



# Westphalia Historical Society Newsletter

Nov. - Dec. 2012

Volume 4



## Fr. Kopp Memorial

Did you know that the Historical Society donated the Fr. Kopp memorial in front of the Parish Office? During the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary year it was felt that a marker should be placed in his memory. When Fr. Kopp left Westphalia he went on to Detroit

and then to Chicago where he was appointed the Vicar-General of the Archdiocese of Chicago. He was the founding pastor of St. Michael Church in that city. His last parish was St. Joseph in Wilmette, Illinois. He died in Detroit on Jan 15, 1862 and was buried from Old St. Mary's in what is now Greektown. At this time the exact location of his burial is not known, however it is assumed to be in the old Mt. Elliott Cemetery in the City of Detroit. In all honesty he probably should have been buried in Westphalia since he was one of the first founders of our community and was appointed as the first pastor here on November 19, 1836 by Bishop Rese in Detroit.

**Need a Christmas Gift?** "Of Pilgrimage, Prayer and Promise...The Story of St. Mary's Westphalia 1836-1986" is available at the Credit Union, Plannedscapes, & Westphalia Milling for \$23 each/2 or more \$20.00 each

"Quiet Heroism"...This book remembers the 87 young Westphalia area women who entered the convent and is available at Ox's Smoked Meats and Groceries for \$6.00.

"Historical Film Footage 1936-1961" as shown during last year's 175<sup>th</sup> celebration contains footage taken by Fr. Gutha of the 1936 Centennial & footage from the 125<sup>th</sup> in 1961, available from Teresa Quartermus, \$15.00 each.

"Westphalia High School Reunion 1938-1950", available at Plannedscapes and Westphalia Milling, \$3.00 each.

"Sisters of Christian Charity", available from Evelyn Weiland, \$1.00 each.

## Our Friends & Neighbors East of Westphalia

We send our greetings and congratulations to our neighbors – St. Peter Lutheran Church in Riley Township. They have celebrated their 135<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a successful community.

Their Founding Fathers (John Rossow was one) left the German Province of Mecklenburg for America a few years after Westphalia was settled in 1836. They were farmers and they had heard about the German community of Westphalia in Clinton County.

Sometime before 1855, the German Lutherans came and settled in the "dense wilderness known as Dallas." Land for their first cemetery was provided by Joseph Nuffer and their first church services were held in the home Frederick and Catherine Luecht.

In the history of St. Peter it is written of Westphalia: "The kindhearted Catholics helped out the new pioneers to the area by helping them clear out the land for creation of farmland as well as providing a small wage for labor and food..."

We congratulate our neighbors and may our friendship remain steadfast for many years to come.

Thanks to Michelle E. Hart, author of "A History of St. Peter Lutheran Church, Riley Township, Michigan," December 1989.

**The "Brown Book"** has arrived!!!! If you have ordered copies of this book and have not yet been notified, please call Maggie Upson 587-4193 or Margie Wirth 587-6984 to make arrangements for picking up yours.



*The Historical Society wishes everyone a Blessed Christmas.*

### **Newsletter writers:**

We have been in contact with both St. Mary's and P-W High Schools. The thought being to see if there is any interest in some of the students writing articles of the area's past. There are many stories of family lore and local history that have yet to be researched, written and shared. Many of their grandparents and possibly great-grandparents would be terrific resources as well as local history books. It would be a wonderful opportunity for some of our children to become investigators in their own town as they interview their grandparents or senior neighbors to learn more about the community in which they live and its history. Please read future newsletters for more information about our collaboration with our schoolchildren.

### **Can't find a copy of the newsletter?**

Our newsletter is now available online on the Westphalia Village website [www.westphaliami.com](http://www.westphaliami.com). On the home page you will see the Historical Society logo. When you see it, click on it and you can pull up the current and all of the past newsletters. We would like to thank our Village for making these newsletters available and appreciate all of the support we have received from them.

### **What do the films reveal?**

At the September Historical Society meeting Clara Smith brought a shoebox that contained several 16mm films and containers of slide strips that were found in Fr. Gutha's house years ago. As of now, no one has any idea of what is in the films or slides. We are hoping to get a look at them some time this winter. Since we know Fr. Gutha was ahead of his time in making movies and taking pictures it will be interesting to see what they contain.

### **A German song learned in my childhood, Evelyn Weiland**

Christ Kindchen komm in unser Haus.  
Schüttel deine grosse Tasche Aus.  
Stell das Pferdchen unter den Tisch  
Das es Heu und Hafer frist.  
Lustig, lustig, tral – a-la-la.  
Bald ist Weihnachstabend da.

#### Translation

Christ Child come into our house.  
Shake out your big pockets.  
Set your little horse under the table  
So that it hay and oats can eat.  
Joyfully, joyfully, tral – a – la –la  
Christmas Eve soon will be here.

**Leo Pohl shares some thoughts on the Feast of St. Nick....** With the feast of St. Nick fast approaching on December 6<sup>th</sup>, it might be a fun time to talk to your children or family members about how the feast was celebrated in the past. As time marches on, traditions change and over time some are even forgotten or abandoned. For example, years ago it was a real treat to get bananas or oranges on the feast of St. Nicholas as fresh fruit was not readily available and was very expensive, making it a real treat in December.

For some families St. Nick would simply knock on the window or door to let you know he had been there, and a bag of goodies would be sitting outside the door. For others he might come in person (often a relative or neighbor dressed up) to visit the "good" children with treats. In other cases he would come with Schwarze Pete (Black Pete). Black Pete would be dressed in black and would give a lump of coal to the kids who had been naughty. In another case, children would set their shoes outside their bedroom door and St. Nick would come during the night and fill them with goodies.

"As a child, I remember hiding in the wood box on the back porch waiting to catch him in the act of delivering candy. But the longer I was outside, the colder I got. Wouldn't you know it, I had no sooner come in the house to warm up and there was a knock on the door and I had missed him."

Originally St. Nicholas, a bishop in the city of Myra in Asia Minor would throw coins into the window or on the doorstep of a very poor family, but there are many legends about him and it would be a wonderful opportunity to share these with your children. St. Nicholas was made a saint in A.D. 80 by the Eastern Church.

The Christmas season is a wonderful time to reminisce and celebrate those old traditions that make the season special.

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**Donation from Stanley & Rose Schafer, \$25.00 in memory of our parents: Louis & Dora Klein and Oscar & Louise Schafer.** If you would care to make a donation to the Westphalia Historical Society, it may be sent to *Rose Schafer, Treasurer, Westphalia Historical Society, 5131 S. Grange Rd., Westphalia, Michigan, 48894*

Do you have a story to tell? We welcome your suggestions. Call Evelyn 587-6839, Leo 587-3843, or email [Charlotte.jerchar@4wbi.net](mailto:Charlotte.jerchar@4wbi.net).