

School Closings during the Spanish Flu

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed education for all students in 2020. Last spring, primary and secondary schools made the difficult decision to close their doors and move lessons online. This quarantine disrupted the social lives of the community, but it was put in place to keep all members of families from getting sick and to slow the spread of the virus. The events of 2020 are not the same as what happened during the 1918 Spanish Flu, but how schools, epidemiologists, and businesses asked the public to respond is similar.

In the fall of 1918, Jefferson County schools were closed “on account of influenza” for several weeks. Schools closed on a case-by-case basis. In the Friday, Oct. 18, 1918 edition of the Jefferson County Union, there were 10 mentions of closed schools due to the Spanish Flu. The Neighborhood News section, with contributions by correspondents in nearby communities, lists individuals affected by the flu and institutions that are closed due to illness. The following week on Oct. 25, Curtis Mill School east of Fort Atkinson in Jefferson township, and Rome, Sullivan, and Hebron (*see right*) remained closed another week on account of influenza. All neighboring schools remained closed until Nov. 12, 1918.

In Fort Atkinson, schools closed in October and reopened in November (*see article to the lower right*). The schools explained in the Nov. 15 edition that the schools would mitigate this loss of time by changing the format of the school day by abandoning opening exercises in the morning, lengthening classes by five minutes and extending the spring session into the summer.



Courtesy of the Hoard Historical Museum

Neighborhood NEWS

ROME
[From the Union Correspondent]
Oct. 14—Mr. and Mrs. Mrs. Auerbach and son, Bobby, went to Fort Atkinson Saturday afternoon to get Mrs. Miller and grandchild, Adeline. All the schools around here have been closed for two weeks on account of the disease that is spreading over the country.
Mr. and Mrs. Auerbach, Mrs. Chas. Miller and Robert Quick attended the funeral of Mr. Lillianthal at Palmyra.

Southeast SULLIVAN
[From the Union Correspondent]
Oct. 14—All schools are closed for a week on account of the Spanish influenza.
John Northey and Bertha Lean are on the sick list.
Mr. and Mrs. Ollie Meach and son, Victor, spent Sunday at Ed. Howell's.

HEBRON
[From the Union Correspondent]
Oct. 14—Mrs. C. B. Clark of Ft. Atkinson is calling on old friends. Schools and church are closed on account of “Flu”.
Miss Ballard of Chicago is a guest at the Parsons home.
There is sickness in nearly every home in town and in some cases every member of the family is ill.

Flu Lid Off Monday
The flu ban in Fort Atkinson will be lifted next Monday, Nov. 10th. Schools will open as if nothing had happened. That is, students will go on with their work right where they left off on Monday, October 7th, when the lid was clamped down. Churches will go back on their regular schedules and the theaters will run as heretofore. Public gatherings of all sorts may be held, including lodge meetings. The raising of the ban does not mean that the danger is passed. It means, however, that the disease is checked. Persons who have been afflicted with influenza should not frequent public places for a number of weeks and coughing, sneezing school children should be kept out of school by their parents. Everyone should exercise every reasonable precaution in safeguarding their health during the next few months.

Neighborhood News from Rome, Sullivan, and Hebron, from the Oct. 18, 1918, Jefferson County Union.

“Flu Lid Off Monday” from the Nov. 8, 1918, Jefferson County Union.

Photograph of the 1911 High School, water tower and Hoard School, circa 1917 from Wesley Sontag’s high school scrapbook. Sontag went on to be a famous violinist, composer, and teacher at Julliard School of Music in New York City. From the Hoard Historical Museum Archive.

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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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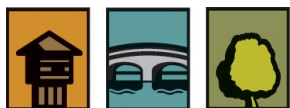
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FORT • ATKINSON

Merrilee's Musings

By Merrilee Lee, Museum Director



"Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says, 'I'll try again tomorrow.'"

Mary Anne Radmacher

This quote has been one of my favorites for years. It reminds me that courage can be found in large gestures but also in smaller, simple gestures that we can do every day. During these uncertain times, it can feel as though our "courage reserves" are being drained. But reminders to be courageous can be found all around us.

Here at the museum, I am reminded daily that courage, perseverance, and creativity frequently go together. Whether a story from the past, such as W.D. Hoard founding a newspaper with no newspaper experience, or a story from today, it's apparent that courage, perseverance, and creativity are deeply connected.

Not to toot our own horn, but, *Toot, Toot*, I've been very impressed with how the museum has responded to our current situation with our own creativity, perseverance and courage! From drive-thru events to packet pickups for young children to writing & producing our own videos and podcasts, our goal is to use this time for productivity and to fulfill our mission in ways we never dreamed before. My co-workers here at the museum are some of the most creative, thoughtful, detail-oriented and positive-minded teammates that I've ever worked with and the credit for our successes this year belongs solely to them.

As always, we appreciate your support in all that we do! Without you we would not be able to preserve, protect, and promote our history and culture. You share your creativity, perseverance, and courage with us as well. Thank you for all that you do! We are so grateful for you!

Merrilee

Fort Atkinson Historical Society Receives Grant

Each year, the Wisconsin Historical Society and Wisconsin Council for Local History partner to offer grants up to \$700 to affiliated museums and historical societies to support collection care projects. In 2020, a total of \$10,077 was awarded to 19 organizations, including the Fort Atkinson Historical Society. The historical society received \$390 from the Wisconsin Historical Society to help with the purchase of acid-free archival storage boxes and envelopes. These supplies will help keep our archival documents safe for future generations.



Lands We Share Exhibit Update

The Wisconsin Historical Society's Board of Curators recognizes outstanding work that connects people to the past. This year the annual Public Program Award was given to the traveling exhibition created by Dr. James Levy of UW-Whitewater. "The Lands We Share" was the result of the Wisconsin Farms Oral History Project. The exhibit focused on the intersection of farming, land, ethnic culture and Wisconsin history through stories, histories, artifacts, and images. The exhibit toured throughout Wisconsin from October 2018-May 2019, including a stop at the Hoard Historical Museum in November-December 2018. During the exhibition, Dr. Levy hosted community conversations with the public, farmers, exhibit designers and researchers about how the use and ownership of the land has changed.



This exhibit had strong ties to our area. Two Jefferson County farms, the Dettmann Farm and the Vang C&C Farm, were both featured in the exhibit. Additionally, Dr. Levy and his researchers used the Hoard Museum archive for a number of images and records for the text of the exhibit. Congratulations Dr. Levy!

From the Archives

Belle LaFollette, prominent suffragist and wife of former governor and congressman Robert M. LaFollette, stopped in Fort Atkinson in 1912 to speak in favor of women's suffrage in Wisconsin.

Belle was a leader within the National American Woman Suffrage Association. She left the national movement in 1911 to rally support for a statewide referendum on women's suffrage set to be on the November 5, 1912, general election ballot. She, alongside many other suffragists, traversed the state to advocate for women's right to vote.

Fellow Republican W.D. Hoard wrote about her visit to the area in his paper, the Jefferson County Union.

The referendum was defeated by a vote of 227,024 against and 135,546 for suffrage and Wisconsin women did not gain access to the ballot box until the 19th Amendment was passed on Aug. 26, 1920.

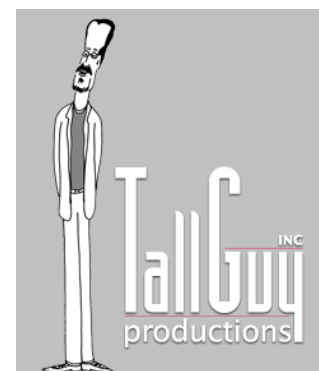


Photograph of Belle La Follette on her speaking tour at a fair in Fox River, Wisconsin in 1912. (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs, LC-USZ61-1546)

"Mrs. LaFollette Speaks" from the October 25, 1912, Jefferson County Union.

Thank you to our Business Patrons!

A big thank you to the many local businesses that continue to be members of the Hoard Historical Museum. We are always thankful for their support, even more so during the uncertainty of 2020. If possible, please consider supporting the businesses that support us!



Thank you to our Organization Members!

Thank you to the following organizations in our community that are members of the Museum! We appreciate their commitment to our regional history and culture.



**FORT ATKINSON
LIONS CLUB**



**FORT ATKINSON
(WI) BRANCH**



FORT • ATKINSON

**FORT ATKINSON AREA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**



**Allen County
Public Library**



**Friends of
Rose Lake**



**Tuesday
Club**




**BLACK HAWK
ARTISTS**

**Fort Atkinson
Woman's Club**



Insiders' Guide to Government Outdoor Display



**Governor W. D. Hoard's
Insiders' Guide
to Government**

Did you know....
...That all governments are based on a contract?
More than 200 years ago, our government was created to help protect people from their neighbors.

- » As our side of the contract, we the people agreed to obey the rules that the government designed to keep us safe. We also agree to fund the government's expenses through tax money.
- » As its part of the contract, the government agreed to take on certain responsibilities.

So why do we need a government? What is its responsibilities?
Governments are tasked with doing jobs that we can't do for ourselves as individuals, such as:

- » defending ourselves against invasions (the military)
- » ensuring that everyone has access to resources such as water, electricity, and road maintenance (public maintenance)
- » writing treaties and trade agreements with other governments (Congress)
- » knowing who and how many people live in each house (Census)

For more information, visit: <http://www.letvies.org>

Every four years, our country decides on a new president, and every four years it seems that politics becomes part of our every day life. This is an excellent opportunity to talk about the fundamental building blocks of our country. Stop by the Museum grounds to see our new outdoor display *Governor W.D. Hoard's Insider's Guide to Government*. This exhibit explores what makes the United States government special.

Stop by the Museum grounds between now and the election to learn something new about the United States from Fort Atkinson's native son, W.D. Hoard! Look for more outdoor displays next spring!

A big 'thank you' to Phil Niemeyer for designing and building the frames for the outdoor displays!

Volunteer Updates

The Covid-19 pandemic has cancelled and changed our programming schedule, including our Volunteer Enrichment Programs. We had scheduled a talk by Jenny Kalvaitis, a Hoard Museum volunteer and former staff at the Wisconsin Historical Society, to present on the Women's Suffrage movement in Wisconsin. Luckily, Jenny was able to record her presentation and it is available for viewing on YouTube. Simply go to the Museum website, www.hoardmuseum.org, click "Virtual Hoard" on the top ribbon, and choose "Lectures." There you will find the Women's Suffrage program, as well as others lectures discussing our local history.

Volunteers are still busy at the Museum working in the gardens, archives, at the greeter desk, and on oral history projects. All of us here hope that you are able to stay safe and healthy throughout the winter.



**Tammy Doellstedt
Volunteer Coordinator**

Historic Preservation Commission

The Historic Preservation Commission is a state-mandated commission of five members with the mission to serve the community by preserving the historic integrity of the city.

Due to recent retirements, Fort Atkinson Historic Preservation Commission is again looking for new members. Do you like old buildings? Are you a fan of noteworthy architecture? Interested in the history of the Native American mounds? Like working with property owners and the general public to help preserve the history of Fort Atkinson? If you answered yes to any of these questions and live within the city limits of Fort, we'd like you to join our commission! We meet once a month at the Dwight Foster Public Library in the evening of the second Monday of the month.

If you are interested, please contact Julia Ince at incej@uww.edu.



Black Hawk Artists Update

Contributed by Jan Gilkey, Black Hawk Artist

Even though we will not hold the 48th Annual Black Hawk Artist Show and Sale at the Museum this year, the Black Hawk Artists are nevertheless creating for the future. The Black Hawk Artists are comprised of 12 local women who meet monthly to support and critique each other's work and to plan their annual show at the Hoard Museum. The group has been active for 42 years and tens of women have been members. The current members are Karen Crosby, Jan Gilkey, Karen Gómez, Angie Hamele Szabo, Judy Henning, Priscilla Heussner, Jan Holewinski, Julia Ince, Sally Koehler, Janet Nelson, Linda Tump, and Mary Wallace.

The artists have been staying busy! Here are a few updates on some of the artists and their current projects. **Sally Koehler** leads our creative efforts with her work on a 5-foot, 500-pound mosaic *Squirrel with an Acorn*. She first created a metal form and then overlaid the form with cement. Once she had created a firm foundation, she set mosaic tiles into the sculpture to provide color and texture. Here you see part of the unfinished squirrel clutching an acorn. **Karen Crosby** is using her marbled designs on scarves of silk and other fabrics. She has added other products—even face masks. In addition to working with embellished alcohol and acrylic pour, **Jan Holewinski** plans a miniature sculpture of Meriwether Lewis (of Lewis and Clark fame) with his dog Seaman. **Linda Tump** is making molds for ceramic pears and working on entries for the Watercolor Wisconsin exhibit. **Janet Nelson** created *Dwelling*, a black and white graphic of Wisconsin images that she plans to reproduce in prints, towels and cards. **Jan Gilkey** is experimenting with palette knife oil paintings—thick paint laid on with small spatulas. **Priscilla Heussner** is experimenting with new technologies to create her art. **Karen Gómez** plans a book or shadowbox on the phases of the moon. She continues to work on her richly patterned collages—which provide material for her many-layered cards.

We continue to hold the monthly meetings—but now on Zoom. One sad meeting was devoted to remembering cherished colleague Kim Karow, who passed away this summer. Her artistic concepts reflect the originality of a major artist. Her talent and acute perceptions inspire us to a more serious level of artistic accomplishment.

Otherwise, we share our work and enjoy each other's company—anxious though to return to in-person meetings and to the museum, we hope, for the 48th Annual Black Hawk Artist Show and Sale in 2021.



Above: *Squirrel with Acorn*
by Sally Koehler
Below: *Cows* by Jan Gilkey



Upcoming Events

☛ Harvest Fest ☛

Saturday, October 31, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

This year we are celebrating the harvest and Halloween at the Hoard Museum! On Saturday, October 31, the Museum is hosting a socially distanced drive-thru event. The yard will feature scarecrows sponsored and decorated by local businesses and organizations. Staff and volunteers will be on hand to give out candy and take home crafts and activities. Be sure to find the Halloween-themed scavenger hunt in the activity bag and use it while you go for a walk or drive with the family.

All are welcome! To participate, turn east onto E. 3rd Street from Main Street, turn right on Merchants Avenue, turn left onto S. 4th Street, and right onto Foster Street behind the Museum.



☛ Irish Potato Famine – Garden Education Program ☛

Saturday, November 21, 2 p.m.

Join Jefferson County Master Gardener Shirley Brown as she delves into the history of potatoes and the Irish Potato Famine. Shirley will talk about the importance of potatoes to the Irish diet, the cause of the famine, and the long-reaching effects of the potato famine in Ireland and America.

There will be limited seating due to Covid-19 precautions. Please call the Museum at (920) 563-7769 to reserve your spot!

☛ WinterFest ☛

Saturday, December 12, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Join us for another socially distanced event at the Hoard Museum! The museum is partnering with Rose Lake Friends to display evergreen trees with environmentally friendly ornaments. We are inviting families, individuals, clubs, and businesses to sign up to decorate the trees. Contact the Museum by Nov. 24 if interested in reserving a tree. Trees must be decorated by Friday, Dec. 11. Call the Museum for more information!

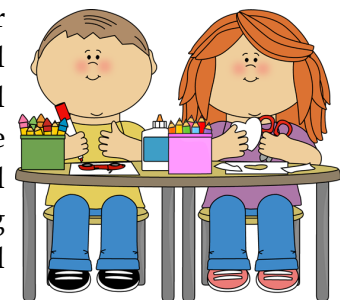
This year's holiday season is different than those in years past but we still hope to help you create holiday memories. While here, stop by the outside tent to make an environmentally conscious birdfeeder. And after admiring the holiday trees on the Museum grounds, pick up an activity packet that includes historic and fun holiday crafts to take home. Activities include a pinecone bird feeder craft, instructions for other historic holiday decorations, and historic recipes.



☛ Morning @ the Museum ☛

New packet released on the first Friday of the month and available that entire month

For the past four years, the Museum has welcomed local preschoolers and their families to explore the Museum before the general public arrived. This time allowed kids to explore the Museum at their own pace, run around, work on a craft, and enjoy story time. Although we won't be holding our monthly Morning @ the Museum program, we are still providing a way for little ones to learn about and experience the world around them. Parents can stop by the Museum anytime during Museum hours to pick up a themed activity packet. Each packet includes a themed craft, coloring page, and activity to use at home.





The Museum is Open!

We are working to keep all visitors, volunteers, and staff healthy.

The Hoard Historical Museum wants all visitors to be comfortable and safe during their visit to the Museum. Per the state of Wisconsin, visitors are required to wear masks during their visit to the Museum. We have disposable masks and hand sanitizer available for all to use, and we regularly disinfect surfaces. We also encourage visitors, volunteers, and staff to practice social distancing and stay at least 6 feet away from others while in the building. Thank you for your cooperation during this time!



Upcoming Events

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|--------------------------|---|
| Saturday, Oct. 31 | ◇ Harvest Fest Drive-Thru Event, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. |
| Saturday, Nov. 21 | ◇ <i>Irish Potato Famine</i> Garden Education Program, 2 p.m. |
| Saturday, Dec. 12 | ◇ Winter Fest, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. |

Questions about the Museum? Contact the Museum office by calling (920) 563-7769 or emailing info@hoardmuseum.org.