



**MUKWONAGO  
REDBRICK  
MUSEUM**

The Mukwonago Historical Society  
**TRADING POST**  
News & Events • May 2024

**2024 Calendar\***

Tours 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays June-Sep

June 9 & 23 – Tours & Speaker  
July 14 & 28 – Tours & Speaker  
Aug 11 & 25 – Tours & Speaker  
Sep 8 & 22 – Tours & Speaker  
Sep 21 – Walk-Thru Tours &  
Ice Cream Social (Sat)

\*Oct 12 – Victorian Tea

Dec 7 – Walk-Thru Tours (Sat)

See pp. 5 & 9 for 2024 Speakers

\*Check website or Facebook for updates

**Hours & Location**

Open the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday  
June - September  
1:00-4:00pm

**Mukwonago Red Brick Museum**  
Highways 83 & ES  
103 Main Street  
Mukwonago, WI 53149  
(262) 363-6413  
mukwonagohistoricalsociety.org  
**Facebook:**  
Mukwonago Red Brick Museum

**Inside This Issue**

- Native American Room – 1-2
- Mukwonago Advertising – 1
- President's Message – 2-3
- Photo Archives – 3-4
- Sunday Speaker Series – 5-6
- Village Hall Display Case – 6
- Group Tours – 7
- Victorian Tea – 8
- Community Outreach – 9
- Board, Committees - 10

**HOW CAN YOU HELP US PRESERVE & SHARE  
NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY IN &  
AROUND MUKWONAGO?**

See Newsletter Insert &/or p. 2 for details...

**NATIVE AMERICAN ROOM REDESIGN**

*Creating a more engaging experience through new interpretive panels and collection display improvements.*

If you've been to the Native American Room lately, you may have noticed the floor tiles, installed over 30 years ago, had seen better days. The Village of Mukwonago, owners of Sewall Andrew's house now museum - the first brick house in Waukesha County - agreed it was time for a new floor. The museum volunteers have been working nonstop since February: carefully packing up the collections; moving furniture within the museum

to make room for the existing cases staying; moving out the cases being retired (thanks to Assistant Coach & History teacher Mr. Strickler & Football Team volunteers); *Continued on page 2*



Mr. Strickler and MHS Football Volunteer Movers

**Priceless Mukwonago Advertising**

Showcased in one of our lobby displays is a large circa 1900 Postal Service rules list surrounded by local business advertising. The hand-drawn artwork was expertly executed in colored ink. An example of one of the rules is "*Rowdiness will not be tolerated in this Office*" in the center under a regal eagle. Around the perimeter are 10 advertisements in matching scrolls and lovely calligraphy font

including Citizen's Bank, Trost Furniture, Wanner & Lobdell Gen'l Store, and a tailor, blacksmith, hotel, barber, horse furnishings and a meat market. Stop in to see the incredible artistic detail! ■



# NATIVE AMERICAN ROOM REDESIGN

*Continued from Page 1*

researching options for new cases; having meetings and coordinating all the tasks required to pull this off before our June 9 Grand Re-Opening.

In addition to new flooring & cases, new interpretive panels have been researched & produced to enhance learning by providing an interesting historical and biographical self-navigating experience. It's almost like Mukwonago's own mini-Smithsonian due to the variety of artifacts and the long tribal cultures and collector histories presented. The three collections displayed are the following:

**Arthur Grutzmacher (1967):** Local resident, dealer, tribal friend & museum benefactor. Arrowheads, stone artifacts (owned by the Mukwonago Community Library).

**Charles Schoewe (1970):** Waukesha County resident; adopted son of tribal leader; archaeologist. Moccasins, baskets, pottery, pipes from Wisconsin and beyond.

**William Kirkby (1982):** Subarctic Canadian missionary from 1850's. Beadwork; moccasins, gloves, belts.

Can you help us meet our goal of raising \$60,000 to fund this big renovation project? We appreciate the community's support for the preservation of American Indian history through the conservation and display of these 3 amazing collections! ■



***Come take a tour this season & see our new hexagonal case to be filled with local & Wisconsin tribal artifacts!***



*Visit our website and click the **DONATE** button on our website's home page or on our Facebook page:*

**[www.mukwonagohistoricalsociety.org](http://www.mukwonagohistoricalsociety.org) or  
Facebook: Mukwonago Red Brick Museum**



***Henry Hecker – December 2023***

For the Red Brick Museum and the volunteers of the Mukwonago Historical Society, 2023 has been a transformational year. Our strategic plan has several elements:

- **Increase our Active Membership.** We added at least six new members that are contributing to our docent "bench strength" and event planning.
- **Expand Tour Days.** More active members allow us to be open more dates and increase our reach into the community and beyond.
- **Document our Policies and Processes.** Our Bylaws have been redrafted to reflect several updates. An accessioning process is being developed to better document physical donations to the museum collection. Our docent manuals were updated, a major undertaking. A new committee will work to make our membership renewal and recruitment process sustainable.
- **Expand our offerings to the public.** Spurred by positive guest feedback in 2022 to local history presentations, we added a history topic to every open date in 2023. These events increased visitor traffic significantly and several visitors attended multiple events confirming there is now "always something new that's old at the Red Brick Museum." →

Continued from Page 2

- **Document Oral Histories.** Our alliance with WFAQ 101.3 FM radio has created more than 120 different segments of oral history, dubbed “Memories of Mukwonago” (MoM). Played randomly on 101.3 FM WFAQ and archived on our website, the public can hear stories of life in Mukwonago dating back as early as the 1860’s.
- **Enhance Sensory Experience.** QR codes were added to several items in our collection to allow our visitors to learn much more about these artifacts on their iPhone. We added music to the Native American room. Finally, in a major initiative, the complete renovation of our Native American room is in progress for a more robust educational experience and enhanced cultural sensitivity to contemporary tribes.

It is important to note that we touched the lives of approximately 1000 members of the public in 2023. This count consists of visitors to our open dates, special events and presentations to three outside audiences. If that number does not impress, another metric should ... and that is the number of volunteer hours our team devoted to the museum in the last year, 2500+ hours!!! This is a conservative estimate of the time spent creating new displays, attending regular board meetings, researching presentations, guiding tours, gardening, hosting the Ice Cream Social and Victorian Tea, producing MoM’s and PSA’s,

housekeeping, social media engagement, meeting with the Village and Library Boards. That is all “free time” that our devoted volunteers give to this community and surrounding area. Surprisingly, a review of our visitor data shows that almost 50 percent of our visitors are from outside the Village and hail from Waukesha, Milwaukee, Walworth, and Racine counties.

These impressive accomplishments bring me to talk about funding. These activities all cost money. After more than fifty years of operating with a “handshake” agreement with the Village, the Village has decided in 2023 that a more formal lease agreement with the Mukwonago Historical Society is necessary going forward. This agreement was recently finalized, resulting in the Mukwonago Historical Society bearing more of the costs of operating the museum once subsidized by the Village. This change, coupled with the aggressive plans to renovate the Native American room, means that the Mukwonago Historical Society must take fundraising to a much higher level. Therefore, you will see calls to action starting in 2024 to improve our multimedia messaging for membership dues, continuous giving, donor special events, and a special funding campaign for the Native American room. Already we are seeing donors respond and started receiving donations in the last two months of 2023. What an inspirational kickoff! ■



### **Bob Bartelt – November 2023**

Well over four score and 7 weeks ago, a couple of our intrepid members (nicknamed “The Sleuths”) undertook the rather daunting task of organizing and digitalizing our large archive of old photographs. Conservatively, there are 1200 to 1500, some dating back to the 19th century, all the way through to the more “modern” era, dating from the 1970s and 1980s.

The difficulty is that the majority of the photographs have sparse or nonexistent accompanying identification as to who or what is depicted. Also, with a relatively few exceptions, they were randomly stored in multiple files, boxes, or envelopes

with no apparent relationship between each or any of the individual photos in the group.

Nevertheless, a multistep plan and process was developed and tweaked as the Sleuths went along.

First, the photos were sorted into archival boxes by broad categories, depending on what is depicted on each, e.g., “People,” “Buildings and Businesses,” “Events,” “Street Scenes,” “Schools/Education,” etc.

Second, taking each broad category at a time, every individual photo was carefully examined and an effort made to identify the persons, places, scenes, buildings, and events depicted

Continued from Page 3

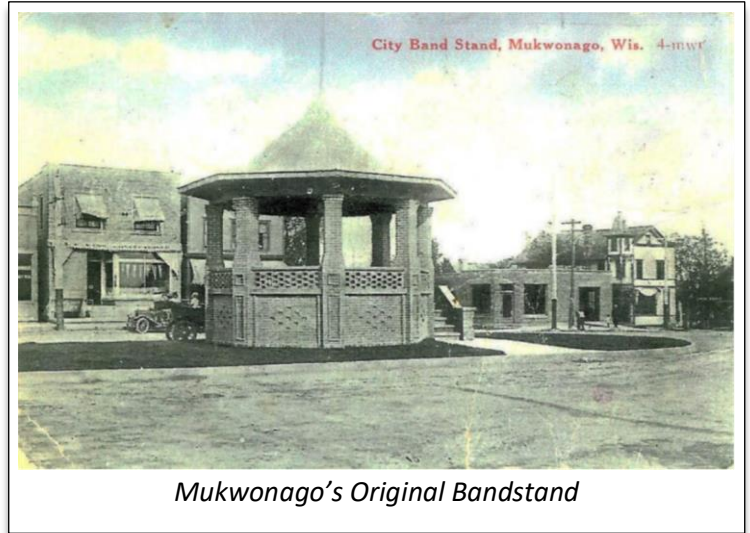
and, if possible, the approximate date or era from which the photo dates. In order to accomplish this, some long-time residents of the Mukwonago area were (and will be) enlisted to help with the identification. A unique identifying number is assigned to each photograph and it, along with whatever information is ascertained about it, is recorded in a line of a separate spreadsheet page for each category.


Third, the photos are scanned which creates a digital copy of each photo with excellent resolution, limited only by the quality of the original photo itself. Each photo's identifying number is recorded in the scanning process and becomes automatically sorted by that number within the category to which the photo was assigned. The digital copy of a photo can then be found by referencing its number on the spreadsheet and the description of the photo can be found for the digital copy by referencing back to the particular page and line of the spreadsheet on which that number appears.

The last step in the process is to develop an overall index for the photos which will be multi-layered so that one can view, reference, and retrieve any or all photos that relate to a key word or theme.

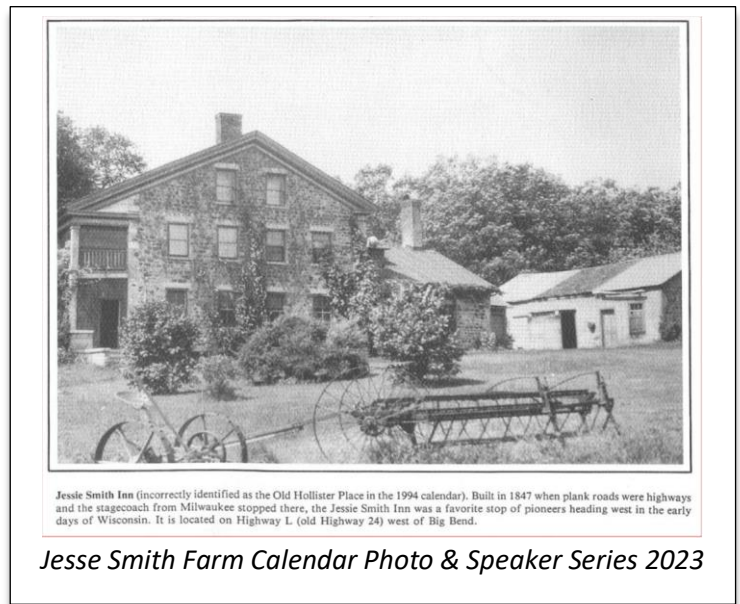
Difficulties encountered along the way in this process included the wide variety of the physical size of the photos, the discovery of multiple copies of the same photos from different caches or groups of photos, etc. Most frustrating was that each time our Sleuths would begin to see the proverbial "light at the end of the tunnel," that is, thinking they were near the end of sorting and categorizing, another box or folder of photos would be pulled out of storage.

At this point, The Sleuths have essentially finished with steps one and two. Some scanning of a few hundred photos has also been completed, but there are many more yet to do. Luckily, the surface size of the scanner is large enough to allow for scanning of multiple photos in one "pass," the actual number per "pass" that can be accommodated depends on the size of each photo. ■





*Arthur  
Grutzmacher:  
Museum  
Benefactor,  
Artifact  
Collector,  
Dealer,  
Photographer,  
Musician,  
Speaker Series  
2023*





Back in the 2022 season, historic figures visited the museum and shared their experiences of days gone by. In 2023, featured speakers discussed a wide variety of topics in our welcome room on tour days. Eerie glow-in-the-dark uranium glass. The history of Mukwonago's Railroad. The crazy, fascinating story of the travelling couple who sold quack meds and put on wild west shows (their shooting wasn't always sharp!). Area heroes and landmarks. We had a lot of new visitors from outside Mukwonago as well as many regulars who came just for the presentations. We have a slate of new topics for the 2024 season – see Page 9 for a full list of dates & topics. If you want to learn more about Mukwonago's past, be sure to check our website and Facebook for schedule updates. ■



*Uranium Glass Speaker Series 2023*

## 2024 Presentations

Native American Room Re-Opening &  
"Indigenous Peoples of SE Wisconsin"

"Martin Field: Pioneer Judge"

"Bicycles Made in Mukwonago"

"History of Phantom Lake YMCA"

"The Craig Melon of Mukwonago"

"Albert Grutzmacher:  
Master Builder"

"Reminisces of a Long Time Resident"

"Life of Charlie Dewey"

## 2023 Presentations

"The Lost Grutzmacher Photos"

"Glow in the Dark: Uranium Glass"

"William Stickles: Woodsman,  
Marksman, Civil War Union Soldier"

"Jesse Smith Stagecoach Inn - 1847"

"Mukwonago and the Railroad"

"19<sup>th</sup> Century Immigrant  
Potters of Wisconsin"

"The Medicine Show  
Came to Mukwonago"

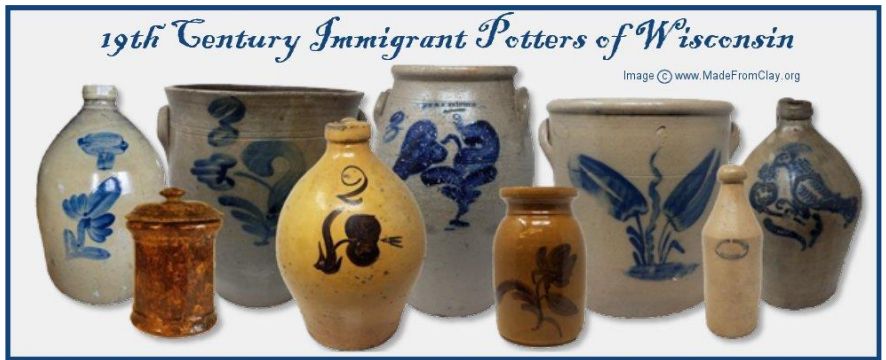
*See next page for more 2023 Speaker Postings →*

# Sunday Speaker Series

2023 Speaker Postings Continued from Page 5



### William Stickles: Woodsman, Marksman, Civil War Hero



### 19th Century Immigrant Potters of Wisconsin

Image © www.MadeFromClay.org

# Mukwonago Village Hall Display Case

The museum brings history to you in multiple ways! Our previous display case honored the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Women's Suffrage by highlighting area women instrumental in winning women's right to vote. The new display highlights many ways the museum enriches our community both within and outside the red brick walls. ■

### Wisconsin Women's Suffrage Contributions



### Mukwonago Red Brick Museum's Outreach





Know a school, social or business group who'd like to visit the museum? We can schedule private guided group tours any time of the week and year by appointment. The Mukwonago Historical Society can be contacted via email ([president@mukwonagohistoricalsociety.org](mailto:president@mukwonagohistoricalsociety.org)) to arrange a date for special group tours. Special tours are dependent upon the availability of our volunteer docents but we are usually able to accommodate groups of ten or more with enough advance notice. A moderate admission is required for appointment tours. See the list below for the groups we hosted in 2023. ■

**Museum Group Tours**

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Elementary, Junior, High School  
Classes & Clubs

Home School Groups

Scout Troops

Youth & Adult  
Church & Social Clubs

Book Clubs

Businesses & Employee Groups

Family Reunions

- 2023 GROUP TOURS**
- JUNE 3:** MHS History Club
  - JUNE 12:** Page Turners Book Club
  - JULY 7:** Grutzmacher Descendants
  - AUGUST 9:** Friendship Force Milw.
  - NOVEMBER 2:** Clarendon – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade
  - NOVEMBER 2:** MHS Local History Class
  - DECEMBER 4:** Cub Scout Pack 152
  - DECEMBER 8:** Rolling Hills – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

Join us for a Group Tour – we'd love to host YOUR group!





Heeding the health warnings of government agencies, the Victorian Tea was regrettably postponed in 2020, 2021 and 2022. We came back with a BANG in 2023! The team of eight "museum ladies" got together months early to plan a mouth-watering selection of savories and sweets and of course a wide variety of green, white, black and herbal teas. The 2023 theme was "Victorian Quilts" and our resident crafty genius Kathy H. came up with quilt-themed centerpieces using vintage toy tea sets donated by Diane H. and hand-made quilt wine glass coasters - each attendee got to take one home.

Interesting tidbits about our 20 guests were compiled by Kathy H. who dressed up as Suffragette Alura Collins Hollister: only 1 attendee was from Mukwonago and the farthest came from Rubicon. Eight were repeat attendees. The leading referral method was Kathy H. with 9. Five door prizes were given away including a stunning live floral centerpiece from Americana Flower Station in Mukwonago and 4 handmade kitchen sets featuring a cozy, scrubbie and quilt coasters. The inaugural Silent Auction and sales of vintage toy tea sets successfully raised some extra funds for our huge Native American room renovation in progress

## Victorian Tea Programs

2013: Hats

2014: Shoes & Purses

2015: Women's Secrets

2016: Parlor Pastimes

2017: Antique Valentines

2018: Doll Collection

2019: Vintage Advertising

2023: Victorian Quilts

This year's featured guest presenter was Carol Pilgrim who has amassed a large collection of spectacular quilts with accompanying research on both the quilt characteristics and in many cases, the quilt-maker. Carol laid out her quilts flat in reverse order on a large table in our parlor and 2 teams of 2 quilt-handlers held up each quilt as Carol pointed out each one's unique characteristics. At the end of the presentation, guests were invited to view the magnificently detailed "Crazy Quilt" donated by the Kingston family which adorns the bed in the Sawyer Master Bedroom - with Carol pointing out some of its interesting features. ■



*Victorian Tea Volunteers and Quilt Presenter Carol Pilgrim*



*Delicious food and desserts for the Victorian Tea Guests*





# COMMUNITY OUTREACH



**WINDY Octoberfest – Native American Exhibit & Pretzel Sale at the new Phantom Junction Stage**



**Listen to "Memories of Mukwonago" Oral Histories on WFAQ 101.3 FM or on our website's "ORAL HISTORIES"**

Visitors in 2023 who signed our guest book had the following geographic location distribution:

Mukwonago	39%
Out of Town	55%
Out of State	5%
International	1%



[mukwonagohistoricalsociety.org](http://mukwonagohistoricalsociety.org)  
**2024 Events Schedule\***

*Open Second & Fourth Sundays*

## June

- 9 Museum Tours 1-4pm**  
*Grand Re-Opening - Native American Room  
"Indigenous Peoples of SE Wisconsin"*
- 23 Museum Tours 1-4pm**  
*"Life of Martin Field: Pioneer Judge"*

## July

- 14 Museum Tours 1-4pm**  
*"Bicycles Made in Mukwonago"*
- 28 Museum Tours 1-4pm**  
*"History of the Phantom Lake YMCA"*

## August

- 11 Museum Tours 1-4pm**  
*"The Craig Melon of Mukwonago"*
- 25 Museum Tours 1-4pm**  
*"Albert Grutzmacher: Master Builder"*

## September

- 8 Museum Tours 1-4pm**  
*"Reminiscences of a Long Time Resident"*
- 21 Walk-Thru Tours 11-2pm (Saturday)**  
**Ice Cream Social @Museum**
- 22 Museum Tours 1-4pm**  
*"Life of Charlie Dewey"*

## October

- 12\* Victorian Tea 1pm – *prepurchase req'd***

## December

- 7 Walk-Thru Tours  
4-9pm (Saturday)**

\* See Facebook & website for updates

Schedule updated 04/18/2024



Mukwonago Historical Society  
 Mukwonago Red Brick Museum  
 103 Main Street  
 Mukwonago, WI 53149

**WE'D LOVE TO HAVE YOU TO JOIN US!**  
 Community volunteers exclusively staff the museum – a 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit organization. Consider joining us as a member &/or volunteer to share our love of history! Gardeners needed too. Visit our website and click on "GET INVOLVED" at the top to find out more.

## The Mukwonago Historical Society **BOARD & COMMITTEES**

Board of Directors	Committees, Activities, Associations	
<p><b>President</b>                      Henry Hecker                      president@mukwonagohistoricalsociety.org</p> <p><b>Vice President</b>                      Jeff Vanevenhoven</p> <p><b>Secretary</b>                      Nic Lo</p> <p><b>Treasurer</b>                      Robert Bartelt</p> <p><b>Board of Directors</b>                      Robin Posekany-Bopp                      Janine Coley                      Donna Whalen                      Penny Honetor                      Diane Hecker                      Ron Reinke</p>	<p><b>Community Outreach</b>                      Henry Hecker</p> <p><b>American Indian Room</b>                      Jeff Vanevenhoven                      Robin Posekany-Bopp</p> <p><b>Volunteer &amp; Docent</b>                      Diane Hecker</p> <p><b>Bylaws</b>                      Donna Whalen</p> <p><b>Gardening</b>                      Shared</p> <p><b>Newsletter Editor</b>                      Rotating <i>(Version F.3)</i></p> <p><b>Website</b>                      Four Summits Web Services</p>	<p><b>Membership Committee</b>                      Janine Coley, Kathy Hansen, Lynn Carlson</p> <p><b>Digital Preservation</b>                      Bob Bartelt, Ron Reinke</p> <p><b><u>Historical Society Affiliations</u></b>  <b>Wisconsin Historical Society/Museum</b>  <a href="http://www.wisconsinhistory.org">www.wisconsinhistory.org</a>  <b>Waukesha Historical Society/Museum</b>  <a href="http://www.waukeshacountymuseum.org">www.waukeshacountymuseum.org</a>  <b><u>Mukwonago Historical Society &amp; Mukwonago Red Brick Museum</u></b>  <b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.mukwonagohistoricalsociety.org">www.mukwonagohistoricalsociety.org</a>  <b>Facebook:</b> Mukwonago Red Brick Museum  <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:president@mukwonagohistoricalsociety.org">president@mukwonagohistoricalsociety.org</a>  <b>Phone:</b> (262) 363-6413  <b>Mailing Address:</b> P.O. Box 392, Mukwonago, WI 53149</p>