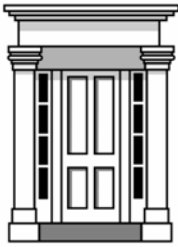


SHEBOYGAN COUNTY



HISTORICAL
RESEARCH
CENTER



1983-2018



The Researcher

**The Newsletter of the Sheboygan County
Historical Research Center**

Volume XXVIII Number 5 June 2018

The Researcher is sponsored by Jay Christopher of Christopher Farm & Gardens.



The Nels Gunderson Home

Atty. Peter R. Mayer has spent years restoring the historic Nels Gunderson home on the northeast corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Sixth Street in Sheboygan.

The fascinating history of this home was almost lost, since it was not included in the list of eligible properties of the 2002 City of Sheboygan, Wisconsin: Architectural and Historical Intensive Survey Report and had been proposed for demolition. Although the story had been forgotten, the connection to the shipping and lumber industries and the elements of Norwegian Dragestil architecture have piqued the interest of those who have heard it.

Peter was able to confirm, through the Wright's directory of Sheboygan Co. and the Pott's Directory of the City and County of Sheboygan, that Nels Gunderson (a/k/a Nicholas Gunderson and N.A. Gunderson) and his immediate family occupied and later owned the residence at 502 N. 6th Street commencing in 1889 and continuing until 1973. Nels Gunderson is identified variously in the city directories as a sailor, lake captain, and steamboat captain. Additional research has confirmed that Captain Nels Gunderson was captain or

Continued on page 2

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 9:00am to 12:00 noon.

Closed June 30 through July 4, 2018 for Independence Day.

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 53085.

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.

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DON'T MISS SHEBOYGAN COUNTY HISTORY COLUMN IN THE SATURDAY SHEBOYGAN PRESS OR ONLINE FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY EACH WEEK.

WISH LIST — PAPER TOWELS

part owner of the Susie Chipman, Alice Gill, Lilly E. (a/k/a Louisa McDonald and later the first clubhouse of the South Shore Yacht Club), Sardinia, and the tug Peter Reiss.

Since the home had only two owners after Captain Nels and Sophie Gunderson and their daughter Mabel Gunderson, the layout of the home is still relatively consistent with the time that Captain Nels Gunderson lived in it.

Many of the features remain, including the three chimneys (two for heating the rooms with stoves and the north chimney for the kitchen). The front porch depicted in the 1891 Groh Bros. photos from the courthouse cupola has been restored, and the restoration of the side porch facing Pennsylvania Avenue is almost completed. The original porch corner brackets and corbels were in the distinctive Norwegian Dragestil design, instead of the more common Victorian or Queen Anne styles.

In the interior of the home, the original cherry bannister is similar to the bannister in the Historic Nobel House Museum in Fish Creek, Wisconsin, of the same age. The oral history of the house includes the story that the large lilac tree on the north side of the house was planted by Sophie Gunderson. Also, both the oral history and location indicates that Captain Nels Gunderson wanted to reside at this location since his family could see his ships approaching the Sheboygan harbor entrance and it was close to and immediately up the hill from where he docked his various ships.

Captain Nels Gunderson was part of a large family of Sheboygan ship captains who were a crucial part of Late 19th Century Sheboygan industry. Captain Nels' father James, was an ocean sailor who came to Sheboygan from Norway in 1854 or 1855, when there was a great need for sailors and ship captains. James six sons, Gustav, Martin, Nels, Fred, Louis, and Theodore, were all Great Lakes ship captains. Some also owned schooners and fishing tugs. James Gunderson's brother Andrew was also a Great Lakes ship captain who lived in Sheboygan.

Although Peter has restored much of the exterior already, there is still some exterior and much interior work to complete the restoration of the home. The first floor is being used as the office of Mayer Law Firm and a small apartment will eventually be added on the second floor. When the restoration is completed, the Captain Nels Gunderson home will also be available for public viewing and tours on the history of Sheboygan shipping during the 19th Century.

Peter will also be exhibiting photographs of approximately 25 of the ships captained by Nels Gunderson and his family from the Great Lakes Maritime Collection with the generous permission of the C. Patrick Labadie Collection/Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, Alpena, MI.

The story of this home and the Norwegian ship captains of the Gunderson family provides the historical connection between the forests of the north, the sawmills and furniture factories of Sheboygan, and the urban consumers in Milwaukee and Chicago to the south and tells an important story of Sheboygan's history.

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June 2018 LET'S DEVELOP OUR CENTER

Steven K. Rogstad
Director of Development

A development manager of a non-profit organization is primarily responsible for creating, administering, and implementing the organization's long-term development plan.

Very often this plan emphasizes fundraising, and includes

the following types of activities:

- 1) Develop and execute the organization's annual campaign.
- 2) Secure financial support from individuals, foundations, and corporations
- 3) Manage the implementation of donor software and oversee staff responsible for data entry and gift processing
- 4) Develop and maintain ongoing relationships with major donors
- 5) Creating and executing a strategy for a large sustained base of annual individual donors
- 6) Developing and tracking proposals and reports for all foundation and corporate fundraising
- 7) Overseeing organization of special events

However, as I have said in earlier messages, development involves far more activities than simply raising money. Very often it also oversees the organization and implementation of special events. I am very excited about two upcoming events we have scheduled for this August and September, and hope you will give serious thought to attending them. *In fact, I am going to do my level-best to persuade you that they are the most educational and entertaining events that are taking place in Sheboygan County this summer and early fall!*

The Historical Symposium.

The Center is hosting a 2-day history conference on Thursday, August 16, and Friday, August 17. Numerous historians and scholars will be educating and entertaining attendees on a wide range of subjects that are associated with the theme of history and travel in Wisconsin. Detailed information about the symposium and the individual presentations is included in this issue. This is the first of what we hope will be several annual symposiums the Center will be hosting going forward. If you attend this event and enjoy the topics, I am confident you will want to jump into your vehicle and tour these wonderful sites for yourselves.

Some of the best vacations I ever took included visits to sites where history was made. Sometimes it was a place where significant history took place – like Gettysburg or Bunker Hill; other times it was just a plot of ground where a rock, a bronze tablet, monument, or statue now stands. But history of some kind was made there. They are places

that still have relevance. They are places that still need to be *visited* and *remembered*. They are places that merit *meditation* and *rumination*. They are places that still *matter*. That is what these eight scholars will be motivating the attendees to do: to visit the sites and ponder their significance as places where Wisconsin history was made, and as windows into who we are as a people, as a state, and as a nation.

“The Lincoln Seminar on Wheels” Bus Trip

This 4-day motor coach bus trip is being planned for people to experience the greater Springfield, Illinois, Monday-Thursday, September 17-20. I will be coming along as the “traveling Lincoln historian,” to provide insights and mini-lectures about what we will be seeing. For the past six years in October, I have been teaching my Lincoln Seminar for the Center. Many of the same individuals return every year for another dose of Lincoln; a few of the women who attend the Lincoln Seminar are now calling themselves my “Lincoln Girls;” several have asked me if I would lead a bus trip to Springfield.

Well, now I am doing it! Come on, girls, let's hit the road!

We will be visiting many of the main sites, including the fabulous Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum, Old State Capitol, current Illinois State Capitol, Lincoln Home, First Presbyterian Church, New Salem village, the grave of Ann Rutledge, and Lincoln's Tomb. There will be a few other surprises, too, but I am unwilling to tell you what they are until you are on the bus and we are traveling down the highway.

More details about the tour and accommodations are included in the newsletter. Let me say that I did this tour for Wisconsin Public Radio several years ago, and we ended with 100 people on 2 buses! I think it would be awesome if the Center could equal or top that number! Again, please consider coming along.

If you love history, or have always dreamed of going to Springfield, or have not yet been to the fantastic Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum (considered by many scholars to be the best presidential museum in the country!), or have been inspired to learn more about the great Lincoln, this trip is for you!

Look at it this way: You will get your money's worth the first day – the rest of the trip will be free!

Sponsoring Memberships

Have you sponsored a new member as part of the 2018 Annual Campaign?

If every SCHRC member sponsored a new member for one year at the \$40.00 level, the Center would raise \$34,000! Imagine what new programs and projects could be realized with just that one small effort.

Please help the Center during this annual campaign by bringing in one new member.

Please feel free to contact me with your ideas, suggestions, and recommendations for enhancing our fundraising efforts. You can contact me at 920-467-4667, or email me at steverogstad@schrc.org.



History Outside the Box Symposium

Sponsored by the Sheboygan County Historical Research Center

Held at the Plymouth Arts Center,
520 East Mill Street, Plymouth, WI 53073

Thursday and Friday, August 16 and 17, 2018

**Eight Great Speakers, Eight Great Topics
History at Its Best**



Speakers' Schedule

Thursday August 16, 2018

Doug Dammann - Civil War Sites in Wisconsin

The War to Save the Union. The War Between the States. The War of Yankee Aggression. The Recent Unpleasantness. By any name, America's Civil War (1861-1865) left deep wounds in the nation. By the late 1800s, many who fought had passed away. Others were concerned that those who had sacrificed might be forgotten. States and local communities raised funds to build memorials to their soldiers. Doug will visit these notable monuments, sites and museums in Wisconsin.

Rochelle Pennington - Shipwrecked Shores: An Underwater Look at Lake Michigan and Lake Superior

Sunken ships. Sunken treasures. Forgotten men in forgotten places. At the bottom of the Great Lakes, in darkened depths, lie the remains of countless ships that were swallowed whole when the pleasing rhythm of calm waters turned violent. Rochelle will take us on a tour of the remarkable treasures hidden just below the surface of two of our Great Lakes, Superior and Michigan.

Mary Bergin - Brats, Beer and Beyond

Great food – and food theater – show up in unexpected places in Wisconsin, and what we love about our German heritage is but a sliver of how that culture defines and distinguishes itself. Hear Mary Bergin reflect upon her work as a freelance food writer whose work includes books about Wisconsin, the Midwest and Germany.

Midwest travel, regional foods, German heritage and environmental sustainability are Mary Bergin's writing specialties. The Sheboygan County native's work is widely published –Chicago Tribune to USA Today.com – and her weekly, syndicated travel/food columns began in 2002. She is the author of five books, including *Wisconsin Supper Club Cookbook* and *Eat Smart in Germany*.

Barb & Ken Wardius - Visiting Wisconsin's Historic Lighthouses

Life-long residents of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the Wardius's have traveled extensively pursuing their hobby of lighthouse photography. Their first book, "Wisconsin Lighthouses" was released in 2000 and just recently totally revised in conjunction with the Wisconsin Historical Society Press. It was the winner of the 2014 Winner of the Gold, 1st Place award, in the national Ben Franklin Book Awards, Regional Division. Enjoy this tour.

Symposium Particulars

Cost: \$60.00 for the two-day event

Registration is required

Call 920.467.4667 for reservations.

Checks made out to: SCHRC

Checks mailed to: SCHRC, 518 Water Street, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085

See schrc.org for more information or call 920.467.4667.



Friday, August 17, 2018

Chad Lewis - Criminals and Villains in Wisconsin

Put on your zoot suit and follow in the footsteps of America's most infamous gangsters as they turned Wisconsin into their own criminal vacation land. Filled with deadly bank robberies, explosive shootouts, brutal murders, and daring kidnappings, this presentation lets the audience discover the grisly locations where the gangster history will never die.

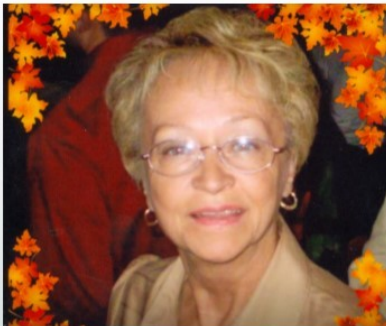
For over two decades Chad Lewis has traveled the back roads of the world in search of the strange and unusual. The more bizarre the legend, the more likely it is that you will find Chad there.



Bob Birmingham - WI Native American Burial Effigy Mounds

Dr. Robert Birmingham, former State Archeologist for Wisconsin will discuss Wisconsin's More mounds were built by ancient Native Americans in Wisconsin than in any other region of North America—between 15,000 and 20,000, at least 4,000 of which remain today. Most impressive are the effigy mounds, huge earthworks sculpted in the shapes of thunderbirds, water panthers, and other forms, not found anywhere else in the world in such concentrations.

Bob will share an overview of these intriguing earthworks and answer the questions, Who built the mounds? When and why were they built?



Sonja Barta - Circus Echoes

Wisconsin was a major player in the circus world early on, with over 100 circuses coming out of the state. Join Sonja on this exiting journey as she explores the history and origins of the circus in Sheboygan, Wisconsin and elsewhere.

A past circus performer herself, as part of the Lindemann family, Barta will tell stories of her time under the Big Top.



Steven Rogstad - The Lincolns in Wisconsin

Myths abound when it comes to Abraham Lincoln and his time in Wisconsin; Sightings and events were many, but are tough to verify. Lincoln slept here has become a cliché. Yet, there are a couple of definites, one maybe, and some that local communities wish might be true.

Lincoln lecturer and author, Steven Rogstad, brings his expertise to the fascinating issue of the Lincolns in Wisconsin

Abraham Lincoln's Springfield, Illinois

SEPTEMBER 17-20, 2018



Join the Sheboygan County Historical Research Center and local Abraham Lincoln expert, Steve Rogstad, on this four-day excursion to historic Springfield, Illinois. Listen to Steve's captivating commentary and visit the sites where Lincoln lived, worked, and was buried. Take in the Old State Capitol and the current Illinois State Capitol building. Wander through Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site, a reconstruction of the village where Lincoln spent his early adulthood. Listen, Learn and Love Springfield!

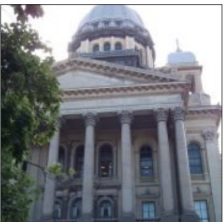
MONDAY SEPTEMBER 17

This morning we board our deluxe motorcoach and begin our four-day trip to Springfield, Illinois. With a mid-day arrival, our first stop is the **Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum**. The museum documents the life of the 16th U. S. president and the course of the American

Civil War. Combining traditional exhibits with 21st-century showmanship techniques, the museum ranks as one of the most visited presidential libraries. It contains life-size dioramas of Lincoln's boyhood home, areas of the White House, the presidential box at Ford's Theatre, and the settings of key events in Lincoln's life, as well as pictures, artifacts and other memorabilia. With over 200,000 square feet, it is 50% larger than any other presidential library. We check into the President Abraham Lincoln Doubletree Hotel in downtown Springfield and have a little time to relax before our group dinner. This evening, Abraham Lincoln expert, Steve Rogstad, will share his knowledge of many details in the life of Former President Lincoln. (D)



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 & WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19



Our itinerary for the next two days features a number of historic sites in Springfield. Not only do we have the expertise of Steve Rogstad as he travels with us, but a local guide will share his knowledge of the community as well. Within the walls of the **Old State Capitol**, a great man rose to prominence. It is here Lincoln spoke the immortal words, "A house divided against itself cannot stand..." as the threat of a civil war loomed. He tried several hundred cases in the Supreme Court and swapped stories with other lawyers in the law library. The present center of Illinois politics, the **Illinois State Capitol** is topped by a 405-foot dome and is a combination of Renaissance Revival and Second Empire architecture. The **Lincoln Home National Historic Site** includes the only home Lincoln ever owned, as well as a four-block neighborhood. The home has been completely restored to its 1860 appearance and reveals much about Lincoln as husband, father, neighbor, and politician. In 1861 Abraham Lincoln left his home of 17 years to serve as the 16th president. Nestled in Oak Ridge Cemetery is the **Lincoln Tomb**. Within the walls of this stunning granite

monument is the final resting place of Abraham Lincoln, his wife, Mary and three of their four sons. Of course as you enter, you will want to rub the nose on Mr. Lincoln's bronze bust, as it is said to give good luck. The Lincoln family rented a pew and regularly attended church services at the **First Presbyterian Church** from 1850 until they left for Washington, DC in 1861. Although Mrs. Lincoln became a member, Mr. Lincoln served as a trustee, but never formally joined the church. We will be able to see the actual Lincoln pew during our visit. **(2 B, 2 D)**



**THURSDAY
SEPTEMBER 20**

Today we depart Springfield and travel a short distance northwest to **Lincoln's New Salem**. En route we stop at the **gravesite of Ann Rutledge, located in Oakland Cemetery**. Miss Rutledge was allegedly Abraham Lincoln's first love



while living in New Salem. Her death, at the age of 22, sent Mr. Lincoln into severe depression. Now, go back nearly two centuries in time as you walk the streets of reconstructed New Salem, the village where Abraham Lincoln lived as a young man. See where he split rails, clerked in a store, and served as postmaster. Watch and interact as history comes to life through the costumed characters representing the people who lived there over 150 years ago. We make our way home through Northern Illinois, having a better understanding of the personal life and accomplishments of Former President Abraham Lincoln. **(B, L)**

MEAL CODE: B-Breakfast L-Lunch D-Dinner

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Average-You should be able to climb stairs, tolerate periods of standing, and walk reasonable distances.



TOUR PRICE: \$699 Per Person Double Occupancy
\$899 Single Occupancy

TOUR INCLUDES:

- * Deluxe Motorcoach Transportation
- * Hotel Accommodations for 3 Nights
- * Sightseeing and Attractions Per Itinerary
- * Lincoln Expertise of Steve Rogstad
- * 3 Breakfasts
- * 1 Luncheon
- * 3 Dinners
- * Luggage Handling for 1 Suitcase Per Person
- * Services of a Personalized Tour Director & Local Springfield Guide

**TOUR
#5195**

PAYMENT INFORMATION:
\$200 Deposit Due with Reservation
Balance Due July 17, 2018

"PEACE OF MIND"
CANCELLATION PROTECTION:
\$69 Per Person

**FOR INFORMATION
& RESERVATIONS CONTACT:**
Personalized Tours, Inc.
W4928 Pheasant Valley Road, Waldo, WI 53093
920.528.7600 or 800.225.0608
www.GoPersonalized.com

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Ice Cream Social
Thursday, June 21, 2018
1:00pm to 3:00pm
SCHRC parking lot

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS, BOARD MEMBERS, FRIENDS,
NEIGHBORS AND RESEARCHERS.

JOIN US FOR AN AFTERNOON OF ICE CREAM AND FUN AS WE SAY
THANKS
FOR YOUR WORK.

MEET OTHER VOLUNTEERS AND PEOPLE
WHO MEAN SO MUCH TO THE RESEARCH CENTER.

NO CHARGE, NO RESERVATIONS