

January 2019 Newsletter

Washington vs. Lincoln Presentation by Dale Reich

George Washington and Abraham Lincoln are usually acclaimed to be the two greatest presidents in American history. But how do they stack up against one another . . . their presidencies, their personalities, their strengths and weaknesses, and their backgrounds and experience?

Find out [on January 26, 2019](#) when Dale Reich presents "Washington vs. Lincoln: A Side-by-Side Look," at the Oconomowoc Historical Museum. Reich, an Oconomowoc native, holds a master's degree in history and has authored several books including some on local history. He currently specializes in lectures dealing with America's founding fathers and other significant historical figures.

ADMINISTRATOR

The close of the touring season ended with visits with Santa Claus! Our very own Board Director, Mac Dorn, was Santa Claus, himself! The children and parents enjoyed photos, treats, and games on December 2nd.

Also, "Tricks and a Treat" on October 27th was its usual success. We greeted over 300 festively-clad guests.

2,800 visitors walked through our museum in 2018, and those who commented stated how very surprised and pleased they were with the exhibits. Many of the visitors from our area were first-time tourists. Let's talk up the museum! It's our icon of history. Can we make it our goal to promote more of an awareness of this museum which all of us are so proud of and don't want others living in the area or visiting here to miss?

Society members should thank our Board of Directors for their fine leadership and for keeping us within budget for the 2018 Season. 2019 will be the challenging season because funds must be raised to replace the roof over our main exhibits area. It is estimated that the cost will be between \$50,000 & \$60,000. This high price is because the entire old roofing must be completely removed before a new roof is installed. We've postponed doing this for nearly eight years, but 2019 is the year the Exhibits Hall will have a new top!

THANK YOU - seems such a small accolade for the value we realize from our volunteers. Last year we focused on obtaining volunteers for the collection office and voila! We gained four energetic and willing people: Hilary Kruger, Pat Borgman, Liz Uhler, Jill Papke and hi school student Rory Eigenberger.

They help with typing, research, registering accessions, copy and scanning, packing and storage, and filing. Some are even happy to help with transporting artifacts to our new store room on the lower level, which is "heart raising" in more than one way!

Thanks also go to Jeff Lins and Chuck Laabs, who have cleaned and built shelving for the new storage area. This year they will continue to clean the entire lower level, which we are fairly certain has never been cleaned and which will provide more storage area.

COLLECTIONS

Some collections received were from:

- Pat Herro – Oconomowoc High School's late 1930s basketball and football records and photos, an original 2004 “Cracker Box” (unopened), an “Asparagus” label from the Oconomowoc Canning Co., and shopping bags from Andres and Snyder’s.
- Hillary Pritzlaff-Nathan – a blue velvet wedding dress and blue velvet hat made by “Ester Splies” of Milwaukee, an Oconomowoc Bicentennial Cookbook dated 1989, a DVD “Honor Flight” 2012, and numerous other booklets from the Oconomowoc School District, circa 1982 - 1990s.
- Janet Kosciński – collection of comic books from 1950s – 1960s, including Patsy Walker, Millie the Model, Life of Archie, Spider-Man, Betty and Veronica, etc.
- Kevin Laabs – tin coin bank shaped like a TV (a promotional item for Oconomowoc Bottling Co. 1950s), the top of a seltzer bottle produced by Dames Bottle Co. during prohibition, an office paste jar labeled “Produced by Bell Systems”, and a 1970 Green Bay Packer Game booklet with 10 residents from Oconomowoc pictured on one of the pages.

Many more significant donations were received and listed under 84 new collections in 2017. It takes many hours to list, photograph, and acknowledge a collection to the donor and pack or exhibit an artifact. And, we are still plowing through the large collections from the library!

EDUCATION/TOURS

The Education Committee has already started planning the winter and spring season. It appears its members will be very busy this winter putting the programs together. They are planning a community program, a special program for the Women’s Club, and one for the University Women’s Club. Then, in early spring, they will fill their time planning for the elementary schools who have begun to reserve their dates for the scheduled visits.

We applaud the committee for its dedication and for the quality programming. Thank you!

There is always room for more volunteers to help in the days of the elementary programs. Many individuals are needed to run the events smoothly. There are seven or eight locations in the museum and the committee has a 10-15 minute script written for each location for the presenters. The time also includes interaction with the students. It is a fun time. Please consider volunteering.

GREETERS & DOCENTS

Many, many thanks to all the docents and greeters who so faithfully guided all of our guests at the museum this past year! Our museum is a true treasure in Oconomowoc, and visitors are always impressed with our informational and beautiful exhibits!

I hope to see all of you when we open again in May 2019. And please remember that we are always looking for more volunteers. Talk to your friends and neighbors and tell them how much you enjoy helping at the museum!

Jacky Morgan, Chair

MEMBERSHIP

Happy New Year! Many thanks to all who have already sent in their 2019 membership dues! A green registration form and note were included in the Annual Fund Drive appeal which was sent out in November. Many of you replied at that time, but if you haven't had a chance to send in your dues, please consider joining us once again in our efforts to preserve Oconomowoc's history. The membership form can be found on our web site under the "Join Us" button in the upper ribbon of each page. You can print out a form and mail it with your check to the museum; or, if your membership information has not changed, you can just mail a check, and I can update your account using the information on your check. Our annual dues are still at their very low price of \$12.00 for seniors and \$15.00 for those under age 65. Don't delay! We need you!

Within the last three months, the following members have joined our society:

Theresa Levenhagen
Robert Moulton
Robert Nienas
William G. Sanders
Jim and Karen Groose
Stapleton Realty LTD

Welcome to you all! We look forward to working with you in our Society's activities. We are always in need of new people willing to invest time and energy in our organization, so don't hesitate to talk up our organization to friends and family.

Our membership rolls as of December 2018 show a total of 147 memberships, with a breakdown of 68 single memberships, and 38 (76) couples memberships, along with 3 student memberships. In addition, there are also 7 organization/business/municipal membership and 30 free memberships.

BIRTHDAYS AND SPECIAL DAYS

Have you thought of giving a Historical Society membership or purchasing one of our historical books or DVDs for that special day of celebration? All would be great gifts that would last the entire year and give hours of entertainment.

Barb Elwood-Goetsch, Chair

FACEBOOK

Visitors topped 8,000 with 48 new visitors, and 4,964 engaged in conversation in December, so interest continues to thrive! The Oconomowoc main street photograph of horse-drawn sleds on the light, snow-covered dirt road parked outside Lorleberg's in the 1800s has been popular on our Facebook page. Posting photos and sometimes a brief history is time consuming -- but a labor of love from our volunteers. Just think: if we received \$10 per visitor on Facebook, our roof would be funded! Please consider a small donation.

Like the News? Become a member and see the timely and full newsletter with photos.