



May / June 2020

## **BEN HUNT CABIN REMAINS CLOSED FOR NOW**



Most of you have already received an email notifying you that the Ben Hunt Cabin would not open on Saturday afternoon, May 2nd, due to the COVID-19 virus.

As all of the Cabin's openings take place on the first Saturday of each month, we will maintain this policy until a Saturday is safe for our docents and our visitors.

*(Left) Ben Hunt and his dog Packy practicing social distancing in front of the cabin.*

## **PFISTER HOTEL PROGRAM CANCELED**

Unfortunately, COVID-19 also has caused the cancellation of our second program of 2020, *The History, Art & Imagery of the Pfister Hotel*, scheduled for May 13th. Architectural photographer **Jay W. Filter** was to be our guest speaker. Jay was most understanding and has offered to present this program in the future.



## **OVER 600 PIX ADDED TO COLLECTION**

This past winter, **Dave O'Brien** dropped off a jumpdrive containing more than 600 photographs taken in Hales Corners from 2006 through 2016. The subjects include HCHS Christmas Houses, the Ben Hunt Cabin, HCHS Plant Sales, Summer Kitchen, July 4th Parades, Stahl-Conrad Homestead, Library, Department of Public Works, Schoetz Park, Veterans Memorial, Night Out, Bosch Tavern Pull, Christmas Tree Lighting, and more! Below and on page 4 are some of the photos. We hope they will put you in the mood for spring and summer.



*One of Dave O'Brien's photos, the Hales Corners Historical Society Plant Sale in front of the Village Hall, 2007*

## “OAKMOBILE” ADDS WHEELS TO LARGEST ITEM IN COLLECTION



In October 1994, a Bur Oak tree that had died was cut down in Hales Corners. A slice from the trunk was saved and added to HCHS's permanent historical collection. At 50 inches in diameter and 7-1/2 inches thick, it certainly is the largest and heaviest item in our possession! Growth rings show the tree's age to be 169 years. Since 1994, that slice has rested atop a desk in the HCHS office, definitely not the most practical place for it to be displayed. Information about the Bur Oak is on the facing page.

In March 2020, **Chris Schachtlie** volunteered to create a fitting display for our oak slice. Because the slice weighs more than 400 pounds, Chris acquired a heavy-duty wheeled trolley to hold it and enable it to be moved when necessary. He painted the trolley to match the tree's bark and fastened the slice permanently to its back support. It's quite impressive -- this is not your father's Oakmobile! (Sorry.) When the slice was first moved to the HCHS office in 1994, members compiled a list of Village historical facts that corresponded to its growth rings. Chris and **Mary Bennett** then cut the list into strips and laboriously attached them to the slice. The facts appear below, updated to reflect Village changes.

### OAK TREE SECTION - HISTORICAL DATA

**1848** - Wisconsin became a state; William Hale built Planter's House; Janesville Plank Road was chartered.  
**1854** - William Hale became local postmaster and Village was named for him; Jacob Siegel bought land in Hales Corners, which he called "a community with six houses and one of them a school."  
**1860s** - Hales Corners Stock Fair was originated by Jacob Siegel and Louis Heineman.  
**1880** - Seneca Hale died.  
**1892** - John Meade opened a hardware store on Forest Home Avenue that stood behind today's Pick'n Save.  
**1898** - William Hale died; Beginning of the Spanish-American War.  
**1902** - First telephone service in Hales Corners.  
**1903** - Rapid Transit arrived in Hales Corners.  
**1904** - Herman Bosch built the Bosch Hotel to serve Rapid Transit passengers.  
**1910** - State Bank Hales Corners founded by James Godsell and John Meade.  
**1914** - Beginning of World War I; Rudolph Holz established Holz Motors, now the largest and oldest Chevy dealership in Wisconsin.

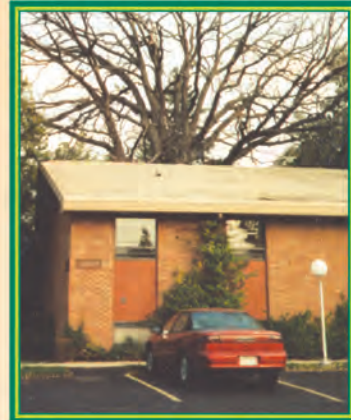
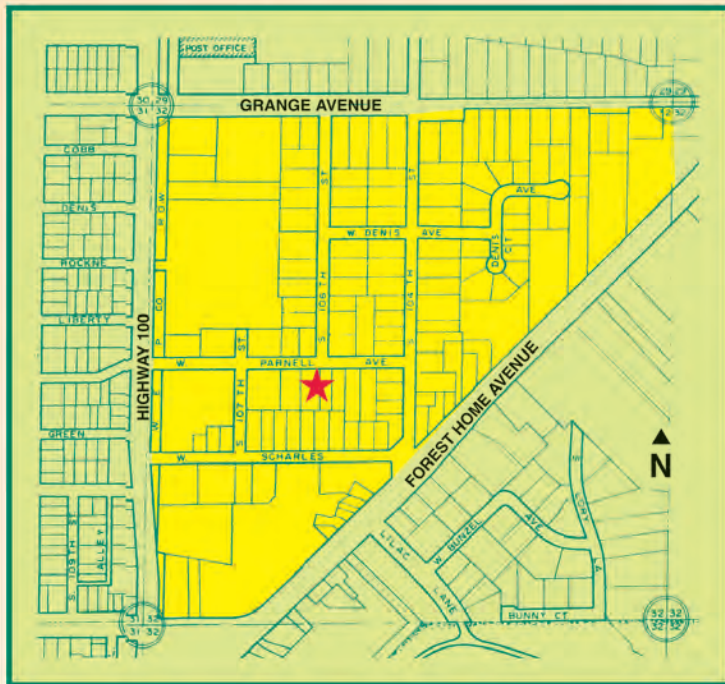
**1915** - James Godsell's daughter, Lorette, became the first female bank cashier in Wisconsin.  
**1916** - Herbert Palmersheim built a barn that stood on Highway 100 where Ritzman Appliance is today.  
**1924** - Tom Schmidt started his grocery business in the building west of the Bosch Tavern.  
**1927** - Hales Corners Fire Department established.  
**1930** - Hales Corners had 500 telephones in service.  
**1935** - Garden House in Whitnall Park built by WPA workers.  
**1942** - John Meinzer started his pharmacy.  
**1946** - George and Orrin Barczak started their grocery business.  
**1951** - Rapid Transit discontinued.  
**1952** - The Village of Hales Corners was incorporated.  
**1953** - Ritzman Appliance relocated to Hales Corners.  
**1957** - Sherper's relocated to Hales Corners.  
**1967** - Fourth of July Parade began in Hales Corners.  
**1969** - Village Hall occupied.  
**1974** - Bette Arey was the first woman elected to Village Board; Hales Corners Historical Society chartered.  
**1976** - Rudolph Holz died; Hales Corners opened its first library.  
**1985** - Hales Corners Library moved to its current building.



# ABOUT THIS TREE

This is a cross-section of a BUR OAK tree. The tree had already died when it was cut down in October 1994. It has 143 annual growth rings, which takes it back to 1851. Best estimates are that the tree sprouted in 1846, nine years after the founding of Hales Corners.

★ *The tree stood on the northeast corner of 10555 W. Parnell Avenue. It grew on land (yellow area) purchased by C. F. Elsworth in 1839.*



The BUR OAK is a common prairie tree. Because of its resistance to fire it can survive prairie fires that would kill other trees. A bur oak typically lives 200-400 years.

The bur oak can be identified by its deeply furrowed, grayish-brown bark and its acorn. The cap of the acorn covers a large part of the nut and is prickly on the bottom edge. It is the prickly edge of the cap that gives this oak its name.

The inner living part of the tree is called the cambium. It is protected by two layers of bark. As the tree expands, the bark cracks which results in its deeply furrowed appearance.





## MORE O'BRIEN PHOTOGRAPHS



*Veterans Memorial Dedication, 2012*



*Veterans Memorial Dedication, 2012*



*Trustees' carriage in Fourth of July Parade, 2010*



*HCHS float in Fourth of July Parade, 2014*

## WELCOME, NEW\* AND RETURNING 2020 HCHS MEMBERS!

Constance Anderson  
 Bette Arey  
 Kenneth J. Augustine\*  
 James Bain  
 Mary Bennett  
 Joan Berg  
 Dan & Diane Besson  
 Roger Brinkmeier  
 Robert Burnham  
 & Patricia Laughlin  
 Esther Demerdash  
 Jeffrey Dietz\*  
 Ronald & Kathleen  
 Dondlinger  
 Mike & Judee Fischer

Robert & Mary Forecki  
 Katy Galewski  
 Frederick & Marsha Hammer  
 Jean Hancock  
 David & Margarete Harvey\*  
 Michael J. Holmes  
 Frank & Judith Humpal  
 Jeffrey & Mary Javorek  
 Mike Jedrzejewski  
 & Sybil Grandeck  
 Celine Kashishian  
 James & Jacqueline Keuck  
 Bob & Dottie King  
 Mary Ann Kniep  
 Gary Kohls  
 & Karen Niessing

Scott & Judy Kruger  
 Mary Long  
 David & Kathleen O'Brien  
 Jerry & Marjorie Pagel\*  
 Mike Praedel  
 Zlatan & Christine Racic  
 Frank & Audrey Reineck  
 Cornelio & Colleen  
 Resendiz  
 Scott & Maureen Riemer  
 Richard & Carol Ann Rose  
 Randy & Sandy Sannes  
 Chris & Caroline Schachtlie  
 Kevin & Marnie Schmidt\*

Mel & Elaine Schmidt  
 Don & Suzanne Schwartz  
 Rosemary Selep  
 Walt & Nancy Sievert  
 Marjorie Stahl  
 Sherman & Sally Stock  
 Daniel & Kayellyn Strasburg  
 Al & Ruth Strekow  
 Brian & Laura Touhey  
 Thomas Ueberroth  
 & Delene Hanson  
 Jeff & Anne Weber  
 Janice Zeit  
 Kathleen Zellmer

### HALES CORNERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

5885 South 116th Street, Hales Corners, WI 53130 • 414-529-6150, Ext. 24

info@HalesCornersHistory.com • www.HalesCornersHistory.com • www.facebook.com/HalesCornersHistory