

Mansion News

From the President

Those of us who live in and around Marshfield are very fortunate to be surrounded by people who take pride in our community, and feel obligated to contribute in some way to make life even better. This spirit of giving is not unique to our area. Most other cities have a core of people who spend their free time, and use their talents or other resources to benefit people or programs or facilities.

In that same spirit, the North Wood County Historical Society is active today, striving to preserve the history of Marshfield and northern Wood County. The mission of NWCHS is to collect objects, including documents and photographs related to our local history, and to educate others of our history. We answer requests for information by others for research projects, as well as providing displays throughout the year for visitors to the Governor W.H. Upham house.

Marshfield is in the midst of a visible spirit of giving back to the community. The new facilities at Wildwood Park, the new Everett Roehl Marshfield Public Library, and various recreation facilities through the years are all the result of people giving back to the community in the form of monetary contributions.

This entire newsletter is intended to make people aware of things happening in our organization, as well as provide historic tidbits of interest for people to enjoy. If you look back through more recent copies of this newsletter, you will easily recognize a theme from the message I have personally been presenting.

I am fortunate to be entrusted by the active members of the NWCHS to make people aware of the ongoing need to include more people in our activities, because more hands tend to make the work a little easier. We simply would not exist without this help.

Just as important, the North Wood County Historical Society is consistently faced with monetary needs. We have recently increased the hours our coordinator Kim Krueger is available at the house to assist people in their searches, as well as consistently archiving new contributions of items and documents. We have completed our two year painting project this year in an effort to insure the preservation and to improve the appearance of the Upham house.

We conduct various fund raising projects throughout the year, but we compete with other organizations like ours in trying to gain attention to our mission, and with it, our services and our needs. Reality tells us there is only so much to go around – volunteers as much as money.

We realize the importance of our existence in the name of local history, but more importantly for future generations. And we have SO much to share.

I invite you to provide us with a bit of your spare time. Get involved - either physically or financially. You will find your involvement in the NWCHS rewarding as I have. Oh, and tell your friends.



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Bette Adler 1919-2016



The late Bill Upham shares a chuckle with Bette in 2008

On August 16 Marshfield lost one of its celebrated daughters with the passing of Bette Adler at the age of 97. Wherever you met Bette, be it out in town, at a restaurant or event, you could not miss her gentle and gracious nature. She always had a ready smile and was kind to all those around her. Years ago Bette had donated material of the Adler family's theater memorabilia and whenever she came to the Upham House to visit we would bring them out for her to see again.

She was always so happy to go through the old scrapbooks laden with show-bills, programs, pictures and autographs of once famous stars. It was a joy to see. Kris Leonhardt used some of this material as she wrote her book *Showstopper: The Adler Family and the Dawn of the Movie Industry* featured later in this newsletter.

NWCHS expresses its condolences to Bette's family.

In Kind Donations

NWCHS would like to thank the following individuals and businesses for the following contributions:

Karen Bittrich for donating funds to go towards, and for **Off the Wall Custom Framing** for the provision of two pieces of Plexiglas. These pieces are being used to help create a safe display space in one of the shelving units in the Upham House's library.

Tami Jackan for donating an iOS7 iPad which will be used for virtual tours of the Upham House. Some individuals are not able to make it to the 2nd story and this will allow people to 'tour' the upstairs exhibits!

I Brandl Inc. and Ken Wood for donating mulch for the Upham gardens.

Paul Rogers and Scott Kordan of Roger's Cinema: popcorn for Kris Leonhardt's presentation on the Adler's family business in the 1920s,

If you have an article you would like to submit to Mansion News, please contact us!

LaMere Photography Bellows Camera



Anne (LaMere) Nikolai her brother Vern LaMere donated a bellows camera and stand which belonged to their father Vern LaMere. The camera dated to the early 1920s and was one that Anne said she remembered being with the family since she was little.

I do remember Dad using the bellows camera.' Vern said in an email, 'He used it at old studio on 4th street. I would go to [the] studio when I was little to do odd jobs and would often watch Mom and Dad take pictures. They made a great team.'

Anne adds: '*this would have been late*

60s even early 70s and later. The studio was in the WD Connor building behind what was Sears at that time (across alley) and the old bank and Severts were across 4th'

The LaMeres kept photograph negatives in the Central State Bank's vault for safekeeping.

LaVern and Theresa LaMere owned and operated LaMere Photography in Marshfield from 1947 to 2002. They started in a home studio at 607 W. Fourth St. and moved to a few locations 108 W. 4th St. in 1954; 6th & Central in 1981 and finally in 1985 to 405 S. Chestnut Ave. LaMere Photography photographed weddings, industrial businesses, and legal photos, but most their efforts went towards portraits for graduates, couples, families, and groups.

LaVern passed away in 2003, Theresa in 2012

The Governor's Mother Comes to Stay

James Upham, the 3 times great grandson of Sarah Derby Upham—and the 2 times great grand nephew to William H. Upham Sr., recently contacted the NWCHS to contribute this beautiful oil painting.

Sarah Derby Upham, mother of William H. Upham, died in 1878, the very year William and Mary Upham moved to Marshfield. She lived most her Wisconsin life in Racine but in her later years lived for a period of time in Shawano with her daughter Mary Russell, who was married to Charles Upham's partner H.C. Russell of Upham and Russell store in Shawano. (Charles and Mary were William Upham's brother and sister) The portrait stayed in the Charles Upham family line and was eventually passed down to James.

Governor Upham's Furniture Restored



The furniture Governor Upham had made for himself back in the late 1890s and, when the House was sold

to the NWHCS in 1976 had been taken to Milwaukee by Bill Upham, has come back to the Upham House. Bill's daughters Darby Upham and Monie Upham donated three pieces back to the Society and even helped finance its delivery and restoration. Included in the collection are a four

poster bed, chiffonier and low boy dresser. The three pieces were restored by Shelby Weister and her grandson, Tom Wagner Jr.. NWCHS would like to thank Shelby and Tom for spending many hours on the Governor's furniture and helping to bring it back to its former glory.

These, along with a tall dresser that was in storage and part of the suite were placed in the upstairs north west bedroom.

An adjoining room has a later set of Upham Manufactured furniture which had been made for Mary Upham, the Governor's first wife, and dates to the early 1900s.

Marshfield Area Genealogy Group's New Home



First meeting for the MAGG in their new room.
Photo by Vickie Schnitzler

If you have not yet been in the new Everett Roehl Marshfield Public Library one of the spaces you need to see is the Felker Local History and Genealogy Room! This beautiful, spacious area now has all the genealogical resources in one place. Housed on shelves and in original oak cabinetry you can find city tax rolls, Marshfield News Herald clippings, research books and files that cover not only Wood County history but Wisconsin and even other nations: German, Italian and Irish immigrants – to name a few! Many of these resources were donated by area genealogists who want to help people find the information they seek. Some of these collections one would find in larger city libraries—and they are right here in Marshfield!



The portrait of Sarah Derby Upham now graces the north wall in Governor Upham House parlor.

Make A Difference Day October 22nd Upham Yard Winter Prep



Saturday Oct. 22nd
9 am—12:30pm
Coffee and snacks provided

We will be preparing the Upham yard for winter and could use your help! Come on out and enjoy the outdoors and hanging out with some great people!
Bring work gloves and a rake if you have one.

Marshfield Memories Project



Drew Fitzgerald with Pediment Publishing & Don Schnitzler work on scanning and identifying photos.

This spring from May 14th—19th Drew Fitzgerald from Pediment Publishing worked with the NWCHS, the Marshfield Public Library and people from the public to scan photos for the upcoming *Marshfield Memories*, which is being presented by the *Marshfield Hub City Times*. This hardcover book filled 136 pages of photos of Marshfield spanning between the 1800s to 1939. It will be on sale at the Upham House in December.

A huge thank you to 'Schnitz' Schnitzler, Dolly Kobs, Ruth Voss, Shirley Mook, Gene Greenwald, and George Winkler for going through the proof copy with a fine tooth comb to make sure the images and information were accurate!

Kris Leonhardt's New Book—*Showstopper: The Adler Family and the Dawn of the Movie Industry*

Kris' latest book features the life and enterprise of JP Adler and his family as they strove to bring the latest innovations in show business and theater to Marshfield and other communities.

While building one of Wisconsin's largest independent theater chains, J.P. struggles with the heavy hand of the production companies along with a multitude of obstacles. Growing up in a life of privilege, J.P.'s daughters, Anne & Bette find success outside the theater; however, the family business would remain a permanent fixture in their lives. (taken from the book's back cover) Books will be available in Marshfield at the Upham House and at Book World.

On Monday, *Sept. 19th Kris did an informative presentation entitled *The Rise of the Star -- the Adler family and the 1920s* in the J.P. Adler Room at the Everett Roehl Marshfield Public Library. On exhibit were Adler Theater artifacts loaned by Paul Rogers.



*If you missed Kris Leonhardt's presentation you can watch it on Marshfield Community Television <http://marshfieldtv.com/>

Decking the Upham Halls!

We will start decorating the Upham House for Christmas on the first weekend in November and subsequent weekends in order for the House to be ready for Christmas by our November 28th Annual Potluck.

If you have Santa Claus items we could use, or need more information, please call Kim 715.387.3322

Annual NWCHS Wreath & Garland Sale starts October 15!



We will be taking orders for the annual wreath and garland fundraiser starting October 15th. All **pre-paid** orders need to be in to Laura Ptak no later than Friday November 14th. The full order will be delivered to the Upham House on 21 November and you may pick up your order from there on the following dates & times: **Wed. Nov. 23rd 9am-2pm; Fri. Nov. 25th 9am-12pm; Sat. Nov. 26th 10am-2pm.** For more information please call Laura or Tom Ptak at 715-207-9928 or 715-207-9187; or email laura_Ptak4@yahoo.com

Proceeds will help support the North Wood Co. Historical Society

Jan Thomas Remembers Jefferson Elementary

The Jefferson School building is located on the south side of Marshfield on South Cedar Ave where the Main Street Conservatory of Dance is today. In 1941, when I was in 3rd or 4th grade, my family purchased a big white house located on the corner of Cedar and 14th, two blocks from Jefferson School . At that time 14th Street was known as Bakerville Street.

I loved school and was a good student. I was good in arithmetic and can still add correctly a row of numbers in a small amount of time. I especially liked Wednesdays, the day we got chocolate flavored iodine pills. The kids that did not like them would secretly give them to me and I would eat them all. I also loved art and to make cut out figures for scenes on the bulletin board. My 5th grade teacher, Mrs. Greenwood, was very strict, and I remember the boys would get hit across their knuckles when they were naughty. Especially when they pulled the girl's hair or stuck their hair into the inkwell.

One year for our school play we did Mother Goose rhymes. I wanted to be Cinderella but ended up being Little Bo Peep. Even though my best friend Audrey Fyksen got to be Cinderella I was happy for her. Audrey and I remained friends all through Jr. and Sr. High. She was like a sister to me.

We had a lot of fun on the play grounds. In the back of the school there was a drop-off and stairway into the basement. We called it the dungeon. The boys would chase the girls and tell us they would put us in the dungeon.

My dad was the janitor at Jefferson School. I would often go with my dad to the school at night and check on the furnace or something. Dad later became the supervising engineer—in other words, Head Janitor.

My brothers, Bob and Jerry and I all attended Jefferson and after I married Gordie Thomas in 1951 we built a home on S. Ash Ave, and all 4 of our children went to Jefferson, too. I was active as a Room Mother and later became a program director and in the end for 1 or 2 years served as the PTA President. We were a close-knit group of parents and always helped with all school events. I'm still friends with some of them.

For over six years I led a group of Campfire Girls. Mrs. John Crawford was my assistant and she was good at planning skits. One year we did a cute skit called "1776". Our grocery store furnished all the cookies, treats, and chocolate milk. This was a long time ago! My daughter, Sue, is now 56 and she was in my troop.

Now when I drive by the old Jefferson School it brings back many happy memories. I'm glad to see it is still standing!



Located at 1008 S. Cedar Ave., the construction for the Jefferson School started in 1911 and was completed in 1912 in a Neoclassical Revival style design by Henry VanRyn & Gerrit J deGelleke. In 1952 the tower was removed when the building was remodeled and expanded by Wausau architects Taylor Foster and Yasko.



In 2002 Jefferson Elementary was closed due to declining enrollment. The building stood vacant until March 2004 when Brian and Heather Conrad purchased it for the current Main Street Conservatory of Dance.

Native to Milwaukee, architect Henry VanRyn (1864-1936) had an impact in Marshfield. Nationally recognized, VanRyn designed over 175 buildings throughout Wisconsin. Of these 6 were built in Marshfield (the Deming House was designed but not built).

Marshfield VanRyn buildings:

- St. John's Grade School -1896
- McKinley High School -1898
- *Deming Building—1899
- *Tower Hall (old City Hall) - 1900
- Old Armory (W. 2nd St.) - 1900
- Deming House (not built) - 1904
- *Jefferson Elementary—1911

* Still standing

The North Wood County Historical Society needs you!
We are looking for folks interested in local history and who would like to help out with behind the scenes projects at the Upham House. It could be anything from helping out with the gardens, to working on archival material to helping out with tours. If you would like to get involved or just need more information, please contact Kim at uphammansion@frontier.com, or call

North Wood County Historical Society

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Marshfield, WI 54449

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE



Office Hours:

Mondays & Thursdays 9-1

Wednesdays 12-4

Tours: Wed & Sat 1-4

Or by appointment

Phone: 715.387.3322

E-mail:

uphammansion@frontier.com

Upcoming Events

- Oct. 15– Nov 4** Annual NWCHS Wreath & Garland Sale (pg. 4)
- Oct. 22nd** Make A Difference Day: Upham Yard Winter Prep Saturday: 9am to 12:30pm (pg.3)
- Oct. 21-22nd** Tenth Annual Local History & Historic Preservation Conference—Wisconsin Dells
- Nov. 1-22nd** Decking the Upham House Halls for Christmas
Call the office or email for more details (pg. 4)
- Nov. 28** Annual NWCHS Holiday Potluck Monday 6:30pm
- Dec 3 & 4** Annual Christmas Event! Sat & Sun. 1pm-4pm both days