



## President's Letter

*Mary Gruhl, President*

“Testing, testing, can you hear us now?” Words heard many times this winter as we learned to set up new sound and presentation equipment for the Tony Woiak History Festival presentations. Thanks to the generous matching grant from the Washburn Community Education Foundation, the equipment makes it possible for presenters to be heard by our audience, and for those asking questions to be heard by everyone. Also, we extend our thanks to the presenters who breathe life into the history of our community, to Harbor Table for use of their facility, to Andrew Grimm for video taping the sessions, and to the History Festival Committee for making it all happen twice a year. And finally, to the

Chamber of Commerce for getting the word out via their weekly e-blast.

Thank you all for being part of our mission, “To enrich the experience of living in our community by telling the compelling stories and preserving the historic buildings and culture of the Washburn area.” We look forward to seeing all of you at our upcoming summer series.



*Raelyn Pearson, president of Washburn Iron Works, along with her sons Taylor and Cole, accepts a copy of the kiosk panel about the Washburn Iron Works from the Kiosk Committee: Lynn Adams, Ginny Pedersen, Sharon Stewart, and Patra Holter. The panel was donated by the Washburn Heritage Association.*

The Kiosk Committee recently completed four panels about businesses run by four-generation families of Washburn. The Olson family for “Olson Building Supply”, the Bratley family for “Bratley Family Funeral Homes”, the Pearson family for “Washburn Iron Works”, and the Ungrodt family for “Ungrodt’s Hardware.” The panels will be on display this summer in the Kiosk at Wikdal Park.

Work is progressing on the Washburn History Book based on the information compiled by the Kiosk Committee for the display panels. Ros Nelson is the graphic designer of the book to be entitled “The Spirit of Washburn.”



## Annual Trolley Tour

The annual trolley rides during Brownstone Days will originate from the southwest corner of Bayfield Street and Central Avenue, next to Time Out. Free, hour-long rides will start at 11 am, noon, and 1 pm on Saturday,

July 27. For many years, this ride has been graciously sponsored by Ron and Kay Maassen of Sedona, Arizona.

## Houghton Depot Open Houses

This summer’s open houses at the Houghton Depot, located at Bayview Town Park, will be from 10:00 am until noon on the following dates: June 29, July 13, July 27, August 10, and August 24. Come join us to see the model train, graffiti, speeder and cart, and read about the history of Houghton.



# Buildings and Sites Committee

Karen Novachek

## 2024 PRESERVATION MONTH

This year's Preservation Month celebration focused on the Washburn Cultural Center. The activities began on May 1 with Mayor Mary Motiff reading a proclamation to declare the month as Historic Preservation Month and urging the people of Washburn to celebrate the role history plays in their lives.

The following activities occurred during May:



Family Activity Day: scavenger hunt, music, appearance of A.C. Probert, first bank president who left Washburn under suspicion of embezzlement and a cannon volley.

School Tours: Sixth-grade students from Washburn School toured the Cultural Center.

Panel Presentation: Past, Present and Future of the Cultural Center: Sharon Stewart, Karen Maki, Dick Olson, Steve Cotherman.

Recognition Award for Preserving Heritage to John and Christina Sopiwnik for their efforts to restore the Hawkes Building.



Matt Simoneau as A.C. Probert



Mayor Mary Motiff giving proclamation.



Steve Cotherman, Dick Olson and Karen Maki



Christina and John Sopiwnik receiving award from Karen Novachek



Brad Lemire, Don Christensen and Kristen Christenson.



**Jane Weiler (1940 – 2024)** Sadly we say goodbye to Jane who joined the WHA early after its formation in 2010. She and her husband Ken were on-going supporters and board members of the

WHA providing ideas and later as representatives of “The Club.” She was always present at tables during Brownstone Days, Boutique Days, and collecting entrance fees and greeting people with her lovely smile at Tony Woiak presentations. Her work and support of the WHA is appreciated and she is missed.

**Featured Member:  
Lynn Adams**



In this issue, we say thank you to Lynn Adams, our Tech support and graphic designer board member, who for the past eight years, has been helping us behind the scenes with all our publications and presentations. In addition to designing our biennial WHA newsletter, she has helped the Kiosk committee produce over 25 historic panels that are on display on a rotating basis at the Kiosk located in Wikdal Park. Lynn has been involved with the publicity and tech support for the Tony Woiak presentations. She designed many pamphlets for the Association including the Walking Tour and Lakewalk Brochure, event posters for May Preservation Month, the newsletter and Open Depot sign for the Houghton Depot, and our original website. Lynn is grateful that Jamey Ritter has joined the WHA so the work can be collaborated on and shared. We owe Lynn a big thank you for making our efforts come alive.



**History Festival Committee**

Mark your calendars for the Tony Woiak History Festival events. New this year, the Harbor Table will be open to diners on those evenings too! So come early, enjoy a meal...but be sure to be in your places when the presentations begin at 7:30! Thanks, Harbor Table for all your help with the festivals over the years! Save the poster below.



**13TH ANNUAL TONY WOIAK SUMMER  
History Festival**

*Students  
Free*

**HARBOR TABLE (FORMERLY HARBOR VIEW EVENT CENTER) – WASHBURN**

**ALL EVENTS TUESDAYS 7:30 PM**

**\$5**

**TUES. JUNE 25TH ORPHAN TRAINS: MIKE BUNCH**



Beginning in the 1900s as a way to find homes for orphans, trains left New York City and brought children all over the country. The Orphan Train story was not always a good one. Orphans were adopted primarily by farmers, supposedly to the benefit of both. One such child arrived at the Bayview Depot.

**TUES. JULY 9TH THE NEWS OF WASHBURN: TIDBITS FROM AN EARLIER CENTURY: PETE MANN**



A presentation of what life was like in Washburn at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as seen from the pages of the Washburn Times, one of the town’s several newspapers. Hear about the events that shaped the community. Explore those matters of importance to the residents of the era. Discover how the community has changed over the last 120 years; and how much it has stayed the same.

**TUES. JULY 23RD MEET THE UNGRODTS: JULIA PROHASKA**



From their roots in lumbertown hardware and the rise of “Boy Mayor,” to parade mowers, dog biscuits, and a cultural museum, the Ungrods have been proud participants in the Washburn story since 1886. Come hear their story told through photos and anecdotes presented by a 5th generation Ungrodt, Julia Prohaska. Oh....and there might be Bridge Mix.

**TUES. AUG. 6TH UNVEILING SLAB TOWN: THE HIDDEN STORIES OF WASHBURN: MATT SIMONEAU**



Step into the captivating history of Slabtown, nestled within Washburn, Wisconsin. Discover the rich tapestry of this unique community, once home to hardworking lumberjacks and pioneering families. Uncover tales of resilience and camaraderie as you learn about the spirited individuals who shaped Slabtown’s character. From bustling sawmills to tight-knit neighborhoods, each slab of history reveals the enduring spirit of this cherished Wisconsin locale.

**SPONSORED BY THE WASHBURN HERITAGE ASSOCIATION AND THE WASHBURN AREA MUSEUM**



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# Heritage

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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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Join us!

*If you are interested in any of our projects and would like to volunteer to help, or 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     \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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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**