



Westphalia Historical Society Newsletter

June 2014

Volume 13

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If you would like to make a donation, please send it to Westphalia Historical Society, P.O. Box 163, Westphalia, Michigan 48894-0163.



A belated Happy Birthday greeting to Rosemarie Rademacher on her 90th Birthday on January 17th! Also Happy Birthday to Helen Wirth who celebrated her 97th birthday on May 1st & Rita Thelen whose 98th birthday was on May 31st!

Bil Turner, Guest Speaker

At our May meeting Bil Turner, a collector of "Old Michigan Beer Stuff" from Eagle Michigan was a guest speaker. His hobby is researching and collecting artifacts from former Michigan Breweries. Bil gave a very interesting overview of the brewing industry in Michigan prior to prohibition in the early 1900's. One of his current interests is to gather any information on the "Clinton" also named the "Fritz-Cook" Brewery that was located north of Westphalia by the Creek which is just south of Millie Droste's house. He is looking for an old keg, bottle, label, sign or anything else that would help document the brewery before it is lost in history. Local legend has it that there was a boardwalk that went from town to the Brewery that was used quite a bit on most Sunday afternoons after Church.

Evelyn Weiland has written an article giving further information on *The Brewery* that will be included in our next newsletter.

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Cruise-In: Westphalia will be hosting its 10th Annual Cruise-In on Thursday June 12th. We will be selling Pretzels T-shirts, copies of old photographs, (The original Cruise-in 1914), "blue books" and "brown books".

Book Signing: Kurt Thelen, author of "When Boppa Was a Boy," has agreed to do a book signing once our building is ready. For those of you who have copies, you can bring them with you or there will be some available at the signing. We will keep you posted via the Newsletter on the date and time.

Volunteers: As people know most non-profit groups depend on their volunteers and ours is no different. Down the road we will do our best to acknowledge the people who have helped us with our building.

By-Laws: We are in the process of redoing our by-laws to meet our current needs. They are now being reviewed to make sure they are legal and up to date. Once we get the O.K. we will present them to the members for a vote.

Cemetery Walk: In September we will be having a cemetery walk. Visitors will visit 6 gravesites for a 10 minute talk about the person buried there. The presenters will be wearing period clothing and will represent the person. Admission will be free, however we will accept donations, since that's what keeps us going.

#1 Mathias Weber: Civil War soldier and prisoner of war at Andersonville

#2 John Hanses: one of the founding fathers of Westphalia & his wife, **Elizabeth Martin Hanses**

#3 Barbara Heinlein: Donator of the painting of the 14 Holy Helpers which hangs in the back of St. Mary's Church.

#4 Michael Hayes: The Irishman whose family is buried under the famous Camperdown Elm in the Cemetery

#5 Dr. Bruno Cook: A local legend many of us can still remember

#6 Joseph Snitgen: The founder of the Snitgen store located on the southwest corner of Westphalia & Main Streets.

Again, we will keep you posted on the date and time via the next Newsletter.

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#### **And the Nicknames, Remember?**

Schimmel – Leo Gross

Leo started Gross Machine Shop in October of 1939. Today his sons, Gerry & Mike, continue with the shop located on West Main Street in Westphalia.

Hinishta – Anthony Miller

Anthony most likely was given his nickname because he lived on the last or the back street in town in the early days.

Detta – Margaret Martin

Margaret, you may remember, owned & operated Martin's Restaurant, now Charlie's on the corner of Main & Westphalia Streets. You may also remember those famous chicken dinners prepared and served by her parents – Frank and Maggie Martin.

Knobby – Norbert Thelen

Norbert was one of Willy & Ollie Thelen's boys. They lived a mile west of town on Price Road.

*Check out our next Newsletter for more Nickname answers!*

### **Strangers in the Box**

Come look with me inside this drawer,  
In this box I've often seen,  
At the pictures, black and white,  
Faces proud, still, serene.

I wish I knew the people,  
These strangers in the box,  
Their names and all their memories  
Are lost among my socks.

I wonder what their lives were like,  
How did they spend their days?  
What about their special times?  
I'll never know their ways.

If only someone had taken time  
To tell who, what, where, or when,  
These faces of my heritage  
Would come to life again.

Could this become the fate  
Of the pictures we take today?  
The faces and the memories  
Someday to be passed away?

Make time to save your stories,  
Seize the opportunity when it knocks,  
Or someday you and yours could be  
The strangers in the box.

*Anonymous*

#### **Available Publications**

- 1). "Of Pilgrimage, Prayer, and Promise...The Story of St. Mary's Westphalia 1836-1986," \$23 each/2 or more \$20.
- 2). "Quiet Heroism". This book remembers the 87 Westphalia area women who entered the convent \$6.00.
- 3). "Westphalia High School Reunion 1938-1950", \$3.00.
- 4). "Historical Film Footage 1936-1961", contains footage taken by Fr. Gutha of the 1936 Centennial & footage of the 125<sup>th</sup> taken in 1961, \$15.00.
- 5). "Sisters of Christian Charity", \$1.00 each.
- 6). "Westphalia Area History, 1836-1976, 140 years of growth", \$40.00.

Our email address: [westphalia1836@gmail.com](mailto:westphalia1836@gmail.com).

Our website: [www.westphaliahistory.weebly.com](http://www.westphaliahistory.weebly.com)

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. at our building 120 W. Main St., Westphalia. Hope to see you there.**

