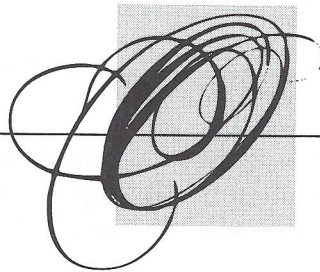


THE



CHRONICLES

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 4 October 2014

103 W. JEFFERSON ST., P. O. BOX 969, OCONOMOWOC, WI 53066

Quarterly Membership Meeting of the Oconomowoc Area Historical Society  
Program to be held at the Museum, 103 W. Jefferson St.

**Saturday, October 25, 2014**

9:30 am Coffee & Conversation; 10:00 am Membership Meeting  
with a special program to follow on

**World War II - The Home Front**

By James O'Leary

We are pleased to invite you to attend the October 25<sup>th</sup> meeting to enjoy a program by James O'Leary. He is a well-known WWII Historian who will give a brief presentation on the impact of the United States' involvement in World War II on the people at home. Sacrifice and change were the norm, as Americans by the millions supported their nation's fight abroad. The presentation will include discussion of the war effort here in Oconomowoc.

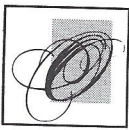
### FROM THE PRESIDENT

Progress continues to be made on the building maintenance and improvement agenda. Not visible, but important have been the changes and repairs to the electrical system which have been completed and will improve both service and safety. On the visible side I would like to encourage all members to attend the upcoming membership meeting on October 25<sup>th</sup> or otherwise stop by the museum to see the completed new front steps and sidewalk.

At its meeting on September 8, 2014, the Board approved a resolution requesting the members to amend the By-laws at the upcoming membership meeting. Enclosed with this letter is a copy of the proposed amendments, together with a marked copy indicating the proposed changes. Basically, the proposed amendments will do away with the right of businesses and other service organizations to vote and designate a person to serve on the Board of Directors in return for paying a higher dues amount. The right is being retained for governmental bodies (currently the City of Oconomowoc and the Oconomowoc Area School District). No businesses are currently using this provision and we believe it best to remove this appearance of "selling" board seats. We do hope to foster a closer relationship with the business community by encouraging their employees to become members as well as the business itself.

In addition, the proposed changes to the Bylaws places authority to set all dues with the Board rather than also requiring a vote by the membership at the October meeting.

Rod Bluhm,  
*President*



## FROM THE MUSEUM ADMINISTRATOR

WHOOSH! There went the summer and most of our visiting days! We had a delightful time with volunteers, visitors, and friends.

You are valued members of our local Historical Society, and, as an integral part of our organization, we depend upon each of you for your opinions and your critique of our multiple operations. Your feedback is the voice inspiring us with fresh ideas for future exhibits and to help us move forward in new directions. Please let us know how we are doing. We need your input!

Visitor comments, especially from those coming from other areas, also encourage and energize us. Their input is primarily directed toward the differences in local cultures and the comparisons of their hometown to ours. In addition, visitors may offer corrections or more specific information. The greatest value in all of this is the constant focus on the building and the preservation of our special Oconomowoc area, what makes us unique, why it was worth while stopping to visit, and what sparked the desire to learn more about us. So, members and friends, please keep us current on your opinions as well as up-to-date on any changes in your businesses' and family situations. This is how we grow, enhance, and educate.

Nancy Lins,  
*Museum Administrator*

## EXHIBITS COMMITTEE



Well, my "15 Seconds of Fame" is over, and, while one local newspaper printed in some detail the fact that a national television network sent out a 3-man crew from New York's "CBS This Morning" TV show to downtown Oconomowoc, Wisconsin to record the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the premiering of "The Wizard of Oz" movie here, it did not see fit to also mention that this show's director, reporter, and cameraman spent an hour or so at our museum, taking camera shots of our Strand Theater Exhibit and the cabinet in the entrance hall chuck full of "OZ" memorabilia and discussing the historic event with museum personnel. And so it goes!

It is interesting to note, however, that one of our OAHS&M's member's granddaughters, overseas on a summer program as a Marquette University law student, actually saw the aforementioned TV program in Germany, and that other people have called or e-mailed Nancy and me from different parts of the USA to tell us that they, too, caught the broadcast that morning. Additionally, I recently received a clipping, cut of Rhode Island's *The Providence Journal's* "Yesterday and Today" column, announcing the following:

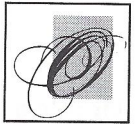
"In 1939, the classic MGM movie musical "The Wizard of Oz," starring Judy Garland, had its world premiere at the Strand Theater in Oconomowoc, Wis., three days before opening in Hollywood. (Oconomowoc was apparently chosen to test the film's appeal to Middle Americans.)" [Please note lack of any mention of Cape Cod!]

Promotion of our wonderful museum here at home, across our country, and even abroad garners unexpected awareness and support to what the Oconomowoc Area Historical Society's mission is all about ..... and untold benefits to future museum visitors!

In closing, I would remind my Exhibits Committee, which has been on hiatus during this summer, that we will be meeting monthly, starting in October, to begin planning fresh and different displays and the enhancement of permanent ones. These minor additions and slight changes, as well as the construction of entirely brand new-from-scratch exhibits are what keep local and out-of-town visitors returning or coming for the first time. If current readers of this *O Chronicles* entertain any original ideas on possible exhibition themes, please let Nancy and her staff know, then come and view what's new!

Shirley Hinds,  
*Exhibits Committee Chair*

## RECENT PAST EVENTS AT THE MUSEUM



Is there a special occasion -- perhaps a family or class reunion or an organization's anniversary celebration -- that you're aware will be approaching in the near future? Detailed below are examples of a few such occurrences purposely held here or which included a tour of the museum as part of the planned agenda. What better place could there be to schedule such an event than our Oconomowoc landmark building?

Members of the Wilkinson family enjoyed a family reunion at Roosevelt Park in Oconomowoc, with a special Saturday museum tour and visit arranged by our Education Committee. The family members especially came to see the donated collections from the Wilkinson Family and to see the Wilkinson Clinic exhibit. Fifty-one family members attended and enjoyed visiting with each other while reminiscing and viewing their family artifacts. On the same day, at the same time, two members of Oconomowoc's Counsell family -- Mary Blaska and her cousin -- came to view the recently received Counsell Collection which was in the museum office. When the Counsells noticed the Wilkinsons in the building, they discovered old friends from Oconomowoc school days. It was a day of déjà vu! We were so pleased to have been instrumental in this connection for all of them!

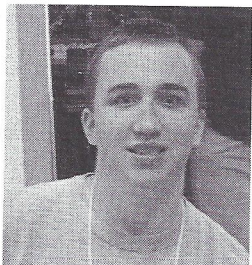
The OAHS&M's July Membership Meeting's Program -- Model A Cars -- was a big hit for our members and for attending members of the Model A's Club! Thank you again, Barb and Barb, for the wonderful "down memory lane" history on Oconomowoc. Everyone in the audience enjoyed the program, and both the owners and the viewers enjoyed showing off and examining the awesome autos outside. Every vintage car was fabulous! It was fun and interesting to learn about each car and how it was acquired, as well as the many other tales that "rode" with them.

The Olympia Resort and Conference Center hosted the National S-Gauge Convention in July. (Yes we are HO, but it is all fun!) Jim Bauer knows Jeff Madden who was one of those responsible for all the Convention programming. The official co-sponsors of the convention were the Badgerland S-Gauges and the State Line S-Gauges, both very active S-Gauge groups. Our model railroad volunteers opened the museum's exhibit for attendees for their viewing and valuable critique. The model railroad visitors were very pleased with what they saw and were impressed with the size, detail to scale, and layout. Yes, indeed, we have a gem! Also, there now is a camera which rides on the train, so "passengers" may also "take a trip" aboard our railroad! And, too, the new mural is a great scenic back drop. If you are a modern, computer-savvy member, our group has placed a promotional video on Utube. Search: M&NW MRR (7-25-14).

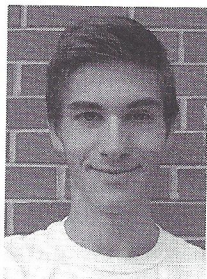
We have new steps and sidewalks! The repair work makes the face of the museum so beautiful! and so much less likely for anyone to end up falling on one's face! If you have not seen it yet, it's worth the trip ....er visit!

### VOLUNTEERS

New Volunteers this summer were Oconomowoc High School seniors, John McVey and Brett Duffy. They served as Jr. Docents/Greeters and were with us most of the summer, filling many open dates on the calendar. Because of their willingness and support, we were able to welcome visitors every single scheduled Visiting Day!  
Welcome, John and Brett.



Brett Duffy



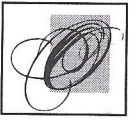
John McVey

Trish Kwitek has volunteered to work with the Archival Committee. You may know her as the person who keeps our museum sparkling clean, even with so many "little fingerprints" on the windows. Thank you, Trish. We think you will enjoy examining looking through the "Windows to the Past," too.

John McVey also volunteered one Tuesday to help organize the framed photos upstairs. This was a special event for Nancy. We have wanted to accomplish this for years!

# Thank you!

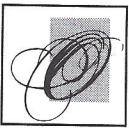
## LOCAL HISTORY COMMITTEE



Here's a challenge to test your knowledge of Oconomowoc pioneers. Read the brief biography and try to guess the identity---answers follow.

Sandie Carter, *Local History Committee Chair*

1. I was born in 1828 in New York City, New York and died in 1913. I worked as a teacher in Chicago and other cities from 1848 to 1858. I taught in Oconomowoc at the Episcopal Seminary for Young Women, later known as Bord du Lac Seminary, from 1858 to 1889. I was held in high esteem as a gifted teacher who was cherished by her pupils long after they left school. I worked with Julia Lapham to create a public library here in Oconomowoc.
2. I was born in 1814 in Uxbridge, Massachusetts and died in 1885. I was married twice (Caroline Watson and Caroline Calkins) and had four children. I moved to Oconomowoc in 1861 I converted a hardware store into a hotel that had access to Lac La Belle. The hotel that bore my name was very successful and attracted many wealthy guests. I served as the city's mayor for two terms and was revered as one of the most enterprising and public-spirited citizens.
3. I was born in 1863 in Hamilton, Ontario and died in 1950. My husband Charles and I had four children. My husband died in 1910, leaving me a fortune. I was the owner of several Chicago theaters. I purchased the Jones House Hotel which I renamed the Majestic Hotel, a home in the area, and the Draper Hotel. Fire destroyed the Draper Hotel in 1927; a smaller building was constructed and was sold in 1931. I was a member on the boards of the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, Chicago Art Institute, and Three Arts Club. Sadly, I lost my money during the depression, but I was named Oconomowoc's Outstanding Citizen in 1937. My husband and I are buried at the highest point in the cemetery.
4. I was born in 1856 in Hanover, Germany and died in 1932. I was married to Elizabeth Theobald and had one child. I immigrated to the Waukesha area in 1861 as a child. I was the mason/architect for mansions in the Oconomowoc area (Bullen, Armour, Depee, Petit, Pabst, and Peck). I was mayor from 1924 to 1930.
5. I was born in 1828 in Augusta, New York and died in 1885. I was married to Lenora Close. I was a hardware merchant in St. Louis and opened a store in Oconomowoc in 1861. I built a summer home in Oconomowoc with gaslights and hot/cold running water. I bottled the spring water on my land and called it La Belle Spring Water.
6. I was born in 1846 in Milwaukee and died in 1936. I was married to a doctor. I was the daughter of Martin Thayer Draper. I spent summers in Oconomowoc following my husband's death in 1890. I was the manager of the Three Arts Club in Chicago and wrote *Oconomowoc Yesteryears* in 1929.
7. I was born in 1840 in Germany and died in 1924. I was married twice (Sarah Schneider and Bertha Meyer) and had many children. I moved to Oconomowoc in the mid-1860s and purchased a tannery on Fowler Lake. Later I opened a brewery on the tannery site. I was one of the founders of the First National Bank and served as president and vice-president. I was known as a highly respected businessman in Oconomowoc and in the state. My monument is the tallest in the cemetery.
8. I was born in 1858 in Pewaukee, Wisconsin and died in 1947. I was married to Charles. I was a student at Bord du lac Seminary and studied voice and music in Paris, Vienna, and Leipzig. I was considered a musical prodigy and was active in the local theater guild. I was president of the Oconomowoc Music Club, a Red Cross volunteer (I knitted over 1,000 sweaters), and president of the local League of Women Voters. I was the half-sister to Hugo Lorleberg, who ran a local hardware store.



9. I was born in Prussia in 1847 and died in 1892. I moved to America as a young child and grew up in Waukesha County, where my parents were farmers. I served in the Union Army in the Civil War I opened a hardware store in Oconomowoc in 1870. I rebuilt the store after a fire in 1879. I was the proprietor of a local iron foundry, machine shop, and waterworks. Following my death from typhoid fever, my sisters took over the business.

10. I was born in 1855 in New York City, New York and died in 1910. I was married to Caroline Lewis, and had four children. I worked for the famous circus magnate, P. T. Barnum. I was a major promoter of dime museums and vaudeville. I became a millionaire investing in nickelodeons and owned several Chicago theaters. I was the director of the Western Vaudeville Managers' Association, president of Orpheum Circuit, representative and chairman of the executive committee of United Booking Offices, and president of Kohl and Castle Amusement Co. I built Brier Cottage, a 45-room summer home, which hosted Calamity Jane, Harry Houdini, Lillie Langtry, Will Rogers, and Lillian Russell. My wife and I are buried at the highest point in the cemetery.

11. I was born in 1846 in Canada and died in 1908. I was married to Mary Lenore Nixon and had four sons. I was in the malt business in Kenosha and Chicago. I purchased land on Oconomowoc Lake and built a castle, modeled after Hever Castle in England. Included on the grounds were a gardener's house, coach house, water tower, and greenhouses powered by electricity. I donated money to the Oconomowoc Library and was the chairman of the Good Roads Committee. I promoted a canal connecting Fowler Lake to Lac La Belle.

12. I was born in 1832 in Barwalde, Germany and died in 1910. I was married to Louise Suddow and had three children. I moved to Oconomowoc in 1868, where I worked as a blacksmith.

13. I was born in 1820 in Boston, Massachusetts and died in 1897. I was married to Eliza Ann Whittemore, and we had two children. I was an agent for the law firm of E. M. and A. W. Randall and was appointed aide-de-camp as a colonel under Governor Randall. I purchased 125 acres on the north shore of Oconomowoc Lake, and built my home, which had 75 rooms (50 bedrooms). It became a hotel in 1874. After my death, my son managed the hotel, which was unfortunately sold in a sheriff's sale in 1909 and burned down in 1912.

Answers on Page 7

## WAR MEMORIAL PROJECT

The committee is in search of volunteers to spearhead the collection of all those names of local people who served in the military from the Civil War to date. Kurt Schrang and Mac Dorn will be available to guide volunteers through the project. If you are interested, call Kurt Schrang at (262) 490-4461. Also, if you are in possession of an historic military roster, please drop it off at the Historical Society's Museum at 103 W. Jefferson St. on Tuesday, 10 - 4 pm or Thursday, Friday, or Sunday, 1pm - 4 pm. Let's challenge ourselves to name all of our hometown heroes!

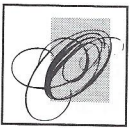
Kurt Schrang

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next membership meeting will be **October 25, 2014**. During the business portion, the new and returning Board of Director members will be elected. Be sure to be there to cast your vote!

Bylaws – at the October 25, 2014 meeting there will also be a membership vote on the proposed change(s) in the Oconomowoc Area Historical Society's Bylaws.

Notice has been included on separate sheets in this newsletter.



## ARCHIVAL COMMITTEE

We have received donations from:

- ✓ Sue Van den Berg and sisters from the Counsell, Cole, and Spear families - a large collection of family histories dating back to the 1700s in England! Several large portraits were included, one of Gilbert Counsell, another of him and his family on his wedding day to Asa Milo, and several other family portraits. The family genealogy was also included. Gilbert Counsell had a farm on the northeast corner of the Town of Oconomowoc in the 1800s. More farms owned by the family were located in the Town of Merton. It is a very large family. Many lived in different parts of Wisconsin, and a few members moved to other states.
- ✓ Dorothy St. Thomas - some high school students' water colors of "The Depot," "City Hall," and "The Freight Depot." These were painted circa 1980s and had been part of a collection in the St Thomas home.
- ✓ Cathleen Morris - a large collection of Presidential memorabilia from all the presidents of the U.S. This collection, belonging to her and her mother, has now been entrusted to us, including a diorama with small statutes of the U.S presidents and one of George Washington on the Potomac River. This will enhance the presidential campaign button collection which Dorothy St. Thomas donated. The Exhibits Committee may explore possibilities for a Presidential Exhibit in the near future.
- ✓ Carol Lamm - collections of "Raggedy Ann" books and grammar school reader books and several vintage hand craft booklets on crocheting and tatting. The booklets partner well with vintage clothing in exhibits. It is interesting to compare how children learned from the early school texts and what elementary school children learn from today. Some of these bygone books can be seen in the school room exhibit.
- ✓ Trish Kwitek -- "Star Wars" LP album cover with a photo of Darth Vader, Beatles LP album cover, and several other LPs. Unfortunately, the records were damaged or missing, but the covers are historic for their time and represent the era of Sci-Fi movies and young group performers of the 80s.
- ✓ The Model Railroad volunteers have donated so many items it would take a page just to list them. Thank you so much for the railroad cars, engines, tracks, model buildings, and landscaping items, as well as the numerous hours of labor and construction!
- ✓ The OAHS&M also thanks Gordon and Susan Telford for their generous monetary contributions to help defray the cost of the railroad expansion and for their special gift of \$1300 to fund the mural, painted by Ken Reichert, which will soon include a memorial plaque for their son, Andy. The Telfords also donated a diorama of "Look! There's Emerald City," which Gordon and Andy created and which will be a touching addition to the museum's Wizard of Oz collection.

---

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

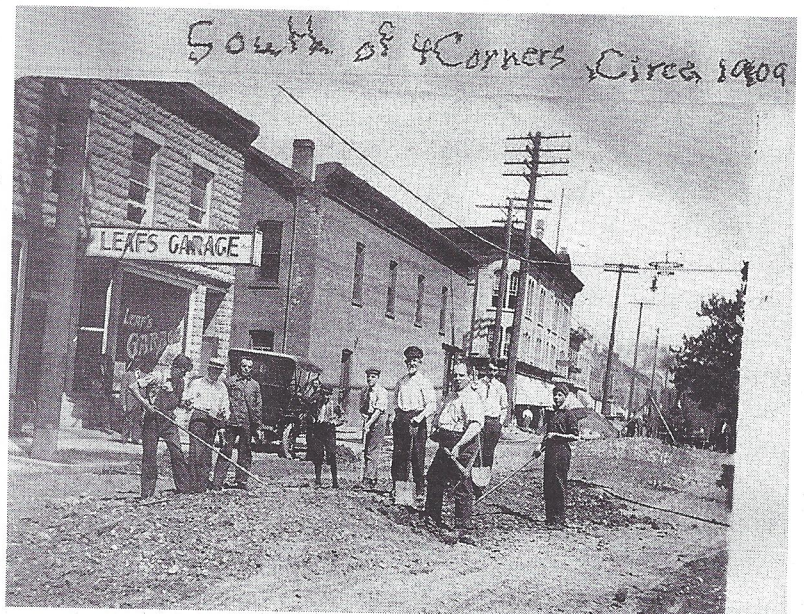
### Forest Leaf Establishes First Ford Garage in Oconomowoc

Born in 1882, Forest Leaf, son of Wingate and Julia Leaf, grew up on a farm in the town of Summit. As a young man, Forest lived and worked in Milwaukee at the International Harvester Milwaukee Works factory. Returning to Oconomowoc after a few short years, he opened his own business, Leaf's Garage, in 1905, located on South Main Street in a building owned by his father.

This building currently houses the Wisconsin Fencing Academy.

First selling REO automobiles, but switching to Fords in 1909, Leaf built a very successful car business.

Continued on Page 7



With the need for more space and his father Wingate's death in 1914, Forest soon sold the garage building and moved to 163 E. Milwaukee St. (E. Wisconsin Ave. ) in the rear of the Hintz Bakery. Forest's son, Robert Leaf, made the following observation of this new location: "It had an alley entrance south off of Milwaukee St. While the alley was narrow, it permitted Model T platform, solid rubber rear wheeled trucks to enter. Such were used in hauling milk to the Carnation Milk Company in milk cans." Homestead lighting now occupies this space.

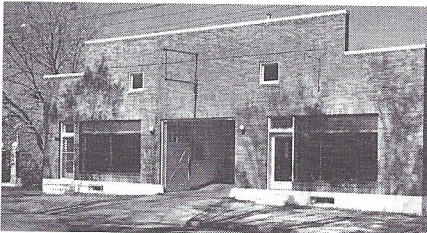
It wasn't long before Forest moved once again to what was then called the Motor Inn Garage at 205 S. Main St. This location was situated almost across the street from his first location. This building offered show room space and a good-sized repair area in the back. This building now houses Catherine's Class Act Beauty Salon in the front and Aasen Heating and Cooling in the rear.



All the while Leaf's Garage was moving from place to place, Forest was planning to erect a brand new building with a showroom, offices, parts department, repair garage, and used car sales area. In the fall of 1917, he moved into this space at 306 S. Main St., across the street from the St. Jerome's Catholic Church parish house. Forest Leaf operated his Ford dealership out of this site for 21 years. Because of failing health, Leaf gave up his dealership in 1938, and he died three years later in January 1941.

Harold Hornburg owned a Ford dealership in Hartland and was looking to expand his business, and so, in 1941, he purchased the Ford dealership in Oconomowoc. The original location for his showroom and repair shop was located just to the west of the city beach band shell at 324 W. Wisconsin Ave. He shared the building with J.P. Birdener, who operated a marine repair business.

Hornburg Ford was a well-known dealership along Lac La Belle for twenty five years; in 1966 the owners built a much larger and more modern facility at 1000 Summit Ave. After another 20 years in business, Hornburg sold to the Safro dealership, who continue to sell Fords to this day.

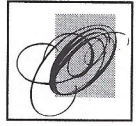


Barbara Elwood-Goetsch  
Education Committee Member

Answers from pages 5 & 6:

- |                         |                               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Grace Phoebe Jones   | 7. Peter Binzel Sr,           |
| 2. Martin Thayer Draper | 8. Molly Maurer Kartak        |
| 3. Caroline Lewis Kohl  | 9. Hugo Lorleberg             |
| 4. Louis J. Flotow      | 10. Charles Edward Kohl       |
| 5. James C. Hitchcock   | 11. George Bullen             |
| 6. Mary Draper Favile   | 12. Gustav Machus Sr.         |
|                         | 13. George Pardon Gifford Sr. |

## MEMBERSHIP



Greetings to all our members!

Please note that membership fees for the society's new fiscal year, which runs from November 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup>, are due on November 1, 2014, which will be here before you know it! Some of you have already sent in dues or maybe paid twice for last year, but if you see a colorful reminder note in this newsletter you'll know that your "dues are due," if not, you are good for another year. The forms are on the back of this newsletter, and we hope to hear from you soon...thanks!

Since our last newsletter in July, we have had one new member join us: **John McVey**.

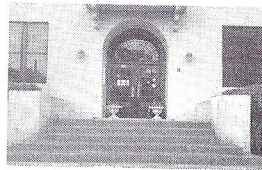
Welcome to you, John! We look forward to working with you in our society's activities. We are always in need of new people willing to invest time and energy in our organization, so, members, don't hesitate to talk up our organization to friends and family!

Our membership rolls for September, 2014 show a total of 230 members with a breakdown of 88 single memberships and 70 (140) couples' memberships, along with 2 student memberships. There are also 4 organization, 6 business, and 1 municipality memberships, for a total of 11 in this category. Lastly, we maintain 34 free memberships with a division of 10 historical societies or museums, 1 library, 12 local political memberships and 11 donations of \$500 or more.

### Birthdays and Other Special Days

Have you thought of giving an Historical Society membership or purchasing one of our historical books or DVDs for that special day of celebration? Any of these would make a great gift that will last the entire year and give hours of entertainment.

Barb Elwood-Goetsch,  
Membership Chairperson



Nonprofit Org.  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
 OCONOMOWOC, WI  
 PERMIT NO. 51

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**OCONOMOWOC HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

P. O. BOX 969, OCONOMOWOC, WI 53066

**MUSEUM:** 103 West Jefferson St.  
 262-569-0740 / oahsm@att.net  
 oconomowochistoricalsociety.com

**HOURS:** Thursday, Friday & Sunday 1:00 to 4:00 pm  
 The Museum is open May 1 to early December.  
 Call for other hours and tours by appointment.

**2015 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE NOVEMBER 1, 2014.**  
**OCONOMOWOC AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.**  
 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM



**REGULAR**  
 \$15 Individual  
 \$30 Couple

**SENIOR (65+)**  
 \$12 Individual  
 \$24 Couple

**ORGANIZATIONAL**  
 \$50

**STUDENT**  
 \$2 each

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  New Membership  Renewal

*I am interested in helping in the following areas:*

*Please contact me with more information* \_\_\_\_\_

- Computer Entry
- Museum Docent
- Museum Greeter
- Local History Comm.
- Education Committee
- Building Operations
- Artifacts Committee
- Exhibit Committee

- Publicity
- Newsletter Mailing
- Refreshments Comm.
- Fund Raising Comm.
- Construction/Remodeling
- Long Range Planning
- Genealogy Research
- Other

Please make check payable to: **Oconomowoc Area Historical Society, Inc.**  
**Attn: Barb Elwood-Goetsch, P. O. Box 969, Oconomowoc, WI 53066**

*It is the mission of the Oconomowoc Area Historical Society and Museum to serve our many constituencies as a community resource and learning center, committed to historic preservation and research; and to inspire and encourage curiosity and passion for our historic treasures.*