWS

As in past years, we change the theme of the main room of the museum every year, while at the same time keeping some of our heritage alive in the "Westphalia" portion of the building.

The theme this year is wedding attire. Margie Wirth has wanted to do this theme for some time; her wish has now come true. It will be a very interesting exhibit! We have a large number of dresses, men's suits, cake toppers, shoes, jewelry and other wedding paraphernalia. Glenn Fink is putting together hundreds of pictures for the display.

In addition to the new wedding exhibit, Bernie Thelen and Malory Simon, with the help of Charlie Bertram, are putting together a pictorial display of that tragic day in **April 1959** when the church burned down.

The building will be full this year! The grand opening will be **May 27th** following the Memorial Day Mass in the cemetery. From there, we will follow our normal schedule of being open the afternoon the first Sunday of the month and the evening of the third Wednesday of the month.

APRIL BAKE SALE

We will again be having our annual bake sale on the garage sale weekend. Stop into PFCU on **Friday, April 26th**. We will have homemade goodies there from 9:00 AM until we run out of items.

If you wish to donate baked goods, they can be brought to PFCU that morning or be dropped off on the porch of Theresa Quartermus at 310 S. Westphalia St.

This is one of our main fundraisers of the year and we are forever grateful for the support and to PFCU for their hospitality.

GERMAN STUDENTS

Ms. Johnston, a teacher at PW, will be bringing 16 students and 2 chaperons (teachers) from Germany to our museum the morning of **April 9th**. The group is from the northern area of Germany, near the city of Hamburg. They are staying at the homes of PW students.

In June, Ms. Johnston will be taking 12 PW students to Germany for a reciprocal visit. It should be a fun time for visiting parties to share experiences.

IMPORTANT DATES & INFO

Wedding Photo Scanning

If you'd still like to have a wedding photo scanned for our 2019 exhibit, we have another opportunity Saturday, **April 6 from 10 AM - 12 PM** at our museum. See our website for additional information.

2019 Exhibit Opening

Join us May 27th for the opening of the new exhibit: Wedding Attire in Westphalia

We will open **after the 9:00 AM** Memorial Day Mass @ St. Mary Cemetery

FROM GERMANY...

"In the [December] Westphalia news letter I read "Christmas in Germany". I can say, it is similar in our Eifel villages today [and] also in the parish of Langenfeld, where many of the Westphalian ancestors are coming from.

There is one difference: The children do not find the gifts under the Christmas tree. The Christ Child comes into the houses where little children are living. The Christ Child is a girl from the village in company with other girls (young unmarried ladies).

In the entrance hall [of the house] the mothers give the Christ Child the gifts. Then the Christ Child goes into the living room and presents the children the gifts. In the [picture] you can see how the look of the Virneburg Christ Child is." (Virneburg is in the Eifel region)

-- We get notes from time to time from faraway followers of our newsletter. This email and photo came from Günter Pung, who visited Westphalia in 2012. He subscribes to our newsletter (as do people from Westphalia, Texas and other parts of the US and world). Thank you for the information, Günter !



FIRE TRUCK



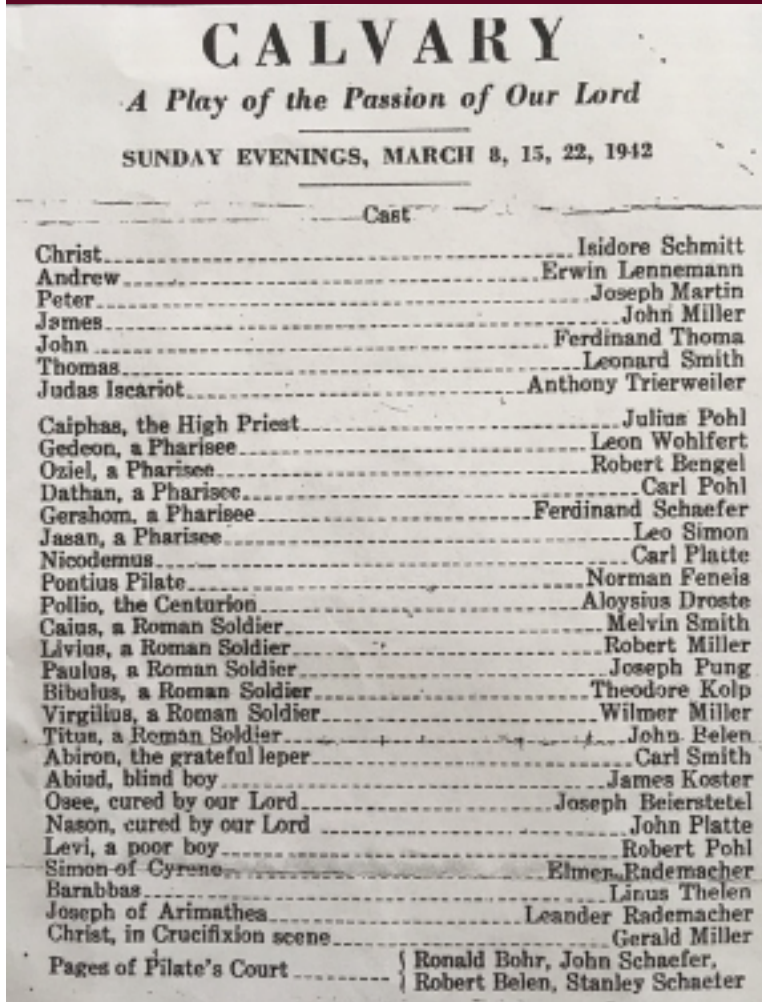
The recent Fireman's Breakfast brings to mind a story that happened back in the 1950s. It seems that Greg Thelen, who was the mayor at the time, was visiting with a sales rep in his hardware store (which is now Ox's Smoked Meats) when the siren went off at the fire hall (which at the time was across the street and is currently the parking lot of the Little Flower Market). Being the mayor, he was very proud of his village. As the story goes, he told the rep, "Just watch these guys; they are very fast and good." Joining them outside to watch was Don Schafer; they were wondering where the firetruck would be going.

True to form, the volunteers started showing up: Delbert Thelen, Izzy Schmitt and Ed Spitzley. To the dismay of Greg, nothing was happening. Then to Greg's embarrassment, the firemen were seen pushing the 1941 Ford truck to get it started. The battery was dead.

When it was finally removed from service, the 1941 Ford Darley pumper was sold to the "Vigilantes": Harold Smith, Gus Pline, Don Schneider, Gary Lucas, etc. In later years they sold the truck to Lee and Karen Thelen and Tim and Gwen Thelen. The Thelen couples owned the truck for about 10 years. Last summer, it passed hands again to a person living near Lyons, who plans to get it back in good running condition.

Special thanks to Don Schafer, Delbert Thelen and Lee Thelen for their contributions to this memorable story from the past. Maybe we'll see the old 41 Ford Darley pumper in one of the 4th of July parades again down the road.

IN TIME FOR EASTER, FROM THE ARCHIVES...



Thanks to Peg Keilen for bringing us a copy of the playbill from a 1942 production of *A Passion of Our Lord*. As you can see, this playbill ran in the Portland Review and Observer, but you can bet many people had their own copy.

Father Gutha arrived in Westphalia in 1932. He did many things for our parish in his time here. In addition to organizing basketball and baseball teams, he reorganized the orchestra, male choir and drama club.

The drama club put on about six plays a year around this time. You can imagine how popular these performances would have been in the days before TV and easy access to movies. Plus, with so many people participating, it would have been a highlight to see friends and family members perform. Fr. Gutha was instrumental in getting new lights and scenery to help make the play experience even better.

The program was all one piece originally. In order to have the names more easily read, we split it up. However, it's still not the best. If you're having a hard time viewing the program, we'll have pictures on our website under Newsletters.

westphaliahistory.weebly.com

Follow Us on **Facebook**

Email Us @ westphalia1836@gmail.com

