

# JONATHAN CLARK HOUSE MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

Term: Spring | May 2023

## IN THIS ISSUE

- PAGE 2:** Board of Directors List & Welcoming Newest Member
- PAGE 3:** Heritage Day Information
- PAGE 4:** Volunteers & Donors
- PAGE 5:** Pie on the Patio Invitation
- PAGE 6/7:** Young Historian Impact
- PAGE 8/9:** Preparing for Planting Blog
- PAGE 10:** Where to Find Us / Donate



## HERITAGE DAY AT JONATHAN CLARK HOUSE

Save the date for our free summer event. Step back in time and tour our house museum, learn about farm animals from the Lindenwood 4-H Club & enjoy treats from the Ozaukee County Dairy Promotion Committee. Find out more on PAGE 3.

## PIE ON THE PATIO ANNUAL AUCTION & CELEBRATION

An annual event for JCH Friends & Donors featuring delicious pie from Outpost Natural Foods & wine from Cedar Creek Winery. Find out more on PAGE 5.



# OUR MISSION

Collect, preserve and share the history of the Jonathan Clark House and the early settlers of Mequon and Thiensville.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Linda Chay, President**

Vice President/Mortgage Lending,  
Port Washington State Bank

**Tom Gifford, Vice President**

Owner, Gifford Video

**Scott Ballering, Treasurer**

Customer Representative,  
Port Washington State Bank -  
Mequon Branch

**Margaret Bussone, Education Director**

Retired, Foreign Language Faculty,  
Mequon Thiensville School District

**Judy Button, Board Member**

Early Childhood Educator

**Kirsten J Reinhardt, Board Member**

Guest Curator, Bruce Museum,  
Greenwich, Connecticut

**Brady Seiberlich, Board Member**

Director of Software Development,  
National Business Furniture

**Patrick Steele, Ph.D., Board Member**

Professor of History, Concordia  
University Wisconsin

**Joel Willems, Board Member**

Director, Cedarburg History Museum

# MEET BRADY



*Photo of Brady & Matthew  
on a recent family trip.*

## Introducing our new Board Member Brady Seiberlich

Brady Seiberlich is my father, he is the Director of Software Development at National Business Furniture, and the newest member of the Jonathan Clark House Board of Directors. My dad has been an active member of the community for years, helping to run and expand youth programs like youth basketball and baseball. He is incredibly excited and honored to hold this position, and looks forward to giving back to the Jonathan Clark House.

Matthew Seiberlich, JCH Young Historian Ambassador

# HERITAGE DAY

AT THE JONATHAN CLARK HOUSE

SAVE  
THE  
DATE

JUNE 17, 2023  
12-3PM

Located on the corner of Cedarburg and Bonniwell Roads in Mequon.



FOR MORE INFO

✉ Email [Jchmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:Jchmuseum@gmail.com)

🌐 Visit [www.jonathanclarkhouse.org](http://www.jonathanclarkhouse.org)

📘 Like us on Facebook @JonathanClarkHouseMuseum

DAIRY TREATS | FARM ANIMALS | HOUSE TOURS

Ozaukee County Dairy Group

Lindenwood 4-H

Jonathan Clark House

FREE  
EVENT  
donations  
welcome



Mequon Thiensville  
Sunrise Rotary

Thank you to our generous event sponsors



Optimist Club

# 2023 FRIENDS OF JONATHAN CLARK HOUSE VOLUNTEER STAFF

**Anne Bridges,**  
Assistant Director/Special Projects  
Retired, Financial Analyst

**Shaw Bridges, Advisor**  
Retired, Financial Analyst

**Margaret Bussone,**  
Assistant Director/Education  
Retired, Foreign Language Faculty,  
Mequon Thiensville School District

**Frederick Derr,**  
Preservation Manager and Curator  
Metalsmith, Historic Preservationist

**Henry Hille, Information Technology**  
Communications Technology

**Jean Hill, Photographer**  
Retired, Ozaukee Economic Development  
and Ozaukee Bank

**Nina Look, Ph.D. Director**  
Retired, Vice President,  
Milwaukee Area Technical College

**Reed Perkins, Historian**  
Musician/Turck Family Descendant

**Matthew Seiberlich,**  
JCH Young Historian Ambassador  
Honor Student, HHS Class of 2025

## NOT ON THE DONOR LIST?

Go to the donate section of our website  
to make a positive impact on our community  
[www.jonathanclarkhouse.org](http://www.jonathanclarkhouse.org)



THANK  
YOU  
DONORS

## 2023 FAMILY DONORS TO DATE

**Scott Ballering**  
**Frederick Bock**  
**Anne and Shaw Bridges**  
**Margaret Bussone**  
**Linda Chay**  
**Susan Gattoni**  
**Tom Gifford**  
**Patti Heiber**  
**Ron & Pat Heinritz**  
**Jean Hill**  
**Courtney & Andy Krogstad**  
**Dr. Nina Look and Fred Derr**  
**Al Lustig & Janice Watson**  
**Dr. Patrick & Lynet Steele**  
**Alice & Bob Schilleman**  
**Tina Schwantes**

## 2023 FOUNDATION & ORGANIZATION DONORS TO DATE

**Cedarburg History Museum**  
**Mequon Thiensville Community Foundation**  
**Thiensville Mequon Rotary Club**  
**Wisconsin Historical Society**

## 2023 BUSINESS DONORS TO DATE

**Cedar Creek Winery**  
**Gifford VideoPro**  
**The Pink Llama Gallery**  
**Portside Investment Advisors**  
**Spectrum Investment Advisors**  
**Washington House Inn**

OUR JCH YOUNG HISTORIANS HAVE  
TASTE TESTED THE OUTPOST PIES AND

**INVITE YOU TO JOIN**

# PIE ON THE PATIO

THE ANNUAL AUCTION  
& CELEBRATION

.....  
*at Jonathan Clark House*

**JUNE 14  
5-7 PM**

RAIN DATE IS THURSDAY

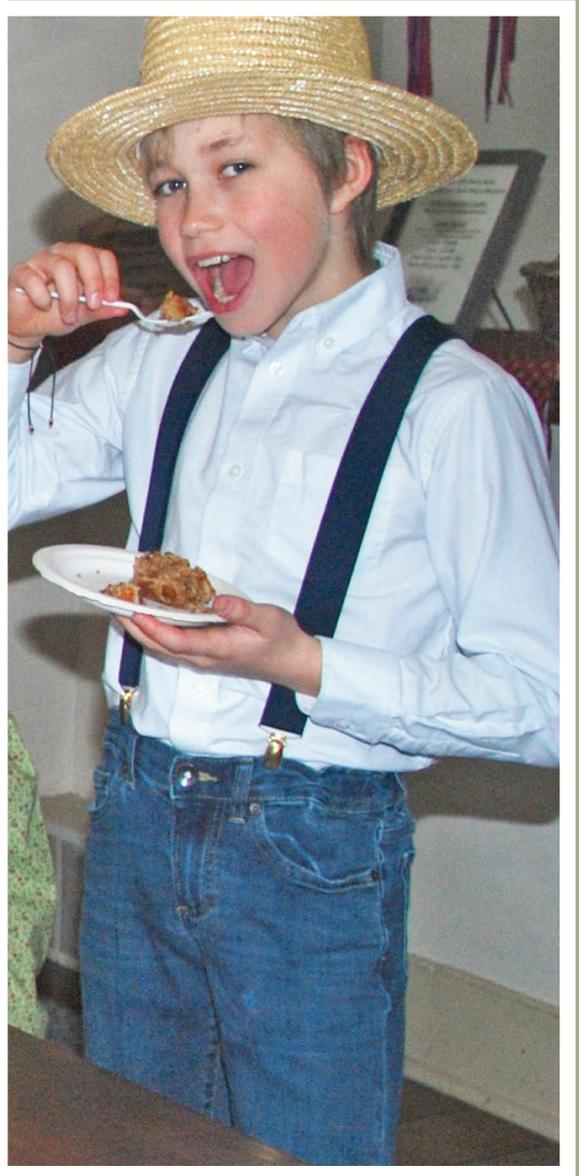


Delicious Pies From  
Outpost Natural Foods



Refreshing  
Lemonade &  
Cedar Creek  
Winery Wine

Feel free to bring a guest.  
RSVP by Monday, June 1st  
to [jchmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:jchmuseum@gmail.com)



*special event for...*  
.....

**JCH Friends and Donors  
Not a JCH donor?  
Go to the "donate" section  
of our website  
[jonathanclarkhousemuseum.org](http://jonathanclarkhousemuseum.org)**

THANK YOU TO OUR EVENT SPONSOR JIM MARSHALL



# Jonathan Clark House Museum Young Historian Impact

Photos by JCH Friend Jean Hill



Matthew and one of his Bike Racks

"Volunteering at the JCH has given me countless fun memories of teaching the history, and having a great time getting to learn more about 1840s Wisconsin!"

2022 Eagle Scout Project  
Two Bicycle Racks  
for the Jonathan Clark House Grounds

**Matthew Seiberlich, HHS Sophomore**



Spencer with Char and George Bonniwell

"Getting to know our local history helps us understand why many things are the way they are today. A lot of the people, buildings and roads we see everyday are here because of something that happened a long time ago. We also should learn about having to make decisions that affect the future. When we learn about history we see that decisions a long time ago have an impact for many years or even centuries. Helping to see how good or bad these decisions have been, helps us take today's decisions much more seriously."

**Spencer Hollway, GHS Sophomore**



Soren - Volunteer Greeter at an Open House

Meet our "youngest" Young Historian in his custom-made costume. "I like all of the artifacts from different times. I like the living history and hands-on activities. I enjoy being able to show kids what it was like during that time in history."

**Soren Damsgaard, Mequon Third Grader**



Kolby, Kate and Cousin Augie Zellmann

"We have personally witnessed the value of the Jonathan Clark House Museum as our children have had their first volunteer experiences helping with preservation projects and museum events. Because of these experiences they have a deeper appreciation of the community and a more significant understanding of the past in relation to the future. They call this having fun at the museum."

**Kurt and Suzanne Zellmann, Mequon**

For more information about becoming a Young Historian  
Contact Nina at [jchmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:jchmuseum@gmail.com)

# Jonathan Clark House Museum Young Historian Impact

Photos by JCH Friend Jean Hill



John in the Clark House Pantry

**John Gattoni** is a Thiensville resident and middle school student. He is our newest Young Historian. In 2022 he served as an event greeter and open house greeter.

In addition, John cleaned and painted the outdoor lights under the mentorship of Mequon Thiensville Optimist Club Member Tom Frank. We look forward to John's continued help at JCH as he aspires to gain his Eagle Scout Award.



McKenna Accepting the Bonniwell Bible

**McKenna Chay**, a student at Cedarburg High School, recently started an organization for her fellow-students who are interested in volunteering at local non-profits.

At the Bonniwell Bible event, sponsored by her grandfather, she gave a moving presentation as she accepted the donated Bible on behalf of the next generation. She assured the group that her generation will carry on with a commitment to historic preservation.



Sarah and Marcy at Fall Harvest

**Sarah Daniels and Marcy Zimmer** are seniors at Divine Savior Holy Angels High School and have volunteered for several events and projects.

If they look familiar, you may have seen them at Heritage Days, the Foxtown Holiday Market or the JCH Exhibit at the Museum of Quilt and Fiber Arts Family Day.

We wish them the best as they go off to college. How about a degree in "United States History"?



Emerson Volunteering at Heritage Days

Eight year old **Emerson Trumbull-Holper** stepped right up into the role of greeter at the summer Heritage Days event. His job was to make certain that all of the other children had fun with the array of yard games. It seemed that his favorite task was giving out cookies and ice cream to children of all ages.

We look forward to Emerson's volunteering skills at future outdoor events.

For more information about becoming a Young Historian  
Contact Nina at [jchmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:jchmuseum@gmail.com)

# CLARK HOUSE HISTORIAN FROM THE BLOG

May 13, 2022 / Clark House Historian Reed Perkins

## PREPARING FOR PLANTING

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It's mid-May in southeastern Wisconsin, and with luck the last frost is behind us. For the past weeks and months farmers and gardeners have been tending to the soil and preparing for planting. At this time of year in the 1840s and '50s, Jonathan M. Clark would have done much the same, hitching up his team of oxen to a steel-bladed plow to cut and turn over the tough prairie grasses and break up the soil of his newly-cleared lands.



*Palmer, Frances Flora Bond, American Farm Scenes, No. 1. (detail).*

Tilling fields by hand is never easy. In New England, the first “crop” of the season is usually a field full of rocks, newly surfaced by the past winter’s freeze-thaw cycle. In Wisconsin and the other prairie states, the great plowing challenge was prairie grass and its deep, thick, root systems.

As white settlers migrated to the prairie states in the early 1800s, they found it nearly impossible to plow through and turn over the sticky prairie soil with the existing iron-bladed plows of the time. Many blacksmiths tried to solve the problem, experimenting with new plow shapes and materials.



*Palmer, Frances Flora Bond, American Farm Scenes, No. 1., pub. Nathaniel Currier, [New York], 1853. Hand-colored lithograph on paper, Smithsonian American Art Museum, gift of International Business Machines Corporation. CCo license, no restrictions.*

In today’s image, the rolling hills and two-rail fences—along with the clapboard house with its gambrel roof and dormer windows—are clues that this is a view of spring plowing in New York or New England, and not southeast Wisconsin in the pioneer days of the early 1850s.

But the scene of the farmer at his plow, the double-yoke of oxen, the farmer’s son leading the way and prodding the team when needed, could easily be taken for Jonathan M. Clark and his son Henry (b. 1843), at work on the Clark farm in Mequon, Wisconsin, circa 1853.



*John Deere’s Steel Plow*

*“Tradition holds that this plow, held in the Smithsonian collections, is one of the first three plows that John Deere personally forged.”<sup>2</sup> (National Museum of American History, gift of Deere and Company, 1938. Image used under fair use provisions of copyright law, other restrictions may apply.)*

# CLARK HOUSE HISTORIAN FROM THE BLOG

May 13, 2022 / Clark House Historian Reed Perkins

## PREPARING FOR PLANTING *continued...*

*John Deere failed as a blacksmith in Vermont but succeeded as an agricultural tool manufacturer in Illinois. His company built revolutionary plows like this early 1838 example. The steel blades of Deere plows slid more easily through sticky prairie soil and made farmers more efficient. John and his son Charles expanded the company through clever marketing and financial acumen making Deere & Company the largest plow manufacturer in the world. The company continue to expand making everything from tractors to combines, from mechanical cotton harvesters to riding lawnmowers.*

*Smithsonian Institution-NMAH*

We don't know if Jonathan M. Clark owned an early John Deere plow but, as today's lithograph shows, by the early 1850s the steel plow was in use in the east as well as the "West." Whether he owned a Deere—or one of its imitators—Jonathan would not have successfully farmed his 160 acres without a modern, steel-bladed plow hitched to his team of oxen.

### NOTES:

Nathaniel Currier, the publisher of this lithograph, is best known as half of the famous and prolific artist-publisher duo of Currier & Ives. The artist, Frances Flora (Bond) Palmer (1812-1876), usually known as Fanny Palmer, is noteworthy in her own right. For an introduction to the artist and her work, you might start with her Wikipedia article. Her works are in the collections of several major museums, including the National Gallery of Art, the New York MET, the Brooklyn Museum, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

For the source of the quoted John Deere information, and more on John Deere, his steel-bladed plow, and its effect on agriculture and the environment, see the December 17, 2015, Smithsonian Magazine.

Although we don't have specific documentation of whether JMC owned oxen, the 1850 federal census for Ozaukee county is clear that oxen were the main working animals of local farms at that time, out-numbering horses by almost 10-to-1. For more on this, see our post Harvest Time: 1850, part 2.

### ABOUT REED PERKINS



*Pictured: Reed Perkins & George Bonniwell. Reed and George have collaborated on research of the Clark, Turck & Bonniwell families of the old Town of Mequon.*

Reed Perkins has been researching Clark, Turck and other Mequon families and their stories since 2006. As the volunteer historian for the Jonathan Clark House Museum in Mequon, Wisconsin, he likes to investigate and share the stories of the Clarks, their relatives, neighbors, friends, and the world in which they lived.

Reed's blog is written in support of the mission of the Jonathan Clark House Museum but the website and—unless noted otherwise—its contents and the views expressed, are the sole property of its author, Reed Perkins.

**To find out more visit [jchmhistorian.com](http://jchmhistorian.com)**

THANK  
YOU

# MAKE A DONATION TO THE JONATHAN CLARK HOUSE



## WHERE TO FIND US

✉ Email [Jchmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:Jchmuseum@gmail.com)

🌐 Visit [www.jonathanclarkhouse.org](http://www.jonathanclarkhouse.org)

📌 Like us on Facebook [@JonathanClarkHouseMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/JonathanClarkHouseMuseum)

We are located on the corner of Cedarburg and Bonniwell Roads.

Tours are available by appointment only. Contact 262-618-2051 to set up a tour.