

**WHA had a successful year regardless of COVID and is**



**to another active year celebrating the heritage of the City of Washburn and its contiguous townships.**

## President's Message

*Mary Gruhl, President*

While reflecting on my first year as president of the Washburn Heritage Association (WHA), it became obvious that the strength of this organization lies in the commitment and dedication of its board members and continued support of its donors. While 2021 was replete with uncertainties as we faced several mutations of the COVID virus we continued to fulfill our association's mission. The Kiosk committee completed several more panels, the Tony Woiak History Festival was held in July and August, the Trolley Tour of Washburn's Historic Buildings once again highlighted historic buildings, and we focused on the renovation of "The Club" for our May Preservation Month.

The Bayview History Committee nearly completed the Houghton Depot restoration project and will start education programming by the spring of 2022. The renewed program of awarding grants to main street businesses willing to enhance their storefronts is once again available. A new subcommittee has also been formed to get Local Historic Site recognition for more of Washburn's buildings.

We also welcomed Aron Lorber, a new board member. And with sadness, we said goodbye to board member Ken Weiler who passed away in November. Our association looks forward to another exciting year beginning with the Tony Woiak History Festival. The board hopes to see you there, and as always, we welcome your suggestions and continued support.

## SAVING OUR BUILT HERITAGE

*Dora Kling*

In 2003, in accordance with Wisconsin state statute, Washburn adopted its own preservation ordinance to safeguard against premature demolition of buildings with cultural, historic, or architectural importance. To support WHA's mission to preserve the historic buildings of the Washburn area, the Building and Sites Committee will initiate nomination of Washburn City Hall and St. Louis Church as Local Historic Sites.

In 1937, after adding a brownstone addition, the 1893 brick library building became today's Washburn City Hall. Construction of St. Louis Catholic Church began in 1891 and continued for about 20 years. A monumental brownstone Romanesque Revival cathedral, well suited for the period, was envisioned. But the population dwindled and that project faltered. A large interior renovation project in 1984 resulted in its present configuration.

There are three levels of historic designation for buildings: national, state, and local. The committee will prepare papers to recognize these two important buildings that contribute to our local cultural heritage and architectural history.



## Keepers of the Kiosk!

*Ginny Pedersen*

Did you know that it takes a whole lot of hard-working people to build a kiosk? Ours has been greeting residents and visitors alike from the corner of Bayfield Street and Third Avenue West since September 2020. But the WHA committee members who worked to get it there began their job in September 2018! As that original committee finished their tasks, the ball was passed to a smaller Panel Committee who create the window displays. These women began their work in June 2020 and continue to this

day. New panels are rotated in and out periodically and these changes are posted in the Washburn Chamber Blast. To learn which elementary school was used as a hospital during the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic, check out the Washburn Schools panel on the kiosk today.

Panel Committee members are Patra Holter, Lynn Adams, Sharon Stewart, and Ginny Pedersen. They will be featured in the February 1st presentation of the Tony Woiak Winter History Festival. Mark your calendars for "A Kiosk Doesn't Happen Overnight."

**A L L  
EVENTS**

**TUESDAY  
7 P M**

**HARBOR  
VIEW  
EVENT  
CENTER  
WASHBURN, WIS.**

**ADMISSION \$ 5**

**COVID SAFETY  
PRACTICES WILL  
BE OBSERVED  
DISTANCED SEATING  
+ M A S K S**

**PRESENTED BY**



**Washburn Area  
Historical Society**

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Wisconsin Humanities and  
the State of Wisconsin  
Any views, findings, conclusions  
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**WINTER  
2022  
TONY WOIAK HISTORY FESTIVAL  
11<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNUAL**



**J A N 18 Where Are All the Railroads?**

Singer/songwriter/historian **WARREN NELSON** and son **ROWAN NELSON-FERRIS** present stories and original songs about the great bygone days of the railroads. Warren Nelson is co-creator of *On The Velvet*, a railroad musical first produced in 1992. His garage is made of roundhouse doors from the Soo Line roundhouse in Ashland, and he has a wooden caboose in his yard!



**F E B 01 A Kiosk Doesn't Happen Overnight**

Join the WHA Kiosk Committee—**PATRA HOLTER, GINNY PEDERSEN, LYNN ADAMS, and SHARON STEWART**—as they describe the process from conception to finish for the beautiful, interchangeable window display panels for the kiosk. Researched and developed by the committee, the panels support the mission of telling the compelling stories of Washburn's heritage.



**F E B 15 The First CCC Camp in Wisconsin**

In less than 30 days of taking office, President Franklin Roosevelt pushed through Congress the most popular New Deal recovery program of the great depression, the Emergency Recovery Work Act, the authorization for the Civilian Conservation Corps. On May 4, 1933, the men of Company 640 marched from the Omaha station on 1st Ave. E. in Washburn 17 miles to the former homestead of Ora and Lizzie Brinks in the barrens to begin their 6-month enlistment in the CCC. **PETE MANN's** program will explore the presence of the CCC in Bayfield County and the establishment of Camp Brinks.



**M A R 01 Take A Ride on the Trolley**

The hour-long Brownstone Days trolley ride through Washburn is free to all. Join **SHARON STEWART** for a narrated tour to see Washburn's architecture and history. Experience the same trip that Brownstone Days visitors take—virtually. Even locals learn at least one new thing when they take this ride.

**Tony Woiak Winter History Festival—Has It Been Eleven Years Already?**

*Ginny Pedersen*

The Tony Woiak History Festival continues into its eleventh season beginning in January (see attached schedule). These lectures are presented in collaboration with the Washburn Area Historical Society. Planning Committee members are Andrew Grimm, Gary Holman, Sandy Johnson, Ginny Pedersen, and, from WAHS, David Bratley. Carla Bremner, as Committee Chair, led this group for all of those ten first years with great success! These events, held in both winter and summer, have become a popular source of education and entertainment that attract the greater Washburn community as well as out-of-town visitors. Past presentations can be viewed on YouTube: find the link on our WHA website. Please remember to thank Carla for everything she has done to develop this program.

As we approach this 2022 Winter Festival Season, we continue to keep the health of our community at the forefront of our planning. Relying on the recommendations from the Bayfield County Health Department, Covid protocols will be followed. These include, masking, social distancing, and collecting contact information. Ultimately WHA reserves the option to cancel events if conditions warrant.

**WHA receives Wisconsin Humanities Grant**

*Sharon Stewart*

Wisconsin Humanities awards grants across the state to locally-initiated programs that encourage public participation in humanities programming, spark imagination, and promote thoughtful conversation. The Tony Woiak lecture series shares these goals. We are pleased to receive the Wisconsin Humanities' financial support for the 2022 winter lecture series. Outside funding that covers many of our basic costs lets us keep our admission fee at \$5 and encourages us to continue tweaking our format. We are pleased that they mentioned on their statewide website that our past taped lectures can be accessed from our website for all to see.

*Visit our Website at  
[www.washburnheritage.org](http://www.washburnheritage.org)*

*Looking Ahead into 2022*



## Ken Weiler

*Carla Bremner*

The loss of our friend and WHA board member, Ken Weiler, brings much sadness and creates a vacuum in our group and in this community. Ken passed away November 22, and we will miss his wisdom, warmth, congeniality, guidance and sense of humor. We miss seeing Ken and Jane, constant companions, walking on our main street, stopping to chat and supporting local businesses.

After retirement from a long career in the banking business about twenty years ago, Ken and Jane moved to Washburn, Jane's hometown. They quickly became part of the community, and in 2009 championed the effort to save the DuPont Club (The Club) from demolition. With the building secured, they helped found the Washburn Heritage Association and have served on the board and advisory board for many years. Ken's knowledge, expertise and playfulness are legendary among our board members. No job was too big or too small for the Weiler's, and they did their work quietly and efficiently. Ken had the ability to look at the big picture.

Ken remained deeply committed to The Club (Civic Center). His wife was passionate about restoring The Club and Ken's love for and devotion to Jane encouraged his support. But Ken also believed successful communities need thriving community centers and he worked toward that end. The Weilers have served on The Club board since its formation. Their determination, commitment, guidance and support have played an important role in bringing this treasured building back to its intended use. Ken's legacy to our community lives on. We are very grateful to have known and worked with this man.

The family has requested memorials be sent to The Club, P.O. Box 144, Washburn, WI 54891.



## BUILDINGS AND SITES COMMITTEE 2022 ACTIVITIES

*Karen Novachek*

This new WHA committee is excited about the projects it will be undertaking this year. The Committee's purpose is advocating the significance of historic buildings and sites in our community by increasing awareness and encouraging improvements.

Given this purpose, the primary activities will include:

**Facade Grants:** The announcement of the availability of grants funds was sent to business owners in December 2021 with a February 1 deadline to submit applications. The grant funds are for repair, refurbishing or enhancements to the exterior of commercial buildings in Washburn. It is anticipated that grant awards will be made March 1.

**Designation of Additional Historic Buildings:** The newsletter contains a separate article regarding this initiative.

**Preservation Month:** In 2022, the Washburn Public Library will be featured. A variety of activities are being planned to occur at the library throughout May, in addition to tours of other historic buildings and sites in the community.

The Buildings and Sites Committee welcomes additional ideas and suggestions from WHA members and the Washburn community regarding our treasured historic buildings and sites.

## Houghton Depot Nears Completion

*Mary Gruhl*

The members of the Bayview History Committee would like to extend a sincere thank you to all the individuals who have contributed volunteer hours, donations, grants and contractual work to make this project a reality. The Houghton Depot stands as a testament to the Washburn Heritage Association's purpose "...to protect, preserve, interpret, and increase awareness of the architectural and cultural history of the City of Washburn and its contiguous townships." Over the past two years, grants from Ron and Kay Maassen, the Washburn Community Education Foundation, the Apostle Islands Historic Preservation Conservancy, several large anonymous gifts, donations of all sizes from local donors and folks around the USA, gifts of items from the period when the train was active, and support from the Town of Bayview have made this dream of saving the last remaining train depot on the Bayfield Peninsula a reality.

This winter the committee continues its work by designing signage and education materials that will be installed before spring field trips of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students from Washburn, Madeline Island, Bayfield and South Shore schools. Programs are also being developed to deliver to the general public.

Members of the committee are interviewing some of the older members from the Town of Bayview who remember the days when the train was active. Other are searching for any information on the days between 1880 and 1970 when the train was actively carrying passengers and goods between Ashland to Bayfield while making additional stops at Barksdale, Washburn, Houghton Village, Pike, Salmo and PureAir.

Please come to a celebration of completion to be held in the Spring of 2022.





# Heritage

WASHBURN HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

## WHA Board of Directors

**President:** Mary Gruhl

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Patra Holter  
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Karen Novachek  
Dave Nyhus  
Ginny Pedersen

**Advisory Board:**

Gary Holman  
Jane Weiler  
Don Ekstrom

## Members and Donors

We appreciate your ongoing support of all our activities. We couldn't do it without you. If you don't see your name on the list below, please consider joining us. Thank you.

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Dawn Bellile  
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Jill Lorenz  
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Join

us!

*If you are interested in any of our projects and would like to volunteer to help, or if you have ideas for new projects, please talk to any board member. You can join the Washburn Heritage Association by filling out the form below.*

### Thank You for your Membership/Donation!

\$20

Individual

\$30

Family

\$50

Patron

\$100

Business

\$500

Benefactor

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

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The Washburn Heritage Association is a non-profit citizen group with no overhead expenses.

We appreciate your support. Please send this form with your tax deductible donation to:

**Washburn Heritage Association ~ P.O. Box 814 ~ Washburn, Wisconsin 54891**