

# JONATHAN CLARK HOUSE MUSEUM NEWSLETTER



Fall | September 2024

## Historical and Significant Partners...past and present

### A message from Curt Gielow

Mequon Mayor 2010-2013

Wisconsin State Assemblyman 2003-2007

It's now been more than a decade since Dr. Sandy Custer called me to tell me about his imminent retirement from dentistry and to inquire about the City of Mequon having any potential interest in his historically significant office building on the corner of Cedarburg and Bonniwell Roads.

Historically significant for sure! Dr. Custer practiced dentistry for 30 years in the original 1848 home of the Jonathan and Mary Clark family, early pioneering settlers of the Mequon-Thiensville area.

Although viewed at the time as impractical for the City of Mequon to acquire the property, we were able to develop interest by some residents in 'saving the house' due to its historical and architectural significance to the M-T area. Successfully identifying an interim 'straw' buyer for the property and recruiting several key thought leaders led to the creation of the custodial group known as the **Friends of the Jonathan Clark House**. An important key leader was Cindy Bock who volunteered to chair a task force and later, served as the first President of the Board of Directors.

One of the initial instrumental organizations to support this vision of preserving the history of the Jonathan Clark House was the Mequon-Thiensville Community Foundation.



Curt Gielow and MTCF president Lori Lorenz at the Jonathan Clark House Museum

Now celebrating their 25th anniversary of providing philanthropic support to worthy community needs, the M-T Community Foundation continues to be a supporter and key funder of Jonathan Clark House preservation initiatives.

Historic and significant partners in the present, celebrating the past,... for the enjoyment and benefit of the future, please join me in congratulating the **Mequon-Thiensville Community Foundation** on 25 years of service and thanking them for their support of the **Friends of the Jonathan Clark House Museum...past and present.**





## 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tom Daub, President

Margaret Bussone, Vice President

Tammie Strause, Secretary

Shaw Bridges, Treasurer

Bob Blazich, Board Member

Mary Ellen Sampe, Board Member

Terry Schoessow, Board Member

Brady Seiberlich, Board Member

## 2024 VOLUNTEER STAFF

Dr. Nina Look, Executive Director  
& Co-Curator

Anne Bridges, Assistant Director/  
Special Projects

Fred Derr, Preservation Manager  
& Co-Curator

Jean Hill, Photographer

Reed Perkins, Historian &  
Media/Web Design

Matthew Seiberlich, JCH Young  
Historian Ambassador

## CONTACT INFORMATION

FRIENDS OF JONATHAN CLARK HOUSE  
P. O. Box 634  
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[www.jonathanclarkhouse.org](http://www.jonathanclarkhouse.org)

262-618-2051

[jchmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:jchmuseum@gmail.com)

## From the desk of JCH President Tom Daub



You all know that this is not my desk. Of course, it is Jonathan Clark's desk. However, I would like to let you know about exciting museum projects on *my* desk.

- Our Board of Directors are preparing our **Annual Year-End Fund Drive**. Watch for mailings and a website feature after October 15.
- I have created a nominating committee that will review and present a slate of officers to our members at our **January 8, 2025 Annual Meeting**. If you have someone to suggest to the nominating committee, please address those suggestions to me at the JCH email.
- Recent **gifts from Cindy and Dave Bock and Frederick Bock** are providing valuable support for our ongoing projects. Thank you, Cindy, Dave and Frederick!
- Our Board of Directors are grateful for a **gift from Liz and Bob Hickman**. Liz, who just celebrated her 80th birthday, is proud to be Jonathan and Mary's great great granddaughter.
- As always, I am sending a heart-felt thank you to our **JCH Volunteers and Young Historians!**

— Tom Daub



## Summertime "hands-on history" at the Clark House!

2024 JCH Young Historians learned ropemaking, gardening, and other chores of the early settlers and Native Americans



Mr. Fred says, "Take a look at the photos of our potato and strawberry gardens as they were planted in June by our Young Historians. Stop by today to see how the garden plants have grown!"



*An annual favorite – Heritage Day, June 15, 2024*





## Recent Donations – Thank You!

Contributions to the Friends of the Jonathan Clark House received between May 24 and July 31, 2024. For a complete list of our 2024 supporters see the [Thank You to Our Donors](#) page at our website.

### Donors

Bob and Jan Blazich  
Kim and Ann Harter  
Tom Daub  
Shaw and Anne Bridges  
Liz and Bob Hickman  
Tom and Mary Frank  
Jean Hill  
Cindy and David Bock  
Tammie and Jim Strause

### Memorial

For Carol Hertz  
Margaret Bussone  
Fred Derr and Nina Look

### Grants & Business Sponsorships

Auer Steel  
Carrier  
Cliff Bergin and Associates  
Fromm Nieman Brands  
Mequon Thiensville Community Foundation  
Mequon Thiensville Lions Club  
Mequon Thiensville Optimist Club  
Mequon Thiensville Sunrise Rotary  
Pieper Power Foundation  
Spectrum Investment Advisors  
Thiensville Mequon Rotary Foundation  
WILO-Scott Pump



### Join us!

You can make a difference with a donation to the Friends of the Jonathan Clark House.

[Visit our website](#) for more information and to make a donation online or by U.S. Mail

## Some of our generous donors at “Pie on the Patio” June 12, 2024



### Mequon Thiensville Community Foundation Donation

Lynn Streeter, Phil Eckert, Lori Lorenz, Nina Look, Fred Derr, Kathy Pederson with Young Historians Charlotte and Elizabeth



### Mequon Thiensville Sunrise Rotary Donation

Nina Look, Lynn Streeter, Bob Blazich with Young Historians Elizabeth and Charlotte



### Mequon Thiensville Optimist Club Donation

Nina Look, Tom Frank, Young Historians John and Laura



### Thiensville Mequon Rotary Foundation Donation

Jenn Hohn, Margaret Bussone and Nina Look



*Our dedicated docents love to give tours of the Jonathan Clark House*



*These Jonathan Clark House tour photos were taken during our summer 2024 events.*



*Can't make one of the scheduled events or tours?  
Contact JCH director Nina Look at  
[jchmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:jchmuseum@gmail.com) or call 262-618-2051 to  
arrange a tour date and time that fits your schedule!*

*In June, JCH co-curators Nina Look and Fred Derr gave a personalized tour of the house to Bonniwell descendants Jed Bonniwell and Lisa Zhang. Jed later wrote: "It really means a lot to see this family history brought to life in the Clark house, the Bonniwell Bible, and the historical items throughout the house."*





## Preserving the 1848 Historic House

We are dedicated to our mission “to collect, preserve, and share the history of the Jonathan Clark House and the early settlers of Mequon-Thiensville”. A few years ago, I worked with local architect and JCH Board Member Justin Racinowski to develop the “JCH Long Range Preservation Plan.”



We determined that an important component of the plan was the preservation of the stone and mortar foundation of the building. I am pleased that over the summer this most significant preservation project has been completed by a local stone mason.

We will continue to work on our long range plan that includes a landscaping project. Our Board of Directors are pursuing grants to finance the stone and mortar foundation project expenses as well as future landscaping projects. For more information, contact JCH Executive Director Nina Look at [jchmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:jchmuseum@gmail.com)

*Fred Derr,*  
Preservation Manager



## *Friends of the Jonathan Clark House Membership*

*For almost two hundred years, the Jonathan Clark House has been a local landmark and gathering place. The family that lived here built it to last. But as JCH preservation manager Fred Derr's article (above) makes clear, old houses like the Clark House don't remain standing all by themselves. Please consider joining the Friends of the Jonathan Clark House and help us preserve the Jonathan Clark House, and share its story with history lovers of all ages for decades to come.*



- Dues are per calendar year, January 1 to December 31.
- Memberships: \$20 Individual — \$40 Family — \$100 Business or organization.
- Payment options: Cash, Check, or PayPal (via the website). Please do not mail cash.
- Dues may be paid as early as September 1 of the previous year for the next year.
- JCH Year-end fund drive donations made in the fall include membership for the next year.
- [Click this link](#), or use the QR code to the left, to make a donation today!

## Website Updates!

All summer long our new webmaster, Reed Perkins, has been making updates to our official JCH website. Almost every page has been revised, and many new pages, images and features have been added.

If you haven't been there in a while, [click this link](#), or use the QR code to the right, to see what's new at the Jonathan Clark House website.

