



*The Researcher* is the official newsletter of the Sheboygan County Historical Research Center, 518 Water Street, Sheboygan Falls, WI 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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## **Welcome New Members**

Daniel Fosterling — Hudson  
Reid Van Sluys — Cedarburg  
Theresa Schaub — Fond du Lac  
Joellyn Weinshrott — Fond du Lac  
Leah Hibl — Sheboygan  
William Moir — Plymouth  
Ted Thieme — Sheboygan

## **Program Schedule**

### **Second Saturdays**

*at Plymouth Arts Center, 520 East Mill Street, Plymouth, WI — 9:30 to 11:30 am*

September 14 – The Reformatory: Tales from Green Bay’s Maximum Security Prison presented by Joe Verdegan

October 12 – Fire, Shipwreck & Cheese presented by Amy L. Rosebrough

November 9 – Sheboygan’s Vollrath Park and North Point Neighborhoods presented by Travis Gross

### **Gravestone Cleaning Workshops**

*Saturdays, 9 to 10 am*

**Please register by calling (920) 467-4667.**

August 24 – Hingham Cemetery, County Road CC, Hingham

September 14 – Farmin Cemetery, on Highway 28 approximately four miles west of Sheboygan Falls

October 5 – Union Cemetery, 231 Division Street, Plymouth

### **History on the Move**

*at Generations, 1500 Douglas Drive, Plymouth — 1 pm*

Tuesday, August 13 – Peach Crates & Comic Books presented by Rich Dykstra

### **Book Club**

*at 517 Monroe Street, Sheboygan Falls — 1 to 2:30 pm*

Thursday, September 19 – *Grant’s Tomb: The Epic Death of Ulysses S. Grant and the Making of an American Pantheon* by Louis L. Picone

**Please register by calling (920) 467-4667.**

### **Taproom History – Presidential Disability and Mortality**

*at Racer’s Hall, W4408 County Road C, Plymouth — 6:30 pm*

*Presented by Steven Rogstad*

Thursday, June 27 – James Garfield’s Slow and Cruel Death

Thursday, July 18 – Grover Cleveland’s Secret Surgery

Thursday, August 15 – Woodrow Wilson’s Paralytic Stroke

### **Annual Meeting**

*at Amore, 18 W Mill St., Plymouth — 11 am to 1 pm*

Friday, October 11 – How the Ho Chunk Thwarted Removal from Wisconsin presented by Stephen Kantrowitz

### **Lincoln Seminar – Lincoln and the Occult**

*at Racer’s Hall, W4408 County Road C, Plymouth — 6:30 to 8:30 pm*

*Presented by Steven Rogstad*

Tuesday, October 8 – Abraham and Mary Lincoln’s Psychologies of Death

Tuesday, October 15 – Spiritualism and Seances in the White House

Tuesday, October 22 – Dreams, Omens, Portents, and Ghosts

Tuesday, October 29 – The Plot to Steal Lincoln’s Corpse

# Let's Develop Our Center

All of us at the Research Center hope this summer season finds you healthy and happy! We are calling 2024 the Year of the Volunteer, for they are truly the life blood of this organization by the hours of service they dedicate to the organization on a daily basis and the passion they have for local and regional history.

The Center will be closed for regular business August 5 to 16 in order that we may catch up on archiving and concentrate on collection care. We will also be using this time to work on cleaning up flower beds and landscaping projects. So, if you have an interest in gardening or outdoor projects, please consider giving a few hours of your time. We still need perennials. Do you have some you could donate? Every plant and donated minute of labor helps the cause and further enhances the exterior beauty of our buildings.

Another project we need assistance with is shelving assembly. We have received generous donations



for shelving for the Adams Street building, which will become the Center's main storage facility for collections. Industrial shelving was recently delivered and awaits assembly. It would be wonderful if we could have a few volunteers assemble shelving for a few hours. Can you help? Do you have friends or family who can? It also would be a perfect community service project for young people.

Projects aside, we are continually recruiting for volunteers to process collections at the Center. It may involve filing, scanning, or entering information onto a computer. If you enjoy researching and solving mysteries, we have that for you, too! So, please consider visiting to see what volunteerism at the Center is all about.

We will offer the last session of presidential mortality and disability at Taproom History on August 15, where we will examine "Woodrow Wilson's Paralytic Stroke." Racer's Hall in Plymouth has been our new host this season. The audiences for our public programs continue to grow. We hope you can make it.

Finally, I would like to give an update on the SCHRC's new history book club. To date, we have read fascinating studies on FDR's funeral train, relationships between ex-presidents, the carving of Mt. Rushmore, and an aeronautical study of 9-11. We currently are reading a book entitled, *Grant's*

*Tomb: The Epic Death of Ulysses S. Grant and the Making of an American Pantheon*, by Louis L. Picone. The club will next meet on Thursday, September 19, 1:00 to 2:30 pm, in the Mersberger Building on the SCHRC campus. You can get details under the "Events" tab on our website.

Please review the new building work-flow chart on page 11. It shows how collection care and management will be handled in the days ahead. The Adams Street facility will provide substantial space for collection storage. Donations and acquisitions will continue to come to the Millhouse, then transferred to the new Mersberger Building for processing, then transferred to the Adams Street Building for storage. This will permit quicker processing of collections and improved storage capabilities.

Keep checking the SCHRC website – [www.schrc.org](http://www.schrc.org) – for updates on events and activities.

As always, thank you for all you do to support and help develop our Research Center!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven K. Rogstad". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'S' and 'R'.

Steven K. Rogstad  
Executive Director  
[steverogstad@schrc.org](mailto:steverogstad@schrc.org)

It was on a Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, not long after her arrival, the Empire of Japan attacked the US Fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Just hours later, on December 8, 1941, Japanese bombers and fighters attacked the Philippines, and Japanese infantry landed at several key beaches on the main island of Luzon.<sup>3</sup> The primary target for the Japanese bombers on December 9 was the Nichols Field Fighter Base near Fort McKinley, where Alice was stationed.<sup>4</sup> At 12:40 p.m. the bombers came followed by the fighters coming down in low-level strafing attacks.

On December 13, Alice's unit was evacuated from Fort McHenry and moved to Manila where hospitals had been established to care for the wounded that kept coming in. Every day they anxiously awaited the arrival of supplies that never came. On December 22, 1941, forty-three thousand well-trained, well-equipped, battle-hardened Japanese soldiers came ashore at Lingayen Gulf in northern Luzon Province. On December 24, the Japanese landed another seven thousand infantrymen at Lamon Bay at Manila's back door, and General Douglas MacArthur, commander of the United States and Filipino forces in the Philippines, left Manila for Corregidor and declared Manila an open city.<sup>5</sup>

For nearly three months the American and Filipino forces held the Japanese at bay. When the Japanese finally broke through, the defenders and the army medical corps retreated to the very tip of Bataan Peninsula where the treatment of the war wounded continued until Bataan surrendered in April 1942.

The Bataan peninsula extends into Manila Bay from the southwestern coast of Luzon. It was a wild place, part jungle, part mountain preserve. A land of monkeys, snakes, wild pigs, leeches, hordes of malaria carrying mosquitoes, dengue fever, dysentery, skin fungus, etc. Then there was the oppressive heat and the suffocating humidity. The nurses, without the proper equipment, very little food, hardly any sleep, amid the shelling, the bombing, and the fighter attacks, worked in jungle field hospitals tending to the wounded. They started transfusions, sutured wounds, administered medications. They assisted doctors in all manner of surgeries tending to the most devastating injuries of war in the face of the advancing Japanese troops. They improvised what they needed from what they had on hand. They made improvements in resuscitation, trauma care, patient transport, blood storage and distribution, and triage. These "Angels of Bataan" as they were called had become the first group of ANC nurses sent onto the battlefield for duty.

MacArthur was ordered to report to Australia and Lt. General Jonathon M. Wainwright took command of the United States and Filipino forces in the Philippines. Major General Edward P. King, Jr., took command of the United States and Filipino forces on Bataan peninsula. On April 9, 1942, General King surrendered to the Japanese. The Japanese took about 75,000 American and Filipino prisoners. Some soldiers managed to escape to the island fortress of Corregidor in Manila Bay. There they held out until May 6, 1942.

Alice and other ANC nurses were taken prisoner on May 6, 1942, at Corregidor and trucked to the prison hospital at Santa Catalina Convent in Manila. On August 25, 1942, they were imprisoned on the campus of Santo Tomas University, which had been turned into an internment camp. The camp had very limited space and the living conditions were extremely congested. They literally were living on top of one another. The internees lived in huts they had built themselves. They managed to construct 600 such structures and named the shanty town "Foggy Bottom."

In the beginning, the internees had no direct contact with the Japanese. Military prisons came under the control of the Imperial Japanese Army. The civilian internment camps like Santo Tomas were governed by the

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<sup>3</sup> The Japanese attack on the Philippines occurred on December 8, not December 7, because the islands are across the International Date Line from Hawaii.

<sup>4</sup> Ninoy Aquino Airport.

<sup>5</sup> A city declared to be unfortified and undefended and so, by international law, exempt from enemy attack.



Department of External Affairs. The Executive Committee and Advisory Committee appointed by and composed of internees dealt with the Japanese civilians who were in charge, and they in turn relayed orders to the internees. The Japanese gave the Executive Committee a financial allotment of thirty-five cents (\$8.00 in 2024) per person per day to be applied toward the purchase of all food, utilities, medical supplies, construction, maintenance, and sanitation materials for a population that would number 3,800 men, women, and children.

Alice's family wrote to her on a regular basis; however, she received only six letters during her imprisonment at Santo Tomas. She was allowed to send only one postcard home every six weeks, none of which ever arrived. The only letters received by her family were those she wrote before December 7, 1941, and they arrived in January 1942. Her parents were notified that Alice had been listed as missing at Corregidor since May 7, 1942. In 1943 word came from the government that she was a prisoner at Santo Tomas Internment Camp aka STIC.

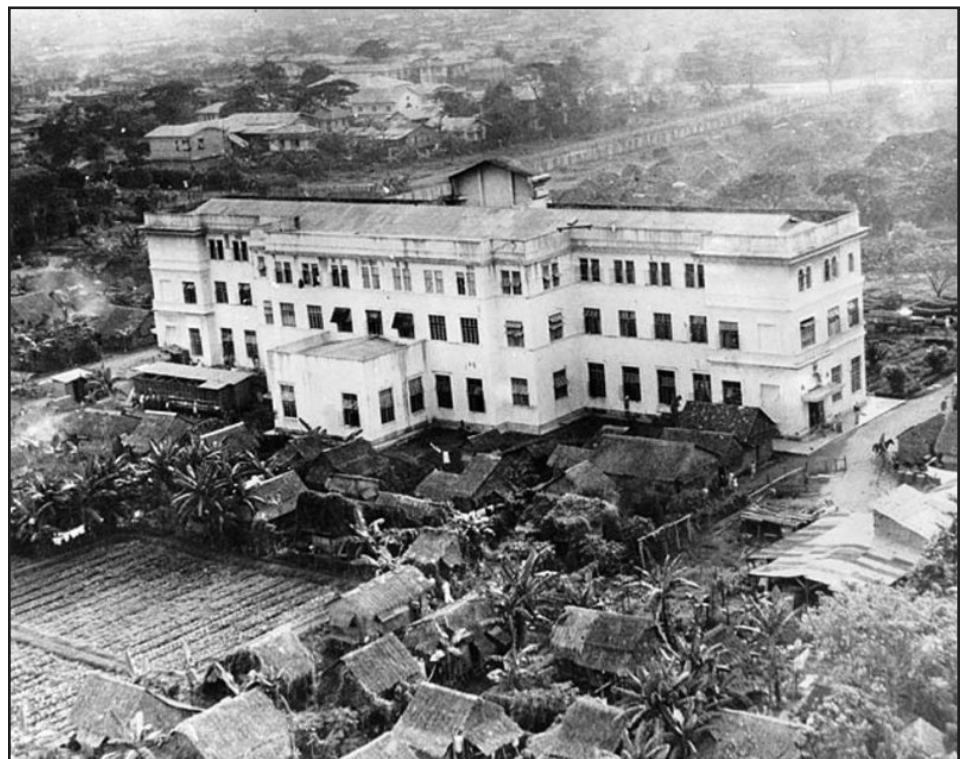
When the Japanese army took over the camp from the Japanese civilians in February 1944 it was a worn and shabby place. The new camp commandant, Colonel S. Onozaki, immediately established harsher restrictions. He declared he was responsible for his men but was not responsible for the prisoners or their welfare. He openly announced that the

rules of the Geneva Convention and International Law "are not recognized here." Surprise inspections and unannounced searches at all hours increased. The rodent control center, the soap shop, textile shop, and library were closed.

Onozaki abolished the Executive Committee. He severely cut the food rations even when the internees were fainting from malnutrition on the stairways, in the halls, and standing and waiting in the endless chow lines. He replaced meat from the daily diet with fish three times a week.

All the food was prepared in a central kitchen. The internees were given just two handfuls of rice a day. Meals consisted of watery rice soup, potato greens, sweet

potatoes, and bits of dried fish. The fish smelled so bad the prisoners had to hold their noses to eat them; however, they ate them because it was their only source of calcium in their diet and vital to their overall well-being. Some ate weeds and peelings from the kitchen and whatever else they found growing in the compound. These "pickings" were then fried in cold cream to supplement the kitchen food. Sugar, all meats and meat substitutes, poultry, bread, butter, and eggs became unavailable. Milk for the children was cut-off. Some ate the cooked meat of dogs and cats. Even permission to buy food was withdrawn. The Japanese gave no reason for such a draconian action. Many internees felt sure the Japanese were trying to control them or kill them by starvation. It was more likely that the Japanese



*Santo Tomas University and "Foggy Bottom" shanty town 60 acres surrounded by a twelve-foot-high stone and concrete wall.*

were just indifferent toward the prisoners. They were treated as more of an annoyance, and they did not care if they lived or died. As far as the Japanese were concerned the internees were to fend for themselves.

Onozaki announced he planned to isolate the camp from any contact with the outside, and the internees could expect more and harsher regulations than in the past. No longer would bundles of extra food, clothing, house wares, or provisions be allowed into camp. Each month brought new restrictions.

There were few resources to combat the illness and death that went unchecked through the camp from the beginning. Along with the doctors that were held captive, there were 69 ANC nurses. The nurses were permitted to set up a hospital on the campus, but the death rate continued to run high especially among the older people mostly due to malnutrition.

Sallie Durrett described her three years at STIC as, “waiting in a long line for a meager meal two times a day, waiting in line to go to the bathroom or take a shower, waiting in the hot sun for three hours for a half a cup of salt, waiting in line to wash my clothes in a tin trough, waiting for some word from home.”

The Japanese had an intense dislike for the Red Cross. During an interview Alice gave shortly after arriving home in 1945 she said:

“To my knowledge no Red Cross representatives were ever

permitted on the island during the period of our confinement. I do remember that in December 1943 Red Cross supplies did get through to us. There were some 48-pound kits containing food, clothing, and medical supplies that helped a lot in minimizing, at least temporarily, the ordeal of imprisonment. But that was our last contact with the Red Cross until our release. Rumors of ‘More Red Cross supplies are on their way’ ran rampant at the approach of the 1944 Christmas season ...but they were apparently unfounded. The Japanese firmly prohibited the supplies from coming through.”

On the morning of September 21, 1944, the sky was filled with the sound of droning aircraft overhead. When the planes broke through the cloud cover, those on the ground could see white stars and blue circles on the wings. The planes were American! One of the liberated nurses, Lt. Winifred (“Winnie”) Madden of Montello, Wisconsin, recounted, “Oh, it was a beautiful sight—those planes.” Seeing those planes and realizing that liberation might be near was unforgettable.

October 20, 1944, at Leyte Gulf far south of Manila, a large force of American forces came ashore to liberate the Philippines. Troops under command of General MacArthur landed on Southern Bataan. They captured key points on Corregidor and opened Manila Bay. 🍃

Part 2 of this story will continue in the October issue of *The Researcher*.

## Used Books for Sale



We have several duplicates of area school yearbooks that are available for sale in our bookstore. Stop in today to see our selection! The following issues are available for purchase:

### Lake Breeze (Sheboygan Central/South High School)

1927, 1943, 1945, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1957, 1958, 1968, 1969, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1979, 1990

### Quit–Qui–Oc (Plymouth High School)

1941, 1944, 1950, 1953, 1954

### Pangissin (Sheboygan Falls High School)

1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1971, 1975, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1982

### Polaris (Sheboygan North High School)

1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1971, 1972, 1973



**Suggested Donation:  
\$5 each**





### **Thirteen-Sided Barn**

The thirteen-sided barn located on County Road J northeast of Plymouth was built by Rudolph Lueder in 1916. The style originated from northern Holland, where the round style was used because storms came from all directions. The multiple sides withstand the winds better than broadside barns. The lumber, which includes oak, elm, and tamarack, was taken from wood lots on the farm. The logs were cut into various sizes in a sawmill constructed about two years before building the barn.

Adolph Suhrke and a crew of 12 carpenters started the project and were later joined by his brother Emil Suhrke and his 12-man crew. First, they built the silo and half of the barn foundation. The original barn was then razed and the foundation was completed. Construction started in early spring and the structure was completed in late July with the new lumber and the lumber of the old barn.

The perimeter of the barn measures 275 feet. Twelve of the sides are 19-1/2 feet each with a 14 foot opening. The overall height of the structure is 65 feet at the peak, the cupola, which covers the 16 by 55-foot silo. The roof area is 7,200 square feet. The rafters and joists are a mixture of 2x8's and hand-hewn beams. Timbers for the thresh floor and loft are anchored in the silo and supported by 8x8-inch posts at the perimeter. Hay was stored around the silo core on the top two levels.

To facilitate storing crops, a wagon may be driven around the silo, eliminating the need to back out. The foundation and part of the wall is made of fieldstone and concrete. The remainder is double brick with an air space between. The air space assists in keeping the housing area warm and dry year-round without the use of fans. Around the silo are 48 stanchions and four pens which house calves.

The barn was awarded Sheboygan County Landmark status in 1977. 🍀

# Volunteer Spotlight

**Ken Richter**  
Kiel, WI



## **Tell us a little about yourself.**

I was born in Sheboygan Falls in 1940 and had a Huckleberry Finn lifestyle living adjacent to the Sheboygan River. For the next twelve years and thru high school, I worked part time jobs about town; hiked or biked within five miles of town; observed people both regular and unusual in our community; and lived next to the dam as the new cement dam was built. I enjoy exploring the many small, country cemeteries, but the gravestones tend to be made from soft stone and after a hundred years, they become difficult to read.

## **How long have you been volunteering at the Center?**

I have been a volunteer for about ten years and show up at the Research Center anywhere from one to three times a week.

## **What prompted you to volunteer?**

I have a strong desire to help the Research Center's clients with their research.

## **What are your favorite projects to work on at the Center?**

There are a variety of activities I enjoy doing such as scanning photo negatives of the Sheboygan Press, special projects suggested by staff, and flower bed care. What is nice is that I choose what to do and when to do it as a volunteer should be able to.

## **Tell us about why you enjoy genealogy?**

Some people ask me why I find looking for deceased family so interesting and compelling. I am totally in awe at the sacrifice and risk that was taken by those before me. I am amazed at their purpose and reason to leave the homeland and the risks they took to bring their families here. As I enter the ending years of my life, I wonder if my ancestors would look favorably at the progress I have achieved with my family. Have the results of my life been worthy of the sacrifices made by my ancestors before me? Hopefully, in time I will be able to meet them and learn more of their opinion and wisdom.





### **Sheboygan's Civil War Monument**

The monument in memory of the fallen soldiers and sailors of the United States who gave their services and lives in defense of the United States during the Civil War has graced the southeast entrance of Sheboygan's Fountain Park will celebrate its 135th anniversary this year.

On October 7, 1889, with appropriate ceremonies, the monument was formally dedicated. US Senator John C. Spooner delivered the dedication oration, and the John Schmidt band furnished the music. The inscription on the monument reads, "In Remembrance of the Heroes Who Fought for the Union 1861–1865."

Conceived at a meeting of the Gustavus Wintermeyer Post, Grand Army of the Republic on July 14, 1888, a resolution was adopted which read in part, "That a monument be erected in some suitable place in the City of Sheboygan in honor and memory of all the fallen and dead heroes of the War of the Rebellion, from 1861 to 1865, and that efforts be made to raise the necessary funds."

Henry Stocks was appointed to select a number of men for "The Soldiers' Monument Committee," and chosen were James H. Mead, George End, Thomas M. Blackstock, Michael Winter, and John M. Kohler.

Henry Scheele (1854–1928) was awarded the contract at a cost of \$5,000. The committee made plans for a four-day fundraising fair to be held in October at Concordia Hall. Citizens were urged to donate items to sell. The fair was a decided success raising \$1,891.06. Private citizens and members of the Gustavus Wintermeyer Post raised the necessary money above the proceeds of the fair. Thomas Blackstock alone donated \$1,000 to the fund.

The granite was cut and chiseled at the quarries in Barre, Vermont. The quality was so durable that a planned bronze plate was not used, the inscription being cut on the third-tier stone which forms the base. The weight of the granite is 75 tons. It required six platform cars for transport to Sheboygan.

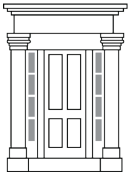
The monument in Fountain Park will stand to remind the present and future generations of their obligations to those who helped to save and preserve the Union and to those of the latter's contemporaries who manifested their gratitude for such service – not merely in words, but in enduring granite. 🍀



# Collection Spotlight



Archiving is a marathon, not a sprint. Sixteen or so years ago, the *Plymouth Review* office called and said that their hard copy photographs, of both the *Review* and the *Sheboygan Falls News*, were stored in a not so ideal outbuilding and they thought the Research Center should house them. We filled three vehicles and brought the boxes of photos back to the Mill House. Since then, the photos have been put in envelopes by date and boxed by year. Each photo has been labeled according to what was published in the newspaper. The *Review* has been kind enough to loan us the bound copies of the paper by year, to make this process quite easy. Through countless hours and numerous volunteers, we're excited that we can say 30 years (1966–1986) have been indexed and can be searched at this time! Only 15 more years of photos to go! We're in the home stretch!



## Collection Care & Management Plan

### Work

Acquisitions are accepted and await processing.



### Benefits

Donors will continue to interact with Millhouse staff for collection deposits.

Collections will be transferred to Mersberger in a timely manner to avoid taking up space.

Library will continue to be used by researchers, who will not have to compete for space with volunteers.

### Work

Acquisitions are assessed and processed by volunteers.



### Benefits

Volunteers will not compete with researchers for space and equipment at Millhouse.

Increased work area space expedites collection processing.

Scanning Lab will digitize collections not requiring physical storage.

### Work

Collections are transferred to Adams from Mersberger for storage.



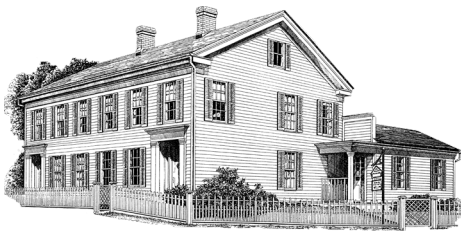
### Benefits

Facility has adequate space for deep-storage of collections.

Frees up storage space at Millhouse & Mersberger.

Provides easier, enhanced, and improved access to collections.





Sheboygan County  
Historical Research Center  
518 Water Street  
Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085



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August 5 – 16

