

By 1902, 32 states had imposed color constraints on margarine. Vermont, New Hampshire, and South Dakota all passed laws demanding that margarine be dyed an offputting pink; other states proposed it be colored red, brown, or black.

The "pink laws" were overturned by the Supreme Court (on the grounds that it's illegal to enforce the adulteration of food) but the ban on yellow margarine remained.

Eleanor Roosevelt promoted margarine on a television commercial in 1959.

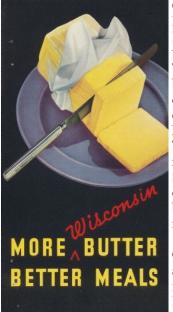


The Researcher

The Newsletter of the Sheboygan County Historical Research Center

Volume XXVII Number 3 February 2017

When Bootleggers Smuggled Margarine



On Wednesday, December 7, 1966, the Sheboygan Press ran a story entitled "Dairyland's Housewife Bootleggers". Great title, but it's probably not what you think.

The story goes on, "There's a little old lady from Sheboygan who is a bootlegger. Every six months she drives 100 miles south on Highway 41, crosses the Wisconsin border into Illinois, stops at a roadside stand, and has a large brown box put into the trunk of her car. Then she drives home. Her contraband: Yellow oleomargarine."

She was part of a group of Badger-state residents who openly flouted state law, a law that made it illegal to buy or sell colored oleo, a product vociferously denounced by dairy farmers as axle grease.

Our beloved butter had no competition until 1869, when

a French chemist patented a lower priced spread made

from beef tallow. Called oleomargarine per its Latin roots, it was hoped the lower classes of humanity and the military would benefit from a lower priced product, though truth be told, neither group liked it.

Margarine arrived in the United States in the 1870s, praised by the poor, and villified by dairy farmers. Within the next decade thirty-seven companies in the United States began to manufacture margarine.

Margarine and butter were fightin' words, especially in Wisconsin, culminating in the Oleo Wars. For nearly a century after the newspapers were full of legislative action dealing with the spreadable duo.

Passion ran so high from the dairy industry



Continued on page 3

The Sheboygan County Historical Research Center is located at 518 Water Street in Sheboygan Falls.

Open Tuesday through Friday, 9:00am – 4:00pm and Saturdays from 8:30am to 12:00 noon.

Closed February 20, 2017 through March 4, 2017 for the archiving.

Phone: 920-467-4667

E-mail: research@schrc.org

Website: schrc.org

The Researcher is the official newsletter of the Sheboygan County
Historical Research
Center, 518 Water Street,
Sheboygan Falls,
Wisconsin.

It is published six times per year in August, October, December, February, April and June.

The Research Center is the local history archive for Sheboygan County and areas surrounding the county. It is a repository for paper records of all kinds.

The Research Center is a sister organization to the Sheboygan County Historical Society and Museum which collects the artifacts of the county.

If you file it, it comes to the Research Center.

If you dust it, it goes to the Historical Society & Museum.

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Check out schrc.org

Website updates weekly Go to History News under Collections

Great Stuff!!

Go Paperless. Receive *The Researcher* via email. Save paper. Save postage and receive a more colorful newsletter. Contact Katie at research@schrc.org to sign up now. Catch us on Facebook– Updates daily.

Don't miss Sheboygan County History column in the Saturday *Sheboygan Press* or online Friday through Sunday each week.

The Elkhart Lake Historical Society is looking for information and photos of the miniature train that once ran at the Elkhart Lake park. If you have any info contact the Research Center at 920.467.4667. We can copy anything. You need not donate originals. Thanks for your help.

Closed for Archiving

The Research Center will be closed to researchers from Monday, February 20, 2017 through March 4, 2017 for the archiving. We'll be working on photos again for these two weeks.



Sheboygan Falls - Winter

Burton Leavens, Sheboygan Falls' unofficial photographer, seen here as a child, skating on a portion of the lagoon off the Sheboygan River behind the R.H. Thomas Lumber Company.

The Henry homestead is seen in the background. This about where City Hall and Wells Fargo Bank is today, Monroe and Buffalo Streets in Sheboygan Falls.



Green Butter Day, I'm Dyeing to Meet You was a protest in favor of butter. The editor of the paper in Sauk City launched a protest and said, 'Rather than eat your damned yellow oleo, we're going to dye this vat of a ton of butter green' ... they did, and they sold out by mid-day. And the entire issue of that week's paper was printed in green ink.

crite shall not see the brooks of honey and butter."

Butter reigned supreme until the poverty of the Depression and the butter shortages of World War II forced a change; margarine inevitably began to bypass butter in sales.

Price was one factor, but sales also rallied because of improvements to its recipe and looks; hydrogenated vegetable oils replaced animal fat, and by a clever side-step of the yellow ban in which white margarine was sold with a capsule of yellow food coloring. Buyers simply squished the two together to produce a beautiful, yellow, non-butter spread.

Even with the added taxes, margarine remained the cheaper alternative. These combined factors set the stage for the oleo smuggling, when margarine sold legally in Illinois commonly came across the border hidden in many a car's trunk.

By the 1960s, Federal support for butter waned, as lobbies for soybean and cottonseed oil producers gained strength. Dairy-producing states gradually gave in to market pressure and dropped oleo regulations.

That is, everywhere but in Wisconsin. It remained a crime until 1967 to use yellow margarine, and was punishable by fines or imprisonment.

For decades, the two ran neck and neck, but in our present clean food movement, butter is winning: as of 2014, butter surpassed margarine as America's favorite spread. Each American now eats an average of 5.6 pounds of butter a year, compared to 3.5 pounds of margarine.

New evidence has shown that the trans fats in margarine are detrimental to our health, far worse than butter's natural saturated fat. But, to most Wisconsinites the honest truth is that real butter just plain tastes better.

that in 1886, a restrictive tax was levied

on margarine; a permit was also needed to sell it. Maine, Michigan, Minnesota,

The drama reached a fevered pitch when

foes of margarine in Madison's statehouse proclaimed it threatened the family farm, the American way of life, and the moral order. Impassioned speeches were made in defense of "sweet and wholesome" butter.

Senator Joseph Quarles of Wisconsin bel-

A Wisconsin Representative from the La-

Crosse area was so fearful of the threat to

butter that he defended it with Bible verse.

Noting it was the principal industry in the

Euphrates Valley thousands of years be-

fore the coming of Christ, he continued

with a quote from the book of Genesis,

"and He took butter and milk- and set it

before them. . . The wicked and the hypo-

lowed that butter should come from the

dairy, not the slaughterhouse.

Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Ohio

banned margarine outright.

Buttermaking in Wisconsin

FROM COOLIDGE TO TOEPEL



The Journey of the "Coolidge Desk"From the Black Hills of South Dakota To Howards Grove, Wisconsin

By Richard A. Stoelb

CALVIN COOLIDGE (1872 - 1933)



(John) Calvin Coolidge was born on July 4, 1872 and was vice president under President Warren G. Harding. At 2:30AM on August 3, 1923, while vacationing on his father's farm in Vermont, he received word of the president's death. With the death of Harding he became the 30th President of the United States serving from 1923 -1929, and he was the sixth vice-president to become president upon the death of a chief executive. Coolidge's father, John Sr., a notary public, administered the oath of office at 2:45AM in the family dining room. The legality of the oath was questioned by Attorney General Harry M. Daugherty because Coolidge's father only had authority to swear in state officials of Vermont. Consequently, eighteen days later a Justice of the Supreme Court administered a second oath.

Coolidge finished out Harding's term and in 1924 ran for president with Charles G. Dawes, director of the Bureau of the Budget as his running mate. He was elected as the Republican Party Candidate on the first ballot. Coolidge and Dawes faced the nominees from

the Democratic Party John W. Davis for president and Governor Charles W. Bryan of Nebraska for vice president. The Progressive Party formed by those dissatisfied with the Democratic and Republican Parties nominated Senator Robert M. ("Fighting Bob") Lafollette of Wisconsin as their presidential candidate, and Senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana for vice president. Coolidge and Dawes won the election and on March 4, 1925 Chief Justice William Howard Taft became the first former president to administer the presidential oath of office. Coolidge's inaugural address was the first to be broadcast by radio. Also, the annual tradition of lighting the National Christmas Tree in Washington D.C. by the "First Family" started by the Coolidge family in 1923.



CALVIN COOLIDGE AND HIS FATHER JOHN, SR.



PRESIDENT CALVIN COOLIDGE AND FIRST LADY GRACE COOLIDGE CIRCA 1926

In the social circles of Washington Coolidge seemed to be an odd man from a different time. He was solemn and frugal a man of few words issuing few unnecessary public statements. Will Rogers, an American humorist and social critic of the time called him "Silent Cal", remarking; "Calvin Coolidge doesn't say too much but when he does he doesn't say too much." Coolidge seldom smiled or laughed sitting silent through official dinners; however, in reality he possessed a sense of humor and had built a reputation for wisdom based on his common sense and use of his dry wit. On one occasion, he was scolded by a hostess about his habitual brevity and said; "But you must talk to me. I made a bet today that I could get more than two words out of you."

Coolidge looked at her and coldly replied; "You lose."

In 1905 Coolidge married Grace Anna Goodhue, a teacher at the Clarke School for the Deaf. They had two sons. John was born in 1906 and Calvin, Jr. was born in 1908. Shortly after being nominated in 1924 tragedy struck the family. Calvin, Jr. developed a blister on his toe while playing tennis with his brother John on the White House courts. Blood poisoning developed and the boy died at the age of 16. In his autobiography Coolidge wrote; "The power and the glory of the presidency went with him."

On June 13, 1927 to get away from a scheduled renovation of the White House, and to escape from the heat, humidity, bugs, crowds and bad air of Washington D.C. that irritated Coolidge's bronchitis the family left the city for a summer vacation in the Black Hills of South Dakota. The *Custer State Park Game Lodge* served as the Summer White House. Coolidge's executive offices were located on the first floor of the Rapid City High School thirty-two miles away. His personal office was in the northeast corner of the high school and press conferences were held in a large room on Tuesdays and Fridays. The President usually worked until noon returning to the lodge for lunch. In the afternoon he would relax and enjoy his vacation especially by trout fishing.

On Tuesday, August 2nd Coolidge called newsmen into his office in the Rapid City High School and handed out slips of paper on which was written a single line; "I do not choose to run again in the next election." The group fell silent. They were shocked and taken completely by surprise at the announcement as the nation soon would be also. Coolidge had given no clue about his plans not to run again. Someone finally asked him if he had anything else to add. He simply replied "No" and left. The heavy strain of the job on him and especially his wife, the death of his youngest son and the death of his father in 1926 had a profound influence on his decision. On September 9, 1927 the family left the Black Hills and headed back to Washington.

CALVIN AND GRACE WITH SON JOHN AND FAMILY PETS ROB ROY AND PRUDENCE PRIM

Before he became president the Coolidge's lived in a rented two-family house in Northampton and they returned there to retire. In 1930 they bought an estate called "The Beeches" that had iron gates to keep the curious at a distance so they could enjoy a quiet life. On January 5, 1933 Grace Coolidge found her husband on the floor in his bedroom dead of a heart attack. He was buried next to his son and father in the Plymouth Notch Cemetery. Grace sold the Beeches and built another home in Northampton where she lived until her death on July 8, 1957.

THE "COOLIDGE DESK" FROM SOUTH DAKOTA TO HOWARDS GROVE

The desk where President Calvin Coolidge sat and penned his surprising announcement not to run for another term as president was part of the furniture of the game lodge. Today it resides in the home of *Carl and Marilyn Blegen Toepel* in Howards Grove, Wisconsin. How the "Coolidge Desk" got from the Black Hills of South Dakota to their home begins with Marilyn's uncle, *Dr. Helmer* "*Pat*" *Blegen*.



Dr. Helmer "Pat" Blegen



Dr. Blegen was born on the family farm in Church's Ferry, North Dakota, located about 50 miles south of the Canadian Border. He taught and was fluent in several languages translating a number of books and documents. In 1920 he graduated from St. Olaf with a B.A. from the University of Minnesota. From 1920 – 1921 he was teacher and Dean of Men at Pleasant View Academy in Ottawa, Illinois. He then moved on to Waldorf College leaving in 1924 spending the next three years at Augsburg College in Minneapolis where he finished his Masters Degree. In 1927 he came to Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. At Augustana he was Professor of Modern Languages and Chairman of the Humanities Section. In 1939 he married Ann Rytterager. He was considered a bit of an eccentric, and besides teaching, was known to engage members of the community in lively discussions on current events and world affairs over coffee and cigars at cafes in downtown Sioux Falls.

He was a passionate and faithful member of the Norwegian-American History Association. In 1954 King Haakon VII of Norway bestowed the St. Olaf Medal to him in recogni-

tion of his accomplishments as recorder and interpreter of Norwegian culture. Dr. Blegen was also interested in the preservation of historical artifacts, and when the "Coolidge Desk "from the game lodge was put up for sale, he bought it."

Helmer and Ann decided to downsize their collections giving most of them to family members. The desk was given to his younger brother Joseph. While Helmer pursued academia Joseph, at the age of seventeen, upon the death of their father, took over the responsibility of running the family farm with his brother Carl. Helmer, although he and Ann traveled extensively, never owned a car and did not drive; therefore, Joseph's two sons Robert and Howard drove to Sioux Falls, South Dakota and brought the desk to the farm home in North Dakota. Helmer died in Sioux Falls in 1980 and Ann moved to Minneapolis after his death.

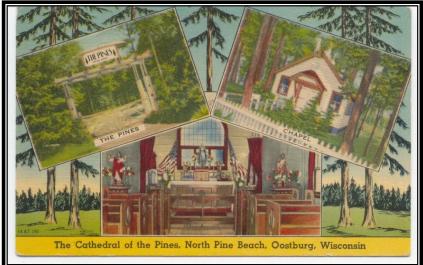
The desk remained at the farm home until sometime around 1977. Joseph and his wife Nora left the farm and moved to an apartment in Minnewaukan, North Dakota. The desk was given to his daughter *Marilyn Blegen Toepel* and her husband Carl of Howards Grove because of Carl's enthusiasm for collecting political items. Marilyn and Carl said that when family members are ready to part with the desk it may be donated to an appropriate historical society for preservation.





DR. HELMER M. BLEGEN AND HIS WIFE ANN AT THE DESK WHERE PRESIDENT CALVIN COOLODGE WROTE "I DO NOT CHOOSE TO RUN AGAIN...."

MARILYN BLEGEN TOEPEL AT THE COOLIDGE DESK



The Pines, Oostburg, WI By Scott Lewandoske

At left is a postcard of the "The Pines, Oostburg, Wisconsin" from about 1940. In the upper left corner is the camp entrance. On the top right is the chapel, with the interior of the chapel on the bottom.

The Pines was a camp located on the shore of Lake Michigan east of Oostburg started in April 1927, when Father Francis H. Cichozki of Chicago purchased 14.60 acres of land from J.E. Uselding, his wife, Cecilia, and G.J. Hales and his wife, Minnie, for the price of "One Dollar (\$1.00) and other good and valuable considerations" according to the land record.

Father Cichozki preferred to be known as "Father Frank." According to the Sheboygan Press of May 6, 1927, "The Rev. Father Frank plans to erect a number of summer cottages on the property for himself and members of his parish in Chicago." Father Frank was pastor of Our Lady of Victory Church in Chicago.

In 1928, a chapel, a mess hall, club house and bunk rooms were built under the supervision of Harold Vruwink of Oostburg, who had been hired by Father Frank as caretaker. In 1937, according to the Sheboygan Press, "in appreciation for Mr. Vruwink's services, Father Frank had an attractive, modern home built for the Vruwink family which is located back of Father Frank's camp against a wooded background."

An August 1941 Press article, "Father Frank Entertains Boy Scouts at His Camp" gave some additional information about Father Frank. In 1941, Father Frank was 66 years old and had been a priest for 32 years. "His winters he spends in Chicago, his summers here. Each week-end he drives to Chicago to conduct Sunday services and each Monday he returns. Getting back to nature and the great out-of-doors is Father Frank's chief hobby. Of a well-to-do family, he has spent his wealth on others. Years ago, at Hayward, Wisconsin, he built a camp similar to the present one but smaller, and he later gave it to the Franciscan Fathers of that region."

The Boy Scouts at the camp were at The Pines "for a week of outdoor life, swimming, hiking, playing games, eating, sleeping, and a daily visit to Oostburg. To compensate Father Frank in a measure for providing the camp, Boy Scouts each year do something to improve the camp. This year they cleared away brush, weeds, and poison ivy from the grounds."

One of the pictures in the article added additional information about the camp. "In the mess hall are approximately 100 mounted birds and animals belonging to Father Frank and a double fireplace built of 150 tons of stone by Garret Bloemers of Hingham." The other photo showed Father Frank eating in the mess hall with the Scouts. Later that same month, nuns from Father Frank's church came for a visit.

In December 1941, Father Frank sold his property to George F. Ballweber, also of Chicago. The price was \$10.00 for the 14.60 acres "and other valuable considerations." Ballweber was also a priest and he later sold the land to the Catholic Church.

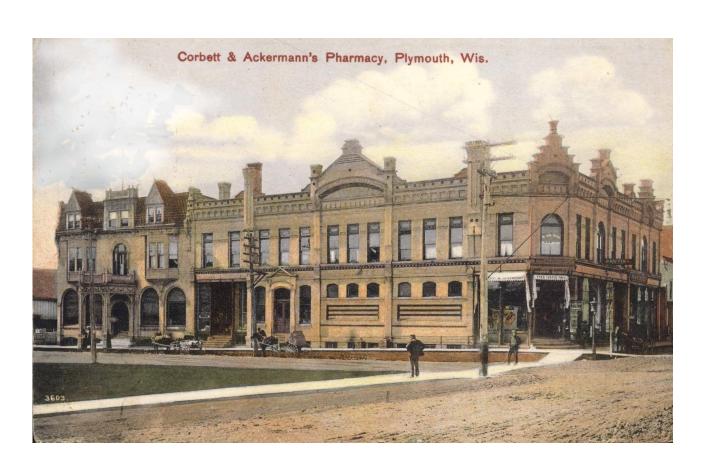
The end of The Pines came in 1951. On November 14, 1951, the Sheboygan Press reported very high lake levels and storms: An article stated, "A cabin on N. Pine Beach Road, owned by the Pines Catholic Boys' Camp, has been jarred from its foundation and now tilts at a 40-degree angle. Normally the cabin was almost 200 feet from the lake waters."

Four months later, on March 29, 1952, the Sheboygan Press reported, "Press Camera Shows Damage Done by Lake Storm. Two of the photos showed The Pines camp. The caption under one photo reported, "The level of Lake Michigan, rapidly reaching an all-time high, and lake storms have reduced to rubble the foundation and porch of a cottage which was threatened late last November. The pile of debris is what remains of a heavy stone fireplace, its large concrete base and the foundation of the cottage at the Pines Catholic Boys' Camp. The porch and chimney toppled into the lake almost two months ago." The second photo's caption stated, "Only by cutting the walls of the Catholic Boys' Camp cottage apart were workmen able to salvage the lumber, doors, and windows which otherwise would have been dumped into Lake Michigan waters along with the porch and foundation." Today none of the buildings remain, and the camp has almost been forgotten.

RESEARCH CENTER 518 WATER STREET SHEBOYGAN FALLS, 53085-1455

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2017 SCHRC Program Schedule

All programs are open to the public. Most are free of charge. See schrc.org and our Facebook page for more information

(History on the Move) Lakeview Community Library

112 Butler Street, Random Lake, WI

Time: 1:00pm - 2:30pm

Thursday, April 6, 2017 - Our Deep German Roots Thursday, May 11, 2017 - Sheboygan County Vice

(History on the Move) Oostburg Public Library

213 North 8th Street, Oostburg

1:00pm to 2:30pm

Tuesday, September 26, 2017 - Tales from the Rails

Tuesday, October 24, 2017 - The Sausage that made Sheboygan Famous

Tuesday, November 28, 2017 - Random Sheboygan County History

(History on the Move) Cedar Grove Memorial Library

131 Van Altena Avenue, Cedar Grove, WI

6:00 to 7:30pm

Tuesday, March 14, 2017 - The Best of Sheboygan County Connections

Topics to be covered- The Oleo Wars in Wisconsin, weird Wisconsin laws, the Chicago fire, Vollrath Park Zoo, outhouses, the lunch counter, Indian Mound Park, the St. Lawrence Seaway, the Dust Bowl years and so much more. Do you know how Sheboygan County is a part of each of these major events or movements? Tuesday, July 25, 2017 - The Dutch in the Midwest

Three major immigration waves have brought Dutch-speaking people from the Netherlands to North America. During the first third of the seventeenth century, the Dutch West Indies Company sponsored exploring and colonizing voyages to the New World. The second wave, subsequently known as the "Great Migration," began during the 1840's, triggered by religious tensions in the homeland. The final wave of Dutch immigration followed the end of World War II, encouraged by the government of the Netherlands in order to help relieve pressing economic problems in the homeland. We'll talk about the two later waves that brought large number of Dutch settlers to the Midwest.

(Genealogy Classes) SCHRC

518 Water Street, Sheboygan Falls

1:00pm to 3:00pm \$15 members, \$20 non-members

Monday, March 13, 2017 - Publishing Your Family Genealogy or Family History Book

Monday, April 10, 2017 - DNA and genealogy

Monday, May 8, 2017 - Smorgasbord, A Little of This, A Little of That

Monday, September 11, 2017 - A Gift That Money Can't Buy - Record & Preserve Your Family's History

Monday, October 9, 2017 - Rounding up your family's black sheep

Monday, November 13, 2017 - Civil War Records, What's Available and How to Find Them

Monday, December 11, 2017 - How to Process Your Photo Collection

(Genealogy Classes) Kiel Public Library

511 Third Street, Kiel

1:00pm to 2:30pm

Monday, March 6, 2017 - German Genealogy. German genealogy is complex and very interesting. We'll learn how to begin, what are the best resources to use, online and otherwise. We'll also learn about enough German history to aid in our genealogical search.

Second Saturdays- Journeys Into Local History

Plymouth Arts Center, 520 East Mill Street, Plymouth - all except October, 2017 9:30am to 11:30am

<u>February 11, 2017</u> - Matthew Prigge - <u>Milwaukee Mayhem, Murder and Mystery in the Cream City's First</u> Century

From murder and matchstick men to all-consuming fires, painted women, and Great Lakes disasters--and the wide-eyed public who could not help but gawk at it all--"Milwaukee Mayhem" uncovers the little-remembered and rarely told history of the underbelly of a Midwestern metropolis. "Milwaukee Mayhem" offers a new perspective on Milwaukee's early years, forgoing the major historical signposts found in traditional histories and focusing instead on the strange and brutal tales of mystery, vice, murder, and disaster that were born of the city's transformation from lakeside settlement to American metropolis. Matthew Prigge will enlighten us and entertain us

March 11, 2017 - Steve Rogstad - The Lincoln Nobody Knows, Or What Didn't He Want Us to Know Abraham Lincoln was considered to be by his closest friends and associates one of the most shut-mouthed men they had ever known. He rarely, if ever, spoke of his lineage, parentage, family, early life, faith, or romantic relationships. He was a mystery to most people, and he only occasionally provided his listeners with insights about his personal life and beliefs. This lecture identifies a few areas of his life that continue to baffle historians and encourage speculation. Lincoln was a man who wanted to be remembered, but did not wish to be known

April 8, 2017 - Michael Jacobs - America Declares War on Germany, 1917

In 1917, Germany, determined to win its war of attrition against the Allies, announced the resumption of unrestricted warfare in war-zone waters. Three days later, the United States broke diplomatic relations with Germany, and just hours after that the American liner Housatonic was sunk by a German U-boat. On February 22, Congress passed a \$250 million arms appropriations bill intended to make the United States ready for war. In late March, Germany sunk four more U.S. merchant ships, and on April 2 President Wilson appeared before Congress and called for a declaration of war against Germany. Four days later, his request was granted. Mike Jacobs, Associate professor of history at UW-Baraboo/Sauk County, will take us through America's entrance into The Great War.

May 13, 2017 - John Jenkins - Prohibition in Wisconsin's Holyland

In the 1920s and early '30s, the Holyland east of Fond du Lac was a bootlegger's paradise. The Depression made it hard for the German-Catholic immigrants who settled in the area to make a living, but Prohibition created a market for illegal booze, and some of these pious churchgoers jumped at the chance. As stills fired up and the moonshine flowed out of barns and faux cheese factories, family secrets, attacks by federal agents, Al Capone sightings and even murder were the result. John Jenkins, who researched the subject for his thesis at Marian University in Fond du Lac, said residents from these sleepy farm communities were lured to the lucrative brewing, distilling and selling of illegal moonshine to make ends meet during difficult times. Jenkins will analyze why this area was such a center of moonshine production.

2017-2018 Season

<u>September 9, 2017</u> - Michael Jacobs - <u>On the Home Front - WWI - Patriotism surged in America after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Volunteerism efforts not only boosted morale at home and abroad, but also provided necessary financial and manpower support for the war effort. Mike will take us back to the years of WWI. <u>October 14, 2017</u> - To be announced</u>

November 11, 2017 Jerry Apps - The Land - Join the author and historian for a walk in the woods, as he passes along lessons gleaned from listening to the land. With wit and wisdom inherited from his father on their Midwestern farm, Apps recalls stories that unite the generations.

<u>December 9, 2017</u> John Eastberg - <u>Three generations of Milwaukee's Pabst family & Mansions of Milwaukee's Prospect Avenue.</u>

The Lincoln Series with Steven Rogstad — A four-part series, Topic to be Announced. Tuesdays- October 3, 10, 17, 24, 2017 6:30pm-8:30pm

Steven K. Rogstad, a nationally known Lincoln scholar, will be the instructor. Mr. Rogstad, a Racine native who, since age 6, has studied the life of Abraham Lincoln, graduated from Washington Park High School in 1977 and from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside in 1981.

Sheboygan County Historical Museum—3110 Erie Avenue, Sheboygan.