

Point Pleasant Historical Society
October 14, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Call to Order: President Jim Malone opened the meeting at 7:36 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Old Business: Rich Morris, Museum Administrator, spoke for Sal Marino to thank all of the members who were docents for the summer at the Bennett Cabin. The Bennett Cabin will once again be open to the public in 2020 and docents will be needed.

Sharon Morris thanked Judy Gruending for her help with refreshments. Judy Gruending and Andrea Rittenhouse

Vice President Len Ludovico announced he enjoyed writing about the Point Pleasant/Brick Township connection for the October newsletter.

New Business: None

Program: William Huneke presented about the history of political campaigns, which included a vast sampling of his extensive political memorabilia collection on display, including an original medal from George Washington's Inauguration in 1789.

Huneke explained that political history is also cultural history and provided attendees with trivia about campaigns, election day, and candidates/winners/losers. Political campaigns are very similar to marketing: you sell a candidate the same way you sell a product. Image is important to both politics and products. It wasn't until 1828 when campaign items first came along: Metal Tokens and the printing of ballots in newspapers.

The election of 1840 was important because the candidates did not discuss issues: instead, this election was based on images. "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too" slogan (William Henry Harrison and John Tyler) and log cabin imagery on porcelain, tokens, medals, and more. Companies making election items would often use the same design and change the photos/names only. By the 1880s torchlight parades popular for campaigning. Participants would wear ribbons. Amanda Lougee developed and patented a new form of pinback button in 1896, which supported stunning graphics and ended tokens. Watch Fobs became popular campaign items as did lithograph buttons and enamel pins.

1940 Willkie campaign against FDR netted thousands of campaign items that didn't even mention Willkie's name, just slogans. TV popularity replaces campaign buttons and memorabilia as that is where campaigns spent their money instead. Today, items such as bumper stickers and buttons aren't cost effective, and the most common item at campaigns today are small stickers.

Meeting adjourned at 8:56 PM with refreshments. 29 members attended

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Ocone, Secretary