

CHRISTMAS AT THE HOUSES

Yawkey House Museum & Woodson History Center

*410 McIndoe Street
Wausau, WI 54403*

Saturday, December 1, 2018

11:00 am-4:30 pm

Both historic homes will be decorated for the holidays, but this year the Yawkey House will highlight different Christmas collections in the rooms, as well as costumed reenactors telling holiday traditions.

Tours of the Yawkey House run every 1/2 hour, starting at 11:00 am. Last tour is at 3:30 pm. Cost is \$5 for Yawkey House Tours Only.

We will have our antique sleigh available, along with some hats, capes, muffs and furs, so grab your cameras for a great Christmas card photo op. Don't miss this unique setting!

Enjoy some holiday treats and view the entries in the gingerbread contest sponsored by Friends of Wausau Historic Landmarks.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dorothy Maxfield, President
John Hattenhauer, Vice President
Patrick Gosz, Treasurer
Jane Janke Johnson, Secretary
Brett Barker
Bill Bertram
Sandi Cihlar
Robert Hagge, Jr.
Laurel Hoffman
Greg Huber
Richard Lohr
Mary Roberts
Gerald Viste
Brian Williams
Russell Wilson
Kelly Zagrzebski
DuWayne Zamzow

STAFF

Mary Forer, Executive Director
Gary Gisselman, Librarian/Archivist

PRINTING OF THE WANIGAN

Editor: Sara K. Goetsch
Co-Editor: Anna Straub

Civil War Book Club 2019

Due to other commitments, Dr Brett Barker will not be able to lead the 2019 Civil War Book Club. Watch for news of the clubs return in 2020.

The Marathon County Historical Society will be closed the following dates in observance of the holidays:

Tuesday, December 25, 2018
Tuesday, January 1, 2019



The Marathon County Historical Society
is supported in part by
City of Wausau Room Tax Funding.

Welcome To Our New Members

Mary Kay Ehlers
Tracy Roach
Lisa Janssen
Don Roesler
Lesli Iverson
Mr. & Mrs. George Peura
Matthew Jeansonne

• THANK YOU •

- ◆ For the tablecloth donation from The Neighbors Place
- ◆ For the paper donation from Brendon Goetsch

A New Roof

The Historical Society has a new roof on the 1962 addition of the Woodson History Center. It looks like your regular shingled roof, but Kulp's of Stratford installed a granule-coated steel roof that will protect our artifacts and archives well into the future. Support for this project was provided through the Nils Folke Jr. & Jean B. Becker Legacy Fund of the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin. We would like to give them a special thank you for their funding for this project.



Misc...



Night at the Museum

Work during the day? Busy weekends? Find it hard to tour the Yawkey House Museum during our normal business hours? Then this new tour is for you. We are now offering evening tours of the Yawkey House. But it's not just a tour. You also get an hour in the Woodson dining room to hang out with your friends, co-workers, family, etc. For just \$150 for up to 15 people, you get two hours of quality time at the museum. It includes a tour of the Yawkey House, then bring in your own snacks, hors d'oeuvres, and beverages and relax in the historic dining room of the Woodson House. Great idea for your book club, girlfriends night out, business team-building night, or just friends and family getting together. Think about this for a completely different Holiday event!

We would appreciate two weeks notice for scheduling evening tours. Please call Sara at 715-842-5750 to schedule this unique evening experience.

SHOP MCHS GIFT SHOP FOR UNIQUE HOLIDAY GIFTS

As promised, we have expanded our Gift Shop inventory to include books, t-shirts and toys that highlight our newest exhibit Milking Time and Wisconsin's dairy industry.

Our book section features over a dozen titles on the immigration of various nationalities to Wisconsin, as well as cookbooks and Wisconsin based fiction and facts.

The gift shop also carries an expanded line of Then & Now items including notecards and beautiful Mugzie insulated travel mugs that feature photos of Wausau past & present melded into one historic image.

If you are looking for unique gift items we have one of a kind coffee mugs, notecards, coloring books, prints and posters.

We are in the process of adding these items to our online gift shop on our website www.marathoncountyhistory.org.

And don't forget that our members receive a 10% discount on all gift shop purchases.

Shopping for a hard to please person? Consider a gift membership to the Marathon County Historical Society. Call Janet at 715-842-5750 for more information.



Little Books ~ Big Fun

In 1938, eight year old Wally Beedle of Mosinee started acquiring small, chunky books that would take him on great adventures. Cowboys, crime fighters and space travelers were frequent topics of Big Little Books, later renamed Better Little Books. Over the next three years, Wally collected many of these and other small-scale books, which were recently donated to the Marathon County Historical Society. Flash Gordon, Tarzan, Green Hornet, Red Ryder and Smilin' Jack are just a few of the titles.

Big Little Books were produced starting in 1932 by the Whitman Publishing Company of Racine, Wisconsin. In mid-1938 the name was changed to Better Little Books, which continued through the 1940s (Big Little Books were later reintroduced and continued into the 1980s). Dick Tracy was the first to be published which was followed by books featuring almost every other cartoon, comic and radio character of the 1930s and early 1940s. At the price of ten cents, the books were inexpensive entertainment that provided an escape from reality during the difficult years of the Great Depression and World War II.

We thank the Isabel Beedle Estate (Wally's wife Liz) for sharing his books with us. The donation of 21 of Wally's childhood books are a fun and colorful addition to our artifact collection but they also provide a glimpse into the everyday life of a little boy some 80 years ago. Wally died in 2017 but his legacy will live on at the Marathon County Historical Society through his childhood adventures.

Kathy Volkmann ~ Curator of Artifacts

These Little Books are currently on display in the reception window cases above the gift shop.



Future Events



20th Annual Victorian Valentine Tea

Thursday, February 14, 2019

2:00 pm at the Woodson History Center

Enjoy an elegant afternoon with fine linens, beautiful flowers, delicious sweets, delectable savories and time with special friends.

A unique program will finish out the afternoon.

\$30/members and \$35/non-members. **Reservations are required and space is limited.** Call 715-842-5750 after the holidays to reserve your spot at this fabulous event!

Mother & Child Tea

Saturday, February 16, 2019

2:00 pm Woodson History Center

A fun afternoon for mothers & their children. Grandmas, Aunts & special guests are also invited. Learn proper etiquette, make a Valentine craft to take home and enjoy gummy sweets & treats



\$15 per adult & \$10 per child.

Reservations are Required and can be made by calling 715-842-5750.

Upcoming Speakers



The Marathon County Historical Society continues its popular lecture series *History Speaks*, which includes a wide variety of topics presented by local experts and history enthusiasts.

All lectures are presented at the Woodson History Center, have no admission fee, and no registration is required. However, donations are always appreciated. **All presentations begin at 2 pm, unless otherwise noted.**

Sunday, January 27, 2019: Side Streets of Downtown Wausau, Gary Gisselman

Sunday, February 24, 2019: From Sawmills to Paper Mill: The Growth of Schofield, Weston and Rothschild, Gary Gisselman

Saturday, March 16, 2019: The History and Future of Therapeutic Gardens, Brianna Wright

Saturday, April 6, 2019: Wisconsin Historic Taverns and Bars, Jim Draeger

Sunday, April 7, 2019, Note time 1:00 p.m.: Civilian Conservation Corps, Jerry Apps

History Speaks in Mosinee:

Far More Than Just the Clothes on Their Backs:

Stories shared at Wausau's 'Hmong Museum' by refugee families

Retired educator Jim Harris is still learning and teaching, lately through the museum exhibit of Hmong and Lao culture that can be seen in the Wausau Center mall. He will share stories during a presentation at **6:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 3, at the Mosinee High School's Creske Center, 1000 High St., Mosinee.**

In November 2016 Jim and Marty Harris opened a museum exhibit, entitled "From Laos to America," to honor the refugee experience of Hmong and Lao residents of our community. Occupying 3,000 square feet of repurposed retail space in the Wausau Center mall, the exhibit soon became known throughout central Wisconsin as the "Hmong Museum."

Jim will display objects from the collection and share stories—some heart breaking, some hilarious—that Hmong elders have shared with him as they have toured the museum. He'll provide historical background to help participants understand the nature of the "Secret War" in Laos that ultimately resulted in 300,000 Lao and Hmong refugees fleeing their country.

Jim Harris also founded "We Help War Victims," an organization that assists survivors of war and other conflict to rebuild their lives. Since 2000, the organization's main effort has been to assist Hmong and Lao families who have been impacted by the Indochina War. Harris' interest in Hmong culture developed over his 20 years as principal at Weston Elementary School in the D.C. Everest School District.



History Returns

1892 Marathon County Courthouse Lights Return to Wausau

As many longtime residents will remember, the Marathon County Courthouse was at the center of downtown Wausau, located on the current site of the 400 Block outdoor space. The impressive Richardson Romanesque-style structure was built in 1892, a time when electricity was still new to Wausau. Like many other public buildings of the time, lighting at the courthouse was provided by gas-fueled fixtures.

In the early 1950s Jerome Balthazor, a local painter and decorator, was hired as part of a project to update the interior of the courthouse. Several years later, when the building was about to be razed, Jerome was allowed to go back inside. When he realized the original gas-fueled lights would be destroyed, he took them home. According to his daughter Barbara, “He was definitely one who thought Wausau made a big mistake taking down an iconic building.”

The lights remained with the Balthazor family for almost 65 years until Barbara donated them to the Marathon County Historical Society in 2018. The donation includes four lights. Each is about 12” high and includes a brass fixture with a glass chimney. A pair of delicate chains were used to adjust the airflow, which changed the brightness of the flame.

As part of the new donation accessioning process, artifact curators asked archivist Ben Clark if he could search the historical society photograph collection for interior views of the 1892 courthouse. Only three courthouse interior photos were found, but surprisingly, a photo of the courtroom clearly shows the light fixtures. As can be seen at the far left in the photo, gas piping extended from the wall and was attached to the lights. The lights originally had white glass “shades” to direct illumination downward but they are no longer present.

Thank you to Barbara Balistreri from Brown Deer, Wisconsin for returning this important part of county history to the Marathon County Historical Society so it can be preserved for generations to come.

*By Kathy Volkmann,
Curator of Artifacts*

Light fixtures
with original
glass shades



In Memorandum



The woman who saved Wausau's iconic train depot from destruction died Sept. 18 in Duluth, Minnesota. Maryanne Norton was 84 and died from a brain aneurysm while she was asleep, according to the [Duluth News Tribune](#).

She left Wausau in 1988, but her legacy remains strong. Thanks to her efforts, the 117-year-old Wausau depot is still standing at its original site at 720 Grant St. It is now open as Wausau's newest small business, Timekeeper Distillery, offering locally-distilled spirits, craft cocktails and light food options.

If Norton hadn't intervened in 1979, the depot would have been razed. The depot was owned by Wausau Insurance Companies at the time, and the company had used the depot's Wausau sign as a logo as it built itself into a nationally-known business. But the building had become dilapidated and the company's plans were to demolish it and preserve parts of the building on its west-side campus.

Norton was appalled at the thought of the community losing a treasured and recognizable building. She led a campaign called Save the Depot and raised \$35,000 for the building's renovation. Eventually, the building was donated to the Samoset Boy Scout Council, which used it until it moved into its new headquarters on Camp Phillips Road in Weston in 2000.

Until Timekeeper Distillery owners Kimm VanDen Heuvel and Dan Weber bought the building in October 2017, the building had been largely vacant and slowly deteriorating. "It'll be a social place ... like it was when it was a depot," said Gary Gisselman, a member of Wausau City Council and librarian for the Marathon County Historical Society. "Now we have fresh life in that building."

Norton moved to Wausau in 1974 with her husband, Dan Norton, and their son John. Dan had taken a job with the Wausau School District as an administrator, and Maryanne plunged into historic preservation. Norton had a master's degree in library science from the University of Minnesota, and she put her researching skills to work, delving into the history of their own east-side Hamilton Street home. She would become involved in the Wausau Historic Landmarks Commission and become the librarian at the Marathon County Historical Society.

Gisselman said the successful effort to save the Milwaukee Road Depot helped energize and vitalize the historic preservation movement in Wausau, leading to successful redevelopment efforts that helped preserve the old Wausau East High School building and the Federal Building, both of which were converted into apartments. "She knew her stuff. She was very determined. She knew what history as exemplified in buildings can do for a community," Gisselman said.

The family moved to Duluth in 1988 after Dan Norton became the coordinator for the graduate program in education at the College of St. Scholastica. She continued her work in Duluth, according to the News Tribune. She co-authored books about Duluth history and supported efforts to save historic and iconic buildings there, too, including an armory and the old St. Louis County Jail.

"I think people can never know where they are going if they don't know the background of a community," Norton told the Wausau Daily Herald in 1988. "I think it is necessary, especially as they get older, (to know) what kind of connection they have with the community."

~Courtesy of Duluth News Tribune



Marathon County Historical Society
410 McIndoe Street
Wausau, Wisconsin 54403

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit
Organization
U. S. Postage
PAID
Wausau, WI
54403
Permit #550

Our Mission Statement

*To collect, preserve, advance, and disseminate the
knowledge of the history of Marathon County and
the State of Wisconsin*



LOCATIONS AND HOURS

WOODSON HISTORY CENTER

410 McIndoe St., Wausau, WI 54403
Office: 715-842-5750 Library: 715-848-0378
Fax: 715-848-0576
Library Hours: Tuesday through Friday
9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Web site: www.marathoncountyhistory.org

YAWKEY HOUSE MUSEUM

403 McIndoe St., Wausau, WI 54403
Hours: Tuesday through Friday
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday
1:00 - 4:30 p.m.
Yawkey House tours are offered on the hour,
last tour starts at 3:00 p.m.
Closed on Mondays and Holidays.