

Butte des Morts Historical Preservation Society holds Kick-off Event

On Sunday, June 22, the Butte des Morts Historical Preservation Society (BDMHPS) held its kick-off event at the Butte des Morts Lions Club with about 75 people in attendance. Society President Joe Yana welcomed attendees who gathered in nearby Frank Kachur Pavilion to witness the charter meeting of the new organization.

The meeting was the first for the new board members that includes the following: Joseph V. Yana (President), Randy R. Domer (Vice President), Patricia A. Yana (Secretary/Treasurer), George J. Kontos, James F. Quillinan, Debra Daubert, Harold W. Thorpe, and Vicki Wilson. Organizational bylaws were submitted, adjusted and approved by the board and dates for meetings were established for the upcoming year.



BDMHPS Board of Directors

Back row: Jim Quillinan, Randy Domer, Harold Thorpe, Joe Yana, George Kontos
Front row: Debra Daubert, Patti Yana (Not pictured: Vicki Wilson)

Joe Yana opened the general meeting with an historic summary of Butte des Morts and informed attendees of the wonderful history that surrounds this little community. Secretary Patti Yana presented the membership program. Patti explained the new society is a nonprofit organization and relies on the support of the community and members. She also reminded the guests that the organization will accept donations, not only financial, but also items of historical significance. "It's our goal to someday have a place where these items can be displayed for the public to enjoy", Patti stated. About 60 persons from Butte des Morts, Oshkosh, Omro, Neenah, Winneconne, and beyond, signed up to become

charter members. Individual charter memberships are available for only \$15, couples are \$25, family \$35 and Lifetime Memberships are \$250. Anyone interested in becoming a charter member can call Patti at [\(920\) 582-9616](tel:9205829616).

Also on hand for the celebration were Representative Gordon Hintz from the 54th Assembly District and Representative Penny Bernard-Schaber from the 57th Assembly District.

Attendees were encouraged to bring old photos or anything they felt reflected the history of the community. Large photo albums were brought and many pictures were digitally scanned to be entered into the society's new archives. George Kontos, who has lived in Butte des Morts for 85 years, brought a large aerial map of Butte des Morts from the 1950's showing buildings and businesses some of which are no longer there. Chuck Nichols, owner of the Hull House, often referred to as the Scovel farm, brought in several memorabilia items from his nearly 160 year old home.

A program entitled, "History's Hidden Treasures - Butte des Morts, WI" was given by Randy Domer. The program highlighted the history of Butte des Morts back to a time when Augustin Grignon established the first permanent trading post nearby. Also included was an overview of the historic Grignon Hotel, which still stands today. It is one of the oldest commercially used buildings in Winnebago County, built by Augustin Grignon between 1840 and 1848. It is on the State and National Historic Registers.

Work is being done to create a Facebook page and eventually a website. The residents of Butte des Morts are proud of their community and it shows. Whether you are looking for a great place to paddle a canoe, find a Friday night fish fry, or enjoy a cool beverage in one of the local establishments, you will find the people and places of Butte des Morts warm and welcoming!



Long time BDM resident *George Kontos* enjoyed the kick-off event with his 12 year old great grandson *Tanner Groshek*.



BDMHPS President *Joe Yana* welcomed guests.



Nearly 75 people attended the *Butte des Morts Historical Preservation Society's* kick-off event on June 22, 2014.