PLANK, WHEEL AND RAIL:
TRANSPORTATION IN EARLY WISCONSIN

The Annual Meeting will take place in the Port Washington State Bank’s Lakeview Room in the Wilson House on Wednesday, October 17, 2018, at 7:00 pm. There will be a short business meeting with the election of the Board of Directors followed by a program entitled Plank, Wheel and Rail: Transportation in Early Wisconsin.

Jim Willaert, Curator of Interpretation and Collections at the Wade House Historic Site in Greenbush, Wisconsin, will explain how technological advancement brought significant changes to the way we lived, worked and traveled in the late Nineteenth Century. Transportation in Ozaukee, Sheboygan and Fond du Lac Counties were hubs of activity competing to bring farm goods and resources from the interior to ports along the state’s east coast. He will show how plank roads and railroads helped bring this to fruition.

The Wade House is one of 12 historic sites and museums operated by the Wisconsin Historical Society. Willaert has worked in the history field for more than 25 years. Prior to the Wade House, he worked at Conner Prairie Interactive History Park in Indiana. He holds a Master’s Degree in History from Eastern Illinois University.

Mary Flierl, Program Coordinator
President’s Message

Dear Members,

As with many Port Washington businesses and homes, our Port Exploreum was a victim of the early August rains and ensuing sewer backup. The maritime level suffered extensive damage to the structure and finishes as well as the technology on that level. We are working very hard to get it back to “like new” condition and ready for visitors as soon as possible.

I would like to thank three board members, in addition to myself, who will be stepping off the board this year. Bill Schanen served two terms and will be leaving the board after six years, including four years as Vice President. Kurt Blum served two terms and will be leaving the board after serving four years. Allon Bostwick served on the board three years and has chosen not to stand for re-election. Allon has been a very active volunteer, especially with the educational programs at the Port Exploreum. Thank you all for your service!

I am ending my second term on the Board. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time on the Board and as president. I look forward to continued involvement in the Society in a variety of ways. We will be electing four new Board members at the annual meeting on October 17.

Planning for the 2018 Society Gala is well under way. The Gala will be held again this year at The Family Farm Event Loft in Grafton on November 3. The theme is Home for the Holidays/Celebrating Harvest and History on the Farm. Shirli Flack is the presenting sponsor as well as the dinner sponsor for this year’s event. The Port Washington State Bank, Ansay & Associates, and the Ozaukee Press are our other major sponsors.

We will have an incredible array of auction items that will add fun and excitement to the evening as well as help us reach our fundraising goal. Mark your calendars and plan to attend. It promises to be a wonderful evening of visiting with fellow members and others while celebrating the amazing accomplishments of the Society and raising funds to continue our work.

We are still seeking sponsors and donors for the Gala. If you are interested in being a sponsor or making a donation to help us reach our fundraising goal, please contact me for more information at jmorgan@alliedinsulation.com or 414-491-9815.

Our need for volunteers continues. All three properties need volunteers in various capacities. Volunteering will help the Society fulfill its mission, give you an opportunity to get to know fellow members better and meet visitors to our city. You don’t have to be a member of the Society to volunteer, so encourage family, friends and neighbors to help. Volunteer today!

Jeff Morgan, President
Port Washington Historical Society Board of Directors
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

Sunday night, August 26, a strong path of storms made their way through the Port Washington area, and by the time the storms had passed on Monday morning, over nine inches of rain had fallen. Unfortunately, this amount of rain overwhelmed the municipal sewer system, and the result is that for many downtown businesses, their Monday morning began with the discovery of almost two feet of sewage in their basements. This included the Port Exploreum. The Resource Center had some back up, but fortunately not enough to cause any damage.

The Maritime Level of the Port Exploreum (the lowest level) suffered severe damage, including the ship walls in the theater area, the refrigerator in the galley, the computer that operates Fish Daze, two lighting controllers in the Maritime Theater, the elevator, the furnace located in the lower level, and much of the materials and supplies located in the storage room as well as the cabinets in the galley. While the final value of the damage has not yet been fully calculated, we are estimating that it will exceed $125,000.

Thanks in large part to our insurance agent, Ansay and Associates, we were able to quickly hire both a remediator for drying out and treating the sewer damage and also the contractor to do the restoration of the Maritime Level. We are on the road to recovery, and we will have the Maritime Level open once again no later than November 15. Please watch your mail and email for the re-opening announcement as we plan on having a special celebration.

Text Message sent to me on Tuesday, 8/28:
With all of the rain, did the ship on the Maritime Level set sail?
My answer:
No, but we are taking on water!

Wayne Chrusiel, Executive Director

1860 LIGHT STATION NEWS

The 2018 touring season at the 1860 Light Station is quickly coming to an end. We will close Sunday, October 14, although we will continue conducting school tours after that date. As always, special thanks to our corps of volunteer guides and greeters as well as our Maritime Heritage interns who made our Light Station come alive for our visitors. Special thanks to Katie Gettel, our Volunteer Coordinator, who helped to ensure we were properly staffed during the summer and fall. Also, a big thank you to Amy Clark, who kept the Light Station exceptionally clean throughout the season.

Landscaping was one of the big tasks this season at the Light Station. We will continue to find ways to improve the appearance of the Station grounds going into next year. Winterization of the Light Station will be ongoing through November, along with re-organization of the basement.

As has been the case the last couple of years, we will be reviewing how we tour, what we emphasize and what we display for next season. It is important to keep what we are doing and showing as fresh as possible, not only for our visitors, but also our guides. A planning group will be assembled late fall, and a review will be completed by early winter so we can make necessary changes in spring before the 2019 re-opening of the Light Station.

Wayne Chrusiel, Executive Director
As I reported in the Executive Director’s report, the Port Exploreum was heavily damaged on the Maritime Level (the basement), and because of this damage, the museum was closed from Monday August 28 until Friday, September 21. On that day, we were able to reopen the 1st and 2nd floors of the Port Exploreum. So as to enhance the experience of our visitors, we moved Fish Daze, the Lake Ecology Quiz and the Sailing Kiosk to the 1st and 2nd floors. Additionally, we are able to move the movie that played in the Maritime Theater to the large TV on the 2nd floor.

Not only will we be able to provide our visitors with a full and complete visit, but by moving the technology upstairs we are also able to continue our school visits which are part of our Educational Initiative. This is doubly important as our Education Coordinators, Deb Ryer-Jung and Neil Rismeyer, will be introducing a new 4th Grade History Curriculum for grade schools in early October. We held a test class on October 2, and other schools are scheduled to visit throughout the rest of October. Please note that a visit to the 1860 Light Station is part of the school visit, and we also incorporate part of the curriculum at this facility.

On another note, plans had been underway to change some of the exhibits and experiences on the Maritime Level before the rains. Now with the restoration work beginning, we will be incorporating changes and upgrades to improve the visitor experience on this level.

Wayne Chrusciel, Executive Director

The Resource Center exhibit Remembering World War 1: 100 Years Later has been well received this summer. In June the building was opened for additional hours on Fridays and Saturdays. Visitors to the Resource Center numbered 126 in June, 233 in July and 198 in August. These visits include those looking for information as well as those viewing the exhibit.

Summer hours on Fridays and Saturdays will end on October 27. The Resource Center will then revert to winter hours of Mondays and Thursdays from 1:00-4:00. The exhibit will run into early next year.

Over the years the Society has assisted with the creation of historic markers for the former firehouse, the 1860 Light Station, the Civil War Draft Riots, the 1899 Wisconsin Chair Company Fire, the Wisconsin Street School and the Leland Sanford site. Three years ago, the Society formed a Historic Marker Project charged with identifying and promoting the history of Port Washington by placing markers on historic buildings and at historic sites. Since then the Society has assisted in placing markers on the Schumacher Building, the Barnum Blake Building and the Henry & Hill Building.

This year we are working on a site marker for Lake Street breweries and three more building markers, including markers on the First National Bank.

Exhibits in the commons of the new high school are being developed. These exhibits will reflect the history of the high school in Port Washington and the generations of students that attended.

We continue to seek additional items to add to our collections. We also need volunteers to assist with archives and events and to act as docents. Some work can be done at home. Call 262-268-9150 if you have time or donations to offer.

Jackie Oleson and Geri Zehren,
PROGRAM IN MARITIME HERITAGE UPDATE

The Port Washington Historical Society welcomed two interns this summer. Kelli Resnick spent her summer continuing our project cataloguing artifacts from the maritime archaeology collection. She made great progress and we are very close to completing the process on all the shipwreck-associated items at the Resource Center. We encourage anyone who might have maritime or shipwreck related items (recovered prior to the state law changes in the mid 1980s) that they are interested in donating to contact us at the Society.

Our other intern, Grant, worked on our news cataloguing project. Port Washington had many newspapers operating concurrently in the 1850s, but few of those papers have survived to the current day. We are working on reconstructing Port Washington and Ozaukee County’s news by pulling articles from Port Washington papers that were reprinted in Sheboygan, Milwaukee, and other Wisconsin newspapers. We’ve found many interesting, strange, and amusing stories that we will share through exhibits and other history projects.

This fall we will continue the research process for our next exhibit at the Port Exploreum and coordinating with the collections committee to further refine our policies. We are always working to better preserve our archives, artifacts and historical objects.

Sarah Elizabeth Smith, Curator

FOUR TAX-SAVING WAYS TO HELP THE PORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

As you all know, the recent nine-inch rain and the resulting sewer backup in Port wreaked havoc on the Maritime Level of the Port Exploreum. The financial and programming impact is and will be significant.

So how can all of us help – because that is what our Society needs right now. First, a most enjoyable way – attend the Society Gala on November 3 at the Family Farm in Grafton. And better yet, bring friends. Place bids on the many wonderful silent and live auction items. Be a donor in the reverse auction, which will be our largest source of income for the evening. If you itemize your deductions, your donation will be fully deductible.

Second, make your gift now. Write out your check to the Society and either mail it to, or stop by, the Port Exploreum, 118 N. Franklin St. Or click here to visit our website to donate now; it’s a quick and easy way to help. And while you are on the website, buy your tickets to the November 3 Gala.

Third, see your generosity in action. If you are 70½ years old or older, you can take advantage of a simple way to benefit the Historical Society and receive tax benefits in return. You can give up to $100,000 from your IRA directly to a qualified nonprofit, such our Historical Society, without having to pay income taxes on the money.

This law no longer has an expiration date, so you are free to make annual gifts to the Historical Society this year and well into the future.

Your gift will be put to use today, allowing you to see the difference your donation is making for our programming, research, restoration and preservation. Why consider this type of gift? You pay no income taxes on the gift. The direct distribution is not reported as income to you so it effectively is 100% “tax deductible” whether you itemize deductions or not.

If you have not yet taken your required minimum distribution for the year, your IRA charitable rollover gift can satisfy all or part of that requirement.

Fourth, gift by making a beneficiary designation. Passionate about supporting the Historical Society and its work even after your lifetime? It's not only possible, it's easy to do with a beneficiary designation with the Historical Society. Just name the Society as a beneficiary of all or a portion of your retirement plan assets, life insurance policy, annuity or bank account. You simply fill out a form that is entirely separate from your life insurance policy, annuity or bank account. You make your gift by making a beneficiary designation.

Not only is it an easy way to give, but also it's also flexible—you aren't locked into the choices you make to-day. You can review and adjust beneficiary designations anytime you want.

Talk to your financial or legal advisor to learn which assets will trigger taxable income when paid to a beneficiary. Because the Historical Society is tax exempt, the entire amount paid through the beneficiary designation will benefit the Society.

If you have questions regarding any of these four tax-saving ideas to help the Society, please contact me at billmoren65@gmail.com or 262-573-3130.

Bill Moren
Board Director & Development Committee Chair
The City and Town of Port Washington sent 230 men and women to serve overseas in 1917 and 1918. Many enlisted or were drafted at the same time and served together in the same company. A registration of eligible men and the draft were instituted for the first time, and men ages 18-45 were eligible for the draft. Contingents of servicemen left regularly from the Grand Avenue railroad station after having had their photographs taken on the Court House steps.

Local newspapers contained stories of those leaving, and letters received from overseas were often printed in the newspapers.

There was a great deal of interest in the war and a great deal of local involvement. Items were sewn and knit, monies were raised for war bond drives, gardens were utilized, and foods were voluntarily rationed in order to support the troops. Local businessmen formed a Home Guard unit which lent protection to the community. On some level, everyone was involved in the war effort. It is understandable that the end of the war would be enthusiastically welcomed.

According to The Port Washington Star newspaper of November 16, 1918, an enthusiastic celebration heralded the end of the war. City residents were awakened at 2:00 am on November 11, 1918, to the sound of city whistles. At 6:00 am, industrial whistles and church bells awakened the city and the celebrations began. On the order of Mayor Kaiser, all stores, factories and schools in the city closed in the afternoon for a city-wide celebration.

At 2:00 pm a parade formed at the Public High School grounds (site of the former Wisconsin Street School and present police department). It was successful beyond expectations. The parade included marshals on horseback, local bands, city and county officials, Boy Scouts, and Red Cross members that had worked tirelessly to gather supplies and funds to support the troops overseas. There were school children and mothers with flags. Home Guard members, who had taken over protection of the home front when National Guard troops shipped out, marched down city streets in their khaki uniforms. Flag-waving citizens joined the mile-long procession.

The group marched east on Pier Street, south on Franklin Street and west on Grand Avenue, winding their way through neighborhoods along Grand Avenue, Milwaukee Street, Chestnut Street, Park Street, and returning on Grand Avenue and Franklin Street, back to the High School park on Wisconsin Street.

Anything that could make a noise was put to use in the celebration. The crowds along the streets joined in with car horns and instruments. Those who had none joined in with their singing voices. There were banners proclaiming victory and support of the troops. Four boys from the raincoat factory carried an effigy of the German Kaiser in a coffin decorated with a cabbage head and beet plants.

“It was an outburst of great joy felt by the people on the close of the greatest war in the world’s history, and everyone let their vent of feelings have full sway at rejoicing.”

And half a world away, celebrations were occurring in the villages of France and Luxembourg. From his 1919 book, From Army Camps and Battlefields, Chaplain Gustav Stearns related in a letter home:

(Continued on page 7)
We are out in the country quite a distance from a large city… The Armistice was signed early in the morning although the news did not reach us until afternoon, about 4 o’clock. One of the boys said to me, ‘Listen Chaplain, the village bells are ringing.’… When I reached the village, the inhabitants were excitedly decorating all the houses with flags, and the children were singing and dancing in the streets. “…It was about 4 o’clock in the evening, and quite dark when we (troops stationed near the village of Saint Parize, France) started off for the village. Our bugle corps and fife and drum were in the lead. Next was the color guard carrying both the French and American flags; after that came our commanding officer, … Officers of Staff, …convalescent soldiers. Those of us in the first set of fours used electric flashlights which were turned on the flags…. The bugle corps and fife and drum… furnished inspiring music…. The boys also sang marching songs… Our column stretched along for a distance that would correspond to many city blocks. “….This is a typical ancient village… with no railroad, electric lights, street lights or anything modern… The people were excitedly swinging candle lanterns, and while the tears were streaming down their faces, they kept shouting and singing the three sentences: Fin la guerre! (The war is finished!) Vive l’Amerique! (Long live America!) Vive la France! (Long live France!)”

Felix Werking was a soldier in Company C of the 7th Regiment Engineers in World War 1 and is a major focus of the Resource Center’s World War 1 exhibit.

Items donated in 2015, including Felix’s doughboy hat, are displayed as part of the exhibit. Prior to the opening of the exhibit, relatives of the Werking family were contacted and invited to view the exhibit and the role that Felix plays in our presentation of WW1 and the men and women of Port Washington. We were assured that they would spread word of the exhibit to other members of the family.

It was a very pleasant surprise when a grandson of Felix and his wife from Colorado visited on a recent Friday afternoon. Our volunteer that afternoon was able to share the exhibit with them. They were very pleased with the exhibit and offered to send more items from Felix’s service time. Therefore, when two large boxes from Colorado arrived on September 19, it was an exciting time. These items include letters and postcards, a WW1 soldier’s songbook, a soldier’s mending kit, patches, service ribbons, a framed photograph of Company C, photographs, spats, personal notebooks, the flag that lay across Felix’s casket and bullet casings from his funeral. All these are such a treasure!

Also donated were a shoemaker’s tree and various size lasts, plus information about Felix’s grandfather, a shoemaker who emigrated from Prussia in 1851 and settled in the Port Washington area in 1892.

These items will be catalogued and displayed in the near future. Please look forward to enjoying them in 2019.
FLOODS THROUGH THE DECADES

Floods on the U.S. West Coast, East Coast, in the South and in the Midwest in 2018 brought much rain and water to many of the regions here and in other parts of the world. Yes, Port Washington even experienced heavy rains in a short period of time that caused flooding in our fair city of seven hills.

The archives in the Research Center contain much information about past floods in Port Washington beginning in 1865 when ‘the great flood’ swept away the sawmill built in 1847 by Harvey and S. A. Moore at a dam that was created for power to operate the mill. The terrain surrounding Port Washington with its hills, bluffs and ravines present natural routes for water to reach Lake Michigan with Sauk Creek the major thoroughfare.

The most talked about flood is the one of August 1924 when Sauk Creek overflowed its banks after a heavy rainfall dropped six inches of rain in one hour. The water washed the fish shanties off of their foundations and some into the harbor. Residential homes were damaged as well as railroad tracks and large oil storage tanks, to name a few. The Wisconsin Street Bridge was washed out. The west end of the harbor was completely gone. It required thousands of cubic feet of earth to refill. The deluge of raging water was so strong that it pounded against the solid steel interurban train bridge just south of Grand Avenue with such force that it was bent and rendered unusable.

It was at that time that Evelyn Smith created the perch fish sandwich and Smith Bros. Restaurant had its beginning.

The flood of June 1996 surpassed or equaled the damage of the 1924 flood. This flood was brought on by seven inches of rain in seven hours and caused millions of dollars in damage to homes, businesses and the infrastructure of the city. The beaches and bluffs were scarred with erosion and debris.

Another June flood in 2008 caused damage to several areas in Port. The Valley Creek alongside the bike path overflowed its banks. The debris-filled water rushed into the underground parking area of the Lighthouse condominiums on Lake Street in Port Washington, damaging the cars and affecting the elevator to the 10-story condo.

Now, in August, 2018, nine inches of rain that fell in 4 – 6 hours along with power outages played havoc throughout the city of Port Washington and the surrounding area. Hardest hit was the perennial north Spring Street. The retention pond at the west end of Larabee Street was not enough to prevent the north Spring Street area residents from having their homes ruined by the raging flood water. These residents suffered damage from floods for decades with no help in sight.

Franklin Street from the north to the south is a natural water way toward the buildings on the southernmost end that endured the most water damage. The basement level at the Port Exploreum accumulated 1-½ feet of water that caused over $125,000 damage. The Anchor Inn at the Holiday Inn had to be closed for repairs due to water and sewage damage. It won’t be open for months.

Again, as in 1996, city crews drove along the streets picking up water-damaged materials from homes that were affected by flooded basements, most caused by power outages and sump pump failures.

Mary Flierl, Research Volunteer
PWHS SUMMER EVENTS ENJOYED BY ALL

Several summer events hosted by the Port Historical Society included Night at the Light, Fireworks on the Deck and the Quarterly Meeting.

Port Washington Historical Society’s Mission Statement:

To create opportunities for inspirational discovery through preservation, education and exploration of the Port Washington area’s history and its maritime environment with sustainable programs that honor the past while looking to the future.
DONATIONS & MEMORIALS

SOCIETY DONATIONS
Charlotte M. Ayers
Leroy Bley
James Fowler
Erik and Carol Moeser
Michael and Diane Pike
New Port Shores - John Weinrich
Paul and Judith Trump

LEGACY SOCIETY

NIGHT AT THE LIGHT
GOLD SPONSOR
John and Vici Dohrwardt
Shirli Flack
Jeff and Rose Morgan
Port Washington State Bank

SILVER SPONSOR
Eric Von Schledorn
Umansky Motors

BRONZE SPONSOR
Wayne and Ann Chrusciel
Bill and Pat Moren

DONATIONS
Todd and Kathie Gordon (Band)
Jim and Mary Jo Pauly
JoEllen Schlereth

MEMORIALS
In Memory of Joan Bley
Eric and Jackie Oleson
Geri Zehren
In Memory of Betty Didier
Eric and Jackie Oleson
Geri Zehren

SOCIETY IN KIND DONATIONS
Kendall Packaging Corp.

PORT EXPLOREUM IN KIND DONATIONS
Bill and Pat Moren

BOOKS/PAPERS/PAMPHLETS/ABSTRACTS/MAPS
Charlotte Barnich Arendt
Jodi Dickmann
Julie Hanley
Judy Krier
Larry and Gloria Larson
Linda Nenn
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PAINTINGS

FURNITURE/TOYS
Randy and Beth Tetzlaff

CD/DVD/VIDEO/RECORDS/TAPES

BUSINESS ARTIFACTS
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PHOTOS AND NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS/PRINTS/POSTERS/POSTCARDS
Charlotte Barnich Arendt
Ned Bartelt
Jodi Dickmann
Julie Hanley
Linda Nenn
Annie Tautges
Randy Weyker

ANTIQUE METAL & WOOD/GLASS/FABRIC
Julie Hanley
Wayne and Margaret Hoffmann
Jean Molitor Jeske
Jason Shelander
Randy Weyker

November 3rd:
Important Date to Remember

Join us for a fun filled evening enjoying scrumptious food, complimentary wine and beer, entertainment, silent auction, and voice auction while supporting the Historical Society at The Family Farm Event Loft in Grafton.

Return your RSVP for the Gala today, or for information call 262-284-2406 or visit our website at www.portexploreum.com

WINTER HOURS

Port Exploreum
Effective December 1
Open Monday & Thursday - Sunday 10am - 4pm
Closed Tuesday and Wednesday

Resource Center
Hours change October 29
Mondays and Thursdays 1-4 pm

Light Station Museum
Closes for the Season
Monday, October 15th
Port Washington Historical Society  
Legacy Society  
Confidential Membership Form

The PWHS Legacy Society has been established as a way to honor and recognize those who have made a planned gift to the Port Washington Historical Society as a beneficiary in their will or trust, retirement account, charitable gift annuity or charitable trust, or life insurance policy.

Please fill out this form and return it to the PWHS office to confirm your membership. The information you provide will be held in strictest confidence.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE RECOGNIZED IN THE LEGACY SOCIETY:

NAME (S):__________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

ADDRESS:_____________________________________________________________________________

PHONE/EMAIL:________________________________________________________________________

___ I/WE WISH TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS

HOW HAVE YOU INCLUDED THE PORT WASHINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY IN YOUR PLANS:

___ BEQUEST IN MY/OUR WILL

___ CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUST (CRT) OR CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY (CGA)

___ IRA BENEFICIARY

___ LIFE INSURANCE BENEFICIARY

___ REAL ESTATE

___ STOCK

___ OTHER_____________________________________________

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PWHS SHOULD KNOW:

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

The current value of the gift is approximately (optional) $__________________

Signature:_________________________________________ Date:_____________________

Spouse’s Signature (If joint will):________________________________ Date:_____________________

Please return to:

PWHS Legacy Society  P.O. Box 491 Port Washington, WI  53074
Upcoming Events

ANNAL MEETING
Wednesday, October 17, 7 pm
Port Washington State Bank’s Lakeview Room
Wilson House, 100 East Main Street, Port Washington

Classic Movie Night
Friday, Oct. 12, 6 pm, Port Exploreum

Merry Go Fish - Free Day
Sunday, Oct. 14, Port Exploreum

PWHS Annual Gala
Saturday, November 3, 5-9 pm
The Family Farm Event Loft, Grafton

Classic Movie Night
Friday, Nov. 9, 6 pm, Port Exploreum

Exploreum Reserved for Holiday Party
Saturday, Dec. 1, 4-8 pm, Port Exploreum

Exploreum Reserved for Holiday Party
Saturday, December 15, Port Exploreum

Classic Movie Night
Friday, Dec. 14, 6 pm, Port Exploreum

Quarterly Program
Saturday, January 19, Wilson House

For a complete list of PWHS events, click here to visit:
www.facebook.com/
PortWashingtonHistoricalSociety
or
www.portexploreum.com/calendar/