

## The Revival of Haumerson's Pond

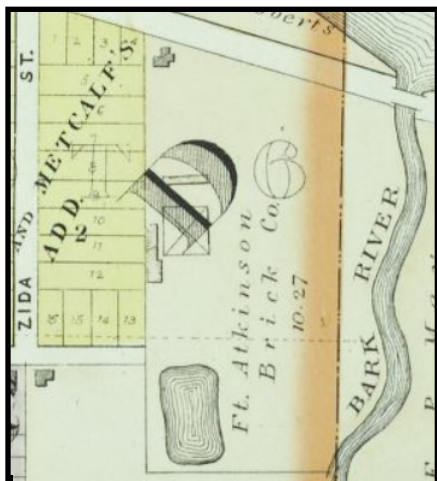
By Dana Bertelsen, Assistant Director

When a town has a history of more than 180 years, the town's landscape is bound to change. Land is settled, first used for the original owners' intent, and then altered for new ideas, innovation, or to suit a new need. This adaptive reuse, the process of reusing an old site for a new purpose, ensures that buildings and land are always relevant and valuable to the citizens of Fort Atkinson. What's old can become new again.

Currently, Haumerson's Pond is in the process of revival. This work has been done by the non-profit Friends of Haumerson's Pond organization alongside enthusiastic supporters. The organization's most noticeable efforts have been the addition of the two-story warming house, but their greatest contribution has been the renewed camaraderie of our community at the pond. For decades, the pond was a meeting place and source of entertainment and pleasure. Slowly, it fell out of favor. Thanks to the work of the Friends of Haumerson's Pond, what's old is new again and the pond is again a source of entertainment and enjoyment for our community.

Originally, the pond area was a lowland alongside the Bark and River. In the mid-1860s, Lemuel Marvin

Roberts converted the land into a brickyard, which he sold to William Haumerson in 1886. The location was excellent for a brickyard as there was a natural abundance of clay, the main ingredient in bricks. As the companies removed the clay, a pond was formed.



1899 Jefferson County Plat Map of the Fort Atkinson Brick Company



1st Warming House, 1920s-1950s



2nd Warming House, Removed in 1990s

By 1909, the Fort Atkinson Brick Manufacturing Company closed and the land was vacant until the city purchased the land on June 13, 1917 and used it as the city's septic tank. By the 1920s, the city repurposed the land again for recreation—it became the city's skating pond.

From the 1920s through the mid-1980s, the pond was a popular place for community members to skate. The first warming shack was set on the west edge of the pond in the 1920s and remained through the 1950s. The shack was a combination of the two food stands that were previously in Jones Park. The second warming shack was portable and sat on the south-east end of the pond. It was removed in the 1990s.

The skating pond fell in popularity in the 1980s. It is unclear why, although the possible decline in popularity of skating as a winter sport, poor ice quality in the 1980s and 1990s, and a lack of community or civic involvement may be the cause for the land's neglect. Without care, the pond returned to a more natural state and became less skating-friendly.

*(Continued on page 4)*

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www.hoardmuseum.org  
www.facebook.com/hoardmuseum  
Hours: Tuesday – Saturday  
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Closed Sundays & Mondays

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## Merrilee's Musings

By Merrilee Lee, Museum Director



Every newsletter that we publish has an unofficial theme, an unintended story line that keeps appearing throughout our articles. This newsletter's unofficial theme? Community.

Fort Atkinson is not my hometown, but it is certainly home now. And I can't help but compare and contrast it to other communities I've called home. Of all the places I've lived, Fort Atkinson and Jefferson County have the strongest sense of community running through it. This sense of place creates a pride in what we do and encourages others to step forward to help. All of our communities, schools, community organizations, historical societies, libraries, and other cultural institutions were created to enrich the lives of those who live here, wherever "here" is.

Here in Fort Atkinson, our community worked to reinvigorate Haumerson's Pond. The Police and Fire Departments in our community recently found time to meet and read stories to 4-year-olds as part of our Morning @ the Museum preschool program. Our community's history is kept safe in the Museum's archives for current and future research by community members. And it definitely takes a community to help plan, implement, and attend our events throughout the year!

As Mr. Rogers, one of my childhood heroes, once said, "When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.'" We are lucky that here we don't have too many "scary things," but we definitely have "helpers." Our community exists because of helpers - past, present, and future. So thank you to all the people who help make Fort Atkinson and Jefferson County a special community and one which we are all proud to call home.

*Merrilee*



## Recent Events at the Museum

### ❧ Holiday Open House ❧

The Museum hosted our annual Holiday Open House on December 9, 2017 with music, cookies, crafts, holiday decorations, and 10 gingerbread houses. Young and “young-at-heart” attendees made holiday crafts including decorating gingerbread houses, orange pomanders, potpourri, holiday cards and paper crafts.

The Museum was decorated for the Holiday Open House. Under the direction of staff member Beverly Dahl, museum volunteers decorated five Christmas trees. The three trees on the first floor of the Hoard House were styled and decorated as they might have been in the 1890s, 1910s, and 1950s. The trees from these eras roughly represented the times that Frank and Luella Hoard resided in the Hoard House from 1909-1956.

The third annual Gingerbread House Contest thrilled museum visitors for more than two weeks. This year, all of the houses and barns were entered by families. Entries could be made from a kit or by scratch. Kit house winners were: Bella and Sophia Bowie in first place; Sadie and Rayne Schneider, and Chloe Rutter in second place; and Lily Rottmann in third place. Houses made by scratch winners were: Moriah and Julie Cooper in first place; and Kirsten, Davey, and Danny Winski in second place. Moriah and Julie Cooper won this year’s popular choice.

Thank you to Bob LaMuro and his piano students for performing throughout the Open House!



### ❧ Morning @ the Museum ❧

Our Morning @ the Museum preschool program continues to bring young families into the museum. At January’s Morning @ the Museum, the Police and Fire Departments of Fort Atkinson met area preschoolers. Chief Bump and Officer Enger from the Police Department and Chief Rausch and several firefighters from the Fire Department talked to kids and parents about what firefighters and police officers do, and showed them how their equipment works. Children and parents were even able to try on the firefighters’ gear to see how it felt to be a Fort Atkinson firefighter.

Thank you to the Fort Atkinson Police and Fire Departments for collaborating with us at Morning @ the Museum!



(Continued from page 1)

On June 11, 2013, the Friends of Haumerson's Pond presented their plan at the Fort Atkinson Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to revive the land around the pond by building a shelter and improving the landscape. With governmental and community support, the past four years have been a flurry of activity at the site.

The third warming shelter was dedicated in 2017 and ice conditions earlier this winter brought many to the site for wintertime fun. This revival and adaptive reuse of land that was once a brickyard is a testament to the community and their collective desire to improve the quality of life for area residents.



*Thank you to Steve Mode, Grand Poobah of the Friends of Haumerson's Pond, for corroborating our facts and providing images.*



Have you R.S.V.P.'d for the Annual Member Dinner of the Fort Atkinson Historical Society and Hoard Historical Museum? You still have plenty of time! Tickets are \$30/person. Call the Museum at (920) 563-7769 to reserve your seat!

The dinner is on Wednesday, February 21 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Join us for an evening of delicious food catered by Carla's Catering, wonderful conversation, a little historical society business, and a presentation by Museum Director Merrilee Lee and Assistant Director Dana Bertelsen featuring some of the many curiosities from our Museum Collection!

## What's the Perfect Age to Volunteer?

By Tammy Doellstedt, Volunteer Coordinator

Recently I was intrigued by an article in the January 16, 2018 *Wall Street Journal* titled "What is the Perfect Age?" The article referenced numerous studies looking at different topics. Apparently 12 years old is the ideal time to get a cell phone, 18- & 19-year-olds process information faster than anyone else, 25 is the ideal time to be a bodybuilder, fertility drops at age 32 for women, financial literacy peaks at around 50, and 65–75-year-olds have the best vocabularies. Closer to home, Midwesterners said the ideal age is 50. People in the "time affluent" 65–75-year-old group reported having more fun than any other age group in a 2016 study of 3,712 adults.

Here at the Museum we are blessed to have volunteers in all age ranges, from 12 years old to 90 plus! Middle school students volunteer with their parents, we have high school students manning the archive desk and helping in the office, college students helping out in the archives, delivering posters, and interning. We are thrilled that retired people choose to spend some of their time here, helping in ALL areas of the Museum. We have young working moms who spend precious Saturday mornings here at the Museum. You would never guess who our oldest volunteers are. We often say, there must be something in the water, because our volunteers all look younger than their age. Maybe volunteering helps them stay young. After all, being active in mind and body can do wonders for one's health.

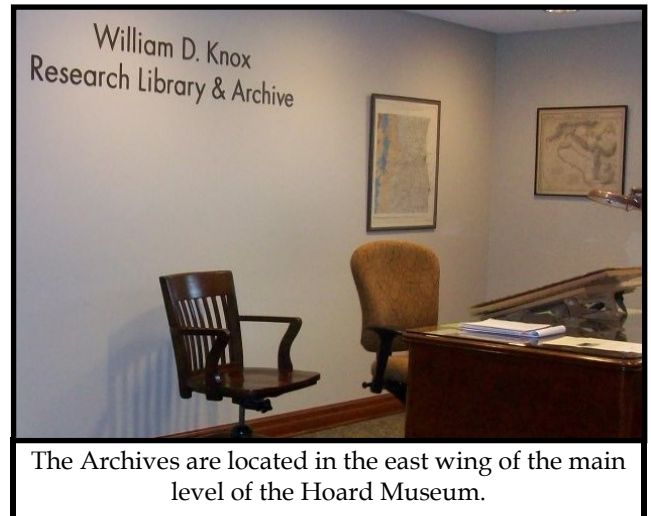
So, what is the perfect age to volunteer? Whatever age are you are, or whenever you're able to help, that is the perfect time to volunteer at the Museum!

Whatever your age, there can be a spot for you in our volunteer corps! Contact Volunteer Coordinator Tammy Doellstedt for more information by calling the Museum Office at (920) 563-7769 or e-mailing [tammy@hoardmuseum.org](mailto:tammy@hoardmuseum.org).



## From the Archives

We have had a flurry of activity in the archives this winter, even while we were closed for two weeks in January! The Knox Research Library and Archives stores all of the Museum's paper documents, photographs, maps, and more. The Archives have bound volumes of the Daily Jefferson County Union (formerly Jefferson County Union when it was a weekly paper) going back to the 1880s, original documents from schools, organizations, families, individuals and the military. We have volunteers who come in daily to help us with the HUGE task of cataloging what we have and making aids to help staff and researchers use the collection more efficiently.

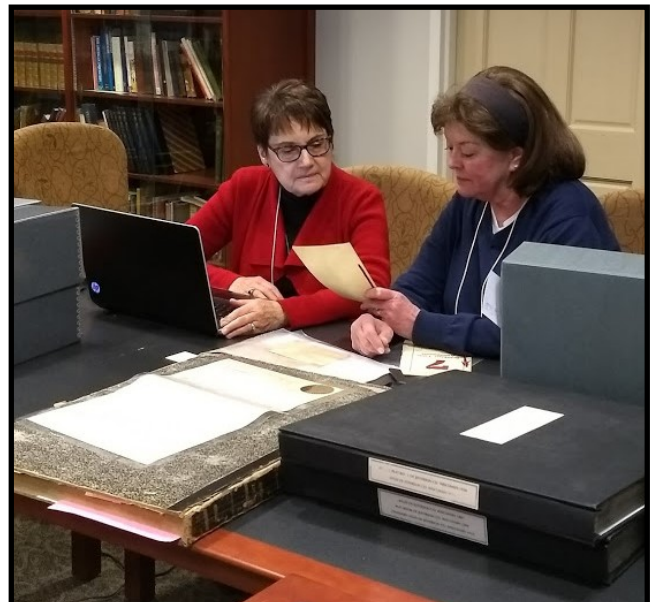


The Archives are located in the east wing of the main level of the Hoard Museum.

We had researchers in the archives in spite of the cold weather. Archive volunteers and those with special projects still made their way to the Museum to continue their projects.

- ♦ Archive and Collection volunteers have been in the Museum to continue their work in the Archives. Currently Archive volunteers are reading the 1919 Jefferson County Union and looking for articles related to World War I, women's suffrage, and prohibition. Once identified, the articles are then transcribed. Collection volunteers are helping staff re-inventory our three-dimensional objects. They work in pairs to methodically identify, measure, and record specific parts of the Museum's collection. If you are interested in volunteering at the Museum, please call Tammy Doellstedt in the Museum office at (920) 563-7769.
- ♦ Researchers Tim and Miah Garant from the Fort Atkinson Generals Baseball Club came in to research the history of sports in Jones Park.
- ♦ Bonnie Geyer, Jen Lowry, and Eve Horton have been working with our First United Methodist Church of Fort Atkinson records. Bonnie, Jen, and Eve are members of the congregation and are using their expertise to look through and catalog the Museum archive's records of the church. They are just three of several volunteers slowly working through local church history.

The Knox Research Library and Archives is a secure location for local denominations to safely store their history. If your church is interested in discussing how we can work together to preserve your history, please call Merrilee Lee in the Museum at (920) 563-7769 or by e-mail at [mlee@hoardmuseum.org](mailto:mlee@hoardmuseum.org).



Bonnie Geyer and Eve Horton inventorying the records from First United Methodist Church.

## Upcoming Events at the Hoard Museum

### ❧ Collectors Show ❧

**Saturday, February 17, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

*Free to attend!*

This year the Collectors Show is open-themed, meaning that all types of collections will be displayed. Take the opportunity to talk with the local collectors about their area of expertise and discover something new.

It's not too late to rent a table if you are interested! Tables are \$5 for members of the Fort Atkinson Historical Society, \$5 for youth, and \$10 for non-members, with a limit of two tables per person. Call the Museum at (920) 563-7769 to register.



### ❧ Saturday Morning Scholars – Insect Ambassadors ❧

**Saturday, March 3, 10:30 a.m. - noon**



The Insect Ambassadors from UW-Madison are coming back to the Hoard Museum! The Insect Ambassadors teach the public why insects are incredible animals. They will also bring along a variety of insects along and, depending on availability, there could be Madagascar hissing cockroaches, walking sticks, tobacco hornworms, tarantulas, and grain beetles visiting the Museum.

### ❧ Pruning 101 with Beverly Dahl - Garden Education Program ❧

**Saturday, March 3, 2 - 3:30 p.m.**

Spring is coming! Gardeners are itching to go outside. March is the perfect time to prune most woody trees and shrubs. Come learn all about pruning - when is the best time for different plants, what should actually be cut off, what are best practices, and what's the worst that can happen if you do it wrong? Dress appropriately, the program will be a combination of lecture and outside demonstration.



### ❧ Wisconsin Remembers: A Face for Every Name Traveling Exhibit ❧

**Sneak-Peek Opening Reception - Tuesday, March 6, 4 - 6 p.m.**

The Hoard Historical Museum is proud to be a host site for *Wisconsin Remembers: A Face for Every Name*. This traveling exhibit features a photo for each of the 1,161 Wisconsinites officially listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. The exhibit also includes additional photos for names that are listed on the memorial in Neillsville, WI. *Wisconsin Remembers* honors soldiers killed in Vietnam or that are still listed as missing in action. This exhibit is made possible by the support of Chapter 409 of the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), which represents Jefferson County.



Come to the *sneak-peek opening reception* on Tuesday, March 6 from 4 - 6 p.m. to see personal items from Vietnam veterans throughout Jefferson County and talk to the members of Chapter 409, of the VVA. The exhibit will open to the general public on Wednesday, March 6 and will be on display at the Museum from March 6 through March 31.

## Upcoming Events at the Hoard Museum

### ☞ 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Mary Hoard Art Show ☛

Co-sponsored by the Hoard Historical Museum and NASCO

Part One Opening Reception - Wednesday, March 21, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

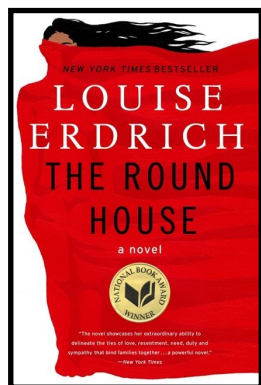
Part Two Opening Reception - Sunday, April 22, 1 - 4 p.m.

\* Fort Atkinson Historical Society members are invited to come at 12:30 p.m. on April 22 to admire and purchase art a half-hour before the general public!

Each spring, the Hoard Historical Museum is inundated with beautiful art and seemingly overnight we become the best art gallery in the county. The art show is presented in two sections: Part One features the artwork of Fort Atkinson area public, private, and homeschoolers in Kindergarten through 8th grade. Part Two features High School students from Fort Atkinson and adult artists that are from Fort Atkinson and Jefferson County. Information and registration forms are on our website, [www.hoardmuseum.org](http://www.hoardmuseum.org), or in the Museum office.



The art show is named in honor of Mary Hoard (1902-1998).



This year's Big Read selection is *The Round House* by Louise Erdrich. Written in 2012, *The Round House* is Erdrich's 14<sup>th</sup> book. As a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians in North Dakota, much of Erdrich's writing is inspired by her history. This book centers around a Native American family that goes through a life-changing experience. Pick up your free copy at the Museum or the Dwight Foster Library and keep up to date on Big Read activities at <https://youngauditorium.wordpress.com>.

### ☞ The Big Read ☛

Saturday, March 24, 10 a.m. - noon

Join us on Saturday, March 24 from 10 a.m. - noon for an opening reception with activities, giveaways, a raffle, and a story walk from the Hoard Museum to the Library.

The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts that began in 2006. Their mission is to "broaden our understanding of our world, our communities, and ourselves through the joy of sharing a good book." Through a partnership with UW-Whitewater Young Auditorium, the Hoard Museum and the Dwight Foster Library are local sites for the Big Read in our area.

### ☞ Mornings @ the Museum ☛

First Fridays, October – May, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

There are only a three more dates of this season's Morning @ the Museum program! Preschool children and their family members or teachers are invited to explore the Museum one hour before we open to the general public. This time allows little ones to explore the exhibits at their own pace with their family or teachers. Refreshments for preschoolers and adults are served. Storytime is at 9 a.m. and 9:45 a.m. in the exhibit space, and crafts are available throughout the morning.

This spring's themes are:

March 2 – Dr. Seuss Day • April 6 – Art Day • May 4 – Mother's Day







RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

### Upcoming Events at the Hoard Museum:

- February 17: ♦ Collectors Show, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. *Call the Museum to reserve your table!*
- February 21: ♦ Annual Member's Dinner of the Hoard Historical Museum /  
Fort Atkinson Historical Society, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. *Be sure to RSVP by 2/13!*
- March 2: ♦ Morning @ the Museum, *Dr. Seuss Day*, 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.
- March 3: ♦ Saturday Morning Scholars, *Bugs!*, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
♦ Garden Education Program, *Pruning 101*, 2 p.m.
- March 6: ♦ *Wisconsin Remembers Vietnam Veterans Sneak-Peek Exhibit Opening*,  
4-6 p.m. *On display through March 31.*
- March 21: ♦ Mary Hoard Art Show Part 1 (K-8) Opening Reception, 6:30 - 8 p.m.  
• *Part 1 closes Saturday, April 7 •*
- March 24: ♦ The Big Read Opening Reception, 10 a.m. - noon
- April 2: ♦ Morning @ the Museum, *Art Day*, 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.
- April 22: ♦ Mary Hoard Art Show Part 2 Opening Reception, 1 - 4 p.m.  
*Fort Atkinson Historical Society members sneak-peek starts at 12:30 p.m.!*  
• *Part 2 closes Saturday, May 5 •*

*Questions about our events? Contact the Museum office by calling (920) 563-7769 or emailing [info@hoardmuseum.org](mailto:info@hoardmuseum.org).*