

# Fitchburg Historical Society

April  
1989



## APRIL GENERAL MEETING

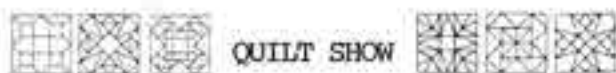
The April 12 (Wednesday) general meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. in the Oak Hall Room of the Community Center.

Our guest speaker is Historical Society member, Sheila Reaves, who will present a slide program based on her book, Wisconsin: Pathways to Prosperity. The book features many stunning historical pictures detailing commerce in Wisconsin and Sheila will provide commentary about a selection of these photographs.

We also encourage members to offer their own stories regarding their family members' contributions to Fitchburg and Wisconsin commerce.

The new membership directories should also be available at this meeting. They will have a new look this year thanks to the efforts of Arlene Ace.

See you Wednesday -- April 12.



## QUILT SHOW

The Fitchburg Historical Society will be sponsoring a quilt show at the Community Center on Sept. 23 & 24. The show will feature new and heirloom quilts and we are currently looking for quilts to display. If you have made a quilt, or have a family treasure you would like to display, please contact Patricia Delker at 275-7141. We are asking the articles be quilted and not tied.

In conjunction with the show, we will also be sponsoring a raffle. Tickets should be available in June. 1st prize is a hand-made quilt, 2nd prize will be two quilted pillows and 3rd prize, a cross-stitch design.



## ROCK'N'ROLL

The Historical Society participated in the Cabin Fever Music Festival "Sock Hop" March 17 by selling concessions. We had a great time listening to "The New Rebels" play 50's & 60's rock'n'roll and we made a little money for the treasury as well. Thank you to Joy Anderson for organizing the concessions and to members Jerry & Jeanie Sieling, Eric Amli, Marge Beebe, Darrell & Arlene Ace, Peter & Linda Rusch and Tom Capp for working during the evening.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At the annual meeting the 1989-90 Board of Directors was elected. Members are:

Arlene Ace	Eric Amli
Joy Anderson	Connie Darling
Patricia Delker	Margaret Eby
Ellen Green	Janet Keenan
Carole Kinney	Winnie Lacy
Ed O'Brien	Bill Stoneman

We also wish to extend out appreciation to outgoing Board members Phil Fox, Anna Fox and Stan Cross for all their efforts on behalf of the Historical Society.



## PORTRAIT PROJECT

Many members attended the Feb. 12 dedication ceremonies in the City Council chambers for the Past Town Chairmen and Mayors Portrait project. It was a memorable event which included comments and stories from descendants of the honored individuals as well as first hand insights from recent Fitchburg leaders.

A special thank-you and recognition is in order for the committee who worked so diligently on the project--Kay Harty, Ellen Green and Jim Green--as well as Frank Lindl, who matted, framed and hung the display.

If you have not had the opportunity, you should take time to visit the Fitchburg Room at the Community Center and view the distinguished collection.

## NEW OFFICERS

At the February 15 Board of Directors meeting the officers for 1989-90 were selected. They are:

President - Patricia Delker
Vice-Pres. - Bill Stoneman
Treasurer - Ellen Green
Secretary - Janet Keenan

Both past president, Arlene Ace and vice-president, Margaret Eby, deserve high praise for their work, not only this past year, but throughout their memberships.

The general meeting dates for the year were set also. The general membership will meet on:

April 12, 1989 - Wednesday
June 11, 1989 - Sunday
Sept. 13, 1989 - Wednesday
Nov. 12, 1989 - Sunday
Feb. 11, 1990 - Sunday (annual mtg.)





#### DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that at one time a portion of Syene Road was on the other side of the railroad tracks? Maps indicate that Syene was on the east side of the tracks from Lacy Road south to the first big curve in the road north of Irish Lane.

Bill Stoneman recalls that one day his mother and sister, Edna, were walking to the Blaney farm. Edna got her foot caught between the railroad tie and track and was freed by her mother only a short time before a train passed.

Bill continues that his mother later related the story to Professor Hibbard, who owned the Stoneman farm at the time. He talked to Professor Taylor (both gentlemen were members of the Dept. of Agriculture at the UW) who owned the land immediately to the north of Hibbard---now Tarpleywick and part of Marc Jones' farm. Because of the potential danger they decided they would donate the land if the Town would change the road. The transfer of land to the Town took place in November, 1921.



#### FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Historic Madison is sponsoring a workshop titled "Genealogy and Oral History for the Novice" on Saturday, April 8 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Madison Senior Center.

Topics are: Saga of the Sugar Bowl---How to Trace Your Ancestors, Oral History Skills---Tips & Techniques, Care & Feeding of Recording Equipment & How to Preserve Tapes, plus a tour of the Dane County Historic Records Center will be offered.

Cost is \$6.00 which includes lunch. To register, contact Mrs. Lorraine Orchard, 901 Cornell Ct., Madison, WI 53705.

#### HISTORICAL SOCIETY LOGO

The logo we are using on our newsletter was designed by member Connie Darling. The three houses honor the three houses in Fitchburg that are on the National Register of Historic Places---the McCoy House, Fox Hall and the Mann House.

FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2421 West Hill Dr.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



#### MEMORIAL APPROVED

At the March 8 Board of Directors meeting the Board approved a memorial to honor deceased members who have made a significant contribution to the Society.

The action authorized the purchase of a plaque on which the name of the honored member will be placed, followed by the date honored, and if the person was a charter member this, too, will be indicated. The plaque will be displayed in a prominent place at the Community Center.

Guidelines for the memorial are as follows: 1. Person shall have been a charter member of the organization or a member in good standing for two or more years. 2. Persons shall be recommended by another member of the Society. Recommendations shall state the reasons why the person should be a member of the honor roll and tell of the individual's contribution. (Monetary contributions will not be a factor.) 3. Recommendations shall be submitted to the Board of Directors. To be approved for the honor roll a person must receive favorable vote by at least 60% of those present at the time of the voting.

In addition, recommendations and a short biographical sketch and photo of the honored individual will be kept on file in an official Society notebook.



#### WE NEED YOU

We need volunteers to help in many aspects of the organization. Currently, we are searching for someone to take over the duties of the chair of the Membership Committee. If you are interested and would like more information, please call Patricia Delker, Stan Cross or contact a member of the Board of Directors.

Connie Darling, who is in charge of the exhibits in our display case at the Community Center, would also like some help in putting together future displays. We have also discussed exhibits that would feature a tribute to early Fitchburg settlers and their efforts to clear the land and establish farms and homes. If you have old tools, small farm machinery or agricultural related items, please contact Connie at 274-5375.





# Fitchburg Historical Society

MAY  
1989



## JUNE GENERAL MEETING

*This arrangement  
just worked out  
best - I hope  
people are  
not too  
disappointed -  
Patricia*

We are having a picnic in the park---as part of our June 11 general meeting. The picnic will begin at 1:30 p.m. in the park shelter, and following a brief business meeting, we will be honoring the first settlers in Fitchburg.

1989 marks the 150th year that the Vroman brothers---William, George and Joseph---began farming in Fitchburg. Though John Stoner started the first farm in Section 17 in 1837, he worked the farm during the week and returned to his Madison residence on week-ends, thus the Vromans are recognized as the first permanent settlers.

The afternoon will also include a program presented by Ellen Rulseh and Virginia Rose called "Aprons". Several Board members heard Ms. Rulseh present her collection of historic information and prose pieces on WHA radio and we thought the Society might enjoy this pleasant look back at aprons and the lives of the women who wore them.

Please bring a dish to pass, plates and silverware---plus any pictures or memorabilia you may in your family collections that relate to any of Fitchburg's early settlers. Coffee and lemonade will be provided. Since we are in McGaw Shelter we will meet "rain or shine", but keep your fingers crossed for sunshine.



## ATTEND A CONFERENCE---WE'LL HELP.

At the May Board meeting it was noted that the Fitchburg Historical Society would like to encourage our members to attend conferences or workshops relating to historical matters or which would provide other valuable information to the Society. With that in mind the Board approved a motion that would allow members attending such events to be reimbursed for their registration fees. We do ask that you provide a report about the event, or copies of the information you received, to the Society. If there is an upcoming workshop or conference that interests you, contact a Board member for further information.

## QUILT RAFFLE TICKETS

Tickets are now available for the Quilt Raffle being held in conjunction with the Historical Society's September Quilt Show. Arlene Ace and Margaret Eby are in charge of coordinating ticket sales. We will be offering tickets at the June 11 meeting, and also encouraging all members to take a book of ten tickets with them to sell to interested family and friends. Cost of a ticket is only \$1.00. We will be drawing the winning tickets on the last day of the Quilt Show---September 24.

First prize is a handmade quilt in the traditional "Fox and Geese" pattern. Second prize is two quilted pillows, and third prize is a cross-stitched quilt design.



## MORE QUILTS

We need to get an idea of how many Historical Society members will be offering quilts for display on September 23 & 24. If you are planning to put a quilt or quilts in the show, please let Patricia Delker know either by calling her at 275-7141 or at the June 11 general meeting.



## SOCIETY DONATES PLAQUE

The Historical Society has provided a plaque to mark the location at the Community Center of the "time capsule" presented to the City during the groundbreaking ceremony for the new building. The presentation occurred in September 1987, and the metal box was installed in the building in May 1988.

The "time capsule" included memorabilia from many Fitchburg organizations, plus special writings from individuals. The plaque will remind future generations of the existence of the collected material.

Where's it at you ask---upstairs, under the display case, across from the Fitchburg Room.







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### "DOGTOWN SCHOOLHOUSE"

The Fish Hatchery School, commonly known as the "Dogtown Schoolhouse", may look a bit forlorn these days sitting along Fish Hatchery Road, just south of the Dellvue curve, but its future is about to look brighter.

At the May 25 Board of Directors meeting, Lyman McKee and Gary Gorman discussed the history and potential future of the building. Mr. McKee explained that the structure is in the pathway of the upcoming Fish Hatchery road improvements, and that he had been contacted by the Gorman family about moving the building to their property on Whalen Rd. for the purpose of restoring it. Mr. McKee thoughtfully decided to approach the Historical Society first, knowing the schoolhouse had attracted the attention of the Society in the past.

The Board discussed several options regarding the building, but because the restoration costs had once been estimated at \$10,000 and the Historical Society had no immediate source of funding at that level, it was decided that we would endorse the Gorman's restoration plans.

Mr. Gorman, who understood the public interest in the building, also stated that when restoration was complete, the Historical Society would be allowed reasonable access to the schoolhouse for meetings or other gatherings. He also noted he was very interested in learning about the history of the building and finding old pictures or other records of the schoolhouse.

The Historical Society Board indicated our interest in assisting in this area of the restoration project. A committee will be formed to begin the research. If you are interested in the project, or have information to share about the "Dogtown Schoolhouse" please contact a Board member by phone or at the upcoming general meeting.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that a building now located in Fitchburg once helped the trains run on time?

The Oscar Mayer Observatory, which was moved from the UW campus to Fitchburg around 1960, housed not only telescopes, but also a meridian transit, which was used to astronomically measure time. It was the most accurate means of measuring time until the twentieth century invention of the atomic clock.

Telephone lines ran from the observatory, then located on the shores of Lake Mendota, to some of the railroads such as the Chicago & Northwestern and the Illinois Central, to provide them with the correct time.

After being moved to the Bjorksten property (now Fitchburg Research Park), the building was used by the Madison Astronomical Society for meetings and stargazing until 1985 when the "light pollution" from the metropolitan area, and the building's old age, made it impractical to use the structure any longer.

reprinted in part from an  
article by Ed Treleven in  
the 1/28/88 Fitchburg Star.



### THANK YOU

The Historical Society would like to thank member Shiela Reaves for presenting the program at the April general meeting. Shiela's slide presentation was based on her book Wisconsin: Pathways to Prosperity. The slides and commentary provided insights into such Wisconsin industries as farming, fur-trading, logging, brewing beer and cheesemaking. Thank you Shiela!



### WHAT'S IN YOUR STORAGE SHED?

Connie Darling is still looking for old tools, small farm machinery or agricultural related items to be used as part of the next display in the Community Center display case. Any item that has to do with Fitchburg's early settlers could be used in the exhibit. If you can help, please call Connie at 274-5375.



# Fitchburg Historical Society

SEPT  
1989



## SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING

The September 13 (Wednesday) general meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. in the Greenfield Room of the Community Center.

If you have ever thought you should be preserving those special family stories, or wished you could be sure your family history is passed on, you will not want to miss this meeting. Following a brief business meeting, Clarice Dunn, the force behind the bicentennial publication, We Were Children Then will present a program and mini-workshop that will provide us with insights and tips about writing our family stories and histories. To actively take part in the workshop, please bring two loose leaf notebooks.

We will also have some surprises for those members attending. See you Wednesday, September 13.



## AUGUST BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The Board of Directors met on August 9 and discussed and acted on numerous items, including authorizing a \$25.00 donation to Mary Mullen. Ms. Mullen is compiling a history of the Dunn's Marsh Neighborhood from articles written for the neighborhood newsletter. She had received a grant for the project from the Dane Co. Cultural Affairs Commission which stipulated she must raise matching funds for publication costs. Our donation was a small contribution toward her goal of \$475.

The Board also voted on our first nomination for the Historical Society's memorial. Edna Stoneman Cross was unanimously honored by the Board for her contributions to the fledgling Society, and her name will be placed on the memorial plaque.



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We have added several new members since our annual meeting and the printing of our membership directory. Welcome Larry Huber, Mary Jo Bernhardt, and Vearl & Lucille Gurtz.

## QUILT SHOW

The dates for our Quilt Show---September 23 & 24---are fast approaching. At the Sept. general meeting we will be asking for volunteers for the various committees necessary to make the event a success. They include ticket sales, set-up, publicity distribution, a committee to take in quilts, and a clean-up crew. Arlene Ace will be looking for persons to sell raffle tickets as well.

At the June meeting we asked that each member be responsible for selling one book of raffle tickets. If you did not pick up a book of tickets then, or need some additional books, please contact Arlene. You can also still get books of tickets on the 13th, but please remember all raffle ticket sales and ticket stubs must be turned in to Arlene Ace or Margaret Eby by September 23.

We are also still hoping to get more quilts to display at the show. Please pass along information about the show to anyone you know who might wish to share either a new or heirloom quilt. Entry forms are available from Patricia Delker---275-7141 or 273-2179.

Remember this is our primary fund-raising event this year and we need everyone's active participation to make it a success!!!



## CAN YOU HELP

The Board of Directors would like to find a volunteer amongst the Society members (or their friends) who can do calligraphy, and who would be interested in preparing a list of our charter members which will be framed. If you can help us in this endeavor, please call Carole Kinney at 271-1132.







FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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## HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

Over the past year, the Historical Society has been made aware of the need for a historic preservation ordinance in Fitchburg. State Historical Society staff have emphasized the importance of such an ordinance to make it possible to protect and preserve our city's historic structures and sites. Several members of Fitchburg's City Council have also expressed their support and interest in such an ordinance.

Following research of the issue, and review of model ordinances, a draft Historic Preservation Ordinance tailored to Fitchburg's needs was written and recently submitted to those interested Council members.

The draft document would set up a Landmarks Preservation Commission that would designate historic structures and sites in the City following a public hearing. The Commission would also be responsible for reviewing any requests to alter, move or demolish any designated landmarks.

In a letter to the Council members interested in the ordinance which accompanied the document, the Historical Society requested that the document be introduced to the City Council and referred to the appropriate Committees for review and timely action.



## HISTORY BOOKS

Additional Fitchburg: A History books have been printed and are available for \$5.00 from Bill Stoneman---275-7141.

## ANTIQUE SHOW

Quivey's Grove will again be the site of the Friends of the State Historical Society Antique Show & Sale, Sept. 23 & 24.

A multitude of antique dealers specializing in American furniture, folk art, quilts, jewelry, prints and books, silver, wicker and linens will be on the grounds from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

Since this events is the same week-end as our own Quilt Show, you can take in one show and just go down the road to the other.



---Swan Creek Church (1913). Photo courtesy of Rachel Haight.

The following is an excerpt from a Madison newspaper article (circa 1936) about this building which had recently been dismantled:

"With the recent dismantling of the old Syene-Swan Creek church a mile east of Syene and on the Madison-Oregon road, and in the northwest corner of the Terwilliger farm, another of the country's oldest landmarks disappears.

Originally built in the northwest corner of the first road leading west, north of Lakeview, by a then Presbyterian society of which the long since deceased Rev. M.A. Fox was a leading character (the Rev. Fox having taken up nearly a half section of land just south of those corners) built and occupied the home just south of those corners, and in connection with his farming, served the church in its spiritual affairs.

As to the exact date of the building of this church, no one now living so far as this writer knows, is able to testify. William Terwilliger, now well past 80 and a resident near there his whole life, does not remember its building. The Rev. M.A. Fox located there in 1845 and removed to Oregon in 1866. Putting our best two and two together, the church must have been built around 1850.

About the time the Rev. Fox moved to Oregon a Union Church society was organized and held the property for a short time, to be succeeded by its last and final owners, the Methodists.

In 1873 the church was moved from its original location."



# Fitchburg Historical Society

NOV  
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## NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING

The November general meeting will be held on Sunday, November 19, 1989 at 5 p.m. in the Oak Hall Room (upstairs) of the Community Center. This will be a potluck so please bring one of those delicious dishes to pass. This meeting was originally scheduled on November 12, but was changed to accommodate various conflicts. Following our meal, we will have a short business meeting and a program.

Railroads will be the subject of our program, and our guest speaker will be Ken Reigle of Fitchburg. Mr. Reigle will tell us about Fitchburg's railroad connections and will also discuss railroad history in general. If you have any railroad memorabilia or stories to share, please bring them.

Don't forget the date is Sunday, November 19 at 5 p.m. See you there.



## SCHOOLHOUSE GOES "ON THE ROAD"

The Fish Hatchery (Dogtown) Schoolhouse has been moved to its new location on Kevin Gorman's property on Whalen Road. It appears everything went smoothly on moving day, an event which was covered by all three Madison TV stations, as well as both Madison newspapers and the Fitchburg Star. Mayor Capp proclaimed October 1-8 as "Country School Week" in Fitchburg in honor of the event.

Connie Darling reports that the event was videotaped, and the Gormans will be filming the process of renovation.

Anyone who has information about the schoolhouse, its teachers and pupils, or pictures of the building "back when" are asked to contact the Historical Society or Gary and Kevin Gorman. We have one picture of the schoolhouse which was contributed by Mrs. Gordon Gill. This picture will be helpful to the Gormans in restoring the building to its original state, but other pictures or information would be helpful in recreating the "one-room schoolhouse" atmosphere inside the renovated building.



## QUILT SHOW WRAP-UP

Treasurer Ellen Green reports the final figures on the Quilt Show to be \$430.00 earned from the raffle and \$177.00 for admissions.

At the October 11, 1989 Board meeting, President Patricia Delker thanked everyone who had worked on the show, particularly Arlene & Darrell Ace, Margaret & Bob Eby, Bill Stenstrom, and Jim Green for assisting in hanging and taking down quilts, Linda Rusch for taking in quilts, Connie Darling for setting up the display case exhibit, and Shiela Reaves for taking our publicity photos---plus all the persons who worked during the two day event---Stan Cross, Barb Takkunen, Joy Anderson, Winnie Lacy, Mary Kinney, Carole Kinney, Janet Keenan and Ellen Green.

Congratulations are also in order for Ellen Green. Her "Tree of Life" applique quilt won the Viewer's Choice award for favorite new quilt. The award for favorite heirloom quilt went to a finely quilted "Double Wedding Ring" quilt owned by Kathy Martin.

The winners of the Quilt Raffle were: 1st Prize (Quilt) - Mary Rowley, 2nd Prize (Pillows) - Carole Kinney and 3rd Prize (Cross-Stitch) - Diana Dunham.

A special thank you goes to Arlene Ace for her work on the Quilt Raffle, and her always willing assistance in all other aspects of the event. The Board also thanked Patricia for her efforts in organizing the show and making the raffle prizes.



## OSCAR MAYER OBSERVATORY

The first meeting of a Select Committee on Oscar Mayer Observatory Preservation met on November 2. The City Council established the Committee to investigate the options available in preserving the structure, either at its present site or another location in the City, as well as possible preservation costs and revenue sources. The Committee consists of one Council member (Roger Tesch), a representative of the Parks Commission (Orrie Lokken) and a representative of the Historical Society (Patricia Delker).

The Committee will present its findings and recommendations to the City Council by November 21.





FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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#### A NEW PROJECT---YOU CAN HELP!

The search is on--the Society would like to put together a slide program about Fitchburg history which could be presented in schools and to various other organizations. To do so, we need more photos!

Many of Fitchburg's ancestors' families still live here, but there are many others who no longer are in the immediate area. We are putting out a call for photos from members, their families and friends. Do you know someone who may have historic photographs---someone who grew up in Fitchburg, but may have moved away?

Please contact one of the Historical Society Board members if you have any idea of anyone who may have pictures to share. In order to put together the slide collection we will only need to borrow the pictures just long enough to take slides of them. We would like to do this at our annual meeting in Feb., however we need to get started this month at our November general meeting. If you can supply names and addresses of persons who you think may have some special pictures of Fitchburg's past, please bring those names and addresses to the November potluck. If you have some pictures to share, let us know too.



#### HISTORY BOOKS

Additional Fitchburg: A History books have been printed and are available for \$5.00 from Bill Stoneman---275-7141.



#### THANK YOU

The Historical Society would like to thank those persons who contributed articles for the current display case exhibit "A Stitch in Time" at the Community Center. Thanks go to Ellen Green, Alma Lacy, Winnie Lacy, Carl & Elinor Meyer, Patricia Delker, Connie Darling, Adelle Johnson and Stan Cross.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

In 1900, some enterprising ladies from Fitchburg put together "The Syene Cookbook". To pay the costs of printing their collection of recipes, they sold advertisements to 15 of Madison's most prestigious businessmen, including Keeley, Neckerman & Kessenich who sold dry goods, carpets and millinery at 15-17 N. Pinckney Street. Other advertisers were Gill Brothers and Findlay & Co. Below are some of the recipes that were contributed as they appeared in the cookbook.

##### Indian Bread

Three cups corn meal, two cups white flour, one cup molasses, one tablespoonful soda, one of salt, three and one-half cups sour milk, (buttermilk is better), steam three hours, serve hot. Mrs. H.E. Tipple

##### Fruit Pudding

One cup molasses, one cup sweet milk, two eggs, one teaspoonful soda, three cups flour, one-half cup melted butter, one cup raisins, one cup currants, steam three hours. (Sauce: Rub smooth in cold water one table-spoonful flour, two of sugar, add one cup hot water, boil, add a small piece butter flavor with vanilla.) Florence McCoy

##### Graham Bread

Three cups graham flour, one cup wheat flour, one-half cup molasses, one half cup sugar, two cups sour milk, two level teaspoonfuls soda, and one of salt. Mix and turn into baking tin, let rise one and bake one hour.

Mrs. Will Terwilliger

##### Johnny Cake

One cup sour milk, one-fourth cup molasses, two eggs, one cup corn meal, one teaspoonful soda thicken sufficiently with flour.

Della Getts

Courtesy of Fitchburg: A History



#### HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

The City Council will hold a public hearing on the Historic Preservation Ordinance on Nov. 28 (Tuesday) at 8:00 p.m. in the Fitchburg Room at the Community Center.



# Fitchburg Historical Society

JAN  
1990



## FEBRUARY ANNUAL MEETING

The year has gone by so quickly that it's hard to believe it's time again for the Annual Meeting. It will be held on Sunday, February 11 beginning at 1:00 in the Stonor Prairie Dining Room at the Community Center.

It was noted in the previous newsletter that we will be having a Picture Day in conjunction with this year's meeting. The Historical Society would like to put together a slide presentation on the history of Fitchburg. To do so we are asking our members, or any person, with historical pictures to bring them to the Community Center on February 11. The sort of picture we are looking for might include Fitchburg's early settlers, farm scenes, old buildings or homesteads.

Tom Capp and Sheila Reaves will be set up to take slides of your photos right there at the Community Center. A Historical Society Board member will be present to take down the information you have about any pictures you bring. We know your photos are precious and this way you will be able to take them home with you the very same day.

We are also asking for assistance in locating historical pictures. If you know of someone who may have family ties to Fitchburg, who may be in the vicinity, or who may have moved away, please contact them to ask them if they have photos they might send for Picture Day. Reassure them that all photos will be returned. If they, or you, have any questions, please feel free to call any one of the Historical Society Board members, in particular Bill Stoneman at 275-7141, Winnie Lacy at 845-7594 or Carole Kinney at 271-1132.

In addition to this project, we will be holding elections to the Board of Directors, reviewing our activities over the last year and sharing some refreshments. See you on February 11.



## IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN

It's time to renew your membership in the Fitchburg Historical Society. Most members dues are due each year at the time of the annual meeting. Enclosed are membership forms for your convenience if you are unable to make it to the February 11 meeting. Please fill out a form and send it with your dues to Treasurer Ellen Green.

Our dues remain the same: \$5.00/year for individual membership, \$10.00/year for family membership, \$50.00/year for business or professional membership and \$2.00/year for junior historian (under 18) membership.

Each year we attempt more activities and projects that we hope will interest you as well as establish the Historical Society as an active and vital community organization. We value your interest in Fitchburg history and we certainly hope you will stay with us. If you know of anyone else who might have an interest, please pass along the extra membership form.



## ELECTIONS - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As noted previously, we will be electing a Board of Directors at our the upcoming annual meeting. There is currently one open seat on the Board. The term would be for three years. If you are interested in getting more involved with the business of the Historical Society and would like to serve on the Board, please contact the chairperson of the nominating committee, Bill Stoneman at 275-7141 or 271-7981.







FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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#### HISTORICAL PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

A public hearing on the Historical Preservation Ordinance was finally held before the City Council on January 9.

On behalf of the Historical Society, President Patricia Delker introduced two suggested amendments to the ordinance. The first amendment would add language to clarify that the ordinance does not intend to control the use or the interior of a structure, only in the case where a proposed interior alteration would affect the exterior of the building. The second would specify that one member of the 5 member Landmarks Commission, created by the ordinance to investigate and recommend historical designations, should be a member of the local historical society.

Jim Sewell, architect with Wisconsin's National Register Program and a Fitchburg resident, also appeared to speak in favor of the ordinance. We appreciate his efforts.

Bill Stoneman stated his concerns about the ordinance and suggested the City set aside dollars to provide an incentive program to owners of historically designated property.

Gordon Vroman noted his concern about the maintenance costs that possible historical designation could mean for his house at 2387 S. Seminole Highway.

It should be noted that, in many cases, the preservation approach is the less expensive alternative because preservation encourages maintenance and repair of the original fabric rather than replacement with new materials.

The ordinance will undergo some format changes to make it consistent with the City's ordinance form, and may also be revised to include suggested clarifications and amendments. It is anticipated that it could be before the City Council again in late March.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that the late Dr. Phil Fox of Fitchburg (Phil & Anna Fox's grandfather) was a good friend and great influence on "Fighting Bob" LaFollette?

The information comes from the book, Belle, The Biography of Belle Case LaFollette written by Lucy Freeman, Sherry LaFollette, and George Zabriskie.

In the book, Belle notes that Dr. Fox was both Bob LaFollette's doctor and a trustworthy family friend. The book also mentions Senator LaFollette's frequent visits to the Fox farm and states that the LaFollette's second son, Phil Fox LaFollette, was named for Dr. Fox.

The book also provides a fascinating look at Wisconsin and national politics, the Progressive movement, and the close relationship shared over the years by the husband and wife team of Bob and Belle LaFollette.



#### OBSERVATORY UPDATE

The Select Committee on the Oscar Mayer Observatory has met several times to assess the preservation needs of the observatory and to discuss the availability of funds for the project.

The Fitchburg Lions Club has indicated their willingness to provide the "Lion-power" needed for the initial maintenance efforts, and the Historical Society Board has expressed an interest in doing the necessary research toward establishing an exhibit about the observatory.

During an inspection of the structure, Paul Fritchel of the Madison Astronomical Society (who now hold the deed for the observatory) commented about the patches once worn by the Fitchburg Police Dept. It seems that, prior to the creation of the current city seal which now adorns the uniforms of the Fitchburg Police, the patch worn on the police uniforms depicted the Observatory. Police Chief Terry Askey has now donated two of the patches to the Historical Society.

A full report with recommendations regarding the structure will be prepared for presentation to the Mayor and City Council in February.





# Fitchburg Historical Society

APRIL  
1990



## APRIL GENERAL MEETING

The next general meeting of the Historical Society will be Sunday, April 29, beginning at 1:00 p.m. in the Swan Creek Craft Room (downstairs) at the Fitchburg Community Center.

The turn out for "Picture Day" at our annual meeting in February was so fantastic, persons brought such wonderful pictures, and the slides are so great, we thought we would let everyone take a look at the April meeting. It was impossible to get around to everyone that Sunday and see all the pictures that were proudly submitted, so now that the slides are back we thought it would be fun to show them.

The official slide program will not yet be completed (we actually probably have enough slides for several programs based on different aspects of Fitchburg history), but this will be an opportunity to see the pictures up close on the "big screen." It will also allow us to make sure we have assigned the correct names, dates and places to specific slides.

Make sure you join us --- we will supply the popcorn, soda and cookies for this "sneak preview." See you Sunday, April 29!!!!



## THANK YOU, THANK YOU

Many thank-yous are in order for our members. First, thank you to all of you who renewed your membership for 1990. Thank you to all of you who brought pictures to "Picture Day" at the annual meeting, and to Tom Capp and Shiela Reaves for the time spent taking the slides of those wonderful pictures.

Also, a round of applause please for outgoing Board member, Margaret Eby, who has worked so diligently on our behalf the last three years. Plus, a bouquet of thanks to Dick and Marie Sweeney for their donation to the Historical Society. Also, thank you to Phil Fox for providing us with a copy of the Fox family history.



## RUMMAGE SALE FUND RAISER

This year's one and only fundraising event for the Historical Society will be a rummage sale on Saturday, May 5 at the Fitchburg Ridge Shopping Center on Fish Hatchery Road. The merchants have graciously allowed us to take part in this spring "Ridge" event, and we need to seize this opportunity to increase our funds if we want to continue our many activities, like the slide presentation, displays, speakers, and programs.

We are seeking donations of "re-saleable" items from all our members as well as the community in general. We need items like used books, children's clothing, furniture, small appliances, dishes, etc. Now that you are doing that spring cleaning, perhaps you will find something you no longer can use, but for which someone may be willing to spend money. Items need not be "historical" ---only in good re-sale shape.

Because the date is so close---May 5 ---we are asking persons to bring the items they wish to donate to our April 29 meeting. If you have any questions about the re-sale event, please call Patricia Delker (273-2179), Arlene Ace (271-3497), Bill Stoneman (271-7981) or any Board member. We can arrange to pick up items you can not deliver.

Remember, this will be our major fund-raiser and we need your help to make it successful. Take a look in your closets or your garage, or the back porch today!!!



## ELECTION OF 1990 OFFICERS

The Board of Directors met on February 22 to hold our yearly election of officers. This year's officers are:

President - Patricia Delker  
Vice President - Eric Amlie  
Secretary - Janet Keenan  
Treasurer - Ellen Green

Special thanks to our outgoing Vice President, Bill Stoneman, for serving us so well in 1989.





FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2421 West Hill Dr.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



#### DID YOU KNOW?

In Our Own Words: The Best of the Dunn's Marsh News, a new book edited by Mary Mullen has recently been completed. The book tells the story of the Dunn's Marsh neighborhood, on the northern border of Fitchburg, both through historical research and articles from the neighborhood newsletters. Below is an excerpt from the book:

"The very earliest part of the neighborhood to be planned was the Rosedale plat, (sub-division), an area that today still bears flower names on the east/west streets...On the original final plat the present Milford, Whenona, Danbury and Seminole were respectively labeled Barberry Boulevard, Arbutus Trail, Aster Avenue and Rosedale Road. That development---extending from Milford south to Clover---was recorded in the County Register of Deeds office on January 27, 1917. All 149 lots, with the exception of 3, were just 40 feet wide and most were 120 feet deep, reflecting house lot standards of the time.

Land records show that the Rosedale plat and what would later become the Belmar and Allied plats and a bit of the Arboretum just east of Seminole Highway (described as the road from Madison to Stoner Prairie) were part of a 409.11 acre parcel purchased for \$511.39 by one Elisha Starr on December 9, 1836 from the U.S. government. He bought the entire north half of Section 5 of Fitchburg, whose original northern limits lay on the present Milford Road and whose southern limits cut through Dunn's Marsh. He also bought another 692 acres of land in Fitchburg and Madison for the same \$1.25 per acre."

Copies of the book may be obtained from Mary Mullen, 4337 Milford Road, Madison, WI 53711 for \$3.00, plus \$1.50 postage.

#### COMMUNITY CENTER DISPLAY CASE

"Clearing the Land-Building a Home" is the theme of the display currently being assembled in the Community Center display case. Connie Darling would like to have interested members lend a hand in putting the finishing touches on the exhibit.

The majority of the items to be displayed are on loan to the Historical Society from Fitchburg resident, Larry Aaron. Others who have contributed to the display are Bruce Cass and Al Colvin.

The Board of Directors, at the March meeting, decided to form a sub-committee of interested Board members and members at large to plan upcoming exhibits. We would like to be able to change the display case about 4 times per year, and to do so we need to do some advance planning. If you are interested, or have some ideas about presentations we might offer, please contact Connie Darling (274-5375), Winnie Lacy (845-7594) or Patricia Delker (275-7141).

#### 1990-91 MEETING DATES

Below are the tentative dates for meetings of the general membership of the Fitchburg Historical Society. Mark your calendars---we don't want to miss you.

April 29, 1990 - Sunday - 1 p.m.  
June 10, 1990 - Sunday - 1 p.m.  
September 12, 1990 - Wednesday - 7 p.m.  
November 11, 1990 - Sunday - pot luck  
February 10, 1991 - Sunday - Annual Mtg.

Most meetings will be held at the Community Center. Look for a newsletter prior to each meeting for additional information on time, place and program.



#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board of Directors were elected at the annual meeting in February. This year's Board members are:

Arlene Ace	Carole Kinney	Ed O'Brien
Stan Cross	Eric Amlie	Connie Darling
Winnie Lacy	Patricia Delker	Ellen Green
Janet Keenan	Bill Stoneman	Joy Anderson



# Fitchburg Historical Society

MAY  
1990



## JUNE GENERAL MEETING

In years gone by, summer fun was almost certain to include an ice cream social on the family event calendar. Some things never change...please mark Sunday, June 10 on your calendar for the Fitchburg Historical Society general meeting and ice cream social beginning at 2:00 p.m. in Greenfield Park (off Irish Lane).

Members are being asked to bring their favorite dessert as a dish to pass, as well as plates and utensils for their family. We will provide the ice cream and pink lemonade as well. Come prepared to play croquet or to challenge a fellow member to a game of horseshoes. We will have a brief business meeting at 2:00 and adjourn to the ice cream and games.

But that's not all! We also want to remind you to be sure and bring your sun-bonnet or your straw hat to this event. That's right, we are looking forward to seeing those old hats come out of storage. Maybe you have a hat that grandma wore to ice cream socials or grandpa wore on Sundays. Maybe it's a chapeau you used to wear a few years ago, and just could not throw away. Any fancy or utilitarian hat will do. Naturally, we will take some time to "show and tell" and share the stories or memories associated with the hat that you bring.

Please make sure you join us for some historical summer fun, Sunday, June 10.



## MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY COMPLETED

Once again, thanks to the efforts of Arlene Ace, our new membership directories are completed and will be available at the June meeting.

Welcome to our new members and welcome back to all of you who have renewed your membership. We now have 92 members!!

We also want to recognize those businesses who have paid for membership at our business/professional level. They are: Tom Mohs - Placon Corporation, Robert Shea - Wingra Stone Co., and Joe Zuravle - Jones Intercable. We appreciate your continued support.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE UPDATE

On May 8, 1990, the City Council unanimously approved Chapter 29, the Historic Preservation Ordinance, which had been introduced in August 1989.

The ordinance provides for the creation of a Landmarks Preservation Commission which will review, hold public hearings and make designation recommendations regarding historical buildings and sites within the City of Fitchburg.

In response to concerns expressed during public hearings on the ordinance, the Council also voted to include an amendment to the ordinance which will create a Historic Preservation Fund. This fund would receive money earmarked for preservation from grants, donations and other funding sources, including monies designated during the yearly budget process. Such funds may be issued on a grant basis to persons who may request financial assistance in order to maintain their historically designated property in the manner prescribed by the ordinance.

Other provisions of the amendment would require that no grants may be submitted for consideration until July 1, 1995 or until monies in the account total at least \$5,000, whichever occurs first.

The establishment of this fund will allow the City to accept grant funds from preservation agencies when funding is available to local levels of government, as well as donations from any interested individuals or organizations.

As a gesture of support for this grant fund provision, the Historical Society Board voted at the May Board meeting to donate \$100.00 to the City to be placed in this grant fund account.







FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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Fitchburg, WI 53711



## RE-SALE RE-VISITED

Thank you to everyone who donated items for our fund raiser re-sale at the Fitchburg Ridge. Thank you to those of you who found some bargains and purchased items as well. Once all the sales are totaled, we will have made almost \$230.00.

At the recent Board meeting we discussed this event and decided that it was successful enough to warrant another attempt at it next year, possibly in conjunction with one of the Fitchburg neighborhood garage sales. So don't throw anything interesting away...just slide it into a corner and tag it for next year's Historical Society Re-Sale, okay?!

Our workers for the re-sale included Arlene Ace, Darrell Ace, Bill Kinney, Winnie Lacy, Al Colvin, Ellen Green, Stan Cross, Janet Keenan, Bob Keenan, Eric Amlie, Marge Amlie, Bill Stoneman, Connie Darling, Linda Rusch and Patricia Delker. We appreciate your efforts!!!

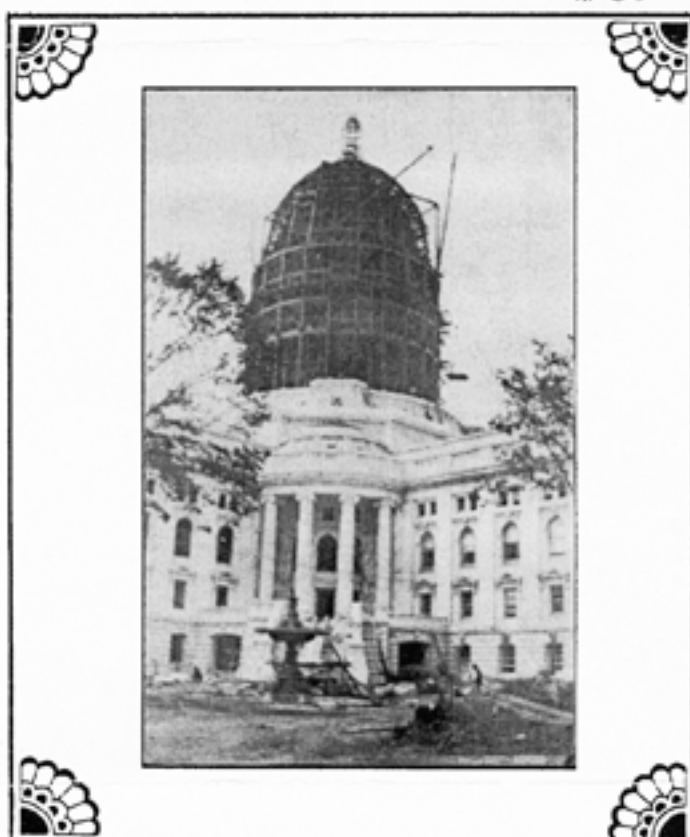
## OBSERVATORY REPORT COMPLETED

In 1989, a member of the Madison Astronomical Society approached the City with the offer to turn over the Society's deed to the Oscar Mayer Observatory (located on the hill overlooking Fitchburg Center) to the City with the expectation that the City would preserve the historic structure.

The City Council requested that the Mayor appoint a Select Committee to study the possible assumption of responsibility for the observatory. The Committee consisted of Patricia Delker (chr.) as President of the Historical Society, Alderperson Roger Tesch, and Orrie Lokken, representing the Parks Commission. The report of the Committee has now been completed and has been submitted to the Mayor and City Council.

In addition to providing a brief history of the building, the report makes seven recommendations which include, that because of the unique historical character of the structure, the City should make arrangements to accept the deed to the observatory from the Astronomical Society with the intent of stabilizing and preserving the structure.

Other recommendations include that efforts be made to retain the building at its present site, make initial repairs prior to the onset of Winter 1990, and seek funding sources within the community for long term renovation projects.



This photograph shows the framework of the Capitol dome under construction, about 1911. Does anyone know of Fitchburg residents who worked on the Capitol?

---photo courtesy of Mrs. Donald Gill

## AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

State Historical Society Affiliate Member cards were distributed at our April general meeting. As one of the 240 historical organizations affiliated with the State Historical Society, every member of our society automatically becomes an Affiliate Member of the state's Historical Society.

The membership cards entitle you to a 10% discount for admission to any of the seven historical sites owned by the State Historical Society. To receive the discount, you will be asked to show your cards each time you visit a site.

Also, each Affiliate Member card includes an invitation to join the State Historical Society as a regular member. For each person from the Fitchburg Historical Society who becomes a new member of the State Historical Society, our organization will receive \$5.00.

If you did not receive your card in April, they will also be available at the June meeting.



# Fitchburg Historical Society

AUG  
1990



## SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING

You saw it "before"---now you can see it "after." As part of our first fall meeting we will take a look at the renovated "Dogtown Schoolhouse."

Last year the Fish Hatchery Schoolhouse, a.k.a. the Dogtown Schoolhouse, was moved from the McKee property to the Gorman property on Whalen Road. Kevin and Gary Gorman intended to restore the structure and have now completed the bulk of the task.

Since so many others are returning to school this time of year, we felt it was a perfect time for the Historical Society to do the same. Many of us have been looking forward to the first look at the restored structure.

We will meet at the Community Center at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 12, consolidate our numbers into as few cars as possible and make the trip to the schoolhouse.

The Gormans have worked diligently on both the exterior and the interior of the building and our visit promises to be a bit like stepping back in time. The Gormans will tell us some of the renovation tales that go along with such a restoration task as well.

In talking to Marilee Gorman, it appears there is one detail they are still missing, and it is something we may be able to supply. During their research they found conflicting dates as to when the schoolhouse was originally constructed and they are appealing to Historical Society members for help. Does anyone know when the Fish Hatchery Schoolhouse was built at the Dellvue hill location? Perhaps with some research and a bit of reminiscing we can supply this missing detail.

Following our visit to the schoolhouse, we will return to the Greenfield Room at the Community Center for a brief business meeting, refreshments and conversation.

Join us when we "go back to school" on Wednesday, September 12.



## IN MEMORY

We are sorry to note the passing of Margaret Eby, a valued Historical Society member and former member of the Board of Directors. Margaret's dedication and insight will be missed by us all.

## FUND RAISING ACTIVITY

Yes, we are selling things again---the State Historical Society has offered us a deal on their 1991 calendars that we just could not refuse.

The Fitchburg Historical Society will be selling State Historical Society calendars for \$6.95 each.

If you are familiar with the State Historical Society calendars you know they are top quality publications that combine historic photos and information in an attractive format. This year they have returned to the appointment book style for their 1991 calendars because the style proved to be so popular.

Approximately half of the sale price will remain in our treasury. Calendars will be available through January and would make excellent Christmas gifts. We hope to have the calendars available at our September meeting.

Because this is our first attempt at selling the calendars, we are being cautious and only purchased 100 for re-sale.

Please contact Patricia Delker at 275-7141 or 273-2179 if you would like to purchase one or more calendars, or if you think you might be able to sell a few to friends.

Don't miss this opportunity to keep track of your own future events while learning about Wisconsin's past.



## LANDMARK PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Are you interested in serving on the Landmark Preservation Commission? The Historic Preservation Ordinance, passed by the City Council in May, calls for the appointment of this five person Commission to review and recommend historical designations in Fitchburg.

If you are interested, or would like more information, please contact Fitchburg City Hall - 275-7141.







FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2421 West Hill Dr.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



#### DISPLAY SCHEDULE

Following lengthy discussion at the August 8 Board of Directors meeting, the Board settled on a schedule of exhibits for the display area in the Community Center.

Beginning in September and running through October, the subject will be "Containers." We realize this is quite a wide open topic, but it should provide the opportunity for an interesting and varied exhibit. We are looking for containers from our members to use in the display---like old gathering baskets, bottles, tins, boxes, feed sacks, etc. If you have an item you could loan for the exhibit, bring it and a brief history of the container to the meeting on Sept. 12. If you can not get to the meeting, please call Connie Darling at 274-5375 or Patricia. We would like to be able to put most of the exhibit together immediately after the September meeting.

Our goal is to provide 4-5 displays in a year. Some displays will utilize the entire display area, while others will be smaller presentations. Other plans on our schedule are listed below:

Nov.'90-mid Jan.'91 - Winter Activities  
Mid Jan. - Feb.'91 - Old Valentines  
March - April '91 - Open (probably a personal collection from a member. Any suggestions?)  
May - August '91 - Weddings

For each of these displays we are counting on our members for items to add to the exhibit. Do you have items that are examples of winter activities---ice skates, sleds, old winter apparel? We know some of you have old Valentines that have been saved over the years. For the wedding display we hope to present three wedding dresses; one from the turn of the century, one from the 20's-30's and one from the 50's. These we plan to combine with wedding pictures of Fitchburg families.

Our goal is to make the displays more than historical artifacts; we want each to have a Fitchburg flavor.



#### DO YOU KNOW?

The photograph above was among many we received last spring from Mrs. Walter Uphoff. A great number of photos and a scrapbook were found in the attic of the Uphoff house on C.T.H. "MM" and we have no way to identify most of the pictures. Many of the photos may be of the Murphy family who had lived in the house and in the Fitchburg/Oregon area. Can anyone identify the woman in this photo?

We will have the other photos available at the September 12 general meeting in hopes that someone will be able to give us some clues to begin the identification process.



# Fitchburg Historical Society

NOV  
1990



## NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING

It's harvest time, and that is what we will be celebrating at our Sunday, November 11, 1990 potluck and meeting at 12:30 in the Stoner Prairie dining room at the Fitchburg Community Center.

Following our meal and a brief business meeting, our speaker will be Richard Blaney who will offer a presentation and film on the early operation of Blaney Seeds, one of Fitchburg's pioneer businesses.

William and Edwin Blaney began farming in Fitchburg in 1908 in the area of Syene Rd. and Lacy Rd. It was in 1932 that Edwin took a short course at the UW-School of Agriculture. It was a time when hybrid seeds were just being introduced and as a test of the seed, Edwin was given enough hybrid seed for one acre. The Blaney operation grew from there.

In fact, at the peak of operations in 1977, Blaney Seed had 8,600 acres in seed corn production and hired 2,500 area youth to detassel corn. The business was sold to Stauffer Chemical in 1978.

The film being presented by Mr. Blaney will detail the seed and farm operation in late 1930's and early '40's.

But that's not all---this will be a special potluck as well. You know how at a potluck you are always asked to bring a dish to pass and table service. This time we still want you to bring a dish to pass, but when it comes to table service, we are asking for something special. Do you have a place setting of your mother's or grandmother's china you could bring, or did you save a family member's first fork or spoon? How about an heirloom tablecloth? We are asking you to check the china cupboard and the table linen drawer and bring more than just table service to this potluck---bring a piece of family history with you. Prior to settling down to eating, we will take time for "show and tell".

Join us on Sunday, November 11. (By the way, we scheduled this so you can be home by 3:00 for the Packer's game, so there are no excuses!!)



## FUND RAISING ACTIVITY

We still have many of the 1991 State Historical Society calendars available. For those of you who have not yet purchased one or more of the calendars, we hope you will consider doing so at the November 11 meeting. They are just \$6.95 each, and would make fine Christmas presents---and it is that time of the year to be thinking about such things!

The 1991 calendars are done in the appointment book style and are very handy for carrying with you in order to keep track of those special events or appointments throughout the year.

The pictures featured are intriguing photos that span nearly a century of Wisconsin history. Photos include a 1955 Labor Day Parade in Brooklyn, Packard Sales & Service at Meehan Motor Mart in Madison (1946) and a Polka Party c. 1957 at the Verona Legion Hall.

If each member purchased just one calendar or sold a calendar to just one other person, we could sell our remaining stock and make a small, but useful, profit for the organization.

If you are unable to make it to the November 11 meeting, but are interested in purchasing a calendar, please call Patricia Delker at 273-2179 or 275-7141. Any member of the Board of Directors can also help you obtain a calendar.



## HONOR ROLL

The Fitchburg Historical Society initiated the honor roll plaque as a way of honoring our deceased members who have made a noticeable contribution to the Society. At our October 10 Board of Directors meeting Arlene Ace put forth Margaret Eby for inclusion on the honor roll which was unanimously approved by the Board.

Margaret was a charter member of the Fitchburg Historical Society and was our first treasurer. She served on the Board of Directors for three years as well as working on numerous committees and Society activities. She brought an abundance of knowledge and enthusiasm to the Society with each endeavor on our behalf.

Margaret's name will be added to the honor roll plaque, which currently recognizes Edna Stoneman Cross.





FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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Fitchburg, WI 53711



Milk trucks line up in front of the Bowman Dairy circa 1925-30. The road on the left is Fish Hatchery Road. The Bowman Dairy operated between 1914 and 1975. Photo is part of our Historical Society archives, courtesy of Duane Bowman Jr., who we also welcome as a new member of the Fitchburg Historical Society.

#### COUNCIL FOR LOCAL HISTORY REPORT

Board member Winnie Lacy attended the Saturday, October 20 sessions of the convention of the Wisconsin Council for Local History held in Madison.

Winnie reports that the welcoming speech was presented by Sondra Shaw who noted that Wisconsin has more local historical societies (145) than any other state outside of New England.

Dr. Loren Horton, from the State Historical Society of Iowa, offered insights on "Developing an Effective Board of Directors", noting that an effective Board is crucial to the success of the organization. Dr. Horton pointed out problem personalities and valued characteristics for a Board member. Winnie commented that our Board would receive quite favorable marks given Dr. Horton's review standards.

Winnie also attend sessions on "Effective Fund-raising Activities," "Planning a Neighborhood Walking Tour," and "Establishing an Active Publication Program." She will be providing a more complete report at upcoming meetings and it appears she has brought back valued information that we may incorporate into future activities and projects.

#### UPCOMING HISTORICAL EXHIBITS

It will soon be time for our Winter Activities exhibit in our display case at the Community Center. Once again we turn to our members for artifacts to include in the exhibit. Do you have items that are examples of winter activities from the past---like old ice skates, sleds, snowshoes or winter apparel.

Please call Connie Darling at 274-5375 if you have an item that we could use in the display, or bring the item to the November 11 meeting. Don't forget to identify the item, who owns it, who used to own it and any stories that might go along with it.

At the meeting we will be making a list of persons who have items for this exhibit as well as upcoming ones. Remember in February our display will consist of old Valentines, which could include such things as cards, candy boxes or other items depicting Valentine traditions.

Next year we will be looking for three wedding dresses, circa 1900, 1920-30, and 1950-60.





# Fitchburg Historical Society

JAN  
1991



## FEBRUARY ANNUAL MEETING

Can you believe it---it's "annual meeting" time again! We will be meeting Sunday, February 10, 1991 at 1:30 p.m. in the Greenfield Room of the Fitchburg Community Center.

The theme for this year's get-together is "Being Neighborly". Following a brief business meeting, Jerry O'Brien and Bill Stoneman will be recalling what "neighborly" meant to farmers in the past. As they tell us some of their stories, we hope they will jog some members' memories as well, and we can all share a brief tale of how Fitchburg residents would pitch in and help one another. Perhaps you can recall a time when people came together to help during a harvest, a family illness, or special event. Look forward to a pleasant afternoon of reminiscing and spoken history.

Also, because of the grand success of last year's "Picture Day", we are going to do it again. The more slides we can accumulate, the more complete our slide history of Fitchburg will be.

There was such a response to our first call for pictures, we were somewhat overwhelmed. Also, because of the limited amount of film we had purchased, we could not take slides of all the photos that members brought.

This time we are asking that each of you bring up to three pictures---either photos that did not get used last year, or other photos that you have but did not think to bring last time. Remember, we are looking for pictures that depict an element of Fitchburg history, like family occupations, homesteads, entertainment, politics, buildings, etc.

It would also be very helpful if, prior to the meeting, you could write down any pertinent information about a picture---who is in it, when it was taken, its particular significance, plus a short description of the photo so later on we can match the slide to the description.

As you can see, we have a full agenda, plus refreshments. Hope you will join us, Sunday, February 10.

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

All Fitchburg Historical Society memberships expire at each year's annual meeting. As always we will have membership forms and cards available at the meeting and hope you will choose to renew your membership at that time.

If you are unable to attend the annual meeting, please mail your renewal dues to our treasurer, Ellen Green, 5449 Irish Lane, Madison, WI 53711. Dues remain the same---\$5.00 - single membership, \$10.00 family membership, and \$2.00 - junior membership.

If there are any address changes, please enclose a short note to Ellen so we can make the necessary changes in our directories. Also, if you have any suggestions, comments or special programs that you would like to see us present, please let us know at renewal time.

## WE WERE APPROVED

The State Historical Society Board of Curators approved the Fitchburg Historical Society's permanent affiliation with the Wisconsin State Historical Society on November 9, 1990.

Our affiliation allows us to participate in many programs and activities, and the recent approval of permanent affiliation signifies the State Historical Society's recognition of our accomplishments on behalf of Fitchburg history to date.

Included in the materials that were reviewed by the Board of Curators was a documentation of the programs and projects we had accomplished in our four years as a trial affiliate. All persons who actively participated in those past programs or past research projects should be proud of their efforts that resulted in our final approval. The current Board of Directors extends its thanks to all of you for your contributions.

## THANK YOU

The Historical Society would like to thank Dick Sweeney for his donation of the Sweeney Family History. We also extend thanks to Darrell Ace for the donation of his time and expertise in completing the construction of our new display case pedestals.







DID YOU KNOW?

Many of you have no doubt had the opportunity to watch the superlative Ken Burns' documentary on the Civil War which has been shown on the local PBS station. Did you know that total Fitchburg enlistments in the Civil War were 97 men. Of those 97 who went to war, 16 died.

Fitchburg: A History documents several stories of Fitchburg's participation both in men and money during the war, including the following information:

"Preceding the war, a military company was organized in Fitchburg under the leadership of William C. Young of Dogtown Corners. This group called themselves the "Rough and Ready Guards" and was composed of men from several towns who met once a week at Lake View to drill. When the Civil War broke out, Captain Young and most of his men joined the 8th regiment of the Union Army as a group on August 3, 1861.

Another group, perhaps branch members of the "Rough and Ready Guards," organized at Oak Hall, also under the leadership of Captain Young. Out of the Oak Hall group, a musical band formed. Mary (Sholts) Anderson writes in a history of Oak Hall that during the war, the band was almost completely wiped out. Mrs. Anderson explains "This band had a wagon to ride in. On the day of the calamity, one member gave his place in the wagon to a sick soldier who was not able to ride his horse. The wagon was blown up in an encounter with the enemy and all in it were killed."

In an effort to learn more about Fitchburg's participation in the Civil War, we are asking Historical Society members to provide information about family members or others that you know participated in Civil War events.

Also, our next exhibit in the Community Center display case will feature pictures, stories and memorabilia from the Civil War. Please bring artifacts or pictures that you would allow us to use in the display to the annual meeting, or contact Connie Darling at 274-5375 no later than February 24.



FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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Fitchburg, WI 53711



## WISCONSIN'S RUSTIC ROADS

The Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation has recently published an updated edition of the booklet describing the Rustic Roads program. "Wisconsin's Rustic Roads...A Positive Step Backward" details the fifty-six designated roads.

The Rustic Roads System in Wisconsin was created by the 1973 State Legislature to preserve what remains of our scenic, lightly traveled country roads for the leisurely enjoyment of bikers, hikers and motorists. A unique brown and yellow sign marks the route of all officially designated Rustic Roads.

The goals of the program include the identification and undisturbed preservation of road having unusual or outstanding natural or cultural beauty, by virtue of native vegetation or other natural or man-made features associated with the road.

Many of the roads are over one hundred years old, and feature historic structures including bridges, farms, homesteads, cabins and mills, as well as an octagon house, lighthouses, round barns, artesian wells, an old lime kiln, historic schools and churches, and even an old stone filling station.

To receive a copy of "Wisconsin's Rustic Roads..." write the Division of Historic Preservation, State Historical Society, 816 State St., Madison, WI 53706 or the Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation, Rustic Roads Board, P.O. Box 7913, Madison, WI 53707.

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## NEVER TOO SOON TO ADVERTISE

This summer look forward to "Old Fitchburg Days", a city-wide celebration of days gone by. Plans are underway for an event that will feature old-time games and recreation, food and entertainment.

The Fitchburg Historical Society will be actively involved in the celebration, and if you would like to get involved too, please contact Patricia Delker at 275-7141 or Joy Anderson at 271-9773.



# Fitchburg Historical Society

APR 11  
1991



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Hunt House

## APRIL GENERAL MEETING

Spring is here and it is time for our April general meeting. We will be meeting on Wednesday, April 10, 1991 at 7:30 p.m. in the Greenfield Room of the Fitchburg Community Center.

Following a brief business meeting we will welcome Jim Draeger from the State Historical Society who will provide us with some answers to questions like, "Why do Wisconsin buildings look like they do?" and "Where did the idea for that sort of building originate?" and "What's the style of my house?" He will offer a slide presentation on the history of Wisconsin architecture, which includes examples of area structures. The presentation should provide us, not only with the answers to the above questions, but also with a new awareness of the significant architectural styles and heritage surrounding us. Also, if spring is here, summer can not be far behind, and that means we will be changing our display case exhibit to celebrate "Weddings." We need your assistance in providing articles for the display. Please rack your brain and search the attic to help us find wedding dresses. We need one from circa 1900, and one from 1920-30 to make our exhibit complete. We will also need dress forms to display the dresses. Do you have one, or know of one, that we could borrow?

In addition to searching for these wedding dresses, we also need wedding memorabilia from our members, which we would like you to bring to our April meeting. Items might include old family wedding pictures (please identify the persons in the photo and approximate date of the picture), wedding announcements, etc.

At the April meeting you may also pick up items that you may have brought for the "Containers" display which will be taken down to make room for "Weddings." We think we have a full agenda, plus refreshments, and we look forward to seeing you Wednesday, April 10.



## REMINDER

If a yellow membership form accompanies this newsletter, its purpose is to remind you that your dues have expired and you need to renew in order to continue as a member.

As in the past, all dues expire at the annual meeting each February. We hope you find the Historical Society to be a worthwhile group with which to be affiliated, and that we have offered programs or information that has inspired you to renew your membership.

Please mail your renewal dues and membership form to Treasurer Ellen Green at 5449 Irish Lane, Madison, WI 53711. If you have suggestions for programs or topics of interest, please jot them down and send them along. We welcome your input.

If you are interested in serving on the Board of Directors, or helping with the display case, or assisting in planning the direction of the Historical Society, please let us know.



THANK YOU, THANK YOU

The Fitchburg Historical Society participated in the City's "Cabin Fever Festival" this year by selling soda and popcorn at the March 1 dance. We made approximately \$95.00 for our treasury. Special thanks goes to the following members for their assistance during the evening---Joy and Kent Anderson, Bill Stoneman, Jeanie and Jerry Sieling, Al Colvin and Patricia Delker.

A thank you is also in order for Jerry O'Brien who graciously agreed to lead off our reminiscences about "Neighborliness" at our annual meeting. He jogged quite a few memories for many. Other storytelling participants included Bill Stoneman, Bill Kinney, Mary Kinney, Marc Jones, Bob Keenan, and Winnie Lacy.

Finally, thanks also to those of you who brought pictures to share---Phil Fox, Anna Fox, and Mickie Schudlach---and Tom Capp for taking slides of those pictures.

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FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2421 West Hill Dr.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



## AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIPS

Once again we will be distributing Affiliate Membership cards at our April general meeting. As one of the 240 historical organizations affiliated with the State Historical Society, every member of our society automatically becomes an Affiliate Member of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

The cards you will receive entitle you to a 10% discount for admission to any of the seven historic sites owned by the State Historical Society. To receive the discount, show your card each time you visit a site.

Each card also includes an invitation to join the State Historical Society as a regular member. If you do join, the Fitchburg Historical Society will receive \$5.00 for each person who uses the invitation to become a new member of the State Society.

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## 1991 OFFICERS

The Board of Directors met during the week following our annual meeting and selected the officers for the year. They are:

President --- Patricia Delker  
Vice-President --- Joy Anderson  
Treasurer --- Ellen Green  
Secretary --- Janet Keenan

\*\*\*\*\*

## DO YOU KNOW?

Do you know about the role Irish immigrants played in the settlement of Fitchburg? I am certain some of you with those Irish surnames know the Irish history of Fitchburg, but shortly many others will know about it as well, due to the efforts of Fitchburg Historical Society member, Tom Kinney.

Tom has prepared a presentation entitled "The Irish Settlement in Fitchburg, Wisconsin, 1840-60" which he has been asked to present as part of the American Conference for Irish Studies to be held on the UW-Madison campus, April 10-13.

(continued on next column)

continued

Speakers from across the country and Ireland will take part in this prestigious conference. Topics are widely varied and include "Irish Facts/Historical Fictions," "The Politics of Irish Nationalism," "The Great Irish Rebellion," "Irish Poetry," "Politics of Women," and "Early Ireland." Tom's presentation will be part of a session called "Migration and Settlement" held on Thursday, April 11 at 1:45.

Conference registration will be held at the Wisconsin Center, and you may wish to call the UW History Dept. or the Wisconsin Center for more information on this particular session or for full conference information.

Irish immigration in the late 1840's and 50's occurred primarily as the result of the potato famine in Ireland. Other Irish settlers came to America to escape persecution by the English. Tom has talked with many of Fitchburg's Irish families and his presentation will include the personal stories of the Irish settlers in Fitchburg.

Congratulations Tom---the Fitchburg Historical Society is pleased with your efforts to document Fitchburg history and proud to have Fitchburg represented at this important conference.



## UPCOMING CONFERENCE

"Celebrating Preservation '91", the annual Wisconsin Historic Preservation Conference will be held in LaCrosse on May 3-4 at the Radisson Hotel.

The conference will present several topics under three general tracks which are: "The Three R's: Restoration, Rehab and Renovation," "The Three P's: Planning, Protection and Preservation," and "Preservation Issues Forum."

Registration must be completed by April 24. Contact the State Historical Society for registration forms and additional information.

\*\*\*\*\*



# Fitchburg Historical Society



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Mann House

## JULY GENERAL MEETING

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the United States involvement in World War II. With this in mind, the Historical Society will be focusing on this period in Fitchburg history at our summer meeting---Sunday, July 14 at 7:00 p.m. in the Greenfield Room of the Community Center.

As Fitchburg: A History indicates, there was no official record of those in Fitchburg who served in World War II. The following names were submitted to the Bicentennial Committee:

Arnel Adams	Ken McGraw
Lloyd Doerfer	Gerald O'Brien
Vernon Dunn	Paul O'Brien
Robert Keenan	Leroy Purcell
Robert Keller	Gordon Richardson
John Koster	Leo Richardson
Ed Lynaugh	Walter Richardson
Heleen Lynaugh	George Rowe
William Lynaugh	David Schuster
James Maloney	James Garry Shiel
Robert Maloney	Robert Smith
Thomas Maloney	Donald Sweeney
Harold Mandt	Ray Sweeney
Lawrence Mandt	Richard Sweeney
Francis McCann	Gordon Whalen

Because little is documented about Fitchburg citizens serving in this war, or the experiences of those who remained on the homefront we are asking that you bring your memories of the war years and share them at this meeting.

As a special guest we have invited Betty Rotar of Verona to speak about a project she has initiated---a Veterans Memorial for all Dane County veterans. The idea for the memorial began to take shape in 1985, and since then land adjacent to the Verona City Hall has been donated for the project. Robert Rieser of Verona has revised Rotar's original ideas and brought them into focus with the creation of a large circular monument to be constructed of red Wausau granite and black granite. A large star will be incorporated into this design, and beginning at the north point of the star there will be engraved in black granite a time line of the history of the U.S.

Ms. Rotar will bring sketches of the project and a model and share her thoughts on the importance of this project.

Please join us on Sunday, July 14. In addition to our program, we will have many items to discuss---and, of course, refreshments will be served.

## HAUL OUT THE APRONS AND MEASURING SPOONS

Devil's Food, Angel Food, Spice Cake, Pineapple Upside Down Cake---we need them all and more for the Cakewalk on Saturday, July 27. This is to be the Historical Society's contribution to the "Old Fitchburg Days" celebration in Greenfield Park on July 27 and 28. (More details on "Old Fitchburg Days" can be found on the flip side of this newsletter.)

We are asking all our members to become bakers for this occasion. If we all provided one or two cakes, it would help make the event a success. Even if you would rather shop for a cake, rather than bake one, we can accept that. We will be signing up "cake providers" at our July 14 meeting, but if we don't get enough volunteers, we will resort to the "confectionery hotline" and make some phone calls as well.

Arlene Ace has volunteered to be "Keeper of the Cakes", so all cake deliveries need to be made to her at 2372 Blue Grass Trail by Friday, July 26. We will also need to know how many of you will be providing cakes, so if you can't make it to the July 14 meeting but can provide a cake, please call Patricia Delker at 273-2179 or Arlene at 271-3497.

## YOU CAN BE A WINNER

The Fitchburg V.F.W. is sponsoring a raffle in conjunction with the "Old Fitchburg Days" celebration. You won't want to miss the opportunity to win the following:

- 1st Prize - 3 day Carnival Cruise for 2 from Miami aboard the "Fantasy."
- 2nd Prize - 20" RCA Color TV with remote.
- 3rd Prize - \$150.00 cash.
- 4th Prize - Trip for 2 on the "Casino Belle" from Dubuque.
- 5th Prize - 5" black & white cordless TV.
- 6th-10 prize - \$25.00 each.

Tickets are only \$1.00 and we will have tickets available at our July 14 meeting. In fact, we hope to be able to sell 250 tickets for the V.F.W., not only because we want to be supportive of their efforts, but also because the V.F.W. has offered Fitchburg groups the opportunity to keep 25% of the total amount they sell.

We hope each member will buy or sell at least \$5.00 worth of tickets. We can sell tickets until July 28 (the drawing is 4:00 on the 28th) so get prepared to be a winner!!





FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2421 West Hill Dr.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



# "Old Fitchburg Days"

## Community Festival

July 27 & 28  
Greenfield Park

### "Old Fitchburg Days" Schedule

#### Saturday, July 27

10 a.m. Softball Tournament begins  
11 a.m. Horseshoe Tournament begins  
All Day Food Tent Beer Tent  
Dunk Tank Carriage Rides  
Crafts Demonstrations & Sales

Noon Police Auction

1:30 Kid's Games with Prizes

1 p.m. Bingo

2:30 Cakewalk

7 p.m. Community Dance featuring music by  
"Marcy & the Highlights"

#### Sunday, July 28

10 a.m. Tournaments continue

All Day Food Tent, Beer Tent, Crafts  
Bingo, Dunk Tank,

1:30 Storyteller

2 p.m. Community Entertainment

3 p.m. Tethered Hot-Air Balloon Rides

DON'T  
MISS  
IT!!!





# Fitchburg Historical Society

OCT  
1991



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Mann House

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING AND HALLOWEEN PARTY SHOULD NOT BE MISSED!

October not only brings to mind colorful leaves, but colorful costumes as well as Halloween creeps up on us at the end of the month. We felt Halloween was just full of historical promise and we tried to incorporate it all into our October general meeting to be held Sunday, October 27, 1991 at 5 p.m. in the Stoner Prairie Dining Room at the Fitchburg Community Center, 5510 East Lacy Road.

Halloween attire is requested for this meeting. If you are so inclined, please come in costume. We have encouraged all members of our Board of Directors to appear suitably dressed for the holiday, and we hope as many members as possible will join in the Halloween "spirit." A prize awaits the best costume of the day.

Please don't feel you must dress-up to join us though, because we have plenty of other offerings that you don't want to miss! In addition to a costume party, this is also a potluck supper. Please bring a dish to share, plates and utensils; beverage will be provided.

Our speaker will be Sue Haswell who will offer a presentation on the history of rural cemeteries. Ms. Haswell is a graduate student in Landscape Architecture at UW-Madison and became interested in the unique aspects and history of cemeteries in this country when she was taking classes in her field.

Ms. Haswell feels cemeteries are "goldmines of genealogy and history," and will provide an overview of the development of North American cemeteries through the centuries. For instance, did you know cemeteries used to be social gathering places, like parks are today?

We also plan on setting aside some time to share some Halloween stories from members' pasts. Be prepared to own up to your most mischievous Halloween prank, or just tell us how you have celebrated October 31 over the years.

See you Sunday, October 27!!!

## CHANGES MADE ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We are sorry to report that Board member and Vice-President, Joy Anderson, submitted a letter of resignation at the last Board of Directors meeting. Though Joy will continue to be with us as a member of the Historical Society, she indicated her other community involvements, and desire to spend more time with her first grandchild, made it difficult to continue. We understand, but certainly wish to extend our appreciation for her past input and efforts as a Board member.

On the other hand, we are pleased to report that Kay Harty has indicated she would be happy to step in and serve the remainder of Joy's term. Also, the Board convinced Stan Cross to serve as Vice-President.

If you are interested in serving on the Historical Society Board of Directors, please let us know. Board members serve three year terms, and the Board regularly holds five meetings a year at which the Society's programs are planned, potential activities discussed and organized, and budgets approved.



## FITCHBURG IS "LISTED" AGAIN

The City of Fitchburg has recently received notification from the Wisconsin State Historical Society's Division of Historic Preservation that the Wisconsin Industrial School for Girls, 5212 Highway "M" has just been entered in the National Register and the State Register of Historic Places.

The addition of the School for Girls is the fourth Fitchburg structure to be listed on the Registers. Our other designated landmarks are the McCoy house on Syene Road, Fox Hall on Highway "M" and the Mann House (Quivey's Grove) on Nesbitt Road.







# DID YOU KNOW?

In 1963, the former parsonage of Oregon's Catholic Church was moved to Whalen Road in Fitchburg.

Currently the home of Carolyn and Andy VanSickle, the residence has 13 rooms and is readily identified by the widow's walk atop its roof and the long stately porch on the west side of the house.

The VanSickle's were featured in a November 4, 1990 Wisconsin State Journal article written by Chris Martell, in which they talked about the house as well as their interests in antiques and fascination with Native American and fur trading lore.

After the church burned down, the parish house was sold for \$1,000. It cost less than \$3,000 to move the house, which had been built in the 1890's for priests' living quarters and office space.

The article details "moving a house so large was not without logistical problems: A bay window had to be cut off by chainsaw to fit through an overpass bridge en route to the new site."

The VanSickle's have filled the house with intriguing collections that reflect their interests, from antique teapots to animal hides and Indian pipes. Also present on the property is a log cabin moved from Fennimore in Grant County.

\*\*\*\*\*

## The Patchwork Quilt

I have a quilt upon my bed  
Of patchwork done in white and red,  
With yellow stars set in beside.  
It is very big and long and wide,  
Yet Grandma made it, I am told,  
When she was only ten years old,  
And now its countless stitches show  
How hard she toiled so long ago.  
She never knew a lazy day,  
And when I waste my time or play  
Too long, I stop and think how she  
Was always busy as could be.

Rose Mills Powers  
The Youth Companion, March 16, 1911

FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2421 West Hill Dr.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



## OLD FITCHBURG DAYS IN REVIEW

July and "Old Fitchburg Days", the revival of our community festivals, have come and gone, but we would certainly be remiss if we didn't thank all the members who made our Cakewalk a great success. Thanks to the efforts of Joy Anderson on the megaphone, the spaces on our "walk" were filled to capacity at all times. We had 26 cakes provided by our members to give away to the winners....thanks to all of you who either baked or shopped!!

After expenses, our profits were just about \$65.00. Although the monetary rewards were not huge, it was certainly satisfying to see so many enthused participants in the event, not only children, but adults as well. The possibility of winning one of those great looking cakes for only 25c was surely one of the best deals of the day.

Thanks are certainly in order for all who participated especially Joy, Arlene Ace, Carol Kinney and Janet Keenan. Herb Gundlach was gracious enough to supply the accordion music that kept our "walkers" stepping high, and the Historical Society extends our appreciation to him as well.

The Historical Society also provided a portion of the funding that made possible the covered wagon rides that were available on Saturday afternoon. The owner of "Rides Into the Past, John Wilson, indicated that the wagon was nearly always at capacity all afternoon. The addition of the wagon rides certainly provided an authentic feel to the "Old Fitchburg Days" theme and the Historical Society was pleased to be able to help sponsor the activity.





# Fitchburg Historical Society

FEB  
1992



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Kern House

## FEBRUARY ANNUAL MEETING

Yes, if it's February, it must be annual meeting time again! This year we have scheduled the event for Sunday, February 16 at 1:30 p.m. in the Fitchburg Room (upstairs) at the Community Center, 5510 East Lacy Road.

In the last newsletter it was reported that Fitchburg has added our fourth entry to the National Register of Historic Places, that being the Wisconsin Industrial School for Girls on Highway "M", (now Oakhill Correctional Institute). In honor of our latest listing, the Board of Directors felt it was appropriate to devote the annual meeting to familiarizing our membership with the facility and providing information on its historical significance.

To that end, we have invited Tricia Canaday from the State Historical Society, as well as current Oakhill warden, Catherine Farrey, to provide their insights on the facility. Ms. Canaday prepared the application that successfully placed the Girl's School on the National Register. Her presentation will consist of slides and historical information about the site. Warden Farrey will provide her observations concerning the present day use of the site.

The Jan./Feb. 1992 issue of the State Historical Society's Wisconsin Preservation newsletter provides a brief overview of the new listing. The Wisconsin Industrial School for Girls was built in 1932 and its rural location was thought to offer a healthful environment away from the evils of the city. The historical designation includes 13 buildings, including a school, maintenance buildings, and ten cottages.

In addition to our guest speakers, we will hold our annual business meeting which includes elections to the Board of Directors and renewal of memberships. Special refreshments are planned as well. Please plan to attend Sunday, February 16.



Wisconsin  
Industrial School  
for Girls  
Fitchburg

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

All Fitchburg Historical Society memberships expire at each year's annual meeting. Enclosed with this newsletter you will find a membership form which we urge you to complete and bring to the annual meeting. Additional forms and membership cards will be available at the February 16 meeting.

If you are unable to attend the annual meeting, please mail your renewal dues to our current treasurer, Ellen Green, 5449 Irish Lane, Madison, WI 53711. For single and family memberships, our dues remain the same---\$5.00 and \$10.00 respectively. In an effort to encourage more Fitchburg businesses to participate in the Historical Society, the Board of Directors voted to lower business memberships from \$50.00 to \$25.00.

If there are any address changes, please enclose a short note to Ellen so we can make the necessary changes in our files and future directories.

We sincerely hope we have provided you with programs or information that make your Historical Society membership worthwhile. Your continued involvement is very important to the continued growth of the Society. If you have suggestions or special programs that you would like to see us present, please let us know at renewal time.



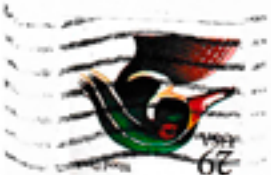
## ELECTIONS PLANNED AT ANNUAL MEETING

The terms of the following Board of Directors expire in February: Eric Amle, Connie Darling, Winnie Lacy and Patricia Delker.

They have graciously indicated their interest in continuing on the Board for another three year term, and elections will be part of the business meeting at the February annual meeting.







FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2421 West Hill Dr.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



#### DID YOU KNOW?

The last remaining original building from the Village of Syene (in Fitchburg) has been moved with the intention of assuring its preservation. Marc Jones reports that he recently completed moving the aging barn from its site next to the railroad tracks along Syene Road to his farm property across the road from the original site.

The Jones' research indicates that the barn, though undergoing various renovations over the years, was built sometime around the establishment of the railroad adjacent to it---about 1864.

Marc found more information about the Syene area in City and Places in Dane County and research done by Ken Reigle and John Gruber for the Antique Rail Assoc. Syene was first settled in 1845. There appears to be no reference to why the name "Syene" was chosen, although Marc has learned that there is some Biblical significance to the name; it means "remoteness."

The train station at the site was built in 1864 and remained in operation until 1926 with the last stationmaster being Vern Sykes. The Sykes', Nellie and Vern, were probably the last to use the barn as a cow and horse barn; it has been used most recently as a truck garage.

During the period in which Syene flourished, it boasted a grocery store, a creamery, a stockyard, blacksmith shop, boarding house, post office and train station.

Marc anticipates that renovation will be a lengthy process, but plans to begin with footings and a foundation in the spring.

#### SUGGESTIONS ARE ENCOURAGED

Not only are suggestions encouraged, they will also be solicited at the upcoming annual meeting. Between now and February 16 we hope you will give some thought to what you would like to see the Historical Society undertake or accomplish.

The Board of Directors will be preparing a brief survey which will be distributed at the annual meeting. We will be asking you what programs you would like to see, what programs you have enjoyed, and any suggestions for appropriate long-term projects.

We would like to expand the newsletter to provide a forum for our members' contributions. Please consider providing an anecdote, a brief story, or your written memories of Fitchburg history for future newsletters.

We also hope to involve our members in assisting with our exhibit case in the Community Center. Do you have some ideas about historical displays, or perhaps an interesting collection of family memorabilia you would be willing to share?

There are so many untapped resources in our community. The Board of Directors knows our members have vibrant ideas just awaiting exploration. We want to hear from you on Sunday, February 16...we'll provide the pencils!!





# Fitchburg Historical Society

MAR  
1992



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Mann House

## APRIL GENERAL MEETING

If Spring is just around the corner, then so is our spring meeting. We have scheduled it for Sunday, April 5 at 1:30 in the Greenfield Room of the Community Center. We have an interesting and varied program planned.

Though we are late for St. Patrick's Day, the focus of our program will be Fitchburg's Irish settlers and our speaker will be Tom Kinney. As you may recall, Tom offered his program, "The Irish Settlement in Fitchburg, Wisconsin, 1840-60" at the American Conference for Irish Studies held last year on the UW-Madison campus. We were so pleased when Tom represented Fitchburg's Irish heritage at this conference and we are equally pleased that we will have the opportunity to hear the result of Tom's research ourselves.

We will also be acknowledging the work accomplished by Bill Linton of Promega Corp. on the Oscar Mayer Observatory. Mr. Linton has been instrumental in completing the painting of the building and restoring the dome, and has demonstrated his commitment to historical preservation in the City.

There's more---we also want you to bring some TOYS! Yes, we are preparing a new exhibit in our display case and the theme is toys, particularly toys from before 1950. Did you keep a favorite board game, or a treasured doll, or any other item that may have been a childhood diversion? Please share it with at the meeting, and allow us to use it in our next exhibit.

You have to agree, there will be a diversified agenda, plus refreshments. Make plans to join us Sunday, April 5.

## OFFICERS ELECTED

The Board of Directors met the Monday following the annual meeting. Among our actions were the election of officers for the 1992-93 membership year. They are:

Co-Presidents: Kay Harty & Patricia Delker  
Vice-President: Arlene Ace  
Secretary: Winnie Lacy  
Treasurer: Ellen Green

In addition, tentative dates for this year's general membership meetings were also set. They are Sunday, June 14, --- Sunday, October 11 --- with our annual meeting slated for February 7, 1993. We promise interesting programs for each, so mark the dates on your calendar now.



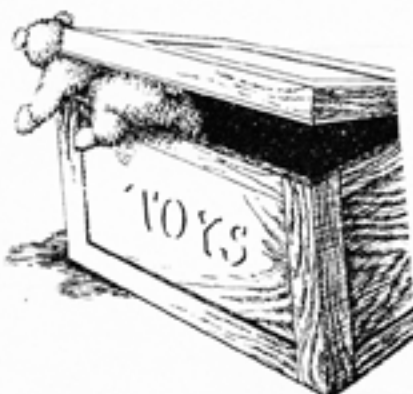
## MEMBERSHIP REMINDERS COULD BE ATTACHED!

If a yellow membership form accompanies this newsletter, its purpose is to remind you that your dues have expired and you need to renew in order to continue as a member.

As in the past, all dues expire at the annual meeting each February. We hope you find the Historical Society to be a worthwhile group with which to be affiliated, and that we have offered programs or information that has inspired you to renew your membership.

Please mail your renewal dues and membership form to Treasurer Ellen Green at 5449 Irish Lane, Madison, WI 53711.

A special thank-you is in order for those of you who annually renew your dues at the annual meeting, and also to those of you who send in a little extra to help defray costs. Every year we are always pleased and surprised when a membership renewal contains that extra encouragement ---this time we wish to thank Jack & Elizabeth Jallings for their added donation.







FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2421 West Hill Dr.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



### DID YOU KNOW?

We have Bill Stoneman to thank for this issue's "did you know" information. Included in some old papers, he found a letter from a Madison realtor, Mr. L.E. Stevens. The letter is dated October 29, 1912. At that time Mr. Stevens had an office in the "Washington Building" located on E. Washington Ave. His stationery indicates that this was "opposite the First National Bank."

Mr. Stevens appears to have been quite proud of his Madison and Dane Co. affiliations because his stationery also carries, in the left margin, a description of both the county and the City of Madison at the time. This is what Mr. Stevens' stationery tells us about Dane Co. early in the century:

#### DANE COUNTY

The second largest in the state in population, lies on the southern and central part of the state and contains 1,200 square miles or 807,400 acres. The county has the finest court house in the state, a Carnegie Library costing \$100,000, a large hospital for insane, and other first class county buildings, and owes no debt.

The census of 1900 shows that the county contains 22,422 horses, 80,347 cattle, 62,000 sheep and 103,070 swine. The latest crop reports show the production for the year 1909 of 3,000,000 bushels of corn, 337,531 bushels of wheat, 4,000,000 bushels of oats, 885,275 bushels of barley and 76,020 bushels of rye, 12,000,000 pounds of tobacco, 2,079,455 pounds of butter, 1,611,055 pounds of cheese, 181,000 tons of hay, 311,181 bushels of potatoes, 306,190 pounds of wool, 51,507 pounds honey, 23,347 bushels of apples, 20,000 bushels of beans. The center of Wisconsin growing and shipping zone for tobacco and beets.

For any information regarding real estate in this fine 1912 county, the margin notes also suggest you contact L.E. Stevens.



### YOUR INPUT IS REQUESTED

Included with every newsletter this time around is a blue survey sheet that was distributed at the February annual meeting. Several members filled out and returned the information at that meeting, but we wanted to make sure we provided every member with an opportunity to tell us what they think about the Historical Society.

Completion of the survey will aid the Board of Directors in planning meetings and programs that interest as many members as possible. It's your chance to tell us what was your favorite program and what was your least favorite. We need to know if you like what we do, or think we could do better. We also welcome any suggestions you may have, either for programming, exhibits or any other improvements. As a member, your ideas and thoughts are important to the Board. We hope you will take a few moments to fill in the survey and drop it in the mail, if you did not complete the survey at the annual meeting. Please mail it to Patricia Delker, 2421 West Hill Dr., Fitchburg, WI 53711, or bring it to the April 5 meeting.

### BUSINESS MEMBERSHIPS ENCOURAGED

In an effort to encourage Fitchburg businesses to become members of the Historical Society, the Board of Directors voted to lower business memberships from \$50.00 to \$25.00.

Thanks to Kay Harty, Ellen Green and Arlene Ace, who gathered around Patricia Delker's kitchen table on March 23, we were also able to mail membership information to Fitchburg businesses providing businesses the opportunity to learn more about the history of the community as well as asking them to join us at the new lower rate.

Earlier in the month, Patricia provided the Fish Hatchery Road Business Association with an introduction to the Historical Society, and no doubt surprised some businesspersons with the wealth of Fitchburg history they could see daily within the Fish Hatchery Road vicinity.

We look forward to welcoming new business memberships and extend our appreciation to those businesses who have supported us in the past.



# Fitchburg Historical Society

JUNE  
1992



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Mann House

## JUNE GENERAL MEETING

Summertime is picnic time---and that's what we have planned for our June meeting. We will meet Sunday, June 14 at 1:30 p.m. at the Gorman wayside, next to Fitchburg City Hall.

June 14 is Flag Day and we selected this spot for our picnic because the wayside is the location of the memorial statue, The Kneeling Soldier, which will be the focus of our program.

Many of you may remember the decision in the 70's by the Fitchburg Club to commission a sculpture to honor Robert Schley, a Fitchburg soldier who was killed in Vietnam. In addition to Robert Schley, the soldier kneeling before the adjacent flag honors "all who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States and especially dedicated to those residents of the Town of Fitchburg who have given their lives in service to their country."

The individuals honored also include Nelson H. Salisbury (Civil War), William Byrne (Civil War), Edward Skelly (W.W.I) and V. Jerry Stich (Vietnam).

We have invited several guests who had a hand in establishing the memorial. We are also pleased that Harry Whitehorse, the Madison artist who created the sculpture, will be with us. Mr. Whitehorse has agreed to provide a presentation on the artistic decisions and the process that was followed in designing the artwork.

Harry Whitehorse is a regionally recognized artist who has been commissioned for various large scale projects. He is also well-known as a carver and painter in addition to being a sculptor and his work often reflects his Native American heritage and culture.

Fitchburg residents are fortunate to have such a distinctive sculpture in our city. We hope you will join us on Sunday, June 14 (bring a dish to pass and table service) as we recognize this aspect of Fitchburg history as well as celebrate its artistic expression. See you Sunday!



## HISTORICAL SOCIETY SOLICITS CONFECTIONS

Due to the success---with both the young and old alike---of last year's "Old Fitchburg Days" cakewalk, the Fitchburg Historical Society will again be sponsoring this activity on Saturday afternoon, July 25 as part of this year's "Old Fitchburg Days" celebration.

This provides each of you with plenty of warning and time to decide what delicious donation you can provide this year. Last year we had a grand spectrum of confections---from Angel's Food to Devil's Food and Chocolate Chip Cake to German Chocolate Cake---much to the delight of those participating in the cakewalk. Everyone with an active sweet tooth seemed to participate and it was truly an old-time activity which fit the "Old Fitchburg Days" theme perfectly.

(The response was so good that the organizing committee has agreed to do two Cakewalks this year. One will be sponsored by the Historical Society and one by another group.)

We again need about 25-30 cakes and the Cakewalk Committee will be contacting you sometime in July in order to get a "cake commitment" from you. We will also be providing a "sweets sheet" for sign-up at our June meeting.



## OLD FITCHBURG DAYS RETURNS

"Old Fitchburg Days" will be held on July 25 and 26 in Greenfield Park. In addition to the Historical Society's "Cakewalk", other events that will be repeated will be a softball tournament, horseshoe tournament, kid's games, beer tent, food tent, dunk tank, craft sales and demonstrations, as well as a Saturday night dance, this year featuring "The Shakers."

Tethered hot-air balloon rides are planned for Sunday (weather permitting) and entertainment on Sunday will include singer/storyteller Reid Miller and the Southern Wisconsin Old-Time Fiddlers.





FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2421 West Hill Dr.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



### DID YOU KNOW?

We know you know that the McCoy House on Syene Road is one of Fitchburg's four listings on the National Register of Historic Places, but how much of its history, before it became the McCoy House, do you know? Thanks to the research and information provided by the current owners, Mickie and Tony Schmudlach, here is more of the story.

The land surrounding the McCoy House was purchased in 1846 for \$504.00 by Henry Yager. The farm was cultivated by Ralph Pomeroy and J.R. Hiestand, who grew the area's most successful tobacco crop in 1853. Mr. Benjamin Brown, "a liberal" and "a democrat" from New York, built this Italianate style cream-colored brick house between 1857 and 1861.

The foundation walls are limestone. The exterior walls of the house are three courses of brick thick. There is no wood frame; the house is solid masonry.

The house has had many owners and residents. The more recent history is that Mrs. Joe Sweeney sold the house and 60 acres to David Peterson for \$12,000 in 1944. Mr. Peterson raised mink there, and eventually sold the house and 12 acres to Professor Elizabeth McCoy, a microbiologist of world renown. Her grandfather had bought the house in 1893 and Elizabeth had spent many childhood hours there.

When Miss McCoy died in 1978, the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation received the house and associated farmland that she had acquired. The house was saved from demolition by the efforts of local residents and preservationists. The house was declared a "cemetery" and therefore could not be demolished. The basis for this claim was the persistent tale that an itinerant workman had been killed during construction and was buried in the basement.

In August 1980, the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation publicly offered the house and 2.9 acres to the highest bidder. The Schmudlach's became the owners in December 1980, and moved into the house in May 1982.

### BOARD REPORTS

The Board of Directors met on May 13 and in addition to summer festival and June meeting discussion, we were also addressed by Tom Kinney in regard to his project on Irish history in Fitchburg.

Many of you who enjoyed Tom's presentation at our April meeting will remember that he anticipated publishing the information in booklet form. Tom is now soliciting donations from various area businesses and foundations in order to make the booklet a reality---perhaps by the end of July.

The Historical Society, with Board approval, will be acting as a repository for those donations and later will be providing the monies to Tom for publication costs. The Board also voted to provide a donation to help complete the booklet.

Tom anticipates needed funds to be between \$2,000-\$2,500. If you are interested in making an individual donation toward documenting this aspect of Fitchburg history, you may do so by writing a check to the Fitchburg Historical Society with a notation that it is intended as a donation toward this project. All contributions are tax deductible.





# Fitchburg Historical Society

JAN  
1993



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Mann House

## FEBRUARY ANNUAL MEETING

It hardly seems possible, but yes, a year has passed and it is time once again for our big annual meeting. It will be held Sunday, February 7, 1993 at 1 p.m. in the Stoner Prairie Dining Room at the Fitchburg Community Center, 5510 East Lacy Road.

Because we all know that history does not begin big, but on a small scale ---with individuals and with families--- we decided it would be appropriate to invite a speaker who can tell us how we can begin, or expand efforts, to record our own families' history. Nancy Emmert, President of the Wisconsin State Genealogical Society will present our program which will focus on tracing family history.

Ms. Emmert has done extensive genealogical research throughout the country and teaches genealogy at Madison Area Technical College (MATC), and she will be able to offer her insights and experience in this field. So, whether you have just started to trace your family history, or have already spent significant time looking back at your ancestors, our Feb. 7 meeting should be of great interest.

We are aware that many of our Historical Society members have undertaken this research task, and if you have completed your family history or are working on such a document, please bring the material to the meeting and share your research experience during the afternoon.

This will also be a potluck as well, and you are asked to bring your favorite dish to pass as well as table service. Refreshments will be provided.

See you Sunday, February 7.



## PLEASE STAY WITH US

When annual meeting time rolls around, that also means that Historical Society memberships expire. Annual memberships come due every February, and you will find a yellow membership renewal slip tucked in with this newsletter.

You may either bring the form with you to the annual meeting and renew your membership at that time, or you may wish to mail your dues (still \$5.00 for individuals, \$10.00 for families, & \$25.00 for business/professional members) to treasurer Ellen Green, 5449 Irish Lane, Madison, WI 53711.

We realize that the year seems to go by very quickly, and to avoid having to remember to renew each year, some members select to pay dues for several years. Perhaps, if you have already decided that you like what the Fitchburg Historical Society has to offer, you may wish to do this as well.

As always, we hope the programs and information offered by the Historical Society have pleased you and you will remain with us another year.



## MAKE SURE YOU ARE A GOOD ANCESTOR

Just a reminder, which was brought to mind as a result of our annual meeting program, that we should all make sure we are being good ancestors. Years from now someone may be attempting to research their family history...history that will include you. Make sure you are in the habit of writing down the identification of people in photographs, inventory family heirlooms, assemble family documents in a fire resistant, safe place, and write your own reminiscences for future generations.





FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2421 West Hill Dr.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



#### DID YOU KNOW?

So many people in the Fitchburg area knew Gladys Stoneman. She worked tirelessly for both her family and her community, but did you know about her brush with world history?

The following is an excerpt from a presentation made by Gladys' sister, Gen Jackson, during a recognition ceremony honoring Gladys in 1988 at the Fitchburg Senior Center:

"Gladys was born in Guilsfield, Montgomeryshire, Wales, the first child of Margaret and Thomas W. Jones. The Village of Guilsfield, in sheep-raising country, is located mid-Wales near the English border and in the English speaking part of Wales.

At age 15, Gladys' Uncle Ed Blaney visited from Utah, where he had settled. He was part owner of a huge Wyoming sheep ranch, and with his family, had a town house in Salt Lake City. He, along with his brothers (Uncle Will and Uncle Lloyd Blaney) who had settled in the Syene area, persuaded Gladys' parents to come to America.

Plans were to travel back to America on Uncle Ed's return trip on the liner Baltic. Prior to sailing, however, there was a coal strike confining the Baltic to dock, so their passages were transferred to the steamship Lusitainia which was to sail later.

In the interim, Gladys' parents decided to postpone their trip due to her mother's pregnancy and the settling of her grandmother Blaney's estate. Uncle Ed, however, was successful in convincing Gladys to accompany him, assuring her she could join her parents later, when they would arrive in the States the next year. The prospect of seeing cowboys and Indians and being able to ride horses on the ranch lured Gladys, and she agreed.

The coal strike quickly ended, and passage was returned to the Baltic, White Star Line, which turned out to be a good thing. The next voyage of the Lusitainia resulted in its sinking at sea."



#### Upcoming Event

Fitchburg Historical Society  
sponsors a  
**CARD PARTY**  
Sunday, March 21 - 1:30 p.m.  
Stoner Prairie Dining Room  
Community Center

#### CARD PARTY/FUND RAISER PLANNED

Mark the date on your calendars now ---March 21 at 1:30---the Historical Society will be sponsoring a card party to raise funds for Tom Kinney's Irish history project.

Tom has been quite successful in raising money for his booklet on the history of Irish settlers in Fitchburg. Through donations from the Dane Co. Cultural Affairs Commission, Promega Corporation, Madison Gas & Electric and several Fitchburg Historical Society members, the funds for the project now total just over \$5,000. It is estimated that \$1,500 additional funding will be needed.

We hope our planned card party will speed along this worthwhile endeavor. The public is invited and all proceeds will go toward Tom's project. So, dust off your card playing skills and make sure you invite your friends and neighbors to join you for a little Sunday afternoon fun. The party will be held in the Stoner Prairie Dining Room at the Fitchburg Community Center, and refreshments and prizes will be provided.





# Fitchburg Historical Society



## MAY GENERAL MEETING

Throughout the histories of Fitchburg and Oregon, Wisconsin we know that the communities have been closely interwoven. We are delighted that our Historical Society will hold our Spring meeting at the new Oregon Historical Society building, 159 West Lincoln Street at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 16, 1993.

Eeda Lumley, the Oregon Historical Society President and other Society members have been most gracious in their enthusiasm for our visit. I have had a "sneak preview" and I know you will enjoy their wonderful new home and the display of their many historic treasures.

Janet and Bob Keenan are active members of both the Fitchburg and Oregon Historical Societies. They have worked very hard on the Oregon building renovation and the establishment of excellent display areas.

We will meet at the building site in Oregon. See you on Sunday, May 16.



## OFFICERS ELECTED - MEETING DATES SET

The Board of Directors met on Feb. 10th and elected the following slate of officers for the 1993-94 membership year. They are:

President - Kay Harty  
Vice-President - Arlene Ace  
Secretary - Winnie Lacy  
Treasurer - Ellen Green

Dates for general membership meetings were also established. They are:

Sunday, May 16, 1993 - 1:30 p.m.  
Oregon Historical Bldg.  
Wednesday, Sept. 22, 1993 - 7 p.m.  
Fitchburg Community Center  
Sunday, Feb. 13, 1994 - 1:30 p.m.  
Fitchburg Community Center



## MARCH CARD PARTY

We are happy to report that our March card party was very successful. The proceeds of the party (\$160.00) have been given to Tom Kinney to assist him in the publication of his book about the Irish settlement in Fitchburg.

Thank you to all who made donations of food, money, time and effort. We also wish Tom much success as he completes his historic publication.

## MEMBERSHIP REMINDERS

Please make sure that your membership dues are paid by February each year. We wish to have all of you continue as members and it is easy to forget a Feb. expiration date unless we remind everyone.

Please send your renewal or new membership dues to our treasurer, Ellen Green, 5449 Irish Lane, Madison, WI 53711.

## OLD FITCHBURG DAYS

Fitchburg's annual community festival will be held August 13, 14, & 15 in McGaw Park. The City and the Fitchburg Lions Club will act as co-sponsors of this year's event, which will also celebrate the 10th anniversary of Fitchburg's incorporation as a city.

The Historical Society will again participate as organizers of our popular "cakewalk" on Saturday, the 14th. As you know, we will need many, many cakes so mark your calendars now and plan to get involved in this fun event.





FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2421 West Hill Dr.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



#### PRESERVATION OF HISTORY

Don't forget about the Fitchburg Historical Society when you clean your attic, basement, closet, barn or tool shed. Our primary goal is to preserve Fitchburg history and we do need artifacts, newspapers, letters, postcards, antique clothing, pictures, signs, tools, etc., which we can display someday when we find a suitable location.

Please contact a Board member if you wish to make a donation of an antique, or if you might consider remembering us in your will.

#### NEW IDEAS WANTED

We are always looking for new ideas for program topics, speakers, etc. We wish to make our meetings educational and interesting. If you have any ideas for our organization, we do wish to hear from you. You may contact one of our Board members to give us the information.



#### NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMBER

This year at our annual meeting, long-time Board member, Stan Cross, declined to serve another 3 year term on the Board. We certainly respect Stan's desire to take a break, and appreciate all that he has offered to us during his time on the Board.

We are also pleased to announce that Marc Jones has agreed to serve as a Board member for this 3 year term. Because of Marc's appreciation and knowledge of Fitchburg history, we look forward to his input in the coming months.

#### HISTORICAL SOCIETY UNDERTAKES RAFFLE

This year the Pleasant Company, headquartered in Middleton, kindly responded to a request for donations by sending us several sets of books which are historic stories about the beautiful Pleasant Co. dolls. After lengthy discussion, the Board of Directors decided to offer the books as prizes in a raffle.

We want all members to be actively involved in this project. and are sending you raffle tickets with this newsletter to sell between now and "Old Fitchburg Days."

The price of the ticket is \$1.00 a piece or 6 tickets for \$5.00. More tickets may be obtained from Arlene Ace (271-3497). We prefer that you send ticket money and explanation of number of tickets sold to Ellen Green, treasurer, at 5449 Irish Lane, Madison, WI 53711. Any Board members will also be happy to assist you if necessary.

Please note that in addition to the books, prizes also include a handmade wooden quilt rack, a handcrafted footstool, and a Sunbonnet Girl quilted wallhanging.

Bob Langer is the talented craftsman of the quilt rack and footstool, and Ellen Green has designed and created the quilted wallhanging. We thank them for their lovely donations to our raffle.



#### NEW FITCHBURG MAYOR ELECTED

Congratulations to Fitchburg Historical Society member, Douglas Morrisette, who is now "his honor", the Mayor.



# Fitchburg Historical Society



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Mann House

## SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING

The fall general meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will be held on Wednesday evening, September 22, 1993 at 7 p.m. in the City Council Room of the Fitchburg Community Center.

We will have an opportunity to hear firsthand about the proposed cultural map of Wisconsin. Our speaker for the evening will be Steve Hoelscher, a University of Wisconsin graduate student, who will collect data and coordinate the project for the next two years. Hoelscher is requesting informative data from historical societies in each of the state's 72 counties. When completed, the map will tell people about Wisconsin's rich history and culture.

We look forward to seeing you at this meeting. Refreshments will be served.



## LOOK FORWARD TO UPCOMING EVENTS

The February general meeting will be on Sunday, February 13, 1994 at 1:30 p.m. Our speaker will be Joe Sokal, project architect, who will present slides of the State Capitol remodeling currently in progress.

Also, the Board of Directors have discussed hosting an Alumni Reunion of former students of our 10 rural elementary Fitchburg schools. We are thinking of Perhaps you have names and addresses of classmates, or information on contacting former students. Also, if you are interested in working on an organizing committee, please give Kay Harty a call.



## FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY CHARTER MEMBER PUBLISHES FITCHBURG BOOK.

Tom Kinney of Irish Lane has written a book: Irish Settlers of Fitchburg, 1840-1860. Tom has presented some of the interesting facts which will be in the book at one of our past Historical Society meetings and also during an interview on Fitchburg Cable TV.

He has done extensive research for this book, including library searches, cemetery tours, personal interviews and map investigations. His book contains significant Fitchburg historical information including immigration maps, plat maps, population tables from 1850 - 1990, territorial roads in Fitchburg as well as pictures, gravestone inscriptions and many wonderful stories.

One of his favorite quotes about an early Irish immigrant is that this person was "born in a castle in Ireland and died in a log cabin in Fitchburg."

We are proud of Tom's valuable contribution to the preservation of Fitchburg history. The Board of Directors of the Fitchburg Historical Society recently voted to contribute a total of \$750.00 to the publication of this book.







FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2121 West Hill Dr.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



#### OLD FITCHBURG DAYS UPDATE

Once again the Fitchburg Historical Society participated in "Old Fitchburg Days", August 13, 14 & 15 in McGaw Park.

Our Saturday afternoon cakewalk is always popular with children and adults. Thank you to all of our good members who donated approximately 30 cakes for this event. Our net proceeds from the cakewalk were \$111.73.

This year we also conducted a raffle which was an excellent addition to our activities. We are very grateful to the Pleasant Company of Middleton for their donation of a set of American Girl Collection hardcover books which was our first prize. Bob Langer handcrafted a lovely quilt rack and child's foot stool which he generously donated for our second and fourth prizes. Ellen Green designed and beautifully stitched an adorable Sunbonnet Sue doll quilt which was our third prize.

We are happy to announce that those generous donations enabled us to conduct a very successful raffle with ticket sale proceeds of \$389.00. Special thanks to our kind prize contributors, to those of you who sold your tickets, to those who purchased tickets and to our members who were in charge of the raffle.

The raffle winners were:

- 1st prize - Pleasant Co. books - Elaine Schaller, Fitchburg
- 2nd prize - Quilt Rack - Mary Kinney, Fitchburg
- 3rd prize - Doll Quilt - Gloria Evert, Fitchburg
- 4th prize - Foot Stool - Mary Wendt, Poynette

#### WE WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

Several new members were added to our membership roster during the "Old Fitchburg Days" event. We welcome all of you and hope you will enjoy being a member of the Historical Society and that you will become active participants. Joining us are:

Megan Backes  
5804 Ledgemont Ct.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711

Laverne & Betty Forest  
2273 Fitchburg Road  
Oregon, WI 53575

Philip & Gladys Gorman  
7615 Widgeon Way  
Madison, WI 53717

Susan Curtis Maron  
2785 Marledge St.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711

Patrick Palzkill  
2784 Lyman Lane  
Fitchburg, WI 53711

Raymond & Charlene Zier  
2702 Tower Hill Drive  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



# Fitchburg Historical Society



## FEBRUARY ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will be held on Sunday, February 13, 1994 at 1:30 p.m. in the Senior Center Dining Room on the lower level of the Fitchburg Community Center, 5510 East Lacy Rd.

Since our Community Center has a magnificent view of the exterior of our beautiful Wisconsin Capitol, I know you will all be interested in the extensive restoration of the interior of this historic architectural masterpiece. We have invited the project architect, Mr. Joe Sokal, to describe and show us the details of this tremendous project. His presentation will precede our annual business meeting.

Our business meeting will include elections to the Historical Society Board of Directors, renewal of memberships and discussion of the first reunion of Fitchburg country school, which will be held on Sunday, June 12, 1994 at the Community Center.

Refreshments will be served during the break between the speaker and the meeting.

We are delighted that members of the Oregon Historical Society have accepted our invitation to join us at this meeting.

We do hope you will all attend this important meeting. It would be wonderful if all of you would come, renew your membership and also bring a friend, relative or neighbor who also might be interested in preserving Fitchburg history by joining our great Fitchburg Historical Society.



## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

We value your membership in the Fitchburg Historical Society. As you know, yearly memberships are from February to February which makes our annual meeting the perfect time to renew. Enclosed with this newsletter is a membership form which we urge you to complete and bring to the February annual meeting. Additional forms and membership cards will be available at the meeting.

If you miss our annual meeting, please mail your renewal dues to our treasurer, Ellen Green, 5449 Irish Lane, Madison, WI 53711. Our membership dues remain the same --- \$5.00 - Individual, \$10.00 - Family and \$25.00 - Business.

Be sure to keep your addresses and telephone numbers up-to-date so that our next membership directory will be accurate.



## ELECTIONS PLANNED AT ANNUAL MEETING

The terms of the following Board of Directors expire in February: Janet Keenan, Ellen Green, Bill Stoneman and Kathleen Harty.

Janet Keenan and Ellen Green have indicated that they do not wish to seek re-election. Both of these members have faithfully served our organization for several years. They have always taken a very active role in everything in which they have been involved. We will miss their ideas and skills and we thank them for their many years of service.





FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY



#### BOOK PUBLICATION

We are all very proud of Tom Kinney's wonderful newly published book: Irish Settlers of Fitchburg, 1840-1860. If you have not seen this fine historical book, it is on sale for \$10.00 at the following locations:

Fitchburg City Hall, 2377 S. Fish Hatchery  
Fitchburg Community Center, 5510 E. Lacy Rd.  
Oregon Historical Society, 159 W. Lincoln Street, Oregon  
State Historical Society Museum, 30 N. Carroll St., Madison  
Kinney Residence, 5339 Irish Lane, Fitchburg.

Tom has gathered many wonderful pictures and historical facts as a basis for this quality historical book. The preface of the book, written by John O. Holzhueter of the State Historical Society states: "As for content, Irish Settlers of Fitchburg reaches well beyond the confines of its title to illuminate county-wide and statewide issues of interest---just as good local history should."

Tom has received acclaim for his work from many sources including Fitchburg Mayor Doug Morrisette, Dane County Supervisor Tom Clauder, Fitchburg Cable FACT's "Focus on Fitchburg" program, Dane County Cultural Affairs' Lynne Eich and many local historians.



#### DATES TO REMEMBER

February 21, 1994 - 7 p.m. - Historical Society Board of Directors Meeting - Swan Creek Room, Fitchburg Community Center.

June 12, 1994 - Fitchburg Country School Reunion



#### COUNTRY SCHOOL REUNION

We are planning a reunion of alumni of our ten former rural schools. Those schools are:

Lakeview - 1848-1930  
Syene - 1850-1952  
Oak Hall - 1850-1949  
Stoner - 1850-1938 & 1953-1964  
Prairie View - 1850-1937  
Swan Creek - 1855-1925  
Camp Badger - 1857-1964  
Fitchburg Center - 1860-1962  
Fish Hatchery (Dogtown) - 1860-1962  
Maple Corners - 1864-1964

The reunion will be held on Sunday, June 12, 1994 in the lower level (Stoner Prairie Dining Room) of the Fitchburg Community Center. If any of you have pictures taken at any of these schools which we could have on display at the reunion, it would be of great interest to us. Also, if you know individuals who attended these schools, we would like to get in touch with them to let them know our plans. Please call Kathleen Harty at 271-4276 if you would like to serve on a reunion committee and/or if you have stories or memorabilia from any of the schools.

# Fitchburg Historical Society



Do you remember box socials, spelldowns, Arbor Day, Play Day, Santa's Christmas visit and Professor Gordon's Spring Music Festival at the University Stock Pavilion? These are some of the many memories we hope to recall at the first Fitchburg Historical Society Country Schools' Reunion. We are planning this event for Sunday, June 12, 1994 at 1:00 p.m. at the Fitchburg Community Center, 5510 East Lacy Road, Fitchburg.

We hope that you and your family will plan to attend. We are anticipating that you may have pictures, school projects or other memorabilia which you might be willing to share with us. Please bring any interesting bits of country school history so we can recall our many great experiences.

You are welcome to bring your own lunch or to order a catered box lunch from us. Lunch will be about 1:30 and we will provide coffee and lemonade.

If you are unable to attend, please send us a letter to share with others.



\_\_\_\_ Sorry, I am unable to attend the Country Schools' Reunion.  
\_\_\_\_ I would like more information about becoming a member of the Fitchburg Historical Society.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

## RESERVATIONS

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I plan to attend the Fitchburg County Schools' Reunion  
\_\_\_\_ Total number with me (please list names on back).

Name of school attended \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I would like to reserve box lunches (turkey or roast beef sandwich, fruit salad, cookie) \$4.50 each.  
\_\_\_\_ number of roast beef  
\_\_\_\_ number of turkey

**PLEASE RETURN BY MAY 28TH TO: Mary Kinney  
5325 Irish Lane  
Madison, WI 53711**  
and enclose a check payable to the Fitchburg Historical Society for box lunch orders.



If someone you know might be interested in attending, please pass this information along to them; we are trying to reach as many former students as possible. We'd rather have someone contacted twice than not get the news to him or her at all. Feel free to duplicate this notice.

**NOTE TO CURRENT MEMBERS:** If you have not renewed your membership for the current year, please do so as soon as possible. Thank you.

If you have questions, please contact: Kay Harty (271-4276), Arlene Ace (271-3497) or Carole Kinney (271-1132)



**FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**  
5425 Irish Lane  
Madison, WI 53711



# Fitchburg Historical Society



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Mann House

SEPT. 1994

## SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING

Our next general meeting will be held Wednesday evening, September 28, 1994 at 7 p.m. in the downstairs Swan Creek Craft Room of the Fitchburg Community Center, 5510 East Lacy Road.

Our speaker will be Belleville resident, Roger Hillebrand, who will show and discuss his marvelous collection of historic American flags. We hope you will all come to see and hear about these interesting symbols of history.

## COUNTRY SCHOOL REUNION

Our first joint Country School Reunion was held on Sunday afternoon, June 12, 1994 at the Fitchburg Community Center. Approximately 165 former Fitchburg students, teachers and their families attended. The program included a box lunch, introductions, school stories of memorable events, sharing of school memorabilia and a Richardson Bus tour of the ten former country school sites. The bus tour was narrated by Bill and Tom Kinney. The Gorman family graciously opened their restored Fish Hatchery School for the focal point of the bus tour. Everyone enjoyed visiting with former schoolmates and neighbors.

Our Historical Society has compiled a memento notebook for each of our ten country schools. We were able to add some interesting memos as a result of our reunion. Connie Darling videotaped the entire reunion which many of you probably viewed on the Fitchburg FACT channel.

## DONATIONS RECEIVED BY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Gordon Vroman donated a school bell which we were happy to use at the reunion.

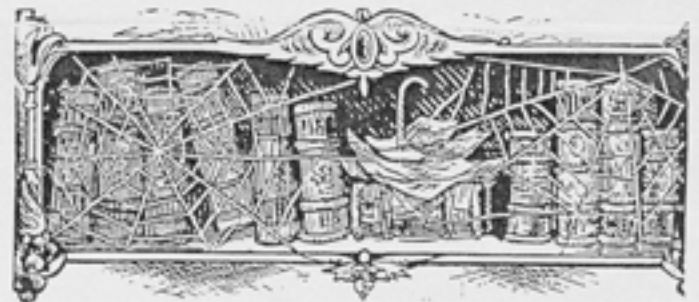
Douglas Stebbins is donating the teacher's desk from the Fitchburg Center School.

Ray and Doris Kluever have given up a lovely 8 x 10 black and white framed photograph of the main street of old Fitchburg.

We are happy to receive donations which are of historical significance to Fitchburg. Cash donations are also welcome and are much appreciated by the Historical Society. We hope that someday we will have an appropriate space to display all donated historic items.

## ANNUAL MEETING APPROACHING

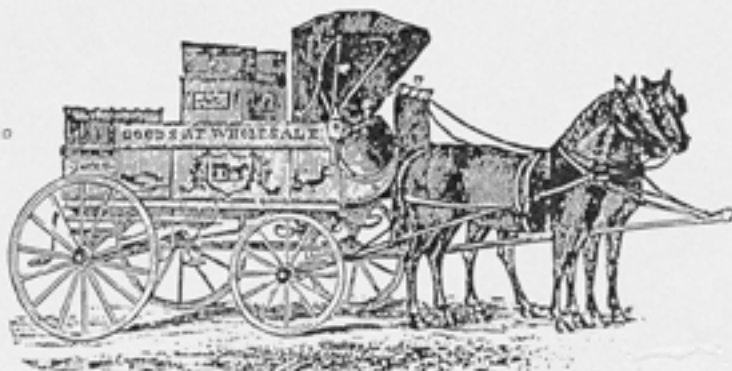
The annual meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will be held at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, February 12, 1995 in the Fitchburg Community Center. As you know, yearly memberships are from February to February which makes our annual meeting the perfect time to renew. Please encourage others to join the Fitchburg Historical Society. We know there are many people who could greatly assist us in preserving Fitchburg history.



## PLACES OF INTEREST

State Historical Museum - Capitol Square  
30 N. Carroll St.  
Madison, WI 53707-2707  
Hours: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Tues.-Sat.  
noon - 5 p.m. Sunday (closed Mon.)

Pendarvis  
114 Shake Rag St.  
Mineral Point, WI 53565  
Hours: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. daily thru  
October 31, 1994.  
Admission - \$5.00 adult and \$2.00 child  
(non-members)







FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

5425 Irish Lane  
Fitchburg, WI 53711





"A town without an understanding of its history is no longer a community and has no soul. Lacking an awareness of its past, a town can neither appreciate its present nor prepare for its future." An excerpt from Charles E. Twining's review of "Settlement and Survival: Building Towns in the Chippewa Valley". Reviewed in Wisconsin Magazine of History, Vol. 79, No. 1, Autumn 1995, page 65.

## The Official Newsletter of the Fitchburg Historical Society

January 1996

### FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK TOP

The new year is upon us. I hope you all had a joyous holiday season. It is once again time to plan the activities of the Fitchburg Historical Society for the upcoming year. Our general meeting will be on February 11th at 1:30 pm in the lower level dining room of the Fitchburg Community Room. This will be the Annual Meeting. Dues for the new year will be payable at that time. We will have four board of director terms expiring. Would you consider becoming a board member? We will be finalizing plans for a fund raising card party to be held on March 11th. Our program on February 11th will feature Mary Jane Foote who will show slides and talk about the Circus World Museum. Mark the date on your calendar and bring a friend with you. Also on the agenda for our Annual Meeting will be program decisions for the year and displays for the show case. Come with ideas, please.

### 1995

Our first program in the past year consisted of Dana Duppler showing slides and speaking about the work he is doing restoring buildings from the lead mining region of southwest Wisconsin. The FHS would still like to sponsor a bus trip to view his work in person. At our February meeting we will be taking names of people interested in this trip.

Our second program, held on September 24, featured Tim and Karen White from the town of Springdale. They entertained us with 3D slides made from the historic stereoscopic views of Wisconsin Dells

done by H. H. Bennett shortly after the Civil War.

On November 5th the Dane County Historical Society used the council chamber of the Community Center to sponsor a meeting with the authors of the upcoming book on the History of Dane County, Allen Ruff and Tracy Will. The last book on this subject was published in 1906. The DCHS is sponsoring this book as its major project commemorating the 150th anniversary of Wisconsin statehood. The Fitchburg Historical Society served as co-hosts for this meeting.

### 1996

On February 16th Leopold School is having a series of 45 minute programs for their students. The series is centered around the history of Wisconsin. The Fitchburg Historical Society has been asked to present one or more of the programs. At this time we are planning on presenting a program about the one room schools that disappeared from the scene in the early 1960's. A program showing the transition of a rural community to a rural/ city environment is also being planned. If you are willing to help with either of these programs please call me at 845-7594.

### ITEMS FROM MY MAILBOX

From the ANCIENT EARTHWORKS SOCIETY..Public meeting to be held in the downstairs rooms at the Fitchburg Community center on Wednesday, January 17, 1996. Professor Jim Scherz will discuss Ancient Fitchburg, Pre-Columbian sites in



Fitchburg and Dane County. The meeting is scheduled for 7:30 P.M. and members of the Fitchburg Historical Society are encouraged to attend.

From the **WISCONSIN AVIATION HALL OF FAME, INC.**... a 200 page, coffee-table style book is being prepared to chronicle the development of aviation in the state of Wisconsin. A call has been put out for historical material related to aviation in our area. If you have information useful to the compilers of this book contact me and I will direct you to the publishing representative. Any information collected but not used in the book will be kept in the Aviation Hall of Fame's archives.

The **MOUNT HOREB HISTORICAL SOCIETY** has included us on their mailing list for their newsletter. They have an interesting newsletter and are doing a great job of preserving the history of the area in written form, pictures, and artifacts from local homes and businesses. I am including an excerpt from their latest issue. They have an excellent museum and it is well worth a visit. The winter hours for the museum are the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. It is located on the top floors of the municipal building in Mount Horeb and is equipped with an elevator.

#### The Real Value of "Old Stuff"

In recent times we have witnessed an increase in the values placed on old or collectible goods. Just like any market, these values

go up or down, or simply level off, depending on the latest fad. Collectors of old stuff haunt auctions, garage sales, and their neighbors' attics. Once it is acquired, old stuff may become an adornment for a tavern wall, be hung in a kitchen, used as storage for books, or simply placed among other stuff like it in a curio cabinet. Old or collectible goods are often sought for their market value alone.

Taken out of their original settings, objects sadly lose their true value - that is, their history. A quilt stitched from scraps from a local milliner's shop becomes just a wall hanging, a box of photos from a neighborhood's joyous occasion fades into a collection of nameless faces and places, and scrapbooks, letters and diaries go to landfill.

It is the job of local historical societies to see to it that not all history is treated with such irreverence.

Since 1975 the Mt. Horeb Area Historical Society has campaigned to collect and preserve not only the things of everyday life, but their stories as well. In 1983, realizing that the most important among these every-day objects, those locally made, were fast disappearing from their original settings, the Society began rescuing such items, before their stories were separated from them. This new direction was very timely, as a great deal of real-value history has been saved.

One may criticize, "Are these items better off on the wall of Chicago apartment or in the storage rooms of the Society?" I would like to believe they are better off in Mount Horeb. Once these items find their way to the Society's collections, they are far from neglected. In the past four years alone such items from the Society's collections have been featured in several publications and traveling or local exhibits, used by countless researchers, and used as models for reproductions at other museums. Importantly, when used in this manner, the stories of these items tell the world about the people of the Mount Horeb area, their interests, their talent, their mores, their reflection on the times in which they live - their true history.

This is the true value of saving "old stuff".

Brian J. Bigler, President, Mt. Horeb Historical Society

The attached membership renewal form can be brought with you to the annual meeting or can be sent to:

Fitchburg Historical Society  
Janet Maves, Treasurer  
5491 Irish Lane  
Fitchburg, WI 53711

#### FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

#### DUES FOR ONE YEAR...

Junior Historian (under 18)	\$2.00
Individual	\$5.00
Family	\$10.00
Business/ Professional	\$50.00



## The Official Newsletter of the Fitchburg Historical Society May 1996

### From the President

Once again I come to you with news of the Fitchburg Historical Society events. Our program for the coming year will hopefully bring us closer together as a group. We are looking for things to do to bring more members into an active role of the Society. Our next program for the year will be a summer picnic at Greenfield Park to be held on Sunday, June 23rd at 1:00 P.M. The theme for the day will be "Getting To Know You". In October we are planning a Halloween party. We hope to include traditional Halloween activities such as dunking for apples, costume contest, and spooky stories. We will end the festivities with a chili supper. This will be held on Sunday October 20th at the Fitchburg Community Center. Don't miss it! The annual meeting for the Society will be held on February 2, 1997 with the program to be announced later. Please mark your calendars.

In June there will be an opportunity to help at the Fitchburg Days celebration. This event will be held at McKee Farms Park the last weekend in June. The organizers of the event have asked us to sponsor a table exhibit showing some of Fitchburg's past. Anyone willing to help with this project or willing to spend an hour or two at the exhibit table should contact Carole Kinney. In September the Ag commission of Fitchburg is sponsoring a Harvest Days celebration at Eplegarden Farms. Again we have been asked to contribute our time and talents to the occasion. We are looking for people to share hobbies or crafts that reflect the early days of Fitchburg. This could include a quilting demonstration, whittling, food preservation or anything else you might think of interest to today's young people and their parents.

### REMINDER

Please check the mailing label on this newsletter. If there is a check by your name it means we do not have any record of your dues for the year 1996. If we are in error please inform us. Unless we hear from you this will be the last newsletter you will receive. Dues can be sent to:

The Fitchburg Historical Society  
c/o Janet Maves  
5491 Irish Lane  
Fitchburg, WI 53711

Junior Historian (under 18)	\$2.00
Individual	\$5.00
Family	\$10.00
Business/Professionals	\$50.00

If you were not able to attend the February 11th Annual Meeting you missed the opportunity to meet Sunshine the clown. Sunshine presided over the meeting in the absence of our president, Winnie Lacy. Sunshine introduced the speaker for the afternoon, Mary Jane Foote, who showed a video of the Circus World Museum in Baraboo. We nibbled on peanuts and popcorn while the film was shown. On March 10th 72 people joined us for the card party which was held as our annual fund raiser. Euchre and 500 were played. We ended the afternoon with cake and ice cream. Our thanks to those who contributed the many fine cakes.



We are contemplating indexing the book *Fitchburg, A History* published by Connie Darling and Jean O'Brien during the bicentennial year of 1976. This would be a helpful adjunct to the book especially for libraries. We would have a copy of the index in our own archives and it could be made available to people who have purchased the book. Watch for further news on this project.

Another project to watch for is a wall hanging being done by the art students of Stoner Prairie School. It is an intergenerational project combining the efforts of the students and the seniors of Fitchburg. The theme of the mural is the history and growth of Fitchburg. Members of the Crafty Crew from the Senior Center are helping with the project and Mary Kinney and Kay Harty of the Historical Society are assisting them.

Bill Stoneman and Winnie Lacy each presented a program to the students at Leopold School during their Wisconsin History Month. Bill spoke about the transition of a rural township to a city and Winnie presented an overview of what it was like to attend a one room school. Other presenters during that day were a folk singer, Alice in Dairyland, Miss Wisconsin, The Cripple Creek Cloggers, an American Indian and a gentleman from the DNR with a large snake. It was an interesting day to say the least.

I hope you will all be able to join us for the activities of 1996. Let us join together to keep Fitchburg's past alive in the future.



Fitchburg, WI 53711

FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY



# Fitchburg Historical Society



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Main House

June 1996

Summer is close at hand and it is time to remind you of the Fitchburg Historical Society's June meeting. We are planning a picnic in the park, Greenfield that is, on Sunday June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Greenfield Park is located south of Irish Lane near the Syene Road intersection. The theme of the picnic is "Getting to know you" and we do want to get to know each other. The festivities will start at 1:00 p.m. with a pot luck lunch. Please bring a dish to pass. Each family will need to bring their own table service. We will provide soft drinks and cups. After our lunch we will swap stories and share some entertainment aimed at getting to know each other. If you have articles or newspaper stories that connect to Fitchburg which you would like to share please bring them along. Photocopied newspaper articles are always a welcome addition to our archives.

Next year will be the 10th anniversary of the Fitchburg Historical Society and we would like to plan some programs that will bring our organization to the attention of residents and former residents of Fitchburg. To do this we will need help from our members in the forms of ideas and effort.

One of the events that will put our organization on display soon will be the upcoming O' Fitchburg Days to be held in McKee Farms Park the last weekend of June. The sponsors of the festival have provided a table for us and have asked us to exhibit some of the memorabilia from our archives and some of the things that our organization has done in the past ten years. It will be a great opportunity to bring attention to our group. Carole Kinney will need people willing to sit at the table for an hour or two during the days of the celebration. We will be planning on having someone at our table between the hours of 1 and 6 p.m. both days. Please volunteer for a specific time. If you are unable to be at the picnic on Sunday June 23<sup>rd</sup> and would like to volunteer for the weekend of June 29 and 30th please call Carole at 271-1132. Sitting at the table will also give our members an opportunity to review some of the things we have done.

We will be looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. If you know someone who wants to join us, even just for the day, feel free to bring them along.





# Fitchburg Historical Society



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Mann House

August 1996

## JUNE MEETING

The few hearty souls who braved the weather on June 23rd for our pot luck picnic meeting were rewarded with a fine meal. The weather was hot and rain threatened but we had many delicious salads to accompany our hot dogs and chips. Lemon pie (delicious), apple pie (delicious), and brownies (delicious) rounded out the meal. The rain stayed away until our meal and business meeting was finished. Anna Fox had asked to be replaced as Historian. Anna has kept a scrapbook of our activities since our organizational meeting in February of 1987. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Anna for a job well done. Ellen Green has graciously agreed to take on the responsibility. Thank you, Ellen. If anyone has pictures or articles to be placed in the scrapbook they can be forwarded to Ellen at her Irish Lane home. Plans were finalized for staffing the display table at O'Fitchburg days on June 29th and 30th. LaVerne and Betty Forest were present to explain the upcoming Fitchburg Fall Farm Festival (FFFF) to be held at Eplegaard in September. There will be hay rides, cider making, barn dancing and exhibits. The FHS discussed the possibility of setting up a "photo studio" to take Polaroid snapshots of people in costume or children as farm animals. The meeting adjourned just in time for people to get to their cars before the clouds opened up and the rains came.

## FALL MEETING

Don't forget to mark October 20th on your calendar. This is the date for the fall general meeting. It will be a Halloween party at the Community Center. You are encouraged to bring young people with you. Typical Halloween entertainment will be featured. Come in costume if you wish. Details will come in a mailing near to the date of the party.

## ANNUAL MEETING

In February of 1997 the Fitchburg Historical Society will be 10 years old. We would like to have a memorable meeting to mark the occasion. The date has been set for February 2, 1997 in the large meeting room of the Community Center. Joan Severa, a Fitchburg resident and a former costume curator for the State Historical Museum will present a program regarding clothing styles through the ages. Joan is the author of the book "Dressed for the Photographer: Ordinary Americans and Fashion". Mark the date on your calendar now and be prepared for an interesting program. This will be the annual meeting and guests will be welcome.

FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



#### FITCHBURG FALL FARM FESTIVAL

The FFFF will be held September 14th and 15th at Vern and Betty Forest's Eplegaarden, 2273 Fitchburg Road. The festival is sponsored by the Fitchburg Agricultural and Rural Affairs Commission to foster a greater understanding between the rural and urban communities of Fitchburg. The FHS will be taking Polaroid pictures of children as farm animals and adults as "Fitchburg Gothic". We need volunteers to help on those days. This will be a good opportunity for members who have not been involved in other projects to take an active part in our organization. Please call me at my home phone to arrange a convenient time for you to help out. If I am not home to receive your call you can leave your name and telephone number on my answering machine (845-7594).



#### BOOK INDEX

We are still in need of someone to check the index for the book "Fitchburg: A History" which was published in the bi-centennial year of 1976. Index cards have been made out but a final editing will be necessary before a printed list can be made. An index will make this an excellent reference work for future years. This project can be worked on in your own home at your own pace. Please call Winnie Lacy at 845-7594 if you are willing to help with this project.





OCTOBER 1996

### Local Happenings

The weekend of September 14 and 15 was a very busy time at Eplegaard Orchard on Fitchburg Road. The Forest's hosted the first Fitchburg Fall Farm Festival sponsored by the Rural Affairs Commission. Judging by the number of people who attended it was a huge success. Saturday was cloudy, dreary and threatened rain but the people came anyway. At the main farm buildings small animals were exhibited, cider presses were available for people to make their own cider. A film of the Blaney Farm operations of the seed corn business was shown. A hand made miniature baler was in operation with the resulting miniature bales for sale. A corn sheller was available along with a large supply of ear corn. This was a big attraction for many of the children who shelled the corn and then fed it to the animals. Farm wagons took people on a trip to the orchard to pick their own apples and on to a field where volunteers were demonstrating various farm jobs. A corn binder was used to make corn shocks, a tractor pulled a small plow to turn the earth, and a steam driven threshing machine was put to work. On Sunday, which was better weather-wise, a group of spinners plied their trade with exhibits of the various types and sizes of spinning gear. On both days the Fitchburg Historical Society had a table of information with a few documents and pictures from our archives. The big attraction for the FHS though was a set of hand drawn caricatures, one of a horse, one of a cow and one of "Fitchburg Gothic". The faces were cut out of each of the pictures and children (and some adults) had their pictures taken for one dollar. Those members of the Society who volunteered to help had an enjoyable time. I want to express my thanks to Jan Maves, Laurie Fleming, Bill and Carole Kinney, Mary and Cory Wendt. Cory acted as the "official" photographer.



The October meeting for FHS will be Sunday October 20 at 2 P.M. in the Community Center. Plans are underway for a Halloween party. This will be the final notice that will be sent. Be sure to come and bring children, grandchildren or neighbors children. What is a Halloween party without children. Costumes are optional.

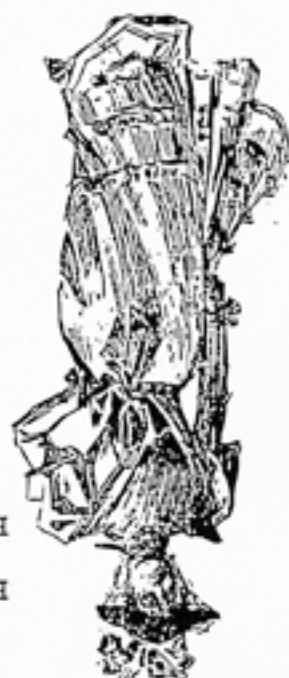
We hope to have a new display in our case by the time of the Halloween Party. It will be based on "Music in the Home". If you have anything you would like added to the display please call me at 845-7594.

A reminder: Next year will be the 10th anniversary for the Fitchburg Historical Society. We would like to make it a banner year. We will start the year with our annual meeting on February 2nd featuring Joan Severa. We will also be electing four members for the Board of Directors. If you are contacted to serve in this position please give it positive thought.

It is with sadness that I report the death of two of our members. Katherine Penn died on August 17. Katherine was born in the "village" of Fitchburg, on Wendt Road where her father was station master for the Illinois Central RR. Evelyn Blaney died on September 23. Evelyn and her husband Burt seldom if ever met. Both will be missed. We extend our sympathy to their families.



FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Fitchburg, WI 53711



### AREA HAPPENINGS

The Mount Horeb Area Museum opened on September 22nd. The Mount Horeb Historical Society has a large collection of artifacts from the area. At present turn of the century photos of the Mount Horeb area taken by bicycle store owner Alva Webber are featured. Complimenting the photos are some of the actual items which are pictured. The museum is open 12 PM-4 PM Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays and is located at 100 South Second Street.



By the time you receive this newsletter Mount Vernon will have celebrated its 150th anniversary. In conjunction with its celebration they have published an updated history book titled: MOUNT VERNON WISCONSIN 1846-1996 150 YEARS DOWN BY THE OLD MILL STREAM. The FHS has a copy of this book in its library if you care to borrow it.

Olbrich Gardens will be celebrating their 5th anniversary with a week long series of events November 2 - 6. Admission to the Conservatory will be free to all during that week.

Carroll College in Waukesha has opened an Institute for Civil War Studies. They offer educational and enrichment programs about the Civil War with special emphasis on Wisconsin's participation. Information on their Certificate Program in Civil War Studies is on file at the FHS.

A barn preservation seminar will be held at Spring Green on November 2nd. Anyone contemplating restoring a barn is welcome to attend. Information can be obtained from Steve or Aimee Gauger at 427-8276.

### WISCONSIN STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Wisconsin Council for Local History Convention will be held Oct. 25 and 26. A Behind the Scenes Tour of the Library is featured on Friday afternoon. A full day of activities including a box lunch social is scheduled for Saturday. Registration is \$6.00. A registration form is available at the FHS.



The State Historical Society of Wisconsin is preparing for the sesquicentennial celebration of Wisconsin's statehood in 1998. One of the projects planned in conjunction with Wisconsin Public Television is a series of programs compiled from interviews with local historians. If any member would like an application blank to participate in this program please call me at 845-75494.





# Fitchburg Historical Society



Newsletter of the Fitchburg Historical Society      January, 1997

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Another year has arrived and as I mentioned in my previous notes to you it is an anniversary year for the Fitchburg Historical Society. Ten years ago our fledging organization took flight. Hopefully we can make this year a banner year. In looking back through the 10 years we have been in existence many events come to mind. We have had a succession of interesting programs and events. Some have been a smashing success. Others have not fared so well. We have moved from having our meetings at the town hall on Fish Hatchery Road to having our meetings at the new community center on Lacy Road. We have had picnics in the park, a tour of a restored home and even a meeting in a pioneer cemetery. We were in costume for the opening of the community center, we hosted a quilt show and who can forget the amazing success of the one room schools reunion. We have lost some faithful members through death. Somewhere along the line other members have dropped from our roster. Wouldn't it be nice if we could all make an effort to ask one former member to return to our ranks. Or encourage new people to join. The coming year of 1998 marks the sesquicentennial of the state of Wisconsin. The State Historical Society is sponsoring many events for the occasion and it would be a wonderful opportunity for the Fitchburg Historical Society to rejuvenate itself and become a vital, visible Fitchburg organization.

## ANNUAL MEETING

Our annual meeting will take place on Sunday afternoon, February 2nd in the large meeting hall on the upper level of the Community Center. Our speaker for the day is to be Joan Severa. Joan is a Fitchburg resident, has been the costume curator for the State Historical Society and is the author of the book "Dressed For The Photographer". It will be an interesting program. Please mark your calendar now and plan to attend. Bring a friend, neighbor or prospective member along to enjoy the afternoon. Annual Meeting also means an election. We have a board of directors consisting of twelve members. Four members are elected each year for a term of three years. This year one member whose term does not expire had to resign due to conflicts in his schedule. That means we will have five vacancies on the board. Please consider taking a stint as a board member. The pay is low but the satisfaction is great. Dues also are to be paid at this time. If you care to take care of this before the meeting a renewal form is attached. Our treasurer will have membership cards at the meeting.

## LOCAL HISTORY MEETING

On August 9, 1997 the Local History meeting will be held at the Community Center. The meeting is sponsored by the State Historical Society and each local society must take its turn at being host. This year is our turn. Hopefully you will answer the call and help us be good hosts for this meeting.



FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Fitchburg, WI 53711





# Fitchburg Historical Society



HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

## The Official Newsletter of the Fitchburg Historical Society March 1997

### ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting was held on February 2nd with over 50 members and guests present. The featured speaker was Joan Severa author of the book, **DRESSED FOR THE PHOTOGRAPHER**. It was a delightful presentation and we are grateful to Joan for agreeing to add us to her crowded schedule.

On the agenda for the meeting was the annual election of board members. The Board of Directors consists of twelve members, each serving a three year term. Four members are elected each year. Bill Stoneman, Mary Kinney and Janet Maves agreed to serve another three year term. Richard Blaney was elected to fill the other post for this year. Betty Osmundsen Brantmeyer agreed to fill in the unexpired term of Marc Jones. In addition to those named above the board consists of Patricia Delker, Ed O'Brien, Bill Redden, Eric Amlie, Carole Kinney, Connie Darling, and Winnie Lacy. Our sincere thanks to Kathleen Harty for long and dedicated service as a board member. Kay thought it was time to direct her energies to other commitments on her calendar. We will miss her direct input at our meetings. **THANK YOU, KAY.**

Also on the agenda at the February meeting was the announcement of the August meeting of the Capitol Region of the Wisconsin Council for Local History. The Fitchburg Historical Society is slated to be the host for this year's meeting. It is scheduled for Saturday, August 9th at the Community Center. The local celebration, O'Fitchburg Days, is scheduled at McKee Farms Park over the same weekend. This years celebration will highlight 150 years of Fitchburg's existence. The FHS has been asked to take an active part in the festivities. This will mean members helping staff the FHS's display over the four day run of the festival and

helping with the Local History meeting. Please respond in the affirmative when you are approached by a committee chairman and asked to help.

### FAMILY HISTORIES

Has anyone in your family written a history of your family? If not, have you ever considered writing one? The FHS would like a copy of any family history to add to the collection that has been started for our archives. Anecdotes and remembrances would also be a valuable addition to our files. This does not have to be a published history. Typewritten, photo-copied, hand written are all acceptable.



### ACQUISITIONS

The FHS is also interested in receiving printed materials that would help people who might be doing research in our archives. We recently received a copy of the 1911 Plat Book of Dane County from Jane Byrne. Jane is the daughter of Tom and Ruby Byrne whose farm is now the location of Byrnewood. We are very grateful to Jane for her donation. On our "wish list" are plat books and county history books. We are also looking for a copy of a book published by John Drury in the late 1950s titled "This Is Dane County". The book contains aerial views of all the farms in Dane County at that time. It would be a most interesting addition to our collection.

Looking to the future when we may have more space to call our own the need for other items will be arising. If



we are to be able to make our archives available to people to do research it would be nice to have a computer and perhaps a copy machine. Often times articles of this sort are available from commercial establishments who are upgrading their own equipment. Please keep us in mind if news of anything available comes to you.

#### DISPLAY CASE

The display case at the Community Center should be changed before the August meetings. It would be fitting to have a display marking Fitchburg's 150 year history. It is always a fun experience to work on the case. Several people toss ideas about and it seems to raise like yeast in bread dough. Ideas and participants are welcome. Call Winnie Lacy at 845-7594 to volunteer.

#### SPEAKERS

Occasionally a request comes to the Historical Society for someone to speak to children about the history of Fitchburg or about things from the past. The requests usually come from teachers or scout leaders. It would be nice to have a list of people who would be

willing to talk to these groups. If you have topics you would like to speak on or have items of interest to share with these young people we would like to hear from you. Talks would probably be limited to 30 to 45 minutes. A list of people available and willing to do this would make it much easier to contact the proper person when the occasion arises. Please let me know what you can do to help.

#### STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Wisconsin State Historical Society has sent us membership applications. As a member of the FHS you are automatically an affiliate member of the WSHS. This entitles you to a 10% on ticket prices at the various historical sites operated by the WSHS. You can upgrade your affiliate membership to full membership at several level; individual, family, etc.. Benefits of full membership include a 50% discount to site, a 10% discount in gift shops, and a subscription to WSHS magazine and newsletters. Our local society receives a \$5.00 rebate for each member who joins the WSHS as a full member. Application blanks are available from Winnie Lacy.



Fitchburg, WI 53711

FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY





JULY 1997

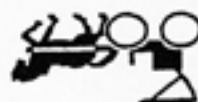
### ST. MARY'S CEMETERY

The Fitchburg Historical Society in conjunction with Holy Mother of Consolation Catholic Church of Oregon and the Oakhill Correctional Institution is in the process of marking the site of the original St. Mary's Catholic Church and cemetery in Fitchburg. The church was originally built in Section 35 of Fitchburg in 1856. In 1886 the parishioners decided to build a larger church in the village of Oregon. The new church was dedicated in 1887. In 1898 lots were sold in the new cemetery adjacent to the village cemetery on Main Street in Oregon. Some of the bodies buried in the original cemetery were moved to the new location in Oregon. Other bodies were moved to the Catholic cemetery in Madison. However some of the bodies and tombstones remained in the original cemetery. Through the years the cemetery fell into a sorry state of disrepair. Sometime around 1970 the grounds were cleared of broken tombstones and brush and the land was leveled. For one year the two acre parcel was planted with corn. Since that time the area has been sown with grass seed and kept mowed by residents at the Oakhill Correctional Institution. It is appropriate to have the area marked as the site of a pioneer church and its remaining cemetery. This is about to happen. Plans include a wooden sign visible from the road marking the site. A large boulder, hopefully a native grown Fitchburg boulder, will be placed farther back from the road. Attached to the boulder will be a bronze plaque which will briefly tell the story of the church and cemetery. It is possible we will be able to have a picture of the original church on the plaque. The area around the sign and the boulder will be landscaped. If all goes as planned we will also be able to have access from Highway M onto the property so people can safely stop to read the story. The sign will be made in the workshop at Oakhill and the landscaping will be done by the Horticulture class at the institution.

This is part of their policy of community service. The Fitchburg Historical Society is grateful to Warden Catherine Farrey, to Father Tony Schumacher and to Vi Brickner of HMC for their cooperation. We will possibly be getting a boulder from the construction site at Hatchery Hill on Fish Hatchery Road. We are looking for an attractive stone large enough to hold the plaque and to be seen from the road.

### AUGUST DOINGS

The weekend of August 9th promises to be a busy weekend for the FHS. We will be hosting the Capital Region meeting of the Wisconsin Council for Local History. This meeting will be held at the Community Center with registration and coffee at 8:30. The morning program consists of a welcome by Mayor Morrisette, The Regional Roundtable discussion, and a short business meeting. After the business meeting a bus tour of historic sites in Fitchburg, including lunch at Quivey's Grove. After the bus tour the group plans to return to McKee Farms Parks where they will be entertained by the Irish singers, dancers and bands that are scheduled to perform at O'Fitchburg Days that afternoon. The FHS hopes to have an interesting display under the tent at O'Fitchburg Days. We want to show the growth that has taken place in Fitchburg over the past 150 years. The display will be open on Saturday and Sunday from noon to late afternoon. Members are encouraged to attend one or both of the activities. Please be willing to help as host or hostesses at the Local History Meeting or to help staff the booth at the park. Bill Reddan and Joy Anderson are chairing the Local History Meeting. Call Bill at 835-5927 for further information. Call Winnie Lacy, 845-7594, to offer your services at the park. To register for the Local History Meeting contact Jim Severa at 5806 Pembroke Drive, Madison, 53711. Registration is \$15.00 and should be made before August 2nd.



### ACQUISITIONS

Several donations have been received since our last newsletter. Joyce Guetzke Snell has answered our call for a copy of the book "THIS IS DANE COUNTY". The book originally belonged to her father who farmed on Fish Hatchery Road. Along with the book was receipt for the purchase of the book. Joyce also donated a Dane County Plat Book from 1958. She also gave us a page from the 1873 plat book which shows Fitchburg. The page had at one time been framed. Finally she contributed a small autograph album with poems from people in the Verona, Springdale, and Paoli area which had been in the house on Fish Hatchery Road when her parents moved into it. Robert Barry has donated several items from his mother's family. Included in the documents are several probate items and a John Deere notebook from the 1800s which contains a list of wedding gifts received by Bob's great grandparents. Bob also donated a framed picture of St. Mary's church and parsonage. Phil Fox has donated a copy of his book; "The Fox Family of Kilcoursey". We are grateful to Joyce, Bob and Phil for their thoughtfulness and generosity.

### PICTURE PROJECT

Many of you remember the picture project of February 1990. People brought in pictures of interest to the history of Fitchburg. Slides were taken of the pictures and the people were able to take their photos home with them. Since then several other slide collections have been acquired and we

are now in the process of indexing them all and putting some of them on a video tape. Some of the slides taken that day are not identified. They will be available at our table at O'Fitchburg Days for people to help with the identification. Be sure to stop by and see if you can help. This might be a good time to remind members to be on the lookout for any pictures or written works that could be added to our archives. Our archives are a good place to save items of an earlier Fitchburg for future generations.

### LOOKING FOR WRITERS

The Fitchburg Historical Society has been approached by the new editor of the Fitchburg Star looking for someone to write a column about history for the paper once a month. This would be a great way to gain some exposure in the community. The column does not have to be written by the same person each month. We are asking for volunteers to do the actual writing. If you have a particular expertise in some area of Fitchburg or would like to research something off the list of possible topics now is the time to come forward. Remember; "History is yesterday, today and tomorrow". You do not have to write about something from 100 years ago.







HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

OCTOBER 1997

### NOVEMBER MEETING

Mark your calendars for the November meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society. Nicolette Bromberg, Curator of Visual Materials at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin will be our speaker. Her topic will be Preserving Treasured Family Photos. We also hope to be able to have a visual report on the St. Mary Cemetery on Highway M. The meeting is scheduled for November 30th from 1 to 4 p.m. in the lower level of the Fitchburg Community Center. Light refreshments will be served. NOTE: This will be the only reminder you will receive of this meeting. Be sure to attend and feel free to bring a guest or two along with you.

### CEMETERY PROJECT

Work continues on the St. Mary Cemetery project. The personnel at Oakhill Correctional Institute have finished the sign marking the site of the old church and the remaining cemetery. It is similar to the sign marking the entrance to the Oakhill Institute. Holy Mother of Consolation and the FHS continue to work on finding an appropriate boulder which will hold a bronze plaque marking the location. Landscaping and pathways are envisioned for a future time.

### FAMILY HISTORIES

We are still asking people to write a short history of their family and its connection to Fitchburg. This does not have to be a genealogy. It can consist of anecdotes about when, how and why the family lived in Fitchburg. It also does not have to be about early settlers. People moved into Fitchburg from 1837 to the present. Some day the present will be "back then". We have developed a short list of prompts to help you do this. Why not try to spend a quiet afternoon and see what you can put on paper. It will be a fun project. Take the prompts and fill in with personalities and color; i.e. How many people in each family. What type of life did they lead in Fitchburg. Any tragedies? Any humorous incidents? Where did they go

to school? Add whatever else is pertinent to your family. Each family will have a different view of their background. They all will be interesting. The completed story will be filed in the local history/family stories section of our archives.

#### PROMPTS:

Who are the earliest ancestors you remember hearing about? Where was their homeland and why did they leave? By what means did they travel? When did they settle in Fitchburg? What was their occupation once they arrived in Fitchburg?



### AUGUST AFFAIRS

The weekend of August 9th proved to be a busy time for several members of the Fitchburg Historical Society. We were the host chapter for the annual meeting of the Local History Council of the State Historical Society. The committee in charge of arranging the meeting did a wonderful job. People who attended had nothing but praise for the program. Thanks to Bill Redden, Joy Anderson and all the others who helped. The same weekend was the annual O'Fitchburg Days celebration at McKee Farms Park. The FHS had a table of information set up in the community tent. This year the weather cooperated and attendance was up from last year. Thank you to Arlene Ace and Doris Warren for their help. The Economic Development office of Fitchburg gifted us with three sesquicentennial cups. One is for our archives and the other two were to be raffled at the O'Fitchburg Days celebration. The mugs were won by John Markwardt and Lara Waters. The Fitchburg Fall Farm Festival was held on the weekend of September 13th. The FHS did not have a display this year. We

have been informed next year the Festival will take place on September 12 and 13. The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Commission would like us to add it to our schedule.



OAHS

The Oregon Area Historical Society has applied for and been awarded a grant from the Wisconsin Sesquicentennial Commission. They plan to use their grant money to help finance a year long project titled "Making History Come Alive: Immigrants to Internet". The Fitchburg Historical Society has been asked to help research some of the early Fitchburg schools which are now included in the Oregon School District. They have extended an invitation to us to join in any of the celebrations in which we are interested. This would include a bus tour, a performance by folk singer David Drake, a video being made in conjunction with the 4th grade school children, significant documents to be put on a CD ROM for use on the computer network, a 1920s simulated high school class room to be set up at the Oregon Area Senior Center and a concert in the park accompanied by an ice cream social. They have set up a wonderful program and I am sure we will find ways to help them with their research.

## FITCHBURG A HISTORY

We have received several inquiries about purchasing copies of the Fitchburg history book published in 1976 by the Bi-Centennial committee with Connie Darling and Jean O'Brien at the helm. There are no longer any new copies for sale and reprinting the book is not possible. If anyone knows of used books available for purchase please let it be known.

## PICTURE DAY UPDATE

We are still trying to identify four pictures from the 1990 Picture Day event held by the FHS. Two views of a home and family on what is now Lacy Road remain unidentified. The pictures seems to have been taken about 1890 and includes a father, mother and seven children ranging in age from about seven to seventeen. A second view of the same family includes the girls playing croquet. The third picture is simply a house, possibly 1930 vintage, with a down spout running at an angle between first and second floor. The last picture is of a man driving a mule pulling a buggy. It is hard to put even an approximate date on this picture, possibly turn of the century. If any of these pictures sound familiar to you please call Winnie Lacy at 845-7594 with the identification. We would like to have as many positive identification of the slides as possible. We have hopes of converting the slides to a video tape for ease of showing.



The Fitchburg  
Historical Society







FEBRUARY 1998

### ANNUAL MEETING

THE ANNUAL Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will be held on Sunday, February 22, 1998. The meeting will be held in the Swan Creek Room of the Fitchburg Community Center at 2 P.M. The Swan Creek Room is on the lower level with parking at the rear of the building.

The business meeting will consist of elections to the board of directors. Four members are elected each year for a term of three years. If you are interested in working behind the scenes with the board please call Richard Blaney at 271-6539 and let him know. Duties of the board include attending four board meetings each year and helping to guide the organization through the various endeavors undertaken. It is a rewarding experience even though the pay is low (as in non-existent).

It has been pointed out that several items in the Bylaws should be brought up to date. These matters will be addressed at the meeting.

The program for the day will be a video presentation of the slides that were taken on *Picture Day, 1990*. For those of you who have not seen the slides this will be a great time to see some of the treasured images we have in our archives. Light refreshments will be served.

**NOTE:** This will be the only reminder you will receive of this meeting. Be sure to attend and feel free to bring a guest or two along with you.

## FAMILY HISTORIES

Several people have answered our call for family histories. One, a reminiscence about the Lappley family of Fitchburg Station, has appeared in the Fitchburg Star. We have also received seven articles printed in *Relatively Speaking*, a newsletter of the Ray Sweeney family. These articles were written by Dick Sweeney who is the compiler of the *Sweeney Family History*. A copy of this book is in our archives. The articles will be filed with the book. We have room for more family reminiscences in our files. This also gives us a chance to use the Fitchburg Star to share a bit of historical information with the community. Keep them coming. We have also received copies of several old newspaper clippings people thought would be of interest to the users of our archives.

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

February is also the month for membership renewals. A form is included with this newsletter. Fill it out and bring it with you on the 22nd. If you are not able to attend the Annual Meeting you can send your renewal form and check to Janet Maves. This would also be a good time to ask friends, relatives or neighbors if they would care to join the organization. We are particularly interested in finding former members whose memberships have lapsed to rejoin us.

## FITCHBURG A HISTORY

We are working on perhaps having the book *Fitchburg A History* reprinted. It would be done in a slightly different format than what it is in now. It will be done with a soft cover and spiral binding. If the book is reprinted it would include an index. The Board of Directors feels that it is imperative to have the index finished even if the book is not reprinted. Anyone who has the book now would be able to purchase the index separately at a small cost (probably just photocopying charges). The index would also be sent to various libraries which hold the book in their collections. An index will be a great asset to this book.



**The Fitchburg  
Historical Society**





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

MAY 1998

### ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting was held on February 22 at the Fitchburg Community Center. The slides which were taken in 1990 were shown to a very appreciative audience. They brought back fond memories. Doris Batker Warren was elected to the Board of Directors. She replaces Patricia Delker who has served on the Board for several years. A hearty THANK YOU to Patricia for her years of service on the board both as a member and an officer. And our thanks to Doris for accepting the challenge of replacing Patricia. Our next meeting will be Sunday, July 12 at 2:P.M. in the Swan Creek room at the Community Center. This is on the lower level. The theme of the meeting will be centered on early farm machinery and its use. Dave and Don Batker will show us some of their collection of farm toys. Mark you calendars now.

### PHOTO EXHIBIT

From April 8th to April 14th the city sponsored a traveling exhibit of "Celebrating Wisconsin: Dane County, Then and Now". This is a sesquicentennial photo exhibit from the Wisconsin State Historical Society. Along with the traveling exhibit the city also premiered the photos from the FHS archives that have been selected to adorn the walls of the new municipal building. The opening reception on April 8th drew a nice group of people who raved about the photos. Because of the publicity of the exhibit we have been asked to show our slides to two groups of people. The staff at Sylvan Crossing Retirement home has asked for the presentation to be given on May 14th and the Fitchburg Senior Center has scheduled the slide show for May 28 to coincide with their celebration of Wisconsin's sesquicentennial. At present we have to borrow a projector every time we show the slides. If anyone has a slide projector they are no longer using and would care to donate it to the FHS we would be very grateful. Another source might be from a garage or estate sale. Watch for one please and keep our need

in mind. We would prefer one with a carousel.

### STAN CROSS

A charter member of the FHS, Stan Cross, died on May 6, 1998. He was a tireless worker in the formative years of our group. For many years he served on the Board of Directors and was our membership chairman. Our sympathy goes out his family.

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Check the front of this bulletin. If you see a mark on the mailing label it means we have not received your dues for the 1998-99 year. The annual dues of \$5.00 individual or \$10.00 family can be sent to Janet Maves at 5491 Irish Lane, Fitchburg, 53711. If your dues are not received this will be the last newsletter you will receive. Please stay with us, we are growing and our future is looking bright.



### TEACHER'S DESK

Several years ago Doug Stebbins donated the teacher's desk from the Fitchburg Center School to our society. Doug's grandparents, Ed and Viola Guetzke had purchased the desk at the auction held when the school was closed in 1962. The desk needed some minor repairs. These have now been completed. For the time being the desk is being housed at the museum of the Oregon Historical Society. It would be a worthwhile trip to Oregon to see the desk in its temporary location and look over some of the varied collection in their museum. When the FHS expands to new quarters the desk will be a fine addition to our work space. We are again extending our thanks to Doug for his generous contribution.



#### ST. MARY CEMETERY

We now have a boulder at the site of St. Mary Church and cemetery. One of the houses on McKee Road which was scheduled for removal had a boulder as a landscape detail. We were able to obtain this rock from the city of Fitchburg and through the efforts of Mike Barry and Bob Everson it was moved into position on April 30. A sincere thank you to Mike and Bob for your help. The next step will be to have a bronze plaque made and embedded in the stone. The horticulture class at the Oakhill Correctional Institution will help us with landscaping. Hopefully we will be able to have a dedication ceremony before summer is over.

#### O'FITCHBURG DAYS

O'Fitchburg Days will be held on the weekend of August 7-9 at McKee Farms Park. The FHS will be having a table in the community tent again this year. We will need volunteers to spend some time at the booth on Saturday and Sunday. We hope to have the new copies of the book "*Fitchburg: a History*" ready for sale by that time. There is also a possibility the pictures which will hang in the new municipal building will be on display in the shelter house. If you missed the presentation in April this would be a good time to see all of them in one place. Be sure to mark these dates on your calendar and please offer to spend some time at our table during the weekend.

#### TIME CAPSULE

Tom Hovel of the planning and zoning department of Fitchburg asked the FHS to prepare a time capsule for the new municipal building. A capsule was put together by Carole Kinney. She gathered current information about Fitchburg from various city departments. She also included pictures, short articles written by several local people and added other things of interest. The time capsule will be encased somewhere within the walls of the new building by the construction crew.

#### SPRINGDALE NEWS

The latest issue of the Springdale newsletter contains articles about the Mt. Horeb Area Historical Society. In honor of the sesquicentennial they have put up a display covering the ethnic origins of the locality. They have a nice museum and it is worth a trip to Mount Horeb to view their collection.

#### REMINDERS

##### CHECK YOUR MEMBERSHIP STATUS

MEETING: JULY 12, 2 P.M. COMMUNITY CENTER

O'FITCHBURG DAYS: AUGUST 7-9



The Fitchburg  
Historical Society



# **FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

June 1998

## **July Meeting**

There will be a meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society on July 12th at 2:00 P.M. The meeting will be held in the Swan Creek room of the Community Center, on the lower level. Park in the rear of the building. Dave and Don Batker will show some of their extensive collection of miniature tractors. It promises to be an interesting afternoon. Feel free to bring guests with you. The display case has been changed to show some pictures of how farming was done in past years. Be sure to check it out while you are at the meeting.

## **Projector**

One item on our wish list has been found. A friend who wishes to remain anonymous found a carousel projector with extra carousels and an illuminated slide viewer. The entire package cost the FHS \$15.00. Thank you!

## **Memorials Stan Cross**

Shortly after the last newsletter was sent out the FHS received memorials in honor of Stan Cross. Thank you to those who remembered Stan in this way.

## **St. Mary Cemetery**

Plans are moving along in regard to the cemetery renovation. Several stakes are surrounding the boulder. These mark locations for future trees. We are excited about the progress that has been made.

## **Vroman Road**

The Fitchburg City Council has set in motion the necessary work to change the name of a short distance of Grandview Road to Vroman Road. This will honor the Vroman family who are some of the earliest settlers of Fitchburg. The Board of Directors of the FHS had petitioned the City Council to do this.

## **Historic Markers**

In late May the McCoy House on Syene Road and the Mann House (Quivey's Restaurant) on Nesbit Road had historic markers installed. This was a joint project between the City of Fitchburg and the State Historical Society. The markers give a brief sketch of each property. Tony and Mickie Schmulach deserve much credit for the great job they have done in restoring the McCoy House. The Mann House has also been kept in fine condition. We are fortunate to have caring people in the area to take care of these gems.

## **Fitchburg Star**

The newly appointed editor of the Fitchburg Star, Lucas Piper, has contacted me in regards to articles to appear in the Star. He would like help with doing a "Looking Back in History" item, and he would also appreciate it if people would call him with current happenings: birth announcements, student news, weddings etc. His phone number is 835-7165





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

November 1998

## ST MARY CEMETERY

On Saturday, August 8th the rededication of St. Mary Cemetery took place. After a week of rain the skies cleared and the day dawned bright and beautiful. The boulder and plaque were in place. Three original tombstones have been returned. A fourth has been located in Rhinelander and we are waiting for its promised return. Mayor Doug Morrisette welcomed the people to the cemetery and Fr. Tony Schumacher offered a prayer and a blessing. The plaque was then presented to the people of Holy Mother of Consolation parish, the people of Oregon and Fitchburg. The plaque was accepted by Jay Bossingham on behalf of the parish. After a short history of the cemetery read by Joan Gefke a list of names of original St. Mary parishioners was read by Kay Harty. The group then moved to one of the returned stones; that of John Murphy, a Civil War veteran. An Honor Guard of Civil War reenactors presented arms, a history of Company K was read and Jack Wagner a descendant of John Murphy read his battle record. After a gun salute a Civil War era flag was presented to Mr. Wagner. Taps was played and the event was closed with a final prayer led by Fr. Schumacher. It was a moving ceremony. Extra programs from the ceremony are available if anyone would like one for a remembrance. The landscaping is lovely and we recommend a trip out to the cemetery to see what has been accomplished. It took the cooperation of many people and several organizations but it is a job well done. There is a small parking area on the extreme west side of the property so one does not have to drive into the Oakhill driveway to make a visit to the plot.

## EDWARD O'BRIEN

On Sunday, August 9th, 1998 the Fitchburg Historical Society lost another fine member. Edward Sarsfield O'Brien died in his sleep after a short illness. Ed was a charter member of the FHS and was a present board member. Ed was a life long resident of Fitchburg, living on the same farm his entire life. We will miss his quiet wit and his diligent service. Our sympathy goes out to his family. The O'Brien family gave a

memorial for Ed to be used in the reprinting of the Fitchburg History Book. Thank you.

## BOOK REPORT

Work on the reprinting of the 1976 history book of Fitchburg is proceeding nicely. We expect to have it ready for sale by Christmas time. We had hoped for the August O'Fitchburg Days but the indexing took longer than expected. We appreciate the help of the committee who worked on checking the index. They include Mary and Carole Kinney, Mary O'Brien, Ellen Green, Vernon and Bernice (McGowen) Dunn and Janet Maves.

## FITCHBURG STAR

Earlier this summer the Fitchburg Star featured an article written by Jane Byrne, a FHS member. The article was a brief history of the Nevin Fish Hatchery. Jane is working on a more complete history of the Fish Hatchery to be placed in the archives of the Fitchburg Historical Society. Jane's great grandfather was a supervisor at the early fish hatchery. Nice work Jane! We would like to encourage others who have a special interest in anything 'Fitchburg' to offer their talents to Luke Piper, editor of the Fitchburg Star.

## LOCAL HISTORY MEETING

In August, the Mount Horeb Historical Society hosted the Council of Local History, Capital Region, annual meeting. Brian Bigler and his staff at the Mount Horeb Museum did a fine job with presentations about what to archive and how to preserve articles. All the members of the Capital Region had a chance to present their banners which were made in honor of Wisconsin's sesquicentennial. Our banner was made by Ellen Green and Mary Wendt. It showcases Fitchburg's transition from a farming community to a rural/urban city. All the banners from the state members will be used in the Madison Holiday Parade around the Capitol Square in November. After the first of the year they will hang in the rotunda



for a two week period after which banner will be returned to its home society. After a fine luncheon and a short business meeting the attendees had a chance to tour Mount Horeb's museum and its extensive archives. The final event of the day was a presentation by Tim and Karen White of their stereoptic slides. This was held at the restored Blue Mounds Opera House. It was a fine program.



#### SESQUICENTENNIAL FARMS

Several families in Fitchburg received awards at the Wisconsin State Fair for continual years of farm and home ownership. The Kinney and the Vroman families received awards for 150 years. Eileen McGaw Carlson, Clarence E. Byrne, Melville Cohee, Genevive Lacy, Paul Lacy, Phil Lacy and the family of Leo O'Brien were awarded 100 year certificates. This is an ongoing program and when other families reach the 150 year or 100 year milestones they can apply for the award.

#### STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The State Historical Society has again reminded each local historical society that membership in the State Society is not automatic with your local membership. There are many benefits of membership in WSHS; discounts on admittance to historic sites, the publications of the state society and not the least, a \$5.00 rebate to each local society for your membership.



The Fitchburg  
Historical Society

#### REQUISITES

We have received the county tax books for Fitchburg from 1912 to the 1950s. After they were microfilmed they were given to the Dane County Historical Society records department. The DCHS offered each community their books. In years to come they will be a valuable tool for people doing family research in our archives. Other recent acquisitions include a map of Fitchburg when it was called Greenfield. There is no date on the map but it dates before 1853 when the name was officially changed to Fitchburg. This map will join copies of the 1861 (photocopy), 1873, and 1890 plat maps of Fitchburg and the 1911 plat book of Dane County. We also have copies of all the historical museums in Dane County along with the times they are open. It is always interesting to see what other societies are doing. One of the books published during this sesquicentennial year is *Back to Beginning, Early years of Dane County*. We have received a copy of this book for our shelves. Another new item is a map for a self guided auto tour of the Blackhawk Indians ill-fated trek through Wisconsin.

#### MEETINGS

Be aware that our winter meeting will be held when the Fitchburg history book comes back from the printers. The next general meeting will be our Annual Meeting which will be held in early February. Three new board members will be elected at that time. If you would like to serve on the Board of Directors please convey your wish to one of the present members (marked with an asterisk on your membership list), and if you are called upon to serve please say yes.



# Fitchburg Historical Society



HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

January 1999

## ANNUAL MEETING

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF the Fitchburg Historical Society will be held on Sunday, February 14 at 2 P.M. in the Swan Creek room of the Fitchburg Community Center. Our agenda will include the election of four members for the Board of Directors. We will also need to finalize some details on the reprinted history book and share some thoughts on preparing a pamphlet to explain our organization. We are planning to show the video from the August dedication of St. Mary Cemetery. Please mark you calendar now. This will be the only notification you will receive for this meeting. As always, guests are welcome.

## COUNCIL FOR LOCAL HISTORY

On November 6th the SHSW Council of Local History's annual meeting was hosted by the Poynette Area Historical Society. They used the occasion to showcase their recently opened historical archives and museum. Representatives from historical societies around the state attended. The two seminars presented were very informative. One stressed how to pick a theme for a permanent display and how to put it all together. The other was a demonstration using mounting material, making display cubes, encapsulating artifacts or documents in mylar and other related subjects. There was also a forum type discussion about how to involve the local community in the Society. When the PAHS moved from its small back room location in the village hall to a more visible and accessible location their membership increased greatly. People from the village and the area, including the high school woodworking and art classes, helped

in refurbishing their new facility. Perhaps when we have a more visible space to call home we will be able to increase our membership significantly.

## CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Fitchburg Historical Society has joined the newly formed Fitchburg Chamber of Commerce. We hope to be a source of historical information to the business community and they will be able to assist us in our various projects. The Chamber office is located at 5930 Seminole Centre Court.

## VIDEOS

We are still looking for a volunteer (or volunteers) to tape some of the videos FACT has made about our programs. Connie or LuAnn would be happy to demonstrate the process and the volunteer would be able to work at his/her own convenience. We would very much like to have copies of our meetings in our own archives. Right now FACT videos have to stay in FACT files. Step right up and volunteer. Take your mind off winter cold and snow.

## CENTURY FARMS

A final note on the century farm project of the Wisconsin State Fair. It was such an overwhelming success this past sesquicentennial year they are going to make it an annual event. As local farms and homes pass the 100 or 150 year mark of continuous family ownership they will become eligible for the award. Application blanks can be obtained from State Fair Park in West Allis or from the FHS.



ANNUAL MEETING, FEBRUARY 14, 1999

It is now time to renew your annual membership dues



FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Gleaned from the Fitchburg Town Clerk's record book. April, 1870: "The project of building a town House was brought up and after a thorough airing it was moved and carried to postpone all further action upon it until some future day."





## FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

April, 1999

### DEDICATION

The weekend of March 19 and 20 saw the official dedication and open house of the new Fitchburg City Hall. The weather was beautiful for the outdoor ribbon cutting ceremony which included our former City Clerk, Bob Ohlsen, singing the National Anthem as the flag was raised. Various dignitaries spoke and Carole Kinney told of the articles the Historical Society had collected for inclusion in the time capsule. The Fitchburg Historical Society had a table to show some of our recent accomplishments including the newly reprinted book. The book is now available at the front counter of the Fitchburg City Hall. It sells for \$10.00, and with the added index it is worth the price to replace the original book published in 1976. The Oregon Historical Society has offered to keep a small number on their shelf for sale also. If you want to send a copy to someone the Post Office has a priority mailing box which is just the right size for one or two books. The cost to mail it is \$3.20.

### LOCAL HISTORY WORKSHOPS

On April 17th Mary Wendt and Winnie Lacy attended two workshops sponsored by the Council of Local History. One workshop was on the care of photographic images. The other centered on oral history. We hope the material garnered at these two workshops will help us care for and preserve the photo images we have in our possession. The oral history workshop will help us in the future

to do a good job of interviewing people for their remembrances of life in Fitchburg and to carefully preserve the oral histories which were taken in 1975-76 in preparation for the original publication of *Fitchburg, a history*.

### MISSING

Several years ago we had old issues of the newsletter bound together with a plastic coil. This made a very convenient way to exhibit our activities at various community events. For some reason we have not been able to locate it. If anyone has any idea of where it might be please contact Winnie Lacy at 845-7594.

### HISTORIC MADISON INC.

Historic Madison Inc. has asked us to inform our members about their project concerning early Madison photos. Several years ago Tim Romano of Monona had purchased the archival negatives of the McVicar, Stein, and Wollin photo studios. For several reasons Mr. Romano is unable to keep them and is on the verge of selling them to a California company. The Dane County Historical Society along with Historic Madison Inc. is anxious for the negatives and the photos developed from them to stay in the Madison area. A fund raising venture is underway to buy the collection from Mr. Romano. Three exhibits of some of the photos have been held in the past three years and more are scheduled for





this year. They are a truly unique reminder of Madison's past. A detailed account of the collection is on page 4 of the April issue of Mature LifeStyles. Please be aware of any news items concerning the photos and avail yourself to the exhibits when they occur. John Hendrickson of E. W. Parker Jewelers has offered space at the showings for local historical societies to add some of their images at the upcoming exhibits. Perhaps some of Fitchburg's photos will be on display. Also on HMI's agenda is a walk through Resurrection Cemetery on May 16th. This will be in conjunction with the book they are publishing about the burials in Madison's Catholic cemetery. They have previously printed a book about Forest Hill cemetery and each spring in recent years have had cemetery walks there.

#### REMEMBER WHEN

The last newsletter included a note from an early Fitchburg town meeting which noted the approval of funds to build a "town house". This month I have gleaned several other items to add to our look at Fitchburg's past.

#### FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1847 Bulls, stud colts and boars running at large are considered a great inconvenience.  
1851 Tavern licenses awarded to Conrad Getz and P. S. Nott  
1853 Greenfield crossed out, Fitchburg written in.  
1854 \$65.00 allocated for the school fund  
1857 Poll list consists of 157 voters

#### IMPORTANT

The Board of Directors is planning to attend the May 11th Fitchburg City Council meeting to make a statement at the open forum. The meeting is called to order at 7:30 P.M. We want the present council to be aware of our space needs. We would like as many members as possible to be there as a show of support. This will take place very early in the session and will not take long. Please make a note of this on your calendar and be present as a gesture of unity. Thank you.





## FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

September 1999

### GENERAL MEETING

The Fitchburg Historical Society will hold its fall general meeting on Sunday October 3rd at 2 P.M. at the Fitchburg Community Center. The meeting will be held in the old city council chambers on first floor. After a short business meeting Tess Mulrooney will talk to us about the book recently published by Historic Madison Incorporated titled From Bishops to Bootleggers, the story of Madison's Resurrection Cemetery. Hopefully she will also speak about a book HMI published several years ago, "Forest Hill Cemetery. A Biographical Guide to the Ordinary and the Famous Who Shaped Madison and the World". For several years HMI has sponsored a walk through Forest Hill Cemetery pointing out the final resting places of early Madisonians. This year they toured the Catholic cemetery and pointed out grave sites of the famous and notorious, from Bishop O'Connor and Bishop O'Donnell to the early German, Irish residents of Madison (and Fitchburg) right up to the alleged bootleggers that resided in Madison during prohibition. It should be an interesting talk. Please mark you calendar now. As usual, guests are welcome.

### SPACE

We have received unofficial word from the City Hall that we will be able to move into some of the space vacated at the site of the old city hall. This is a much needed move. At the present time the actual room (or rooms) which will be made available to us has not been set but we are in hopes of having sufficient room to work with the material we have been able to collect up to this point. It

will also give us additional room to house other valuable written records of Fitchburg and its families. We can now actively pursue the search for a used computer. We would like a simple system we could use for word processing and perhaps a data base. If anyone hears of a used computer looking for a home please remember to put in a good word for the Fitchburg Historical Society.

### ORAL INTERVIEW TAPES

The Fitchburg Historical Society has been given the oral interview tapes made in 1975 and 1976 by the bicentennial committee. These tapes were used to form the background for the book FITCHBURG: a history. The tapes had been transcribed by hand at that time and we are now in the process of transcribing them onto a computer disc and printing off readable hard copies. It will be a long process. Thirty five tapes had been made and only six have been transcribed at this time. It takes about five hours to transcribe each one hour tape. As the tapes are transcribed they will be filed in the archives of the FHS and will be available for future reference. Not all of the material on each tape was used in the book.

### REMEMBER WHEN

This month's gleanings from the Town Clerk's Records; 1847-1911 include notices of the appointment in 1885 of a "commissioner on Canada Thistle and a health officer". In 1890 the position was changed to read "Commissioner of Noxious Weeds". In 1892 the position was changed again. This time the highway commissioner for each district was to



also be the commissioner of weed for that district. This meant Fitchburg was blessed with between 14 and 16 commissioners of weeds.



#### FITCHBURG ON THE MOVE

Perhaps you have seen the newspaper article about the granary from the Vincent Lacy farm. It has been donated to the Dane County Parks and has been moved to the Schumacher Farm Park which is located just east of Waunakee on Highway 19. The building was dismantled on August 13th and placed on three flat bed trucks. On August 31st, with

all the necessary paperwork and permits finished the trucks took off for the new location. The building will be restored by a local Boy Scout troop and will be part of the outdoor laboratory/classroom at the farm.

#### HAPPENINGS

The weekend of August 6th, 7th and 8th was the annual O'Fitchburg Days in McKee Farms Park. The FHS was represented at a table in the shelter house. We were able to present some of our items of interest to the public. We had copies of Fitchburg; *a history* for sale along with Tom Kinney's book, *Irish Settlers of Fitchburg, 1840-1860*. Both books are available for purchase at the main desk of the City Hall. If you wish to send a book to someone USPS mailers are available which can be posted for \$3.20. The Fitchburg book sells for \$10.00 and the Kinney book sells for \$15.00. We also plan to have a booth at the Fitchburg Fall Farm Festival on September 11 and 12. FFFF is held at Eplegaarden on Fitchburg Road.



## FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

December 1999...January 2000



### ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will be held on Sunday February 13, 1999 at 2:00 P.M. The meeting will be held in the former city council chambers on the first floor of the Community Center. You may park in the upper parking lot. We will have election for the Board of Directors. The speaker for the day will be Lois Jarvis who teaches quilting classes in the Madison area. Quilts in her collection span 100 years. She will have interesting stories to tell about them. Worked into the presentation will be simple tips to help members of the audience with their own quilts. Mark you calendar now and bring a friend.

### NEW HOME

We have received official word from the City Hall that we will be able to move into space vacated at the site of the old city hall, 2377 South Fish Hatchery Road. We will be using two rooms formerly used by the Finance Department located on the south side of the main hallway. We will also be able to use a room across the hall for shelved storage. Before we can move our accumulated materials to this location we will have to prepare the space. The walls will need to be painted, windows washed and carpet shampooed. We will also have to do a general cleaning and replace shelves. We have set a date after the first of the year to do this. We have selected Saturday, January 15th from 1

P.M. to 5 P.M. to be the general clean and paint day. We have chosen January 22nd to be a "snow day" in case of inclement weather. If all the cleaning can be done on the 15th we will use the 22nd as moving day. This is a very exciting time for all of us. It has long been a dream of many of our members to have our collection available for public use. This will allow us to do that. Please come and help us with the cleaning job. An hour or two will help immensely. With three rooms to do we will have lots of space for an eager worker who can add a little elbow grease. We can use people to dust down the walls, to apply masking tape, to wash windows, clean blinds, wash the dust off furniture or wield a paint brush. Bring a paint brush or a pail and join us for a little afternoon of cleaning. We will provide refreshments for your enjoyment. See you there!

### CENTURY FARMS

The State Fair Committee from West Allis has again contacted us with forms for people who are eligible for Century Farm awards. Anyone wishing to apply can contact the FHS for a blank form. Requirements include a parcel of land staying in the family for one hundred years. You do not have to live on the land; ownership is sufficient. We have the proper forms for you to use to apply for this honor.

### ANOTHER MEMBER GONE

Death has claimed another faithful member of the Fitchburg Historical Society. Catherine Whalen Markee died this fall. She was a member of the Whalen family that pioneered east of the Stoner Prairie. We shall miss her.



ANNUAL MEETING, FEBRUARY 13, 2000  
It is now time to renew your annual membership dues

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

JANUARY 15TH, GENERAL CLEANING DAY AT 2377 S. FISH HATCHERY ROAD

JANUARY 22ND, SNOW DATE FOR CLEANING OR MOVING DAY

JANUARY 29TH BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING AT 2377 S. FISH HATCHERY ROAD\*

FEBRUARY 13, 2000, ANNUAL MEETING AT FITCHBURG COMMUNITY CENTER

\*Please note date change for this meeting.



FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2377 S. Fish Hatchery Road  
Fitchburg Wisconsin 53711



### ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society was held on February 13. A small group of hearty individuals turned out in spite of the five inches of snow which fell over night and in the morning. Election for members of the Board of Directors was held. Richard Blaney, Mary Kinney, Janet Maves and Bill Stoneman were elected to three year terms ending in 2003. After the short business meeting Lois Jarvis brought out her fine collection of antique quilts.



She described the patterns; told what to look for in dating quilts and explained the proper way to care for them. Her collection included quilts from 1840 to the present. She showed a quilt which she made that took ten years to complete.

### PHIL FOX

Phil Fox, a charter member of our organization died on Sunday January 30. Phil was gentleman of the old school and an avid historian. Our sympathy is extended to Anna and her sister Katherine. Phil had specified memorials could be made to the Fitchburg Historical Society in his name. We appreciate his thoughtfulness. We hope to purchase an item to be used in our new location that would befit his memory.

### DUES

Have your dues been paid for the year 2000? If you see a check mark on your address label it means they your dues have not been received by our treasurer, Janet Maves. Please inform her if this is in error. Our membership roster for the year 2000 will go out with the next newsletter. Also in this mailing you will receive a membership application for the SHSW. The FHS receives a rebate for each member of its society who joins the SHSW.

### NEW HOME

The new quarters for the Fitchburg Historical Society are finally taking shape. On January 15th a crew of volunteers arrived with plenty of enthusiasm and elbow grease. The three rooms assigned to us at the old city hall building were given a thorough going over. The walls were dusted and painted. Some small pieces of furniture; chairs, a table, a computer desk and a book case were scrubbed and polished. It took a second day to finish the painting and when it was done two members of the organization volunteered to shampoo the carpets. After the carpets were dry the furniture was moved back into the rooms and wall shelves were re-mounted. Our thanks to Eric and Marge Amlie, Bill Stoneman, Doris Warren, Sue, Scotty and Jim Sheets, Janet Maves Carole Kinney, Mary Wendt, Winnie Lacy and Mona and Orville Scott. On March 13th Janet Maves, Doris Warren and Carole Kinney packed boxes and on March 16th another crew of volunteers moved our accumulated papers, books and artifacts to our new location. Phil Sveum of Coldwell Banker Sveum Realtors loaned us a van and the move was accomplished in one trip. Our thanks to



Phil Sveum for the loan of the truck and to Paul, Phil and Dan Lacy for the use of their time and muscles. Volunteers will now be needed to help sort, file and catalog our items. Please remember our new location is 2377 S. Fish Hatchery Road but we cannot use that as a mailing address. Any mail should be sent to a member of the Board of Directors or sent to the FHS in care of the Fitchburg City Hall, 5520 Lacy Road, Fitchburg WI 53711.

#### HELP WANTED

Belleville Historical Society is looking for information about Ray Williamson who farmed south of Fitchburg, between Oregon and Belleville. Mr. Williamson was a poet and author. Anyone with information about Mr. Williamson or his family is asked to contact Jerry Remy at 424-3842.

#### CENTENNIAL FARMS AND HOMES

Sesquicentennial and Centennial farm and home awards will be again given out at the State Fair in August. If your farm or home has been in the same family for 150 or 100 years you are eligible for

this award. Please contact Winnie Lacy at 845-7594 for an application blank.



#### ONE ROOM SCHOOLS

A project for marking the sites of the 10 one room schools in Fitchburg's past is under way. The project was started by the Oregon Area Historical Society in conjunction with their sesquicentennial celebration. If a grant can be obtained from the Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission the project should be completed this coming summer. The FHS is working with the OAHS and the Historic Preservation Commission of Fitchburg on this.



FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2377 South Fish Hatchery Road  
Fitchburg WI 53711



HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW  
July 2000

### O'FITCHBURG DAYS

O'Fitchburg Days will be held in McKee Farms Park on August 4-6. Events include music all three days; arts and crafts booths on Saturday and Sunday; casino games to benefit the library fund on Saturday evening; a farmers market on Sunday; pancake breakfast on Sunday; euchre and '500' tournament on Sunday; games, food and activities for the entire family all three days. The FHS will have a display in the shelter house. Be sure to attend.

### DIMITRI PRONIN

The Fitchburg Historical Society has been able to obtain a copy of *Europe in Flames, The Horrible Years, 1939-1945*. It is an interesting book written by Dimitri Pronin who lived in Fitchburg until his death in 1981. Mr. Pronin fought in the Russian Revolution and was caught up in World War II while living in Poland. After the war was over he came to America as a displaced person. He and his family settled in Fitchburg while he worked at the University of Wisconsin and at Forest Products Laboratory. The book is on the shelves of our library.

### PICTURES, PICTURES

We recently acquired photos and information about the Keenan family. Included were newspaper articles, letters, and a brief record of the Keenan family's arrival in the United States. We are very grateful to the donor for thinking of the FHS as a repository for these items. Now that our new quarters are finally taking shape we are asking members to again check scrap books and

photo albums (or wherever photos are stored) for items that would be of historical interest. We are sorting and filing the articles and pictures we have but we know there must be many more interesting items to add to our collection. With today's new technology it is inexpensive and fast to make copies. Digital copy machines and computer scanners make it easy to have excellent duplicates made. In the July/August issue of *Columns*, the bi-monthly publication of the SHSW, Director George Vogt outlines the threefold purpose of historical societies: "collecting, caring and sharing". The mission statement of the FHS states our purpose is "to preserve, advance and disseminate knowledge of the City of Fitchburg by accessioning, cataloging, using and displaying materials having historical value. Included are visual images, oral histories maps, newspaper articles and books". We would appreciate it if you would share any of the above mentioned items you may possess which pertain to Fitchburg.



### SCHOOL SIGNS

The ten former one-room schools in Fitchburg are being commemorated with signs giving a brief history of each school. This project was started by the Oregon Area Historical Society as a sesquicentennial project. The Fitchburg schools are the last to be designated. While six of the schools were absorbed into the Oregon School District,



FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2377 South Fish Hatchery Road  
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three schools were absorbed into the Verona School District and one into the Madison School District. Funds for the non-Oregon schools part of the project have been obtained through a grant from The Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission in cooperation with the Overture Foundation. We have also received some assistance from the City of Fitchburg. We hope to have the signs in place by this fall.



#### TEACHER'S DESK

Speaking of schools: We have been able to bring our teacher's desk 'home'. The desk was used in the Fitchburg Center School and had been purchased at auction by Edgar Guetzke. His grandson, Doug Stebbins, donated the desk to the FHS in honor of his grandparents. It has been on display at the Oregon Area Historical Museum. We feel very proud to be able to use this desk in our new offices.

#### LOCAL HISTORY MEETING

The annual meeting for the Capitol Region of the Local History Council will be held July 29th in Edgerton Wisconsin. It will be hosted

by the Sterling North Society, Ltd. The meeting starts at 9 A.M. and includes a roundtable discussion about local societies, talk getting your message out to the community, a Sterling North monologue. After lunch and a brief business meeting there will be a presentation about web sites for historical society. That will be followed by a visit to the historic Edgerton Library and a tour of the Sterling North home. Sterling North, you may recall was the author of the beloved book, "Rascal". Registration is \$12.50 and can be made by calling Elizabeth Dietrick at 608-884-3870. This is a good opportunity to see what other local societies are doing.



#### BLACK WOLF BASEBALL

The Fitchburg Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring Fitchburg Night at the Black Wolf game on Wednesday, August 9th. The evening is to open to all Fitchburg residents and interested parties. A \$12 ticket includes dinner and a seat on the party deck. General admission is \$5.00. As members of the Chamber of Commerce we urge you to attend this gala event. Tickets may be obtained by calling the Chamber office at 288-8284.



SEPTEMBER 2000

### LET'S GO TO THE MOVIES

Movies, popcorn, soda. Does this sound like an afternoon? Richard Blaney has offered to show his home movies of the Blaney corn operation, a corn picking contest and clips of the Oregon Centennial Parade of 1941. This will be in conjunction with the fall general meeting. The meeting will be held in the old city council chamber on the upper level of the Fitchburg Community Center, at 2:00 P.M., Sunday, October 22nd. Parking is available at the front of the building. At the conclusion of the meeting we will take a tour of the new offices of the FHS located in the old city hall building.



### OAK HALL CEMETERY

The Oak Hall Cemetery on Highway M has reopened as a city cemetery. The cemetery opened in 1854 as a cemetery association. When the number of members of the association dropped to a level which was

impractical for operation the cemetery was turned over to the city. It was placed under the supervision of the parks department and no further burials were allowed. The city has now purchased adjacent property and expanded the grounds. Lots are now being sold and the first burial in the new section has been made.

### STERLING NORTH MEETING

Three members of the FHS attended the Council of Local History annual meeting hosted by the Sterling North Society of Edgerton. The morning session consisted of discussions on attracting and holding new members and how to get young people interested in local history. At the conclusion of the morning session a gentleman from the Sterling North Society did a monologue based on a day of Sterling North. After the lunch the Sterling North Society presented its outline of its main fund raising event of the year, an annual house tour. Upon completion of the meeting the attendees were treated to a tour of the restored home of the North family.

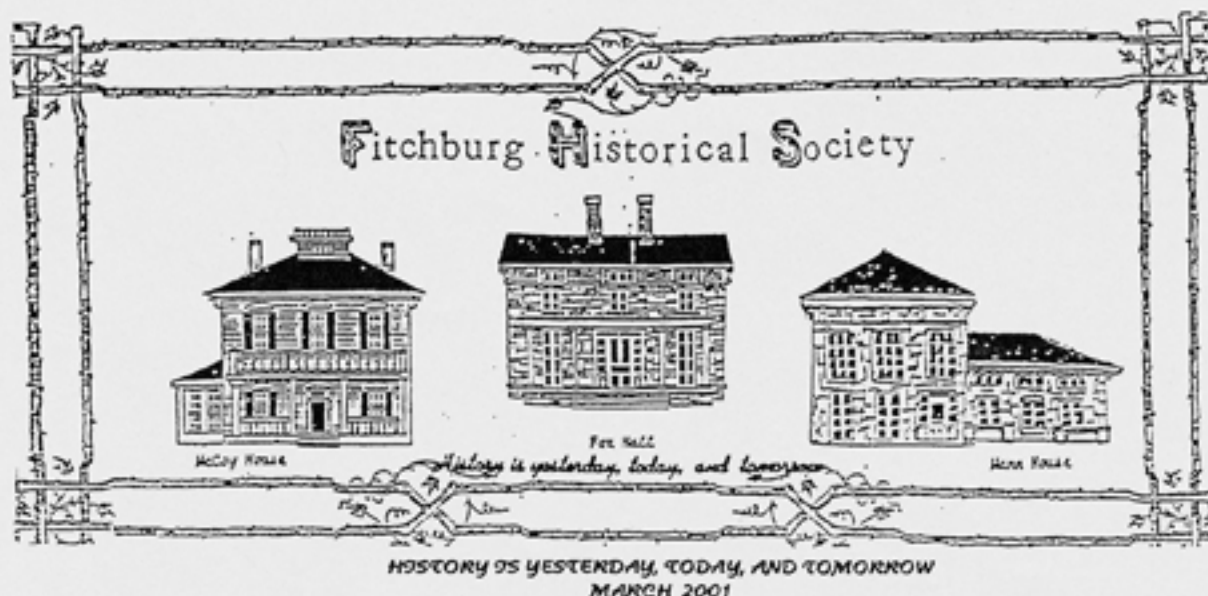
### SEE YOU AT THE MOVIES

OCTOBER 22 2000

2:00 P.M.

FITCHBURG COMMUNITY CENTER  
GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME





### ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting for 2001 was held on February 11 at the Fitchburg Community Center. The turn out for our "Show and Tell" party was phenomenal. Some of the items of interest include daily journals from the late 1800s, a wine decanter from the Revolutionary War, a chest carved from a hand-hewn barn beam, a jam jar and china tray, a silver tea service, an 1886 doll, jewelry, arrowheads, a W.W.II magazine collection, silverware used at Sacred Heart Academy, photos, valentines, scrap books, a kitchen clock purchased in 1894 and the dated end of the 1843 Vroman barn. All had interesting stories connected with them and our only regret was the stories came to an end. We were all in the mood to listen to more. It is very possible the program will be repeated for the annual meeting in 2002. Be looking for items of interest to "show and tell" next year.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Before the show and tell program we did conduct some society business. First and foremost was the election of four members to the board of directors. Connie Darling and Eric Amlie declined to run for re-election. We thank them for their years of service. Doris Warren and Winnie Lacy agreed to have their names placed in nomination for reelection.

were added to the slate. As no other nominations were forthcoming the membership present voted all four to fill the slots. We welcome the new board members and look forward to their input of fresh ideas. Board members for the year 2001 are: Richard Blaney, President; Mike Engelberger, Vice President; Janet Maves, Treasurer, Winnie Lacy, Secretary; Betty Brantmeyer, Carole Kinney, Mary Kinney, Bill Redden, Diane Reynolds, Bill Stoneman, Doris Warren, and Mary Wendt members at large

### MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings for the year 2001-2002 will be as follows:

Board meetings will be held the first Saturday of the months of April, June, August, October, December and February 2002. They will take place in the archives area of the FHS at 2377 S. Fish Hatchery Road at 10:30 a.m. It is hoped to be able to have the archives open at the same time. This will allow time for members and the public to do historical research. We also plan to use this time to do the work necessary to make our collection usable.

General Meetings: May 19, 2001 will be dedication of the school signs. Time and place to be announced. Fall meeting date, time and place to be announced probably in October

or early November. The Annual Meeting will take place about February 10, 2002, exact time and place to be announced. All society members are welcome to attend the board meetings and are urged to attend the general meetings. Remember to save time in February for the Annual "show and tell" meeting. If you are contacted by a board member to work on a project or a telephone committee please be willing to give some of your time.

#### SCHOOL SIGNS

The signs for marking the locations of the former one room schoolhouses in Fitchburg are finally finished. Plans are to dedicate them on Saturday May 19, 2001 in conjunction with Historic Preservation Week celebrations held throughout Wisconsin by the State Historical Society. Watch for details. Thanks to Bob Parnell

of Action Fence, a Fitchburg business, we have the necessary posts to mount the signs. We are very grateful to Bob for his generous donation.

#### LOCAL HISTORY WORKSHOPS

This year's local history workshops will be held March 24 at Shorewood, March 31 at Black River Falls and April 21 at Tomahawk. The topics to be presented are: Putting the Pieces Together (starting a new historical society or energizing an old one); Restoring Historic Buildings; and Caring for Historic Textiles. All three topics are covered at each location. Registrations forms are available from board members. Any member of the FHS is eligible to attend. The registration fee is \$15.00. More information is available from Connie Maier at 608-264-6579.



FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2377 South Fish Hatchery Road  
Fitchburg WI 53711





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW  
April 2001

### GENERAL MEETING

The spring general meeting will be held in conjunction with Historic Preservation Week. On Saturday, May 19th we will dedicate the school signs placed at the location of each former one room school house in Fitchburg. The dedication will take place at 11:00 A.M. at the Maple Corners school located at the corner of Highway M and Fitchburg Road. This will be a symbolic dedication for all the sites. After the dedication we will return to the old city hall for refreshments and reminiscing. Brochures that tell about all ten schools will be available. A map showing the locations of all the sites is included with the brochure. Pass the word to former students of the schools. We would like to see as many of them as possible at the dedication. As always the meeting is open to the public.

### FUTURE MEETINGS

Our fall meeting will feature a speaker about a new WWII veterans book. There will be time to ask questions and relate experiences of our own pertaining to WWII. The meeting will be held on October 14th at 1:30 in the Fitchburg room at the Fitchburg Community Center.

Mark you calendars now. The annual meeting in February will feature another "Show and Tell" session. Our response to this year's program was so well received we have decided to do an encore performance.

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION WEEK

In addition to the dedication of the schools signs, Historic Preservation Week in Fitchburg will be marked by several other activities sponsored by the Fitchburg Historic Landmarks Commission. A photo contest will be held in which entrants will have a chance to identify details from some of the eight designated historic sites in Fitchburg. The contest will run May 12 - 20. On Monday May 14 we will have an opportunity to see a slide presentation and lecture on remembering our rural heritage. This will be given by regional historian and author Jerry Apps. It will be presented at 7:30 p.m. in the Fitchburg Community Center. On Thursday, May 17 at 7:30 p.m. Jim Draeger of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin will present a program entitled "What a Gas - History and Evolution of the Gas Station in Wisconsin". This also will take place at the Community Center. It sounds like a busy week but it gives members of the

Historical Society a chance to attend some events which have a historic background. Let's see lots of our members there.

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Doris Warren is unable to continue as a member of the board of Directors. Catherine O'Brien Schneider has agreed to fill her unexpired term. We take this opportunity to thank Doris for the work she has done and the things she has contributed to the FHS. She was responsible for many fine programs and the refreshments that were served at the meetings. We extend a hearty welcome Catherine. She will be a fine addition to our board.

#### SHSW

Included in this mailing is the current membership list and an application for membership in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. A five dollar rebate is sent to the local society for each member of our local society who joins the SHSW.

#### LOSSES

Our membership continues to suffer the loss of charter members. Hazel Grady died on March 10, 2001. She was the former Hazel Byrne and was born and raised on the farm that is now Byrne Wood. Her maternal grandfather was Valentine Maag, a long time employee of the early fish hatchery. Hazel had supplied us with many visual images both of the Byrne farm and the Fish Hatchery. Another long time member, Margaret Brannan O'Brien died on April 5, 2001. Before retirement she and her

husband farmed on Seminole Highway. As this newsletter is being finished word has been received of the death of Robert Purcell. The Purcell family has farmed in the Adams Road area for over one hundred years. Bob also contributed pictures and stories to our society. Their loss will be felt deeply. Our sympathy is extended to their families.

#### TRANSCRIPTS

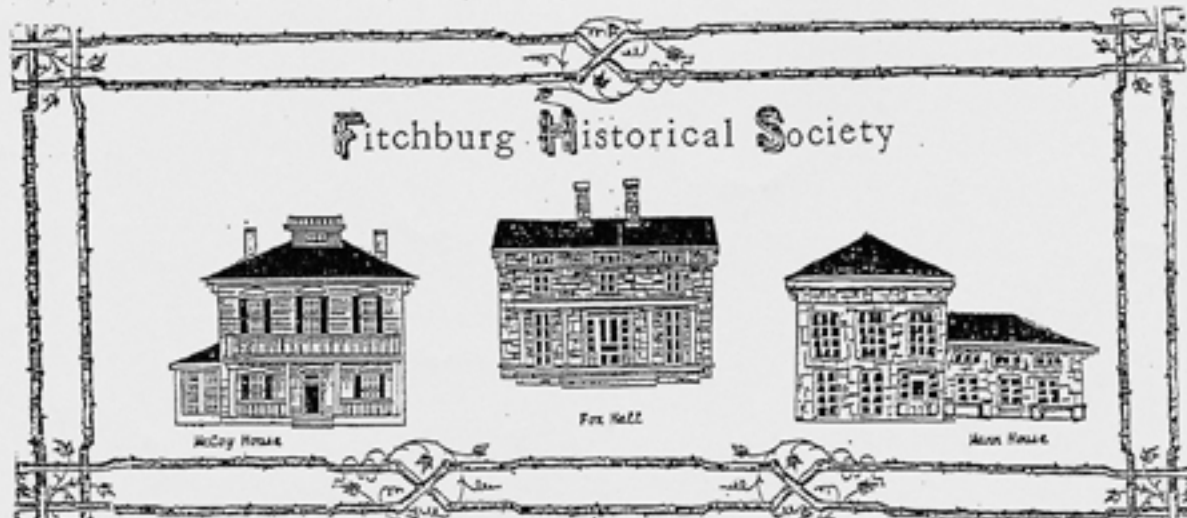
The audio tapes which were made at the time of the publication of "Fitchburg - a history" are being transcribed and will be available to the general public for research. There is considerably more information on the tapes than was used in the book. It will also be possible to have a copy of the actual audio tape made for a slight fee. It would be a most welcome addition to a family history to be able to hear the actual voice of a relative who was interviewed. Details of this will be made available at a later date.

#### REMINDERS

- May 12 - 20 Photo Contest
- May 14 Jerry Apps
- May 17 Jim Draeger
- May 19 Dedication of school signs.







HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW  
September 2001

### MEETINGS

\* Saturday, October 6, Board of Directors Meeting, old city hall building, 10:30 A.M.

\* Sunday, October 7, "Talking Spirits", Forest Hill Cemetery, sponsored by the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. World War I individuals portrayed. Guided walking tours leave every 15 minutes between 1 and 4 p.m. One of the spirits who will be talking is Marion Cranefield who has Fitchburg connections. \$5.00 admission.

\* Sunday, October 14, Fall Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society. See enclosed flyer for details.

Reminder: The Annual meeting of the FHS in February 2002 will be an encore of the our Show and Tell meeting of this year. Be prepared to bring in additional treasures or more pages of journals to read. This year's exhibits were all great!

### PARADE

The Fitchburg Historical Society participated in this year's "O Fitchburg Days Parade" with a float. The float included an early one room schoolhouse scene with Cathy Schneider as teacher and three Fitchburg youngsters as pupils. We also had our version of

Grant Wood's American Gothic, called "Fitchburg Gothic" with Richard and Marge Blaney portraying the famous pair. Bill Kinney was our able tractor driver with Carole Kinney and Janet Maves manning the water bottles on a hot, hot Sunday in August. Our thanks to the Oregon Area Historical Society for the loan of the costumes worn by the participants.

### DONATIONS

The family of Gerald and Margaret O'Brien has presented us with a memorial in honor of their parents. We accepted the donation with heartfelt thanks and our deepest sympathy. We have also received the record books of the Maple Corners School. These came from the family of Robert Purcell. Again, our thanks and our sympathy to the family.

### ARCHIVES

Our material in the archives has been growing with the addition of how to literature. This includes how to research the historical background of your home and how to care and preserve historic photos. Now that we have work space in the old city hall building we hope people will avail themselves of our collection.



## ANNUAL MEETING

### HEAR YE HEAR YE HEAR YE

It is time again for the Annual Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society. Dust off your precious mementos and bring them to our "Show and Tell" day Sunday, February 10 2002. The meeting is slated to start at 1:30 P.M. After a short business meeting we will again have an opportunity to marvel at the treasures that have been handed down through the years. The articles do not have to be connected to Fitchburg. We are interested in seeing whatever has been kept dear to your hearts. We will be anxiously waiting to hear more tidbits extracted from the various daily journals kept by ancestors of our members. They were just one of the precious memories of last year's meeting.



### ACQUISITIONS

We have had several donations since our last newsletter. Bill Stoneman has given us an atlas covering every township in the state of Wisconsin. The actual year of the atlas has yet to be determined but it is known that it predates 1925. We also have

a photocopy of the book of poems, "Songs of a Badger" written by former Fitchburg resident, Joseph Warren Wallace. The poems dealing with Fitchburg were printed in the bicentennial history book done by Jean O'Brien (Elefson) and Connie Darling but this has the annotations of all the poems, who they were written about and where they were written. The owner of the book, Jack Herrick, has allowed us to photo copy the book in its entirety. It had been presented to his grandmother, Mrs. John Lacy, by the author. Last, but not least, we are now in possession of a computer donated by Mary Wendt. This should enable us to do our newsletters, record keeping, indexing and transcribing at our headquarters. Thank you to Bill, Jack and Mary. We have also received a short history of the Cranefield family who lived in Fitchburg in the late 1880s. We encourage families with Fitchburg connections to provide a copy of their family history to keep on file at our archives.

### BOARD ELECTIONS

During the business meeting on February 10 we will be electing four members to the Board of Directors. Board members whose terms are expiring are; Betty Brantmeyer, Mike Engelberger, Carole Kinney and Bill Reddan. If you would like to become a



member of the board and have a hand in some of the day to day operations of the organization please give the nominating chairman, Bill Stoneman, a call and offer to have your name put in nomination. Likewise if you know of someone who is too shy to volunteer but you know would make a good board member do the same. Bill's phone number is 271-7981. The annual meeting is also the time to renew your membership. You can use the form included with this mailing or you can bring your dues to the annual meeting.

#### PROGRAM NOTES

Our last general meeting and program was held on October 14, 2001. The program featured Kristin Gilpatrick, a local author who featured two of her books, *The Hero Next Door*, and *The Hero Next Door Returns*. A panel of WW II veterans,

including our own Bob Keenan told of their experiences and answered questions from the audience. Those in attendance had an opportunity to purchase the books and the author donated a portion of the sales to our treasury. Thank you, Kristin. If members have ideas of programs for the future be sure to present them at the meeting on February 10. The board wants to schedule programs that appeal to the membership. Don't forget the Show and Tell on February 10. We are looking forward to seeing some lovely items.



#### FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

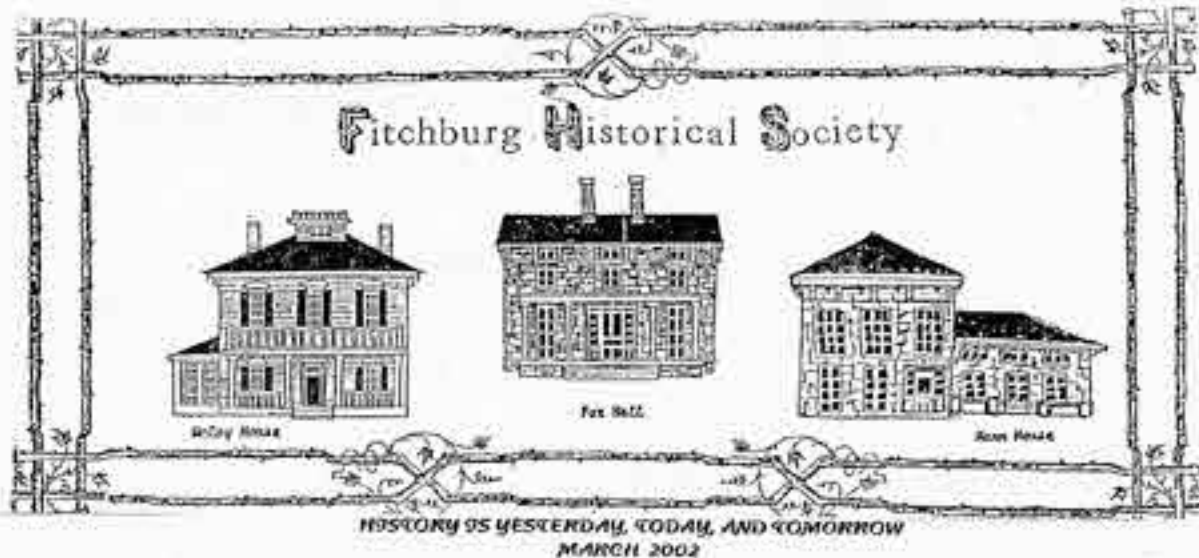
#### Dues for one year:

Junior Historian (under 18)	3.00
Individual	5.00
Family	10.00
Business	20.00

Dues can be paid at the annual meeting or mailed directly to:

Fitchburg Historical Society  
Janet Maves, Treasurer  
5781 Chapel Valley Road # 206  
Fitchburg, WI 53711

Membership cards can be picked up at the annual meeting or if you wish to have one sent please include a self addressed stamped envelope.



#### ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting for the Fitchburg Historical Society was held on February 10 at the Community Center. A cold, snowy day kept the attendance down but those who were there were treated to some interesting articles brought in by members. Some of the articles included a honest to goodness Irish shillelagh, beautiful amethyst jewelry, a cross and chain worn by a bride in 1876, an early mechanical toy, books from the 1880s and a collection of postcards and religious cards from 1860. A mysterious wooden piece which could not be identified was given a thorough going over in hopes of determining its use. Another interesting wooden piece was a hand carved rolling pin from 1850. The Vromans brought a copy of the 1880 History of Dane County which they in turn donated to the Society for its library. Thank you Gordon and Rosalie.

#### MEETING SCHEDULE

At present the only meetings scheduled are for Board of Directors meetings. They are open to all the members and attendance is encouraged. The meetings take place on the first Saturday of April, June, August, October and December. They are held at the archives in the old city hall building at 2377 S. Fish Hatchery Road at 10:30 in the morning.

#### STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Included in this mailing is the affiliate membership cards for the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Our local society receives a \$5.00 rebate for each member who joins the State association. If you have not paid your dues to the Fitchburg Historical Society for 2002 this would be a good time to take care of that also. Dues can be sent to Janet Maves at

5781 Chapel Valley Road, Fitchburg WI 53711. In another matter pertaining to the State Historical Society; many of you may have read the disturbing news of the cuts in funding for the State Historical Society. One of the recommendations which has been made to the legislature is the elimination of the Office of Affiliated Local History. This is a very important part of SHSW which concerns our local society directly. Other significant cuts are on the table for the Library itself. People who are doing family history would be greatly affected by these cuts. It has been suggested that a letter writing campaign be waged to save these very important parts of the State Historical Society. Your help is needed. Please write to you assembly person and your state senator and ask them to be mindful of the impact such cuts would make in the preservation of the history of the State of Wisconsin. Fitchburg residents are represented in the Assembly by:

Rick Skindrud	Teresa Berceau
P.O. Box 8953	P.O. Box 8952
Madison 53708	Madison 53708
266-3520	266-3784

The state senators representing Fitchburg are:

Fred Risser	John Erpenbach
P.O. Box 7882	100 N. Hamilton
Madison 53707	Rm. 104
266-1627	Madison 53703
	266-6670

A letter or a telephone call to these people would show that we care enough about our history to be willing to preserve it for future generations. For members of the FHS living outside of the area but in the state please contact the representatives from your area.



### **O'FITCHBURG DAYS**

After last summer's disastrous heat spell the O'Fitchburg Days committee has decided to move the celebration to the weekend of May 17, 18 and 19. Due to unforeseen circumstances there will not be a parade this year. Other activities are still scheduled. A cultural tent will be present and the FHS has been asked to have someone available to provide information on Fitchburg's history. Any Volunteers?

### **PHOTO SHOW**

John Hendrickson of E. W. Parker Jewelers has called to inform us of his plans to have a photo show in honor of Wisconsin's birthday on May 29, 2002. The event will be held at his store on the Capitol Square. He would like all of the historical societies in the area to bring pictures of Wisconsin that he could display throughout his store. He will also be hosting a similar event honoring Dane County later in the summer.

### **QUERIES**

The FHS has received several queries about ancestors in recent weeks. If anyone has any information about John Lindstrom or the Albert Anderberg family from the 1910 era please contact one of the board members. Another query has come seeking information about the Darmondy family including Martin O'Connell, John and Thomas Purcell. Again if anyone has information about these families please contact a board member to be put in contact with the inquirers.

### **PROGRAM NOTE**

An invitation has been received from Historic Blooming Grove Historical Society to attend their meeting on April 28th. The featured speaker will be Patty Loew, author of the recently released book, *Indian Nations of Wisconsin*. The program will start at 3:00 p.m. at the Lussier Family Heritage Center at

Lake farm park, 3101 Lake Farm Road. Watch for more information in area newspapers or call 221-1948 for more information.

### **CENTURY FARMS**

Jill Diehnelt of the Sesquicentennial and Century Farm and Home Program of the Wisconsin State Fair has again sent application blanks to be used by property owners whose property has been in their family 150 or 100 years. The application deadline for this year is May 1, 2002. If you are eligible for this award you can get an application blank from Richard Blaney.

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Last but not least; at the Annual Meeting the members re-elected Betty Brantmeyer, Carole Kinney and Mike Engelberger to the board of directors. The nominating committee was unable to present a fourth candidate at the meeting. Our board of directors needs one more member. We need someone to step up and volunteer for the position. The work is not hard. We have six meetings a year at which we discuss the workings of the organization. We also plan for the three or four general meetings which are held throughout the year. It is not a time consuming job and rarely does it involve physical labor. The pay is non-existent so there is nothing to foul up your tax returns. We need some fresh ideas and new enthusiasm. If you have the time and are willing to help please come to the April 6th meeting and offer your services.

### **REMINDERS**

\* Please check to see if you have paid your dues for this year. This is our only funding for operating expenses.

\* Please write or call your representatives in the State Legislature in regard to funding for the State Historical Society.



### Local History Meeting

The 2002 Capital Regional Convention of the Wisconsin Council for Local History will be held on August 24, 2002 at Lake Farm Park. The meeting is being hosted by the Dane County Historical Society. These annual meetings are very informative and are an excellent time to exchange ideas with other chapters in the Capital Region. After a regional roundtable discussion Leslie Eisenberg and Deidre March will give a presentation about identifying and protecting burial sites. Also on the program is a presentation by the host society telling about its mission of serving history throughout Dane County. Art Shegonee, a member of the Ho Chunk tribe, will speak about the Ho Chunk people who made the four lakes region their home for hundreds of years. He will also give a performance of dance in traditional costume. There will be an opportunity to tour the Lussier facility and view the Dane County archives and to walk the trails of Lake Farm County Park. Registration for this meeting can be made by contacting Ann Short, Dane County Historical Society, 474 Hilltop Drive, Madison WI, 53711. The registration fee is \$14.00 which includes lunch and is due by August 16. Anne can be contacted at (608) 274-1960 for

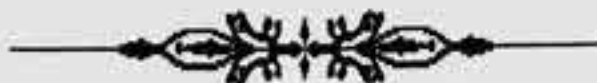
more information. Lake Farm Park is located on the shore of Lake Waubesa on Libby Road.

### Fitchburg Days

This year's Fitchburg Days at McKee Farms Park was another battle with the elements. Cold weather kept the attendance low. The FHS had space in the Cultural Tent which featured day long events such as Irish music, language lessons, spinning demonstrations, and other activities. Our booth featured maps, photos and other items from our archives. Our thanks to the members who sat out the inclement days answering questions posed by those who stopped.

### Membership list

Enclosed with this mailing is the current membership list. We are asking each member to take a more active part in our organization. We would like volunteers to help with sorting and filing the pictures in our archives. Our next board meeting will be held on August 3 at 10:30 A.M. at 2377 Fish Hatchery Road (the former City Hall offices) and you are more than welcome to attend and see the work which needs to be done.







HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW  
September 2002

## GENERAL MEETING

The next general meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will be held on Sunday, October 20, 2002 in the Fitchburg Room (old city council chamber) of the Community Center. The meeting will start at 1:30 P.M. Richard Zeitlin of the Veterans Museum in Madison will speak about the Civil War. We would like to include information about ancestors of FHS members who served in the Civil War. If you are a descendant of a Civil War Veteran or know of an interesting story concerning the Civil War please contact Richard Blaney (271-6539) to forward the information to the speaker.



## HELP WANTED

We have a large collection of back issues of the Fitchburg Star. After contacting the newspaper office and being told they bind them in yearly volumes, we decided not save our copies as it is redundant and newspapers deteriorate rapidly. We would like to have several people take some of the issues and go through them to clip interesting articles about people or places. The clippings would then be placed in appropriate files. The pay is low but we would be able to furnish the scissors for the project. The work can be done at home. Any Volunteers?

## PLAT MAPS

Do maps interest you? We have large, laminated plat maps of Fitchburg township in our collection. We have had copies of the years 1861, 1873, 1899, 1904, and 1911 for some time. We recently have added 1953, 1948 and 1980. It is quite a study in Fitchburg history to track the changes on the maps. We also have a large volume containing individual townships maps of the entire state of Wisconsin. This seems to be a 1925 publication. Additionally we have several Dane County Atlases; 1911, 1968 and 1999 for example.

## FUTURE PROGRAMS

It has been suggested the Board of Directors sponsor a program that would feature short vignettes about people from Fitchburg's past; including the recent past. It could be presented to the schools in Fitchburg and perhaps involve some of the school children as actors. To start with we would need several people to write concise stories that could be acted out by a small case of characters.

## LOCAL HISTORY MEETING

The Capital Region of the Local History Council met on August 24, 2002 at the new Lussier Family Heritage Center at Lake Farm Park. It is a lovely building; well worth the effort to visit and to enjoy the view of the area. The regional roundtable was led by John Grek, President of the WI Council for Local History. His opening remarks centered on the budget cuts affecting the Wisconsin Historical Society. One of the positions cut was that of Debbie Kmetz, a long time staff member of the Local History Office. Her



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FITCHBURG, WI 53711

FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

absence will be a great loss. She was an excellent resource for the various local chapters. Leslie Eisenberg and Deidre March spoke on the subject of burial sites. All burial sites are to be listed with Burial Sites Preservation division of the SHSW. Literature to help people identify and preserve these sites is now available at FHS archives. After a sandwich buffet the Dane County Historical Society, which was the host for the meeting, presented a program of their projects. This included the placement of historical markers at diverse areas of Dane County; their publication of the book "Forward! A History of Dane the Capitol County"; and their new archival center in the lower level of the Lussier Family Heritage Center. A brief business meeting followed. After the business meeting Art Shegonne, a member of the Kickapoo Tribe presented a program of Indian dances. He was dressed in his ceremonial dance costume and spent some time explaining various elements of his costume including feathers, bead work and breast plate. He also invited about 20 people from the audience to join him in one dance. It was a very enjoyable performance. At the conclusion of the meeting the attendees had time to walk the trails of Lake Farm Park.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Several events which are scheduled for the near future in the Madison area:

**October 6:** Historic Madison Inc. will sponsor "Talking Spirits" at Forest Hill Cemetery. Actors will portray selected people who are buried in Madison's oldest cemetery. Historic Madison will also sponsor a walk through Resurrection Cemetery with talks about some of its burials. At this time the date has not been set.

**October 26:** Friends of WHS (Wisconsin History Society) will offer a day long program at the Historical Library in Madison with presentation by four genealogical reference librarians and archivists. The program will appeal both to novice and veteran genealogists. To register or obtain information mail a request to Mary Jane Herber 434A N. Broadway, De Pere 54115 (Phone: 920-226-5927)

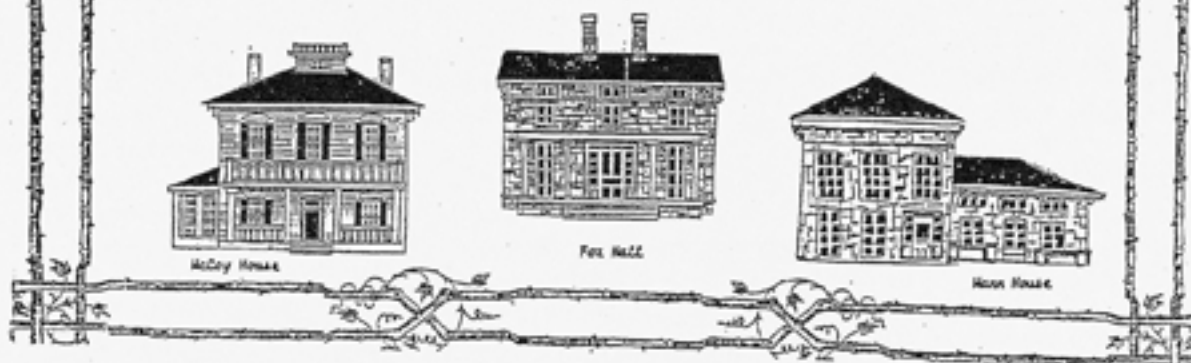
**November 2:** The Annual Meeting of Wisconsin Historical Society at the Historical Library in Madison. This is an all day program featuring booths from various local history affiliates; interesting programs and an award luncheon. Notices will be mailed out in the near future. Watch for information about these events in the local paper.

REMINDER: GENERAL MEETING OCTOBER 20 2002





# Fitchburg Historical Society



HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

January 2003

## NEW YEAR

Can you believe the year 2003 is already upon us? Wasn't it just yesterday people were worrying what the change over to the year 2000 would do to all the electronic marvels we play with these days? Hopefully the new year will be a building year for the Fitchburg Historical Society. We have much to do to make our organization a vital part of the Fitchburg community.

## ANNUAL MEETING

To start the year our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 16, 2003 at 1:30 P.M. in the lower level dining room of the Community Center. The business meeting will include election for the board of directors. At present we are operating with only 11 members on the board. We definitely need a full compliment of twelve to conduct the business of the society. The board has six regularly scheduled meeting during the year. They usually take place the on the first Saturday in the months of February, April, June, August, October and December. Please contact President Richard Blaney if you would be willing to serve a three year term as board member. To finish the meeting, plans are being formulated for a musical program. Please mark your calendar now and plan to attend We hope to see some of our lost faces. Our last meeting was not well attended. The topic for that meeting was Wisconsin's roll in the Civil War. Richard Zeitlin of the Veterans Museum was our speaker. His talk covered many interesting facets of Wisconsin's contribution. In addition to our speaker several people brought articles of interest about their families' participation in the war between the states. A file has been started to keep all the information in one place. If your family has had any connection

to the Civil War we would be happy to add copies of that to the file. Annual Meeting time is also time to renew memberships. A form for that purpose is attached to this newsletter. You can bring it with you to the meeting.

## LOCAL HISTORY MEETING

The annual convention of the Council of Local History was held at the State Historical Society on November 2, 2002. The president of the local councils told of the effort made to try to keep Debbie Kmetz on staff. The project was not successful and Debbie's position has been eliminated. This is a great loss to all the local societies. Following the business meeting a group of young people from White Lake, Wisconsin entertained the assembly. They performed a mini-musical telling about the rise and fall of the railroad and its impact on the town of White Lake. The actors, who ranged in age from 9 to 16, sang and acted out a story written by the music teacher from their school. This is an annual project for them. Many of the actors were in their third year of performing with the group. Their enthusiasm and spirit were infectious and their program was well received. The day also included a session titled "What is History" presented by representatives of the Mount Horeb Area Historical Society. They spoke on the importance of adding items of current interest to a society's collection. The board of directors of the Fitchburg Historical Society encourages its members to keep that in mind. We want to expand our archives to include pictures, papers, and histories of what is happening now. With the proliferation of scanners, digital cameras and copiers it easy to accomplish this without losing actual possession of an item. Please contact a board

member if you have something that would be an asset to our collection.

#### RECENT ACCESSIONS

In that vein we would like to take this opportunity to mention some recent acquisitions. We have received two books covering the history of Holy Mother of Consolation Church in Oregon and a yardstick that was used as a promotional item in Bill McKee's campaign for reelection as Town Chairman from the Gorman family. Don Kanel has donated the materials he had at the time the Town of Fitchburg was organizing its campaign to become a city. He included several Fitchburg history books. Jean O'Brien Elefson sent a packet of literature from Fitchburg Massachusetts acquired by the Bi-Centennial Committee when they were writing the book, *Fitchburg..a history*. She also sent a packet of recent literature about our eastern namesake. Jean also contributed material about Joe O'Brien who served in the Civil War. Other Civil War information has been received from Doris Batker Warren, Gene Purcell, and the Kinney family. Gene also donated a picture of Fanny Steve who was a music teacher at the various one room schools in Fitchburg in the 1950s. Don McCord, after seeing the Fitchburg pictures at Tony Romas restaurant, sent a picture and a brief history of the McCord family. Gerald Richardson has donated an aerial view of the Eugene Richardson farm before it was developed. Linda Byrne Kriz has donated the classroom globe from the Fish Hatchery School.

Her father, Tom Byrne, had purchased the globe at the time of the auction when the school closed. The policy of the Fitchburg Historical Society is to accept only printed material, photo images and other paper items related to Fitchburg's history. Occasionally an item small enough to be kept on display at our archives will be accepted. Such was the case of the globe. We thank those who have donated items recently and in the past and encourage others to do the same. We are especially interested in stories and photo images featuring Fitchburg families.



#### TAPES

We are in the process of making copies of the FHS meetings taped by FACT. We have several finished, the most recent being the meeting in which W.W.II veterans spoke of their service years. Hopefully we will be able to replay these tapes at future meetings.

MARK YOU CALENDAR  
ANNUAL MEETING FEBRUARY 16 2003



FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2377 South Fish Hatchery Road  
Fitchburg WI 53711





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW  
April 2003

## ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting for the FHS was held on February 16, 2003. A short business meeting was held at which time Ellen Green presented the latest scrap book she has completed. Ellen does a wonderful job of clipping articles pertaining to Fitchburg from the various newspapers. She has agreed to acquire another scrap book and continue the process. Many thanks to you, Ellen, for the work you do. Tom Clauder showed patches that have been used by the Fitchburg Police Department and has promised to donate a series of them for our archives. We hope to also obtain patches from the Fitchburg Fire Department to add to the collection. The next thing on the agenda was the election of members to the Board of Directors. Richard Blaney, Janet Maves, and Bill Stoneman all agreed to continue on the board. Richard Eggleston was elected to fill the vacancy left by Mary Kinney's retirement. A hearty thank you to Mary for serving on the board. We will miss her but are happy to know she will continue to be a member of the FHS. Sincere best wishes to her on the occasion of her 90th birthday. Our program for the day featured music. Members brought along various musical instruments including a recorder (flute), a bodhran drum from Ireland, a violin, banjo and uke, a chromatic harmonica, a zither and some old sheet music. However, no one offered to play the instruments or sing from the sheet music.



We were then entertained by the Fitchburg Eldersingers. They presented their 2003 program titled "Sing, Sing, Sing". Favorites from by-gone days kept our toes tapping and hearts singing along with the group. Following the Eldersingers the Men of Note from St. Andrew Parish in Verona continued the musical memories with a fine program of old favorites done in male four part harmony. It was a wonderful afternoon and we left with all those great tunes echoing in our heads. Murial Stoneman had her postcard collection with her but the time was short and we did not have time to do it justice. We hope she will bring it again when we have more time to admire them.

## BOARD of DIRECTORS

Al Bach has graciously accepted to take a seat on the board of directors. He will fill the vacancy from last year which expires in 2005. Thank you, Al, for coming to bat for us. Because the farm breakfast falls on the same day as our next regularly scheduled board meeting the board will meet on the following Saturday, June 14. As usual, any member of the FHS is encouraged to attend board meetings. Meetings are held on the first Saturday of June (second Saturday this year), August, October, December, February, and April. They are held at 10:30 in the archives rooms at 2377 S. Fish Hatchery Road.

## DAIRY FARM BREAKFAST

Pat and Tom O'Brien will be hosting the Dane County Dairy Farm Breakfast on June 7th. This will be a wonderful opportunity to showcase Fitchburg's agricultural heritage. The Fitchburg Historical Society will be

having a display in the activities tent. We will need volunteers to help set up on Friday June 6, and to be present at the tent during the hours of the breakfast. Pat and Tom are also looking for volunteers to help serve the breakfast and to be ambassadors of Fitchburg "Good Will". Please call Winnie Lacy at 845-7594 if you are able to help in any of these capacities.



### HISTORIC PRESERVATION WEEK

Historic Preservation Week will be held May 3-11, 2003. Many interesting events will be taking place throughout the area. At this time we have not been informed of any definite activities for Fitchburg but you are encouraged to watch the newspapers for such announcements.

### STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

Patricia Delker of the Fitchburg Historic Preservation Commission has asked if any houses in Fitchburg feature stained glass windows. There is talk about documenting such windows, either old or new construction. If you have stained or etched glass windows or know of any please give her a call at her office in the Fitchburg City Hall, 270 4200.

### ARCHIVES

The heating and ventilation system at the old city hall seems to have been corrected and it is now time to think about trying to correct the mildew problem which developed during the time the system was not working. We shall be scheduling a day when we can take books out into the parking lot, dusting and brushing them, and airing them in the

sunshine. We could a good deal of helpers for the project. Please be willing to volunteer. Please call a board member and volunteer. You shall be called on short notice when we can determine a day suitable for the work. Thank you!

### STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The State Historical Society is still having budget problems. They are expected to make massive cuts which will affect both the library/archives and the historic sites around the state. Various groups who will be affected by these cuts have joined together in hopes the cuts can be alleviated somehow. The Historical Society is taking a bigger cut percentage wise than any other state agency. For a thorough account of the problem you can check the Historical Society's home page at [www.wisconsinhistory.org](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org). You will be able to read just what cuts and measures will have to be taken. Fears that the library and archives will suffer are well founded.

### COMING ATTRACTIONS

May 3 - 11 Historic Preservation Week

May 16-18 Fitchburg Days

June 7 Dairy Farm Breakfast

Watch newspapers for further details

Anytime now: Spring flowers



Watch your gardens and lawns





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW  
September 2003

## GENERAL MEETING

It is once again time for our fall meeting. This year's meeting will be held on October 19, 2003 in the lower level dining room of the Fitchburg Community Center. The time for the meeting is 1:30 P.M.. The theme will be Fitchburg's railroads. We will have a speaker who will give us an overview of railroading in Wisconsin and then we will ask our members to add their memories of the railroads that ran through Fitchburg. Fitchburg was served by two railroads, which ran over three rail lines. The main line of the CNW ran north and south through Syene and Oregon to Chicago. The CNW also had a line that ran east and west through the northern part of Fitchburg to Verona and points west. The Illinois Central Railroad traversed south to north near the western border of the township. The trains came from Freeport Illinois to a station on West Washington Avenue. We would like to hear stories of all three lines. If anyone has photos of trains going through Fitchburg now is the time to dig them out and share them with the members.



## PHOTOS FROM KOHLS

Many of you may have noticed the photos which graced the walls of the former Kohl's grocery store on Fish Hatchery Road are now gone. The management of the Copp's store has graciously donated them to the Fitchburg

Historical Society. We have had them cleaned and repaired and they are now ready to be displayed on the walls of the Fitchburg City Hall. We are indebted to the Copps for their generosity.

## DAIRY FARM BREAKFAST



The Dane County Dairy Farm Breakfast held in June on the O'Brien Brothers farm was a huge success. After a gloomy weather forecast of possible rain the day turned out to be gloriously sunny. A large crowd of people accepted the invitation to eat breakfast under a tent and tour a working dairy farm. Many of these people stopped at the tent featuring ag-related products AND the Fitchburg Historical Society. We were able to present a nice display of farm articles including the butter churn used by Ella O'Dea Lacy that was pictured in a 1933 newspaper article in the Capitol Times. The display also included a grain cradle, corn planting and shelling equipment, lanterns, and photos of how farm work was done before the modern convenience of tractors. We had a photo arrangement of the process of haying that ranges from 1897 to the present. Children and adults were happy to have their pictures taken in our cut-out versions of "Fitchburg Gothic" and Clara the cow. Member Rich Eggleston was our "unofficial" official photographer. He took numerous quality photos around the grounds during the morning. Our hats off to him and a hearty thank you!

## RECENT PROJECTS

One fine day in July four members gathered at our headquarters and cleaned books and boxes and the storage area in general. Because of a break down of the heating and cooling system in the old city hall building many articles had developed a mildew problem. The system has been fixed and it was time to get rid of the mildew. With the help of some elbow grease and sunshine we seem to have conquered (at least for the present) the problem. It was a pleasant way to reacquaint ourselves with some of the historical items we have in our archives.



The display case in the lower level of the Community Center has been changed to a back-to-school theme. We have used a student desk to center the exhibit. The crowning items however are the actual teacher's bell from Stoner School which was a gift from Gordon and Rosalie Vroman and a floor standing globe from the Fish Hatchery School which was a gift from Linda Byrne Kriz. The teacher's desk from the Fitchburg Center School, which is a gift from Doug Stebbins, is too large to use in the exhibit so we have used an enlarged photo of it.

Our most recent project involves the Fitchburg Police Department. We have received an early badge, a uniform patch and the uniform name pin from Mayor Tom Clauder. We hope to gather similar name pins from other retired officers. Our police department has grown from a township constable to a staff of approximately thirty-six officers. The growth of the department is another important aspect of Fitchburg's history. We would like to do a similar project about the growth of the

fire department. The fire department started as a completely volunteer organization and is now comprised of volunteer, full time, and fire student personnel. We would appreciate any gifts of information concerning the fire department from its roots to the present.

## OTHER HAPPENINGS

Reporters from Madison Magazine have contacted several people in Fitchburg in regard to an article about Fitchburg to be featured in the October issue. Be on the lookout for it.

The planning department of the City of Fitchburg has also contacted the FHS. Our activities and acquisitions are being factored into the long range planning efforts of the city. We have been able to present a favorable picture to them. Our work in preserving the history of Fitchburg will not go unnoticed. We need to continue our efforts to collect meaningful parts of Fitchburg's past and of course our present.

The Fitchburg Farmers Market was in need of someone to manage an ice cream social on August 14. Steve Leverantz, a member of the Fitchburg Center management team, called and asked if we would fill in for the group originally scheduled. It was a hot day and the ice cream was a huge success. Besides dishing up ice cream cones and sundaes we had a table with FHS brochures, books and general information. Hopefully people took note of our articles. Part of the proceeds of the event will be used to defray expenses at the Oscar Mayer observatory. The observatory is in dire need of paint and repair.



FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
2377 South Fish Hatchery Road  
Fitchburg WI 53711





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW  
January 2004

## NEW YEAR



Welcome to the year of 2004. "History is Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" takes on real meaning when we see the calendar pages turn to a new year. We tend to think of history being 50 or more years past but that is not the case. The events of the past year are now history. Tomorrow, 'today' will be added to that list.

Have you given any thought to items you might have in your possession that would be an asset to the archives of the Fitchburg Historical Society? We are not looking for museum type items. Printed material and photos are the things we are able to house and preserve. With today's technology it is easy to have quality photo copies made to share. This means you would not have to give up your own treasured memories.

Among the items we are seeking are obituaries of people who have made their home in Fitchburg. Many of us have saved obituaries of family and friends. They would make great resource material for genealogy researchers in the future. Photos are also most welcome for our archives. And of course, we are always begging for people to write a family history. We have histories in our collection that range from single sheets of school composition paper to hardbound volumes that cover many generations. Both are equally welcome.

## GENERAL MEETING

The October General Meeting, with the theme "Railroads of Fitchburg" was very enjoyable. Vern Brummel showed slides and talked to us about the Chicago Northwestern Railway that ran through Syene and Oregon and then to Chicago and of the other CNW line that

traversed the northwest corner of Fitchburg to Verona and beyond. He also had information on the Illinois Central line that ran from Freeport, Illinois to Madison's near west side. Various members of the audience offered their own reminiscences of living near the lines. Their stories were captured on video. Printed copies of their stories have been added to our archives. We thank them for sharing their memories with us. If you have stories of the railroads you would like to share with future generations we have just the place for them to be preserved!



## ANNUAL MEETING

Our Annual Meeting will be coming up Sunday, February 15, in the upstairs meeting room of the Community Center. The meeting will start at 1:30p.m. with a short business meeting. February is membership renewal month. A blank is included with this mailing. Bring it with you the meeting or mail it to the address on the form.

It is time again to consider being part of the Board of Directors. Every year we elect four members to serve for a term of three years. The Board meets on the first Saturday of the even months of the year: February, April, June, August, October and December. This is a great opportunity to get involved with the inner workings of the FHS. It would be a treat to see new faces on the board - please consider volunteering.

After the business portion of the meeting we will proceed to the program for the day; a slide presentation of stained glass windows in Madison. Ann Waidelich, who is a member of Historic Madison Inc., will do the honors. Since this date is close to St. Valentine's Day we also ask members to bring in their own cherished valentines

from the past to show to the members.



#### CENTURY FARMS AND HOMES

We have again received applications from the Wisconsin State Fair organizers for Century Farm and/or Home recognition. To be eligible the farm (in whole or in part) or home must have been in continuous family ownership for 100 years. There is also a program for Sesquicentennial awards for property that has been in continuous ownership for 150 years. Those qualifying will be recognized at a special breakfast program held during the Wisconsin State Fair. The tentative date for the Awards Breakfast is August 10, 2004. Applications must be in by April 1, 2004. Details of the event will be mailed to accepted applicants by mid June. If you would like an application blank please contact Winnie Lacy by phone at 845-7594 or by mail at 5897 Whalen Road, Fitchburg. 53711. They will also be available there at the February meeting.

#### KUDOS

Thanks to several members who have given of their time this past year to do some major housekeeping at our "home office" in the former City Hall building. One warm summer day saw Diane Reynolds, Carole Kinney, Catherine Schneider, Janet Maves and Winnie Lacy toting volumes and boxes outside to be brushed and dusted. The room itself was also dusted down. When they finished it looked great! Later in the summer Janet and Carole returned with shirtsleeves rolled up and cleaned the main meeting room. We still have a big project to sort, file and catalog some of the many items we have in our archives. Wouldn't you like to help?

#### Mary Kinney

Death has claimed our dear friend Mary Kinney. She was a charter member of the Fitchburg Historical Society and a former member of the Board of Directors. She contributed to many of our activities; even loaning her wedding dress to be used in our display case. We extend heartfelt sympathy to Mary's family.

Members Josephine Darling and Kathleen Mikow have died this past year. We extend our sympathy to their families also.



#### FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

#### Dues for One Year:

Junior Historian (under 18)	2.00
Individual	5.00
Family	10.00
Business	20.00

Dues can be paid at the annual meeting or mailed to: Fitchburg Historical Society  
Janet Maves, Treasurer  
5781 Chapel Valley Road # 206  
Fitchburg, WI 53711

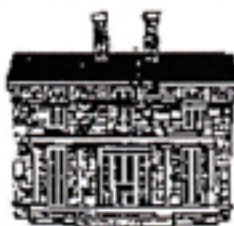
Membership cards can be picked up at the annual meeting or if you wish to have one sent please include a self addressed stamped envelope.



# Fitchburg Historical Society



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Stark House

HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW



Fish Hatchery Road and McKee Road in 1980

Photo © Arlan Kay



Same intersection (relocated to the south) today

Photo by Rich Eggleston

## ***Our Oct. 10 Meeting:*** **The Changing Face** **Of Fish Hatchery Road**

Architect Arlan Kay lives in the town of Oregon, and like many Fitchburg residents, he has been navigating Fish Hatchery Road for years.

Unlike most of us, though, he has been taking slides that reflect the changing face of Fish Hatchery Road since the late 1960s.

That face is sure to change further as the busy street becomes the "gateway to Fitchburg."

Join the Fitchburg Historical Society **on Sunday, October 10, to see what Kay has seen.** Everyone is welcome!

The meeting begins at **12:30 p.m.** in the community room of the **Stark Realtors Building** at **2980 Arapaho Dr.**, on the northwest corner of Seminole Highway and McKee Rd. Come around the back: Seminole to Croix to Arapaho.

## Fitchburg: where development ebbs and flows

By Rich Eggleston

Development in Fitchburg never stops, but it does go in spurts. One of the biggest growth spurts (in percentage terms) Fitchburg has seen occurred in the early 1970s, when apartment developments sprang up in northern Fitchburg.

The number of dwellings in the then-town more than doubled from 1970 to 1973, according to Fitchburg's 1974 land-use plan, with apartments accounting for more than 90% of the new units.

Single-family home builders weren't sluggards during that period either. There were 190 single-family homes constructed during those three years, mostly in subdivisions, the Dane County Regional Planning Commission noted.



Bulldozer poised to move earth at new Oak Meadow subdivision, July 10, 2004

## Rosalie Vroman dies

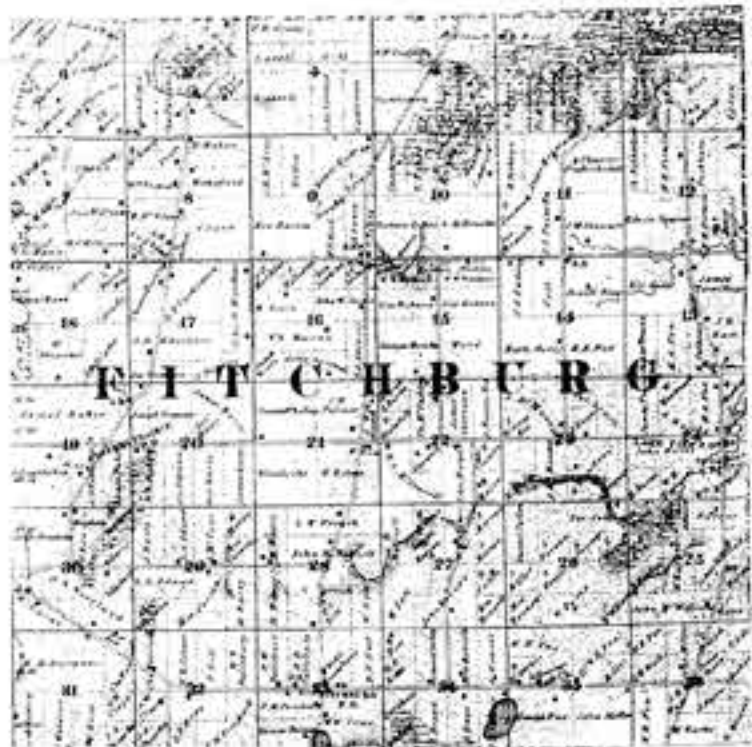
Rosalie W. Vroman, a long-time member of the Fitchburg Historical Society, passed away May 3. She was 88.

Rosalie married Gordon Vroman in 1938. She was active in St. Andrew Catholic Church, Verona, and raised four children.

Gordon and Rosalie Vroman's children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren are descended from the first permanent settlers in Fitchburg.

The pioneering Vroman brothers, William, George and Joseph, began farming in 1839 and built the first home between Madison and Monroe.

The Vroman homestead is in Section 20, T 6 N, R 9 E. (see map at right)



Fitchburg Plat Map, 1861

(from the Society archives)



## Fitchburg honors fallen hero

By Rich Eggleston

On Memorial Day, 2004, Fitchburg honored the memory of its fallen war heroes with a touching tribute to Cpl. Robert James Schley, who died in combat in Vietnam.

Schley, 23, was killed in April, 1967, during a fierce battle for Hill 881 just south of the Demilitarized Zone near Khe Sanh.

Those who gathered at the Harry Whitehorse "Vietnam Warrior" sculpture at Gorman Wayside Park, 2377 S. Fish Hatchery Rd., heard a comrade of the fallen Marine's, "Doc" Rod Hardin, tell of Cpl. Schley's bravery on other missions in the months before the battle for Hill 881.

Hardin also read from the citation accompanying the Navy Cross awarded posthumously to Cpl. Schley, and described how the young man fought on though grievously wounded.

"By his dauntless courage, initiative and indomitable fighting spirit, (Cpl. Schley) served to inspire all who observed him and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service," the citation states. "He gallantly gave his life for his country."

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### It's a fact...

Andrew and Michael Kinney came to Fitchburg in 1844. Six generations later, Kinneys still live in Fitchburg.

— Fitchburg Star, July 15, 2004.



Niles and Hazel Schley, Cpl. Robert Schley's parents, at Fitchburg's Memorial Day, 2004, observance

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## Bill Stoneman dies

Farmer, longtime Fitchburg assessor and member of the Fitchburg Historical Society William Thomas "Bill" Stoneman passed away July 11, 2004, in the farm home in which he was born, on the land that his parents, Edgar (Ted) and Gladys, had farmed since 1918.

He attended the one-room Syene School on the corner of Syene and Lacy Roads, and the old Wisconsin High School on the UW campus. He was Fitchburg's assessor for 44 years until his retirement in 1997, and saw the community swell from a rural haven to a teeming suburb.

He fondly remembered horse-and-wagon milk delivery, when electricity came to his family farm in 1943, and attending the one-room country school, a *Madison Magazine* feature article noted shortly before his death. Yet he understood the future as well as the past, the magazine added.

"It is sad to see so many acres of farmland turned into parking spaces," he told assistant editor Judy Frankel. "But with the location of Fitchburg, it is just inevitable."



**Fitchburg Historical Society**  
Janet Maves, Treasurer  
5781 Chapel Valley Rd. #206  
Fitchburg, WI 53711





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

MARCH 2007

The Fitchburg Historical Society held its Annual Meeting on Sunday February 18 in the dining room of the Community Center. An election was held to fill in some vacancies on the Board of Directors. New Board members are Kay Harty, Adrienne Imilkowski and Winnie Lacy. They join current members Richard Blaney, Mike Engelberger, Carole Kinney, Diane Reynolds, Janet Maves, Rich Eggleston, Muriel Stoneman, and Roger Tesch. We still need one member to fill our twelfth position on the board. If anyone is interested in helping out on the inner workings of the FHS please call Richard Blaney (271-6539) or Carole Kinney (271-1132). Board meetings are held four times a year on Saturday mornings and are kept brief and to the point.

Two events in the near future were discussed at the meeting. The Dane County Historical Society is having a meeting on Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at the Lussier Family Center at Lake Farms Park. The topic of the meeting will center on the early Irish settlements of Fitchburg. Watch for details in the newspapers. The FHS will sponsor a "picnic in the park" in early June. This will be in conjunction with Wisconsin Historic Preservation week. (albeit a bit late, WHP is in May.) The "picnic" will be held at the Oak Hall Cemetery on County Highway M. This will be a reminiscence of the annual cemetery clean-up day for members of the Oak Hall Cemetery Association. We will not be doing any clean up work but will tell stories about the origins of the cemetery, some of the settlers who are buried there and the expansion of the pioneer burial ground to a Fitchburg City cemetery. Details will follow.

This being February, payment of annual dues is in order. If you did not renew your membership at the time of

McCoy Open House you can send your check to Janet Maves, 5781 Chapel Valley Road, #206, Fitchburg, 53711. Single adult dues are \$5.00 and family dues are \$10.00.

After the business meeting was finished we were treated to a talk by Rick Murphy who is a long standing (I didn't say old time) employee of radio station WIBA. He gave an interesting talk about the history of the station and then led us down memory lane with inside stories of some of the on air personalities whose mellow voices have graced the air waves in the past. Who knew what shenanigans took place in front of and in back of the microphones!

It is also our sad duty to report the death of two of our long standing members. Mary Dunn O'Brien, a charter member, died on February 9<sup>th</sup>. Mary was a life long resident of Fitchburg living her entire life within one mile of her girlhood home. Theresa Femrite, another longtime member, died on Feb. 22nd. Our condolences are offered to their families.

## HISTORY

We are taking this opportunity to acquaint our new members and to reacquaint former members with some of Fitchburg's history.

Many of you who joined the FHS at the McCoy open house are probably not aware of Fitchburg's past. Two excellent books documenting the progression of what is now the City of Fitchburg are available for purchase at the FHS. They are also available for purchase at the front desk of the Fitchburg City Hall. *Fitchburg: a history* was compiled by the Fitchburg Bicentennial Committee in 1976 (reprinted in 1998 with an added index).



*Irish Settlers of Fitchburg, Wisconsin 1840 - 1860* was published by Thomas P. Kinney in 1993. Both books have excellent background material on the formation of Fitchburg beginning in 1833 with the survey done by Lorin Miller. The books are also available on loan from the South Central Library System and the State Historical Society Library on the UW campus.

Because the early history of Fitchburg is detailed in the aforementioned books we will only dwell on a few interesting facts through the years.

\*\*\*\*\*

Fitchburg started as a 36 square mile Township named Greenfield. The name was changed to Fitchburg in 1853 due to confusion with the Township of Greenfield in Milwaukee County. One of the men discussing the name change was from the area of Fitchburg, Massachusetts. They decided there were no towns in the immediate vicinity with that name so that was why the name Fitchburg was chosen.

The population of Fitchburg has grown from an 1850 census number of 598 to its present level of 22,900. About 1950 the suburbanization of Fitchburg started to take place. Up until that time it was basically a rural farming community. There had been several settlements of homes and small business scattered about the Township, namely Lakeview on the eastern edge, Syene, Oak Hall, and Fitchburg village at the west. These settlements held a variety of businesses at various times, Blacksmith shops, a creamery, post offices, a lumberyard and at times churches all at one time or another were located in these little settlements.

#### GOVERNMENT

The town government started with a Town Chairman, two Supervisors, a Clerk, Treasurer and various other minor elected officials. The seat of government progressed from meetings held in the homes of the supervisors to meetings held in a small frame building built in 1877 at a site located at what is now the highway maintenance building at 2377 South Fish Hatchery Road. The wheels of progress had moved slowly. A motion had been made to the supervisors in 1870 to build a town hall but it was tabled. It was not until 1877 that the supervisors finally decided to take action on the matter and build a town hall. About 1959 a garage was built to house

the growing number of trucks and equipment for the highway department. The small frame town hall was replaced in 1961 with a single story brick office building. This contained offices for the Town Clerk, Assessor, and other departments of the growing township. The building also included a large meeting room with a small kitchen. The Town Board was able to meet in this room. The room was also used for elections, local organizations' events and private parties for residents of Fitchburg.

In the early 1980s the governing board of Fitchburg now increased to five members, petitioned the State of Wisconsin to become a city instead of a Township. This met with disapproval from the City of Madison which had been annexing portions of Fitchburg piecemeal. In 1983 the case was settled in the Wisconsin Supreme Court Fitchburg became a Fourth Class City.

Eventually the large meeting room in the City Hall was converted to more office space. In 1987 the Community Center Building was constructed at 5520 Lacy Road. This building contained a room that was dedicated for use by the City Council for their meetings. Soon, with Fitchburg now a city, the 1961 City Hall was also filled to capacity and plans were made to construct the new building located at Lacy Road site. The new City Hall was dedicated in 1998.

#### POST OFFICES

There were several post offices throughout the Township in early days. These were in homes of some of the residents. Mail was not delivered. The residents went to the Post Office to pick up and send their mail. With the advent of RFD (Rural Free Delivery) in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century mail came to most residents of Fitchburg from the Post Offices in Madison, Verona and Oregon. This is a system that is still used today. However if the correct Zip Code is used mail can be addressed to "Fitchburg". Mrs. Dora Wendt who ran a general store in the settlement of Fitchburg Station on Wendt Road maintained a Post Office in her store until February of 1952. This was the last local post office to close. It had been in existence for sixty-four years.

Stay tuned for further tales of a growing Fitchburg



# Fitchburg Historical Society



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Allen House

HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

## JUNE MEETING

Plans have been finalized for the June General Meeting. It will be held on Sunday, June 10<sup>th</sup> on the grounds of the Oak Hall Cemetery, 5868 County Highway M. The cemetery is located about one half mile west of the intersection of Fish Hatchery Road and CTH M. The time of the meeting is set for 1 P.M. and will feature a picnic lunch. You may bring your own lunch or order and prepay for a box lunch. The box lunch will consist of sandwich of your choice; roast beef or ham. Also included will be fruit salad, chips, cookie and a soda. The cost is \$6.00. We must have the orders in on June 4<sup>th</sup>. Please use the enclosed card to order. Send it and your check to FHS, Muriel Stoneman, 2559 S. Syene, Fitchburg, 53711. The Oak Hall Cemetery Association was started in 1854 by a group of pioneer settlers in the townships of Fitchburg, Oregon and Verona. In 1987 only two member families of the association were still in the area and were no longer able to continue the work that is involved in caring for a cemetery. In accordance with state statutes the cemetery association was dissolved and the property turned over to the municipality of Fitchburg. In recent years the City of Fitchburg has purchased adjoining property and the cemetery is once again available for burials. At the time the City took possession of the cemetery the

Parks Department asked the FHS to do some research and answer questions they had about the cemetery. Some interesting pieces of information turned up. On the day of the picnic docents will be able to share this information with you. We will also be able to give you an overview of the other cemetery in Fitchburg, the Saint Mary Catholic Cemetery located farther to the east on Highway M. In case of inclement weather, arrangements have been made to hold the picnic at the Fitchburg Community Center, 5510 Lacy Road. We will be able to use video equipment and other visuals to "walk" through the cemetery.

## OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

- We have been asked by the Landmarks Preservation Commission of Fitchburg to nominate a member of the FHS to its committee. If you are a Fitchburg resident and would be interested in serving on this committee please contact FHS

MAY  
2007

- Board Member/Alderman Roger Tesch at the City Hall. Or you may submit your name to Deputy City Clerk Tanya O'Malley.
- The Fall General Meeting of the FHS is scheduled for October 21<sup>st</sup>. Time, place and topic are to be determined.

### **HISTORY LESSON OF THE MONTH**

This month's history lesson tells the story of the Fitchburg Historical Society. In 1986 a group of Fitchburg residents met to discuss the history of Fitchburg, which was fast becoming a municipality larger than the rural community it had been for over one hundred years. The attendees were descendants of early Fitchburg settlers and people who were fairly new to the community. They saw the opportunity to preserve the history of Fitchburg and also to preserve the future happenings of Fitchburg. Newspaper invitations for an organizational meeting were extended to anyone who had a desire to learn about Fitchburg's history. A capacity crowd filled the meeting room at the old City Hall. It was decided to take the necessary steps to incorporate as an official historical society. The charter was granted in February of 1987. The FHS is an affiliate of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Council for Local History. A twelve-member board of directors meets six times a year to oversee the society's needs. General membership meetings usually take place in the early summer and again in the fall. The Annual Meeting, with election of board members, is held early in February. The holdings of the FHS are housed in the former City Hall building at 2377 S. Fish Hatchery Road. While we do have some

artifacts, our main collection consists of photographs, family histories, maps, early tax records and poll lists and other significant paper documents. We also have school records from some of the ten one room schools that once were attended by Fitchburg children. We do not have set office hours at the archives but we can make arrangements to open the facility for anyone wishing to do research. Some of the significant projects that have been accomplished since 1987 are: Oak Hall Cemetery Research; memorabilia for the cornerstone at the new Community Center building; Town Chairmen pictures; quilt show; picture day; rural one-room school reunion; memorabilia for the cornerstone at the new City Hall; Saint Mary Cemetery renovation; reprinting of *Fitchburg a history*; signs marking the one room school sites; a survey of possible Indian Mounds in Fitchburg; photo images for the City Hall and the Fitchburg Senior Center; historic presentations to various festivals, school children, scout troops and civic groups; and the petition to rename a portion of Grandview Road in honor of the Vroman family. The picture day in 1990 supplied us with many of the images we have in our collection. People were encouraged to bring in photos documenting Fitchburg's past. A photographer used a 35mm camera to capture the images and the photos were returned to their owners the same day. It was a huge success. Another crowd pleaser was the reunion for students who had attended the one-room schools in Fitchburg. All the schools were represented with some people coming from as far away as Texas and Pennsylvania. Young and old enjoyed retelling stories of their school days.





SEPTEMBER 2007

### FALL MEETING

The Fall General Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will be held on Sunday, October 21, 2007. The meeting will begin at 1:30 P.M. in the Dining Room (lower level) of the Community Center, 5510 Lacy Road. The featured topic of the meeting will be "Your Toys of Yore." We will have a speaker to talk about toys of the past. After the presentation by the speaker we will have an open forum for people to showcase their own favorite toys from their childhood. If you do not have a toy (or toys) to bring feel free to bring a photograph to share with the group. Or you may just wish to talk about a favorite toy or game. Before the October meeting we will be making some changes in our showcase at the Community Center. If you have a favorite toy you would like to have included for several months please call Winnie Lacy at 845-7594 and we will arrange to have it displayed.



### JUNE MEETING

On June 10<sup>th</sup> the FHS sponsored "Picnic With the Pioneers" at the Oak Hall Cemetery on Highway M in Fitchburg. The participants enjoyed their catered box lunch picnic under a clear blue sky with a slight breeze that kept pesky bugs from bothering us. The program opened with Carole Kinney giving a brief synopsis of the St. Mary Catholic Cemetery located about a mile to the east on Highway M. Then Donna Fisker and Winnie Lacy presented a run down on the part the Fitchburg Historical Society played in researching the Oak

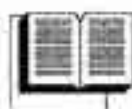
Hall Cemetery. In 1854 early settlers of the area had started the cemetery as a Cemetery Association. It was turned over to the City of Fitchburg when the remaining membership of the association could no longer take care of the cemetery. Those attending the picnic had an opportunity to walk through the cemetery and read for themselves the family histories inscribed in stone. As a result of that meeting a new member of the Fitchburg Historical Society, Teresa Lalor, has supplied us with a great number of obituaries and newspaper accounts of people who are buried at Oak Hall Cemetery. Some of these accounts go back as far as the beginning of the cemetery. This contribution has led to an overview of the obituaries we have on file in our archives. We seem to have a sizable number of obituaries already and this has certainly expanded the collection. We plan to make a traceable file of all the obituaries in our collection on our recently acquired computer. If you have saved obituaries of Fitchburg people through the years we would be happy to have photocopies made so we can add them to our archives for future research.

### GORDON VROMAN

Many of you know the FHS lost one of its charter members on May 29<sup>th</sup> when Gordon Vroman died. He had been a faithful member of our organization and generously shared many of his photo images with us. The Society has received a generous monetary memorial fund in his name. We extend our thanks to Gordon's family for including the Fitchburg Historical Society in the memorials and to all who donated to it. Gordon will be truly missed. We extend our condolences to Gordon's family.

## WRITERS AND READERS

Sarah White, a freelance writer in Madison, is contemplating holding a writing class to be held in Fitchburg at the community center. Sarah will work with participants on a one-to-one basis to develop their writing skills. Stories will include a variety of topics. A collection of stories that relate to Fitchburg may eventually be published in book form. Please contact Jill McHone at the Fitchburg Senior Center, 270-4290, if you are interested in joining the group



### Fitchburg History Books

Both "Fitchburg - a history" and "The Irish Settlers of Fitchburg Wisconsin" are available for purchase at the Ancora Coffee Shop 2690 Research Park Drive. The shop has other interesting books available for purchase.

### CAPITAL REGION MEETING

Several members of the FHS attended the fall meeting of the Capital Region, Wisconsin Council of Local History hosted by the Blue Mounds Area Historical Society. It was an informative meeting featuring a film (slides) presentation of the area from the collection of the Mount Horeb Area Historical Society's archives. Rick Bernstein Field Service Representative of the Council spoke on the importance of volunteers to a historical society. After a wonderful lunch prepared by some of the best Norwegian cooks of the area we were treated to two field trips.



FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

c/o Fitchburg City Hall  
5520 Lacy Road  
Fitchburg Wisconsin 53711

The first trip was to the site of the archeological dig of Fort Blue Mounds. Because of the rain that was falling the trip was made by a slide presentation. The second trip was to the Blue Mounds studio holding the archival material of Gunnar Johansen who was appointed Artist-in-Residence at the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 1939. Mr. Johansen and his wife resided near the village of Blue Mounds.

### DCAGS MEETING

As this newsletter is being prepared several FHS members are planning an exhibit to be held in conjunction with Dane County Area Genealogical Society's September 8th Genealogical Fair. The fair will be held at the Family History Library 4505 Regent Street. The day will include lectures by leading genealogists and archivists, demonstrations of genealogy software programs for computers and instructions on preserving digital photos. The day will also include tours of the Family History Center. The exhibitors' hall will have information on area genealogical and historical societies as well as vendors with books, maps, and supplies. The Fair is open to the public and is free of charge.

### REMINDER!

Mark your calendars for the October 21<sup>st</sup> meeting "YOUR TOYS OF YORE". Bring a favorite toy or a story to tell of how you entertained yourself before the days of television. The 21<sup>st</sup> is a Packer-free day. Refreshments will be served.





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

## FEBRUARY 2008

### FEBRUARY ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will be held on Sunday, February 24, 2008 at 1:30 P.M. in the dining room of the Fitchburg Senior Center, 5510 Lacy Road. The Wartime Home Front will be the theme of the meeting. A short video will be shown and people will be encouraged to tell how their families managed during World War II and the Korean War. We would like to hear stories about rationing, savings-bond drives, V-mail letters, shortages, paper drives and other memories. Stories of separation and reuniting will also be of interest.

The display case will be changed before the meeting to show some articles connected to the wartime home front. Some of the things we would like to feature are a Service Flag, copies of V-mail letters, wartime recipe books or any other items you think would be appropriate. If you have an item that you would like to share please contact one of the following board members; Adrienne Imilkowski, Carole Kinney or Winnie Lacy to have it featured in the case. The display case is security locked. The

items will be returned in about three months.

At the meeting we will have an election of board members. Currently four three-year terms are expiring. New members are encouraged to volunteer to be on a slate of candidates for the upcoming three years. New members bring new ideas.

February is also the time to renew your membership in the FHS. Due to rising costs the Board of Directors has voted to raise the membership fees to \$10.00 for an individual and \$12.00 for a family membership. The dues have remained at the rate of \$5.00 individual, \$10.00 family since the society was formed. You may fill out the enclosed card and bring it with you to the meeting or you may mail it to Janet Maves, Treasurer, 5781 Chapel Valley Road, #206, Fitchburg, WI 53711

### OCTOBER MEETING

The October meeting, Your Toys of Yore, drew and an enthusiastic gathering of members and non-members eager to show and tell stories about their favorites toys. Member Ann O'Brien gave an

interesting background on dolls. Her mother was the owner and operator of The Doll Hospital on Monroe Street for many years. Ann grew up with a family of her own dolls and those that were brought into her mother's shop for repair. Marge Blaney brought the doll she has had since childhood and her stories brought back memories of our own dolls. Trains, tractors, marble runs, building blocks and tops were among other toys featured for the male contingent at the meeting.

### **BOB FAHEY**

Another long time FHS member has passed from our lives. Robert Fahey died on Jan. 5<sup>th</sup>. His funeral was held at Holy Mother of Consolation Church in Oregon, the same church where he was baptized 86 years ago. We send our condolences to his wife Mary, their four children and their grandchildren.

### **ARCHIVES**

Filing and cataloging work is continuing at the FHS archives which are housed in the former City Hall building at 2377 S. Fish Hatchery Road. Recent additions include obituaries of residents through the years. Teresa Lalor gathered the majority of these obituaries. They are being entered into a searchable database to make an easy reference for people who are doing genealogical research. We extend our hearty thanks to Teresa for her dedication and hard work. We have also received several photos of some of the one-room schools in Fitchburg. We are still actively seeking photo images of the farms that once covered most of Fitchburg. We also encourage people to donate newspaper clippings of Fitchburg

that may be have tucked away in scrapbooks or desk drawers.

### **NEW DONATION**



The Fitchburg Historical Society has recently been gifted with a portion of the communion rail from the original St. Mary's Catholic Church located in Fitchburg. The church was located on Highway M across from Fox Hall. In November of 1856 Barney McGlynn deeded two acres of land to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to be used for a church. When the church membership outgrew the first building it was decided to build the new church in the Village of Oregon. Although St. Mary's cemetery remained at that location for a number of years the church building and the parish house were dismantled. Various members of the congregation used the lumber for their own building projects. Edward Byrne used the communion rail for a rail at the top of the stairway in his house on Whalen Road. The Byrne house has recently been torn down and the owners offered the communion rail to the FHS. Although we have a strict policy of what type of items to accept the Board of Directors felt this was too important to turn down. Hopefully we will be able to use it when the FHS gets a permanent home.





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

MAY 2008

### FHS SOCIETY NEWS

The Annual Meeting for the Fitchburg Historical Society was held on February 24, 2008. During the business meeting an election was held for positions on the Board of Directors. The board for 2008 consists of twelve members: Richard Blaney, Laverne Brummel, Richard Eggleston, Kathleen Harty, Adrienne Imilkowski, Carole Kinney, Winnie Lacy, Janet Maves, Ann O'Brien, Diane Reynolds Muriel Stoneman, and Roger Tesch. The program for the meeting featured stories and pictures of WWII. Members and guests shared tales about their experiences during those troubled times. The make-do attitude displayed by the storytellers exemplified the solidarity of the time. Al Bach and his wife, Elsie, had been married the day before the attack on Pearl Harbor. Their stories were at once humorous and poignant. Richard Blaney told of employees at Blaney Seed Farm who went off to war and how he has recently made contact with their families. Other attendees reminisced about Block Wardens, rationing, what their parents did for the war effort, prisoners of war camps, and many other things. The next general meeting will be held in October.

### FITCHBURG IS 25

Fitchburg as a city is 25 years old! As a community it is much older, having been established as the Township of Greenfield in the 1830s. The name Fitchburg came several years later in the mid 1850s. Although city status was granted in 1983, several years of pros and cons went on before it became a reality. The FHS display case at the Community Center is being changed to depict this. Newspaper articles outlining the trials and tribulations of becoming a fourth class city are highlighted.

The City of Fitchburg is doing several things to celebrate the occasion. Banners were hung along major thoroughfares earlier this spring. A lapel pin has been designed and is being distributed to Fitchburg employees, Council members, committee personnel, and various other people. The Fitchburg Historical Society has been given a number of these pins to distribute to their members. If you would like one please contact one the Board of Directors to make arrangements to receive one.



The City of Fitchburg is planning several events throughout the year to commemorate the occasion. They have already sponsored Fitchburg Days, which included trolley rides that pointed out Fitchburg's origins. FHS members narrated the trips. Memorial Day was observed at the Fallen Soldier Statue at Gorman Wayside. Interviews with former Mayors will be televised on FACT cable channel and an ice cream social will be held in conjunction with a Farmers Market in August. Fitchburg will participate in the Good Neighbors Parade in Middleton, business appreciation luncheon will be held in late summer, and the Fire Department Open House will include 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary displays. Last but not least the October meeting of the FHS will center on the progression of Fitchburg from Township to City.

### WHERE WE HAVE BEEN SEEN

Several FHS members staffed a table on the Capitol Square during a recent Farmers Market.

The event was sponsored by the Dane County Historical Society. It was a cold day and only a few people stopped to look at our brochures but the consensus of the other societies represented thought it might be to the various societies' advantage to plan joint efforts to spread the word about local historical societies.

The Fitchburg Historical Society joined other groups on Saturday May 17<sup>th</sup> in the Cultural Tent at Fitchburg Days. Many people stopped and checked our table and purchased the two history books which feature Fitchburg. A video presentation of early Fitchburg ran during the day. On Sunday three trolley tours of Fitchburg took people through the city looking at historic spots from the past. Those who took advantage of the tours were very pleased with what they saw and learned of Fitchburg.



FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
c/o Fitchburg City Hall  
5520 Lacy Road  
Fitchburg WI 53711

## AROUND THE AREA

Here are some activities occurring around the area in the upcoming months.

- Concerts in the Park The second Monday of June, July, and August. 6:30 McKee Farms Park
- Dane County Historical Society Annual Meeting June 7 MATC Downtown Center. *"I Remember Central High School"*
- Attic Angels Parade of Homes with the Dean House of the Historic Blooming Grove Historical Society open for refreshments June 23
- Local History Convention and Historic Preservation Conference Sept. 26 and 27, Radisson Hotel Madison WI
- October 26 General Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society, Fitchburg Community Center.







JANUARY 2009

Once again we take time to turn the pages of the calendar as we start a new year. Let us hope 2009 will be a year without worry, stress or disturbance; a bright year without troubling clouds.

### MEETINGS

The Fitchburg Historical Society ended the year of 2008 on October 26<sup>th</sup> with a meeting celebrating Fitchburg's twenty-five years as a city. The meeting featured a panel discussion with our present mayor, Tom Cluader and former mayors (in person and on video) recounting the trials and tribulations leading up to incorporation and the continued trials and tribulations encountered getting the Township governing body up to a City government. It was a lively and informative meeting.

The first meeting of 2009 will be held on Sunday February 22<sup>nd</sup>. The program will feature the changes in agriculture in Fitchburg and how the land has changed from strictly agriculture to an Ag/City combination. You are encouraged to come and present your own views on how the change has affected you. The meeting will be held in the Fitchburg Room on the upper level of the Community Center.

The February 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting is the Annual Meeting for the FHS. This means it is time to renew memberships and select members for the Board of Directors. The Board consists of twelve members who are the driving force of the society. They serve for a term of three years. It has six scheduled meetings throughout the year, usually on the first Saturday of alternating months. The meetings are painless and a good way to keep in touch with what your society is doing. If you would like to have your name placed in nomination for position on the board please contact President Richard Blaney at 271-6539 or Secretary Adrienne Imilkowski at 271-8614.

### UPDATE TO THE BY-LAWS

The by-laws of the FHS were formulated over twenty years ago when the society was started. It is now time to reevaluate them. The Board will do this by prior to the February meeting and a vote on the updated by-laws will be taken on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. All members of the FHS are eligible to vote on the matter.

### ANDERBERG HOUSE

The Anderberg house, a gracious old Pink Lady, located on Oregon Road is in imminent danger of being destroyed. It is part of the Drumlin Farm Community. It is located on land owned by the Alexander Company, which is building the Novation Campus. The lease on the farm has not been renewed and it is feared the Alexander Company will demolish the house. The FHS Board of Directors held a special meeting to discuss the problem and passed a motion to send a letter to the Alexander Company to reconsider the demolition of the house. The house is a prime example of the Arts and Crafts style with interesting interior décor. This includes beamed ceilings, stained glass and leaded glass windows. There are murals painted on some walls that were done by the builder and his daughter in the early 1900s. It would be a shame for this house to be destroyed. Other interested parties are being notified of the project. We hope this house can be preserved.

### HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

Have you considered joining other historical societies? Membership in the **Wisconsin Historical Society** gives you free admission to the Wisconsin Historical Museum, Reed School and First Capitol plus a 50% discount on admission to the other State Historical Sites including Circus World Museum. It

also provides a stipend to the Wisconsin Council for Local History. The FHS benefits from the Council's expertise.

The **Dane County Historical Society** allows any member of a local historical society a \$5.00 discount on membership in the DCHS. They have a wonderful website that is worth browsing. It can be found at [www.danehistory.org](http://www.danehistory.org). They have recently digitized The Madison Mirror, the high school newspaper of the former Madison Central High School. Their site also has recorded stories read by local writers in the Remembering in Dane County section of their website. The stories are humorous, poignant and compelling. Their authors who are members of various reminiscence writing classes in the area read them.

### CENTURY FARMS

Now is the time to check your family records to see if you qualify for the Sesquicentennial and Century Farm and Home awards that are given out at the Wisconsin State Fair. This award has already honored several Fitchburg farms and families. To qualify for the award, families are required to provide proof of continuous family ownership of a property in the state of Wisconsin for either the last 100 or 150 years. All property owners will be honored at a special Century and Sesquicentennial Farm and Home Award program held on Tuesday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, in conjunction with the 2009 Wisconsin State Fair, August 6 – 16. Honorees will receive complimentary admission tickets to the fair, an invitation to the awards breakfast sponsored by Hillshire Farms, a commemorative photo, a certificate and an outdoor display sign provided by Hillshire Farms, a longtime program sponsor. To request a copy of either application, write to Century or Sesquicentennial Farm & Home Program, 640 South 84th Street, West Allis, WI 53214, or call Jill Albanese, Program Coordinator, at 414-777-0580. Or you may call the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection's Bureau of Farm Services at 1-800-942-2474. The deadline for applications is March 1, 2009. Only one certificate is issued per property.

### NEWS OF OTHER SOCIETIES

The **Mount Horeb Area Historical Society** (MHAHS) has a wonderful museum. At present it is closed for the winter but will reopen May 1<sup>st</sup>. You may call 437-6486 to check on hours of operation. The MHAHS is also working on Phase 1 for the creation of the Southwestern Dane County Heritage Center. They already have an impressive Archive and Museum and will realize a Cultural and History Center as well.

The **Historic Blooming Grove Historical Society** operates the Dean House on Monona Drive. The house is open for tours during the year and sponsor Back Porch Concerts during the summer. Call 222-5783 for more information.

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Annual Meeting: February 22, 2009  
Fitchburg Room, upper level of the  
Fitchburg Community Center  
5510 Lacy Road  
1:30 P.M.

Dues can be paid at the meeting or sent to Janet Maves, Treasurer, 5781 Chapel Valley Road # 206, Fitchburg WI 53711

Single:	10.00
Family	12.00
Corporate	25.00

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE AND ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Remember

HISTORY IS YESTERDAY

TODAY

AND TOMORROW





Dear Members of the Fitchburg Historical Society:

The Board of Directors of the Fitchburg Historical Society has decided to update the ByLaws that were originally written in 1987 when the Society was established. It is required that we notify the members, so we are sending you the revisions of the ByLaws for your review. Members present at the Annual Meeting on February 22nd, 2009 at 1:30 p.m. at the Fitchburg Community Center will vote to approve the amended ByLaws.

Each reference to the "State Historical Society of Wisconsin" in the By-Laws has been changed to the current title of "Wisconsin Historical Society." Other revisions in the By-Laws are keyed as follows:

- 1) Underlined word or words are "additions." Exceptions to this are underlined magazines.
- 2) Word or words in parentheses are "deletions."

Amended ByLaws:

As time and circumstances and the will of the members dictate, this corporation may establish and operate a local history museum, a local history library, a local collections and storage facility, and one or more historic sites.

The president shall cause applications for state and federal tax exempt status to be made, and such status shall be kept in force through the filing of subsequent annual reports as required by the Internal Revenue Service and the Wisconsin Department of (Revenue) Regulation and Licensing.

The expenditure of funds to pay for speakers and other expenses of meetings and special events for the members and/or for the general public; for tours; (for junior historian projects); for miscellaneous museum, etc....

N.B.: Classification of "junior historian" was discontinued in the past.

Memberships shall be of (four) three classes as follows: individual, family, (junior historian), and business. (and professional).

The annual dues for each class of membership shall be (as follows: individual, \$5.00; family, \$10.00; junior historian, \$2.00; business and professional, \$50.00.) determined at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Non-adults included in family memberships (and junior historian members) shall not be entitled to vote etc....

The Board of Directors shall consist of (8) twelve directors-at-large and those officers to whom Board status is imputed under provisions of Article IV. of these ByLaws.

Other officers, such as parliamentarian, sergeant-at-arms, chaplain, curator, archivists,

historian, etc., may be elected or appointed as the Board of Directors may determine.

Officers without Board rank as specified in Section 1(b), Article IV, shall be elected or appointed by the Board of Directors at the annual election meeting to specified or indefinite terms consistent with the nature of their duties and as determined by the Board.

The annual meeting of this organization shall be held (not later than the 15<sup>th</sup> day) in the month of February of each year. Other regular meetings of the membership shall be held (at least quarterly or as determined at the annual meeting) upon notification of the membership.

The organization shall receive without charge such publications and periodicals as the Wisconsin Historical Society shall determine, but such publications will include the Wisconsin Magazine of History, (Badger History), (Then and Now), and Columns.

N.B.: Badger History and Then and Now have been discontinued.

This organization shall be a member of the (South Central) Capitol region of the Wisconsin Council for Local History, etc.....

These ByLaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of members present or voting by proxy at any regular meeting or special meeting called for the purpose, provided the amendment is (either) submitted in writing to the membership 30 days prior to the meeting (or presented for an announced open discussion at the meeting prior to the one set for action on the amendments).

It is hereby certified that the forgoing ByLaws of this corporation were adopted by the initial Board of Directors of the Fitchburg Historical Society, Inc. at the meeting in Fitchburg, Wisconsin, on (this) the 12<sup>th</sup> day of August, 1987 by the following vote:  
etc.....

These ByLaws were amended by the membership on February 22nd, 2009.





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

**AUGUST 2009**

*April*

## ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society was held on February 22, 2009 at the Fitchburg Community Center. Minor changes to the by-laws of the Society were presented to the membership present. Those attending voted in favor of the update. Nominations for candidates to the Board of Directors were presented. The slate of candidates consisted of Richard Blaney, John Darling, Rich Eggleston and Janet Maves. No additional candidates were nominated from the floor. A voice vote approved the slate as presented. The meeting was then turned over to the program for the day. Its theme was "The Changing Face of Agriculture". Rich Eggleston gave a power point presentation showing the changes in agriculture in Fitchburg. Roger Cohee added an informational section showing the change of the amounts of agricultural land in Fitchburg and how the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee would like to see land in Fitchburg continued in the production of crops. There was also a display of various farm and home items that are no longer used in today's lifestyle.

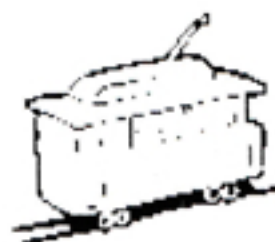
## DANE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The DCHS is sponsoring a National History Day Preview Open House at the Lussier Family Heritage Center, 3101 Lake Farm Road. Student historians in grades 6 to 12 will present their exhibits, web sites, video documentaries and performances based on the theme, "THE INDIVIDUAL IN HISTORY; ACTIONS and LEGACIES". These students are vying to represent Wisconsin at National History Day competition in Washington, D.C. This is an exciting academic adventure that helps students learn about historical issues, people and events. In Wisconsin NHD is sponsored by the Wisconsin Historical Society. The April 18th open house starts at

1:00. Members of the FHS or any other historical society in Dane County can become members of the DCHS at a reduced rate. An individual with membership in another society can join DCHS for \$10.00. Likewise a family membership is \$15.00. The DCHS has an interesting website: [dchs@danecountyhistory.org](mailto:dchs@danecountyhistory.org). One of the featured links is called "Remembering Dane County." On it you can listen to members of local reminiscence writing classes reading their essays and stories. Check it out..You will enjoy it..And perhaps it will inspire you to write your own reminiscences.

## FITCHBURG DAYS

Fitchburg Days are scheduled for May 15, 16, and 17 at McKee Farms Park. There will be fireworks, music, carnival rides, games for children, police auction and food. Trolley tours narrated by FHS members will take place on Saturday and Sunday at 10:30, 12:30 and 2:30. The FHS will also have a display in the Cultural Tent. Come and enjoy the spirit of the celebration.



## SESQUICENTENNIAL

Fitchburg farms or homes that have been in one-family ownership for 150 years are eligible for recognition at the State Fair in August. If you are eligible and would like to fill out an application for this award please contact the FHS Secretary, Adrienne Imilkowski at 271-8614.

## JUNE AT THE SENIOR CENTER

Jill McHone, Fitchburg Senior Center Director, is planning a June program featuring weddings, old and new. If you have bridal attire or memorabilia you would like to share please contact Jill at 270-4290. Be sure to watch for an announcement of the program and save the date to attend. Also the FHS maintains a display case at the Senior Center. It has been recently been updated to a spring theme, Gardens of Fitchburg. Photos of gardens both public and private are featured. There are an amazing amount of green thumbs in our community.

## TONY ROMAS

Tony Romas Restaurant on Cahill Main has closed its doors. The historic Fitchburg photos that adorned the walls have been returned to the Fitchburg Historical Society. The Board of Directors has decided to store the photos until they can be put on display in the rooms dedicated to the FHS in the new Fitchburg library.



## MEMBERSHIP

This will be your final notice for renewal of dues in 2009. If your address label is marked with a star we have not received your membership for the year 2009. Please send your renewals to Janet Maves, Treasurer, 5781 Chapel Valley Road #206, Fitchburg, WI 53711. Dues are \$10.00 for a single membership, \$12.00 for family. If we are in error please accept our apologies and contact Janet at 271-5076.

## FUTURE PROGRAMS

Do you have something special you would like to have featured at an upcoming meeting? Please contact a board member with any or all suggestions. We would like to know what you are interesting in hearing. You may make your suggestions to any member of the FHS Board of Directors.

For your reference here is a list of the Board of Directors of the FHS:

- Richard Blaney, President 271-6539
- Roger Tesch, Vice President 271-2259
- Janet Maves, Treasurer 271-5076
- Adrianne Imilkowski, Secretary 271-8614
- LaVerne Brummel 273-2310
- John Darling
- Rich Eggleston 845-6754
- Kay Harty 271-4276
- Carole Kinney 271-1132
- Winnie Lacy 845-7594
- Ann O'Brien 271-3579
- Diane Reynolds 277-9046



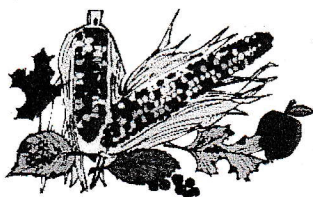




HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

SEPTEMBER 2009

### FALL MEETING



The fall general meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will take place on Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 in the

Oakhall Room of the Fitchburg Community Center. The Oakhall Room is located on the upper floor with parking at the front of the building. Our speaker for the meeting will be Janice Rice a member of the Ho-Chunk Nation. She will speak on the Native Americans who comprised the original population of our area. Ms. Rice has degrees in education and library sciences and is currently the Outreach Coordinator at College Library, HC White Hall U.W. Madison. She remains active in urban Indian community organizations and maintains close ties with her Ho-Chunk communities. FHS members are encouraged to attend and to bring friends and families along. It would be a good time to expose the younger generation to the history of the area. You are welcome to bring any artifacts you may have and ask questions of Ms. Rice.

### UPCOMING EVENT

On October 10th the Dane County Area Genealogical Society is holding a genealogical fair at the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints, 4505 Regent Street. The event runs from 8:30 to 3:00 and promises to be a day filled with interesting subjects. Speakers include Rick Pifer of the State Historical Society, Pat Stone and others. There will be demonstrations on

preserving family photos and movies. Genealogy software will be demonstrated and genealogy vendors will be on hand. There is no charge for attending. Watch the newspapers for further announcement.

### WRITING YOUR MEMOIRS

Every life has its own unique story. You can start writing your family history for your descendants now. The Fitchburg Senior Center offers two classes to assist you with this project.



Instructor Sarah White, author and historian, moderates one class. There is a fee for this class. The other class is free and is conducted in a less formal setting. It is a supportive group of people who write for their own enjoyment. Marlin Jung facilitates this class. The finished product of either class would be welcome additions to the family history files of the FHS.

### MURIEL STONEMAN

Death has claimed another charter member of the FHS, Muriel Stoneman. Her husband Bill was instrumental in the founding of the FHS in 1987. Muriel was active member of the Fitchburg community. She died on July 19<sup>th</sup>. Her obituary outlined a life filled with generosity and goodness. We will truly miss her.





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

MAY 2010

### Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the FHS took place on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Deborah Henkes was elected to the Board of Directors to replace Ann O'Brien. Thank you, Ann, for your years of service. Richard Blaney has agreed to continue to serve as President of the board, Roger Tesch is Vice-President, Adrienne Imilkowski is Secretary and Janet Maves is Treasurer. Other board members are LaVerne Brummel, John Darling, Richard Eggleston, Kathleen Harty, Carole Kinney, Winnie Lacy, and Diane Reynolds. The February meeting program featured *Rails Through Fitchburg* with our own Verne Brummel as presenter. It was a great success. Verne concentrated his presentation on the Illinois Central and Northwestern lines that ran through Fitchburg from the late 1880s until the 1990s. It was a very informative program with many of slides of the trains and maps of the lines. The program has been made into a DVD, which has been placed in our archives for future reference. A good turn out of members was joined by others who had learned of the program. The display case in the lower level of the Community Center had been changed from a Christmas theme to a railroad theme to enhance Verne's presentation. Several area model railroad club members have loaned us items featured in the case. This display will remain for the foreseeable

future. The Board of Directors is always looking for themes for upcoming programs. If you have ideas for a program of interest to our members please let someone on the board know about it.

### Member news

Don and Judy Taylor, Fitchburg residents and members of the FHS, have been featured in the member profile section of the Wisconsin State Historical Society latest issue of *COLUMNS*. Don and Judy also belong to the Historic Blooming Grove Historical Society. Several members of the FHS participated in Stone Prairie School's Cultural night in late April. The event featured displays centered on the various cultures that are represented in the school's population. Our contribution featured Ireland's presence in Fitchburg and the naming of Stoner Prairie School. (It did not get its name from stones on the prairie but from the man who first broke land on the adjoining prairie, John Stoner.)

### Upcoming events

The Fitchburg Senior Center and the Fitchburg Library are co-hosting a very special program, "A Century of Hats" (1860-1960) with Heather Edgington. The program will be held on Monday, May 24th at 1:00 P.M. in the dining room of the Senior Center at the Fitchburg Community



Center building. From the sunbonnet to the pillbox, there is an exquisite array of hats in this show. Heather will entertain you and educate you while staging an interactive hat show with guest as models. And what would a vintage hat show be without a tea party? Wear your favorite hat, bring your favorite teacup and enjoy classic English tea and sweet treats. For planning purposes reservations are requested and can be made by calling the Senior Center at 270-4290. It sounds like a very interesting program. May also brings Fitchburg Days. This year's celebration will be on the weekend of May 21 to 23 at McKee Farms Park. Watch local news outlets for details.

**Fitchburg Historical Society**  
c/o 5520 Lacy Road  
Fitchburg WI 37111

#### **Newsletter by email**

In order to keep costs down we are setting up an email list for the newsletter. If you would like to receive the newsletter by email please send your current email address to [pwlacy@chorus.net](mailto:pwlacy@chorus.net) . In the future we hope to be able to have our own email facilities at our new home in the soon to be built Fitchburg Library.

#### **Membership**

If the number "09" appears on your mailing label it means your membership for 2010 has not been renewed and this will be the final newsletter you will receive. If you wish to continue membership please send your dues to Janet Maves, 5781 Chapel Valley Road, #206, Fitchburg WI 53711. Dues are \$10 for a single and \$12 for a family.



HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

APRIL 2011

Spring is here and not a moment too soon. The time for the Annual Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society is approaching although it will be about five months later than usual. We will meet at the new Fitchburg Library after its opening in July. Our meeting will be held on Saturday, July 30<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 in the afternoon in the Thermo Fisher Conference Room on the second floor of the library. This will give those attending a chance to see what the building has to offer and a chance to see where the Historical Society will be located in the building.

The FHS will have office space and a room for local history, The Fitchburg Room, which dedicated to the founding families of Fitchburg. There will also be storage space for our collections in the climate-controlled basement. Contributions designated for the Fitchburg Room can be sent to the Fitchburg Public Library Capital Campaign Committee, Box 404, 2935 S. Fish Hatchery Road, Fitchburg WI 53711. All contributions will be acknowledged in the FHS location.

Perhaps because of the delayed Annual Meeting several members have not sent in their membership renewals. This can be done before July by contacting Janet Maves at 5781 Chapel Valley Road, # 206, Fitchburg, 53711. Dues are \$10.00 for a single member and \$12.00 for a family membership. A small x on your mailing label indicates we have no record of your membership for 2011. If this is in error please

accept our apologies and contact Janet. It is an added benefit to include your email address. The society only uses the email addresses of members to send out short reminders between mailed newsletters.

The Annual Meeting will be relatively short, and the program to follow will feature a musical presentation by The Special Edition Trio. They will perform a series of tunes that span the years that represent the 175 years of Dane County. The meeting is open to members and non-members alike. Guests are always welcome.

Among several important items on the meeting's agenda will be a vote to accept the newly revised by-laws. A preview of the revisions follows:

The Board of Directors of the Fitchburg Historical society has decided to update the Bylaws that were originally written in 1987 when the Society was established, and updated in 1998 and 2009. It is required that we notify the members, so we are sending you the revisions of the Bylaws for your review. Members present at the Annual Meeting on July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at 1:30 p.m. in the Fitchburg Library will vote on the following amendments:

The membership year shall begin on April 1st. New members joining after January 1st shall remain members through March 31st of the following year without additional charge.



The annual meeting of this organization shall be held in the month of April. Other regular meetings of the membership shall be held upon notification of membership.

Presented by Board of Directors of the Fitchburg Historical Society

Another important item on the meeting agenda will be a vote for members of the Board of Directors. The Board meets six times a year, on the first Saturday of February, April, June, August, October and December.

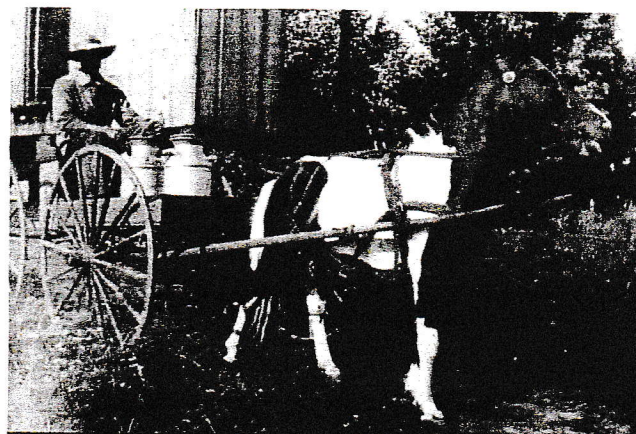
Several things the board has discussed recently are the placements of photos on kiosks in the area. The Dane County Historical Society has asked permission to highlight Fitchburg on their kiosk at the Dane County Airport. This will be the second in the series of communities they will feature throughout the year. The kiosk is located at the far end of the airport concourse, near the escalator bringing incoming passengers to the main floor. Be sure to check the highlights of Dane County as it celebrates its 175<sup>th</sup> year Anniversary. The Fitchburg section will appear soon and will be in place for only a short time. However other communities will be featured throughout the year.

The Illinois Central railroad tracks from Freeport to Madison have now been turned into a "Rails to Trails" bike route. There is a possibility the DNR will be installing a historical marker at the Wendt Road site of the former stop at Fitchburg Station. Hopefully we will be able to provide cyclists and walkers with a bit of history of the area.

May is Historic Preservation month and the Wisconsin Historical Museum would like to

invite you to a special Taste Traditions of Wisconsin Event. It will be an evening with award winning author of rural history and chronicler of country life Jerry Apps as he examines the role barns have played in Wisconsin's farms and pastoral culture. The event will take place on Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup> from 6:30–9:00 p.m. at the WHS Museum. The museum is located at the corner of State and Carroll Streets. Barns present distinctive architecture that expresses the pride and practicality of Wisconsin farm families. See why these special buildings are being saved, repurposed, and honored for their faithful and sturdy service at a time when barns as we know and remember them are in danger of fading into the past. Underground Food Collective Catering will create a menu using products from local farms to complement this evocative glimpse into Wisconsin's bucolic past, present, and hopeful future. Cost to attend will be \$31.50 for WHS members and \$35.00 for non-WHS members. Registration is due by Monday, May 2. Email [museum@wisconsinhistory.org](mailto:museum@wisconsinhistory.org) or call 608-264-6563 to reserve your space. It sounds like an interesting way to spend an evening.

News from our neighbors: On April 16<sup>th</sup> The Mount Horeb Area Historical Society will be celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their village. The event will unveil two new exhibits in their museum: Ethnicity & the Civil War, and Stories in Stitches: Quilts of Southwestern Wisconsin. A newly published, limited edition book, *Then and Now*, a past and present look at Southwestern Wisconsin will also be featured. The museum is located at 100 S. Second Street, Mount Horeb. All are invited to attend.



Illinois Central RR Milk Stop at Stoner Prairie





NOVEMBER 2011

The Annual Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society was held on July 30, 2011 in the Thermo Fisher Room of the new Fitchburg Public Library. Vice President Roger Tesch, sitting in for President Richard Blaney who is on sick leave, called the meeting to order. Mayor Shawn Pfaff welcomed the FHS to its new home in the Fitchburg Library. A lively group of 55 people attended the meeting. A vote was taken to amend the by-laws. The changes had been sent to the members in a previous newsletter. The amended by-laws included a change of the date of the Annual Meeting from February to April. The membership voted in favor of the changes. Along with the new meeting date it was decided the membership year would go from April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>. If dues are not paid by April 30<sup>th</sup> the person will be removed from the membership list. At present the FHS has 45 members. Votes were taken for the four open positions on the Board of Directors. Verne Brummel, Deb Henke, Adrienne Imilkowski and Carole Kinney were elected by a unanimous vote.

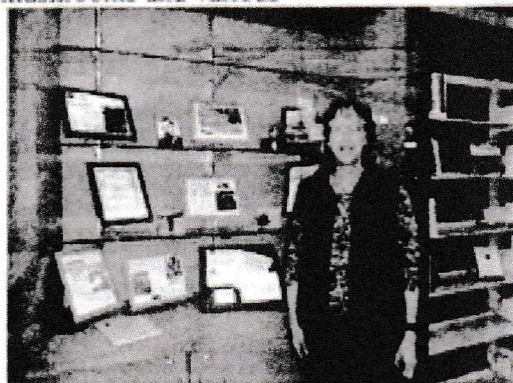
The business meeting was followed by a musical presentation of patriotic songs by the First Edition Trio (plus one). It was a rousing program enjoyed by all. After the program concluded the attendees were able to tour the new location of the FHS, which is located on

the second floor of the new library. The Fitchburg Room, stocked by the library with books about Wisconsin history, is open whenever the library is open. Our permanent collection of files including family histories, photos, local history and obituaries are located in our closed business office adjacent to the Fitchburg Room. We also have archival storage space in the climate-controlled basement of the library. These collections include early tax records of the Township of Fitchburg, records of the various one-room schools, scrapbooks and other ephemera. The collections are open to the general public for research by appointment. We now have a mailing address, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg, 53711; an email address, [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com) and a direct telephone number, 608-279-1783. Our telephone has voice mail capability. Please use any of these to contact us.

The FHS also has two glass enclosed display cases in the library. A large case is located on the outside wall of the Fitchburg Room and a smaller one is inside. When the library opened the large case displayed some of the matted photos that had decorated the walls of the Tony Roma restaurant. The photos were returned to the FHS when the restaurant closed. That display has recently been changed to feature photos, booklets and newspaper articles from the



Lawrence Monthey collection. Professor Monthey's family lived in Fitchburg in the 1960s and 70s. He was a proponent of eating from the landscape; dandelion salads, edible mushrooms and various



Mary Lou Monthey Oothoudt plant life, sometimes called weeds, that are easy to include in the daily diet. He was also instrumental in returning neglected acreage into a productive farm including prairie and forestland. Our thanks go out to the Monthey family who donated this collection to the FHS.

The smaller display case located inside the Fitchburg Room now features two scrapbooks of Lyman McKee. The

books contain photos and articles about Lyman's career in the dairy industry. They are on loan from Lyman's family. The books will be opened to different pages throughout their stay in the case. Be sure to stop in and read some of Lyman's interesting travels and activities.

Now that we have a permanent home with room to organize and work on our permanent collection we are in urgent need of the general membership to help on various projects. This would include help with cataloging, sorting photos, filing newspaper articles, photocopying documents. No one would be expected to work alone. They would work with one of the archivists. This would be a great opportunity to become an active part of the FHS. Please contact Deb Henke by FHS voice mail or email to set up a time convenient for you. We are still asking member and non-members to donate copies of family photos, histories and obituaries to the FHS. These items are the most asked for items when people are doing genealogical research.

**FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
5530 Lacy Road  
Fitchburg WI 53711



HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

JANUARY 2012

The Fitchburg Historical Society finds itself in a whirlwind of activity at the beginning of the New Year, 2011. Our archives have been housed in the old city hall building on Fish Hatchery Road. Late in December we were notified that the building is slated for demolition and the heat and the electricity would be turned off at the end of the 2010. With the help of several city departments we have found storage space and a small work area for our archives. With the holiday season looming before us we asked for and received a reprieve until January 10, 2011, for our move from the old city hall building.

Late in December several crews of volunteers started packing and labeling our precious archival materials. As of this time most of our materials are in a secure storage area. We hope to be able to do archival work in the Fire Station on Lacy Road. If anyone has any articles they want to contribute to the archives we will still be able to process them at that location and then add them to the stored materials. Please remember, we limit our acquisitions to historical paper: photos, newspapers articles, and books etc.. We are not in a position to become a museum. We are especially interested in building up a file of stories of Fitchburg residents and our obituary file.

If you have newspaper articles, family histories or obituaries of people who lived in Fitchburg or were instrumental in Fitchburg's history please send a copy to the FHS in care of the Fitchburg City Hall.

The weather also played tricks on us requiring us to cancel our last board meeting for the year. As a result we have not had time to arrange for our February Annual Meeting. We have postponed it to coincide with the opening of the new Fitchburg Library. We are hoping to be able to have a grand opening meeting to introduce people to our new home in the newly completed Fitchburg City Library. We are looking forward to a good turnout of membership and other interested people to fully appreciate the collection the FHS has in its care.

At the Annual Meeting we will have our election of board members. The term for three board members will expire this year and the fourth position that had been held by Muriel Stoneman has not been filled since her death. If you would be willing to serve on the Board of Directors for the FHS please submit your name to our secretary, Adrienne Imilkowski at 5501 Jan Drive, Fitchburg, 53711. The board meets on the first Saturday of February, April,



June, August, October and December. The board is instrumental in keeping the history of Fitchburg alive and well for future generations.

Since we will not be having the Annual Meeting in February we are asking members to please renew their memberships by mail. A renewal form is included with this newsletter. It can be filled out and sent to Janet Maves, Treasurer, at 5781 Chapel Valley Road, # 206, Fitchburg WI 53711. We apologize for the inconvenience.

President, Richard Blaney, continues to recuperate from a stroke he suffered in 2010. He is currently at the Rest Haven Care Center, 7672 Mineral Point Road, Verona WI 53593. We are hoping he will soon be back in our midst.

**FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
c/o Fitchburg City Hall  
5520 Lacy Road  
Fitchburg WI 53711

## Membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State and Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Single \$10.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Family \$12.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Corporate \$25.00

# Fitchburg Historical Society



HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

## FEBRUARY 2012

### APRIL MEETING

Plans are underway for our Annual Meeting on April 15<sup>th</sup> in the Thermo Fisher Room on the second floor of the Fitchburg Library. The meeting will start at 1:30. After taking care of a few business matters, including election for the Board of Directors, we will feature a program showcasing how families entertained themselves in the days before television. Audience participation will be welcome although not mandatory. What do you remember about what amused you, your parents or your grandparents before the black box took over?

April is also time to renew annual memberships. Memberships now run from April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>. To renew your membership by mail please fill out the attached renewal blank and return it to Janet Maves at your earliest convenience. We would appreciate having your email address prior to the meeting so we can send email reminders thus saving on postage. You can do this by sending an email to [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com). We realize not everyone is connected to the Internet. We can make arrangements to telephone reminders for those who do not have Internet connection.

Watch for details about a special program coming up on Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup>. The FHS in conjunction with the Fitchburg Library will be sponsoring an antique appraisal program. It promises to be a delight. Stay tuned!

### MEMBER NEWS

Richard Blaney, the former president of the FHS Board of Directors died on February 6, 2012. Rich had suffered a severe stroke over a year ago and has been in ill health since. We extend our sympathy to his wife Marge and his family.

We have learned that a long-standing member of the FHS will be celebrating her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Irene Ferguson Larsen grew up on what is now Grandview Road and attended the Stoner School. After her marriage she lived on Purcell Road. She is now a resident of Oregon Manor at 354 N. Main Street, Oregon 53575. Birthday greetings in the form of cards from members would be appreciated.

### CENTURY HOME AND FARM APPLICATIONS

It is again time to make application for century home and farm awards. The Century Farm and Home Program began in 1948 in conjunction with the State of Wisconsin's Centennial Celebration. There are currently 8,445 Century Farms and Homes nestled throughout the Badger State. The Sesquicentennial Program originated in 1998 as part of the State's Sesquicentennial Celebration, and since that time 586 families have been honored. In 2010, 118 Century properties and 31 Sesquicentennial properties were honored for carrying on Wisconsin's rich family farming tradition. Applications for the awards are available through the FHS. To qualify for the award, families are required to provide proof of continuous family ownership of a property in the state of Wisconsin for either the last 100 or 150 years. All property owners will be honored at special Century and Sesquicentennial Farm and Home Award program held on Tues. Aug. 7, 2012 in conjunction with the Wisconsin State Fair. Honorees will receive complimentary Fair admission tickets and an invitation to the awards breakfast sponsored by Hillshire Farms. A commemorative photo, a certificate and an outdoor display sign will be provided by Hillshire Farms. To request an application leave an email or phone message to the FHS at



[woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com) or 608-279-1783.

### DONATIONS

We are still asking people to remember the FHS when they find interesting articles, photos or other memorabilia relating to Fitchburg and its residents. Now that we have a secure home and filing system we can build our historical inventory about the Fitchburg community. To paraphrase our motto, Fitchburg's history is yesterday, today and tomorrow. Recent donations include Dane county plat books dating as far back as 1935. We have also received scrapbooks and posters about the Swan Creek Sewing circle.

The Fitchburg Historical Society is now housed on the second floor of the Library. It has early records of Fitchburg, Fitchburg families, the one-room schools, photos and newspaper articles. It is compiling a list of obituaries of people from early times to present. The Fitchburg Room with books of Wisconsin interest is open when the library is open. The Archives of the FHS adjacent to the Fitchburg room are open by appointment. An archivist can be reached by leaving a phone message at 608-279-1783 or by email at [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com).

### DISPLAYS

The display case that the FHS has used at the Senior Center hallway had been

changed at the time of Veterans Day to honor those who served in various branches of service. This will perhaps be the last time we will use the case at the Senior Center. At the time of the Senior Center's open house to celebrate the new construction they put in a very interesting display outlining the Senior Center from its inception to the present. In the future we will concentrate our display efforts in our cases at the Fitchburg Room at the library. Be sure to stop in and see the latest pages from Bill McKee's scrapbooks that are on display in the Fitchburg Room. The pages in the scrapbooks are changed from time to time. The display case outside of the Fitchburg Room is now featuring an election display dating from Greenfield's (Fitchburg) first election in 1847 to the present time.



### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City State Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

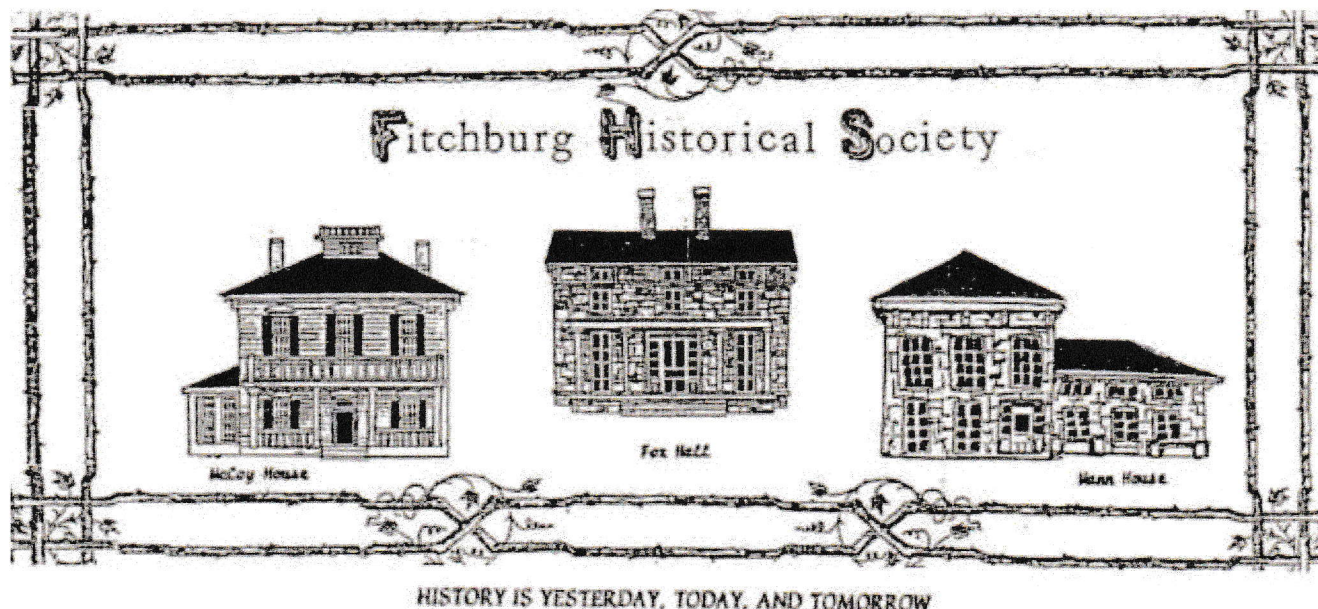
Email \_\_\_\_\_

Single\_(10.00)\_\_\_\_\_ Family\_(12.00)\_\_\_\_\_ Business\_(25.00)\_\_\_\_\_

Mail to Janet Maves 5781 Chapel Valley Road #206 Fitchburg WI 53711

FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
5530 Lacy Road  
Fitchburg WI 53711

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 15, 2012 AT 130 P.M.**



April 2012

The Annual Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society took place on Sunday April 15<sup>th</sup>. Janet Maves, John Darling, Rich Eggleston and Verne Brummel were re-elected to serve on the Board of Director for the coming three years. President Roger Tesch spoke about an upcoming project for the society. A mural depicting an early street scene of Fitchburg Village may be painted on a wall in the Fitchburg Room of the Fitchburg Public Library. A photograph from 1908 will be used as a model for the mural. Word will be sent out when the project has been completed. President Tesch also announced a September antique appraisal program that will be held in

conjunction with the library. Watch for further announcements. Our speaker for the April program was Ruth Olson from the UW's Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Culture. She presented an interesting account of the changes in entertainment through the years. After her talk members contributed a lively discussion of things from their past. In addition Catherine Schneider recounted stories about the activities of the children from Stoner school where she attended. Stoner was one of the one-room schools that existed in Fitchburg before the 1960s consolidation. Carole Kinney told of the Swan Creek Sewing Club that has been meeting once a month



since 1915. The farm wives of that era joined together to expand their world with congeniality, education, and service to the community. Minutes have been kept of all the meetings and scrapbooks have been compiled to show their accomplishments. The early scrapbooks are archived at the Fitchburg Historical Society. The group meets yet today but membership is limited to descendants of the original ladies. To round out the annual meeting toys and photos were displayed to remind us of days gone by.

FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
5530 Lacy Road  
Fitchburg WI 53711

Yearly membership in the Fitchburg Historical Society now runs from April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>. Several members have not renewed their association with the FHS. If you wish to remain a member and stay on our mailing list please send your dues to: Fitchburg Historical Society, Janet Maves, Treasurer, 5530 Fish Hatchery Road, Fitchburg WI 53711 as soon as possible. An indication of you membership status is on the mailing label of this newsletter. Membership fees are as follows:

Single	10.00
Family	12.00
Business	25.00

# FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2012

## LET'S HAVE A PARTY

The year 2012 marks the 25th Anniversary of the Fitchburg Historical Society. To celebrate this event we are combining a special anniversary party with the official "unveiling" of the recently completed mural on a wall in the Fitchburg Room at the Fitchburg Library. The mural, FITCHBURG VILLAGE - EARLY 1900'S, is based on a 1908 photograph of the area of Fitchburg Village. Fitchburg Village was a settlement along the route of the Illinois Central Railroad. The small settlement included a general store, a post office, a feed mill, a lumber company, stockyards and farm implement dealer, a blacksmith shop, the railroad station, a small church and several homes. We were very fortunate to find two artists who did a magnificent job of recreating the village. The other part of the program will center on things that the Fitchburg Historical Society has done in the past twenty-five years and our hopes for the future. Please join us on Sunday, November 18th at 1:30 for this gala event. We will start the program in the THERMO-FISHER room on the second floor of the Fitchburg Library.

## JOHN MUIR

It has recently come to our attention that John Muir, considered to be the father of our National Parks, taught school in Fitchburg in the mid 1860s. The book, "A Passion for Nature: the Life of John Muir" by Donald Worster is available at the Fitchburg Library. On pages 81 to 84 it tells that John Muir taught at a one room school located on what is now Highway M, near the intersection of Fish Hatchery Road. At that time Muir had been a student at the University of Wisconsin studying under Professor Ezra Carr. Muir taught at the Oak Hall School for a short term in the winter of 1861 – 1862. After one term he decided being a schoolteacher was not what he wanted to do with his life and he returned to the University. His roommate when he returned to the University was Charles Vroman, a member of a pioneer Fitchburg family that lived on Stoner's Prairie. The paragraphs that concern his tenure at Oak Hall and the University are quite interesting. Descriptions of some of the novel inventions attributed to Muir were detailed. These included clocks to time students' recitations, a desk that opened books to the appropriate place, and a device that started the fire in the stove at the school so the schoolhouse was warm when he and the students arrived. These paragraphs were taken from Worster's book and are cited to Muir's own autobiography. In the Muir file at the Archives at the State of Wisconsin Historical Library there is a handwritten note from William Frost dated 1920 that says Muir taught at the Lake Harriet School in Oregon Township. It is interesting that Muir taught in the area, regardless of which account is correct.

## FAMILY HISTORY

The motto of the Fitchburg Historical Society is ***History is Yesterday Today and Tomorrow.*** With this in mind we would like to invite Fitchburg people, members of the Historical Society or not, to think about adding their family histories to the archives of the FHS. Deb Henke, member of the FHS, is willing to help, one on one, with anyone who would like to get started documenting their family's arrival to



Fitchburg, whether it was in Fitchburg's early history, the 1900s or even the 21st century. A good example of what can be done to do a basic history is on the desk in the Fitchburg Room at the library. If you are interested in a project like this for your family you can leave a message on the FHS voice mail (608-729-1783) or on our email; [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com).

#### **A GREAT APPRAISAL EVENT**

The Fitchburg Historical Society in partnership with the Fitchburg Public Library sponsored an antiques appraisal event on Saturday, October 29, 2012 at the library. Many people from Fitchburg and other communities enjoyed the appraisal fair because of the knowledge and expertise of Mark Moran who did the appraisals. Mr. Moran has over 20 years experience in evaluating antiques including work on PBS's Antiques Roadshow and as the author of more than 20 books about various types of collectibles. Each of the participants seemed pleased with the evaluations of their family treasures because of Mr. Moran's professionalism. He often provided additional comment or advice to assist the owner in understanding the value or importance of the object being reviewed. The entire appraisal afternoon at the library to find out "What's it Worth?" was a positive and entertaining experience for all.

# FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2013

It is time again for our Annual Meeting! It will be held on Sunday April 28, 2013 at 1:30 in the Thermo Fisher Room at the Fitchburg Public Library 5530 Lacy Road. The meeting will open with a short business meeting at which time we will have the annual election for Board of Directors. Four members have terms expiring: Kay Harty, Winnie Lacy, Dianne Reynolds and Roger Tesch. We also need someone to assume the position of Janet Maves who died during the past year. Her term goes until 2015. This is an excellent time for people who have wanted to become involved with the inner workings of the FHS to step forward. Everyone is welcome to volunteer for any of the positions. We are also looking for people who would like to volunteer to work with a FHS member on the various projects we have on-going. Do you have one half day a month? It would be great to have some new hands to help. Since it is annual meeting time it is also time to renew memberships. Memberships now run from April 1 to March 31<sup>st</sup>. Dues are \$10.00 for an individual, \$12.00 for a family and business membership is \$50.00. Dues can be paid the day of the meeting or mailed to the FHS, 5530 Lacy Road Fitchburg WI 53711. Continuing about memberships: If you received this newsletter in the mail we would appreciate it if you would inform us your email address so newsletters and other FHS business can be sent that way. Thank you.



Nevin State Fish Hatchery ca. 1887

After the business meeting we will be honored to have Doug Morrisette, former Mayor of Fitchburg and past employee of the DNR, to speak to us about the Nevin Fish Hatchery. Many people do not know the background and evolution of this wonderful facility we have on our doorstep. We look forward to hearing Doug and seeing some of the photos and documents we have in our archives concerning the Fish Hatchery.

It is again time for people to apply to the State Fair committee for recognition of one hundred years of ownership of farm or home. An application blank can be obtained from the FHS. Leave a message at 608-729-1783.

The display case on the second floor of the library has been changed to show some of the various neighborhoods in Fitchburg. This will be a changing exhibit. Stop up and see how Fitchburg has grown.

## NOVEMBER MEETING REPORT

An enthusiastic group attended the November 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of the FHS at the Fitchburg Public Library celebrating the society's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the formal dedication of the mural *Fitchburg Village early 1900s*. Several charter members from 1987 membership were present.

After the dedication of the mural in the Fitchburg Room the group retired to the Thermo Fisher Room where President Roger Laurel Tesch opened the meeting by welcoming those in attendance. He introduced Mayor Shawn Pffaf who spoke briefly about the importance of the society and then read a formal proclamation from the City of Fitchburg honoring the society.

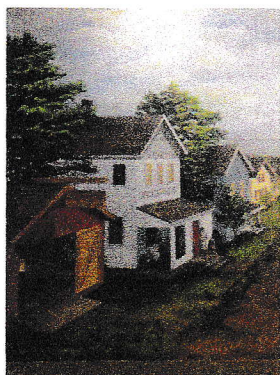
Carole Kinney gave a recap of the very first meetings held in 1986 to organize the FHS. She told about a group of seven people that were instrumental in the establishment of the society and the process they went through to affiliate with



the Wisconsin Historical Society. Besides Carole, Jeanne Sieling and Jean O'Brien Elefson, two of the original committee, were present. Deceased members of the original seven were Phil and Anna Fox, Edna Stoneman Cross and Mickie Schumudlach. Carole also acknowledged Connie Darling and Jean O'Brien Elefson as co-authors of the 1976 volume *FITCHBURG a history*.

Winne Lacy read from a list of some of the achievements the FHS has accomplished in its 25-year history. Among them were the Oak Hall cemetery research, picture day, photos of Town Chairmen for City Hall, the Rural School Reunion Program, and several others. A printout list of the various accomplishments was available for people to take home. If you were not at the meeting and would like a copy to see what the society has done please contact us at our headquarters either by email, [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com), by snail mail at FHS, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg 53711 or leave a message on our voice mail; 608-729-1783.

Catherine O'Brien Schneider talked about the procedure of arranging for the mural to be done; the incentive behind it and the grant for Dane Arts that helped achieved it. The Dane Arts grant along with monies from memorials to the historical society and a contribution from 2012 board members defrayed the cost. Pam Andros from The Dane Arts committee was present and acknowledged.



Partial view of the mural

Rich Eggleston presented a power point showing the method Tom Green and Joan Christgau used to paint the mural on the wall. It was very detailed showing the artists projecting the proposed image on the wall to the finished product.

Laverne Brummel gave an interesting account of the Illinois Central Railroad that ran

from Freeport through Fitchburg Village on its way to Madison. He gave the history of the railroad station and its demise. A collection of timetables and historical documents were available to peruse.

Donna Fisker was also acknowledged. Her grandfather was one of the Lappley Brothers who operated a feed mill, lumberyard and other businesses at Fitchburg Village before a fire demolished the buildings in the 1920s.



Donna Fisker at the Mural

At the close of the meeting cookies decorated with a 25-year logo were served while all in attendance were encouraged to look through the various three ring binders that contained reports of the society's accomplishments. An invitation was extended to go to the Fitchburg Room for a close look at the beautiful new mural *Fitchburg Village early 1900s*. The glass display case inside the Fitchburg Room contains the original photo which was used as a basis of the mural along with other photographic images of the Fitchburg village.

## MEMBERSHIP

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

(EMAIL WILL NOT BE SHARED)

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

July 2013

The Annual Meeting of the FHS was held at the Fitchburg Public Library on April 28<sup>th</sup>. Four current members of the Board of Directors whose terms were expiring were re-elected. Dan Carpenter was elected to fill the vacancy due to the death of long time Board member, Janet Maves. After the short business meeting former Town Chairman and Mayor, Doug Morrisette talked about the Nevin State Fish Hatchery. Doug had worked at the Fish Hatchery all his adult life until retirement. He gave some interesting insights into the workings of the Hatchery. Among things he talked about were how fish are raised and how they are delivered to various streams throughout Wisconsin. He also spoke about the health and vitality of the streams and lakes in the state.

The City of Fitchburg celebrated Fitchburg Days at McKee Farms Park May 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>. A new activity was added to the Saturday program. Fitchburg's Agricultural Past and Present Bike Tour took place with a narrated tour of the Badger State Bike Trail. The ride started just south of McKee Road and continued to the site of the early Fitchburg village along Wendt Road. Some of the places pointed out along the way were the old McKenna stone barn, the Joseph O'Brien creamery, the O'Brien Brothers dairy farm, and the former milk stop known as Beanville. From there the bikers proceeded along Stoner Prairie where John Stoner first broke ground in 1837 and past the Vroman farm which was settled in 1839. The tour then crossed the marsh and wetlands to the site of Fitchburg settlement. Bill Kinney gave a narration

on this little settlement with its homes, a church, businesses, the near-by one-room school and the Illinois Central Railroad Depot. On the return trip the "present" parts of the tour were pointed out; Eplegaarden Orchard, the site of the St. Vincent Food Pantry Garden on Whalen Road and the area of the North Stoner Prairie Neighborhood development. After the approximate seven-mile tour the 25 -30 bikers were treated to ice cream at the starting point.

Work is underway to place a historical marker at the site of the Illinois Central Railroad Depot and the early village along Wendt Road. This is a joint undertaking of the FHS working in conjunction with the Dane County Historical Society. The bronze marker will have two photos and a brief account of the early site. One photo will be a 1908 scene of the road through the village with a horse drawn buggy and the other photo will be an early scene of a train waiting for passengers to board at the depot. We expect this exciting project to be completed by mid to late summer. Watch for news about the dedication of the historical marker!

On April 19<sup>th</sup> the FHS was once again asked to represent the Irish background of Fitchburg at the Stoner Prairie School's Cultural Celebration. Families gathered in the school gym where they could sample foods and be treated to some of the culture of the various ethnic groups that attend the school. Joe and Adrienne Imilkowski along with Bill and Carole Kinney manned a table with items of the Irish heritage in Fitchburg. Pat O'Brien entertained



the crowd singing some Irish melodies. The Irish soda bread served at the FHS table was a big hit.

We are still asking people to add obituaries and photos to our archive collections. If you can contribute stories about your family's connection to Fitchburg we are always happy to include them in our Family History collection. Now that we have a Face Book page we are expecting to hear from people looking for genealogical information.

Our current membership list includes the following: Arlene Ace, Eric and Marge Amlie, Al Bach, Pat Berkan, Ed and Lois Brick, Verne Brummel\*, Jane Byrne, Richard and Berndetta Carmen. Dan Carpenter\*, John\* and Connie Darling, Mary Fahey, Richard Eggleston\* and Anita Clark, Donna Fisker, Kay Harty\*, Alan and Deborah\*Henke, Joseph and Adrienne\* Imilkowski, Genevieve Jackson, Bill and Carole\* Kinney, Tom Kinney, Paul and Milda Lacy, Phil and Winnie\* Lacy, Beatrice Larsen, Mary Lou Monthey Oothoudt, Shawn Pfaff, Dianne Reynolds\*, Bill and Catherine\* Schneider, Barbara Stoneman, Dan and Barbara Takkunen, Alan and Barbara Tereba, Roger Laurel Tesch\*, Fitchburg Chamber

**FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**5530 LACY ROAD**  
**FITCHBURG WI 53711**

Visitor and Business Bureau. (Asterisks indicate Board of Director members.) If your name is not listed here but you think you are a member please inform the membership committee by emailing your information to them at [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com) . If you would like to renew your membership please send your dues to FHS at 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg WI 53711.

Memberships	
Individual	10.00
Family	12.00
Corporate/Business	50.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

(Will not be shared)





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

OCTOBER 2013

### TRAIL MARKER DEDICATION

On Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup> the FHS Fall General Meeting will take place in two sections. The first session will be held at 1:30 p.m. along the Badger State Bike Trail on what is now Wendt Road. (Wendt Road runs north and south between Adams Road and Highway M.) At that time there will be a dedication ceremony of a new Dane County Historical Society marker honoring the early settlement at that site and the Illinois Central Railroad which ran from Freeport IL. to Madison through Fitchburg. The Fitchburg settlement was once the location of a bustling community of homes, a general store that included among other things, a post office, a one-room school, a blacksmith shop, a lumberyard, and the depot of the Illinois Central Railroad. After the short dedication ceremony the meeting will reconvene at 2:30 in the lower level dining room of the Fitchburg Community Center, 5510 Lacy Road. Access will be on the north side of the building with plenty of parking and handicap accessibility. At that time we will be able to view photo exhibits about the history of the settlement and the Illinois Central Railroad. Discussion will be encouraged and it is hoped that FACTv will have a video of the

dedication ceremony ready to view on the big screen TV. You are welcome to attend both sessions and you are especially encouraged to attend the 2:30 session to view the photos and add to the discussion. Refreshments will be served. Membership in the FHS is not required. The Historic Marker is a joint project of the Fitchburg Historical Society and the Dane County Historical Society.

### OTHER SETTLEMENTS

Besides the settlement on Wendt Road there were other early settlements in the Township of Fitchburg that have all but disappeared. Lakeview had an inn and a saloon, Oak Hall had a creamery and a blacksmith shop, and Syene had a railroad stop on the Chicago Northwestern Railway line. The area called "Dogtown", located where Lacy and Fish Hatchery road now intersect, had a butcher shop and a quarry in the vicinity. These settlements had various other businesses and usually a one-room school. You can read about them in the books, *FITCHBURG: a history*, and *IRISH SETTLERS OF FITCHBURG 1840 -1860*. Both books are available for purchase through the FHS.



## FACEBOOK PAGE.

There is now a Facebook page for the Fitchburg Historical Society that is interesting to check out. Just make sure you get Fitchburg Wisconsin, not Fitchburg, Massachusetts. One of the items on the site includes a photo of a boulder with a marker that honors the work Lawrence and Esther Monthey did to restore the native habitat on the farm they purchased on Fitchburg Road. It also tells of the work they each did in their own fields of endeavor. Their children installed the marker. It can be seen on Fitchburg Road, north of Whalen Road or viewed on the FHS FaceBook page. Check out these and other items of interest about Fitchburg. Perhaps it will inspire you to add some of your photos for others to see.

## HELP

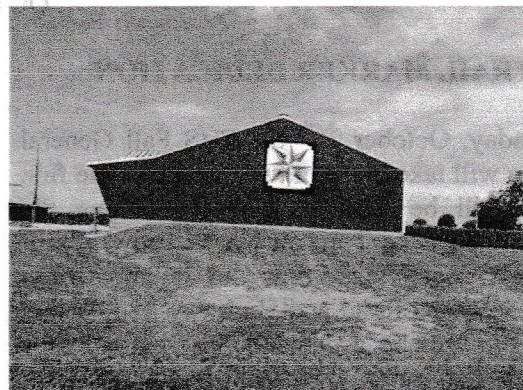
The archivists of the FHS are urgently asking you to add a family history to the collection we have started. The history does not have to be a genealogist's book. A single page or two of your family's arrival in Fitchburg would be sufficient. They are also asking for volunteers from the general membership to help with archival projects such as sorting and identifying photos, filing newspaper articles and copying obituaries. You would not be expected to work alone. An archivist would be working with you. In addition, do you

**FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**5530 LACY ROAD**  
**FITCHBURG WI 53711**

have any ideas for future programs? We are open to suggestions.

## BARN QUILT

The history of American Barn Quilts can be traced back almost 300 years to the arrival of immigrants from the central regions of Europe. Decorating barns with colorful designs and quilt squares peaked by the beginning of the 20th century. Today barn quilts have become popular again with more and more becoming visible. Fitchburg now has its first "barn quilt". There is a lovely barn quilt on the east facing side of the machine shed on the Paul Lacy farm at the corner of Mutchler and Lacy Roads. Paul and Milda Lacy's daughter, Joan Kleinheinz, did the artwork. The pattern, "Mariners Compass", stands out nicely on the green siding of the shed.







HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

**JANUARY 2014**

### **DEDICATION CEREMONY**

It was a chilly, drizzly day on Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup> when members and friends of the FHS gathered along the bike trail in Fitchburg to dedicate a Dane County Historical marker honoring the early settlement of Fitchburg and the site of the Illinois Central Railroad that ran from Freeport to Madison. A contingent of city dignitaries and board members talked about the importance of the marker. The sign shows the early Illinois Central Railroad depot on one side and a 1908 view of the road through the village on the other side. After the unveiling and picture taking, the group traveled to the warmth of the Fitchburg Community Center to view displays of the early days of the area and give some first hand reports of living there. Jean Vroman Nelson who lived there as a child told some interesting stories. Maps and photos were available for people to peruse. FACTv showed a preview of the tape they made of the celebration at the site. We have had favorable feedback from people who use the bike trail about the information that is available on the sign. The following photos show some of the group and Jean Nelson with Mayor Pfaff



### **UPCOMING ANNUAL MEETING**

Mark your calendars for the Annual Meeting of the FHS which been scheduled for Sunday, April 6<sup>th</sup>. Membership renewals will be due at that time. At present the program



is being formulated. It promises to be very interesting. Details will follow closer to the date of the meeting. Mark you calendars and stay tuned.

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

The following column has been copied from *A Walk Back in History* by Florice Paulson, who has put together a compilation of stories from the Oregon Observer.

#### YOU HAVE NOT LIVED..

You haven't lived unless you have belly-flopped on a sled down a snow covered hill\* Skated on a pond\* Toasted wieners and marshmallows over an open fire\* Seen a circus under the Big Top\* Watched an old fashioned circus parade\* Gone swimming in a swimming hole\* Attended a country school\* Smelled peat burning\* Read Shakespeare and poetry\* Read everything you can get your hands on\* Read a newspaper every day\* Seen Old Faithful erupt\* Spent time on a ranch during round-up\* Attended your Junior Prom\* Attended a symphony concert\* Heard and danced to big bands\* Seen at least one professional sport contest\* Smelled leaves burning\* Learned to spend some time with your

own thoughts\* Roller skated\* Shoveled snow\* Pushed an old lawn mower\* Played croquet\* Smelled new mown hay\* Tried to milk a cow by hand\* Seen a rainbow\* Watched a sunrise and a sunset\* Looked at the stars\* Stopped to smell the roses\* Ridden on a train\* Spent time in a museum\* Attended a county fair\* Ridden on a roller coaster\* Smelled bread baking\* And last, but not least, left a worthwhile contribution to your small part of the world.

*This column has been edited to conserve space. The book itself can be found on a shelf in the Fitchburg Historical Society archives.*

### ACQUISITIONS

We have recently received family photos from a long time Fitchburg family to add to our collection. Also documents from Stoner School have been added. We appreciate people, members and non-members alike, who think of us when they are going through drawers and storage spaces and find things that are of interest to the community. We are an ideal place to store these things for future research. Newspaper stories, obituaries and books and photos are of particular interest. Remember, we do not have the space to collect museum type articles. Feel free to contact one of the Archivists if you have something that you think might be of interest for future generations. A message for the archivists can be left on the voice mail of the FHS, sent by email, "snail" mail. (*see below*)

### FAMILY HISTORY

Would a class or a one-on-one session in doing your family history be of interest to you? Several members of the FHS have suggested we sponsor a class to acquaint people with the basics of getting started. Family histories are of great demand. Many school children do little family histories as part of their schoolwork. We would be happy to add them to our collection. They need not be professionally done. There is a fine example of an easy-to-do family history on the desk in the Fitchburg Room at the library. Stop in and check it out and then do something similar. If a class would be of interest to you leave a message on the voice mail of FHS: Phone: 608-279-1783 or at: [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com)





**HISTORY IS YESTERDAY TODAY AND TOMORROW  
MARCH 2014**

The Annual Meeting for the Fitchburg Historical Society will take place on Sunday, April 6<sup>th</sup> in the Thermo Fisher room on the second floor of the Fitchburg Public Library. The meeting will be called to order at 1:30 p.m. One of the items on the agenda will be election for positions on the Board of Directors. Please consider putting your name on the ballot. We will also discuss ways volunteers can help in the Archives. The Archives are a critical part of our organization and some duties are being neglected for want of help. After the short business meeting we will hear a talk by Fitchburg's own Ada Deer. Ada is a member of the Menominee Indian Nation. She has been active in DRUMS and headed the Bureau of Indian Affairs from 1993 to 1997. She will be an enlightening speaker. The display case near the Fitchburg Room will have some interesting things in relation to Ada's work. Stop in check it out. The Annual Meeting is also the time to renew your membership. Be sure to mark your calendar. If you cannot be present at the meeting you can renew by filling out the attached blank and sending it to FHS, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg WI.

\*\*\*\*\*

Here is example of another book on the shelves of the Fitchburg Room:

***A TASTE OF OLD MADISON.***

The book contains recipes from the kitchens of early Madison area settlers including the Fox family of Fitchburg.

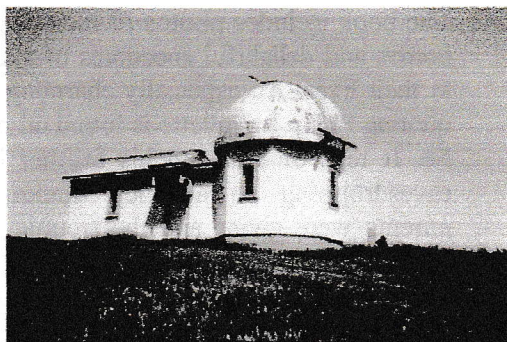
The book includes photos of their elegant homes and delightful anecdotes of events in their lives. An especially charming one quoting Philip LaFollette is found on page 54. It tells of Phil and his brother Bob eavesdropping on a fancy dinner his parents were giving and the trouble that ensued. Some of the early recipes in the book include squatter's corn soup using fresh venison. If fresh venison was not available rabbit, hare, squirrel or wild pigeons could be used. Amounts of butter in various recipes varied between the "size of an egg", and "size of a walnut." Liquids were sometimes measured by "a tea cup full." Main dishes included hasenpfeffer, quail, potted passenger pigeon and snipe. The book is a quaint look at what life was like in the early 1800s.

\*\*\*\*\*

We have received a donation from a friend of the FHS, Doris Koster, which will be a great addition to our files. Part of the donation includes slides her husband Art took of some old photos of the Stoner School, ca. 1915, as a swing set was being constructed in the schoolyard. Another part of her donation is a collection of newspaper articles featuring the Madison Area Astronomical Society. It includes stories and photos of the Oscar Mayer Observatory that was moved from the UW campus (originally part of the Washburn Observatory) to a site in Fitchburg. It also includes a story about the observatory her husband Art built in the backyard of their home near the present Stoner Prairie School.



Because of the increase of night-sky lighting close to Fitchburg, that observatory has been moved to a location near Brooklyn in southern Dane County. Doris also included a remembrance of Art written at the time of his death. We thank Doris for her contributions and hope that it inspires others to make donations of photos and articles that will be a source for future research of Fitchburg.



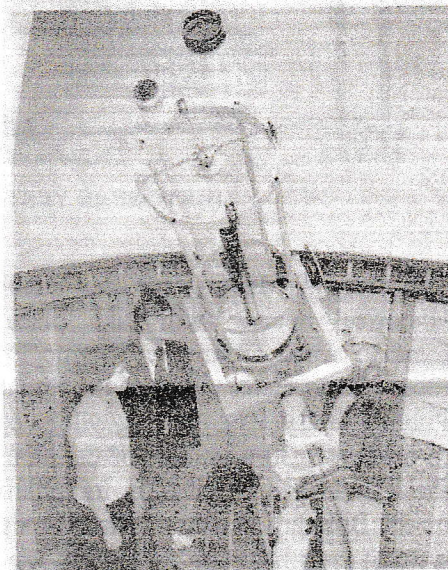
The Oscar Mayer Observatory as it sits on a hill top in rural- Fitchburg.  
(Photo from the Fitchburg Historical Society Photo Archives)

Other recent donation to the FHS have been some early records of the Stoner School Mother's Club and a collection of funeral memorial cards and obituaries spanning a number of years. These are a great addition to our obituary file. Sometimes the only records people can find of family members from years ago will be funeral cards that list birth and death dates. If you have things that would be a plus to our archives please remember the FHS.

#### GENEALOGY CLASS

The Fitchburg Public Library in conjunction with the FHS will be offering a free basic introduction to family genealogy. This will be given by Alan Tereba in the second floor Thermo Fisher Room at the Library on Sunday March 9th, from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Register by calling the library at 608-729 -1760

## ng for the stars



Jane Weiler and Greg Novacek (center) watch as Arthur Koster examines his 120-inch Cassegrain telescope at his Devoro Road observatory. Koster built the observatory and telescope.

Star gazing in the observatory on Devoro Road  
(Capital Times, June 27, 1978)

\*\*\*\*\*

#### MEMBERSHIP

Individual.....\$10.00  
Family.....12.00  
Business.....50.00

NAME\_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS\_\_\_\_\_

City\_\_\_\_\_

STATE ZIP\_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE\_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL\_\_\_\_\_

(Will be used only for FHS business)





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

May 2014

### ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the FHS in April was well attended. There was an election of officers for the Board of Directors. Carole Kinney, Adrienne Imilkowski and Rich Eggleston were reelected for three-year terms and Eric Amlie was elected to replace Deb Henke who had resigned. Eric's term will also be three years. We thank you, Deb, for taking over the position after the death of Janet Maves. You did a great job. About 50 people gathered to hear Ada Deer talk about the Menominee Indians of which she is a member. She was a vocal opponent of the downward spiral that termination of the reservation caused, and was instrumental in getting the reservation restored. "Termination was a cultural, political and economic disaster," Deer declared. "We were the first tribe to be terminated, we were the first tribe restored. We achieved the historic reversal of American Indian policy. We set up a whole new relationship with the tribe, a whole new relationship with the federal government."

### BIKE TOUR

A bike tour along the Badger State Bike Trail was held in conjunction with the Fitchburg Days celebration May 17<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 50 bikers participated. Many interesting spots along the trail were pointed out. At the terminus of the ride along Wendt Road Bill Kinney of the FHS spoke about the early settlement of houses and businesses that grew up around the Illinois Central Railroad depot. Although the businesses and depot are gone some of the

houses remain. Upon their return to the starting point ice cream, compliments of Dairy Queen, was served.

### FROM THE BOOK SHELF

**HISTORY JUST AHEAD**, a book published in 1999, is a guide to Wisconsin's historical markers. It is designed to acquaint readers and travelers with many of the dramatic events and noteworthy achievements that help to comprise Wisconsin history. Containing over 400 marker texts and 100 illustrations, conveniently organized by regions and counties with accompanying maps, this guidebook celebrates the Wisconsin heritage from geological epochs to recent ethnic settlement. Wisconsin's rich history is brought to life in this compendium, reminding us that historical markers are truly an important educational tool helping to strengthen respect of state history and raising public awareness of the need to preserve our historical and natural environment. Descriptions and locations are given. The book is on the shelf of the Archives. If you would like to plan trips to include historic markers leave a message on the FHS voice mail 729-1783 to make an appointment to read the book.

### FESTIVAL OF TRADITION AND HERITAGE

On May 9<sup>th</sup> the FHS was a participant in the Stoner Prairie Elementary School's Festival of Tradition and Heritage with a historical presentation and display of the early schools of Fitchburg. Photos and hand drawn pictures of schools from 1848 – 1964 were mounted on a special display board with four photos of the old Stoner School from the 1920's and 1950's were a real attraction for the visitors. A lunch bucket from a class member from the 1950's and old school bells were favorites of the children. Members of the



FHS were on hand to answer question from the attendees.

### **SCHOOL HOUSE PLAYS**

And speaking of Stoner School, interesting articles have been found in the local newspapers from January of 1930 telling about The Stoner School Mothers Club. This amateur group won a Dane County Talent Play competition with a play written by Mrs. Carl Felton. The title of the winning play was "Seeing Things Right". The group went on to win the State competition held in Madison. Featured in the cast were George and Ellen Richardson, Wilson Mutchler, John Fluckiger, Mrs. Lee Mutchler, Mrs. Clarence Rockwell, and Mrs. Emmett O'Brien. The review of the play follows. "Wilson Mutchler was the star of the play as "Grandpa." He acted the age that he was supposed to represent — not an old, doddering grandpa, but a man in his late 60s, still strong and ambitious enough to want to get married again, confident of 20 years more of active life. His old sweetheart in the play, "Aunt Lucy," played by Mrs. George

Richardson, played it admirably with the right personality and voice for this role. Mrs. Lee Mutchler, as "Lucy May", was her grandpa's favorite and accomplice, and between the two of them, things did move. John Fluckiger and Mrs. E. S. O'Brien furnished good comedy as Mr. and Mrs. Simpson who find travel "broadening." George Richardson plays the young farmer who wins "Lucy May" despite the mother's preference for a city man. Mrs. C. E. Rockwell was the mother who didn't want her daughter to become a "country drudge," but who learned too late that even her deceased husband had never been happy in the city".

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Please be advised if you have not sent in membership for 2014 - 2015 this will be the last newsletter you will receive. An individual membership is \$10.00 and family is \$12. You can send the fee to the FHS at 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg WI 53711

***FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
5530 LACY ROAD  
FITCHBURG WI 53711***



HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

JULY 2014

## WISCONSIN HISTORY TOUR

The Wisconsin State Historical Society is sponsoring an outreach program this summer that involves traveling exhibits of history-related stories of various communities. Starting August 2<sup>nd</sup> the tour will be at the Verona Public Library. During the week of August 19 to 23 history will come alive when authors, genealogists and storytellers join the tour to present programs for all ages. The Verona tour will end on August 23 with a celebration of an "Old World Experience." Watch for news of the tour and join our neighbors for the party.

## DAIRIES OF FITCHBURG

The dairy industry has a long history in Fitchburg starting with local creameries where farmers brought milk to be made into butter and cheese. Are you aware of commercial dairies that were located in Fitchburg? Many people who now live in Fitchburg remember the Bowman Dairy located on Fish Hatchery Road. (This is not to be confused with a large Bowman Dairy in Chicago). At one time there was a circular milking parlor attached to the facility that allowed families to come and watch the cows as they were being milked. The parlor has recently been renovated for other uses. But before the Bowman Dairy there were other dairies.

Bancroft Dairy, which was long

associated with Madison, got its start in Fitchburg on the Bancroft farm, which was located on what is now Glacier Valley Road. The dairy was started by Ben and John Bancroft and was known at various times as Bancroft Brothers, Wood Bend Farm Dairy, and Valley Spring Farm. The name was officially changed to Bancroft Dairy before it moved to Madison where it was located at 1010 South Park Street. The brothers sold the operation in 1933. The Madison location was well known for its dairy fountain serving malts, sundaes and sodas to the ice cream lovers of Madison. It went through several ownerships until it was mothballed in 2004. A paper written by a twenty-three year employee of the dairy, Vern Smith, is on file at the FHS archives. He tells interesting tidbits of the work he did, the innovations that made his work a pleasure (even though hard) and his admiration of his employers.

In the 1920s and 30s a small dairy operated by Mr. McCoy was located on Syene Road near what is now Clayton Road. A natural spring cooled the rich milk from Guernsey cows before it was made into ice cream. The archives of the Wisconsin Historical Society has photos showing people enjoying a treat at the McCoy Ice Cream Shop located at 507 State Street in Madison. Before the advent of home freezers many Fitchburg neighbors purchased ice cream at the Fitchburg location to take home for dessert. The



containers used were much like the carryout boxes from today's Chinese restaurants.

In later years Ben Meek operated a small farm on Fish Hatchery Road where he raised goats and sold their milk. Goat's milk was purported to be easily digested by people suffering with stomach ulcers.

Through the years there have probably been other farms in Fitchburg that sold milk to customers. An elusive evidence of this is an old, small cardboard bottle cap sent to the archives that is printed "Fitchburg Dairy Madison Wisconsin". There is no date or other information to identify where the dairy was located.

### PHOTO DONATION

A recent donation to the photo archives of the FHS is an enlarged photo (ca.1910) of the business section of Fitchburg, the area along Wendt Road. The photo was taken about the same time as the photo used for the mural in the Fitchburg Room at the library. We extend sincere gratitude to Shelby and Bonnie Alcott of Greenfield, Wisconsin, who discovered the photo and sought out the FHS to make the donation. Research shows the photographer, Sherwin Gillett, grew up in the house that is located at 2627 S. Seminole Highway. After leaving Fitchburg, Mr. Gillett worked as a freelance photographer with a studio in Muscoda, Wisconsin. There is a large collection of his photos in the Archives of the Wisconsin Historical Society.

### CAPITOL REGION MEETING

The 2014 Capitol Regional Meeting of the Wisconsin Historical Society will be held at the Brodhead High School on Thursday August 14. Highlights include "Bringing Local History Online", Understanding Collections Preservation, a regional round-table discussion and tours of the Depot Museum and the Kelch Aviation Museum. Lunch will be served. All members of the Fitchburg Historical Society are invited to attend. A \$20.00 reservation fee is due by August 8<sup>th</sup>. Registration forms can be

downloaded at [info@brodheadhistory.org](mailto:info@brodheadhistory.org). or by calling Pat Weeden, 608-576-6645.

### FROM THE BOOK SHELF

*Preserving Your Family Photographs* by Maureen Taylor is on the bookshelf of the FHS office (not the Fitchburg Room). The author gives detailed instructions on preserving precious family photos from years ago or current digital images. The book is available to members of the FHS to sign out by leaving a message at the FHS.

Phone: 608-729-1783

Email: [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com)

### CELEBRATING 170 YEARS

On June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Mayor Shawn Pfaff extended congratulations in the form of a "Proclamation" to the Kinney family on the 170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ownership of their farm on Irish lane. Two brothers, Andrew and Michael Kinney, who originally came from County Mayo, Ireland, established what became a 200-acre farm in Fitchburg, Wisconsin in 1844. Andrew and his wife, Mary Jane, and their four children built their log home on the current farm site. There are currently five Kinney residences on the farm, which include nine members of the 7<sup>th</sup> generation. 160 people from ten states attended the big celebration June 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. There were many family stories and much genealogy sharing as extended family members got to know one another. The weekend was filled with goodwill, laughter, and fun as the Kinney clan came to know so many of their relatives, and discover their common Irish roots.

### The 2014-2015 Board of Directors:

Eric Amle  
Verne Brummel  
Dan Carpenter  
John Darling  
Rich Eggleston  
Kay Harty

Adrianne Imilkowski  
Carole Kinney  
Winnie Lacy  
Dianne Reynolds  
Roger Tesch  
Catherine Schneider





HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

OCTOBER 2014

## FALL MEETING

The fall general meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will take place on Sunday, November 2, 2014. It will be held in the second floor meeting room of the Fitchburg Public Library starting at 1:30 p.m. Warden Dan Westfield of the Oakhill Correctional Institution will speak to us about the history of the facility including the early history as the Industrial School for Girls.

## OTHER PHOTO NEWS

After the meeting, stop in at the Fitchburg Room and check out the photos we have had made from our image collection. Two from the school collection are hung over the School-marm's desk and a photo of the Fox children in their pony cart on what is now Highway M is on another wall. There are a considerable number of images from the collection of the FHS used elsewhere on the Fitchburg City Campus. Many decorate the walls in various rooms of the City Hall; the Senior Center has a collection in their space. Some images that came from the Kohl's grocery store are in the lobby of the Police Department. Included in that group is a large view of the area of the settlement of Fitchburg along Wendt Road. The picture was taken in the early 1920s by Sherwin Gillett, a resident of Fitchburg who went on to become a freelance photographer in southwest Wisconsin. This photo was recently donated to the FHS by Shelby and

Bonnie Alcott from Greenfield, Wisconsin. We thank them for thinking of us.

## WHS HISTORY TOUR

The FHS had a table at the Verona Library on August 23<sup>rd</sup> when it hosted the touring exhibit from the Wisconsin Historical Society. Several of our members were there to talk about our part in historical preservation and to answer questions about the FHS.

## HERE COMES THE TRAIN



News was made in Fitchburg on September 29<sup>th</sup> when the Wisconsin and Southern Railroad made the inaugural run on the re-opened rail line through Fitchburg. The line runs along S. Syene road to the Lycon plant in the Village of Oregon. What was once a main line of the CNW Railway to Chicago



has not been used since the Union Pacific closed that section of the line in 1997. Prime movers in the reopening of the line were the Village of Oregon and the City of Fitchburg. A grant from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation helped with the funding of the project which included replacing 40 percent of the ties, rebuilding crossings and two bridges. New signage and signals will be added at the various road crossings. Lycon expects to have three to five slow-moving trains per week hauling inbound shipments of sand and gravel to its facility in the Oregon Business Park. A large group of enthusiastic people and dignitaries were present for the ribbon cutting ceremony along W. Clayton Road on a beautiful September afternoon.



### FITCHBURG'S HISTORY

Through the years two books have been published about the history of Fitchburg Township (originally Greenfield). *Fitchburg...a history* was published during the bi-centennial year. (It has since been indexed and reprinted) and in 1993 Tom Kinney published a book, *Irish Settlers of Fitchburg Wisconsin - 1840 to 1860*. Both books are available for purchase from the FHS. There is another wealth of information available to researchers in the form of the Town Clerk's

records from early years through 1911. In the early years the Annual Meeting for the Township met at the private homes of the Supervisors. Much of the business centered on roads and control of farm animals. In 1851 two tavern licenses were issued. And in 1853 Greenfield Township officially became Fitchburg Township. The 1857's poll list consisted of 157 voters (all male of course). In 1864 a quota of volunteers for the war was set at 32. Each volunteer would be paid \$200.00. The same sum would be paid to the family of a man who was drafted. Also in 1864, \$65.00 was allocated to the school fund. In 1878 a committee was appointed to find a suitable place for a town hall. A year later the town hall was built on a small piece of land in Section 24. In 1879 it was voted to erect a fence around the town hall and to add a suitable hitching post.

### BADGER BIKE TRAIL

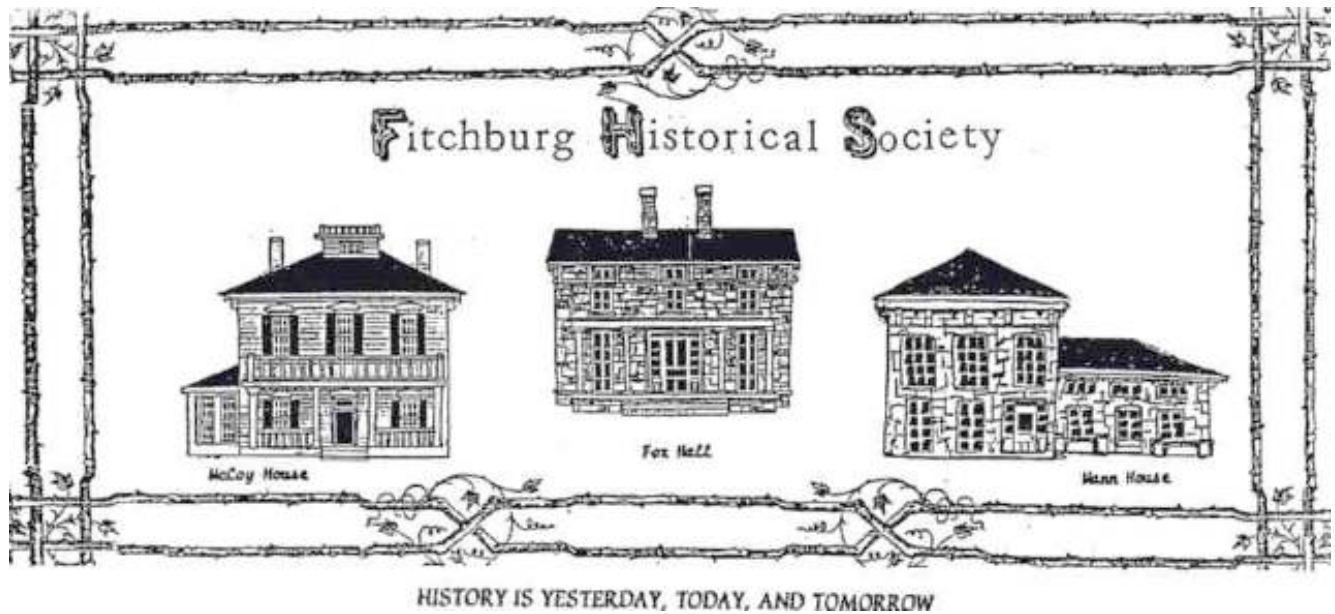
The FHS is working with the City of Fitchburg to add more signs along the Badger Bike Trail. This will give bikers using the trail additional information of what Fitchburg is.

### FACEBOOK

Have you checked out the Fitchburg Historical Society's Facebook page? There are wonderful vignettes along with various photos. When checking the Fitchburg Facebook site be aware that the Fitchburg Massachusetts site seems to be the predominate page and comes up first.

### REMINDER:

FHS GENERAL MEETING  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2014 1:30 P.M.  
FITCHBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY  
SECOND FLOOR



**JANUARY 2015**

## **NOVEMBER MEETING**



At the fall General Meeting of the FHS on November 2, 2014, Warden Dan Westfield, of the Oakhill Correctional facility in rural Fitchburg gave an interesting presentation of what used to be the Oregon Industrial School for Girls. He gave a timeline starting with the 1854 incarceration of “delinquent” boys in Milwaukee and how it grew to correctional facilities for both boys and girls in the state. The Oregon school for girls closed its doors in 1976 and the buildings were turned into a minimum-security facility. A print out of the PowerPoint presentation by Warden Westfield is on file at the Archives of the FHS. Also in the

archives is a large scrapbook of newspaper articles covering the school starting when it was located in Milwaukee up to and including its closure in Fitchburg. Both the scrapbook and the PowerPoint are available for research.

The next meeting of the FHS, the Annual Meeting as required by the By-laws, will be held on April 19th at 1:30. The meeting will be held in the Fitchburg Public Library. Molly Fifield-Murray will present an overview of Fitchburg’s near-north neighbor, the U.W. Arboretum. Also at that meeting we will be electing members for the Board of Directors. If you would like to serve as a director please let the nominating committee know by leaving a message on the voice mail of the FHS, 608-729-1783. The board meets six times a year, on the first Saturday of alternating months. It formulates plans for the activities of the society. Please consider joining the Board.

## **SCHOOL SIGNS**

Some years ago the FHS cooperated with the Oregon Area Historical Society to mark the sites of all the one-room schools that



were in the area. One of the signs, located on the old Camp Badger School on McKee Road, has been moved from its position on the street side of the building to an area near the door that most of the people who attend meetings at the Fitchburg Serenity Club use. This makes it easier for them to connect with the history of the building. A brochure with early photos of the all the Fitchburg schools telling about their history along with their locations is available at the FHS archives.

### **VESPER**



Do you read the stories of Vesper the northern white-footed mouse, which is printed in the Wisconsin State Journal around Christmas time each year? George Hesselberg, a Fitchburg resident and a Wisconsin State Journal employee write the stories. George has given us permission to have a copy of the stories on our reading shelf inside the Archives Office. They are delightful little vignettes of the tiny mouse family that live in Briarwood. Make an appointment to stop in sometime and read them.

### **WHAT IS AVAILABLE AT THE ARCHIVES**

The following is a general list of the articles in the Fitchburg Historical Society's collections: family histories, photographic images, oral histories, cemetery records -

Oak Hall Cemetery and St. Mary's, Cemetery, maps and plat books, early Township records, tax Records, and poll lists, school district records, copies of the original Fitchburg Star, other newspaper clippings, and materials produced by State Historical Society of Wisconsin. A Fitchburg Historical Society volunteer can obtain copies of articles and images at the library copier. Black and white copies are .10 each. We are now making progress on formulating an inventory list of photos so they will be easier to locate. If you have documents or photos of interest to the FHS now is the time to add them to our inventory. We are always ready to accept your family histories and photos to be placed into the archives. If you would like help in starting a family history, even a basic one, we have volunteers ready to help you.

### **DISPLAY CASE AND FACEBOOK**

The cold winter months are good times to stop in at the FHS located on the second floor of the Fitchburg Public Library and view the display case that highlights the farm of Joseph O'Brien on S. Seminole Highway. The following photo is a sample of what is displayed in the case at the present time.



Don't forget to check the newest posts on the Fitchburg Historical Society's Facebook page.



HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

MARCH 2015

### ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will be held on April 19, 2015 at the Fitchburg Public Library. The meeting will start at 1:30 in the Thermo Fisher Room on the second floor of the library. A short business meeting will start with a general overview of the previous year. It is also time for the election to the Board of Directors. Four positions will be open. If you would be interested in serving on the Board please contact Carole Kinney at 271-1132 or Winnie Lacy at 845-7594. The Board meets six times a year on the first Saturday of the month. It is a satisfying job with minimal time requirements. After the business meeting there will be a presentation by Molly Fifield-Murray on the history and purpose of our next-door neighbor, The UW



Arboretum. Molly Fifield-Murray is the outreach and education manager at the Arboretum. Trained in landscape restoration and native garden design, she has taught about and designed native wildflower

gardens as an educator and design consultant. It promises to be an interesting program.

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Several interesting projects have surfaced and are in need of volunteers. One consists of digging and delving into newspaper archives for information on a long-ago family of Fitchburg, the Williams family. They resided on a farm on the northern edge of Fitchburg until the last of the farm was sold. It was near what is now Arbor Hills. \* We are looking for help in studying the growth of the area at the north end of Fish Hatchery Road. Who or what was along the road before McDonald's, Avalon, or prior to that, Orchard Hill? Some preliminary work has been started on both projects and members of the archives committee will be available to help. \* Photos are being inventoried and help will be required to do some data entry to make access to the photo collection easier. \* We are also looking for someone to take on the task of writing a grant proposal to the Wisconsin Historical Society. Mini grants are available for up to \$700.00 that we could use for several photo-digitizing projects. If you can help in any of these projects please leave your name and phone number on the FHS voice mail.



The Annual Meeting is also the time to renew membership. This can be done by filling out the attached membership blank and bringing it with you at the time of the Annual Meeting or by sending it in the mail to the FHS. Single membership is \$10.00 . Family membership is \$12.00. Business and Professional Membership is \$50.00.

FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
5305 Lacy Road  
Fitchburg WI 53711

#### MEMBERSHIP

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

(Telephone and email contacts are used only by the FHS. They are not shared. Email will be used to send the newsletters and meeting reminders to save on postage.)

FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
5530 LACY ROAD  
FITCHBURG WI 53711

608-729-1783

[woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com)

Messages for members of the Board can be left at the above telephone and email numbers.

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Catherine Schneider, President,  
Eric Amlie  
Laverne Brummel  
Dan Carpenter  
John Darling  
Rich Eggleston

Kathleen Harty  
Adrianne Imilkowski  
Carole Kinney  
Winnie Lacy  
Dianne Reynolds  
Roger Laurel Tesch



May 2015

### ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting for the Fitchburg Historical Society was held on Sunday April 19, 2015 at the Fitchburg Public Library. The speaker for the program was Molly Fifield-Murray. Molly received her undergraduate degree in history at the University of Missouri, and her graduate degree in landscape architecture at the UW-Madison. She has been outreach and education manager at the UW arboretum more than 20 years and has been a frequent guest on the Larry Meiller show on Wisconsin Public Radio discussing such topics as the place of native plants in our ecosystem and in our gardens. She presented a power point lecture showing the growth of the Arboretum from the early Native Americans to the vision of Aldo Leopold and others who saw the need of conserving green space in a growing urban area. Molly then fielded questions from the audience. We extend our thanks to her for her impressive presentation. It made us all aware of the wonderful oasis we have in our "neighbor" to the north. After the program a brief business meeting was held. The Annual Meeting is renewal time for membership and time to hold an election for the Board of Directors. Four members of the

Board had terms expiring: Dan Carpenter, John Darling, Rich Eggleston and Catherine Schneider. Dan declined to run for another term due to conflicting time schedules. The other three agreed to have their names put on the slate of candidates. The nominating committee added Alan Tereba to the slate. A request for nominations from the floor went unanswered. A motion was made and seconded to elect the slate of candidates as presented. A unanimous vote to elect them followed. The other members of the Board of Directors are: Eric Amlie, Verne Brummel, Kay Harty, Adrienne Imilkowski, Carole Kinney, Winnie Lacy, Dianne Reynolds, and Roger Tesch. Regular meetings of the Board are held six times a year on the first Saturday of every other month. If there are things you want the Board to know or if you have questions about Fitchburg History you can send an email to [woodcdarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodcdarchives@gmail.com).

### JUNE PROGRAM

On Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Fitchburg Public Library and Fitchburg Historical Society are hosting Tom Laughlin, producer of



Wisconsin Public Television's "American Barn Stories" series. Tom will discuss the history and preservation of Wisconsin Barns. The program will be held at 7 p.m. in the second floor meeting room at the Library.



Dane County Cultural Affairs poster 2014

In conjunction with the presentation the case outside of the Fitchburg Room in the library now has a display of barns of Fitchburg.

### FITCHBURG HISTORY 101

When Fitchburg became a township in 1847 it was known as Greenfield. It was overseen by a Town Board consisting of a Chairman and two Supervisors along with other officials: Clerk, Treasurer, Assessor, Constable, and Commissioners of Highways and Schools. Because of confusion with the Township of Greenfield near Milwaukee the post office mandated a name change and Fitchburg was chosen. Town meetings were held at the homes of the various Supervisors until 1877 when \$500.00 was allocated to build a suitable town hall. Instructions were to have it built in time for the 1878 November 1<sup>st</sup> election. A wooden town hall was built in section 21 at what is now 2377 S. Fish Hatchery Road. That building was used until 1964 when an addition to be used as a town hall was built on to the already present garage for town trucks. The new Town Hall was built for \$141,000.00.

The wooden building was sold to a neighbor who removed it from the property. Fitchburg's growth continued and in 1983 the town won approval to become a 4<sup>th</sup> class city and the Town Hall became "City Hall." Space in that City Hall became very tight and in 1989 a new City Hall was built on Lacy Road where it remains to this day. The population of Fitchburg has grown from 598 in 1850 to its present population of 26,000 (more or less). Additional information about the history of Fitchburg can be found in the book *Fitchburg....a history* which is available for purchase at the front desk of City Hall or at the Fitchburg Historical Society.

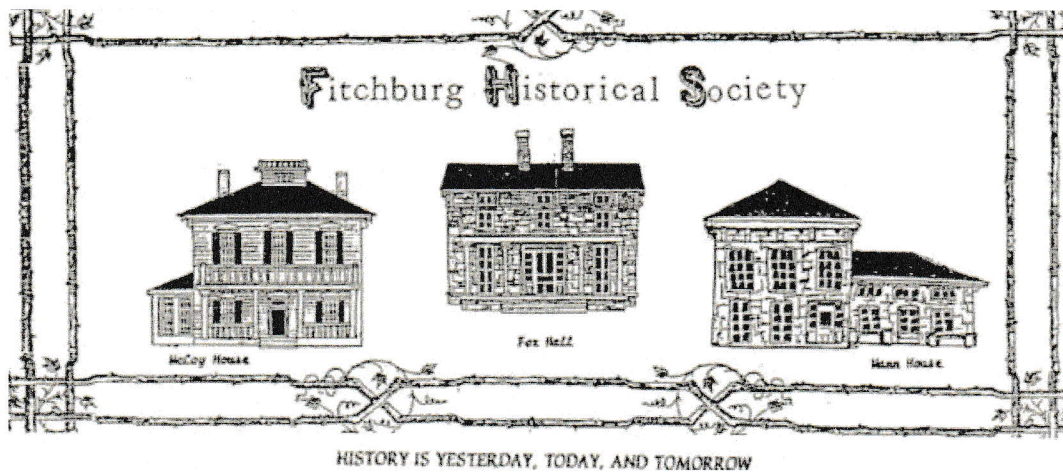
### VOLUNTEER HELP NEEDED

We have not received any word from FHS members who would be willing to help with some of the projects we have on the agenda. A big help would be someone who could enter data into the photo index about our images. One day a month would be a big help. The volunteer would not have to work alone. A member of the archives would be there to help. Another project would involve scanning the 35mm slide images in our collection onto a more retainable format. The equipment for this project is available to us.

### MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

Memberships seem to have fallen by the wayside. If you have not sent in membership for the 2015 – 2016 year you can still do it by sending your information to the FHS, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg WI 53711. Individual membership is \$10.00 and family membership is \$12.00.





**AUGUST 2015**

### **FALL MEETING**

Save the date. The Fall General Meeting of the FHS will be held on Sunday, November 1st at 1:30 p.m. in the large meeting room at the Fitchburg Public Library. The program is presently in the planning stage. When details are worked out you will be notified.

Stay tuned.

### **HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

The Fitchburg Landmarks Preservation Commission has presented a copy of its newly printed book, *Historic Properties of Fitchburg*, to the FHS. It showcases some of Fitchburg's historic sites and homes that are designated on the City's register of historic places as well as those that are on the National Register of Historic Homes. The book contains a thumbnail history of Fitchburg along with the requirements for adding sites to the register, the current Ordinance and contact information for designation. Among the homes and sites in the book are the Mann House (Quivey's Grove), Fox Hall, the two cemeteries in Fitchburg and the Oscar Mayer Observatory. Other sites and homes are also included. The book has been added to the shelves of the FHS archives. Under the terms of publication it can only be used as a reference, not checked out. You can make an appointment to read the book in the

Fitchburg Room on the second floor of the library by contacting the FHS either by telephone, 608-729-1783 or by email, [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com). We extend out thanks to the Commission for this beautiful book.

### **FOX PAINTING**

Earlier this summer the Fitchburg Historical Society was gifted a painting of Katherine Brigham Fox and her daughter Anna done in 1907. It is too large to display in our archives



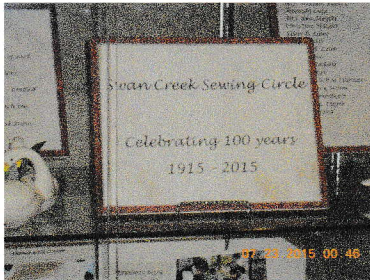
and too precious to store away, sight unseen. Although we have limits on what we can accept this was too beautiful to turn down. Arrangements have been made to have it

hung at the Fitchburg Senior Center. What could be more appropriate than in the Fox Crossing Room? The painting fits in an ideal spot in the built-in bookcase. It is marked with a sign that shows it is the property of the FHS. We extend our thanks to Dick Lindberg of Oregon, WI., who donated the painting and to the staff at the Senior Center who have accepted the loan of the painting. Mr. and Mrs. Lindberg were close personal friends of both Anna and Phil Fox



## SWAN CREEK SEWING CIRCLE

Swan Creek Sewing Circle is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year! The club began on December 1, 1915, when a group of 15 women met at the home of Amanda Culp with the idea of organizing a social club to break the monotony of everyday farm life.



The women had the opportunity to chat with their neighbors while they made quilts, knit mittens scarves and socks for men in the service of our county and engaged in many other charitable works. A display highlighting this organization that has endured for 100 years, with members meeting each month to continue their endeavors, can be seen on the second floor of the Fitchburg Public Library near the Fitchburg Room. Take time to view this impressive display! Today's members will be honored at the Fall Meeting of the FHS.



## BADGER BIKE TRAIL SIGNAGE

New signs along the Badger State bike trail in Fitchburg are being prepared by the City of Fitchburg Planning and Zoning

department. They will be located at strategic spots with text and photos to inform bike riders of the things that are or have been located nearby. The signs should be in place later this summer.

## DONATIONS

Our mailboxes seem to be filled with requests for donations these days so we are taking this opportunity to add our request. A monetary donation comes to mind, a mention in your will or just more information about your connections with Fitchburg. Family histories, photos or obituaries are always welcome.

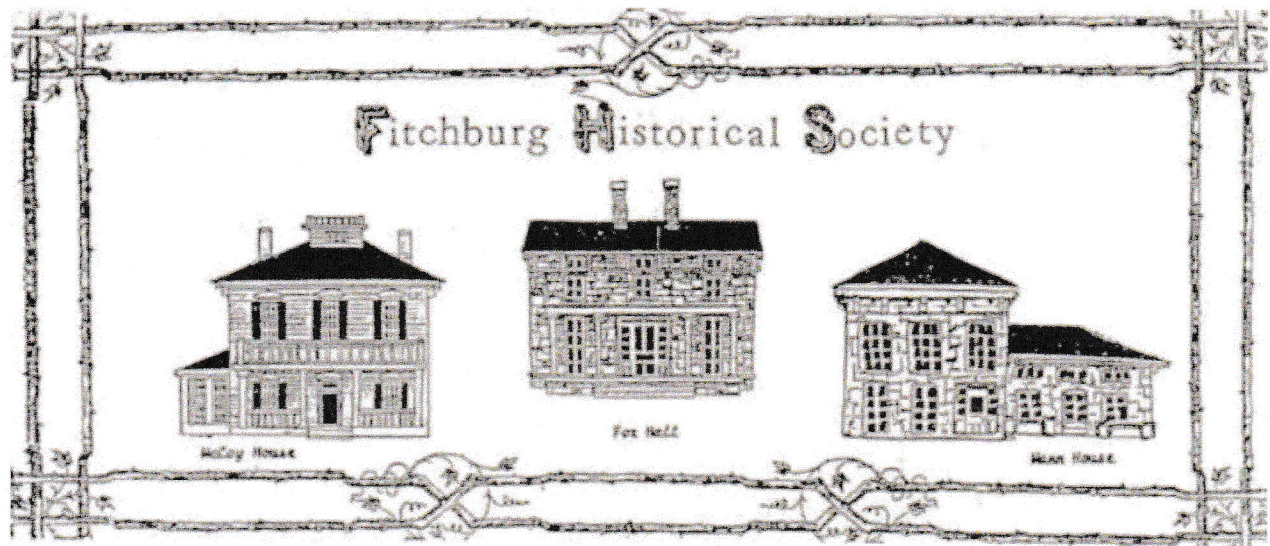
## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meet the current Board of Directors working and planning for you.



The 2015 FHS Board of Directors. Back row: Adrienne Imilkowski, Secretary; Carole Kinney, Laverne Brummel, Vice Pres., Roger Tesch Treas. Eric Amlie, Allan Tereba. Seated: Catherine Schneider, Pres., Winnie Lacy, Dianne Reyonolds, and Rich Eggleston. John Darling and Kay Harty were missing when the photo was taken.





**HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW.**

**February 2016**

### **ANNUAL MEETING**

The Annual Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will be held Sunday, April 17th. Membership renewals will be due at that time. Mark your calendars now. A reminder will be sent out prior to the meeting. Our speaker for the meeting will be Ed Janus. His topic for the day will be ***How Cows Created Wisconsin.*** Before the speaker's presentation a short business meeting will take place including an election for Board of Director positions. Four board members have terms expiring this year. They are Winnie Lacy, Kay Harty, Dianne Reynolds and Roger Tesch. The Board meets six times a year on the first Saturday of the month. The Board plans for upcoming events and helps with the operation of the FHS. We always welcome new members to the Board. If you would be willing to serve a three-year term please contact the nominating committee by phone or email at the FHS office prior to the April meeting. Nominations can also be made from the floor at the time of the meeting.

Contact numbers are:

608-729-17835 or

woodedarchives@gmail.com

Historical Society. The Sewing Circle, which has been in existence for one hundred years, has kept records and scrapbooks for the entire time. Pictured below are members who were able to attend the November meeting. Standing: Marge Blaney and Mary Kay Clark (current president of the Sewing Circle). Seated: Carole Kinney, Betty Blaney Guy, Barbara Stoneman



### **NOVEMBER MEETING**

Members of the Swan Creek Sewing Circle were feted during the November general meeting of Fitchburg

Mary Kay's grandmother, Amanda Culp, was instrumental in starting the Sewing Circle in 1915. A short history of the Sewing Circle was given to the attendees by Carole Kinney. After celebrating the Sewing Circle, Professor Emeritus William Tishler



treated us to an interesting slide program centered on the architecture of rural Wisconsin. Bill is a resident of Fitchburg and is involved in several activities in the community.

### KEEPING UP-TO-DATE

Check the archives of FACTv's *Talking Fitchburg* for a taped interview with Carole Kinney who gave a brief summary of the Sewing Circle. Other interesting segments of *Talking Fitchburg* can be found on FACTv. The program can be accessed on Fitchburg television cable station or by going to the City of Fitchburg website, [factv@fitchburgwi.gov](mailto:factv@fitchburgwi.gov) or on the FACTv facebook page. They already have a notice about the spring Annual Meeting posted. There is also a Fitchburg Historical Society facebook page with many interesting photos. Keep watching for updates.

### ARCHIVES

Now that the holiday season is behind us the archive committees have resumed work on their various projects. One group is making an inventory list of all the items in our files. It is now possible to find names, places events from Fitchburg's past. Another group is working on obituaries. It is a collection of

people with Fitchburg connections. You are encouraged to add any family names and stories you may have. A third group is working on cataloging the photos in our possession. The database can lead you to the images of people, places and various happenings in Fitchburg, both past and present. If you have items you think would be of interest to the photo file please leave a message at the FHS office either by email, voice mail or snail mail.

### FITCHBURG ...A HISTORY

There are only a few copies of *Fitchburg ... a history* left in stock. The book was originally printed in the Bicentennial year. However until a decision is made to have more copies printed the book can be checked out at various libraries in the area. Our own Fitchburg Public Library has two copies. One can be checked out and the other can be read in the reference section of the Fitchburg Room on the second floor. It

is also available to be read on the digital collection of the State Historical Society Library. Look for it at: <https://uwdc.library.wisc.edu/collections/wi/wilocalhist/> *Wisconsin Local Histories*

**Fitchburg Bicentennial Committee (ed.) / *The Fitchburg Bicentennial Committee presents Fitchburg, a history* (1976)**

### DISPLAY CASE

Through this election year the display case on the second floor of the Fitchburg Public Library will have a series of displays relating to elections through the years in Fitchburg. It will not be a political showcase of the present but it will show some of the elected officials through the years from the founding of the Township through the formation of Fitchburg as a city. The election-based displays will be interspersed with other displays through the year. Be sure to check the case as you visit the library to see what is new.

### WISCONSIN'S JOHN MUIR

During 2016 the Wisconsin Historical Society is providing a free traveling exhibit to local public libraries and historical societies in 25 communities around the state. "Wisconsin's John Muir" explores Muir's youth in Wisconsin, his advocacy for national parks, and his views on environmental issues such as logging, hunting, and climate change. Its eight panels share facsimiles of images and manuscripts from the Society's library and archives alongside Muir quotes and interpretive texts. The exhibit and reading programs have been created to celebrate the centennial of the National Park Service, which was formed in 1916 to preserve the nation's wild areas. The closest sites to view this exhibit will be at libraries in Sun Prairie May 24<sup>th</sup> and Monona on Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>. Watch for news of this traveling exhibit as the event comes to this part of Wisconsin. More information about this can be found at [www.wisconsinhistory.org](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org).





## HISTORY IS YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW MARCH 2016

### ANNUAL MEETING

Mark your calendar for the FHS Annual Meeting to be held at the Fitchburg Public Library on Sunday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at 1:30. The speaker for the program will be Ed Janus, author of *Creating Dairyland*. His topic for our meeting will be *How Cows Created Wisconsin*. It will be an interesting look into the early agriculture that was prominent in Fitchburg before we became "citified".

Before the speaker takes the podium we will have a very brief business meeting. There will be four openings for members of the Board of Directors. If you would like to be part of the planning and ~~exec~~ of the FHS please contact Carole Kinney who is the chair of the nominating committee. She can be reached by leaving a voice mail on the society's telephone 608-729-1783 or email: [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com). Membership renewals are due at the same time. If you are not able to attend the meeting you can mail your renewal to: FHS 5530 Lacy Road Fitchburg WI. 53711. Please use the attached renewal form. In order to save the cost of postage an email address is appreciated. We do not share email addresses with anyone else. They are only used to send newsletters or messages of importance to the FHS.

### DISPLAY CASE

The display case outside of the Fitchburg Room at the library is being changed to showcase some of the things that will be included in the April talk by Ed Janus. Stop

by and see how the dairy business was the center of Fitchburg's agricultural scene in earlier years.

### ARCHIVES

Recently several committees working on the archives have turned up some very interesting stories about Fitchburg's history. One of the interesting files contains the stories about the Blaney – Jones connection. For instance here is a photo of Tom Jones taking milk from Fitchburg into the Kennedy Dairy in Madison. The photo was taken along University Avenue in Madison.



Other stories of Fitchburg dairy connections can be found in the files. Bancroft Dairy had its start in Fitchburg, as did the Bowman Dairy on Fish Hatchery Road. Stories about them will be featured in later newsletters.



## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Several years ago land abstracts had been donated to the Dane County Historical from a company that was clearing out their files. Because DCHS did not have room to store them they offered to local societies those that pertained to their area. FHS two boxes of said abstracts. A wealth of interesting information can be found in them. Ownership trails and wills are two of the most obvious. A searchable database needs to be made In order to make them available to researchers. If someone has an afternoon a week that they would like to devote to this project we can make the resources available for them. It is a job that can be done at your leisure with no time limit. The task would be easier by a team of two people. Initial training can be provided. If you are interested, leave a telephone message at FHS: 729-1783

## FACTv

A Fitchburg Historical Society member, Verne Brummel, recently recorded a television interview with the FACTv station here in Fitchburg. Verne spoke about the railroad history of Fitchburg. The program is called ***Talking Fitchburg***. It airs live daily from nine to ten in the morning and is repeated at other times during the day. It is archived on the FACTv site which can be accessed through the City of Fitchburg's web page.. Look for the Community Channel 2. The FHS is scheduled to do a once -a-month interview with FACTv. The topics will vary through the year. They are scheduled for broadcast on the third Thursday of the each month. Tune in!

## STATE HISTORY DAY

The Wisconsin Historical Society coordinates National History Day (NHD) in

Wisconsin, a year-long academic enrichment program that helps 10,000 student annually. Students in grades six through twelve research historical issues, people, and events and create presentations of their findings. Judges and volunteers are key to the success of the NHD program! Each year hundreds of volunteers are needed for Wisconsin's National History Day competition cycle. Opportunities are available at every contest level. Judges and room monitors are needed in Madison on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Volunteering at a NHD event is a rewarding experience. You can help students learn history by supporting this event. Information can be found at [sarah.fallon@wisconsinhistory.org](mailto:sarah.fallon@wisconsinhistory.org) or by calling 608-264-6487.

Volunteer opportunities are needed at the state event in Madison on Saturday April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Meals are provided.

- ☐ A.M. Room monitor
- ☐ P.M. Room monitor
- ☐ Wherever most needed
- ☐ Judge (8 – 3 p.m. includes orientation)

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

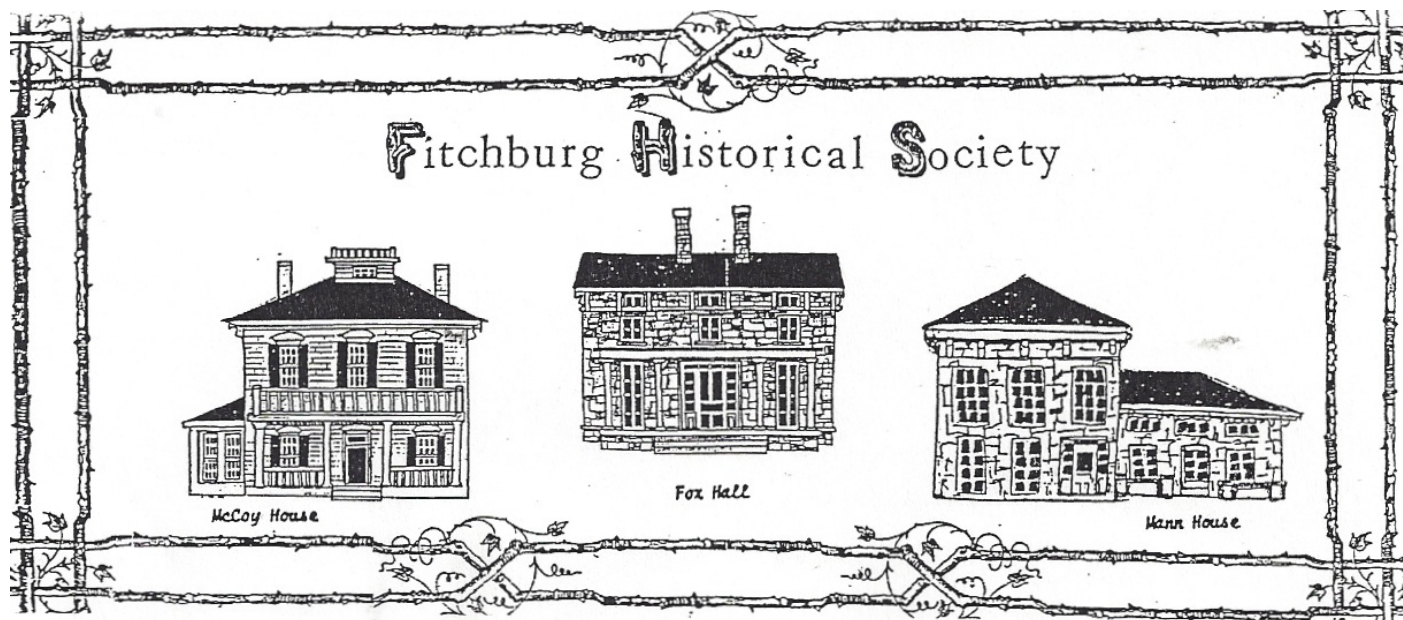
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_  
(only for FHS use)

Individual ☐ 10.00

Family ☐ 12.00

Business ☐ 50.00



**HISTORY IS YESTERDAY TODAY AND TOMORROW**

**Fitchburg Historical Society 5530 Lacy Road Fitchburg WI 53711**  
**608-729-1783 [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com)**

## **JUNE 2016**

### **ANNUAL MEETING**

The Annual Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society was held on Sunday, April 17th, at the Fitchburg Public Library. The gathering started with a brief business meeting. President Catherine Schneider and Winnie Lacy gave a brief report of their presentation on FACTv for a promo of the general meeting. It was time to elect members for the Board of Directors. A slate of four nominees was presented and no other nominations were made from the floor. Three members whose terms were expiring, Roger Tesch, Dianne Reynolds and Winnie Lacy had agreed serve again. Kay Harty chose to retire from the Board. The nominating committee added Loretta Dichraff to the ballot. Those present voted unanimously to accept the committee's slate. We welcome our newest member, Loretta. President Schneider then read a proclamation of appreciation for Kay for her long and devoted service to the Fitchburg Historical Society. She explained that she would deliver the proclamation to Kay in person, as Kay is relatively housebound. This was also the day to renew memberships. There had been an outstanding turnout of members and guests present. Was it the promise of ice cream from the Babcock Dairy on the UW campus or was it our featured our speaker for the day, Ed Janus, author of *Creating Dairyland?* His topic for the meeting was *How Cows Created Wisconsin*. It was an interesting look into the early agriculture that was prominent in Fitchburg before we became "citified". We welcome the news members who joined that day.

### **DONATIONS**

The ten one-room schools in Fitchburg have been documented many times in programs and newsletters.

However, missing from those venues have been stories, photos, and documents from the one-room school that served the children in the northeast part of Fitchburg. The children in that area attended Joint School #3, Madison and Fitchburg Townships. The school was known at various times as the Bryant School and later Silver Spring. The school was located near what is now Perkins Restaurant along the Beltline. Howard Hasz, who attended that school in the 1930s, has gifted us with several class photos and a photocopy of the document *Farewell Silver Spring 1858 – 1970*.



Howard was born and raised in a house near what is now the church and bank on Fish Hatchery road across from MacDonalds. We extend our thanks to Howard for thinking of us. Bill Schmidt who attended Silver Spring in the 1940s has also given us a photo of a later class. We have heard from a Fitchburg resident who lived in the Town of Madison and attended that school. She has promised to look through her memorabilia to see if she can add to our collection of this "long lost school" that included Fitchburg. The early one-room schools were an important part of the social life of the neighborhoods. The children attending the schools all lived within a certain boundary and could form friendships



that lasted a lifetime. The teacher organized school programs at Christmas. The Mothers Club, a forerunner of PTA or PTO groups, arranged card parties to help finance the "extras" that helped the school with treats and unseen expenses. The card parties were also a time for the adults to gather and get to know one another on a casual basis.

### OTHER DONATIONS

Other recent donations have been photos and stories of the Richardson family, the Fleming family and the old stone barn that stood at 6256 Nesbitt Road across from what is now Quivey's Grove restaurant. The old barn was originally part of the Mann property which straddled both sides of Nesbitt Road. The barn, referred to as the Norland barn, has since been demolished. We are grateful to the people who brought those things to us. Which brings to mind this.



Ed Scott at the old stone barn c. 1906

If you have photos and stories about places other than Fitchburg it would be thoughtful if you contacted the local historical society in those areas to see if they would like to add them to their collections

### THE WENDT GENERAL STORE

While researching our archives for "hidden gems" we came across a scrapbook from the Fox family that included an interesting history of the Wendt General Store that stood across from the Illinois Central railroad depot. The little settlement along the Illinois Central Railroad line on what is now Wendt Road was once a thriving community. There was a blacksmith shop, a lumberyard and mill, a small church, and several homes. Nearby was a creamery or cheese factory and a small one-room school that taught pupils in all eight grades. There was of course a depot for passengers to go to Madison or Freeport where connections could be made to travel to far away places. Farmers brought fresh milk to be shipped to dairies in Madison and Belleville. The depot also had a telegraph office and a freight house. These places all developed after the railroad built the line from Freeport to Madison. Last, but not least, was the general store. Do you need a bolt of fabric for a summer dress? Groceries to grace your table? A hammer and nails to fix the squeaky staircase? How are you set for rubber boots for the coming spring rains? All of these needs can be found at the general store. Thomas Purcell, who operated it until 1898, founded the store in 1890. After Mr. Purcell sold the store it went through several ownerships until 1910 when

Herman Wendt bought the business. The basement of the building was a quasi community center where boxing and wrestling matches, card parties and even bridal showers were held. The store was also the post office where locals could pick up their mail. At the time of its closing in 1952 the post office was serving 14 families. After Herman's death in 1924 Dora Wendt continued the store until 1964 when she retired. Ladies in the neighborhood held a surprise party for her on December 15, 1963. The store was then purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Herman Fischer who operated a craft and antique store at that location for a short time. The store has since been converted to a private residence.

### JOHN MUIR

The recent *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Summer 2016 edition, has an excellent article about the inventions of John Muir. Muir fashioned many ingenious contraptions before, during and after he was a student at the University of Wisconsin. The Society will be sponsoring exhibits of the Muir's drawings they have in their collection. The drawings are done in pencil, ink and watercolor. The exhibits will be held in at Mt. Horeb on June 21<sup>st</sup>, and Monona on December 21<sup>st</sup>. In the meantime you can read about them in the magazine. A little known fact about Muir is that he taught briefly at a local one-room school, Lake Harriet in Oregon Township.

### WHATEVER HAPPENED TO?

This is a lost piece of Fitchburg history: a five-foot tall pillar



that used to be part of one of the gateposts linked by an iron fence that surrounded the Wisconsin State Capitol grounds. In 1976 the pillar stood at the driveway entrance to a house at 2833 Fish Hatchery Road. Does anyone have an answer to what happened to it when the property was developed? The photo can be found in the Wisconsin Historical Society's Image Collection.

### IN MEMORIAM

The Fitchburg Historical Society has lost two long-time members in the past months. Mary Fahey, who with her husband Bob, was an early member, died in March. Elsie Bach, who was married to Al Bach, also died in March. Al can be remembered for his stories of WWII and the fact that his uniform from that war still fits him perfectly. They had recently moved to the Oakwood facility on Mineral Point Road where Al continues to reside. Brian Blaney, the son of Past President Richard Blaney, died in May. He and His family reside in Kentucky. We extend our condolences to all of their families.

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# Fitchburg Historical Society



*Fox Hall*



*McCoy House*



*Mann House*

*Fitchburg, Wisconsin*

*History is Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*

SEPTEMBER 2016

## SAVE THE DATE

The Fall General Meeting of the FHS will be held on Sunday, November 6th at 1:30. Our speaker will be Anne Pryor. Ms. Pryor has an extensive resume including ethnic foods and folklore. She is a folklorist who specializes in traditional cultures of WI. She worked on the staff of the WI Arts Board where she coordinated the Folk Arts Apprenticeship Program and the Woodland Indian Arts Initiative. She has been a Folk and Traditional Arts Specialist with the Department of Tourism and worked with the Wisconsin Teachers of Local Culture. Her talk is entitled "Food Traditions in our Neighborhood." We are not sure how many food traditions she will discuss but we want to share with our members that food is a happy part of our life and history. The meeting will take place in the Thermo Fisher Room on the second floor of the Fitchburg Public Library.

## VANISHED POST OFFICES

At one time there were six post office locations in Fitchburg. These locations can be found on various early plat maps of Fitchburg. The earliest was the Fitchburg Post Office that had an official start in 1842. This was located on what is now S. Seminole

Highway, then known as the road from Madison to Monroe. It was also known as the Stoners Prairie Post Office. Later this post office was moved to the office of the Lappley Feed Mill on what is now Wendt Road with the name reverting to Fitchburg Post Office. Other early post offices were located at Syene, Oak Hall (named Floyd), Lake View, and at the Mann property, now the location of Quivey's Grove. Mail was brought to these locations by stagecoach to be picked up by nearby residents. Early in the 1900s Rural Free Delivery routes were started. These routes originated out of nearby towns and were covered by horse and wagons over dirt roads. The small local post offices were then closed. However, one in Fitchburg remained open until 1952. Mrs. Dora Wendt is shown below with





Mr. and Mrs. Carl Larsen on the last day of operation, February 29, 1952. Mrs. Wendt ran the general store at the Wendt Road location and maintained the post office for the nearby residents. She had taken over the duties of Post Master after fire destroyed the Lappley buildings. When the post office closed there were only fourteen patrons that were using the facility. Now residents of Fitchburg get their mail from three post offices, Madison, Verona and Oregon. More information about the Wendt Store can be found in the book *Fitchburg..a history* and information about the Rural Free Delivery can be found in the Spring 2007 Dane County Historical Society Newsletter in an articles written by Mary Clark and Glen W. Wheeler. Both References can be read at the FHS Archives. A book listing early post offices in Fitchburg is at the Archives of the Wisconsin Historical Society: Call# HE6376 al #8. It has more information about each PO including postmasters. The list of Fitchburg Post Offices follows.

Syene 1864 - 1885 and 1898 – 1909  
Lake View 1848 – 1855 1872 – 1901  
Stoners Prairie 1851 – 1887  
Fitchburg 1842 - 1879 1888 – 1952  
Floyd (Oak Hall) 1895 – 1902  
Mann property (Quivey's Restaurant)

Dane County Historical Society Newsletter Rural Free Delivery Spring 2007  
Mary Clark  
Ibid Glen Wheeler  
*Fitchburg a history*, 1975, Connie Darling and Jean O'Brien

## DISPLAY CASE

The display case outside the Fitchburg Room at the library has returned to showcasing some of Fitchburg's early government leaders. This display will change periodically over the next several months tracing the names and faces of the Town Chairmen and eventually Mayors that have held those positions through the years. The list includes farmers, businessmen, women, including one of color, and other upstanding members of the community.

## LOCAL GIRLS MAKE GOOD

Lauren Stoneman, a Fitchburg resident and a student at Eagle School won a Second Place award at the National History Day competition in Washington D.C. Lauren and her classmate, Siena Perna, presented a program about the effect the Munich Agreement had on the onset of WWII. Several other students from Eagle School also were awarded prizes for other presentations. Eagle School students routinely take part in National History Day. Good Work!

## ELECTRIC FARM

A query came to the FHS archives wanting information about the "Electric Farm" that was located along Fitchburg's northern boundary in the early 1950s. The following information was found online.

*The Wisconsin Electric Research Farm is an experimental farm providing opportunity to study under actual working conditions the application of electric light, heat and power to all phases of dairy farm operation. The film shows how the American dairy farmer can reduce his chore time and hand labor with proper management, good planning and the use of electrical equipment. Electricity to pump water, milk the cows, unload silage, clean the barn, dry hay, grind feed, and many other uses. From the transformer-to the distribution panel-to the house-the barn-the hog and poultry houses-the farm shop-and other buildings- the film rapidly summarizes research in the field of farm electrification.*

There is a link to a 30 minute film on the internet about the farm under the title *Electric Farm Madison Wisconsin*. The film includes footage of the labor saving devices in the home as well as the farm labor it saves. It was sponsored by Wisconsin Electric Utilities Association and the University of Wisconsin and was narrated by WHA's Karl Schmidt.

## WEBSITE

A committee of the Board of Directors are working on a FHS website. The site will probably not be up and running until after the first of the year. Stay tuned for further word.

# Fitchburg Historical Society



Fox Hall



McCoy House



Mann House

Fitchburg, Wisconsin

*History is Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*

JANUARY 2017



And just like that 2017 is upon us. We hope you all had peaceful and lovely holiday celebrations. We now concentrate on the upcoming business of the FHS.

## APRIL MEETING

The first thing we want to mention is the upcoming Annual Meeting, which will be held sometime in April. The exact date has not been set but the topic of the meeting will be the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of WWI. We will have a speaker from the Veterans Museum. Watch for details. That will be the time to renew membership in the FHS. Also at that meeting we will be having an election of members to serve on the Board of Directors. At the present time we have two positions open. We like to have a full compliment of 12 members on the board. Please search your conscience and see if you can devote six days during the year for a meeting. We meet on every other month on Saturday mornings, at 10:30.

The meetings are short and productive, dealing with the nitty-gritty business of the society.

## NOVEMBER MEETING

Our meeting on November 6<sup>th</sup> was very well attended with interesting views on food. To open the meeting Adrienne Imilkoski gave a short history of Quivey's Grove, an inn from the 1800s located in the southwest part of Fitchburg and how the modern Quivey's Restaurant on Nesbitt Road garnered its name and why it uses local place names for the dishes on its menu. The main speaker, Anne Pryor, outlined the history of mainly Irish food with stories of her ancestors. She included the fact that corned beef and cabbage is not a traditional food of the Irish. It is mainly a concoction of United States cuisine. A table containing cookbooks and recipe books was on display. The books included two recipe books put together by members of the Swan Creek Sewing Circle in years past. There was also a copy of the book *Taste of Madison*, printed in 1974 by *Wisconsin Tales and Trails*. It contains recipes and memoirs from the early settlers of our Capital city. The book is in the reference section of the Fitchburg Room on the second floor of the Fitchburg Library. Anne ended her presentation with a food quiz; which food is connected with which country? Irish soda bread and apple cider was served for refreshments. Besides gaining three new



members at the meeting we received a journal from the Oak Hall Creamery covering the years 1895 – 1914. The same donor added a document that her mother received when she was awarded her teacher's certificate in 1924. We have also received a series of snapshots from the Yanggen family whose farm was replaced by the AMC theater on McKee Road. An earlier request about information for the Silver Spring School was answered and we received class photos and newspaper articles to add to that file. We are not a museum where we can showcase items but we certainly appreciate paper documents and photos that add to the history of Fitchburg. We appreciate donations of this kind to our archives. We extend a heartfelt thank-you to the donors.

### WEBSITE

The FHS has been busy for the last six months making plans for a website. It was launched on December 26. This site will eventually contain abbreviated information from our archives on a large number of historical to contemporary points of interest in and around the area of Fitchburg. It is designed to acquaint residents and those interested in our city about the past, present and future of Fitchburg. Due to the complexity of our website and our limited knowledge on website development we are slowly adding information and making adjustments to the format. We will soon be adding a list of new links to the home page to make it easier to check for information. To view our website go to [fitchburghistory.org](http://fitchburghistory.org) in your browser.

### DISPLAY CASE

The fall display of Fitchburg government officials has been replaced by a theme of holiday events. Pictures fete Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years. Small items loaned by members of FHS add to the scene. The holiday display will probably be gone by mid January in order to have a display showing some of the Century Farms in Fitchburg. That will lead into the theme of WWI articles before the April meeting. Plans are already underway for an interesting spring display. Be sure to check the case on you visits to the library. It is located near the Technology Center on the second floor.

### TALKING FITCHBURG

*TALKING FITCHBURG*, a conversational TV program to keep Fitchburg up to date on what is going on in the community airs on FACTV. It is live at 9:00 A.M., Monday thru Friday and on tape at other times during the day. In the past the program has featured members of the FHS discussing various themes. The latest version, Adrienne's talk about Quivey's Grove, can be accessed at the following site :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orDQlmf0fy0>

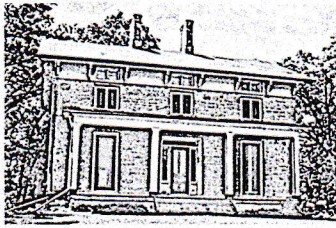
You can access previous programs done by FHS members by putting *FACTV Youtube* in the Google search site. It will bring up the site. Click on "videos" at the top of the page and it will bring up a myriad of topics to watch. There will be pages and pages of choices to scroll through.

### VETERANS DAY

The Fitchburg Senior Center held a recognition day for all veterans of Fitchburg on November 11<sup>th</sup>. The program consisted of an honor guard, choral music from the Fitchburg Seniors and Eagle School students, patriotic readings, and a call for veterans from each branch of service to stand while their hymn was sung. Dan Bach, whose 92 year-old father was in the audience, presented a short history of WWII. Dan also recounted the story of two Fitchburg residents who played significant roles in various battles. Norm Shaller was a prisoner of war in Germany for a time before escaping and returning to duty. Mike Millisor's stories of flying bombing missions in Europe were also recounted. The program concluded with the playing of Taps by Lizzie Alstad. The veterans and their guests then proceeded to the dining room for a delicious lunch of barbecue ribs and twice baked potatoes.



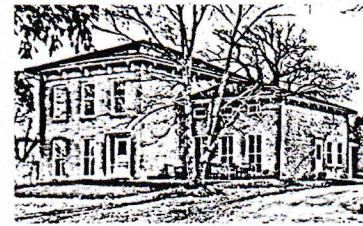
# Fitchburg Historical Society



*Fox Hall*



*McCoy House*



*Mann House*

*Fitchburg, Wisconsin*

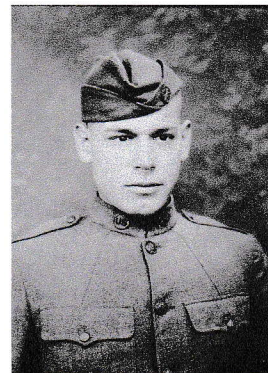
*History is Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*

APRIL 2017

## ANNUAL MEETING

The upcoming Annual Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society has been set for Sunday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. at the Fitchburg Public Library. The speaker for the meeting will be Russell Horton of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum located here in Madison. His topic for the day will be centered on WWI. At this time the display case has been updated to showcase some of the men from Fitchburg who served in that war. Before the speaker presents his program there will be a short business meeting at which time we will vote for the openings on the Board of Directors. The board consists of 12 members with four members being elected each year to serve a three-year term. At the present time the four members whose terms are expiring are Eric Amlie, Verne Brummel, Adrianne Imilkowski and Carole Kinney. They are willing to stand for re-election. Kay Harty and John Darling chose to retire early from their seats on the board. Their unexpired positions are open. Kay Phistry and Bill Hauda have agreed to place their names in nomination. Voting will take place during the meeting. The board meets six times a year on a Saturday morning every other month. Fresh ideas from new people are always welcomed. April is the time for renewals of membership in the FHS. Please fill out the form at the bottom of this newsletter so we will have

accurate information. Be assured that email addresses will not be shared. All group emails that go to members will be sent by blind copy in order that others cannot use your private address.



Wilson Mutchler one of the many men from Fitchburg who served in WWI

John Brown, another of the men from Fitchburg who served in WWI



Images taken from the FHS photo archives



## WEBPAGE

Have you accessed the website for the FHS that was launched in December? Some people get discouraged when their computer keeps bringing up Fitchburg MA. The surest way to access the FHS site is by using: [www.fitchburghistory.org](http://www.fitchburghistory.org) The "Web-daddy" has done a masterful job of posting interesting items including, but not limited to, the history of early Fitchburg, the schools both past and present, the obituary file we maintain (both past and present), landmarks, rural Fitchburg, and family histories. A sidebar connects with other area historical societies web pages and the Facebook page of the FHS. The website keeps growing as new things are posted.

## NATIONAL HISTORY DAY

It is also time for the annual National History Day. Coordinated by The Wisconsin Historical Society, it is a year-long academic enrichment program that helps 10,000 students annually. Students in grades six through twelve research historical issues, people and events and create presentations of their findings. Volunteers are a critical part of the NHD program. Help is needed to keep things running smoothly! Volunteers will act as room monitors for the State Competition to be held in Madison April 22<sup>nd</sup> at the State Historical Society Building on

State Street. You can find out more by going to:  
[www.historyday@wisconsinhistory.org](mailto:www.historyday@wisconsinhistory.org)

## HIDDEN GEMS IN THE ARCHIVES

An interesting file in the archives concerns the story and history of the Oscar Mayer Observatory and the original observatory on the Madison campus, the Washburn Observatory. The Oscar Mayer Observatory is located on property owned by Fitchburg Research Park Associates in Fitchburg. The small building sits on the hill north of Cheryl Parkway. It was originally located near the Washburn Observatory on the UW campus and was used as a student observatory. It was later donated to the Madison Astronomical Society, which was organized in 1930 as a protégé of the Astronomy department of the University. The building was moved to its present location in 1960. Oscar Mayer and Co. provided financial support for the move. When the night skies around Madison became too bright for "star gazing" the club was able to secure a darker area about 20 miles south of Madison where they observe the skies. However, their meetings are held in Madison. The original Washburn Observatory on the Madison Campus has recently been reopened for the public. You can find information about the Astronomical Society at [www.madisonastro.org](http://www.madisonastro.org) and about the Washburn Observatory at [www.astro.wisc.edu](http://www.astro.wisc.edu)

## FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

(Please circle type of membership)  
DUES APRIL 1 TO MARCH 31

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

INDIVIDUAL \$10.00

FAMILY \$12.00

BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL \$50.00

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Fitchburg Historical Society 5530 Lacy Road Fitchburg WI 53711  
608-727-1783 [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com)  
[www.fitchburghistory.org](http://www.fitchburghistory.org)

# Fitchburg Historical Society



*Fox Hall*



*McCoy House*



*Mann House*

*Fitchburg, Wisconsin*

*History is Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*

MAY 2017

## APRIL MEETING

What do wristwatches, zippers and donuts have in common? They are among the things that attained perfection because of WWI. Wristwatches replaced hard to manage pocket watches in the trenches, a primitive zipper went through many changes to be of use for flying suits and money belts, and the donuts were welcomed as eat-in-your hand treats for soldiers on their way to war. These are just some of the points brought up at the FHS's Annual Meeting talk about WWI. Russell Horton, the Reference & Outreach Archivist from The Wisconsin Veterans Museum, presented an interesting program with stories and other memorabilia to put on display. That, along with the pictures and documents in the display case, made for great conversation among the attendees. A short business meeting preceded Russ Horton's presentation. The election for the Board of Directors resulted in four members being re-elected for another term and Kay Phistry and Bill Hauda were elected to fill the two vacancies. We now have a full compliment of twelve members for the board.

## DISPLAY CASE

The display case on the second floor of the library has been changed with the theme of "Miniature Memories." Charlotte Milsner, Fitchburg resident and member of the Madison Area Miniature Enthusiasts, has generously agreed to showcase

some of the intricate pieces she has assembled. Be sure to stop up and admire them. The display will be up until fall.

## NEVIN STATE FISH HATCHERY

The Nevin State Fish Hatchery located at 3911 Fish Hatchery Road was established in 1876 as The Madison Fish Hatchery. It was the first fish hatchery in Wisconsin and one of the first in the United States. The site was chosen for the location of the nearby natural springs which could supply cold, clean water for hatching and raising fish. The streams and rivers of Wisconsin were being polluted from nearby lumbering, manufacturing and agricultural uses. Salmon were the first fish raised but by 1880 the fish hatchery was planting a variety of fish in Wisconsin and Michigan waters. Trout of various varieties predominated. From the 1870s to the 1920s railroad cars designed specifically for hatchery use were used to haul tanks of fry to streams and lakes throughout the state. The last remaining "fish car", Wisconsin's Badger #2, has been restored and is on display at the Mid-Continent Railway Museum in North Freedom. Fingerlings and yearlings are now trucked to the waiting waters. Each year between 800,000 and a million fish are stocked at fish hatcheries throughout the state. Up until the 1960s visitors could enjoy the grounds, have a picnic and walk through the pond areas to view the different stages of fish life. A gazebo was



a popular spot for families to gather. At the end of the school year the students from the one-room schools in Fitchburg held play-days with the various schools competing in sack races, tug of war, and softball games. In recent years the hatchery has been closed to public use for safety reasons. The Madison facility is now the DNR's South Central Regional Office and Service Center. It has been renamed Nevin Fish Hatchery in honor of a long-time superintendent of Wisconsin fisheries, James Nevin. Fish are still raised there and tours are offered to view the trout ponds. Call first to inquire about times. (608-275-3276)

### MINI GRANT FUND DRIVE

The FHS is applying to the Wisconsin Historical Society for a mini-grant to help digitize our archives. WHS awards mini-grants to affiliated societies twice a year for projects amounting to \$700.00 or less. In order to receive the grant we need to have matching funds. Our request will be for various items including two external hard drives, a good scanner and software to enable us to bring our archives up to date with modern technology. Our total for the items we have listed comes to a bit over \$600.00. We are requesting \$319.00 with the hopes of reaching matching funds of \$320. This is our first request for such a grant and we hope to be among the societies that are chosen. Donations with the notation "Fund Drive" can be sent to FHS, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg WI. 53711. All donations to the fund will be acknowledged at the FHS archives and in future newsletters.

### HISTORY BOOKS

There are very few new copies of *Fitchburg-a history* left for sale. Because copies are available on loan from libraries in the area and at the State Historical Library a decision has been made to not have it reprinted again. From time to time they show up at garage and book sales. All used copies will be welcomed at the FHS Archives.

### NEWS FROM OUR NEIGHBORS

The Mount Horeb Area Historical society has been in the process of a new venture for several years. Their museum and archives have been strained to the breaking point. Now they have completed their new facility, The Driftless Historium, a history and research center with a focus on the southwestern part of Dane County. They are having a Grand Opening on Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> from 9am to 5pm with a full schedule of events including tours and musical performances through the afternoon.. After the Grand Opening the usual summer season hours will be Wednesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Historium is located at 100 S. Second Street in Mount Horeb.. They have an interesting website at [www.driftlesshistorium.org](http://www.driftlesshistorium.org). For more information call 608-437-6486

### ORGANIZATIONS

Does your organization or neighborhood association have an article that would be appropriate on the [fitchburghistory.org](http://fitchburghistory.org) website? You can use the drop down tab on the home page to contact the web-master

### MEMBERSHIP

Summer is on the way. Memberships in the FHS run from April to March 31<sup>st</sup>. Don't let the change of seasons get in your way of thinking of the FHS. If you have not sent in your membership for 2017-2018 this would be a good time to renew.

#### FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

INDIVIDUAL \$10.00 \_\_\_\_\_ FAMILY \$12.00 \_\_\_\_\_ BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL \$50.00 \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Fitchburg Historical Society 5530 Lacy Road Fitchburg WI 53711  
608-727-1783 [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com)

# Fitchburg Historical Society



*Fox Hall*



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*History is Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*

SEPTEMBER 2017

## FALL MEETING

Plans are taking shape for our fall meeting. The date has been set for 1:30 p.m., Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> at the Fitchburg Public Library. The meeting will center on the evolution of the Fitchburg Fire Department since its inception as an all-volunteer department in 1971 to its two-station, paid employees of today. A member of the Fire Department will be a presenter and will have history and photos of the department. Prior to the meeting the display case on the second floor of the Library will feature items of interest regarding the department. October is Fire Prevention Month so the topic should be quite relevant.

## MINI GRANT REQUEST

We are pleased to report that we have received a mini-grant from the Wisconsin Historical Society for \$310. This will be used to help fund the digitization of our collection. This is a matching grant so we still need donations to match the \$310 we will be receiving. Donations with the notation "Fund Drive" can be sent to FHS, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg, WI 53711. We will provide frequent updates on the progress of our digitization project on the home page. The mini grant proposal detailing the rationale for our digitization project

can be seen by clicking **FHS Grant** on [www.fitchburghistory.org](http://www.fitchburghistory.org). We hope to start getting our photographs digitized soon so they are accessible.

## REGIONAL MEETING

FHS and Dane County Historical Society are co-hosting a meeting of the Capital Region of the Wisconsin Council of Local History. The meeting will be held at the Fitchburg Public Library on Sat. Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>. Registration will start at 10.00 A.M. Coffee and donuts will be available. Our President, Allan Tereba, will give a presentation on doing a webpage and an archivist from Milwaukee will present on the topic of Facebook for historical societies. Both topics will be quite interesting. Everyone is invited to attend. The meeting will end by noontime.

## SCHOOLS ARE OPEN

September brings about the opening of the schools. Years ago, in early Fitchburg, one-room schools were the norm. These schools were within a reasonable walking distance of the farms and educated the children in grades one to eight. It was rare that high school was in the future after the Common School commencement. The ceremony



was held as a joint celebration with other schools throughout Dane County. The commencement program was held at a high school in Madison. As home environments and roads improved so did the possibility of pupils attending high school in Madison, Verona or Oregon to continue their education. By the 1940s it was common for the pupils to go on to high school. Some of these students even went on to university educations.



Pictured here are the one-room schools in Fitchburg in 1911. Top row: Syene, Fitchburg Center, Fish Hatchery. Middle row: Swan Creek, Lake View, Prairie View, Camp Badger. Bottom row: Oak Hall, Stoner, Maple Corners. Early in the 1960s the Wisconsin Department of Instruction decreed that all areas of the state have K through 12 school districts and the one-room schools were phased out. This left a void in the local communities. The one-room schools had been a hub for gatherings of the neighbors. School programs featuring students as actors and performers drew parents and relatives to the schoolhouses to applaud their efforts. Mothers Clubs held card parties to raise money to offset the costs involved in furnishing the school. The annual play day at the end of the school year brought all the local schools to one spot, usually the grounds of the Fish Hatchery, for an end-of-the year picnic and play day. It was a chance to meet the children from the other schools. I don't think we need to write about the school systems in place in Fitchburg now. Three school districts, Madison, Oregon and Verona meld the children into larger communities of

students. Private schools and home schools have entered the picture. All in the name of progress. But have we lost something in the change?

## ARCHIVES

Our archivists are again asking for items to put in our collections. Newspaper articles concerning residents, obituaries, and of course the ever-present call for photographs. Keep us in mind when looking through your family history. Please remember our motto: "History is Yesterday Today and Tomorrow". The items do not have to be from the 1800s to be historical. Last week's events will be history in the near future.

## WEBPAGE

Are you keeping current on the additions to the Webpage? Is there something you would like to contribute to the page? You can write an article and submit it to the webmaster who will see about adding it to the site. Just click on *Contact* under the heading *About Us*. There is also a link to the various talks that members have done with FACTv. The ***Talking Fitchburg*** archives are easily accessible by going to the webpage, [www.fitchburg.org](http://www.fitchburg.org), and clicking on the sidebar ***Video Presentations***. If you are interested in reading archived newsletters you can find a connection to most of them going back to the first editions in 1989.

## MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the FHS runs from April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>. You might want to check to see if your membership is current. This will be your last newsletter if you have not rejoined. You can still send your check to FHS, 5520 Lacy Road, Fitchburg WI 53711. Single membership is \$10.00, Family \$12.00, Organization \$50.00.

# Fitchburg Historical Society



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JANUARY 2018

## A NEW YEAR

Another year has passed and we are all set for a prosperous 2018 at the Fitchburg Historical Society. Plans are underway for the Annual Meeting to be held on April 22. The topic for the meeting is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Spanish Flu that took so many lives in 1918. That meeting will also be the time to renew memberships.

## FALL MEETING

On October 29th Adam Dorn, Public Education Director from the Fitchburg Fire Department, talked about the department. He gave a brief history from being an all-volunteer department, which was on call from the county by pager to establishing the current permanent department in 1971 with Herman Pfund as the first chief. The FFD has changed from the all-volunteer department to a current staff of 82 people including firefighters that live on the premises, paid on-call, interns, and other support staff. He added figures as to the number of fire department related actions over the last few years. Most calls occur in the northern third of Fitchburg where there is the most population. Improving response time is always being worked on. Chief Pulvermacher spoke in the second half of the meeting telling about the quality of service and the training of the current staff. The FFD is responsible for emergency responses for fire,

rescue, and medical support. He noted the fire department is involved with prevention, education, and investigation as well as putting out actual fires. The opening of new fire station #2 was explained and he spoke of plans for fire station #3 in the future.

## PROGRESS ON MINI-GRANT

In July 2017 we obtained a matching funds mini grant to digitize our collection and to develop a robust database that could incorporate these images. This project was funded in part by a grant-in-aid from Wisconsin Historical Foundation, Inc., administered by Wisconsin Council for Local History, Inc. and by matching donations from our FHS members. Our ultimate goal is to place at least parts of our digital collection on our website to make it possible to view and search from remote locations. Our first step was to buy the necessary hardware and software. These items have been purchased and are now being used. Over the last few months a working database was developed and continues to be refined. Of prime importance is for our databases to accommodate images and searchable pdf files. To date we have scanned and optimized nearly 800 photographs in our collection and stored them as both high and low-resolution images. The high-resolution images are linked to our database. Each photograph is given an ID number, subject and description information on the



location of the original collection item. The database is searchable. At present this file is placed on our website ([www.fitchburghistory.org](http://www.fitchburghistory.org)) under the main menu FHS Collection. The file is searchable using the browser find function and is periodically updated with new records. High-resolution images can be obtained by contacting us. The newsletters from 1989 thru 2017 are also searchable from the same site. Both files are large and may take a rather long time to load.

## PIONEER CEMETERIES OAK HALL

Are you aware of the two pioneer cemeteries in Fitchburg? In 1854 a group of settlers sought to



have a burying ground for their families. A piece of land in Section 32 on what is now Highway

M was purchased and the Oak Hall Cemetery Association was established. By-Laws were formulated and lots were sold. By 1987 the Association had dwindled to two families and it was not feasible to continue. State rules on Cemetery Associations mandates that if the association is dissolved the cemetery reverts to the municipality where it is located. The Oak Hall Cemetery became part of the City of Fitchburg and was put into the hands of the Parks Department. The department kept the grounds mowed through the summers and placed flags at the graves of veterans on Memorial Day. In 1999 the City of Fitchburg purchased land along the east and north side of the original cemetery and began selling lots to interested parties. A list of the original burials is on the [www.fitchburghistory.org](http://www.fitchburghistory.org) website.

## ST. MARY CEMETERY

The other pioneer cemetery, known as St. Mary's Cemetery, is located in Section 35 on Highway M, 2.6 miles east of the Oak Hall site. That cemetery was founded in 1857 when Barney McGlynn deeded two acres of land to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to be used as a Catholic Church. The

site contained the church building, a parsonage and a cemetery. When the church building became too small for the growing congregation a new church was built in the Village of Oregon. Burials continued at the original site until 1898. After that time burials took place at the new St. Mary Cemetery in Oregon. Some of the bodies that had been buried in Fitchburg were re-interred at the cemetery in Oregon. Others were re-interred in the Catholic cemetery in Madison. However it is a general consensus that some bodies remained at the site. Through the years the cemetery fell to ruin; brush and brambles took over. When it was deemed necessary to clean up the cemetery it was done by removing the remaining head stones and clearing away the brush and brambles. The remaining headstones were piled along the edge of the cemetery where passing motorists stopped and helped themselves. An area farmer took it upon himself to plant corn on the site. Steps were taken to make sure this did not happen again. The Wisconsin Department of Corrections who operated a facility next to the property, agreed to mow the area and keep it presentable. In 1998 the Fitchburg Historical Society along with Holy Mother of Consolation Church in Oregon and the Oregon Area Historical Society rededicated the cemetery. Some of the tombstones had been recovered and plantings were put in by the Department of Corrections. Decorative fencing was installed and a local stone was moved in to hold a plaque describing the area. A list of most of the original burials is found on the FHS website. More information about the cemetery and the church can be found in the book *Holy Mother of Consolation Church, A History 1856 - 2006*. A copy of the book is on the non-circulating shelf of the FHS.



# Fitchburg Historical Society



*Fox Hall*



*McCoy House*



*Mann House*

*Fitchburg, Wisconsin*

*History is Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*

*April 2018*

## APRIL ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will take place on Sunday, April 22, 2018. It will begin at 1:30 in the ThermoFisher Room on the second floor of the Fitchburg Public Library. A short business meeting will be held including an election of four members for the Board of Directors. The Directors whose terms are expiring are: Rich Eggleston, Kay Phistry, Catherine Schneider and Allan Tereba. The Board meets six times a year on the first Saturday of alternating months, starting in February. If you are interested in serving on the Board please contact the nominating committee chair, Carole Kinney at 271-1132. Service on the board consists of helping to decide the direction the FHS takes through the year. **\*\*\*Renewal of membership can be done at the meeting.\*\*\*** If you are unable to attend the meeting you can renew your membership by using the form that is included with this newsletter. After the short business meeting we will hear Mary Hayney, Professor of Pharmacy at the University of Wisconsin. She will give a presentation regarding the flu pandemic of 1918 and its comparison to present bouts of flu. Professor Haney's program is sponsored in cooperation with the Dane County Historical Society.

## FITCHBURG HISTORY

Have you checked the website for the FHS lately? There are many new items on the ever-growing site: [www.fitchburghistory.org](http://www.fitchburghistory.org) Searchable databases of photos, military service and obituaries are now on the site. These databases are searchable through the browser on your computer. Great strides are being made with the obituary database. The hard-copy obituaries collected by Dianne Reynolds that are housed in the FHS archives are being digitized and added in increments to the website. Pictured below are our collection advisor, Elizabeth Leith, and her six UW students that are helping in this digitization project. Megan Bernard, Kelsey Breen, Virginia



Fetzer, Jackson Rhode, Onah Rongstad, Elizabeth Leith, and Caroline Schlingsong



Click on the "Fitchburg People" column and drop down to obituaries to read about the project. The photo database is very large and is also available at the website. Depending on your Internet speed it may take up to five minutes to load. **Video Presentations** on the website has a link to the FACTv interviews that have been aired on the local television channel. The website also has all the newsletters that have been sent since 1989 to the present. The website is a wealth of information. Check it out.

## CHANGING FACE OF FITCHBURG

Plans are being formulated to mark the 35<sup>th</sup> year since the Township of Fitchburg became the City of Fitchburg. Thirty-five years have changed the landscape dramatically and the changes have been nothing less than spectacular. Whereas it was once a farming community it is now a booming residential and commercial entity. There are very few farms with dairy animals left. The Barry Stables has closed after 150 years of operation. The O'Brien Brothers Stoner Prairie Dairy has

recently been auctioned. These have been added to the list of disappearing former Fitchburg businesses. Much of the rural acreage is now being used as cropland only. New thriving businesses have moved in to take their places. Many of these companies are technical companies such as Promega and Thermo Fisher (formerly Nicolet). There are also manufacturing firms; SubZero, Saris Bikes. Hotels are scattered throughout the city. Commercial shopping areas dot the landscape. The police department has grown from a one-car Constable to a department with over fifty officers and staff. The fire department has gone from a mutual aid department to a volunteer fire department to two fully-staffed fire stations. What will the next thirty-five years bring? Hopefully they will be saved and recorded in the annals of the Fitchburg Historical Society. It can be, if the general public continues to contribute to the archives of the Fitchburg Historical Society with photos and news of current residents of our "new" city.

***History is Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow***

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## FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Membership renewal 2018: APRIL 1 TO MARCH 31

Name \_\_\_\_\_ \$10.00 Individual \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ \$12.00 Family \_\_\_\_\_

City – State – Zip \_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00 Business or Professional \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Donation \_\_\_\_\_

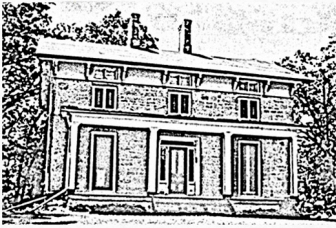
Email \_\_\_\_\_

(To be used only by the FHS to communicate with members)

BOOK ORDER: IRISH SETTLERS of FITCHBURG @ \$15.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Plus \$7.00 shipping

Mail form and payment to Fitchburg Historical Society  
5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg WI 53711

# Fitchburg Historical Society



*Fox Hall*



*McCoy House*



*Mann House*

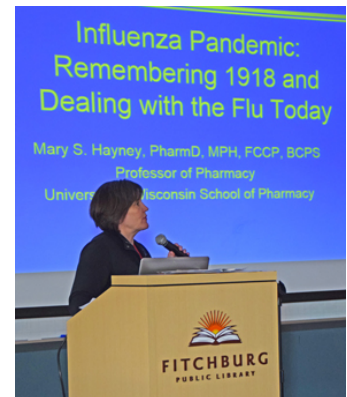
*Fitchburg, Wisconsin*

*History is Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*

AUGUST 2018

## APRIL ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society took place on Sunday, April 22, 2018, at 1:30 at the Fitchburg Public Library. The four members of the Board of Directors whose terms were expiring agreed to serve for another term. Thank you Rich Eggleston, Kay Phistry, Catherine Schneider and Allan Tereba. Adrienne Imilkowski presented a short background presentation on the 1918 influenza pandemic and Professor Mary Hayney from the UW Pharmacy School presented the keynote address on how influenza virus works, how it caused the 1918 pandemic and how we are dealing with influenza virus today. Professor Hayney's program was sponsored in cooperation with the Dane County Historical Society. The meeting had over 50 people and generated a large number of thoughtful questions.



## FALL MEETING

Sunday, October 28<sup>th</sup> has been set for the fall meeting. It will be held at 1:30 p.m. in the second floor meeting room at the Fitchburg Public Library. Jason Himebauch, a technologist at the Nevin State Fish Hatchery will be the speaker. The talk will be centered on the workings of the Fish Hatchery.

## WEBSITE

The Fitchburg Historical has a wonderful website. On it you can check Fitchburg History, Landmarks, Rural Fitchburg, Fitchburg People, Organizations, and the collections that are held in the archives. Other links include maps, publications, family histories, and cemeteries. If you have anything you would like to contribute there is a contact link on *About Fitchburg*. We welcome additional photos and obituaries. If there is something you would like added be sure to do it under the link *About Fitchburg* link. The site is updated



routinely at [www.fitchburghistory.org](http://www.fitchburghistory.org). There is a link to FACTv and FHS interviews on the right sidebar. You should also check out the Fitchburg Historical Society Facebook page where you can see the latest postings

## BARRY STABLES

The Barry families were early settlers of Fitchburg when it was still known as Greenfield. Since 1870 five generations of the Garrett Barry branch of the family have been involved in the horse business. Garrett and his son George started raising Percheron and Belgian horses to do the heavy farm work of the area. With the advent of tractors the workhorses were phased out and the Barrys concentrated on raising saddle horses. They were early members of The American Saddle Horse Breeders Association. Mike and his father, Phil Barry, built up a championship line of horses, many of them Palominos. The stables won many trophies through the years in various competitions. The Barry Stables were the boarding homes of many area horse lovers. That came to an end this spring when Michael and his son Patrick closed the stables. Hopefully the pastures and paddocks will soon see other horses enjoying the comforts of the area. The picture is of Mike at a horse show ca. 1949.



## 1903 SIGNATURE QUILT

An unusual signature quilt is on display in the Fitchburg Room at the library. It is on loan from Colleen O'Dea Porter. The large quilt was made in 1903 for a raffle of the St. Elizabeth's Society to help the poor in Madison. The names of parishioners of the three Catholic parishes of Madison along with other prominent Madisonians are embroidered on the quilt. In order for different signatures to be seen the quilt is repositioned periodically. Make a visit to the Fitchburg Room to see the quilt or go online to view the article about the quilt. The FHS website has high resolution photos to examine signatures in detail

## NEW FORMAT FOR THE PHOTO DATABASE

The **FHS Photo Database** has been reformatted to decrease the loading time 10 fold and increase the readability of the text. There is a small thumbnail photo following the description of each photo. Clicking on a thumbnail will bring up larger photos. Please [contact us](#) if you have questions about a particular photo, would like to correct or add information to a description, want a high-resolution image or would like to donate additional photos to the Fitchburg Historical Society.

## MEMBERSHIP

It is not too late to renew your membership in the FHS. Individual dues are \$10.00 and Family membership is \$12.00, Business or Professional is \$50.00. A check can be sent to the FHS, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg WI 53711. Add your name, address, and phone number. Please include your email address for newsletter and notification purposes. We do not share email addresses. New members are always welcome. Membership runs from April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>.

# Fitchburg Historical Society



*Fox Hall*



*McCoy House*



*Mann House*

*Fitchburg, Wisconsin*

*History is Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*

APRIL 2019

## APRIL 14 ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Fitchburg Historical Society will take place on Sunday, April 14, 2019, at 1:30 p.m. at the Fitchburg Public Library, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg, WI 53711, in the second-floor conference room. After a short business meeting, there will be a presentation on "This is Fitchburg." The business meeting will include an election of four members for the Board of Directors. The Directors whose terms are expiring are Mike Croft, Dianne Reynolds, Roger Tesch, and Winnie Lacy. Winnie Lacy has chosen to retire from the Board. Kay Phistry and Verne Brummel also retired from the Board. Their seats were recently filled by the Board with Eileen Kellor (two years remaining) and Barb Tereba (one year remaining). The Board meets six times a year on the first Saturday of alternating months, starting in February.



## THIS IS FITCHBURG

Business in Fitchburg once consisted of dairy farms, feed mills, blacksmith shops and general stores, but today there's genetic engineering and all kinds of stuff going on. The Fitchburg Historical Society

will address Fitchburg's decades-long identity crisis at its annual meeting. The Fitchburg Chamber of Commerce says "This is Fitchburg!" but what is "This?" Aldous Huxley wrote that Los Angeles was "nineteen suburbs in search of a metropolis." Is Fitchburg one suburb in search of a downtown? Help us answer the question April 14. The meeting is free and open to the public. Everyone is welcome to attend!





## WEBSITE

The Fitchburg Historical has a wonderful website. On it you can check Fitchburg History, Landmarks, Rural Fitchburg, Fitchburg People, Organizations, and the collections that are held in the archives. Other links include maps, publications, family histories, and cemeteries. If you have anything you would like to contribute there is a contact link on *About Fitchburg*. We welcome additional photos and obituaries. If there is something you would like added be sure to do it under the link *About Fitchburg* link. The site is updated

routinely at [www.fitchburghistory.org](http://www.fitchburghistory.org). There is a link to FACTv and FHS interviews on the right sidebar. You should also check out the Fitchburg Historical Society Facebook page where you can see the latest postings.



## MEMBERSHIP

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### FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Membership renewal 2019: APRIL 1 TO MARCH 31

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Address \_\_\_\_\_ \$12.00 Family \_\_\_\_\_

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( To be used only by the FHS to communicate with members)

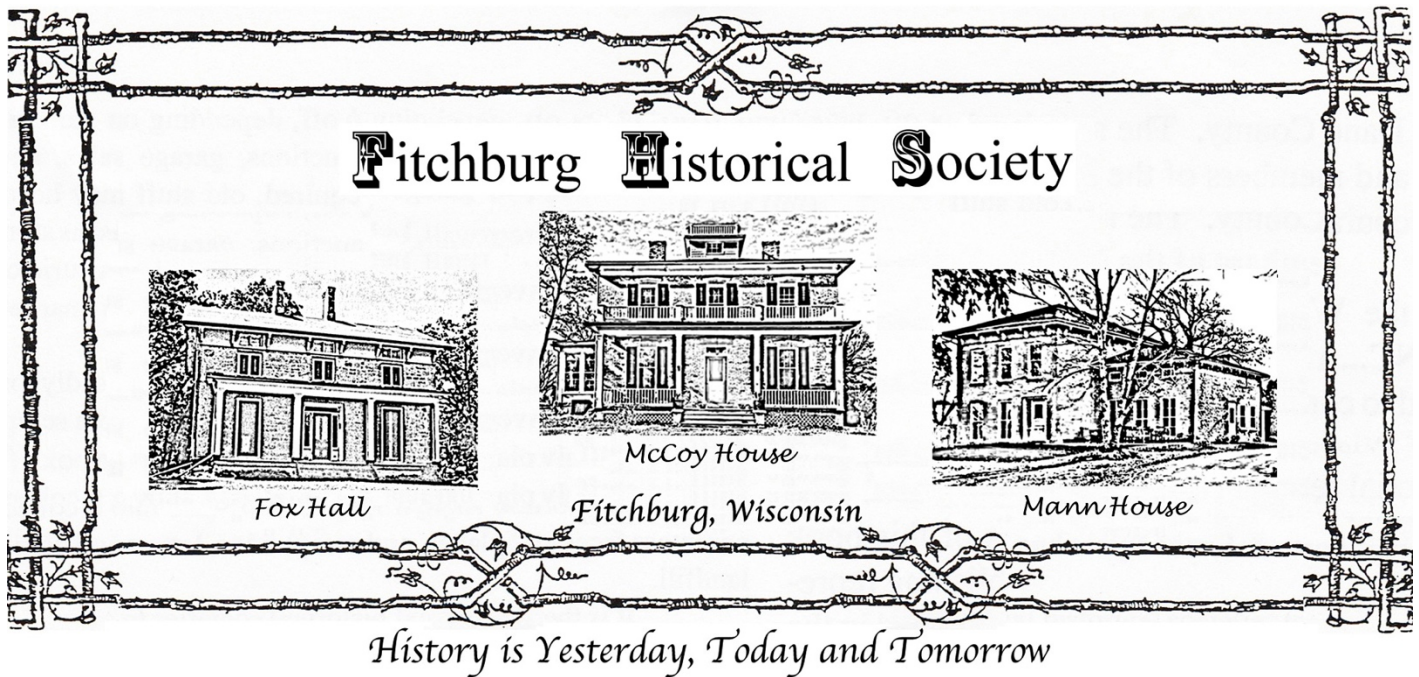
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Fitchburg Historical Society 5530 Lacy Road Fitchburg WI 53711 608-727-1783

woodedarchives@gmail.com [www.fitchburghistory.org](http://www.fitchburghistory.org)



September 2019 Newsletter

## How the Great Battle for Woman Suffrage was Won



Belle La Follette

2019 marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Wisconsin along with many other states ratifying the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment granting women the right to vote. The Fitchburg Historical Society has asked well known author and Professor Dr. Bob Kann to speak about the struggle required to pass the constitutional amendment giving women the vote. He will reveal the fascinating stories of courage, perseverance, and political know how it took over several generations of advocacy to achieve the vote for women. Plan to attend this inspiring presentation on Sunday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1:30 pm at the Fitchburg Public Library, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg, WI 53711. The program is free and open to the public. Prior to his talk a member of the Fitchburg Historical Society will give a brief run-down on the voting process through the years here in Fitchburg. Plans are to have a Q and A session after Bob's presentation.

## School is in Session

Once again our young people are returning to school and the age-old question arises, why doesn't Fitchburg have its own schools? It goes back to early Fitchburg Township when it was divided into twelve one-room schools. In the early 1960s the State Department of Public Instruction made a ruling that all schools should be in a K-12 district. A wonderful explanation of it can be found on [www.fitchburghistory.org](http://www.fitchburghistory.org). The right sidebar has a link to videos. You can listen to a great presentation by FHS Board member, Catherine O'Brien Schneider, herself a graduate of a one-room school, as she explains the whys and wherefores of the facts.



## Pioneer Cemetery

The pioneer cemetery on Highway M was once the site of St. Mary Catholic Church in Fitchburg. After the church and cemetery had been moved to Oregon the site was neglected for years. It was finally cleared of the brush and overgrown vegetation. The Oak Hill Correctional Institution took charge of mowing the site. In 1998 the FHS, in conjunction with Holy Mother of Consolation Parish and the Oak Hill Correctional Institution, had a dedication ceremony to mark the old cemetery. Some tombstones that had been in the original cemetery were found and reset. This past summer another of the original stones was found in Northern Wisconsin and moved back to Fitchburg. Eric and Marge Amlie, members of the FHS, are credited with bring the memorial stone of Thomas Burke back to the site. We extend thanks to Eric and Marge for their dedication to the project.

## New Fitchburg Business History Initiative

Fitchburg began as a rural community with a few businesses catering to the needs of the local farmers. With the introduction and expansion of dairy farming in the 1880s, Fitchburg emerged as a center for dairies that served Madison and the surrounding area. The growth of Madison and its encroachment into northern Fitchburg by the late 1970s made land values more profitable for homes than dairy farms. Then in 1983, a Wisconsin Supreme Court ruling established Fitchburg as a city and cemented its status as a true suburb. With its lower property values and its close proximity to downtown Madison, Fitchburg attracted small local businesses as well as national and international corporations. With a population of about 30,000, Fitchburg now has over 750 businesses. The Fitchburg Historical Society is in the process of obtaining the history of many of these businesses to document the transition of Fitchburg from a rural farming community to a diverse community supporting both rural and suburban lifestyles as well as providing affordable locations for leading technologies. We currently have 47 histories on our website. The September issue of the Fitchburg Star has two articles on this initiative. If you work for or know the owner of a Fitchburg based business, please encourage them to write a short history of their company and submit it to the FHS email [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com). You can visit our website <https://fitchburghistory.org> and look under the Businesses menu for examples.



## Summer Recollections in Fitchburg by Eileen Kellor

The Fitchburg Historical Society's display at the library of summer activities over the years made me think about my childhood summers in Fitchburg in the early 1960s. I lived in Lakeview, on the corner of old Highway 14 (M) and Highway B, where my parents ran a general store and gas station. My friends who lived on farms were busy with chores and animals, and the few kids I knew who lived "in town" went to the pool, played with neighborhood friends, and perhaps attended activities offered by the Oregon schools. But how did I, a country kid with a younger sister and eight much older siblings, but no nearby neighbor kids, spend my time?

Summer began with Holy Mother of Consolation's School year end picnic at Vilas Park. This was a big deal – field trips were rare. Our parents usually included something special in the bag lunch that day, such as Twinkies or potato chips. The grades could mingle more than on a usual school day and we were free to roam the zoo and park, or catch a ride on the little train that went around the lagoon.

At home, the hot summer days and nights were cooled only by a fan and whatever breeze might come through the open windows. As a fair-skinned child who burned easily, my mother often kept me indoors, where I read voraciously and did crafts. I also spent time in our store, and was sometimes allowed to ring up small sales and chat with customers. My time outside was usually spent reading under a tree or playing in the tree house. Our property had a well and septic tank, so we never filled a wading pool or ran through a sprinkler. At that time, stores were not allowed to be open on Sundays, so a family activity that included my father would only happen on a Sunday, when we might visit family friends from church or 4-H, or my mother's family in Waterloo. Once or twice a summer, my mother would bring us to the beach at Vilas Park.

Early summer meant planting a garden and working on projects for the Stoughton Junior Fair, which would also be entered in the Dane County Fair. One older brother raised sweet corn and when it was ripe, had my younger sister and me sell it at the road side on Highway B for a small commission. His theory was that two little girls were more likely to make a sale than a teenage boy. I learned what a baker's dozen meant, and how to pull back the corn husks to see if there were worms on the ear.

Some summers a convoy of army vehicles would pass by our house on Highway B, on their way to a drill or activity, perhaps at Goodland Park. Highway B was usually resurfaced each summer, and the smell of hot asphalt was present for days. My goal for the summer was to be able to run barefoot cross the hot pavement to my grandmother's. Although the fields across from us were usually planted with corn or peas, the fields adjacent to our yard were left untouched. If I was feeling adventurous, I would put a sandwich in a bandana and tie it to a long stick and "hike" through the field.

A special summer evening might include a marshmallow roast and folk songs around the fire pit near our house, catching fireflies in the yard, or going to a drive-in movie with an older sibling and their boyfriend or girlfriend. If there had been severe weather and the power was out – a pretty common occurrence – the night would be spent by candlelight or simply an early bedtime.

By mid-August, it was time for school shopping, usually a pair of new shoes, a new lunch box and thermos, and a few clothes to fill in the gaps from the hand-me-downs from older siblings and neighbors. My mother would begin to retrain us to a school schedule, with earlier bedtimes.

I'm pleased to see that many of the things that I did during my childhood in Fitchburg are still available to Fitchburg's kids in some fashion, through formal programming or simply taking advantage of the city's many parks and outdoor areas.

## Board of Directors

Eric Amlie  
Mike Croft  
Rich Eggleston  
Adrianne Imilkowski (Secretary)  
Eileen Kellor  
Carole Kinney  
Dianne Reynolds  
Catherine Schneider (Vice President)  
Allan Tereba (President)  
Barb Tereba  
Roger Tesch (Treasurer)  
Jennifer Ullman



Left to right: Rich Eggleston, Eric Amlie, Roger Tesch, Catherine Schneider, Carole Kinney, Mike Croft, Barb Tereba, Adrianne Imilkowski, Allan Tereba, Jennifer Ullman, Eileen Kellor, Dianne Reynolds.



## MEMBERSHIP

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### FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Membership 2019: APRIL 1 TO MARCH 31

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Address \_\_\_\_\_ \$12.00 Family \_\_\_\_\_

City – State – Zip \_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00 Business or Professional \_\_\_\_\_

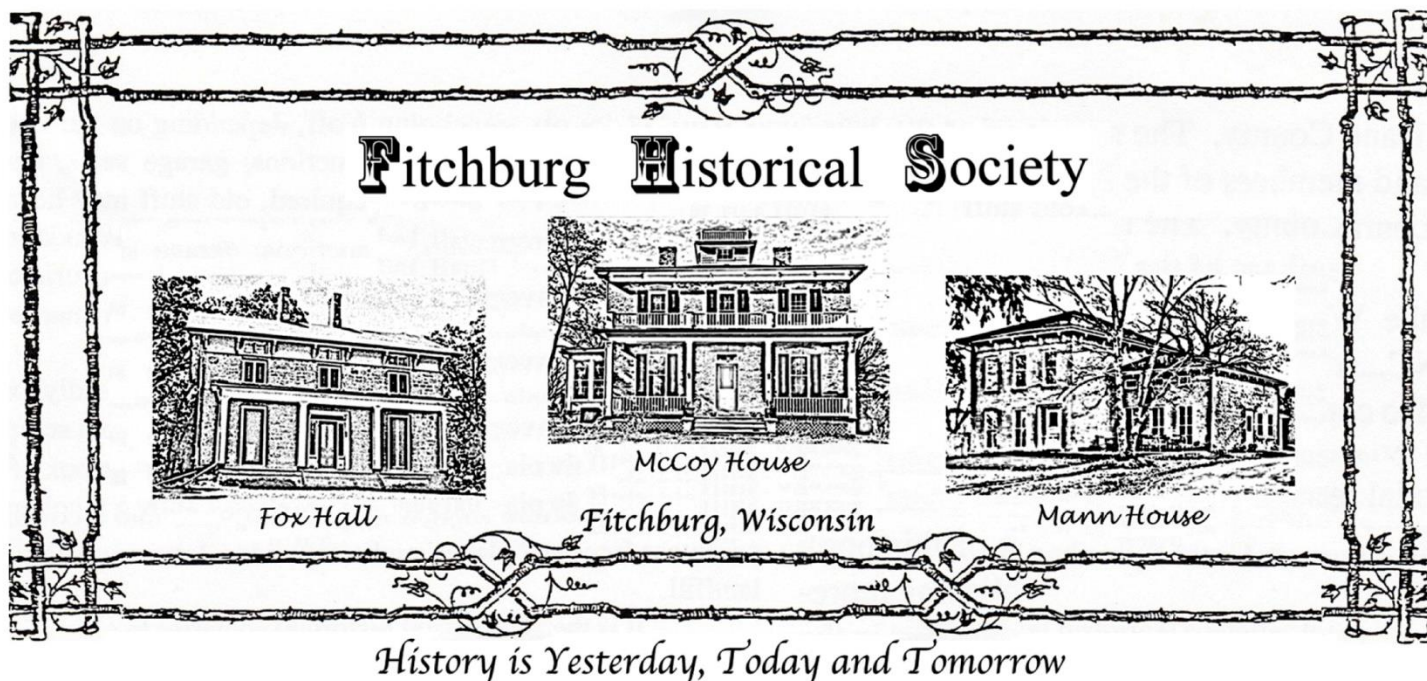
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Historical Society 5530 Lacy Road,  
Fitchburg WI 53711



**AUGUST 2020**

### **OPERATIONAL AND PROGRAM CHANGES DUE TO THE PANDEMIC**



The public health measures taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have required the Historical Society to make a number of changes. Our office, display, and archive are located within the Fitchburg Library, which has been closed to the public since mid-March. It is unknown when it will reopen. At present, the Board members do not have regular access to the Society's office or materials. Until further notice, the best method is email, [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com). You may also contact us through our website, [www.fitchburghistory.org](http://www.fitchburghistory.org), using the contact form under the "About Us" tab. If you do not have email or internet access, leave a message at 608-729-1783.

Our April 19 annual meeting was cancelled. The planned program for that meeting was the work of the late Ida Wyman, an internationally renowned photographer who spent her last years in Fitchburg. Our featured speaker, Melanie Herzog, dean and professor of art history at Edgewood College, has graciously agreed to present at our annual meeting in April 2021. Our current display case in the library features Ms. Wyman, and is highlighted on our homepage. The Board has transacted business via email and held its first Zoom meeting on August 1.



The Society's membership year begins April 1 and ends March 31. A renewal reminder is usually sent before the annual meeting. The dues help support the Society's activities, including the website and programs, typically two a year. Because we may not be able to hold programs this membership year, the Board voted to suspend membership dues for current members for a year. Any dues that were already paid for the 2020 membership year will be credited to the 2021 membership year unless a refund or designation of the dues as a donation is requested. Please email us if you have any questions about your membership.

### **ANNUAL MEETING BOARD MEMBER ELECTION**

The Wisconsin Historical Society has released the local historical societies from holding in-person elections and annual meetings this year due to COVID-19 restrictions. Four Board members, Eric Amlie, Adrienne Imilkowski,



Carole Kinney, and Barb Tereba, hold seats that end this year. All four have agreed to remain on the Board and the Board supports that they continue another term. If there is anyone else you would like to nominate, please let us know by September 5, 2020, and notice will be shared with the members. If no additional nominations are received by that date, these four members will maintain their positions on the Board for another three year term.

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW



It's been almost a year since our last newsletter, and we apologize for that. Similar to the duck who's calm on the surface and busy paddling underwater, the Fitchburg Historical Society Board members have been busy – so busy, the newsletter was delayed. You can learn more about the Board members and their interest in Fitchburg's history on our website, [fitchburghistory.org](http://fitchburghistory.org) under the "About Us" tab.

During the past year, Board president and webmaster Allan Tereba has made many changes and updates to the website, [www.fitchburghistory.org](http://www.fitchburghistory.org). These include notices of additions to the Society's online obituary database, featured articles, new projects, and other informational pieces. Society members with email addresses on file automatically receive an email when new items are published on the website. Members may opt out of the feature, and non-members may opt in by emailing us at [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com).

Throughout the year, Board members Adrienne Imilkowski, Carole Kinney, and Roger Tesch responded to email, phone and website submissions from individuals or organizations requesting information about someone or something in Fitchburg, although on occasion someone does confuse us with Fitchburg, Massachusetts. The website currently includes three databases (photographs, newsletters, and obituaries) that can be a good source of information. We welcome contributions to these, and encourage you to email us if you have an item of interest.

Another ongoing project were the monthly video interviews on Fitchburg's FACTv, which are organized by Board member Catherine Schneider. These short interviews, as well as videos of past programs, are available from the "Video Presentations" link in the sidebar on the right-hand side of home page.

The April 2019 meeting featured a video prepared by the Fitchburg Chamber of Commerce, and used to promote the city to businesses. It generated a lively discussion among the attendees about possible topics for future programs.

Our last newsletter promoted the November 3, 2019, meeting and program, "How the Great Battle for Woman Suffrage was Won." Dr. Bob Kann's informative presentation included a chronology of the national efforts, and included the role that Wisconsin's Belle LaFollette played. Winnie Lacy, a long-time Fitchburg volunteer election official, started the program with a history of the changes to the election process in Fitchburg and several election-related artifacts from the Society's collection. The Dane County Historical Society co-sponsored this event, which was attended by 51 people, who were greeted by Board member Eileen Kellor, wearing authentic period clothing that belonged to her late grandmother, Caroline Slinde Kellor, a former Fitchburg resident.



If you are on social media, please check out our Facebook page, Fitchburg Historical Society, for photographs from Fitchburg's past, information from other historical societies, topical news items, and events.

## BECOME PART OF HISTORY: WISCONSIN PANDEMIC JOURNAL PROJECT



As noted on its website, "in 1861 Wisconsin Historical Society founder Lyman Draper asked soldiers stationed at Camp Randall in Madison, Wisconsin to help document the Civil War by keeping a diary. After the war, those diaries were mailed back to the Society, where today they are regarded as one of the most valuable collections in the Society's archives." The Wisconsin State Historical Society has

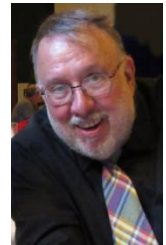
launched a project to allow the public to contribute their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more about the project and how to contribute, at <https://wisconsinhistory.org/JOURNALPROJECT>.

## THOUGHTS FROM THE BOARD ABOUT THE PANDEMIC

Two of our board members have shared some thoughts about their pandemic experiences for this newsletter. We will include others in future newsletters, and welcome your contributions as well. Email them to [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com).

### **Rich Eggleston, Chicago native, Fitchburg resident**

*In mid-March, there were only a few dozen known coronavirus cases in Wisconsin. The pandemic itself was psychologically distant. On March 16 I attended a board meeting of the Dane County Historical Society in the basement of the Lussier Family Heritage Center in Lake Farm County Park. It seemed like an ordinary day when I arrived for the 1p.m. meeting, but when we adjourned at around 3, we were the only people left in the building. We hadn't gotten the memo, if there was one. There was no fire alarm. That brought home to me the reality of the pandemic.*



*I drove home, and except for one trip to the pharmacy, my pickup truck rarely comes out of the garage in the days since. The days blend together when you're retired, but more so when you're quarantined in a pandemic. First, my exercise classes were canceled. Then the community lunch. Then the plays downtown and out of town. Of course, my favorite bars were closed, a social hardship more than a chemical hardship since I'd quit drinking. My Friday lunch group, the Has-Beens of Wisconsin, switched to Zoom and e-mails.*

*While the National Football League continues to discuss what to do with its business, politicians who are adept at tossing around political footballs have been having a field day. Having no close family nearby, I've resorted to social media, newspapers and the network news to keep informed.*

*Pity poor me.*

### **Catherine Schneider, Fitchburg native, Verona resident**



*As a person who enjoys history and hearing about how things were "in the old days", a pandemic brought to mind for me the killer influenza that struck the world in 1918 leaving countless casualties in its wake. It was beyond my imagination that by March of 2020, the United States would be in the grip of a new and deadly virus sweeping the world that was named COVID 19. My first hint about the seriousness of this virus was a phone call from my oldest son on Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, warning me to stay home. He said, "This virus is real. We're shutting down everything for your age group not to get infected. We're sacrificing for you. Do your part and don't go out."*

*I certainly paid attention to that warning. By Monday, the schools were closing as well as most businesses, offices were shuttered, and people were told to only venture out for what is necessary in order to stop the spread of the virus and "flatten the curve" of those being infected. All we could do was practice "social distancing" meaning staying at least six feet from others. The use of masks was not encouraged at first so that supplies could be saved for hospital and emergency personnel.*

*On a personal level my husband and I canceled all the events on our calendar. We took turns getting our groceries early in the morning just as the store opened in order to avoid other people. Two of our sons are teachers; both started teaching on line. Our son's engineering firm began working online at home. One daughter-in-law was laid off from retail work, another was temporarily laid off as a surgical technician when hospitals geared up to receive*



*COVID 19 patients, and the third began working for her non-profit organization on line from home. Our older grandchildren began taking their classes on line while our preschool grandchildren needed full time care at home with no preschool facilities open.*

*Day to day life is much different and quieter these days of living with COVID 19. My husband and I are getting more exercise with an hour's daily walk or bike ride now part of our schedule. Many more neighbors are walking or biking by our home during the day with fewer cars on our street. I have met with friends for outdoor visits in my yard. Most of my contacts with family and friends are through phone calls, Facetime, or Zoom meetings. Medical visits opened up for me again in May with clinics requiring masks, check ins with temperatures taken and questions about any exposure to COVID 19 with hand sanitizer everywhere. A sister and brother-in-law live in an assisted living facility which shut down to all visitors in March. During the summer, family may now make appointments for visits with residents on the patio outside; residents and visitors all wear masks. When the warmer weather ends, it will again be difficult to be able to see family in the facility unless they are going for medical appointments.*

*The normal ways we relate to one another on a physical level have now become ways we are aware could result in someone being infected with the virus. Funeral services are now mostly limited to immediate family or a visitation with a small number of people allowed at a time. It's also much more common to refrain from hugs or handshakes as gestures of sympathy due to the fear of giving or receiving the virus.*

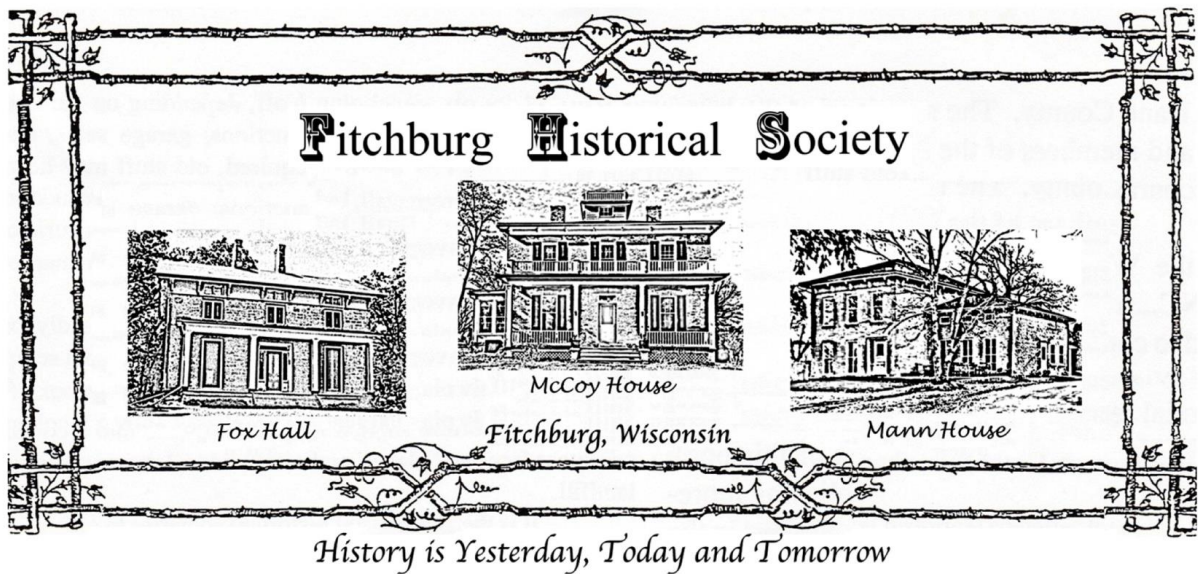
*It has been a time for much more noticing and awareness on my part due to the slower pace of life. As spring began, I loved watching the new buds appear, the birds starting to sing, and the trees and shrubs grow greener each day. In the summer, the longer days with picnics and bike riding are deeply enjoyable. There have been surprises with a cousin phoning from Texas and more check ins with neighbors. I'm seeing more smiles and hearing more greetings during walks as we all step aside for each other on the sidewalk to make room for social distancing. It's good to see people trying to keep each other safe. We've all been in this together.*

### **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

We believe that the Historical Society can play an important role by promoting a sense of engagement among Fitchburg residents, including "newcomers" who want to know more about their community as well as "old timers," who have helped Fitchburg become what it is today. The goals of the Fitchburg Historical Society are to preserve, advance and disseminate knowledge of the history of the City of Fitchburg, Wisconsin and its environs. We value the support of our members, whether through membership dues or donations, attending our programs, using our website, contributing information, or simply saying "thank you" to a board member. Although dues are suspended for 2020, we hope you will continue your membership and support in 2021. A membership form is available on our website at <https://fitchburghistory.org/registration-form/>.

Share your thoughts and ideas about possible Society activities or programs, and ways that we can engage with the community, by email [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com), or leave a message at 608-729-1783.

**Stay well!**  
**We hope to see you soon.**



**NOVEMBER 2020**

With almost a year between the last two newsletters, this newsletter marks what we hope will be a quarterly publication cycle. Our goal is to use the newsletter to highlight current Society activities, make people aware of our resources, and draw from previous newsletters and the Society's archives to help tell the story of Fitchburg's history. We welcome your contributions and story suggestions.

### **BOARD ELECTION RESULTS**

Due to the pandemic, the annual meeting was not held, and the election for Board member positions could not be held in person. Information was provided in the August newsletter about the positions up for election and the candidates. Members were asked to respond via email by September 5, 2020, with the names of any additional candidates. None were received, and the Board unanimously accepted the slate of candidates, Eric Amlie, Adrienne Imilkowski, Carol Kinney, and Barb Tereba. These individuals will serve a three-year term that will end in April 2023. Thank you to these individuals and the other board members for their time and dedication.

### **DOCUMENTING HISTORY IN THE MAKING**

If you ask people their idea of the purpose of a historical society, most of them would probably say it has to do documenting and sharing information about the past – you know, "history." But another role of a historical society is to document the current world so that future generations have a source of information. During the past few months, the Fitchburg Historical Society has begun several projects that highlight that role. Two of these are the Verona Road Project, and the City's response to provide government services during a pandemic.

The *Verona Road project* in Madison and Fitchburg hasn't taken forever. It just seems that way. The Fitchburg Historical Society is seeking the remembrances of residents who lived through it, as well as some of us who lived through the historic traffic jams that the road was famous for. Please email us at [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com) or reply to our Facebook page if you are willing to share your experiences. (A poll on how many people unintentionally took a trip to Verona after the McKee Road left-turn option was removed may appear in a future newsletter.)

*How is the City of Fitchburg functioning in the pandemic?* The Fitchburg Historical Society and FACTv launched an effort to answer that question with a Talking Fitchburg segment. Catherine Schneider, vice-president of FHS,



turned the tables on Jeremy Crosby, community media services manager for Fitchburg, and put him in the role of answering questions instead of asking them. Crosby said Fitchburg was fortunate in having the technology available not only for staff to work from home, but in broadcasting city meetings seamlessly wherever the participants are physically located.

Future segments are planned for other city services, such as the library. A guest article at the end of this newsletter describes how each of the four elections held in 2020 were conducted in the midst of a pandemic.

## **HISTORICAL SOCIETY OPERATIONS**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, city buildings have remained closed to the public since mid-March. The Society's archives and office within the library have not been available, nor have the meeting rooms. The Board has shifted to holding its meetings virtually, using the Zoom platform. Members continue to check and respond to email and voicemail, and mail is forwarded periodically to the President. If you need to contact the Society or a Board member, the best method is to send an email to [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com).



Acquisitions to our collections haven't stopped either. Earlier this year, the estate of Ruth Skelly Trameri and Tom Skelly provided FHS with images of Leo Skelly, who farmed in Syene until the early 1950s. He is shown with his team of horses in the early 1920s, and a decade later, Leo with his fox hunting companions, whose names have been lost to history.



If you have photographs or other materials that you think may be of interest to the Society, send an email with your contact information. Our space is limited, but we may be

able to make digital copies of some items, keep physical copies of limited materials, or refer you to another Society that has more storage space available. Digital contributions are especially welcome.

## **SWAN CREEK SEWING CIRCLE IS 105 YEARS YOUNG**

On Wednesday, December 1, 1915, a group of women met at the home of Amanda Culp, or as she would have been known at the time, Mrs. Fred Culp. The purpose was to form a group with the mission of "promoting neighborliness" for the women in the Swan Creek School District. The group is among the oldest women's group in the country, and was featured on a segment of Nancy Zieman's, *Sewing with Nancy*. Due to its popularity at a time when there were few social opportunities for rural women, membership was usually restricted to daughters and daughters-in-law of members. This was waived at times, and periodically, new members were invited. The group continued to meet the first Wednesday of the month, with rare exceptions for special events, such as a local fair.





This year, the Circle intended to celebrate its 105<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a jubilee event featuring its service activities over the past century. Although the pandemic has limited its in person meetings, meetings have continued via Zoom – a technology that’s a far cry from the hand crank telephones that were in the homes

of the lucky few when the Circle was founded. The detailed minutes from the 105 years include the names of many names featured in Fitchburg’s history, such as Blaney, Haight, Jones, Kellor, Kinney, Stoneman, and Uphoff.

The photo in the upper right is the Culp farmhouse. The lower left shows several founding members before riding in a parade in Oregon. The lower right is a more recent photo of a service project to make pillows for women recovering from breast cancer surgery. The Circle has adapted to the times with a Facebook page, where visitors often share their memories of a grandmother for whom Swan Creek Sewing Circle was an important part of her life.



### **Elections 2020 Thorough the Eyes of a Fitchburg Poll Worker**

*Sonjia Short, a Fitchburg resident, describes this year’s elections from her unique perspective as a Chief Election Inspector for District 3.*

When my husband Mike and I moved to Fitchburg, Muriel Stoneman encouraged me to volunteer. Around 2005, I finally did, taking a vacation day from work each election to serve. Over the years, I worked at three of the four districts, wherever help was needed. Because I was very comfortable using computers, I usually worked on voter registration. When I retired in 2015, I took the training to become a Chief Elections Inspector. Patti Anderson, the City Clerk at the time, assigned me to be Chief of District 3. I’ve been serving there ever since.

February 18, 2020 primary: We were excited to use the Badger Book electronic poll book system and software, a replacement for paper poll books, for the first time. The system was developed by the Wisconsin Elections Commission in 2017. It is used to check in and register voters and to process absentee ballots. It speeds these transactions significantly and creates reports for end-of-night processes. The data from Badger Books is downloaded onto a data stick at the end of the night. That data stick is used to upload the data directly to the statewide WisVote system by the City Clerk after the election. The new system reduces human error and makes balancing numbers after the polls close considerably easier.

April 7, 2020 Spring and Presidential Preference election: The COVID-19 pandemic had struck by this time. Most of our regular election workers are retired seniors, considered to be a vulnerable population. Most decided not to risk working, which left us quite short-handed. Fortunately, Governor Evers activated Wisconsin National Guard troops to assist at the polls statewide. Six to eight young men and women were assigned to each Fitchburg polling location. (Sgt. Monica Miggins, a Soldier with the 1158<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company out of Beloit, Wisconsin, is shown sanitizing a voter’s hand before he enters one of Fitchburg’s polling stations. Photo credit Spc. Emma Anderson, Wisconsin National Guard.) They were fun to work with, listened carefully to instructions, organized themselves efficiently, and quickly completed the





tasks I assigned. They helped set up the polling locations, helped process absentee ballots, cleaned voting booths, and helped monitor and maintain social distancing among our voters, then assisted with take-down at the end of the night.

This election was the first election for which we implemented social distancing, placing tape on the floor at six-foot intervals and limiting the number of people in the room as needed. All workers wore masks and sneeze guards were used for all check-in, registration, and ballot stations. Workers were assigned to spray and wipe down voting booths and pens with sanitizer after each voter.

Despite our preparations, I was caught off-guard when our first curbside voter told me she was COVID-19 positive. Fortunately, I was wearing a mask, even though she was not. I quickly put on gloves to handle her photo ID and ballot, as well as the pen and clipboard she used. I sprayed everything she touched thoroughly with disinfectant, including her ballot. We allowed it to dry before processing through the tabulator and storing it with the other ballots.

August 11 Partisan Primary: Unlike the April election, enough people volunteered to work the election, and National Guard assistance wasn't needed. COVID-19 safety procedures were refined. We strongly encouraged voters to wear masks. Curbside voting workers were issued face guards and gloves, as well as shields. We requested that voters use their own pens to mark their ballots. Although in-person voting was light, with only 300 people at my polling location in the Wyndham Garden Hotel ballroom, we processed a record number of absentee ballots, about 1200 in my district.

November 3 General Election: We knew that this election November 3, 2020, would involve considerably more interest than the elections earlier in the year. That certainly was the case.

*Absentee voting.* Concern for voter safety generated a significant increase in absentee ballot requests. Late legal challenges about who qualified to be on the ballot meant that clerks could not mail the absentee ballots until the Wisconsin Supreme Court made a final determination. City clerks had only a few days after the Court's decision to mail the ballots by the state mandated deadline. City Clerk Tracy Oldenburg enlisted the Chief Elections Inspectors' help. Mailing the ballots was not as simple as slapping a label on an envelope. There were four different ballots for District 3, depending on which congressional and school districts people lived in. For each requested ballot, the correct ballot had to be identified based on the address. The mailing and return envelopes had to be labeled, stamped, and initialed. The folded ballot had to be assembled and inserted along with the instruction sheets and return envelopes. There were several ways to return the completed ballots, including by mail or at the dedicated drop box in City Hall.

Despite the encouragement of absentee voting, as the election date grew closer, some people were concerned about mailed absentee ballots. Would they arrive in time to be counted? Would they arrive at all? The City Clerk anticipated a greater use of in-person absentee voting at the Community Center the two weeks leading up to election day. Once again, the Chiefs and other election inspectors were called upon to help City staff with in-person absentee voting, "early voting". Early voting began October 20<sup>th</sup> and ran through October 30<sup>th</sup>. The first day there were over 500 voters, with an average of more than 200 voters per day over the next 10 days. Many voters chose to drop off their absentee ballots in the drop box at City Hall during this time.

Curbside voting was also an option, and people with active cases of COVID came. The safety procedures were refined. Voters were asked to call ahead so we could prepare to safely serve them. We donned masks, shields, and gloves. We talked to voters through their car windows and had them show us their photo IDs through the window. We wrote down their name and address on a log sheet and retrieved the proper ballot. Voters were asked to use their own pens and then were given a clipboard with the ballot and the absentee envelope. The voter marked and folded the ballot, placed it into the envelope, which we watched them sign. We wore gloves to take their envelope and the clipboard, sprayed the paper thoroughly with disinfectant and only after it had dried, signed the envelope as witness and put it into the bin with the other envelopes.

*Election day.* My election day duties started at 6AM when I arrived at the hotel to turn on equipment and prepared to get the new workers started so we could promptly open the polls at 7AM. There were already two voters waiting when I arrived. I delivered my Inspector's Statement to City Hall at 11PM that evening. It was a long and very busy day. I'm proud of my workers who did a great job, many without the advance face-to-face training that they would typically have received except for COVID-19.

We weren't sure what to expect on election day, but we knew it would be busy. We received training on how to handle disruptive behavior. Our police department was ready to respond if needed. We had just the opposite atmosphere. A vendor set up a food cart and someone provided live music in the parking lot for most of the afternoon. While the line of voters reached around the block (mostly because everyone was standing six feet apart), no one seemed to mind the wait, and all were very patient and respectful when they interacted with us. Over 1000 people came to vote in person at the Wyndham.

Our lines were long in part because so many people needed to register before they voted. They were not just young people who were voting for the first time. Many had moved and needed to change their addresses. One 50+ year-old confided to us that he had never voted before. Happily, most of the people brought the necessary documentation to prove where they lived so they could register. We had to turn a small handful of folks away due to not meeting the 28-day residency requirement or missing documents.

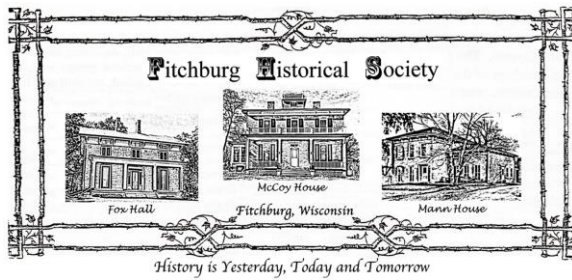
*Provisional votes.* People who were registered and didn't have a valid photo ID could vote Provisionally. They could fill out a ballot and seal it in a special envelope that was held at City Hall until 4 PM on Friday afternoon. If the voter returned to City Hall with a valid ID by that time, their vote would be counted. On the Monday after the election, a Board of Canvas (several of the Chiefs along with the City Clerk) convened at City Hall. The Board members reviewed all provisional (PV) ballots. The PV ballots from voters who have returned to city hall with a valid photo ID were opened and their votes added to the preliminary results. Only then are the election results confirmed and considered official. While several provisional ballots were issued, only three people city-wide returned with the required ID to have their ballots counted after the election.

*Absentee ballot processing.* My crew of 14, seven in each of two shifts, worked from the time the polls opened at 7AM until late afternoon to process approximately 3,000 absentee ballots. Over 40 ballots had to be re-made so the tabulator could read them. Some ballots were damaged, some people did not follow directions and used colored ink or used checkmarks rather than filling in the circles. If we can determine voter intent, we are allowed by code to remake the ballots so the machine can read them. As with all processes, this needs to be done with two people to assure it is done accurately.

*Tabulating results.* At the end of the night after the polls closed, I sent the results from each tabulator (the machines that voters feed their ballots and we feed absentee ballots into) by modem to the County and ran reports from both the tabulators and the Badger Books. Any discrepancies in the numbers are reconciled or explained. The ballots are hand sorted by reporting district, absentee ballots separated from regular ballots, remade ballots stacked separately, and write-ins identified and recorded. All ballots are then sealed in bags and kept in the vault at City Hall for no less than 22 months. In the event of a recount, the ballot bags will be taken to a central location in Dane County where the ballots will be recounted.

Throughout the year, City Clerk Tracy and her staff at City Hall were outstanding, providing excellent support for all of us workers with grace and patience, despite working long hours before, during and after each election. All of us are dedicated to making sure that all qualified voters can vote and that their ballots are accurately counted. My father served in the US Army and was a Prisoner of War for 14 months during WWII. Voting in our elections is a privilege that my family has always taken very seriously, and I am proud to do my part to help.





**We'd love to hear from you!**

Here's how you can reach us:

Email: [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com)

Phone: 608-729-1783

## **MARCH 2021**

Almost a year has passed since the COVID-19 pandemic reached us and caused massive changes to all aspects of our lives. When the Board met at the Fitchburg Library on February 1, 2020, we had no idea that it would be the last time we would meet in person for more than a year. We've continued to meet via Zoom, and in conjunction with Fitchburg's FACTv staff, our annual meeting and program also will be web-based. And even though we can't access our office or archives at the Fitchburg Library, we continue to share content through our website and Facebook page. We welcome your feedback and suggestions on other ways that we may be able to connect with our members and others interested in Fitchburg.

### **SUPPORT LOCAL HISTORY: JOIN THE FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

The Fitchburg Historical Society relies primarily on membership dues to finance its activities, including the website and programs. For a nominal amount, \$10 individual, \$12 family, or \$50 business, you can support our efforts to document and preserve Fitchburg's rich history. Our membership year runs from April 1 – March 31. As a member, you have the right to vote in Board elections, participate in Society business decisions such as by law revisions. Download the membership form from our website at <https://fitchburghistory.org/registration-form/>, or send your payment, along with your name, address, telephone number, email address, and membership level to this address:

FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY, c/o Roger Tesch, 3417 Brighton Pl, Fitchburg WI 53713-2842

## **ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM APRIL 25, 2021**

The Society's annual meeting and board election will be held Sunday, April 25, at 1:30 via Zoom. We are excited that Melanie Herzog, professor of art history at Edgewood College, will be joining us. She will speak on the topic "Ida Wyman, acclaimed photographer of everyday life," with a question-and-answer session following. Ms. Wyman lived much of her life in New York, and became a Fitchburg resident in her later years. She is best known for her photographs of New York street life, and her work in Life magazine.

The program and meeting are free and open to the public. Registration will open on April 1. The registration form will be posted on the Fitchburg Historical Society's website, [www.fitchburghistory.org](http://www.fitchburghistory.org), on the city's website, and through FACTv. Registrants will receive a link to Zoom event after registration is complete. The business meeting and board member election will be held after the program. We encourage you to share this information with others who have an interest in Ms. Wyman's work or photography. When the Fitchburg library reopens to the public, check out the display case on the second floor that highlights her work.



## WEBSITE DEEP DIVE: VIDEO PRESENTATIONS

The Society's website is home to a wealth of information about Fitchburg's past and present. The website is maintained solely by volunteers. In this newsletter, we're highlighting the "Video Presentations" page, [www.fitchburghistory.org/video-presentations/](http://www.fitchburghistory.org/video-presentations/). This page contains links to dozens of videos of talks presented at Historical Society meetings, and interviews conducted by FACTv. The talks include topics that are primarily related to Fitchburg, such as "Irish Settlers in Old Fitchburg," as well as others of broader interest, such as "Ethnic Rural Architecture in Wisconsin."

The FACTv videos, coordinated by Board member Catherine Schneider, are short interviews (15 minutes or so) on an issue or item specifically related to Fitchburg. They air on FACTv, Fitchburg's community television station, and are made available to the Society to post on its YouTube channel. Recent interviews have focused on COVID and how it has affected Fitchburg, including Pete Gunderson, owner of Gunderson Funeral Homes, and Aaron Richardson, Mayor of Fitchburg. Examples of other topics are the history of schools in Fitchburg, Fitchburg agribusiness, and how Fitchburg became a city.



You can access the videos from our YouTube channel, [www.tinyurl.com/fhsyoutube](http://www.tinyurl.com/fhsyoutube), or use the links to individual interviews and presentations on our Video Presentations webpage, [www.fitchburghistory.org/video-presentations/](http://www.fitchburghistory.org/video-presentations/).

Take time to check out some of these videos and let us know what you think, by sending an email to [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com), or drop us a note at 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg WI 53711.

## BOARD MEMBER ELECTIONS

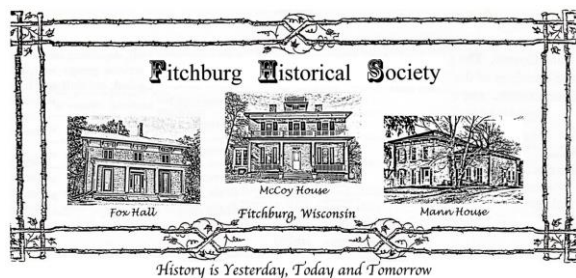
An election to fill four three-year Board member seats will be held in conjunction with the annual meeting. Board meetings are generally held the first Saturday morning of every other month, February through December, at the Fitchburg Library or Zoom. Board members whose terms are expiring are: Rich Eggleston, Eileen Kellor, Catherine Schneider, and Allan Tereba. If you are interested in becoming a Board member, send an email by April 18 to [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com) to be placed on the ballot.

## EXPLORING FITCHBURG: BIKE AND MULTI-USE PATHS

Many residents of Fitchburg and the area take advantage of the bike and multi-use paths that run through the city. Whether they bike, jog, or walk on the paths, they may wonder how the paths came about, and the stories behind them. An article that provides some of this information for the regional trails and paths, and many of the important local paths, is available on the Society's website, [www.fitchburghistory.org/bike-trails-and-paths](http://www.fitchburghistory.org/bike-trails-and-paths). Many thanks to Board member Tom Hovel, for preparing this information.







**We'd love to hear from you!**

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 Email: [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com)  
 Phone: 608-729-1783

## AUGUST 2021

As we near the end of the second summer of the COVID pandemic, we can't say that things are "back to normal," but we can say that things are getting back to normal. For example, in June, the Society Board had its first in-person meeting in over a year and a half, and we've been able to access our office at the Fitchburg Library, which is also allowing access to library patrons. Vaccination rates in Dane County are high, and many of us have been able to see friends and family again. We are proud of the Society's efforts to capture many aspects of the pandemic's impacts on Fitchburg residents, businesses, and government. (Maybe "Resilient" should be added to Fitchburg's city motto.)

This newsletter falls on the cusp between the end of summer and the beginning of a new school year. One of our articles features a common summer job for several decades of Fitchburg and area youth (working at Blaney's Seed Corn), and another highlights Fitchburg's school system. We welcome your feedback and suggestions on topics of future newsletters, and ways that we may be able to connect with our members and others interested in Fitchburg.

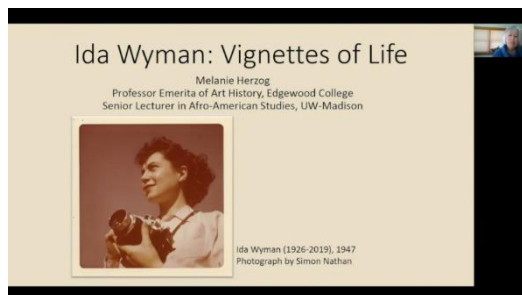
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FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY, c/o Roger Tesch, 3417 Brighton Pl, Fitchburg WI 53713-2842

## 2021 ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM: A VIRTUAL SUCCESS!

The Society's annual meeting and board election were held Sunday, April 25, via Zoom, an online meeting platform. The event made history as the Society's first ever virtual meeting and presentation, made possible by the valuable technical assistance of Fitchburg FACTv staff. Melanie Herzog, professor of art history at Edgewood College, spoke on the topic "Ida Wyman, acclaimed photographer of everyday life." Ms. Wyman lived much of her life in New York, and became a Fitchburg resident in her later years. She is best known for her photographs of New York street life, and her work in *Life* magazine. The presentation is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h6IOpAaPR18>. With the success of our first virtual presentation, we plan to explore the possibility of offering hybrid in-person and virtual offerings in the future.



The Annual meeting and Board election were held after the presentation. Both the minutes of the last annual meeting, and the treasurer's report were shared with members via email prior to the meeting. An election to fill four

three-year Board member seats was held. Three incumbents, Allan Tereba, Catherine Schneider, and Eileen Kellor, chose to run again, and were reelected. The seat previously held by Rich Eggleston, who opted not to run again, remains vacant. Board meetings are generally held the first Saturday morning of every other month, February through December, at the Fitchburg Library or via Zoom. If you are interested in becoming a Board member, email [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com) and a Board member will contact you.

## WINNIE LACY

It is on a sad note that we share news of the death of Winnie Lacy, a long time Fitchburg Historical Society member and board member. Although she was not a Fitchburg native, she became an ardent Fitchburg supporter when she



married Phil Lacy, and moved to the Lacy family farm. She was the longest presiding President of the FHS, serving from 1995 to 2001. Winnie kept busy with FHS projects such as cataloging over 1100 photos amassed over the years with the help of Eric Amlie. For many years she was the editor and major contributor of the FHS Newsletter. In 2017, she pushed for and did the early work for the FHS to submit a Wisconsin Council for Local History mini grant. This grant provided the FHS funds to develop both a digital database for organizing our collection as well as developing the FHS website. Winnie retired from the FHS board due to health reasons and to finish her genealogy book. We are grateful to Winnie for her important role in capturing Fitchburg's history and her ongoing support to the Society.

## RICH EGGLESTON

We are extending a heartfelt "thank you" to Rich Eggleston, a longtime member and former president of the Board. Rich's professional career as a journalist brought him to this area. He has played an important role in moving forward the Fitchburg Historical Society's mission. Rich opted not to run for another term on the Board, although his work and interest in history continues with the Dane County Historical Society. We are grateful that Rich is continuing as the lead for our Facebook page.

## WEBSITE DEEP DIVE: FITCHBURG SCHOOLS

A recurring question is why doesn't Fitchburg have its own school system? At present, Fitchburg children attend school in three districts: Madison, Oregon, or Verona. But few people know that in the past, there were at least 12 different school districts serving Fitchburg's families and children. These were primarily one room schools, with grades 1-8 being served by a single teacher. After eighth grade, students from these schools attended high school in Madison, Oregon, or Verona. Gradually, many of the schools closed and joined one of the other districts. For example, in 1951, residents of the Syene School District voted to join the Oregon School District, and the school eventually became a private residence. In 1965, the Stoner School, District 7, shown at right in 1911, closed and became part of the Verona Area School District, and that building as well was converted into a private residence.



By the mid-1960's, changes at the state level resulted in the closure of the remaining small districts, which were consolidated into one of the three larger districts. District consolidations were not unique to Wisconsin and continue, usually as small school districts face decreased funding or student populations, that make it difficult to operate a comprehensive secondary school. The consolidations are still reflected in the names of the three districts that



Fitchburg's students attend: Verona Area School District, Oregon Consolidated School District, and Madison Metropolitan School District. Despite all the schools being closed for at least 55 years, several board members have personal connections to these former schools. For example, one member and her father both attended Stoner School, and her mother attended Camp Badger. Another member's grandparents purchased and lived on the property on which Lake View School was located, and her father attended Lake View School.

As part of a joint project with the Oregon Area Historical Society, markers were erected at the locations of most of the old Fitchburg schools. A detailed map showing Fitchburg's old schools and a history of each are at <https://fitchburghistory.org/schools/>. Current Fitchburg residents might find it interesting to locate the school that

they would have attended and envision what it would have been like. One former school, Silver Springs joined the Madison district in 1961, and continued to operate until 1970. Its former location is close to the current Rocky Rococo's off the Beltline. It's hard to envision a school at that site, in the shadow of the Beltline and amidst commercial properties, yet not that long ago, students walked to it from Badger Road and Fish Hatchery,



Some of Fitchburg's former schoolhouses were converted to private residences, while others were lost to development and growth of the surrounding communities. One former resident recalls that in the 1950s, four of the old school houses were moved next to the red brick Oregon High School and used as temporary classrooms while a new school was built. After the new school was completed, the old schools were demolished. Top left is Lake View School in 1911, at its original location on the corner of Highways MM and B, and lower left, sometime in the 1950s, when it was moved to an unknown location. Camp Badger School, (top right, in 1911) 6048 McKee Road,



was purchased by Alcoholics Anonymous, and currently is used as a Serenity House (lower right).

In addition to the histories of the schools, another source of information about the history of Fitchburg's school system is a FACTv video by Catherine Schneider, available at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNZYUzmwZEc>.



## IT WAS THE BEST OF JOBS, IT WAS THE WORST OF JOBS

The address of a current Fitchburg business, Hartung Brothers Seed, on Blaney Road, reveals its origins as Blaney Farms, Inc., a provider of hybrid seed corn grown by farmers as livestock feed. But Blaney's was probably better known in the Madison area for the summer jobs for teens than for its seed corn.

Every summer, hundreds of teens (usually at least 14 years old) and young adults spent long days in the fields. Buses transported the young workers from across the Madison area and brought them back at the end of the day. Most worked as corn detassellers, removing the tassels from every other row of corn to prevent unwanted pollination that would disrupt the desired hybrid line. An inspector (often a college student) followed their progress through each row and reported at the end of the day. Too many tassels left unpicked might result in a warning or termination.

We recently posted on two Madison and Oregon area Facebook pages, asking people for their memories of these summer jobs. There were scores of responses, including from people who had the same job in another state or at another Madison area seed corn producer. Not surprisingly, memories of the experience varied. Best job ever, worst job ever. Best suntan, worst sunburn. Good pay (a special incentive was paid if you worked the entire summer), poor pay. Many people worked the job to earn money for a big purchase or to fund a school trip. There were memories of injuries inflicted by the surprisingly rough corn stalks, including someone who remembered that a friend severed an artery – or at least that's how it's remembered. We'll be compiling these memories into an article for our website. Until then, here's a recollection from Board Member Dianne Reynolds:



*"I detasseled corn for 2 summers for Blaney's (1967 and 1968). We walked down to the corner of Syene and Irish Lane to get picked up for work at 6 a.m. Mornings in the corn were wet and buggy and afternoons were hot and dry. Suntan lotion in the 1960's really didn't have much SPF so even if you wore it you most likely were going to be very tan by the end of the detasseling season. If I remember correctly, the season only lasted two to three weeks. We had two older gentlemen as our crew leaders one of whom lived in a boarding house in Oregon. We either walked or rode the detasseling machine. One thing I didn't realize was that corn stalks when broken off (culling rogues was part of the job) are really sharp and I still have scars today to prove it. I was thankful for the opportunity to work and earn money because my only other job option was babysitting which only paid 50 cents an hour; it seems like at Blaney's we made a \$1.00 an hour."*

### THINGS ARE HAPPENING IN LAKE VIEW



What or where is Lake View? Lake View is the area of Fitchburg at the intersection of MM (also known as Old Highway 14) and County Highway B, near Fitchburg's eastern edge. Early in Fitchburg's history, Lake View thrived. Two of Fitchburg's oldest structures are located there, including the Lake View Stagecoach Hotel and Tavern (Conrad Getts' Inn, photo courtesy Wisconsin Historical Society), built in 1845, as well as a property across the street, built at a similar time, and used most recently as a private residence and antique shop.

Earlier this summer, two of our Board members met with the new owners of the second property, who are eager to learn the history of the property and of Fitchburg. Among their first projects is restoring the residence to resemble its original state more closely. This photo of the staircase provides a glimpse of what their efforts are revealing. We are excited by their energy and interest in Fitchburg history and have invited them to share their progress with us.

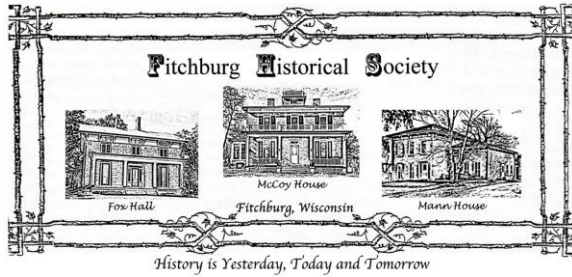


### SAVE THE DATE: FALL PROGRAM SET FOR NOVEMBER 7, 2021

The Historical Society typically holds two in person programs a year, one in the spring, in conjunction with the annual meeting, and another in the fall. The recent surge of COVID cases makes it difficult to plan in person activities. Given the success of its first virtual program in April, the Board is moving forward with a virtual fall program on genealogy research. An in person option has not been ruled out, but would be dependent on local public health conditions and meeting space availability.

Mark Sunday, November 7, at 1:30 on your calendars. If there are specific genealogical topics you would like to suggest, please email them to us at [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com).



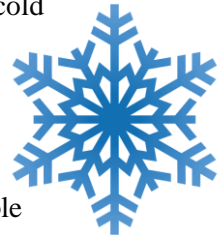


**We'd love to hear from you!**

Here's how you can reach us:  
 Email: [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com)  
 Phone: 608-729-1783

## DECEMBER 2021

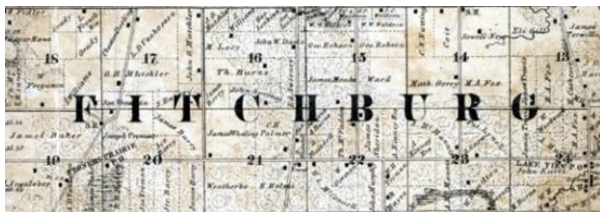
The year may be winding down, but for many of us, it's a busy time of year. Those of us in cold climates may be winterizing our homes, making sure the garage is well stocked with snow shovels and ice melt, and pulling out the mittens and scarves. Others may be shopping for gifts, preparing holiday meals and treats, or deep cleaning closets for one last donation drop off of the year. It seems as if the last few weeks of the year go by quickly.



With that in mind, we've made this newsletter a short read, featuring some videos available through our website that may help you pass some time on a long, dark, winter night.

As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions on topics of future newsletters, and ways that we may be able to connect with our members and others interested in Fitchburg.

## "USING LAND TO MAP YOUR GENEALOGY" AVAILABLE ONLINE



With the success of our virtual annual meeting and spring program, our fall program annual meeting was offered online. Patty Schmitt, an experienced amateur genealogist, and board member Roger Laurel Tesch discussed many types of land documents dating as far back as colonial times that are useful in identifying and documenting family history. In addition to obvious items such as plat maps that show land ownership, many other documents and resources reference land or location. For example, city directories, census records, marriage, birth, and burial records, may all include location information. Many of these documents can be found on the internet, through free sources or online subscriptions. The presentation is available on YouTube at this link: <https://youtu.be/IFvoWDE4Kyc>

## MEMORIES OF WINTER IN FITCHBURG

As adults, when we think of the upcoming winter, many of us who live in a cold climate may conjure up visions of snowplows that are slow to arrive, and when they do, depositing glaciers at the foot of the driveway, or an iced-up windshield greeting you when you get to your car after work. Children's thoughts may be more joyful, with sledding, snow days, snowmen, and video games envisioned. But what was it like in Fitchburg "back in the day?"



Two of the Society's video interviews with FACTv provide some insights into what it was like for two individuals whose families have long ties to Fitchburg. In 2018, Bill Kinney talked with FACTv about "Winter in Old Fitchburg." Bill's forebears were among the earliest Fitchburg settlers, and Bill still resides in Fitchburg. Board member Catherine Schneider's family also has long ties to Fitchburg, and Catherine grew up and attended school in Fitchburg. In 2017, she shared her memories of a special Christmas story.



20180125 Winter in old Fitchburg

View Bill's "Winter in old Fitchburg" here:

<https://youtu.be/exXX8rpGiHI>

View Catherine's "Historical Christmas Story" here:

<https://youtu.be/LrOgygWARUY>



Even if you didn't grow up in Fitchburg, or in a cold climate, watching these short videos with a family member – especially a younger one - could be a great way to start a conversation and reminisce about your life "back in the day." Dozens of other video interviews and programs are available through our website's "Video Presentations" page at <https://fitchburghistory.org/video-presentations/>

### **SUPPORT LOCAL HISTORY: BECOME A MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER**

The Fitchburg Historical Society relies primarily on membership dues to finance our activities, including the website and programs. You can help support our activities by becoming a member. For a nominal amount, \$10 individual, \$12 family, or \$50 business, you can support our efforts to document and preserve Fitchburg's rich history. Our membership year runs from April 1 – March 31. As a member, you have the right to vote in Board elections and participate in Society business decisions such as by law revisions. Download the membership form from our website at <https://fitchburghistory.org/registration-form/>, or send your payment, along with your name, address, telephone number, email address, and membership level to this address:

#### **FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

c/o Roger Tesch

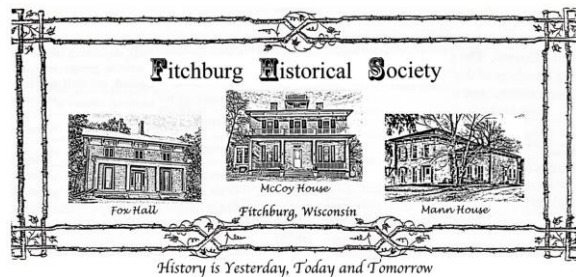
3417 Brighton Pl

Fitchburg WI 53713-2842

If you're interested in a more active role with the Society, please consider assisting in a volunteer capacity. The Society's impressive website, its display cases at the library, communications, semiannual programming, and ongoing FACTv video interviews currently are developed and carried out by Board members. An ongoing area of need is helping to write new content for the website. Board vacancies occur when a member's term and they chose not to run, or steps down during their term. Board meetings are generally held the first Saturday morning of every other month, February through December, at the Fitchburg Library or via Zoom. If you are interested in volunteering with the Society, or potentially being considered for a Board member position, email [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com) and a Board member will contact you.







Here's how you can reach us:

Email: [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com)

Phone: 608-729-1783

<https://fitchburghistory.org/>

## APRIL 2022

This year, Mother Nature has been playing April Fool's Day tricks all month, sending us cold, blustery days and even snow, instead of much awaited warmer temps and spring blossoms. With garden cleanup and yard work delayed, some of us may be looking for new indoor activities. This newsletter offers some suggestions – read on!

## 2022 ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM APRIL 24 AT PROMEGA

We are excited to hold our first in person event in more than two years! This year's annual meeting will be held on Sunday, April 24, at 1:30 p.m., at the Promega BioPharmaceutical Technology Center, 5445 E. Cheryl Parkway, in Fitchburg. Following a brief meeting and board election, Penny Patterson, Vice President of Corporate Affairs, will present "Promega: A Company on the Move During COVID," and Promega's international scope in the fight against COVID. A tour of the building will be offered after the presentation. The meeting and program are open to the public.



Current board members Mike Croft, Tom Hovel, Dianne Reynolds, and Roger Tesch are up for reelection. In addition, Shawn Pfaff and Ann White, who filled vacant board positions, must be confirmed. We encourage you to share this special opportunity to learn more about one of Fitchburg's businesses with a global reach.

## MEMORIES OF A FITCHBURG TRANSPLANT

Last year, Joyce Snell, a former Fitchburg resident, sent us a thoughtful, handwritten memory of how her family came to Fitchburg, ending with "You can now understand why I love keeping in touch with Fitchburg and watching it grow into a city." Here's an excerpt:



*In the winter of 1946 Fitchburg was not a city. It was a quiet farming community south of Madison. That winter my dad, Edgar Guetzke, came home from work and told my mother, Viola, "I bought a farm today." He had sold our home on Syene Road for \$8000 to purchase the Percy Tusler farm on Fish Hatchery Road for \$8000. The Tusler farm was the typical farm of that era. The kitchen was very small but it had running water. There was a summer kitchen near the kitchen. There was a big black pot-bellied stove (with isinglass windows) in the dining room and a space heater in the living room. There were registers in the ceiling of the first floor allowing the first floor heat to rise through the register in the floor of the second floor. There was no bathroom but a nice outhouse behind the house.*

Her transcribed memory will be posted on the Society's website, and includes the answer to the question "what's on that property today?"

Almost all the Board members are Fitchburg transplants or have another connection to Fitchburg that motivated them to become a Board member. Check out their bios and why they are committed to preserving Fitchburg history <https://fitchburghistory.org/about/>

## SHARE YOUR FITCHBURG STORY

As stated on our website, “history is yesterday, today and tomorrow.” Are you a current or former Fitchburg resident? Do you have family ties, such as a grandparent or uncle? Do you work in Fitchburg? If your answer is “yes” to any of those questions, or you have some other connection to Fitchburg, please consider sharing your story. It doesn’t have to be long, and it doesn’t have to be anything “special” – because every story is special in its own way and is part of Fitchburg’s history.



As the excerpt from Joyce Snell’s memories of Fitchburg shows, a simple memory can capture rich historical information. Her description of the family’s house, and especially kitchen, is probably an accurate description of many rural homes in the 1940s. An important part of the Society’s mission is to document and preserve history. Capturing and sharing more current content will help our newer “transplants” become part of the Fitchburg community, as well as its history. Sharing your story helps us achieve those goals. (Photos are welcome as well.) You can email your memory to us at [woodarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodarchives@gmail.com), or mail it to Fitchburg Historical Society, c/o Fitchburg Public Library, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg, WI 53711.

The next time your outdoor plans are thwarted by one of Mother Nature’s April Fool’s tricks, consider spending some time strolling through our website for an idea of the range of information it includes, and that we would welcome from you. A great starting point are the options under the “People” tab, with topics such as “Family Histories,” “Organizations,” and “Obituaries.” Access them from the homepage, <https://fitchburghistory.org/>

## SUPPORT LOCAL HISTORY: BECOME A MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER

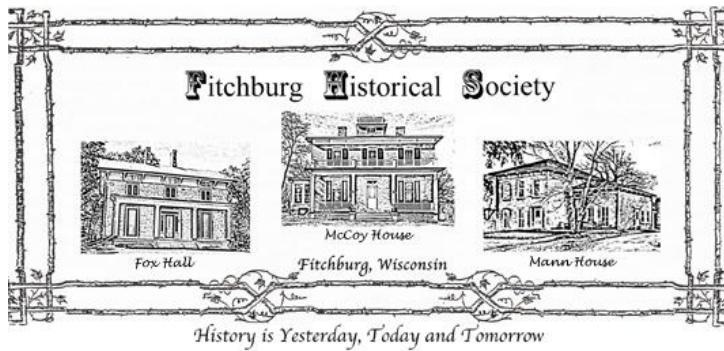
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FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
c/o Roger Tesch  
3417 Brighton Pl  
Fitchburg WI 53713-2842

**By the time our next newsletter arrives, summer should have arrived and stuck around. So we’ll end on a positive note, with an image from Stoneman’s Famous Sweet Corn, a popular Fitchburg stop in midsummer.**







**Fitchburg Historical Society**  
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**Fitchburg, WI 53711**  
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**woodedarchives@gmail.com**

## November 2022

As we approach a third winter with COVID in our world, many of our usual routines are returning. The Fitchburg Library, which houses our office, display case, and a small storage area, is open to the public. We have been able to resume in person Board meetings at the library, and as noted in the article below, hosted an in-person fall meeting and presentation.

But the limitations on meeting in person or accessing our office didn't mean our activities stopped! Unlike historical societies that have storage space or a building, from its creation in 1987, the Society decided to primarily limit their collection to photographs and documents, rather than artifacts, memorabilia, etc. Due to this limited space, the website has been developed with the goal of making our collection widely available using the internet, and the pandemic did not stop progress on that goal. Numerous items were added to our website, monthly videos with FACTv continued and were added to our website, additions were made to our database of obituaries of current or former Fitchburg citizens, and enhancements were made behind the scenes to our website, <https://fitchburghistory.org>.

Our website provides a wealth of information, including digitized photographs, previous newsletters, links to video presentations and recordings of live programs, plat maps, and information about Fitchburg businesses, to name a few. If you haven't checked it out lately, put it on your "things to do in the winter" list. We think you'll be surprised at the wealth of information and material that is available.

### Fall Program: Insights of a Growing City

About 20 people attended our fall program by, Chad Brecklin, City Administrator. Although relatively new to the Administrator role, his knowledge and perspective of Fitchburg is much deeper, having been with the city's police department since 1999, culminating as Police Chief prior to his appointment as City Administrator. The program focused on the recent growth of businesses, population, and housing and their projected trends, the addition of parts of the Town of Madison effective October 31, and the financial, regulatory, and environmental challenges the City faces while striving to keep Fitchburg a desirable and diverse place to live.



Links to this presentation as well as other FHS presentations and interviews can be found on our Video Presentations webpage, <https://fitchburghistory.org/video-presentations>

## Website Deep Dive: Obituary Database

Local historical societies are often approached by people conducting genealogical research. They may be searching for a grandparent or relative who lived here at some point, and may also be looking for more information about a family. Obituaries often contain a wealth of information about a person and can provide clues about others as well. Although many obituaries are available online through a variety of sources, some may require a subscription to access and others may never surface in an online search.

The obituary database we maintain provides a way to help unearth some of that information. Key information, such as the deceased name, date of birth, date of death, internment location, survivors, etc., is extracted from the obituary and recorded in a database. This enduring project currently is 275 pages long, contains over 1400 obituaries, and is regularly updated.. This database is searchable using a computer find menu. All names, dates, locations, etc., are as they appear in the published obituary.

Earlier this year, Board Vice-President Catherine Schneider interviewed Dianne Reynolds, FHS board member and curator of the FHS obituary collection. Dianne described the process of collecting and archiving obituaries of people who have lived and/or worked in Fitchburg and how to view the FHS Obituary Database that contains the birth and death dates and places as well as listing names mentioned in each obituary.

Access the database here <https://tinyurl.com/2m4w86hk> and view the presentation here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qq94cUtlGY>

### Fitchburg Historical Society Obituary Database

Name	Birth Date	Birth Place	Death Date	Death Place	Other Names	Publisher	Obit Date	Cemetery
Barnhart, Margaret E. (nee Beavin)	6/14/1926	Reedsburg, WI	1/31/2013	Fitchburg, WI	Kermit W. Barnhart; Lizette Beavin (nee Alt); Thomas Beavin; Edee Woerdehoff; Mike Woerdehoff; Kirk Barnhart; Kent Barnhart; Erin Harley; Dave Harley; Meghan Gansauge; David Gansauge; Kevin Barnhart; Kristopher Barnhart; Kyle Barnhart; Allycen Harley; Olivia Harley; William Harley; Bart Beavin; Helen Beavin; Kathryn Terman; Gilbert Terman; Dorothy Gorman; Clarence Gorman; Paul Beavin; Kathleen Barnhart	Wisconsin State Journal, Madison, WI	2/2/2013	Richland Center Cemetery, Richland Center, WI
Barrett, Timothy William	4/8/1940	Madison, WI	8/18/2014	Madison, WI	Alphonse Barrett; Bernice Barrett; Peter Barrett; Tara Barrett; Kevin Barrett; Bruce Barrett; Laurie Stone	Wisconsin State Journal, Madison, WI	8/24/2014	Highland Memory Gardens, Madison, WI
Barry, Bridget	3/7/1852		9/6/1946	Madison, WI		Wisconsin State Journal, Madison, WI	9/7/1946	
Barry, Catherine (nee Fox)	3/7/1854	Fitchburg, WI	8/20/1940	Fitchburg, WI	George Fox, Garrett Barry, George Barry, Anna Barry, Catherine Barry	Wisconsin State Journal, Madison, WI	8/21/1940	St Marys Cemetery, Oregon, WI

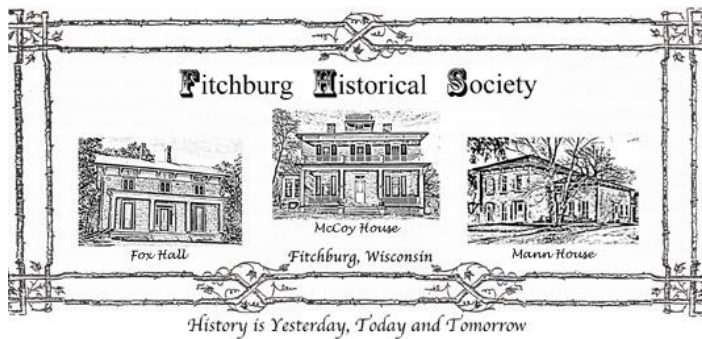
### SUPPORT OUR WORK: BECOME A MEMBER!

**JOIN US!**

Our work may be carried out by volunteers, but we do have expenses, including website and speakers. We don't have a nifty t-shirt or tote bag to offer, but we hope that won't deter you from joining. Individual membership is \$10/year, family \$12/year, and business/profession, \$50.

Fill out the membership form on our website at <https://tinyurl.com/4rf8vkh9> or send your name, address, email address, membership level and check payable to Fitchburg Historical Society, to Roger Tesch, 3417 Brighton Place, Fitchburg, WI 53713-2842.





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## **MARCH 2023**

Welcome, 2023! Despite the record-breaking 12.1" snowfall a few days ago, there are hopeful signs that winter may be on its way out, including robins, outdoor decorations that emerged from under the piles of snow, and teeny tiny buds on the trees and bushes. Throughout the winter, the Society's committed volunteers continued their efforts. The website was updated with new content and information about displays, monthly segments for "Talking Fitchburg", the obituary database resource was updated, and volunteers responded to calls and emails from people with questions about, or connections to, Fitchburg. *(As an aside, at least a few times a year we get contacts from people who confuse us with the Fitchburg, Massachusetts, historical society. Sometimes events in "the other" Fitchburg tag our Facebook page. We're sorry if an enticing event that caught your eye turned out to be 1,100 miles away).*

This newsletter includes information about our exciting spring program, Fitchburg's 40<sup>th</sup> "birthday, and a deep dive into our website's information on historic sites and landmarks.

### **ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM, APRIL 23, 2023, 1:30 p.m.** **Historical Places: Valuing Our Past and Moving Into Our Future** **Fitchburg Public Library, 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg**

We are excited to hold this year's annual meeting and program, Historical Places: Valuing Our Past and Moving Into Our Future, in person, as well as returning it to the Fitchburg Public Library, which a year ago was still closed to the public. A brief business meeting and election of new board members will be held before the program. The public are welcome at the meeting and subsequent program.

Our fall program included many details and insights into Fitchburg's past, current, and projected growth. We learned that among the challenges a growing community faces is how to balance development with preservation of existing resources and structures. This topic has been of long interest to the Society, as shown by a review of many years of newsletters that included information about its support of efforts to recognize and preserve local landmarks.

We are pleased to expand on that topic with our spring program. In 2019, our speaker, Traci E. Schnell, completed a survey for the Fitchburg Landmarks Preservation Commission and has also evaluated historical sites in the former Town of Madison. Ms. Schnell will give some details about historic properties from her 2019 report, along with current updates and, in her words, "some interesting random additional Fitchburg property information." Ms. Schnell continues to do investigations of many locations and will include Wisconsin State Historical Society information in her presentation. Ms. Schnell acquired over twenty years' experience as an architectural historian after her graduation from UW - Milwaukee and then established her own consulting firm. She works with non-profit organizations, community groups, and businesses investigating historical locations and completing surveys about historic old properties.

Learn more about the City's Landmark Preservation Commission, including the 2019 report, at the Commission's website: <https://fitchburgwi.gov/2156/landmarks-preservation/>

## **FITCHBURG IS TURNING 40!**

Although the Town of Fitchburg predates 1853, when it was given its current name, the City of Fitchburg is just reaching middle age, having been recognized as a city on April 26, 1983. The FHS is proud to be celebrating the 40th anniversary of the City of Fitchburg as part of our annual meeting and program on April 23. We invite all of you to

join us for refreshments at our annual meeting and spring program as part of the Fitchburg anniversary event. The meeting will be held at the Fitchburg Public Library, 5530 Lacy Road, at 1:30 p.m.

For more information about the unusual and some might say, arguably questionable, path that Fitchburg took on its way to become a city, check out this article by former Board member Rich Eggleston.

<https://fitchburghistory.org/fitchburg-becomes-a-city/>

(Photo: the first members of the city council being sworn into office, 1983)



## WEBSITE DEEP DIVE: FITCHBURG HISTORIC SITES

The historic structures in a city that has its origin as a sprawling, rural township may be of a different type than those typically found in a city. At a minimum, they are likely fewer and farther apart, with clusters of remaining structures sometimes providing hints of areas that had some hope of becoming a population center. An old weathered building adjacent to a field may simply look like an old building to us, but to an historian, it may tell a century's old story.

Fitchburg has a number of structures or sites that are on the National Register of Historic Places, or the Fitchburg Landmarks Preservation List. Still more are of interest, but not officially recognized. Our website has brief histories and photos of many of these. Visit <https://fitchburghistory.org/historic-sites> to check them out – you may recognize a few. Here are a couple to whet your interest.



**Location: 5212 County Hwy. M, Fitchburg, WI**  
**National Register of Historic Places, 91001391**  
**September 13, 1991**

Currently the site of Oakhill Correctional Institute, the facility was originally built in 1932 for juvenile girls.

### **Location: Bjorksten Pl, Fitchburg, WI**

This small observatory, just off Fish Hatchery Road on property owned by Fitchburg Research Park Associates, was built about 1879-80 as a student observatory for UW-Madison. It was originally located on the shores of Lake Mendota, just east of the Washburn Observatory. (The photo is from the Society's website, which was given permission to use it by the Fitchburg Landmark Preservation Commission.



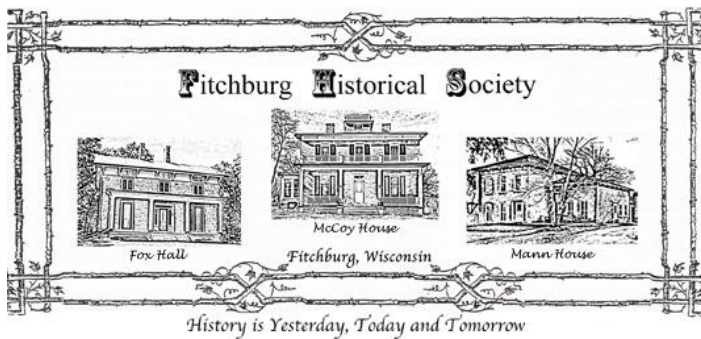
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Fitchburg, WI 53711  
608-729-1783  
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## SEPTEMBER 2023

Our last newsletter reached you just as winter exited with an impressive 12+” snowfall. Now, we’re set to say farewell to summer with a series of days in the 90’s. Nothing like Wisconsin weather to keep us confused about what season we’re in! With fall, and then winter, on the way, we might be spending more time indoors. This newsletter features activities and content on our website that can help while away those increasing hours spent inside.

### APRIL’S ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM WAS A SUCCESS!

More than 50 people attended our annual meeting and spring program, Historical Places: Valuing Our Past and Moving Into Our Future. In 2019, Traci E. Schnell, completed a survey for the Fitchburg Landmarks Preservation Commission. Ms. Schnell shared updated information about the historic properties from her 2019 report. View the full presentation on our YouTube page at <https://tinyurl.com/25bn88pa>. In honor of the city’s 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, several former mayors as well as the current mayor attended. We also conducted official business, approving the minutes of the previous year’s meeting, electing (and welcoming) new board member Nancy Dorman.



Long-term Board member and secretary, Adrienne Imilkowski, was recognized for her many years of service and dedication to the Society. Adrienne not only served as secretary, but also planned and installed library displays several times a year, and helped disseminate information about our activities. We will miss her!

### FALL PROGRAM FEATURES THE SWAN CREEK SEWING CIRCLE Sunday, October 15, 1:30, Fitchburg Public Library

Our fall program will highlight one of the area’s oldest organizations, the Swan Creek Sewing Circle. This 108 year old woman’s group was founded with the purpose of “neighborliness.” It provided a way to connect a group of rural women at a time when travel and communication options were limited. Four generations of women have continued the Circle’s traditions, and survived the challenges that COVID restrictions and precautions imposed.

Join us on Sunday, October 15, at 1:30 at the Fitchburg Public Library, 5530 Lacy Road, to learn about this unique group, how its members’ family histories are interwoven into Fitchburg’s history, and why keeping it active is important to its current members. And in accordance with one of the Circle’s most important traditions, a dessert will be served.



(Do you have a memory about Swan Creek Sewing Circle? Maybe a grandmother, great-grandmother, or aunt who was a member, or you received a shower gift. If so, we’d love to hear from you. Email us at [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com).)

## FITCHBURG'S ONE ROOM SCHOOLS: A VISUAL HISTORY LESSON

We are excited to share our current display in the Fitchburg Room on the second floor of the Fitchburg library. The display includes a large plat map (shown below) with the locations of all the former schools (green buildings), as well as current public schools (red buildings), and the current school district boundaries. (Verona is shown in pink, Madison in blue, and Oregon in peach.) Members of the community generously shared personal items, such as report cards and photographs, for use in the display. We received items that represent eight of the 12 one room schools that operated in Fitchburg at some point.



Rural schools existed across the country, typically small one-room buildings that served children from a nearby area. To many of us, the idea of a one-room school may seem like something that only existed in “the olden days” or in books. In reality, according to one source, there were about 190,000 in 1919, with fewer than 400 still operating in 2020, most in small Western communities. It may come as a surprise to learn that Fitchburg had one room schools into the 1950s and early 1960s. It may be even more of a surprise to learn that some of these structures still exist, although no longer in use as a school

building.

Bring a younger (or older) family member or friend to view the display – it will provide a wonderful opportunity to share memories and learn how your school experiences compare. Learn more about Fitchburg’s historic schools at <https://fitchburghistory.org/schools>.

### INSIDER TIP: FHS’ TALKING FITCHBURG INTERVIEWS AREN’T JUST ABOUT FITCHBURG

Since 2015, the Society has partnered with FACTv to provide an ongoing series of video interviews on topics, businesses, or people of interest to Fitchburg and the surrounding area. Recent segments featured several former mayors, including Francis Huntley-Cooper, the first Black mayor in the state; Jeanie Sieling, and Shawn Pfaff. We’ve learned about the growth of Agrace, Fitchburg’s Landmarks Preservation Committee, and had a walk-through of the new display about the history of Fitchburg’s one room schools and school system. Older topics cover a variety of items, such as lead road routes through Fitchburg, early Fitchburg history, and how COVID affected businesses and people. View the full list and access them through our website at <https://fitchburghistory.org/video-presentations>.

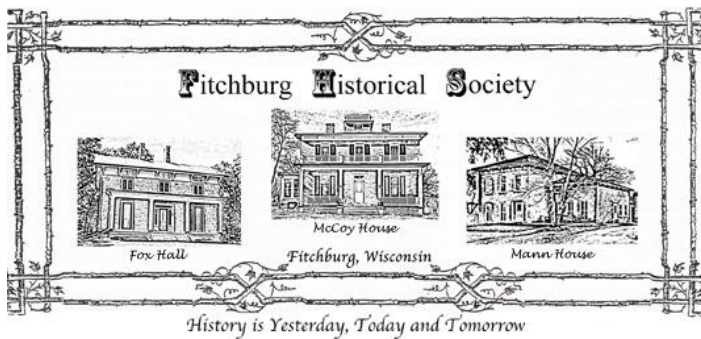
**Send your suggestions for topics or people for future interviews to [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com).**

### SUPPORT OUR WORK: BECOME A MEMBER!

Join Today

Our work may be carried out by volunteers, but we do have expenses, including website and speakers. We don’t have a nifty t-shirt or tote bag to offer, but we hope that won’t deter you from joining. Individual membership is \$10/year, family \$12/year, and business/profession, \$50. Fill out the membership form on our website at <https://tinyurl.com/4rf8vkh9> or send your name, address, email address, membership level and check payable to Fitchburg Historical Society, to Roger Tesch, 3417 Brighton Place, Fitchburg, WI 53713-2842. We’d be happy to renew your membership or begin a new one at our fall program on October 15 (see article above for program details).





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## FEBRUARY 2024

It's been a few months – an entire season (fall) and part of winter – since our last newsletter. Somehow, the shorter days seem to make the months go by more quickly and sometimes the gap between newsletters gets larger than intended. Despite the irregular publication of the newsletter, our website, [fitchburghistory.org](http://fitchburghistory.org), is updated frequently throughout the year with new or revised content. If you're not already on the list to receive notice of new website content, just email us at [woodedarchives@gmail.com](mailto:woodedarchives@gmail.com) and request to be added. Events and news items are also shared on our Facebook page.

Speaking of our website, earlier this year we were given the opportunity to provide an overview of the website to the City Council. Allan Tereba, President, and Eileen Kellor, Secretary, provided a guided tour to the website. The presentation is a great way to become familiar with the website and the wealth of information it contains. Check it out here [https://youtu.be/rwz\\_gJvjM\\_4?feature=shared](https://youtu.be/rwz_gJvjM_4?feature=shared)



## APRIL ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM TO EXPLORE FITCHBURG'S RICH ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD

**Sunday, April 14, 1:30 pm, Fitchburg Public Library  
 5530 Lacy Road, Fitchburg WI**

Come learn about the rich archaeological record that provides insight into people living here from at least the end of the last ice age. We are excited to announce Elizabeth Leith, Department of Anthropology, University of Wisconsin, and Luther J. Leith, museum Archaeology Program, Wisconsin Historical Society as the presenters for our spring program. This presentation will discuss the deep history of the greater Fitchburg area from the earliest evidence of occupation to the period of European and American immigration into the area. They will discuss the archaeological evidence related to the different lifeways practiced, as well as some of the key technological innovations which allowed the transition from a mobile to a sedentary lifestyle.

A brief business meeting will precede the program.

## SOCIETY HONORED WITH 2023 MAYOR'S AWARD



At the November 28, City Council meeting, Mayor Julia Arata-Fratta honored and recognized Peg Guse (staff member), Ed Kinney (community member), Oak Bank (business/organization) and the Fitchburg Historical Society (nonprofit organization). Mayor Arata-Fratta is recognizing these recipients for their community leadership, inspiring service to the community, setting an example for others and their commitment to and significant impact on Fitchburg. The FACTv video of the Mayoral Awards ceremony is available at <https://youtu.be/YwuSPO5dp6k?feature=shared>

We are honored to be the first recipient in the new nonprofit classification. We want to thank all the members of the FHS and the FHS Board of Directors, as well as members of the community who support our efforts.

Featured at right at the City Council meeting are Fitchburg Historical Society Board members and City Council members.



## THE JOURNEY TO ESTABLISH FITCHBURG'S PUBLIC LIBRARY



Fitchburg's library may seem to be a mainstay of the city, providing a wide array of books, publications, activities, meeting and study space, and other resources to residents. But the path to establish the library was not a simple or easy one. Four recent "Talking Fitchburg" interviews by Board Vice-President Catherine Schneider will get you up to speed on the challenges to approving, building, and operating the Library that is now firmly established. The interviews are available from this page of our website [Video Presentations | Fitchburg Historical Society \(fitchburghistory.org\)](https://fitchburghistory.org)

- November 30, 2023: Planning the Fitchburg Library, Barbara Matthews
- December 20, 2023: Managing the Fitchburg Library, Wendy Rawson
- February 2, 2024: Planning for the Fitchburg Library, Marykay Zimbrick
- February 21, 2024: Financing the Fitchburg Library, Phil Sveum

## FALL PROGRAM FEATURED THE SWAN CREEK SEWING CIRCLE

About 30 people attended our fall program on October 15, 2023, about the Swan Creek Sewing Circle. This 108 year old woman's group was founded with the purpose of "neighborliness." It provided a way to connect a group of rural women at a time when travel and communication options were limited. In addition to the speaker, several members of the Sewing Circle attended and shared insights about their experience in the group. Historical items from the Circle's 108 year history, including the original minutes from the initial meeting on December 1, 1915, were shared. The Circle provided cake and a long-time tradition, individual nut cups. The program can be viewed on our YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/2Qorc6RW1Dw?feature=shared>

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