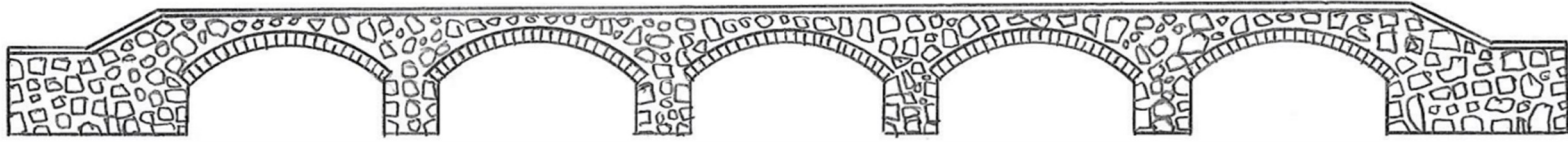


# THE BRIDGE



Connecting the Past to the Present where the Rock River meets the Yellowstone Trail

**Vol 1 #4**

**July 2025**

Official Newsletter of Theresa Historical Society  
Theresa, Wisconsin

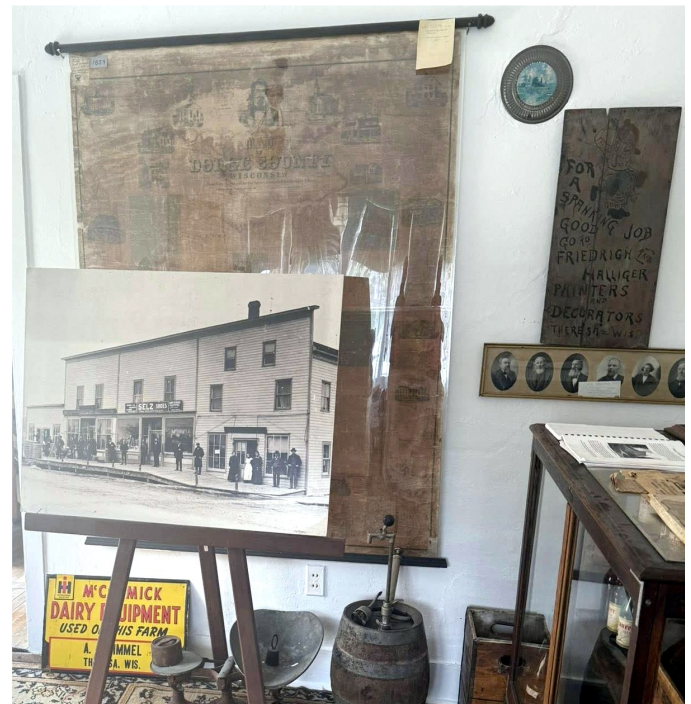
## 1849 Schiefer House Restoration Updates Completed



**Thanks to the diligence** of THS Curator Alice Mirk assisted by THS members Bob Beck, Jim Rodell, and Jim Polster the reorganization and interior restoration updates of the 1849 John Schiefer House are complete. This house was home to the John Schiefer family, early Theresa village pioneers. Schiefer operated a nearby distillery

The Schiefer house contains the newly revamped display about the Theresa Village Bands which supplied marching and concert entertainment in the area for many years. Photos and instruments of the

by-gone era are on display. Also featured are artifacts from the Weber Brewery, photos of early Theresa residents and the newly opened Theresa Veterans Room which premiered at the recent Yellowstone Trail Day and the June 29th open



**Photos Courtesy Of Jim Polster**

### **Les Becks: It Happened In Theresa**

**1886 John Winege built a Bowling alley in his establishment at Theresa Depot (Station). It was 80 feet long. Gustav Luhn is buiit it**





**Those Aren't Weeds!** Photo Laura Bruederle

## Letter From The Editor:

Our Theresa Historical Society open houses this summer have been a resounding success. We had perfect weather and a wonderful turnout. It was a great experience to meet and greet the many folks who stopped by on Yellowstone Trail Day June 7th as well as Sunday, June 29th.

On Monday, June 30th we hosted a school group tour, the Lomira Career and Community explorations class, and shared the unique history of the area with them.

One of the students asked, "why don't you trim the weeds growing up the steps (of the 1849 J. Schiefer House)." I had to chuckle as another visitor asked me the same question the previous day at our Sunday open house. My answer, "It's a part of history. Those are hops vines and hops is used to brew beer. These hops vines were from Theresa brewery owner Benedict Weber's nearby farm. Weber raised much of the barley and hops use the family's Weber's Brewery producing Pioneer, Bock and Munchner Lager beers."

We hope you'll attend our summer THS campus open houses on Sunday, July 27th & Sunday August 31st. If you haven't visited before we hope you will join us, and

if you have...Welcome back. We speak history here.

The continued response and kind comments we have received about our Society newsletter, *The Bridge* are most gratifying. Thank You. On the business side, THS is moving forward with more folks giving us a bit of their time, talents and treasure. This means we can update old and establish new historical exhibits in the future.

Between our first newsletter issue in January to our present issue, requests to be added to our mailing list have grown by 50%, and we have gained several new members, so we welcome John Schreiter, Dave & Chrstine Steger, Ron & Diane Wendler and Mary Jaster. We look forward to having you in our organization.

As we continue to move forward we need your continued support as we expand and preserve our THS Campus museum. We cannot do it alone. Theresa Historical Society is a 501(c)3 tax exempt charitable organization. Our only current means of support is through our membership fees and donations. We are working on future fund raising projects but to get that done and do what is needed we certainly would welcome whatever support you can lend to us, whether it be time, talent or treasure. Your participation and generosity will help us to preserve the past for the future.

If you have friends or family who would be interested in receiving our newsletter send us an email care of [famousrobbo@gmail.com](mailto:famousrobbo@gmail.com) and put the word *Bridge* on the subject line. **Visit us soon! Our next open houses will be on July 29th. and August 31st 1-4 PM.**



**Published by: Theresa Historical Society**

**Jim Rodell: President**

**Rob Bowe : Vice President**

**Cindy Bowe: Secretary**

**Kathy Benter: Treasurer**

**Alice Mirk Jim Polster:**

**Theresa Historical Society Museum Curators**

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**R. Bowe 105 Schnitzler Dr., Theresa, Wi, 53091**

## Theresa Historical Meeting Notes June 16th, 2025

The June meeting was held at the THS/Juneau grounds campus.

The secretary and treasurer's report were read and approved. A review and discussion of Yellowstone trail days was held. The consensus was the event was a success with great weather. It was decided that the event will go forward next year with the date set as Saturday June 7 and we will look forward to working with the Byron, Lomira, and Slinger Historical societies if they choose to continue the event.

We will host a school group tour from Immanuel Lutheran School on September 23 at 9 Am.

Rob Bowe reported *The Bridge* newsletter has been a surprising success. Rob and Cindy Bowe are donating the production costs and mailing expenses of the publication for the 1st three issues. 2nd quarter production costs are expected to be \$100 and THS will cover that cost.

Alice & Walter Mirk are donating brochures for handout during open houses. Jim Rodell and Rob Bowe reported that the Yellowstone Trail Society's Magazine *THE ARROW* featured an article highlighting Theresa and the Theresa Historical Society's effort to promote the Yellowstone Trail/Yellowstone Trail Day.

A discussion was held on the feasibility of obtaining "Black Out" shades for the Juneau and Schiefer House to prevent UV damage to exhibits.

The membership thanks Alice Mirk and Bob Beck for their efforts in upgrading the exhibits and restoration improvements on the Schiefer House.

Alice Mirk submitted organizational plans via email and suggested a time line for moving forward in getting new exhibits set up in the "Old

Library" on the THS campus.

Carl Benter gave an update on the facelift - restoration of the Koll pavilion and a possible "shed" project. A bid on the project will be sought.

A discussion on strategic planning took place with fund raisings, open house themes and other ideas for the future.



**JOIN  
THERESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
TODAY!**

**DON'T MISS OUR  
JULY MEETING!**

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

**MONDAY,**

**JULY 21, 4PM**

**THERESA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**PIONEER KEG**

**MILWAUKEE ST.-HWY 175**

**DOWNTOWN THERESA**



## Settlement Stories

By Rob Bowe

**Have you ever wondered what your true purpose in life is?** Cardinal John Henry Newman, a Catholic priest, wrote over a 100 years ago, but I shall be told it next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons."

When Theresa Meixensperger and Gabriel Quick started their lives together as man and wife, they had no idea that one purpose for their life was to be an important link in the chain of human history. Their son would become a savior of human life in the world of medicine. The Meixensperger and Quick families immigrated from Bavaria to the Farmersville area in the 1850s where Theresa and Gabriel were born.

Theresa's parents eventually moved from Farmersville to Theresa, where as a young woman, Theresa started a dress making shop in the 1890s. In June of 1893, she married her former Farmersville neighbor boy, Gabriel Quick, the co-proprietor of Hustung and Quick Hardware store in Theresa.

A son, Armand James Quick, was born on July 18, 1894, followed by a brother, Louis, in January of 1898. Their father, Gabriel contracted tuberculosis as did infant Louis. Louis died at 3 months of age and the boy's father Gabriel succumbed to the disease 3 months later in June of 1898, leaving his widow Theresa, and 4-year-old Armand to fend for themselves. Gabriel Quick would never know during his lifetime how important his son Armand's future life's work would be.

Shortly after his father's death, Armand also contracted Tuberculosis. He recovered but the disease affected his spine, causing a severe case of scoliosis. As a result he would have a shortened neck and could not turn his head leaving him hunched back, a side effect of Tuberculosis which effected many who recovered from the disease.

While sick, young Armand lost his ability to walk. Many treatments were tried and failed. Finally young Armand was fed cod liver oil, and amazingly he recovered. However, the neck and spinal dam-



**Theresa Quick and son Armand Quick about 1899**

age was permanent.

Quick started school at the age of 9 at St. Theresa's Catholic School in Theresa. In 1907 at the age of 13, he entered Theresa Public School where he excelled. Like all boys, he loved the outdoors, hiking, swimming and fishing in the Rock River, as well as playing baseball, though he never excelled in the great American pastime.

The Theresa Public School only went to 9th grade., so in 1911 Armand went to stay with his aunt in Madison while attending high school. He returned home to Theresa to live with his mother in the summer. His mother would always remain dear to him, and in later years he returned often to visit his mother, other relatives and friends.

After graduating from high school in 1914, Quick enrolled in the University of Wisconsin, taking a keen interest in chemistry and research earning a Bachelor of Science degree in 1918.

### **Les Beck's It Happened in Theresa**

**1879 Theresa Mutual Insurance Founded**

**6,028 acres of wheat, 676 acres of corn harvested in Theresa Township.**





**Dr. Armand J. Quick**

**1894-1976**

In 1919, Armand earned his Master's Degree and left Madison to accept a teaching assistant position at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. After a year, Quick left Vanderbilt, and went on to earn his Ph.D. at the University of Illinois in organic chemistry. Next, he worked in research, at the Philadelphia General Hospital and the University of Pennsylvania, developing an interest in medicine. He earned his M.D. at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York in 1928.

Quick immersed himself in teaching and research, staying on at Cornell while doing intern work in New York City. At Cornell he began to make inroads in the fields of liver function and blood clotting. He developed a new medical test, along with F. Bancroft and Margaret Stanley-Brown, that opened a new understanding of blood coagulation and its disorders.

Dr. Quick gained recognition for his pioneering research and lectures on developing tests for Hemophilia and other bleeding disorders, but he often found his work to be stressful and discouraging. The challenges of research, budget limitations and the petty politics at the institutions he worked for soon took its toll. Quick while driven by his research, loved teaching university medical classes and his work load was time consuming, as a result he was often a lonely man in his early years.

In 1935, Quick joined the Marquette University

School of Medicine faculty in Milwaukee as an assistant professor. He would be associated with Marquette for the rest of his life. The move to Milwaukee brought him close to his beloved home in Theresa again, which he visited often. He also established a private practice with patients who suffered from bleeding disorders.

In 1937, at the age of 43, Armand married Margaret Koll. A daughter, Edith, would be born to the couple in 1947 when Quick was 52. Marriage and starting a family were life-changing events for Dr. Quick.

In a career span of 50 years, Quick traveled world wide, teaching and lecturing on his research and findings. His research saved the lives of many who suffered from hemophilia and other blood clotting disorders. The "Quick Tests" he developed represented a significant advancement in the detection, diagnosis, and treatment of hemophilia as well as other coagulative and hemorrhagic disorders.

Quick published over 300 medical papers and several renowned medical books on the subject of hemorrhagic diseases. His name became well-known in every medical lab & medical school across America and around the world.

Quick kept diaries all his life, as well as volumes of notes about his research. He had always intended to write an autobiography, but never really took the time to slow down and do it. His daughter Edith would write his biography. *The Quick Tests, The Life and Work of Dr. Armand J. Quick by his daughter* Edith M. Ebel, Pocahontas Press, Blacksburg, Virginia, 1995. The information for this article came from that biography.

Armand Quick passed away on Jan. 28, 1976 at the age of 83. His body was returned to Theresa and interred at St Theresa's Memorial Gardens. He was truly a medical rock star who advanced medicine for the benefit of all mankind.

**Les Beck's It Happened In Theresa**

**1924 Theresa population 324**





**Come Visit Us! THS Campus Open Dates**

**Sunday, July 27    Sunday August 31    Sunday Sept. 28 1-4PM**

Special Thanks to Laura Bruederle for providing these photos





**On Monday, June 29th, Theresa Historical Society hosted students in the Lomira Career and Community Explorations Class**  
Photos Courtesy of Jennifer Priesgen and Nancy Jordan

This summer school class , offered by the Lomira Middle School is intended show various careers, recreational services and programs available in the area. Accompanied by their teachers Jennifer Priesgen and Nancy Jordon, the students were of full of questions, showing a great deal of interest in the history of the area and the historical buildings they toured.

THS museum curator Jim Polster and THS Vice-President Rob Bowe served as guides for the group ushering them through the Juneau and Schiefer Houses, the Reklau Log Cabin and Beck Tourist Cabin sharing the history of the building and the area.

Polster said, "We are pleased to provide school tours for educational purposes. As part of our community outreach program we are especially committed in preserving history and educating young and old alike about our area history .



Above; THS Museum Curator Jim Polster reviews the history of the Solomon Juneau Family in the Juneau family dining room . Right: Rob Bowe tells the Reklau Family Saga.







**Friedrich Christian bought 160 acres from U.S. Government for \$1.25 per acre in Sec. 28/29 Theresa Township in October of 1846. He built his cabin and began farming it in spring of 1847. He is shown here working in the yard with his wife Friedrike working in the back garden. Painting By Rob Bowe**

**The influx of Prussian and other German speaking** immigrants into the Town of Theresa, Herman and adjoining townships was almost explosive between 1847-1858. Hundreds and then over 3,000 came to Dodge County in that era.

In 1846, Michael Zimmermann, Friedrich Christian, Johann Zirbel, Micheal Budahn, Christan Koepsell and other Prussian immigrants were among the first to arrive in Southern Theresa and Northern Herman townships. The area were pretty much rolling hills covered dense forest,, scattered swamp lowlands, numerous creeks and of course, the Rock River. In 1846-55, there were no roads, only rudimentary trails from log cabin to log cabin.

Solomon Juneau platted the Village of Theresa, in 1848 while in Herman township, Herman Center became that area's business center in those early years. By 1850 ,Theresa village had around 125 people and the township 714.

Most people really didn't have any money. If they did, there were few places to spend it. If you needed something you made it, grew it or bartered for it. Everything the immigrant pioneers did centered on survival and establishing a subsistence way of life. They did this through gardening and commodity farming . You couldn't buy much of anything in the early years as few stores existed. Those that did were miles away.

Getting started farming was tough. The earliest pioneers cleared acres of trees by hand. Standing trees other than those used for lumber and firewood were regarded to be worthless for anything else in those days. Trees got in the way of farming.

It took a while to get a farming started Besides clearing trees, picking stones and develop crop land, it didn't happen over night. Records show many farmers cleared only 10 acres in their first 3 years on the land. In that three years if you built a warm dry cabin, cleared some land, planted a garden, got some poultry, maybe have pig or two and a milk cow, you could survive. Simple as it sounds it was work and it took time.

As the story goes wheat would become king crop for the first 40 plus years in Dodge County. In spring of 1844, back in Lebanon settlement (established in 1843), Fred Christian's father , Martin along with neighbor, Micheal Budahn and other newly arrived immigrants neighbors had chipped in and secured a bushel of seed wheat. The cost was \$3.19. It was divvied up and added to small quantity of wheat seed a Mr. Moldenhauer had brought from Prussia to Lebanon in 1843. The seed was carefully planted in small plots by the participating pioneers. This crop along with turnips, and squash given to the pioneers by the Pottawatomi Indians marked the beginning of crop farming in Dodge County, Wisconsin for our ancestors.

When Fred Christian, Michael Budahn, and some newly arrived immigrants in Lebanon came north to Theresa in 1846, they brought those crops with them. By 1850 they would add Irish Potatoes, Indian Corn and other garden crops to their portfolio.



By the 1880's, the golden era of wheat farming in Wisconsin was coming to an end. Many pioneer farmers in the land between the marshes has passed on, moldering in their graves. Their sons and grandsons were on the farms now and they were transitioning into dairy farming,

Dairying was a natural as Wisconsin's European immigrants and the old Yankees migrants from the east brought cheese making knowledge and skills to the state. Cheese making had been around for thousands of years. Early in American history cheese was being made as the Old Yankees who brought the old English favorite, Cheddar Cheese to Wisconsin. From Cheddar cheese, a Wisconsin original, Colby Cheese was developed. The Prussians and other German speaking settlers brought Muenster and Limburger into the state and still another Wisconsin original, Brick Cheese would evolve right here in Dodge County.

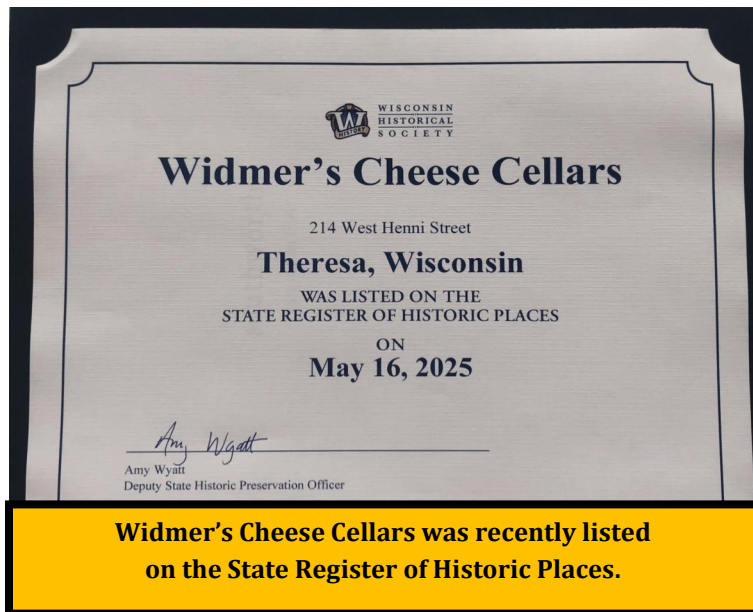
Swiss cheese, another European favorite came with the Swiss settlers who settled the south western part of the State. Later the Italians brought Mozzarella, Provolone, Parmesan, Ricotta and Gorgonzola while the French brought Camembert, Brie, and a variety of blue cheeses and the Dutch added Gouda and Edam cheeses.

Cheese making was big in this area. At one time there were at least 18 cheese factories within a 10 mile radius of the village of Theresa.

In 1885 William Flath opened a cheese factory in Theresa. He sold it to Micheal Asenbauer in 1907.



Early Photo Theresa Cheese Factory.  
Widmer's after 1922



Widmer's Cheese Cellars was recently listed  
on the State Register of Historic Places.

who called the Riverside Cheese Factory.

In 1922, Swiss Immigrant John O. Widmer came to Theresa and acquired the local cheese factory. Over his lifetime Widmer always strived quality first. He passed his methods of making cheese on to his sons, Jim, Ralph and John who passed the business on to next generations.

Today, 103 years later, Widmer's is the only cheese producing plant in Theresa Township and is still operated by 3rd & 4th Generations of the Widmer family, Joe Sr and his wife Penny along son Joey and daughter Hannah .

The Widmer's no longer refer to their business as a cheese factory and are now known as **Widmer's Cheese Cellars, Producers of Quality Handcrafted Cheese®**, producing several varieties of 3 different cheeses, Brick, Cheddar and Colby.



John O. Widmer (left) standing next Mike Asenbauer (center) in 1922 when John purchased Riverside Cheese Factory  
Photos Courtesy of Widmer Family



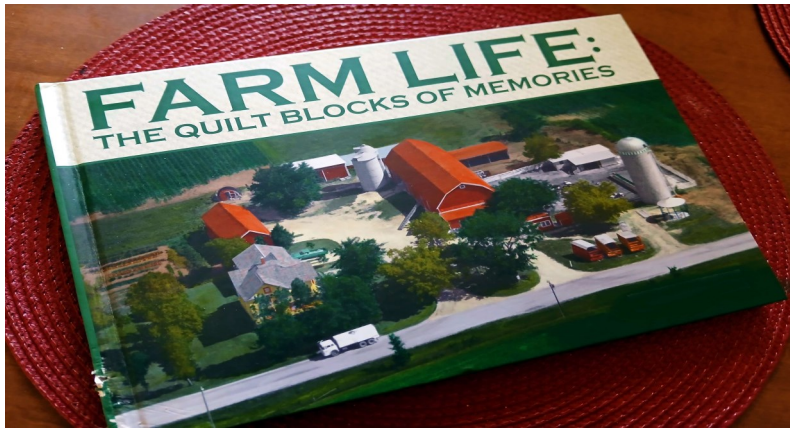


Late 1890s The Dress Shop and Hustings General Store  
is today the "Confectionary"

# Theresa Montage







**Diane Christian Boehm grew up on a family dairy farm** located on Allen Road in Town of Theresa in the 1940s, 50, 60s. She graduated from Mayville High School and went on to be an educator as her life's work, retiring from Sagina State University-Michigan as Writing Program Director. It was only natural that she would write a book about her experiences growing up here in Theresa township.

Through her generosity she has made her book, **FARM LIFE: THE QUILT BLOCKS OF MEMORIES** available as a fund raising project to the Theresa Historical Society. (See page 12 for order details)

In her book, Ms Boehm traces her family history from Prussia (Germany) in the 1840s into present day Theresa township and details growing up on the family farm in the 1940s, 50 & 60s. Here are some interesting excerpts for her book.

"Family farms were mostly self-sufficient. Nearly all the food for the family came from the farm itself, from its fertile fields, its bountiful gardens, its carefully tended animals, even from its woodlands."

Later she writes: "When you grew up on a farm, you were raised to be competent. There was no room for finding some tasks disagreeable. As soon as you were capable, you were given responsibilities in the house or on the farm. Everyone's work was essential to our family life together. We rarely complained about our tasks-we did them because it was expected of us and part of our family responsibility"

"Responsibility and quickness to learn were expected of

each of us; there was little excuse for failing to do your share of the infinite tasks that needed to be done. As soon as we were able, ...we learned how to cook, clean, mend and garden or take care of the animals and land, and contribute to the responsibilities of home and family. There was no possible way, mom or dad could keep up with the work load without each one of us pitching in"

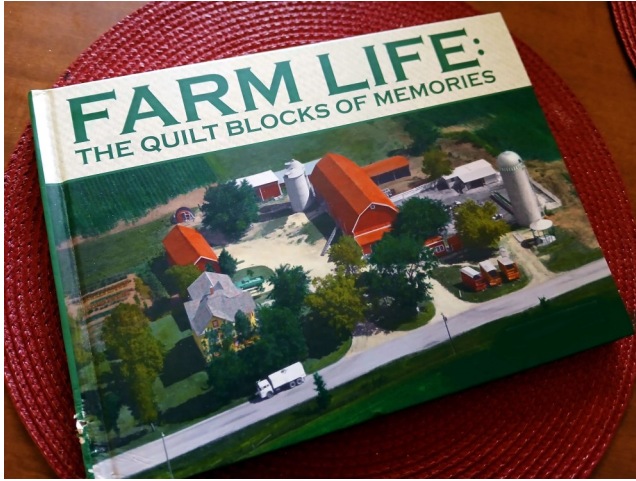
"Growing up on the family farm shaped who we became in so many ways we wouldn't recognize until we became adults....All of us learned to work hard: to care about what was best for everyone, not just ourselves; to become someone the family would be proud of ...Who we are-and who we have become-is firmly rooted in where we have been.." **Diane Christian Boehm**



**Visitors to the recent THS Open House got an extra treat as THS President Jim Rodell opened up his historic 19th century blacksmith shop , a few blocks from the THS Campus to visitors. Rodell pictured above, explains to visitors how blacksmiths plied their trade . Rodell has restored the shop forge to working order and as a hobby enjoys forging as one of his many interests. Be rest assured if you show any interest ask Jim and he'll be glad to answer questions on the trade.**

**Les Beck's It Happened In Theresa**

**1930 Theresa population 437**



Limited Edition ORDER NOW!

## FARM LIFE: THE Quilt Blocks of Memories

By Diane Christian Boehm

A wonderful collection of memories about growing up on a dairy farm in Theresa Township, Dodge County, Wisconsin in the 1940s, 50s & 60s. High quality hard-cover book, printed on superior quality paper. Filled with wonderful memories and stories. Lots of color and Black & White photos. 106 pages **GREAT GIFT IDEA!**

Please send \_\_\_\_copy/copies of FARM LIFE: THE Quilt Blocks of Memories.

I enclose \$32 per copy with free shipping & handling .

Make your check payable and mail to Theresa Historical Society, 105 Schnitzler Dr., Theresa WI. 53091.

Ship my order to : Name\_\_\_\_\_Phone\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_City\_\_\_\_\_State\_\_\_\_\_ Zip\_\_\_\_\_

Email:\_\_\_\_\_

Theresa Historical Society is 501(c)3 tax exempt charitable organization

## The Theresa Historical Society needs your Help

**Your can help to continue & preserve the history of our area. Here's how .**

### **1. Become a Member 2025 THS Historical Society memberships:**

**\$ 15 Individual\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 Family\_\_\_\_\_**

**\$50 Business Sponsor membership \_\_\_\_\_**

**Join Now!**

**2. Donations to THS Historical Society \$100\_\_\_\_\_ \$50\_\_\_\_\_ \$25\_\_\_\_\_ Other\_\_\_\_\_**

**3. I would to volunteer time or others talents to help the society.\_\_\_\_\_**

**4 . I have artifacts to donate. Please contact me \_\_\_\_\_**

**Please check the appropriate lines in number 1-4 above**

**Total Enclosed\_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed\_\_\_\_\_**

**Name\_\_\_\_\_**

**Address\_\_\_\_\_**

**Phome\_\_\_\_\_Email\_\_\_\_\_**

**Make Payment& Check payable to Theresa Historical Society**

**Mailing address R. Bowe, 105 Schnitzler Dr., Theresa, Wi . 53091**

**THANK YOU! For Supporting The Theresa Historical Society**