



September 2021

Brach's Animal Hospital was the Largest in America!

A horse is a horse, of course, of course -- and horses and other farm animals played a big role in our Village's early agricultural development. The need to provide medical care for those animals led to the founding of **Brach's Animal Hospital**, which reportedly was the largest veterinary hospital in the nation at its time. The hospital also was a logical adjunct to the Hales Corners Stock Fair and **Adam Conrad's** horse-buying enterprise.

The hospital was built by **Dr. Max Brach**, whose previous office was in **Jacob Conrad's** barn. On October 12, 1911, Dr. Brach bought land that is now the parking lot of Emanuel United Church of Christ (f/k/a Emanuels Kirche), at about 10635 W. Forest Home Avenue. He then proceeded to hire and supervise the tradesmen who built the hospital.



Forest Home Avenue c.1912: (l to r) Brach's Animal Hospital, Dr. Max Brach's house, entry sign and pathway to Emanuels Kirche behind house

About 30 farmers, patrons of Brach's, donated and delivered hardhead rocks for the foundation. They organized "hauling bees" to deliver the cement blocks.

The hospital's ground floor contained an office and medicine room. It also had a bedroom for the attendant and was hot water-heated throughout. The large front door was hoisted by a chain and pulley. The hospi-

tal, used primarily for horses, contained an operating table and conducted an ambulance service for disabled animals.

Dr. Brach sold his property in 1920. The building and its annex served a variety of purposes after that -- as an auto sales office, a lumber business, even the Hales Corners Post Office -- until they were razed when the intersection was widened in 1956.



This ambulance was used for transporting disabled animals, primarily horses, to Brach's Animal Hospital in the early 1900s.



The building was occupied by Ted's Auto Body and the Hales Corners Post Office when this photo was taken during a July 4th parade in the 1950s.

Safe at Home: HCHS Adds Adam Conrad's Safe to the Collection

Our March newsletter featured a history of the Conrad family in Hales Corners. On July 24th, HCHS acquired a cast iron safe that was owned by **Adam Conrad** (1857-1933), an entrepreneur with diverse business ventures: cattle, horses, farm machinery, horse-drawn buggies, and taverns. He also dabbled in politics.

The safe, with Adam's name emblazoned on its front, had been on display for 20 years in

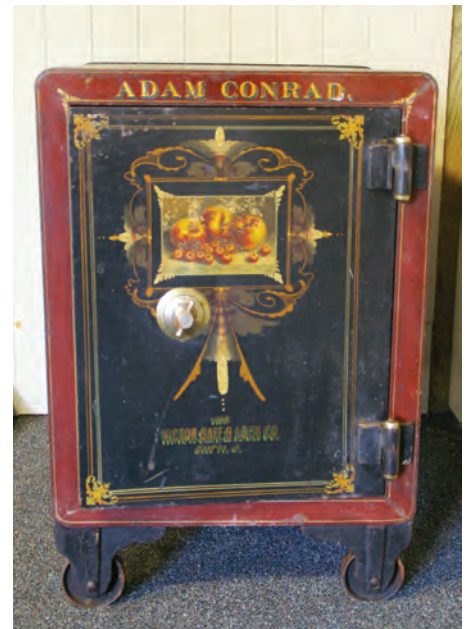


Adam Conrad, 1918

The Olde Store, an antiques shop on Forest Home Avenue. **Skip Knapp**, the store's owner, had received it from Emanuel United Church, and he brought it to our attention. Skip was in the process of clearing out his store, as he had a buyer for the building.

So, on a Saturday morning, five strong men -- **Jim Bain, Mike Fischer** and his son **Zack, Don Schwartz**, and **Al Strekow** -- converged on The Olde Store to move the 500-pound safe to HCHS headquarters in the Library. With the loan of Skip's lift and Jim's trailer, the move went off quite well.

In addition, Skip kindly donated about two dozen items to our collection. They included anniversary booklets from Emanuel Church and Whitnall Park Lutheran Church, a recipe book from the *Tri-Town News*, a china plate from Link's Grocery Store, and even a copy of Adam Conrad's Last Will and Testament.



Adam Conrad's safe was built in 1893 and was decorated with a hand-painted still life of apples. The Conrad family owned apple orchards in the Hales Corners area.



Jim Bain, Skip Knapp, Al Strekow, Mike and Zack Fischer loading the safe at The Olde Store



Jim Bain, Mike Fischer, Don Schwartz, and Zack Fischer unloading the safe at the Hales Corners Library

In Memoriam

Longtime HCHS member **Jane Campanelli** passed away at the age of 89 on August 25th. Some of you may remember working with her on a variety of Society projects. For many years, she visited our office to help record items in the Ben Hunt collection with a dedicated group of volunteers: **Betty Bell, Anita Hantzsch, Priscilla Riebs, and Bob Zeit.** We remember them all fondly.



The interior of Adam Conrad's safe is divided into compartments. A label on the door identifies the Victor Safe & Lock Co. and lists its patents up to March 7, 1893.

The Victor Safe & Lock Co. was founded in 1885 in Cincinnati, Ohio. Its safes were cast iron with a black finish, and hand-painted with a brick red frame and the name of the company on the front. The doors were decorated with pinstripe

edging and hand-painted emblems. The Victor Safe & Lock Co. continued until 1927 when it was acquired by Remington-Rand. This company was again acquired in 1956 by the Sperry Corporation, and the safe making division was discontinued.



Jane Campanelli helping to organize the HCHS Plant Sale in 2003

Local Book Club Gathers at Ben Hunt's Cabin

On August 16th, the Ben Hunt Cabin opened its doors for the first time this year to welcome 10 members of the Liz & Friends Book Club that originated in 2004. HCHS member **Rose Mary Walecki** reserved the Cabin for a club meeting and book discussion. The other club members are **Karen Brey, Laurie Ganske, Joan Gapinski, Liz Hovey, Mary Kopp, Mary Schwalbach, Barb Schwartz, Nancy Sherwood, and Judy Walczak.**

Club members were reading the *The Scent Keeper* by **Erica Bauermeister**. Rose Mary explained, "The first portion of the book is set in a



Joan Gapinski, Liz Hovey, Mary Kopp, Rose Mary Walecki, Judy Walczak

remote cabin in the woods, so we can imagine we are with Emmeline and her father as we soak up the atmosphere in the historic W. Ben Hunt Cabin.” The members seemed pleased with the venue and we’re certain Ben would have been delighted to have them visit.



Karen Brey and Barb Schwartz. Zike the giant kachina enjoyed the discussion and thinks he may read the book next!



Laurie Ganske, Mary Schwalbach, Nancy Sherwood

REMINDER: Groups are welcome to schedule special tours of the Ben Hunt Cabin or to hold meetings there. There is no charge, but donations are appreciated. The Cabin reservation form is available on the HCHS website (www.halescornershistory.com) or by email at celine.elizabeth@sbcglobal.net

HALES CORNERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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TALES OF THE CORNERS

**From the files of the
*Tri-Town News and Hub.***

90 YEARS AGO (1931)

- More than 100 men begin work on the new county park (Whitnall) in Hales Corners.
- The Village has nine freshmen enrolled in city high schools. Pupils are attending Bay View, Juneau, and West Milwaukee high schools.
- John Johnson wins a \$2.50 gold piece in a drawing at the card party held for the Hales Corners baseball team.

80 YEARS AGO (1941)

- Construction begins on the Hales Corners Sanitary District.
- Enrollment at Hales Corners School is 202. Frank Nelson is principal.
- The article “Whittling-Jackknife Technique” by W. Ben Hunt appears in this month’s issue of *Industrial Arts and Vocational Education* magazine.

70 YEARS AGO (1951)

- An estimated 55,000 persons converge on Hales Corners to attend the 81st annual fair.
- For the first time in the history of the Hales Corners Speedway, the season’s total prize purses exceed \$30,000.
- A move by the City of Milwaukee to annex 38-1/2 square miles, which would include Hales Corners, temporarily stymies Hales Corners incorporation proceedings.
- Hales Corners Girl Scouts are chosen to raise the flag at the new Girl School camp in Saukville. The troop declines due to the outbreak of polio in that area.

60 YEARS AGO (1961)

- The Hales Corners Village Board votes to lease the old Singer residence for a village hall.
- The Village Board and officials of the volunteer fire department decide to place the department under Village jurisdiction on January 1st.
- Cobb Park on 116th Street and Janesville Road is nearly completed. The Village puts in a bridge and walkway.
- Members of the Emanuel United Church of Christ hold a cornerstone ceremony for their new church.

50 YEARS AGO (1971)

- The Hales Corners Village Board bans flying model airplanes on Village property.

Research by Katy Galewski