

Time Lines

October 2021 Edition



THE RETURN TO IN-PERSON PROGRAMMING!



We had a party at the Sheboygan County Historical Museum on Saturday, September 11, 2021! We kicked off Fall with our Annual History Hill Music Festival and it was a blast having so much life around the Museum again. First up, Michael Lee Ammons & the Water Street Hot Shots got the party going and entertained the lunch crowd. Following that, we honored the 20th anniversary of 9/11



with a commemorative program that included music by the Lakeshore Woodwind Quintet and guest speakers. Thank you to Sheboygan Mayor Ryan Sorenson and Sheboygan County Board Chair and former firefighter Vernon Koch for joining our program and taking time to honor and remember with us a day that we will never forget. Our music for the day ended with Lil' Rev & Friends, while the pioneer activities that were originally planned for the Pioneer Olympics finally had their time to shine. We plan to pull those out again in the future since they were such a hit!



The day ended with a Children's Mini Lantern Parade, which was re-scheduled after it was rained out in August. We even got a special performance from the North High Drumline! We then lined up to parade past the residents at Sunny Ridge Nursing & Rehabilitation Center and through Taylor Park. What a treat that was for everyone! We have received SO much positive feedback from the kids, parents, and even Sunny Ridge residents about the parade! We look forward to having this event again in the future, with more spectators to cheer the kids on!



Thank you to our Lantern Kit Partners who helped distribute kits to the community!

- Mead Public Library
- Above and Beyond Children's Museum
- John Michael Kohler Arts Center

...to collect, preserve, and educate about the history of Sheboygan County.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Hello,

Another summer is wrapping up and we are getting back to the Society of old with new twists. We are holding public programs once again and eagerly anticipating the return of our school-aged visitors this fall. All of us at the museum were excited to have visitors attend our programs, even if they were changed a bit by the pandemic. Our visitors shared many enthusiastic words at the History Hill Music Fest and expressed that it felt as if a weight has been lifted from our shoulders. We are happy to be inching our way closer to the new normal. Let's all continue to do what we need to do to put this pandemic into the annals of history, I know I am anxiously awaiting that to occur.

After almost a year of vacancies in two staff positions, I am happy to say the Society is at full staff... plus one! You can read more about our new staff members below. I must give massive kudos to our seasoned staff members for stepping up and taking on added responsibilities outside their realms to make sure the Society kept moving forward. We welcomed our new maintenance person a couple of months ago and are welcoming Susan Barnett as I type. Susan will be very helpful with her administrative duties and I look forward to moving forward with her. We are also welcoming back a former intern, Becca Schnabel, as she joined the staff about two weeks ago. Curator Tamara Lange wrote and received a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, through their *Inspire! For Small Museums* program. This grant is focused on documenting the collection and due to the massive scale of the project we decided to ask for funds to hire a limited term employee to focus on the project. Becca fills that role perfectly as she is familiar with our collection and database. As Director, I firmly believe an organization runs the best when all hands are functioning together. I also like the injection of new thoughts and ideas that come with new staff members. I believe we are set and ready to make some positive change to the Society.

Part of making the changes I feel need to be made, we have entered in to an agreement with The Idea Works, a local small business that specializes in re-branding businesses and non-profit organizations. Our work with them commenced a couple of months ago by having meetings with our Board of Directors and staff members to get an understanding of the Society. They have other listening sessions planned with people who are not familiar with the Society and those that are. Here is where you can help. I am looking for twelve to fifteen members who are willing to meet with The Idea Works to give your perspective on the Society. If you are interested in being a part of this positive change please contact me.

As this newsletter is going to press, I want to mention a program that I am excited we are sharing. In collaboration with the Mead Public Library, and in association with our Smithsonian Institutions "The Way We Worked" exhibit, we are hosting a speaker on Oct. 4 who will discuss the Kohler Strikes of the 1950s and the history of the labor movement. The Kohler Strikes are a touchy subject even 50+ years after their occurrence, but a topic that should be covered, as the strike not only changed things for us locally but changed the relationship between business and labor in the United States. I have wanted to share this topic for several years because this is our local history, and local history is what we do. I believe by discussing a topic we can come to terms with its negativity and move forward in making the world a better place. The strike's influence on the national level also proves that all history is local history. I hope we can come away with a better understanding of this historic event. - Travis

WELCOME NEW MUSEUM STAFF

The Museum welcomed two staff in September. Starting just before the History Hill Music Fest (so we threw her right into the deep end) is Susan Barnett.

Susan stopped by the museum to volunteer in August and ended up accepting the position of Administrative Assistant and Volunteer Coordinator instead. She moved back to Sheboygan in June, where she had lived from 2012-14 while working for the John Michael Kohler Arts Center. Her experience includes serving as Director of the Cedarburg Cultural Center and Curator for the Erie Art Museum and the Yellowstone Art Museum in Billings, Montana. An artist, writer, administrator, and photographer with an M.A. in Art History from UW-Milwaukee, she brings a broad range of skills and interests to the position. In her spare time, Susan enjoys playing cello, singing in the Bel Canto Chorus, gardening, and being outdoors.

Susan is happy to be a new member of the SCHM family and eager to get to know all of the wonderful volunteers. Boy, are we glad she decided to stop by!

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PROGRAMMING (Return to In-Person Programming Continued)

We kicked off the celebration of the Ryder Cup at Whistling Straits at the Sheboygan County Historical Museum with a special speaker engagement on Thursday, September 23. Sheboygan native and former pro LPGA golfer Martha Nause took time during her trip back home for the Ryder Cup to share stories about growing up learning to golf in Sheboygan, her tour experiences, and how she became a champion. They were stories of passion and perseverance that left everyone in the audience laughing, cheering, and in awe. We are so grateful to Martha for not only sharing her time and stories with us, but also donating so many wonderful things from her career to the Sheboygan County Historical Museum. A handful of these items were on display during her presentation.



UPCOMING!

Disappointed you missed out on our September speaker? You're in luck! We have another **FREE speaker event on Monday, October 4, 6:30pm**. In connection with the Smithsonian traveling exhibit *The Way We Worked*, we'll be diving into the history of labor and unions in Sheboygan and the US in the 20th century with labor historian Jon Shelton, Associate Professor and chair of Democracy and Justice Studies at UW-Green Bay. A special look will be given to the 1954 Kohler Strike.

Mystery at the Museum: Trick or Treat, Oct. 15, 6pm - 8pm - Children FREE

Halloween is right around the corner, and we're having a party to celebrate at the Museum! Invite your little goblins and ghouls for trick or treating around the historical buildings and inside the Museum. There will be scavenger hunts and other Spooktacular activities for kids to win additional prizes. And don't forget to get those costumes ready! There will be a historical costume contest for children and adults at 7pm.



Call for candy! - We are looking for donations of bags of individually-wrapped candy and Halloween-themed allergy-safe items (party favors, pencils, etc.). Please drop off any donations in the lobby by *Friday, October 8th*.

Call for Jack-O-Lanterns! - As part of our decorations for the event, we're having a pumpkin carving contest! Pumpkins must be carved and dropped off by *October 12-13th*. Winners will be announced during the Mystery at the Museum event. Open to all ages!

HOLIDAY MEMORIES 2021

Even though the trees in Taylor Park have just started to show a little color, we have already been hard at work planning for Holiday Memories. We look forward to returning to an in-person show for this year, while acknowledging that it may not look exactly like the "normal" of two years ago. Think of it as a little bit of North Pole, a little bit of South Pole, and a little bit of Rock 'n' Roll!



We are excited to offer more than just the Preview Party this year for members. You are invited to join us for **Members Only** hours on December 4 & 5 and December 18 & 19 from 10 AM to Noon. Your guests are also welcome, but must be accompanied by a member.

We are also planning for the return of several of the in-person special activities and events, along with offering a few favorites that debuted during the Virtual Holiday Memories of 2021. More details can be found on the calendar on the last page of the newsletter!

Remember, the most up-to-date information can be found on the Museum website or Facebook page!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Our August 2021 Spotlight Volunteer is John Van der Vaart. John joined the Historical Society Board of Directors in January 2017. Since that time, John has assisted with a number of projects, including several moving projects, along with becoming chair of the Financial Development Committee in April, 2018. His efforts helped secure significant funding from Sartori Company for the recent Bodenstab Cheese Factory exterior restoration project.

When asked why he chose to volunteer with the Sheboygan County Historical Society and Museum, John replied “I have always had an interest in the history of Sheboygan, our state and country as well as my family's heritage. I thought that by volunteering my time at the museum I would be able to help in its growth and at the same time learn more about our area's history.”



Our September 2021 Spotlight Volunteer is Linda Mittelstadt. Linda first became involved with the Museum as a member of the Education Advisory Committee, a group of local educators that helped the Museum build and shape our Full Day Student Education Programs in the early 2000s. As a teacher at Jackson School, her 2nd grade students were the first to pilot the Immigrant and Pioneer Program (now known as Journey to Sheboygan County). As a 3rd grade teacher, Linda and her students also helped pilot the Historic Jobs and First Peoples of Sheboygan County programs. As the programs became integrated into the Sheboygan Area School District curriculum, Linda continued to support the programs, primarily by bringing her 3rd graders every year.

Linda and a colleague from Jackson were also responsible for beginning the Community Tree tradition during Holiday Memories. A variety of ornaments were created in classrooms across the community, and then each school was assigned an evening for children and parents to decorate the school's tree. Linda coordinated the tree themes, school participation, and the decorating schedules.

Following her retirement from teaching, Linda became a volunteer facilitator for the programs, guiding hundreds more students in hands-on learning experiences. When asked why she volunteers with the Museum, Linda responded “I love American history and found that kids love to hear and learn about the past as well. I love the content of all the Educational Programs and see the excitement & sometimes awe on the faces of the kids when hearing some of the historical facts! For many of these children it may be their only source of learning and directly experiencing history. I have so much fun....I love it!!!!”

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Beginning in mid-September, Becca Schnabel joined the staff as a Collections Assistant. She is likely a familiar face, since she interned at the Museum during both the 2019 and 2020 summers, during which time she developed the *Harmonizing Heroines: Sheboygan's Chordettes* exhibit.

A graduate of UW-Milwaukee with a Masters in Public History and graduate certificate in Museum Studies in May, 2020, Becca was born and raised in Minnesota. Having lived in Southeastern Wisconsin for the last five years, Becca fell in love with the area. In addition to her experience with the collection here at the Museum, she has worked with America's Black Holocaust Museum, Waukesha County Historical Society & Museum, Milwaukee County Historical Society, and the Milwaukee Public Museum on a variety of public history and collection management projects.

Besides being a museum nerd, Becca enjoys traveling, hiking, running, gardening, and best of all, cuddling with her various pets. She has three silly cats, two dumbo fancy rats, and one lonely fish at home. They love helping her cook and craft, and keep her plants well pruned (aka they like to eat them when she isn't looking).

Becca's position is part of the Museum's Initial Collection Inventory Project, made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services [Grant #IGSM-249370-OMS-21]. The project will begin the first complete inventory of the Museum's collection, spanning nearly 100 years of collecting. Becca looks forward to delving deeper into the Museum's collection, along with increasing its longevity and accessibility for generations to come.



FULL DAY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Education Program staff and volunteers are eagerly preparing for In-Person programs coming up this fall. We have had two “Busy Bee” days already. On “Busy Bee” Days volunteers join staff members in preparing materials for programs. We make starters for candle-dipping and put together buzz saw kits. This year, we are also preparing train cars for Make and Take during Holiday Memories.

We are delighted that we will be able to once again have students come to the Museum to participate in two of our programs during October and part of November. Due to the ongoing pandemic, however, we are going to have to make some changes in the programs. Because all county buildings (including the Museum) are currently under a mask mandate, all students and volunteers will be masked.

We are also limiting the number of students we can serve per day to about thirty. This is because it has become a little more difficult to get the number of volunteers we need during these times so most of our programs will be what we refer to as “singles” rather than “tandems.”

We have talked about a number of things that we can do to make sure that the programs are as efficient and as content-rich as they have always been so we will be prepared to do a bit of tweaking along the way. To use a phrase that I really never want to hear again, “We are in somewhat uncharted territory.”

Still, we will be happy to be welcoming students back to programs.

And, one of the good things that has come from this time—We have learned to read smiles in eyes.



COLLECTIONS SPOTLIGHT

As we begin our preparations for Holiday Memories, conversations related to some of our favorite H.C. Prange Company memories often creep in. This particular Collection Spotlight object likely played an important role in one of the items that comes up time and again.

Going to the flagship Sheboygan store of regional department retail chain H.C. Prange Company was more than just a shopping trip. Customers could stop just for lunch at one of the company’s dining areas, pick up bakery, or get a quick and affordable snack of hotdogs and caramel corn. Likewise, one of Prange’s most beloved confections was the Jumbo handmade Popcorn ball. This



Cretors Ambassador model popcorn machine, considered to be top-of-the-line from the mid-1950s until the design was discontinued in the late 1960s, would easily have kept up with demand for not only a quick snack while shopping, but also the needs of the kitchen for a ready supply of popcorn to turn into a specialty treat. The machine was donated to the Museum by Sonlight Books, Prange’s neighbor, who had found it hardwired into their electrical.



Based at 8th and Wisconsin in Sheboygan, the H.C. Prange Company was a one-stop shop for the needs of Eastern Wisconsin residents. Founded in 1887 by Henry C. Prange, his sister Eliza, and Mr. J.H. Bitter, Prange’s began as a dry goods store. From day one, company leadership made sure that the newest merchandise was available to Sheboygan County residents and offered unique experiences, like the holiday window displays, life-size Steiff promotional animals, and popcorn for all. An outstanding selection coupled with an unbeatable customer service policy — “It’s Not Yours ‘Til You Like It!” – helped the Prange’s become the largest Wisconsin based department store chain with sales topping \$250 million annually by 1984. The end of an era came in 1992, when Prange’s, including the Sheboygan flagship store, was sold to Younkers Inc.



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*Sheboygan County Historical
Society and Museum*

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Mark Your Calendars



Please note that we will be following the recommendations, of the Sheboygan County Health Department, Wisconsin Health Department and Center for Disease Control. Up to date requirements can be found on our website and Facebook pages.

NOW—OCTOBER 9 - *The Way We Worked*, Temporary Exhibit. Included with regular Museum admission. Created by the National Archives, and adapted for travel by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service and made possible with the generous support of the United States Congress. Additional local support by Kohler Foundation, Inc.

OCTOBER 4, 6 PM—*Work & Unions in Sheboygan in the 20th Century*. Speaker Jon Shelton. FREE to all. Co-sponsored by Mead Public Library.

OCTOBER 15, 6 PM TO 8 PM - *Mystery at the Museum*. Family friendly event featuring Trick or Treating, Costume Contest, Activities & More

NOVEMBER 21, 3 PM TO 5:30 PM - *Members Preview Party*. Holiday Memories 2021: Happy Holidays.

NOVEMBER 27—DECEMBER 30 - *Holiday Memories 2021: Happy Holidays*, Temporary Exhibit. Included with regular Museum admission.

Monday & Tuesday—Noon to 7 PM
Wednesday thru Sunday—Noon to 5 PM

DECEMBER 4, 5, 18, 19, 10 AM TO NOON - *MEMBERS ONLY Hours*

NOVEMBER 29, DECEMBER 6, 13, & 20 FROM 5 PM TO 7 PM: *Children's Craft Night with Chloe the Craft Elf*. Preregistration required.

DECEMBER 1, 8, 15, 22 AT 3:30 PM: *Storytime with Santa*. Preregistration required.

DECEMBER 11, 10 AM TO 11:30 AM: *Zoom Calls with Bruce the Spruce*. Register online.

DECEMBER 15, 5:30 PM TO 7:15 PM: *Zoom Calls with Bruce the Spruce*. Register online.

DECEMBER 16, 5:30 PM—7:30 PM: *Christmas at the Taylor House*. Ticketed Event.

DECEMBER 28, 7:00 PM: *Holiday Trivia*. Ticketed Event.

Follow us on Facebook and check out our website for more information on upcoming programming!

MUSEUM STAFF

Travis Gross, *Executive Director*; Susan Barnett, Nathan Chisholm, Angela Hullin, Tamara Lange, Kiyoh E. Lopez, Dale Robson, Becca Schnabel, Chloe Seider, Vicki Stopar