

- EST. 1958 -

WYANDOTTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

December 2023

VOLUME 12



Biddle Avenue in Wyandotte is always festive, but nothing beats the municipal decorations that would drape over the road in the old days. This display from the 1950s was from Bronner's in Frankenmuth.



Two Wyandotte youngsters are excited that Santa came, as this colorized photo from 1945 shows.



The Sieg family celebrates Christmas on 9th street in Wyandotte, 1966.

From the Prez-

Hello all, I'd like to take the time to wish all of you a Merry Christmas! During this holiday season the Historical society is collecting recipes for our newest cookbook. If you are interested in sharing one of your favorite recipes along with a photograph, memory, or story to go with it please email us at wyandottehistory@gmail.com.



Did you have a favorite toy you received as a child? Check out this special Wyandotte toy Dan Galeski received when he was a young lad. The box says Wyandotte Dan - gets the truck that fits his plan.



"Holiday Greetings!": The History of Christmas Cards

It is many families' tradition to send and receive Christmas greeting cards- either featuring the family pet or maybe a scenic painted snowfall. Whatever the subject matter, it is a fun and easy way to spread some holiday cheer to your loved ones.

The tradition of sending Christmas cards is older than one may think. The first known Christmas card was printed in 1843! (Out of a 1,000 copies, only 21 exist today) Featuring a scene of a jolly Christmas feast, one copy remains on display at the Charles Dickens Museum in London, the people featured on the card reminiscent of Dicken's popular holiday tale *A Christmas Carol*.

In the late 1800s, the popularity of sending Christmas postcards was wide spread. Victorian traditions and customs for all holidays popularized commercially printed greetings, and Christmas was no different. By the turn of the century, people were becoming bored of trees and poinsettias, and cards began to have unique designs. From creepy Santa to ice skating frogs, there was something out there for everyone.

The Wyandotte Museums collection hosts many Christmas postcards. In looking through the collections, we discover we are one in the same of ghosts of Christmas pasts. Pioneering Wyandotte family, the Fairchilds were fond of sending Christmas cards with messages of greetings and well wishes. Marked to a Biddle address, one can picture the joy of receiving such a greeting. The trend of Christmas cards is certainly one that has lasted the test of time. *~Julia Moore*



MOVING FORWARD by Ken Navarre

Our recent highly successful 65th anniversary provided an opportunity to unveil our latest project. Having a large receptive audience, we were able to unveil our new Centennial Award Project. Thinking about it for a long time, we felt that it was time for a less restrictive Home/Structure award. Naming it the Centennial Award tells most of the story. The structure must be a minimum of 100 years old & carefully maintained.

Purpose of the program-

- 1.) Encourage the preservation and restoration of structures.
- 2.) Educate and promote Wyandotte History.
- 3.) Encourage people to visit Wyandotte.
- 4.) Help preserve aging neighborhoods.
- 5.) Foster community interaction in applying for awards.
- 6.) Create vibrant neighborhoods.

Eligibility Criteria-

- 1.) Age of structure – 100 years or older.
- 2.) Structure in a good state and condition.
- 3.) Must provide a photograph of structure.
- 4.) Cost - \$25.00

The plaque will be 9.5" x 7.75". On it will be printed:

**Centennial Landmark Plaque
Construction Date
Wyandotte Historical Society**

If any additional information or a copy of the application and guidelines are needed, please contact the Wyandotte Historical Society at:

(734) 324 7299 or wyandottehistory.org

SANTA'S ON HIS WAY

Join us on December 2 at the Bacon Library to welcome Santa and Mrs. Claus for a fun day of stories, secret wishes and crafts.

To add to the excitement, Santa's elves will again have stocked a complete gift shop where children may do their shopping for family and friends at prices ranging from 25 cents to \$4.00.

Saturday hours are from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. There is no charge with the exception of the gift shop. The gift shop only will be open on Monday, December 4 from 1 to 3:30 p.m. for last minute shopping.

Events at the Wyandotte Museum

The beautifully decorated MacNichol Home Museum will be open for Festive Fridays on December 1, 8 and 15 from 5-8 p.m. Donations of canned goods for Downriver for Veterans will be most welcome.

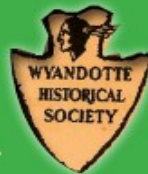
The museum is also open Thursdays through Sundays from 1-5 p.m. for regular tours.

*Wyandotte Historical Society
Presents
Santa and Mrs. Claus*



*Saturday, December 2
Bacon Memorial Library*

Story time with Mrs. Claus
Saturday, Dec. 2 - 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
and 1 to 4 p.m.



Visit Santa's Secret Shop
Saturday, Dec. 2 - 10 a.m. to 12:30
p.m. and 1 to 4 p.m.

It's always a "Vintage Christmas" at my house! By- Josh Halasy

Christmas is, always has been, and always will be my favorite time of the year. I love everything about it, and in my opinion, one of the most versatile parts of Christmas is decorating. There are so many different styles and themes, and each of them is beautiful in their own way. For me, its vintage/retro ALL the way.

While I have decorations from many eras, the 1940s-50s are the decades where most of mine originate. I use old lights from the 1940s-60s, and let me tell you, they don't make 'em like they used to. You won't see any issue with 60 or 70-year old light strands going out, unlike modern strands which often break after a few years of use (yes, old bulbs get hot, but this can be easily controlled by using lamp dimmers). My real Christmas tree, which I chop down every year the day after Thanksgiving, is never complete until I have showered it in vintage tinsel icicles.

In recent years, vintage has become "trendy", so you will see a lot of reproductions or vintage-inspired décor at the stores. And yes, I have bought a few of these pieces myself. But a HUGE majority of my décor is pure vintage, and each year, the Christmas wonderland that I turn my home into is described by those who visit as "nostalgic" or "cozy". The following pictures are just some, and I emphasize the words "JUST SOME", of my yearly displays. I hope you enjoy, and have a very Merry Christmas!



Above— While it's a different live fir tree every year, I always get a fat tree & adorn it in tinsel, big lights, and a variety of ornaments. This is my 2020 tree.

Upper right— This vintage 1960s fireplace is a rare find. I hung 1940s stockings on it & covered its mantle with 1960s plastic holly & 1940s Christmas lights.



Lower right— A 100+ year old toboggan is covered with Christmas cards from the 1930s-1950s, and lined with a strand of 1950s Christmas lights.





This 1950s lighted sleigh, which I place on top of my fireplace mantle, is a big collectors item.



These lighted plastic decorations are called "flatbacks" and were huge in the 1950s. They are highly sought today due to their fragile condition. These pieces range from the years 1941—1955.



I create a winter scene on my coffee table, full of trees, snow, deer, etc. This is looking close-up at a small portion of the table, & you can see my tree in the background.



This santa is a "die cut" or "cutout". These cardboard decorations were popular in the 1940s-80s & are making a comeback. This cutout is on a mirror that catches a reflection of my tree.



I have so many old lights! This is a set of C9 lights from the late 1940s-early 1950s, The bulbs get hot but the color is incredible!



My favorite ornament! These handmade bells were a gift to my great-grandparents in 1954, and they hang on my tree every year.

Return Service Requested

Wyandotte Historical Society

Burns Home

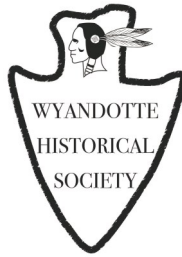
2624 Biddle Ave.

Wyandotte, MI 48192-5208

Phone: (734) 324-7299

Email: wyandottehistory@gmail.com

Website: wyandottehistory.org



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