HALES CORNERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY Newsletter

September / October 2026

Youngtimers Organization Tours The Hunt Cabin

On September 24th, fifteen members of the Youngtimers BSA organization made one of their road trips to Hales Corners. Organized by **Randy Carr**, the group gathered for lunch in the Hunt Room of the library. Then, the group toured the Hunt Cabin and the Hunt Museum Room with HCHS docents **Celine Kashishian** and **Al Strekow.**

Several members had visited the cabin before and quite a few had been involved in Indian craft projects and Indian dancing groups in their youth. Celine spoke to them about Ben Hunt's legacy and was pleased by the amount of information they shared in return.

Youngtimers BSA was founded in 1972 as a service organization consisting of men and women who had retired from professional life. All had accumulated a variety of Scouting-related responsibilities and positions over many years, providing a pool of resources that are utilized to provide manpower and support to Three Harbors Council, BSA and the greater Milwaukee community.



Randy Carr (extreme left) and the other Youngtimers enjoyed their visit to the cabin with HCHS docent Celine Kashishian (3rd from left).

These veteran Scouters represent a cadre of volunteers whose ongoing yearly activities encompass such things as:

- Participating in a themed Summer Picnic
- Feeding the homeless for the "Street Angels"
- Supporting Council Staff in daily operations to serve the community

Currently, the Youngtimers BSA meet on the fourth Thursday of the month at Three Harbors Council Milwaukee office before noon for lunch, a presentation, and review of a packed business agenda.



Celine sat down with the Youngtimers as they asked questions about Ben Hunt and his cabin.

A New Roof Is Installed on Ben Hunt's Cabin After 48 Years

As we mentioned in the previous newsletter, the Cabin is now more than 100 years old, and, according to our records, its roof was last replaced in 1978. So, it was definitely time for a new one.

On October 8th, roofers from **Modern Exteriors** began the process, and if this roof is as good as the last, Ben's Cabin won't need another one until 2074! A special thanks to **John Just** who volunteered to oversee the project during the installation.

Our Board, Directors, and Volunteers are sincerely grateful to the **Jerome J. and Dorothy H. Holz Family Foundation** whose generous grant enabled HCHS to complete this project before the upcoming winter months.



The old roof was torn off and replaced in a two-day process

Join Us November 18th for Our Last Program of 2026

GENE MUELLER:

MILWAUKEE RADIO LEGEND

November 18, 7:00 p.m.,
Hales Corners Library / Hunt Room
— Presented by GENE MUELLER,
Retired Morning Show Host at WTMJ Radio

Through a long and varied career in Wisconsin radio, Hales Corners resident Gene Mueller has become known for his humor, quick wit, deep knowledge of news, politics, sports, pop culture, and for having a legendary work ethic. Gene's work experiences have included trips to Washington, D.C. and Moscow, interviews with the "Beaver" and the cast of *Cheers*, and hosting the "Bosch Tavern Tug." All this and more will provide a very entertaining glimpse into the life of Milwaukee's radio legend.



Gene Mueller's final day on the job at WTMJ Radio

HCHS 4th of July Floats Receive "Best In Show" Award

Once again, HCHS received recognition for its historic floats in the July 4th parade. On September 16th, **Olivia Sterny,** Chief Parade Judge of the Hales Corners 4th of July Committee, presented the award for the "Best in Show" floats to HCHS President **Randy Sannes**. Judging was based on creativity, craftsmanship, and visual appeal. Village Trustee **Todd Brinkmeier** was instrumental in the design of both floats, with construction assistance from several HCHS members.

TALES OF THE CORNERS - SEPTEMBER

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

90 YEARS AGO (1936)

- Labor Day farm produce prices are reasonable with pickling size cucumbers dropping from 75 cents a hundred at the August fair to 25 cents a hundred, cantaloupe 60 cents a bushel, tomatoes 50 cents a bushel, eggs 28 cents a dozen, and corn 25 cents a dozen. Carrots and kohlrabi are three bunches for 10 cents.
- The Hales Corners Advancement Association decides to present the Village's traffic and school safety problems to highway committee members in an effort to slow down traffic.
- The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) holds a homecoming duck dinner for 106 men who returned to the Whitnall Park camp from fire duty on Isle Royale, Wisconsin.
- Hales Corners voters cast only 191 votes in the primary election, which is only a little more than one-third of the registered voters.
- The Hales Corners PTA "Get Acquainted" tea is attended by 56 parents and teachers.
- The Hales Corners Garden Club presents a display at the Art Institute Garden Club.

80 YEARS AGO (1946)

- Square dancing is being offered on Saturdays at Hales Corners School through November. Mrs. Elmer Godsell, Mrs. Harry Oelschlager, Mrs. Thomas Welch, and Mrs. Ross Hampton are the committee members in charge.
- The Whitnall Park Garden Club enjoys a luncheon at the China Cupboard in Milwaukee's Cudahy Tower.
- Richard Gumieny wins $50 at the Wisconsin State Fair for the best guess of the number of barley kernels in a gold fish bowl. His guess of 125,425 was only one kernel more than the actual number.
- Square dancing is offered at the Hales Corners Elementary School.

70 YEARS AGO (1956)

- Electors of the Hales Corners area union high school district vote to authorize the school board to buy about 43 acres of land north of Edgerton Avenue and west of Highway 100, contingent on its detachment from Greenfield and attachment to Hales Corners. The land was part of the old Conrad Farm and will cost $82,400.
- Construction begins on a new store on Forest Home Avenue, which has been leased to National Food Stores.
- Drews Variety Store announces more than 300 price reductions on America's best new 1956 and 1957 toys.
- The Whitnall Women's Golf Club closes its season with a barbecue after their play day.
- The annual Hales Corners Labor Day Fair is attended by 40,000 people.

60 YEARS AGO (1966)

- Only 720 of Hales Corners 2,890 eligible voters turn out for the primary election.
- Changing school boundaries for Hales Corners, Greenfield, Franklin, and Oak Creek to make them conform with municipal lines will be discussed by a county school committee. The Whitnall School Board opposes any changes in district boundaries.
- Thirty-six new members are welcomed into the Hales Corners Woman's Club. Mrs. John Hafemeister holds a tea for the event.

50 YEARS AGO (1976)

- A single-engine Cessna airplane crashes at the Hiller Ford parking lot after clipping the Hiller sign with its wing. The four men on board had planned on landing at the Hales Corners Airport across the street. Fortunately, no one is injured.
- The Harmony House Restaurant moves into the former Dutchland Dairy building just across the parking lot.
- A flowering crab tree is donated by the Whitnall Lucky Charms 4-H Club and planted on the Hales Corners Library grounds.
- Two fires occur at Village sites: $800 damage at Froemming's Flower Shop and $200 damage at the Red Owl food store.

This poem was discovered in our archives. Based upon the businesses included in the text, it was probably written in the mid-1940s.

Hales Corners Fair

by Florence Slicting
R.R. 1, Box 93-B, Hales Corners, Wisconsin

First Monday of each month you know,
Hales Corners stages quite a show.
It's just called "The Hales Corners Fair,"
You'll find most everything right there.

Each farmer brings his wares to sell,
And to some shopper it looks well,
A rabbit, dog, or little cat,
Or chickens, ducks, or goslings fat.

A horse, a pig or a big cow,
Machinery, if you want to plow.
There're dresses, shoes, shirts, hats and coats,
Fishing tackle, even goats.

Antique collectors might find there
Some pieces they consider rare.
Old furniture of every kind,
Fresh fruits and vegetables, you'll find.

There, too, you'll see the medicine-man,
Selling snake-oil, all he can.
The market's spread out on the street
Where buyers and the vendors meet.

If you're lucky you can sit
On Welch the plumber's stoop a bit,
Or stand before the "Candlewick"
Or you might John Dohn's food mart pick.

Some will at Swede's "Bow Wow" Shop
For rest and recreation stop.
Way down to Meinzer's Drugs, then back,
Displays on both sides of the track.

Much like a carnival t'would seem
Folks eating cones filled with ice cream,
The peanut vendor, too, you'll find.
The crowd has bargaining in mind.

Who patronizes this affair?
It seems most everybody's there.



More than 40,000 persons turned out Monday for the "last" Hales Corners Labor Day Fair, and as you can see, they covered Forest Home Ave. almost solidly. The fair drew its usual assortment of animals, produce, refreshment stands and miscellaneous items. Contrast the picture above with that of the first Hales Corners Fair, below, held on March 13th, 1871, and held every succeeding first Monday of the month since that date. The lower picture was taken in front of the old Dreyfuss Hotel at Forest Home Ave. and Janesville Rd., which was an important way station on the road to Milwaukee in those days.

— Tri-Town News, September 6, 1956



Village Residents Witnessed Teddy Roosevelt's Shooting

On October 14, 1912, an attempt was made on former President **Teddy Roosevelt's** life in Milwaukee. Roosevelt's eyeglass case and a folded-up copy of his speech saved his life from a bullet, and he went on to deliver the speech. An interesting coincidence was that two prominent residents of Hales Corners were in attendance that day: **Adam Conrad** and his son, **Jacob**.

Adam Conrad, an early entrepreneur, developed several business ventures in Hales Corners. He sold McCormick farm machinery, bought and sold cattle and horses, started the Janesville Buggy Co., managed a tavern, and built



Photo of Teddy Roosevelt from a newspaper article in 1912

Conrad's Opera House on Forest Home Avenue. Adam was also interested in politics, having run for office himself. That is why he and his son attended this political rally in Milwaukee. The Conrads escaped unharmed, but in the excitement that followed, they left their overcoats behind.

Another coincidence was the involvement of **Dr. Robert G. Sayle,** a former Hales Corners surgeon. Dr. Sayle practiced medicine in Hales Corners from 1885 to 1896. Dr. Sayle moved to Milwaukee in 1896, as the head of the Milwaukee Hospital, later known as Samaritan Hospital. He was one of several doctors called upon to attend Theodore Roosevelt after the shooting occurred.

AMERICA 250

Sweeney's Silver Dollar Bar: A Tale of Two Taverns

Gone but not forgotten is Sweeney's Silver Dollar Bar, once at 10539 W. Forest Home Avenue, a favorite gathering place for many a Hales Corners resident or passer-by. **Ed** and **Isabelle Sweeney** moved to the Village and bought an old building that looked like it belonged in the Old West; hence the name Sweeney's Silver Dollar Bar. Eight different taverns had been in business at that same location through the years, some in the same building.

While Ed dispensed drinks, mostly beer, Isabelle filled orders for sandwiches, fish, and chicken on demand. Sweeney really did give silver dollars in change until the coins became scarce. The tavern was badly damaged when a car crash destroyed the front of the building in 1961. Sweeney razed that building, built a new one, and reopened again as Sweeney's Silver Dollar Bar in 1963. The building became the site of the China Inn restaurant in 1980, and since 2015, it has been the Hale House restaurant.



Original Sweeney's Silver Dollar Bar after a car crash



Rebuilt Sweeney's Silver Dollar Bar (Now Hale House)

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

90 YEARS AGO (1936)

- Rev. Carl Harman, pastor of Hales Corners English Lutheran Church, preaches his farewell sermon.
- A large crowd attends the Hales Corners PTA meeting to hear a proposal by Dr. Clifford R. Wolf, health officer, on providing an adequate health program for the school. Those present approve a motion that the president appoint a committee to investigate further and report the findings to the proper authorities.
- Fifty members of the Hales Corners Parent-Teacher Association are planning the annual Halloween party for Hales Corners youngsters.
- Free motor tests are offered at Motor Service Co. in Hales Corners.

80 YEARS AGO (1946)

- The first dance classes are offered at Hales Corners Elementary School and 36 children attend.
- More than 100 persons, including some teenagers, participate in the first square dance of the season at Hales Corners Elementary School.
- Women of the Friday Study Club and their husbands meet at the Ben Hunt cabin to view his collection of Indian articles and then hear his lecture on whittling.
- The Tri-Town Post is the name of the new Hales Corners VFW.
- The Freede-Eckel American Legion Post offers assistance to any area veterans wishing to consult them regarding the filing of an application for terminal leave payment.
- Hales Corners is among the 100 Wisconsin communities on the eligible list for a new post office building when and if Congress authorizes funds for a new building program.
- Ed Falk makes his solo flight at the Skyways airport.

70 YEARS AGO (1956)

- The Hales Corners School District Board completes purchase of 16-1/2 acres of land south of Edgerton Avenue between 116th Street and 120th Street for $29,038.75 for a future grade school.
- An organizational meeting for Hales Corners men interested in forming a Lions Club is held with Dr. Terence Hayes, a leader in the move to organize and the club's first president.
- George Polakowski is host at the organizational meeting for a Hales Corners Junior Chamber of Commerce and is elected temporary chairman.
- Pistol competition between the Hales Corners and Greendale police departments will be stimulated by the donation of a trophy by Hales Corners Police Chief David Geary.
- The Rural Postman's banquet is held at Whitnall Park Lutheran Church.
- William E. Kilps Sons purchases the home of Donald E. Fischer and will move into the building once remodeling is completed.
- Free facial tissues, waxed paper sandwich bags, or paper napkins are available at Lee Richard's Old Quaker Service Station.

60 YEARS AGO (1966)

- Hales Corners Jaycees sponsor a costumed Halloween dance.
- Christmas gifts for disabled veterans to give to their families are being collected by the Hales Corners Memorial American Legion Post.
- The Hales Corners Woman's Club offers Christmas card shopping with a cup of coffee in the homes of several of its members.
- Hales Corners Jaycettes are collecting all kinds of trading stamps in the statewide effort to purchase two four-wheel drive vehicles for Project Concern in Vietnam.
- Rev. Ronald Segedy begins duties as the new pastor of Emanuel United Church of Christ.

50 YEARS AGO (1976)

- The Hales Corners Bicentennial Bikeway project receives the go-ahead from Village trustees.
- The Peddler's Son restaurant offers a "Land & Sea Friday Night Buffet," all you can eat for $3.75. It includes salad bar, rolls, and butter.
- The A&W restaurant celebrates Halloween by offering "Frank'n Stein," a hot dog and root beer for 49 cents.

HALES CORNERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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