



# THE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

December 2018

Vol. XXXVII, No. 4

A newsletter by the Brown County Historical Society dedicated to the preservation of history in Brown County, Wisconsin.

## 2017 HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD WINNER

### ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL 140 SOUTH MONROE AVENUE, GREEN BAY

by Jerry Abitz

The early history of this cathedral is somewhat unique. Francis Krautbauer, a native of Germany, studied theology and was ordained in Munich, served in Buffalo, New York, and was a pastor in Rochester, New York. In 1859, he was sent to Milwaukee and, on February 12, 1875, Pope Pius IX appointed him the second Bishop of the Green Bay Diocese. Under his bishopric, the Cathedral of St. Francis Xavier was planned and erected. He is interred under a marble slab in the entryway.

During his first months in Green Bay, Bishop Krautbauer expressed his distress over the lack of brick or stone churches or Catholic schools. He commented "immigrants need churches lest they lose their religion."<sup>1</sup> He also was concerned about a suitable cathedral to replace the building he described as a "wooden building shaken by every storm, of which every peasant congregation in France would be ashamed."<sup>2</sup>

The original cost of the cathedral was \$35,000 with funds coming from the immigrant population of Green Bay, the Bavarian Missionary Society in Germany, a donation from King Ludwig II of Bavaria and friends of Bishop Francis Krautbauer. In 1877, Bishop Krautbauer traveled to Europe to visit Pope Pius IX and spent over a month collecting money from his family and friends to build a cathedral.

"In a letter to Munich asking for financial aid, Krautbauer assured the officials of Ludwig-Missionverein (Ludwig's Mission) that the cathedral would be modeled after Ludwigskirche (Ludwig's Church) in Munich."<sup>3</sup> Krautbauer drew up plans for a new cathedral and submitted them to a New York architect for correction and approval.

In 1875, bricks and stones were purchased and construction began. An 1878 article in the *Green Bay Advocate* stated "the building will require about one

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Front façade of the St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. Photo supplied by St. Francis Xavier Cathedral.

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## ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL

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million brick which gives an idea of the size and solidity."<sup>4</sup>

After five years of construction, the cathedral was consecrated in 1881.

The subsequent sacristy mural (1883), twin tower belfries (1904), eight beatitudes paintings (1911) and three-story sacristy (1918) essentially completed the construction.

Aside from remodeling work in the 1930s (painting restoration), the 1950s (installation of the Memorial Rose stained glass window and construction of the three enclosed entrances), and the 1980s (installation of the pipe organ), few improvements had been made to the original building. Restoration of the steeples was done in 2006, but the congregation soon realized that the building would eventually require much more repair and restoration work. In 2013, a committee was tasked with developing a 50- to 100-year preservation plan. After identifying 18 separate projects and successfully raising the necessary funds, work began in 2015. The initial phase included replacing the roof, tuck-pointing

the masonry, insulating the attic, and restoring tower bells that had not swung since World War II.

The 2017 interior phase required that the church be closed down for three months. It included rebuilding the organ console, removing and restoring the pews, replacing the floor and updating the 60-year-old, in-floor heating system, installing a new sound system, and restoring the artwork on the sacristy and side



Restored mural in the sanctuary. Photo by Don Kraft.

walls, which required the church be filled with scaffolding. The St. Francis Xavier statue was restored and placed near the cathedral entrance. A statue of St. John Paul II was a gift from Bishop Riken, the current bishop.

The plan was to have the building reopened in time for the Christmas holidays, and they set a date of December 3, 2017. It wasn't until later that they realized that this very date was the feast day of St. Francis Xavier, a delightful coincidence.

The cathedral is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places which provides governmental acknowledgement of its historic significance. The Cathedral is an impressive example of Romanesque Revival architecture and is renowned for its remarkable paintings and interior. The designation also recognizes the regional Roman Catholic history and its importance to the community. Bishop Ricken, current Bishop of the Green Bay Diocese, commented, "This is one of the most beautiful churches I have ever seen."<sup>5</sup> The professionals who restored the paintings claimed that

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### BROWN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OUR MISSION – To preserve, present and share the heritage of Brown County history through preservation activities, exhibitions, educational programs and events.

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by Christine Dunbar

A significant part of our mission is connecting our community to our past, to each other and to the future. This is exemplified in the varied programs we offered in 2018. Our interns, staff and volunteers have done amazing work, researching, planning and implementing programs in collaboration with our community.

**Fashioning Our Identity**, an exhibit commemorating the county's history, allowed us to share seldom seen treasures from our collections and feature artifacts and clothing from community members. On August 25, Brown County turned into a giant game board with our first **History Tour Road Rally**. Thirty teams made their throughout Brown County solving clues, riddles and puzzles, and discovering interesting facts about people and places in the county.

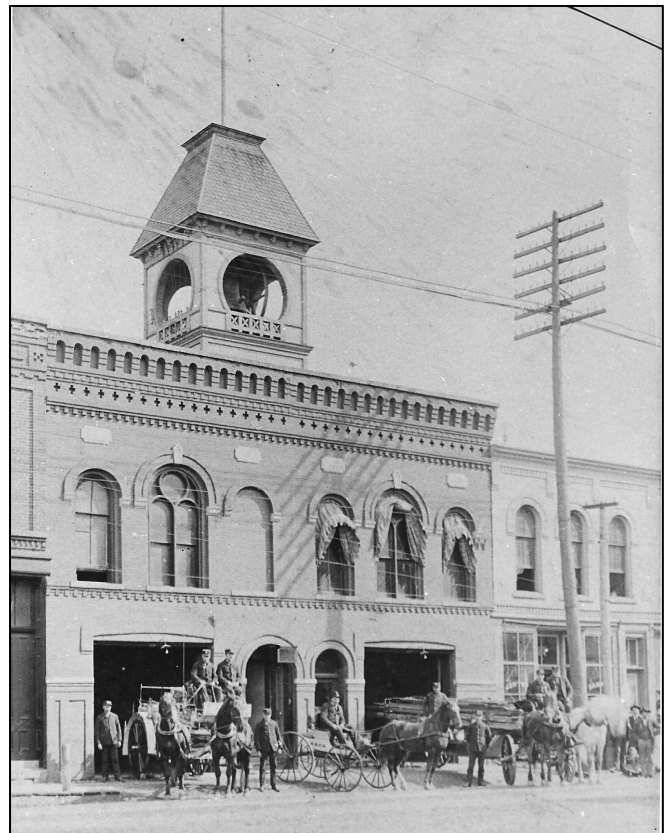
Volunteers of the **Digital Archives Project** scanned photos, film negatives, slides and glass plates with the goal of making these images accessible to the public in an online format in 2019. This project is an enormous visual resource for those interested in the history of Brown County.

One hundred fifty, old house enthusiasts enjoyed **"If These Homes Could Talk,"** a walking tour partnering with the Astor Neighborhood Association.

We expanded educational programs with a new art and architecture program for summer students and added a Junior Girl Scout badge program, **Playing with the Past**. A first-time fundraiser, **Dining with the Dead**, brought participants to Hazelwood and Captain's Walk for scary ghost stories and activities followed by dinner at the Union Hotel.

I invite you to join us for our ethnic Christmas celebration to see firsthand how crucial your support is to creating programs where people of all ages can better understand their connection to history.

*Without you, the fulfillment of our mission to preserve and share our community's history would not be possible.*



Green Bay Fire Department Station No. 1 on South Washington Street in 1902. The 1874 bell is visible in the tower. Photo courtesy of the Green Bay Metro Fire Dept. Archives.

## TANGIBLE CONNECTIONS TO THE PAST — THE TRAVELING GREEN BAY FIRE STATION BELL

by David Siegel

In 1874, the Green Bay Common Council purchased a 3,500-pound alarm bell and placed it in a tower on top of the fire station on the east side of South Washington Street. This location is currently the southern end of Backstage, immediately adjacent to the Meyer Theatre. The Green Bay Fire Department used this bell to summon the volunteer firefighters in the event of a fire.

Eventually, the bell tower deteriorated and officials determined it presented a danger. Consequently, they removed the bell in 1925 and donated it to St. Joseph's Church on Ninth Street on Green Bay's west side. The church mounted the bell at ground level.

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## TRAVELING FIRE STATION BELL

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According to a church yearbook, they placed the bell in storage in 1949 when the original church was razed. This was met with relief as the bell had been mounted low and often rung by children and bar patrons, much to the annoyance of neighbors and church members.

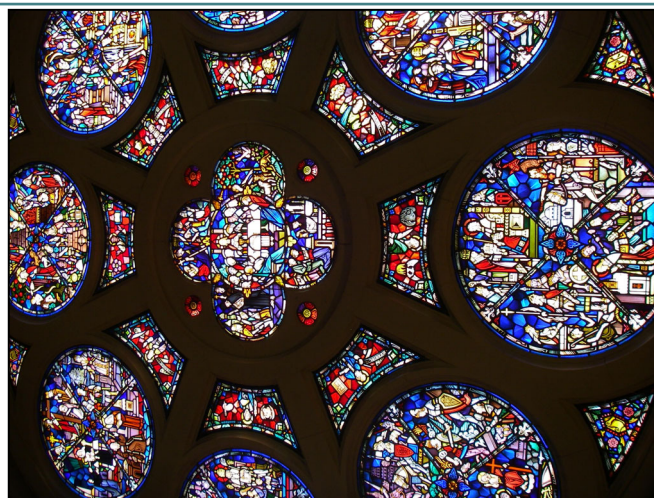
In 1984, a parishioner with St. Agnes Church in Amberg, Wisconsin, paid to move the bell and mount it in front of that church as a memorial to her deceased husband. To this day, the former Green Bay Fire Department bell is rung daily at noon and to announce services. Still visible are the embossed markings of the manufacturer from 1874. It is mounted at least fifteen feet high, preventing the unauthorized and aggravating ringings that occurred while at St. Joseph's.



**Editor's Note** — This story is taken from the book *Forces of Change*, an in-depth examination of the early history of the Green Bay Fire Department released in 2016. It was written by the author of this article and available at Hazelwood Historic House Museum, other Green Bay outlets and Amazon.com. The author can be reached at [gbfd.history@gmail.com](mailto:gbfd.history@gmail.com).



Green Bay Fire Department Station No. 1 bell in front of St. Agnes Church in Amberg, Wisconsin, 2014. Photo by David Siegel.



**Top:** Memorial Rose stained glass window. **Bottom:** One of the beatitude murals along the sides of the nave. Photos by Don Kraft.

## ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL

(continued from page 2)

the eight beatitude murals were deserving of display in a fine museum.<sup>6</sup>

Bishop Krautbauer also raised funds to build a larger chapel, a school and convent at the site of the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help at Champion. Currently, an average of 160,000 pilgrims pass through Green Bay annually to visit this shrine.<sup>7</sup> Hopefully those same pilgrims will make the cathedral a related side destination.

The work initiated by Bishop Krautbauer and completed by the Cathedral congregation ensures this impressive structure will serve future generations. The Brown County Historical Society gave the St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church congregation a Historic Preservation Awards for Building Restoration/Rehabilitation.

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# EVENTS

Join us for one or all!

## HAZELWOOD'S ETHNIC HOLIDAY TEA

FRI., NOV. 30, & SAT., DEC. 1, 1:00–3:00P

While the custom of afternoon tea originated in England, the beverage itself has ties around the world. Join us to celebrate tea's global roots with a menu inspired by our ethnic holiday event. Teatime guests will be treated to a relaxing cup of tea accompanied by savories and sweets, perfect for an international culinary tour.



Photo courtesy Kathy Kauth

**Reservations are required.** Cost: \$22/person



Unknown family. Photo from the BCHS archives.

## AN ETHNIC CHRISTMAS AT HAZELWOOD

SAT., DEC. 8 AND 15, 11:00A–7:00P

*Get your photo taken  
with an Ethnic Christmas Figure  
on December 8 from 12-4p!*

Brown County's diverse ethnicity contributes to the special atmosphere of the holidays at Hazelwood's

Ethnic Christmas celebration. Today's Christmas customs are derived from a wide array of inspirations, as plentiful as the immigrants who settled Wisconsin. Join us and explore ethnic traditions, crafts, foods and decorations. Share your traditions with us and start some new ones!

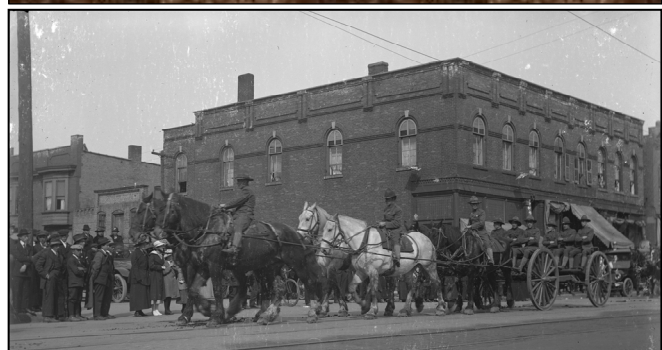
Event Partners include: Amicale Francaise de la Vallee du Renard; Ashwaubenon High School German Club; Casa ALBA Melanie; Shamrock Club; Sons of Norway; UWGB German Club; and Wisconsin Czechs, Inc.

**Cost – Adults/\$6; Seniors/\$5; Students (5-17)/\$4.**

**Children under 5 are free.**

**No charge for BCHS members.**

For more details, visit [www.browncohistoricalsoc.org](http://www.browncohistoricalsoc.org) or call (920-437-1840).



Members of Battery B on parade passing the corner of Main and Adams Streets (c. 1920). Photo from the BCHS archives.

## DIGITAL ARCHIVE PROJECT

The dedicated volunteers working on the BCHS digital archive project took a break from scanning and shared their discoveries of historic Green Bay at the Brown County Library on Sept 25. It was fascinating to see how Green Bay's downtown has changed. A second program, held on November 13, commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Armistice ending WWI, with scenes and parades of Brown County during WWI and WWII. Many of the images are from the recently scanned Matzke glass negative collection. Over the last few years the group has scanned close to 2,000 images and documents as well as photographing area artifacts.

Contact the BCHS if you have images to add to our growing collection. The long range goal of the committee is to preserve images and artifacts and make them available to the general public via the internet. Contact the Society if you would like to join the committee ([920-437-1840](http://www.browncohistoricalsoc.org)).



## EVENTS FOR 2018\*

### DECEMBER

Saturday, Dec. 1, 1:00-3:00p – Hazelwood Holiday Tea. \$22/person.

Saturdays, Dec. 8 and 15, 11:00a-7:00p – Hazelwood's Ethnic Holiday. Regular admission.

## EVENTS FOR 2019\*

The event list for 2019 is currently under construction. Check our website in January for more events and dates – <http://www.browncohistoricalsoc.org/>.

### MARCH

Saturday, March 9, 1:00-3:00p – "Women of Early Green Bay." Celebrate Women's History Month with a luncheon tea and program.

### MAY

Saturday, May 11, 10a-12n – Downtown Walking Tour

Wednesday, May 15, 4:00-8:00p – History Treasure Tour. Free event sponsored by the Brown County Federation of History Organizations. Visit participating history organizations for special programs and activities. Details available in January.

### JUNE

Wednesday and Thursday, June 12 and 13, 6:00p – "If Tombstones Could Talk" Fort Howard Cemetery Walk. Special program takes place in the Fort Howard Chapel on Tuesday, June 11, for those who have difficulty walking in the cemetery.

### JULY

Saturday, July 27 – Faeries and Wizards Festival. Time TBA

### AUGUST

Saturday, Aug. 3, 1:00-3:00p – Women's Suffrage Tea Party

Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 7 and 8, 6:00p – "If Tombstones Could Talk" Allouez Catholic Cemetery

### SEPTEMBER

Wednesday (6:00p), Thursday (6:00p) and Saturday (4:00p), Sept. 4, 5 and 7 – "If Tombstones Could Talk" Woodlawn Cemetery

## SEPTEMBER (CONT.)

History Road Rally TBA

Astor Walking Tour TBA

## OCTOBER

Saturdays, Oct. 5 and 12, and Friday, Oct. 11, 5:00-8:00p – Haunted Hazelwood

## NOVEMBER

Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15 and 16, 1:00-3:00p – Hazelwood Harvest Tea

## DECEMBER

Saturdays, Dec. 7 and 14, 2019, 11:00a-7:00p – Christmas at Hazelwood

\*Events can be added, changed or cancelled without notice. To make sure you stay informed, make our website one of your Favorites – [www.browncohistoricalsoc.org/](http://www.browncohistoricalsoc.org/)

*Thanks*



91.1 The Avenue brings the holidays to Hazelwood's ethnic holiday event with a Community Impact Grant worth \$4,200 of air time. Thanks!

## ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL

(continued from page 4)

**Author's Notes** – Ludwig II built the Nueschwanstein Castle in the Southern Bavarian Alps, which is a great tourist attraction and serves as a model for the Disneyland theme parks in the United States.

### Footnotes –

<sup>1</sup>Letter from Daems, Nov. 6, 1875, published in the *Green Bay Register*, July 28, 1961.

<sup>2</sup>Letter from Krautbauer, Nov. 22, 1876, published in the *Green Bay Register*, August 4, 1961

<sup>3</sup>Roemer, Theodore. "Munich and Green Bay," Catholic Diocese of Green Bay.

<sup>4</sup>*Green Bay Advocate*, May 30, 1878.

<sup>5</sup>[https://www.thecompassnews.org/2017/12\\_st-francis-xavier-cathedral-reopens/](https://www.thecompassnews.org/2017/12_st-francis-xavier-cathedral-reopens/)

<sup>6</sup>Interview with Steve Motl, volunteer project manager on behalf of the Cathedral, relaying statement made by Conrad Schmidt employees (who did the art restoration).

<sup>7</sup><https://www.wearegreenbay.com/news/local-news/prayer-events-center-under-construction-at-national-shrine-of-our-lady-of-good-help/1547174721>

# WHEN GENEALOGY BECOMES ARCHEOLOGY ~ OR ~ HOW I MET MY GRANDMA AT THE ROAD RALLY

by Susan Frost

It's not that my 6th great-grandmother was missing. Our family history drawer is brimming with information and she is securely situated on the genealogy charts: Josette Saint Raison, 1746-1822, born in Nicolet, Quebec. I was satisfied with that . . . at least, until she found me at the BCHS Road Rally!

When volunteers were needed, I was assigned to the Historical Society of Allouez and, although I had no connections, it was no problem. As I left them that Saturday, I picked up their materials and, before disposing of them the next day, read their history — it was the polite thing to do. All familiar, it was nothing new, at least until I turned the page, and stopped short — for there it was, "Amable Durocher Sr., a fur trader, and Josette Saint Raison who like many women kept their family name, one of the most successful voyageurs on the river" at Lot 14 with the south boundary on what is now St. Joseph Street and runs from the Fox River east to the East River, and perhaps beyond. It also notes that Josette was a Menominee Indian.

The oh-by-the-way Josette was Menominee citation falls a little flat against the more fascinating truth, what Paul Harvey called "the rest of the story," or at least some of it. Josette was the daughter of Chief Souigny (Shi-non-ni), chief of the warrior Eagle Clan and half French, who led 150 warriors to the Battle of Mackinaw, joined Chief Oshkosh at the negotiating table of the Treaty of Lake Poygan, battled with Black Hawk — who blinded him in one eye, and founded Keshena Falls . . . all of which causes Josette to emerge from a dry document to become a real woman.

What was it like to grow up in that family? What kind of leadership rubbed off, and is this why she often appears as godmother in so many baptismal records? Could it be that the Heritage Hill Fur Trader's cabin, a place in which our children once played the role of voyageur children, could be in reality more truth than fiction? What other clues could be lurking out there with people

who know one more piece of information, waiting to be added?

While there is an historical note that the Menominee were at the Battle of Mackinaw, it doesn't explain that the families most likely joined them since, as Josette's daughter, Marie Angelique Gravelle, 17, was "conditionally baptized"<sup>1</sup> at Fort Mackinac two days before marrying Francois Grignon, a cousin of the Green Bay Grignons. Thus, when Josette married, she was a young widow, a single mom.

When you query these dry texts, more evidence emerges and more questions are evoked. For example, how could Josette have been born in Nicolet, Quebec, Canada, when my records are contrary to that? A 1962 letter from my grandfather to a Québécois cousin explains that his great-grandmother was born in what was, in 1962, the CN&W Railroad station. More likely, she was born at an encampment outside of Fort Howard, which became the CN&W and, later, Titledown Brewing.

In Brown County, our history goes deep and, especially the well-documented French history, contains many clues. The Brown County Genealogy Department regularly presents education that cracks more mysteries and helpful tracking information and the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Archives are a motherlode of information. The traditions of various immigrant groups and the history in which they lived shaped how they became Americans, which also makes dry history books take on a flesh and blood life.

Genealogy is no longer a topic we assign to retirees who have "nothing else to do." As so often happens with internet surfing, veering off-track and going "down the rabbit hole" of the distracting information just may be more "archeology" than genealogy. You never know what or who you will find. Grandma may be down the rabbit hole, waiting for you!



## Footnote —

<sup>1</sup>The rite of baptism performed on a person who is entering the Roman Catholic Church and is not certain about previous baptism. This is not rebaptism, which is impossible, since this sacrament can be received only once. But if there is reasonable doubt about the fact or validity of one's previous baptism, the sacrament is administered conditionally, i.e., the one who performs the ritual at least mentally says, "If you are not baptized," and then proceeds to confer the sacrament. (CatholicCulture.org)



## SPOTLIGHT ON OUR NEIGHBORS —



## BROWN COUNTY FEDERATION OF HISTORY ORGANIZATIONS

by Barbara Bush Miller, Presi-

The Brown County Federation of History Organizations was established in 2006 as group of museums and archives dedicated to teaching our community the history of Brown County. These organizations understood that this could be done most effectively through collaboration and mutual support, and we continue to work towards this ideal. Over the past twelve years, Federation members have produced joint marketing initiatives, special community events, and educational opportunities for teachers and for our peers within the history profession as we follow our mission ...*dedicated to the support of*

*regional history organizations and their missions through collaborative projects that provide excellent professional education, integrated community awareness, mindful collections preservation and dynamic community events.* A highlight is this collaboration is the annual History Treasure Tour. Held in May during National History Week, this tour provides an evening of free access to some of the historical treasures of Brown County.

Member organizations include Ashwaubenon Historical Society, Brown County Historical Society/Hazelwood House, Green Bay and De Pere Antiquarian societies, Green Bay Diocese Museum & Cultural Center, Heritage Hill Foundation, Heritage Hill State Historical Park, Historic Allouez Society, National Railroad Museum, Neville Public Museum, NEW Masonic Library and Museum, Oneida Nation Museum, Packers Hall of Fame Inc., and The Automobile Gallery.

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**<https://www.facebook.com/BCFHO/>**

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK! BROWN COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY & HAZELWOOD HISTORIC HOUSE

Adult \$6.00 • Seniors (60+) \$5.00  
Children (5-17) \$4.00 • Children under 5 are FREE.  
AAA and Time Traveler discounts available.

### ADMISSION

Tours, programs and teas scheduled at your convenience  
by appointment throughout the year.  
*See details for events on page 5 and 6 of this issue.*

### HAZELWOOD HISTORIC HOUSE MUSEUM

BCHS offices — 8:30a-4:00p, weekdays  
1008 South Monroe Street, Green Bay WI 54301 MAP  
Phone: 920-437-1840 / [www.BrownCountyHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.BrownCountyHistoricalSociety.org)

**HOURS for  
SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2018**

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