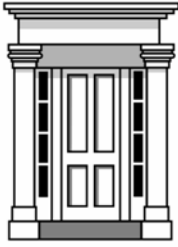


SHEBOYGAN COUNTY



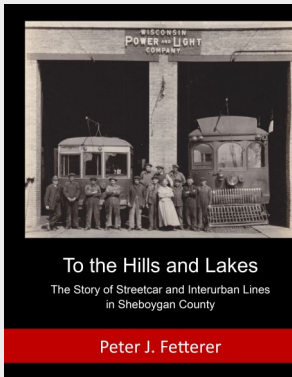
HISTORICAL
RESEARCH
CENTER

**Forgotten Facts in
Wisconsin History**

The first kindergarten in the United States was opened in 1856 by Margarethe Meyer Schurz in Watertown, Wisconsin. It was based on her experiences in Germany with educator Friedrich Froebel.

Newest Publication

To the Hills and Lakes,
the story of the Streetcar and
Interurban Lines in Sheboygan
County
by Peter J. Fetterer



The Researcher

The Newsletter of the Sheboygan County
Historical Research Center
Volume XXXII Number 2 December 2021

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

The Long Trip Home



The log cabin of Irish immigrants, Dennis and Bridget Hogan O'Rourke, once located on land in section 21, town of Mitchell, southwest of Parnell.

On October 6, 2021 SCHRC received a query through our website - It reads "We are trying to find any information such as wills, land purchases, baptismal records or anything else pertinent for the family of Dennis O'Rourke, born 1812, died 29 August, 1867. He is buried in St. Michael's cemetery in Parnell."

"I believe I am a descendant of Dennis and his youngest son Martin O'Rourke born in 1865. Dennis had 80 acres in two adjacent parcels in Mitchell Township, Sections 21 and 28. These appear in the 1875 county plat book. Can you help us? Signed Steve O'Rourke. Baldwin, WI."

Of course, we can help. As it turns out, the land that Dennis and Bridget Hogan owned is the land that my husband's family bought in 1886. Dean and I still own that very piece of land. The O'Rourkes visit was something of a homecoming.

Continued on page 6

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

Open Tuesday through Friday, 9:00am – 4:00pm.

Closed Friday, December 24, 2021 through Monday, January 3, 2022 for the holidays.

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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**Check out
schrc.org**

**And SCHRC
on Facebook**

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.

New Members

WOW! We have registered **25** new members in the last two months! **Welcome!**

Nick, Laurie & Barbara Alvarez, Sheboygan

James Bichler, Adell

Janet Susan Johns-Bullard, Kohler

Cleveland State Bank, Cleveland

Ann Jarvis Eads, Minneapolis

Kathleen Flath, Plymouth

Michael Gerend, Mendota Heights, MN (sponsored by Dr. Jacob Gerend)

Jeanmarie Genske, Sheboygan

Marilyn Fisher Hanson, Tucson, AZ (LEGACY)

Frederick Koehn VI Properties, LLC, Belgium

Judith Kolvenbach, Plymouth

Anna Krueger, Plymouth

Cheryl Kruschke, Sheboygan

Bonnie & Donnie Laack, Plymouth

Ed Mattern, Eldorado Hills, CA (sponsored by Margorie Mattern)

Gerald Mueller, Janesville

Betty Pearce, Plymouth

Alissa Preuss, Sheboygan

Lisa Salgado, Sheboygan (sponsored by Steven Rogstad)

Jack Schroeder, Belgium

Robert M. Simmelink, Sheboygan Falls

Don & Paulette Sorensen, Sheboygan (sponsored by Joan Burgasser)

Gregory Van Winkle, Pewaukee

Andrea Voss, Sheboygan

Dianna Witt, Sheboygan Falls

Programming and Classes

Second Saturdays

Plymouth Arts Center, 520 East Mill Street, Plymouth

9:30am to 11:30am

Saturday, December 11, 2021 - Milwaukee Craftsmen with John Eastberg,

Saturday, January 8, 2022 - Rethinking Nazi Art: What Art Scholars Are Now Saying with Patrick Jung.

Genealogy Classes

Research Center, 518 Water Street, Sheboygan Falls

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

Monday, December 13, 2021 - Genealogy Detective Series

Monday, January 10, 2022 - Owning a Piece of America: Land Records

History on the Move

Chris & Sue's, W3820 Co Rd C, Plymouth

6:30pm to 7:30pm

Thursday, January 20, 2022 Topic to be Announced

Thursday, February 17, 2022 Topic to be Announced

**Closed Friday, December 24, 2021 through
Monday, January 3, 2022 for the holidays.**

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



“LET’S DEVELOP OUR CENTER”

NEWSLETTER COLUMN December 2021

As we approach the end of this calendar year, it is both timely and appropriate for us to recognize our accomplishments as an organization and determine how each of us can contribute to its progress and sustainability in the days ahead.

First, let us congratulate ourselves on what we have done in 2021. Most of would probably agree that 2020 was a year that most nonprofits would like to forget due to COVID, and how the pandemic adversely affected so many organizations worldwide in their ability to promote their mission and service to the public. We also were affected, but through the diligent efforts of our board, staff, volunteers, members, and supporters, the organization was able to make this year a rousing success! We resumed in-person programming. We held an impressive Annual Meeting that was attended by 127 individuals. We resumed our Annual History Symposium, Taproom History, Lincoln Seminar, Second Saturdays, and genealogy classes. We continued publishing books that profile various aspects of Sheboygan County and Wisconsin history. We continued to process collections, and acquire new collections. Members and supporters gave so generously to the Annual Campaign that it was one of the most memorable in recent history for the organization. The frosting on the cake is that we are constantly attracting new members! In fact, we have acquired 22 new members since October! So, let us recognize our accomplishments, celebrate our achievements, and give thanks for all that we attained in 2021!

Second, we cannot afford to pause, stall, or plateau in 2022. Momentum is on our side and we need to remain vigilant, supportive, and passionate about the Research Center going into the new year. With that in mind, I want to tell you about some objectives, goals and initiatives we are already working on.

The date for 2021 “Giving Tuesday” is November 30. We have set a goal of raising \$2,500 to go towards a new studio at the Research Center. This studio will allow us to reach new audiences through interviews, podcasts, and audio/visual programs that we can promote on the website,

social media pages, and YouTube. A well-equipped studio will cost nearly \$5,000, but we are going after half that amount. Please mark your calendar for that date and give what you can to make the studio become a reality.

We will also be hosting a new “History on the Move” series at Chris & Sue’s Place, W3820 CTH C, Plymouth, starting Thursday, January 20, 6:30 pm. They will be hosting the series January through April. We are looking for an individual or business to sponsor the series. Please consider promoting the Research Center by hosting this wonderful series of history programs.

The organization also has plans for a huge holiday event to be held Christmas 2022. We have a full year to prepare, and ***the organization needs 100 artificial Christmas trees!*** We are looking for large, medium, and small-sized trees. We can use 2’ trees, 4’ trees, 6’ foot trees, 12’ trees – ANY SIZE TREES! Do you know of any trees that people will be wanting to donate? We are accepting trees ***NOW!*** Please contact me at steverogstad@schrc.org if you have a tree to donate.

We are always looking for new volunteers to help with collections. Acquisitions continue to come in and the need to organize and process documents, maps, photographs, and other printed materials is always there. If you have an interest in history and some time to volunteer and make a difference on behalf of the Center, we would love to hear from you!

Finally, December is a great time to make a financial contribution to the organization as part of your year-end giving. Your gift could be used toward establishing the studio, sponsoring an event or program series, assisting with collection care and management, or the ongoing maintenance for the building and grounds. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss any specific ideas you may have concerning a gift and how it could be used.

Thank you for all you do to support and help develop our Research Center!

Sincerely,
Steven K. Rogstad
Executive Director

Did You Know?

SCHRC does a weekly article in ***The Sheboygan Sun*** called **History Uncovered**. New stories come out every Wednesday at 5:00pm. Locals can read the crazy stories in hard copy news, but you can access all the blogs at sheboygansun.com. Search **History Uncovered** and you’ll get the full list.

+++++

Holiday Shopping

Please do your holiday shopping at schrc.org. Lend support and get a great read all at the same time.
Shop Local.

A Busy Fall at SCHRC

The Center held its **2nd Annual History Symposium** at the Plymouth Arts Center on November 6.

This year's theme was recent scholarship in Midwest History, with presentations on controversies associated with Great Lakes infrastructure, an alternative history of a subversive organization, Progressivism in the 1980s, and Wisconsin Native American effigy mounds. It was an eclectic assortment of topics that made it both educational and fun for those in attendance. Special recognition is given to the Kohler Foundation for financial assistance in sponsoring the event.



Above: symposium (L-R) SC HRC members Alan Pape, Dr. Jacob Gerend, Robert Melzer, and Richard Bemis listen to the presentations at the 2021 Symposium.



Left: Presenters at the Symposium were (L-R) Dr. Theodore Karamanski, Dr. Robert Birmingham, Dr. Cory Haala, and Dr. Michael Jacobs.

Below right: SCHRC Treasurer Wayne Warnecke received a service award for his years of service on the Board of Directors, and for his many hours of work on COVID-relief grants that were awarded to the Center in 2020. Congratulations, Wayne, and thank you for all your hard work!

The Center held its **2021 Annual Meeting** on October 29 at Amore Banquet Hall in Plymouth. Nearly 130 people (below left) celebrated the organization's accomplishments in 2021. The crowd enjoyed great food and a superb lecture by Dr. James Marten, who spoke on "Bearing Their Part Equally: Sheboygan County and the Iron Brigade." Appreciation is given to Jos. Schmitt Construction for sponsoring this year's Annual Meeting.





This past October the SCHRC presented Sheboygan Mayor Ryan Sorenson with a framed copy of the iconic photograph showing a man sitting on a dead horse on 8th Street in downtown Sheboygan. A Sheboygan native, the mayor kept a paper copy of this photo taped to the wall of his room during the years he was at college. We are happy that he can now look at it daily in his office at City Hall.



Dr. Laura Gellott, former Professor of History at UW-Parkside in Kenosha, spoke to a large Second Saturdays audience on November 13. Her presentation, "Helen Perry Curtis and the European Trip of a Lifetime," was based on her new book by the same title.

It was a visual biography of Curtis, combined with a virtual tour of Eastern Europe in 1937 based on Curtis's travels.

Dr. Laura Gellott and SCHRC member Lisa Salgado showcase the books that Gellott has recently authored and published that deal with the life and works of Helen Perry Curtis.





Steven O'Rourke and daughter Laurel O'Rourke.

The O'Rourkes came from the townland of Marley, Parish of St. Mullins, County Carlow, Ireland located in the far south of the county just east of the Kilkenny border. After much research family members found marriage and baptismal records verifying the origins of the Wisconsin/ Mitchell O'Rourkes.

Brothers, Michael & Dennis O'Rourke, immigrated together to Syracuse, NY in 1836, but were in Mitchell/ Lyndon, Wisconsin by 1848. Another brother, Patrick, settled in Milwaukee.

The Dennis O'Rourke story is a bit of a tragedy. Dennis died in 1867 and his wife, Bridget Hogan O'Rourke, died shortly after in 1870 leaving five minor children. At age 20, son Dennis was responsible for them. Daughter Eliza was out of the house and married, and two infant sons lay in the family grave at St. Michaels with their parents.

Martin, the youngest child of Dennis and Bridget, was just two when his father died and five when his mother passed away.

A difficult life for all, the minor children were taken in by others. Martin ended up in Milwaukee where he went to school and then worked as a businessman.

Martin, who went by the name James Martin, married and had two children, George and James Glendon with his first wife. James Glendon is Steve's grandfather.

Martin's life was a bit of a mystery for decades. And this is how the connections to the O'Rourke family history were lost. Long story short, Martin changed his name to James Harris and made a new life for himself. Happily family members saved written letters and information that explained some of the mystery.

After much research, Martin's story was sorted out through a combination of great detective work, persistence by family members, DNA testing and a wise email sent to the Sheboygan County Historical Research Center.

It's been a privilege to work with Steve and Laurel. We're glad we were able to provide a piece of the puzzle for the family.



The gravestone at St. Michael's Cemetery of O'Rourke, Dennis and Bridget, Also buried there are Michael, son of D & B, died September 7, 1861 age 2 years, 11 months, 15 days and Patrick, son of D & B, died February 6, 1862 age 2 years, 10 months, 8 days

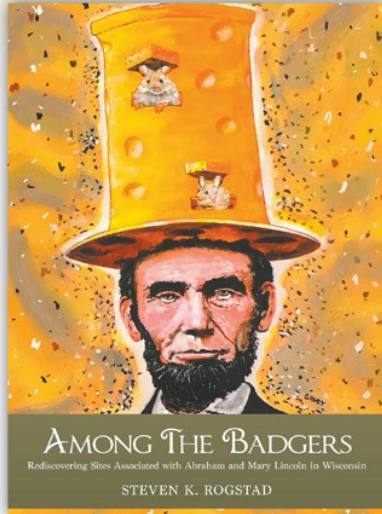
Dennis, son of Michael, born County Carlow, Ireland; died August 29, 1867, age 55.



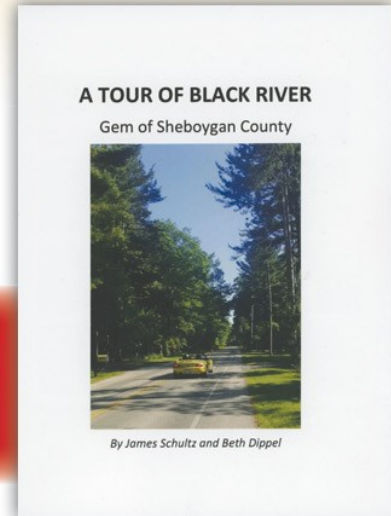
An aerial view of the land that Dennis and Bridget O'Rourke once owned in sections 21 and 28 in the town of Mitchell, Sheboygan County.

Drone image courtesy of Jeremie Dippel

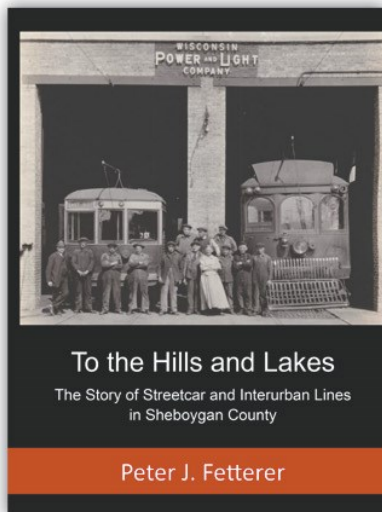
Locally Themed Books about Sheboygan County



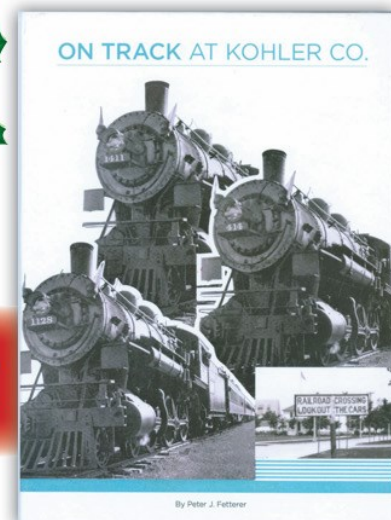
Among the Badgers
by Steven K. Rogstad



A Tour of Black River
by James Schultz
and Beth Dippel



To the Hills and Lakes
by Peter J. Fetterer



On Track at Kohler Co.
by Peter Fetterer



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Tuesday-Friday: 9:00am-4:00pm

GIFT CERTIFICATES • GIFT MEMBERSHIPS • MAPS • PHOTOS

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

In Memory of a Friend

This past August the Research Center lost one of its long time friends and volunteers. Doris Kraus started volunteering at SCHRC in the fall of 1992. She began as a board member and stayed on as an outstanding volunteer.

Doris did everything to help at the Research Center, but she ended up being our filing guru. A regular on Thursdays, Doris volunteered for nearly thirty years. She loved the Research Center, and everyone at the Research Center loved Doris.

The photo at right is of Doris at work, doing what she loved. The photo was taken last year when she had passed her 90th birthday. We are in awe.

So please take a moment to remember something fun about Doris. She gave much to the Research Center. We are grateful for her service and are lucky to have known her. Please keep her family in your thoughts.



Doris Steenport Kraus
(1930-2021)

