

Beloit Historical Society  
Confluence  
845 Hackett St.  
Beloit WI 53511

Address Service Requested

Beloit  
Historical Society

The Vision of the Beloit Historical Society is to make history a focal point of community pride and to serve as a constant reminder to the community of its great and diverse heritage. Visit our web site at [beloithistoricalsociety.com](http://beloithistoricalsociety.com)

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# Confluence

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## One of Beloit's Firsts: Baseball 1867



Early baseball photos from the Society's Collection

One still searches back for baseball's origins. Some say the origins of baseball go back 400 years. The kind of baseball we have come to recognize as "Our American past time", however, had its origin in 1846 when the first officially recorded game with codified rules was played. Beloit, as well as other cities across America, became enthusiastic about the game following the end of the American Civil War. Beloit made its big splash in 1867 when it hosted the first State Championship tournament on 3 September.

This preamble is leading to a mentioning of that tournament in more detail but also to let you know of a unique artifact held in the Society's collection which was advertisement for the tournament. It is a baseball broadside 3ft. X 6ft., is vintage 1867, and in mint condition thanks to conservators Jane Ketcham and Peter Dast who tenderly preserved it so the Society could exhibit it in its Sports Hall of Fame. This broadside will be featured in an exhibit opening up September 2014. On 6 September the Society will also host a vintage base ball game on the grounds of Lincoln Center, 845 Hackett St., to commemorate the historic game that was played in Beloit in 1867 and highlight its unique artifact. Presently we have two Illinois teams (the Crestwood Regulators & the Chicago Salmons) that will play the game the way it was then played.

Back in 1866 Wisconsin baseball pioneers organized dozens of clubs. The following year Badger State (Wisconsin) teams represented at the National Convention of baseball players outnumbered the once powerful fraternity of New York state ball clubs. Throughout the 1867 season the city of Beloit reigned as the baseball capital of the Badger state.

*continued inside*

## Restated Articles of Incorporation and By-laws Approved

Last fall, the Board of Trustees held a strategic planning meeting, facilitated by Ann Sitrick. One result of those meetings was the realization that our articles of incorporation had not been amended (and may not have even been reviewed) since their creation in 1918.

In reviewing the articles, we discovered among other things, that we were supposed to have not one, not two, but three Vice Presidents! Clearly, what may have been deemed as a standard practice in 1918 no longer made any sense today.

In a similar vein, by-laws are meant to go hand in hand with the articles of incorporation, but our current by-laws were totally out of sync with these 1918 articles. So, upon Ann's recommendation, as our first order of business, we tackled creation of restated articles of incorporation and then the creation of new by-laws.

Board member Rick Dexter led this effort. Dexter worked diligently at this task and after review and discussion at several drafts of these documents at our monthly Board of Directors meetings, the final drafts were reviewed by our legal advisor, Bill Bolgrien. Both documents were then submitted to the membership for approval at the annual meeting in May where they were both approved. Our Restated Articles of Incorporation have since been submitted to Madison for final acceptance.

For those of you who are interested you can find these documents at our website [www.beloithistoricalsociety.com/about.php](http://www.beloithistoricalsociety.com/about.php).

Now that we have these foundational documents in place we can update other organizational documents and begin to do some planning for our future.

Hanchett-Bartlett  
**GHOST HUNT**  
Sat., July 26  
Group 1: 7:45-11:15 p.m.  
Group 2: 11:30 p.m.-3 a.m.  
\$50 members, \$60 non-members  
**Limited to just 20 guests!**  
A 3-hour ghost hunting experience at Hanchett-Bartlett Homestead.  
Then join us on Oct. 24 for the big **Reveal Dinner!** Ghost hunters get free admission!



wisconsinpit.org

## BUS TRIP: Toy Trains and Folk Art

Thurs., Aug. 28.

8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Departs from Lincoln Center  
\$45 members,  
\$50 non-members



Featured on the tour will be the Toy Train Barn Museum in Argyle, followed by lunch at Cook's Room Café in Dodgeville, a little time for shopping, and The Grandview home in Hollandale.

Get Info and tickets at [beloithistoricalsociety.com](http://beloithistoricalsociety.com) or call (608) 365-7835



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**Hometown People With A Common Concern**

## Beloit Historical Society

Founded 1910

### Officers

Nancy Wallace, President  
Teri Downing, Vice President  
Dick Gerhard, Treasurer  
Sue Kurth, Secretary

### Board of Directors

Richard Dexter  
Mary Herrmann  
Mike King  
Rich Ranft  
Jen Scott

### Lincoln Center Staff:

Paul Kerr,  
Executive Director  
Dwight Alton,  
Facilities Manager

### Newsletter Contributors:

Paul Kerr, Rick Dexter, and Sue Kurth;  
layout by Jen Scott.

Board meetings are the third Thursday of every month at 4:15 p.m. and are held at Lincoln Center, 845 Hackett Street.

The Newsletter, Confluence, is published quarterly for the membership of the Beloit Historical Society to inform readers of Society activities as well as educate them on the history of Beloit. The Beloit Historical Society manages two sites, Lincoln Center Museum with main offices at 845 Hackett St. and Hanchett-Bartlett Homestead, 2149 St. Lawrence Ave. For further information please call (608) 365-7835 or e-mail us at [Pkerr@beloithistoricalsociety.com](mailto:Pkerr@beloithistoricalsociety.com). Or see our web site at [beloithistoricalsociety.com](http://beloithistoricalsociety.com).

The Confluence is sponsored by



## Craig Mellem Steps Down from Board of Trustees

Craig Mellem started his tenure here at the historical society in 2007, and became its President in 2009. Sadly, Craig is resigning from the Board. He brought a calm professionalism to the Board and his presence and his method of operation influenced the Board in a positive way for the three years he served as President. Though he is resigning he will still be part of our team helping with the Finance Committee and may be on call for other ventures. Craig has been and will be in the future a real supporter of the Society and we are sincerely grateful for his dedicated service.



### *In Memoriam Carol Bolgrien*

Carol Bolgrien died June 2014. She was a devoted, talented and savvy volunteer at the Beloit Historical Society. Starting in 2008, Carol worked diligently for six years as an Accessioner — cataloging artifacts coming into the collection. Personable, with her thermos of Pepsi she carried everywhere, Carol brought with her not only the talents but stories and anecdotes she shared with all in the break room. The break room... She will be sorely missed by all of us here at the Beloit Historical Society.

## FOOD FACT: NATURE'S FREEZER

"Dining During the Depression" was published in 1996 by Reiman Publications Greendale, WI. In it, people from around the country shared recipes and memories of those hard times. Below is one such memory from Ella Dixson who now lives in the state of Oregon. It will help younger people learn about one element of what life was like on the farm — where life during the depression was not usually as hard as it was for city folk who didn't have their own animals or gardens for food.

### NATURE'S FREEZER KEPT MEAT FRESH EACH WINTER

I lived in the southeastern part of Colorado during the early '30s. If there was a depression, we were unaware of it since money was scarce in the best of times and our way of life didn't depend on that commodity.

The first hard freeze meant it was time to butcher a cow. Mother would can part of it for the following summer and wrap the rest in a sheet. It would then be taken to the top of the windmill platform. When the supply in the kitchen got low, Dad would cut off a big chunk of the frozen meat and the rest would stay frozen until we needed it.

Hogs were butchered in the fall also. The bacon and ham would be cured; pork chops cut and put down in a big crock with sausage. Melted lard would be poured over the meat to keep it fresh for future use. Mother also canned chicken for our winter food supply.

If we were poor, our dining table didn't show it. The "good old days" may be gone, but today the memories are still as clear as ever.



The first team of prominence and the first to stake claim to the crown was the Olympian Baseball Club of Beloit College. It was organized in 1866 and opened the 1867 season by beating the Whitewater Club, then the Madison Capitols and finally defeating the defending state champions Milwaukee's Cream City team 44 to 25. The score was typical of the era of bare-handed players in the field and flat-footed pitchers pitching underhanded to free swinging batters at home plate.

In 1867 representatives from eleven Wisconsin teams met in Janesville to establish a baseball association. At that meeting the association accepted a proposition from the Beloit Badger Club to host the State's first official baseball tournament in Beloit. Nineteen clubs from Wisconsin and seven from Illinois enrolled in the September competition. Beloit businesses

offered prizes such as gold mounted rosewood bats, silver baseballs and generous cash awards to the winners of the contest. There is a more detailed listing of these prizes on the broadside.



The eight-day event commenced at ten minutes to nine a.m. on Tuesday, 3 September 1867. The Beloit Badger Juniors prevailed over the Cream City Juniors of Milwaukee although it took until twilight to do it. The score was 41 to 40. The Beloit senior teams fared worse with the unbeaten Olympians falling

in the first round. The Milwaukee Cream City Club beat the senior Madison Capitols, then defeated Whitewater to take the senior class championship. The Capitol Juniors were victorious over the Delavan Continentals. On the 7th of September there were throwing, batting and running competitions. Finally the tournament drew to a close on the following Tuesday with the Beloit Rock River Club defeating the Beloit Star Club for the Beloit boys city championship.

Some 2400 people attended this event which must have been, seeing how it was a first here in Beloit, unique and entertaining.

The charge was twenty five cents per person which, according to the numbers attending, didn't appear a deterrent. This eight-day event put Beloit and baseball on the map for Wisconsin and serves as just another highlight to Beloit's rich heritage: one of its many firsts.

# VINTAGE BASEBALL DEMONSTRATION

## Crestwood Regulators

vs

## Chicago Salmons

**Delicious Concessions!**

**Sat., Sept. 6  
Lincoln Center**

**Free & Fun  
for the  
whole family!**

**Beloit made its big baseball splash in 1867 when it hosted the first State Championship tournament on 3 September. The Society's collection features a unique baseball broadside advertising that tournament. The 3ft. x 6ft. vintage poster, possibly the oldest of its kind, is in mint condition. It will be featured in an exhibit opening up September.**

*Fairbanks Morse Fairies*