

CAPITAL PAST TIMES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BISMARCK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Logan's Grocery and other early Bismarck grocery stores

Logan's Grocery and other early Bismarck grocery stores is currently on display at the Bismarck Public Library through mid-April. The exhibit was produced by BHS board member Ann Vadnie.

Photos by Mike Lalonde

*** Annual Dues Are Due! ***

If you have not done so, please renew your membership in the Bismarck Historical Society and help us continue to preserve and share Bismarck's history.



Presidents Message:

Greetings. I hope everyone had a very merry and blessed Christmas. It is a time of faith, family, friends, reflection, and looking forward. The Bismarck Historical Society has been busy reflecting on the past year and looking forward to the upcoming year.

In 2012 the BHS board held a strategic planning session in an effort to more clearly focus our mission and get our arms around the many opportunities and projects which have presented themselves. Thanks to Connie Spryczynatyk for leading our first session. It is a lengthy process, but will be helpful and worth the effort as we move forward. We truly had an amazing year, but we have even bigger plans for 2013.

Founders Day plans are well underway and we have two events for 2013. The first will be a 141st birthday party with cake and entertainment May 14 at Camp Hancock State Historic Site. The following week Ev Miller's play *Little Casino* will be showing at the historic Belle Mehus Auditorium on May 24,25, and 26. Preliminary assessments indicate a strong community interest in the play, and we are hopeful of replicating the sell-out crowds when it was first produced almost 30 years ago. Mark the dates on your calendars.

Tom Dunkel's book *Color Blind: The Forgotten Team That Broke Baseball's Color Line* will be available in bookstores in mid-April. While the focus of the book is Satchel Paige and the historic Bismarck semi-professional baseball team that became the first integrated team to win a national championship, there are numerous sub-plots involving moonshining, gambling, etc. in Depression -era Bismarck, with cameo appearances by several famous individuals. The book will be of interest to anyone interested in Bismarck history, even if you are not a baseball fan. We have had several conversations with Tom in an effort to get him to return to Bismarck for a presentation and book signing, possibly in connection with Founders Day.

On February 13 our public programming for 2013 will begin with a presentation by BHS Executive Director Walt Bailey entitled *Fortress Bismarck*. Incredibly, there are more than 40 sites of former fortifications in the Bismarck area. On March 13 Mike McCormack will conduct a Bismarck trivia program at the Blarney Stone.

Finally, it is membership renewal time. Take a minute and renew your membership and also recruit a new member. We are heavily dependent on memberships to support our activities.

Dennis Boyd

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Otto Eduard Leopold von Bismarck

by Ann Vadnie

The city of Bismarck is named after Otto von Bismarck, a Prussian statesman who unified Germany and made it a major player in world affairs. He was both the Minister President of Prussia and the Chancellor of the German Empire. His most famous nickname was “the iron chancellor” because he ruled with an iron fist.

Bismarck’s role in the Austro-Prussian War (1866) was to stir up trouble in parts of Austria. During “The Battle of Sedan” in the Franco-Prussian War (1870), Bismarck was able to capture French Emperor Napoleon III.

Otto von Bismarck was Chancellor under three generations of Kings.

- Kaiser Wilhelm I (1871-1888), the Kaiser's son King Fredrich III
- (only ruled for 99 days before dying), and King Fredrich's son
- Kaiser Wilhelm II (forced Bismarck to resign (retire) in 1890).

As Chancellor, Bismarck consulted with, but was not a member of the Reichstad, the parliament of the German Empire. Otto von Bismarck’s most famous words were:

“Not through speeches and majority decisions will the great questions of the day be decided, but by ‘iron and blood.’”



Prussia and Germany created and used images to honor Otto von Bismarck in both practical and artistic ways. His likeness appeared on stamps, currency, memorial coins, drawings and paintings, statues, military images, and caricatures.

It is interesting to note that under the leadership of Otto von Bismarck, Germany led Europe with thirty major postcard factories. About 75% of all postcards used in the U.S. prior to World War I were printed in Germany.

In the early 1870s, Northern Pacific Railroad was facing serious financial problems. Desperate for money, NP directors decided to rename “Edwinton” (Bismarck’s original name) for Otto von Bismarck. Their hope was that this honor might encourage German investors to buy Northern Pacific securities.

A letter was sent to Otto von Bismarck before naming our town.

In reply to the honor of having a town named for him...Bismarck wrote a reply in which he:

- ❖ expressed thanks for this compliment,
- ❖ was grateful for kind words about services he has done for his country, and
- ❖ offered his best wishes for prosperity.

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Our last public program of 2012 was presented at our Annual meeting by Sister Thomas Welder. A daughter of Bismarck, she is perhaps more responsible than anyone for the outstanding growth and success of the University of Mary. Her presentation on the *Benedictine Sisters and Their Contributions to Bismarck* was outstanding and well attended.

Photo by Mike Lalonde

Correction: The article in the October issue of the Capital Past Times, Operation Sky Watch –When Civilians Watched the Skies was incorrectly attributed to Tim Atkinson, it was written by Tom Atkinson. My apologies for this error -Johnathan Campbell, Editor

Upcoming programs:

February 13, 7 p.m., Bismarck Public Library. Walt Bailey, "Fortress Bismarck".
 March 13, 7 p.m., Blarney Stone (reservations required). Mike McCormack, Bismarck Trivia.

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