



**October/November 2025**

## **Join Us to Learn About the History of Mitchell Park and the Domes at Our November 12th Program!**

### **MITCHELL PARK AND THE DOMES**

**November 12, 7:00 p.m.**

**Hales Corners Library / Hunt Room**

**— Presented by Christa Beall Diefenbach, CEO  
and Laura Emir, Chief Development Officer  
of the Milwaukee Domes Alliance**

Since 1964, the Mitchell Park Domes have been an impressive landmark and cultural attraction in Milwaukee County. Their architectural beauty complements the inside beauty of the plants and flowers. Learn about their construction and plans for their future, as well as the history of the park, the original conservatory, and the sunken garden.



## **Happy 214th Birthday to Seneca Hale!**

**Seneca Hale**, the first child of **Ebenezer** and **Betsey Barnes Hale**, was born October 5, 1811. His was the first of the three Hale families to venture from the family home in New York, moving to Wisconsin Territory in 1836. He and his wife, **Helena Ehle**, were married in 1840 and were the parents of four children: **Harriet Cobb**, b.1842; **Catherine Hessler**, b.1845; **Helen Hale**, b.1852; and **John Hale**, b.1857. His home site

was located at what is currently 10920 W. Forest Home Avenue. The summer kitchen that Seneca built of stone in 1850 can be seen at Cobb Park on Janesville Road, where it was moved in 1996. The kitchen, now 175 years old, is the oldest surviving structure in Hales Corners.



*The original wooden sign once affixed to the Hale family home reads "House of Seneca Hale - Land Grant Signed by Pres. Van Buren 1837"*



**Seneca Hale (1811-1880)**



**Helena Hale (1818-1882)**



# O'Brien Family Memorials Used to Digitize 25 Years of Local Newspapers

Within the past year, **David and Kathy O'Brien**, HCHS founding members, passed away. Dave owned one of the first print shops in Hales Corners and also edited a newsletter for the Badgerland Striders, a running club. Kathy was a former librarian who hand-cataloged all the books in Ben Hunt's private collection. Clearly, the written word was important to both of them.

The HCHS board considered ways in which to honor the O'Briens, but one seemed the most appropriate...the addition to our digital collection of all issues of the *Tri-Town News* from 1942-1967. The O'Brien family approved of the idea and requested that memorials be sent to HCHS. Those donations made it possible to proceed.

Previously, the Greendale Historical Society had given HCHS 12 rolls of microfilm that contained issues of the *Tri-Town News*. Unfortunately, neither of our organizations had the equipment needed to view the microfilm and convert it to digital files, which meant we either had to purchase equipment or hire someone to do the conversion. The *Tri-Town News* focused on Franklin, Hales Corners, and Muskego, but not Greendale. Consequently, Greendale decided that HCHS should have custody of the microfilm, with the understanding that our society would notify them of any Greendale-related information.

Ultimately, the HCHS board decided that hiring the firm of C. H. Coakley was the most cost-effective method of digitizing the 12 rolls. That resulted in almost 10,000 newspaper pages, converted to files that can be searched by topic. This is a giant addition to HCHS's digital collection, acquired through the generosity of the O'Brien family in memory of Dave and Kathy.

## Details from Tri-Town News pages:

- **Top: July 7, 1949 - Hales Corners Fair**
- **Middle: August 27, 1942 - Junk Rally for WWII**
- **Bottom: January 3, 1952 - Photos of July 4th fireworks, Last Rapid Transit ride, Hales Corners incorporation, Hales Corners Lutheran church groundbreaking, and Hales Corners baseball team**




## Free Cookies Make the Hales Corners Library's 50th Anniversary Celebration Even Sweeter

On September 6th, Hales Corners library card holders received free cookies as a special treat to celebrate the library's 50th anniversary. Each cookie was packaged in a bag featuring the library's logo and the slogan: "50 Years of Smiles: 1975-2025." The cookies were donated through the generosity of Festival Foods.



### TALES OF THE CORNERS - OCTOBER From the files of the *Tri-Town News* and *Hub*

#### 90 YEARS AGO (1935)

- All 13 children of Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester Sweeny attend the couple's 25th anniversary celebration at Schubring's Hall on the Triangle.
- The Hales Corners Advancement Association decides that the Village needs new "Welcome" signs. They would prefer a rustic look and will ask W. Ben Hunt to design them.

#### 80 YEARS AGO (1945)

- The Bosch Motor and Appliance Company is being remodeled and a radio repair shop is being added.
- Rose Hampton is district chairman of the community war fund drive.
- The Hales Corners Businessmen's Association members meet for lunch at the Dreyfuss home.
- "The Legend of the Apple" highlights the meeting of the Whitnall Park Garden Club at the home of Mrs. Robert Froemming.

#### 70 YEARS AGO (1955)

- The Hales Corners Village Board raises the salary of the Village president from \$150 to \$500 and trustees from \$100 to \$360.
- Hale Park Lumber and Millwork opens for business in a new building on Forest Home Avenue. Arthur Kilps is the firm's president.
- Smith's Harmony Restaurant in the Hales Corners Shopping Center celebrates National Restaurant Month by offering roast prime rib at \$1.95 a la carte or \$2.70 for a complete dinner.

#### 60 YEARS AGO (1965)

- Construction begins on Forest Home Avenue for the international air museum.
- Major Donald Champlin receives the Distinguished Flying Cross for bravery in action in Vietnam.
- The Hales Corners Village Board approves the purchase of a used 1960 Cadillac ambulance. The 1954 Cadillac that was purchased in 1958 and served the Village for seven years will be retired.

- Starting with this week's issue of the *Hub* there will be two editions, one for Muskego and the other for Franklin and Hales Corners.
- The Hales Corners Village Board will work with the Hales Corners Business and Professional Men's Association to install electric outlets on selected light poles. The outlets will provide electricity for community displays and the Christmas tree.
- Laurence Jansky is selected as the new principal of Whitnall High School.
- Hales Corners is the winner for its population group in the 1965 Wisconsin Slow Down and Live contest.

#### 50 YEARS AGO (1975)

- Low well pressure causes the closing of Hales Corners Elementary School for the day. A plumber makes repairs but the pressure drops again days later and a larger repair will be needed.
- A musical variety show is being planned as part of the 1976 U.S. Bicentennial Celebration.

## HAPPY HALLOWEEN FROM THE HALES CORNERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY!



*Trick or treat in the early days of Hales Corners?*



## Tree Planted in Memory of HCHS Director Chris Schachtlie

On September 28th, HCHS members and friends joined **Caroline Schachtlie**, wife of **Chris**, and other family members to honor his memory with the planting of a Celebration Maple tree. The tree was planted near the Ben Hunt Cabin, to which Chris dedicated much of his time.

A memorial sign was also installed nearby that reads: "Chris Schachtlie (1961-2025) - This tree stands watch over the cabin he loved so much, and in which he invested his many skills and countless hours."



**Caroline Schachtlie (2nd from left) and members of her family stand in front of the maple tree planted in memory of her husband, Chris Schachtlie**

## Memories from the Hawthorn Garden Club Are Preserved in Club Scrapbooks

Earlier this year, the Hawthorn Garden Club celebrated its 100th anniversary. Recently, **Betty Braun**, a long-time member of Hawthorn, donated two scrapbooks from the club. Covering the years from 1929-1974, they contain photos, newspaper articles, event promotions, and minutes from board meetings.

Among the pages were two photos that referenced **Ben Hunt** and his wife, **Laura**. Our society had no previous knowledge of their involvement with the Hawthorn Garden Club.



**Hawthorn Garden Club Officers: Mrs. John Ryan, Miss Louise Snyder, Laura Hunt, and Mrs. Charles Eisenberg, 1955**



**The first page of the 1929 scrapbook featured this color photo of a prize-winning miniature garden modeled by Mrs. R. H. Malisch and W. Ben Hunt**



## Fourteen Kachina Dolls Donated to HCHS Collection

**Leonard Cieslak** enjoyed making Kachina dolls in Ben Hunt's cabin under Ben's guidance, and he was very skilled at it. Leonard's son, **Brian**, recently donated 14 wonderful examples of his father's creations to HCHS. Based on the un-

painted doll below, it appears that Leonard used an undercoating of white before applying the final paints, resulting in very vibrant colors. Thank you, Brian, for donating them! They will be on display in the Ben Hunt Museum room very soon.



## Hales Corners Veterinary Hospital Was Nation's Largest in 1911

The largest veterinary hospital in the United States during the early years of the 20th century was Brach's Animal Hospital, built by **Dr. Max Brach** right here in Hales Corners. On October 12, 1911, Dr. Brach bought land on Forest Home Avenue, and then proceeded to hire and supervise tradesmen to build the hospital. 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 roof was made of cement shingles.

The first floor of the animal hospital 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 hospital, used primarily for horses, contained an operating table and conducted an ambulance service for disabled animals. The hospital was a logical adjunct to the Hales Corners Stock Fair and Adam Conrad's horse-buying enterprise.

Dr. Brach sold his property in 1920, and the building and its annex served a variety of purposes: auto sales office, lumber business, Village Post Office. In 1961, the present Emanuel church building was erected on the hospital site as a replacement for the congregation's old church.



*Brach's Animal Hospital Poster*

## TALES OF THE CORNERS - NOVEMBER From the files of the *Tri-Town News* and *Hub*

### 90 YEARS AGO (1935)

- Plans are made to build 25,000-gallon cisterns around the Village for the fire department. Currently its only source of water is the creek near the Meyer property at the intersection of Highway 100 and Forest Home Avenue.
- Legionnaires build a stairway to the basement of the Post Office in the Godsell building to use as the Freede-Eckel American Legion post dugout.
- Individual ballots are mailed to Hales Corners voters in a new *Literary Digest* poll of 10 million persons to determine the popularity of the New Deal.
- Bosch Auto Sales begins work on an addition to its display room.

### 80 YEARS AGO (1945)

- Members of the Hales Corners Businessmen's Association escort their wives to the Dreyfuss home on Forest Home Avenue where they receive a gardenia corsage and enjoy a turkey dinner.
- The Hale Park Civic Association is sponsoring a Christmas decoration contest.
- Members of the Freede-Eckel American Legion Auxiliary are making stuffed toys to give to area children whose fathers are serving away from home in the military over Christmas.
- The Hales Corners North Western Railroad is mentioned in a newly published book, *Slow Train to Yesterday*, by Archie Robinson.

### 70 YEARS AGO (1955)

- There will be no Hales Corners Village tax this year.
- Robert Brinkmeier, former service manager of the Hales Corners Ford garage, will be manager of the new Midland Service Station that opens this week.
- William Ritzman is the new president of the Civic Club of Hales Corners.
- Trimborn's Super Market in the Hales Corners Shopping Center has tom turkeys at 43 cents a pound.
- Barczak Bros. market has pork chops at 29 cents a pound.

### 60 YEARS AGO (1965)

- Eighty-two parade units celebrate the opening of Highway 100 after six months of construction.

- Ten days after the road opening parade and celebration, Highway 100 actually opens.
- A five-acre site is purchased at 11222 W. Janesville Road for a YWCA.
- The Hales Corners Village Board overrides the plan commission and rezones three acres between Grange Avenue and Ridge Road, east of the Hales Corners Post Office, for an apartment project.
- The Hales Corners Community Theater presents *The Man Who Came to Dinner*.

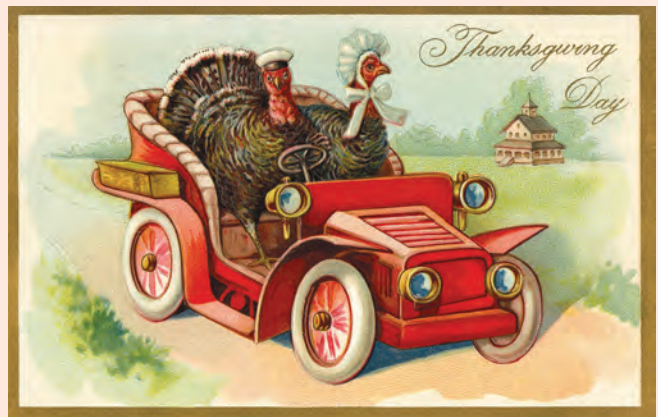
### 50 YEARS AGO (1975)

- The Hales Corners Lions Club donates \$1,000 to the Hales Corners Library.
- To date, money collected from a bike-a-thon sponsored by the Hales Corners Bicentennial Committee totals \$861 for the Model Bikeways Bicentennial project.
- An attempt to reactivate the Student Council at Whitnall High School raises very little interest.

### 40 YEARS AGO (1985)

- Under the leadership of Priscilla Riebs, the Hales Corners Historical Society closes on the sale of the Ben Hunt Cabin. To date, the society has raised \$22,400 toward its goal of \$36,000 to move and restore the cabin.

## HAPPY THANKSGIVING FROM THE HALES CORNERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY!



### HALES CORNERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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