



Oconomowoc Area
Historical Society
& Museum

Rooted in History, Reaching for the Future

OCONOMOWOCHISTORICALSOCIETY.ORG



ROOTED IN HISTORY

The 1921 Armory has been a part of Oconomowoc's history for over a century. For the last 35 years, this landmark has housed exhibits, archives, research services, and programs that connect people of all ages to the stories of our region. It has gone from being *a part of* history to *the home of* Oconomowoc's history. To ensure this legacy continues, we are launching a \$1 million capital campaign to reinvigorate this incomparable structure and pay respectful tribute to its past.

This campaign is about more than a building. It's about preserving the stories that make Oconomowoc unique and creating space for new ones to be told. Whether you've lived here all your life or just arrived, we invite you to rediscover Oconomowoc's home for nearby history. The term "nearby history" makes the past more personal. It encompasses community history, family history, and objects that are meaningful and representative of *your* story.

With your support, we will protect this treasured building, expand access to nearby history, and ensure the museum continues to grow as a vibrant, welcoming resource. This campaign is a promise: to care for a cherished landmark, to foster learning and community, and to ensure that when people go looking for their nearby history, they needn't look any further than their own backyard.

Join us. Let's preserve the past, enrich the present, and build a future where there's truly no place like Oconomowoc.

Justin Agar-Pratt
Director

OUR MISSION

To inspire and educate by
preserving and sharing
Oconomowoc area history

**Each year, we connect
with 2,000+ people
through**

- **Museum visits**
- **Research services**
- **Lectures & workshops**
- **Field trips**
- **Family & class reunions**
- **Community programs**
- **Student enrichment**

**We are
the caretakers of**

50,000+ Objects

10,000+ Photographs



**20,000+ Books
& other archival
resources**

1921



The National Guard Armory Building, constructed in the Spanish Colonial style for the 127th Regiment Infantry Company G, was dedicated on December 15.

TWO LEGACIES INTERTWINED



Oconomowoc's first museum was established in 1926 in a storage area above the city's original library.



1926



1984

After serving as a hub of community activity for over 60 years, the 1921 Armory was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and would soon be listed on the State Register of Historic Places. One year later, a new armory was dedicated and the National Guard moved out.



1988

The 1921 Armory needed a new tenant and the Oconomowoc Historical Society needed a new home. The City of Oconomowoc deeded the building to the historical society with the stipulation that a museum be opened within five years.

THE CHALLENGE WAS MET



**THE OCONOMOWOC HISTORICAL SOCIETY
REOPENED THE 1921 ARMORY
AS A MUSEUM
ON JUNE 29, 1991**



THE WORK CONTINUED



REACHING FOR THE FUTURE



To ensure that the shared legacies of the 1921 Armory and the Oconomowoc Historical Society continue for decades to come, we are launching this capital campaign to complete a series of renovations and enhancements to our museum building. These updates will protect the building's structure, improve accessibility and visitor experience, and enhance our ability to preserve and share local history.



Restore the building's exterior

Time and Wisconsin's weather have taken their toll on the museum's exterior. This project will include patching, repairing, and repainting the building's exterior. These improvements will protect the structure from further damage and preserve its historic appearance.

Exterior work also includes re-installing windows at the building's front elevation by removing outdated knock-out panels, drywall, and framing. This will harken back to the building's first 60 years of existence when there were actual windows! The windows in the exhibit hall will remain covered to protect our artifacts from the damaging effects of sunlight.

Refresh the entrance and other public areas



We will completely reconstruct the outdated restrooms and revitalize the entrance hallway to create a welcoming and accessible experience for our guests and volunteers. Restroom reconstruction will result in an expansion of the Hilbert Scherffius Research Center allowing us to better serve researchers, museum programming, community meetings, and rentals.



The Hilbert Scherffius Research Center



Passage from entryway to exhibit hall



Improve interior lighting and air quality



We will install a new, modern lighting in all of our exhibit spaces to create a brighter and more energy-efficient exhibit environment. In addition, the building's ductwork will be professionally cleaned and inspected.

Enhance the theatre



The museum's theatre is a beloved and vital component of our programming. New seating and an enhanced audio-visual system will dramatically improve audience comfort for lectures, films, and school field trips. It will also serve as a gathering place for private and corporate events, extending its impact beyond museum programs and providing an important source of income to support for our mission.



Fundraising goal: \$1,000,000

As the only institution solely dedicated to Oconomowoc area history, we carry a responsibility to protect the past and make it accessible to all. We are proud to be debt-free. Every dollar raised goes directly to critical renovations and enhancements that will preserve our collections, improve our spaces, and expand our ability to serve the public. The past isn't gone. We are its stewards, and within our building, it remains alive and within reach.

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Legacy Leaders	\$100,000+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top-tier name on permanent Donor Wall • Major naming opportunity • Private dinner & behind-the-scenes tour • Lifetime membership • VIP recognition at reopening event • All benefits below (except Heritage Circle naming opportunities)
Heritage Circle	\$50,000– \$99,999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prominent Donor Wall listing • Naming opportunity • Private museum tour with the Director • Five-year membership • All benefits below
Centennial Society	\$25,000– \$49,999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor Wall listing • Three-year membership • All benefits below
Armory Advocates	\$10,000– \$24,999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complimentary admission and recognition at our next annual fundraising gala • Donor Wall listing • Two-year membership • All benefits below
Preservation Partners	\$5,000– \$9,999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name listed on campaign webpage • Donor Wall listing • One-year membership • All benefits below
Community Stewards	\$1,000– \$4,999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor Wall listing • Invitation to donor-exclusive reopening celebration • Name listed on back of theatre chair (persuant to the number of available chairs) • All benefits below
Friends of the Museum	\$100–\$999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign thank-you postcard • Name included in year-end thank you



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THANK YOU!

