

# Mansion News

## From the President by Brad Allen

Is it just me or did summer get shorter? Seems we just had buds on the trees and flowers popping up and now it is jacket in the morning, t-shirt in the afternoon weather. The trees up north are full on color as we see the same starting to happen here.

Change, it is what we can always count on.

Another thing that changes are the faces that come through the Governor Upham House. We are very fortunate to have had so many people through this year from so many different places. From our curious and beloved local guests to visitors from Arizona, Canada and even Spain! Nice to see NWCHS has gone global...

One of the big changes that has occurred with us, as with many organizations is our membership. We have had some of the strongest, smartest, productive members of this community as members who have helped in so many ways and we cannot thank them enough.

However, like with the changing of the seasons, somethings never stay the same. I am here to ask our members, challenge if you will, to help us in our membership campaign for the coming New Year. I ask if you have sons or daughters, friends, family and co-workers that may have known you were members to come and join us as well.

We have had a few more activities on the grounds that have helped this year but membership, volunteers and fresh ideas are what will keep us strong and viable now and in the future. I also ask that as members you give us your input, what would you like to see change or not change moving forward? Please email, call, drop a note or better yet come on in and let us know your thoughts because as members it is your House too!

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## Docent Training starting January 7th, 2018

The North Wood County Historical Society is recruiting volunteer docents to lead tours of Marshfield's historic Governor William Upham House.

To best serve the more than 1000 visitors who come each year eager to view the magnificent Upham home in Marshfield, and learn about the treasures it contains, the historical society relies on volunteers to greet visitors and to conduct tours.

The society offers this 6-week training program for volunteer docents who will gain the skills necessary to lead tours of the former Upham home and answer questions about the family and the northern Wood County communities' history.

Docent training classes will be held from **12p.m. to 2 p.m., on Saturdays January 7th through February 11th** at the North Wood County Historical Society, 212 W Third Street, Marshfield. The training curriculum covers all aspects of the William Upham family and is specially designed to prepare docents to give interesting and informative tours which will include a range of information about the house, family and community.

The classes are presented by society staff and volunteers.

After completing the training, participants will be thoroughly prepared to lead tours of the Home. Each candidate will lead a qualifying tour to an audience of their choosing (i.e. friends and family) before providing their first public tours. On average, volunteer docents work one four-hour shift per month.

For more information about the program and other volunteer opportunities, contact Kim Krueger at (715) 387-3322 or email [nwchs@uphammansion.com](mailto:nwchs@uphammansion.com)



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## Marshfield's Rollohome in Africa

-Bill Rebolz, NWCHS Volunteer



The Aug. 16, 1951 News-Herald caption reads: "Elmer Frey, left, president of Rollohome Trailer Coach Co. and Commander Attilio Gatti inspect the office coach which will be the famed explorer's headquarters on his forthcoming 12th expedition to Africa."



In 1951 the Rollohome trailers were included in a Marshfield to New York 'Wisconsin Good Will Tour' which promoted the Gatti Expedition.

The North Wood County Historical Society has an archive of many documents: old photographs, letters, newspaper stories, and much more. Some interesting stories can be revealed in seemingly dry documents from the past. A case in point is a collection of documents related to a one-time major industry here in Marshfield, the Rollohome Trailer Coach Company. This collection was donated by Shirley Burt, whose husband Robert had worked in sales for many years at Rollohome. Among the many items in the collection are two scrapbooks, filled with photos, correspondence, publicity photos, and newspaper clippings that tell of the relations that Rollohome had established in the early 1950s with an adventurer and explorer in Africa, Attilio Gatti.

Gatti, who was commonly referred to as Commander Gatti, was a veteran of the Italian Air Force during the First World War. After the war, he moved to the United States and became an American citizen, where his reputation was then established as an explorer, author, and filmmaker. Commander Gatti led a series of 13 expeditions to Africa, from 1924 to 1957.

Much of the financial support for these expeditions was raised through the cooperation provided by manufacturers of equipment needed for the expeditions, in exchange for publicity for these companies who contributed the equipment.

Rollohome enters the Gatti story in 1951, when Gatti was preparing for his 12<sup>th</sup> expedition from Cape Town, South Africa to Mombasa, Kenya. Gatti contacted Rollohome and made arrangements to supply 5 trailers for his caravan through the African bush.

By far, most of the scrapbook contents are letters exchanged between Commander Gatti and Rollohome officials, primarily Sales Manager Mac Matthews, detailing the construction of the trailers. It is evident from Gatti's letters that he was a colorful character, an experienced showman, and an accomplished self-promoter. Gatti informs Rollohome that the company will receive plenty of publicity through the two motion pictures and many publications that he has planned for telling the story of the expedition. The correspondence in the scrapbooks comes to an end in 1953, with news of the completion of the expedition in January of that year. Correspondence from 6 months after that includes queries from Rollohome to Gatti, asking when he will fulfill the commitments he had made to Rollohome. It is here that the story comes to an end, which

leaves us asking if Rollohome ever received the benefits that they expected from their investment in the Gatti African expedition.

If there are any former Rollohome employees who would have additional details, please let us know!



## 2017 Christmas theme — "A Victorian Wedding Christmas"

December 19, 1867, one hundred fifty years ago, William and Mary Upham were married. In commemoration of this marriage the Governor W.H. Upham House will be decorated in a Victorian Wedding Christmas theme.

The decorating committee, headed up by Board Director, Don Schnitzler will start decking the Upham halls the first week in November. We will be using wedding dresses from the NWCHS historic collection and using decorations one would see in the late 1890s and early 1900s.

Decorations will be finished prior to the **annual NWCHS Christmas potluck banquet 6:30pm November 27th** which is open to members and friends of NWCHS. .

The annual **Christmas weekend** event will be **Saturday December 2nd** and **Sunday December 3rd, 1pm-4pm** both days.

If you would be interested in helping with decorating please contact the office 7155.387.3322.

## Native American Artifact Show



The NWCHS sought to tap into the Hub City Days events with a Native American artifact show. Local collectors were invited to display their collections and folks were encouraged to bring in artifacts for archaeologists Ernie Boszhardt and Danielle Benden to identify. At the same time a Native American exhibit made up of NWCHS collections loaned artifacts was set up in the sun porch gallery and in the Upham library room. A number of people did bring in artifacts to have identified and the indoor exhibit was a success. This will be on display until Christmas decorations go up in

early November.

We learned that Hub City Days is definitely a car show event, and although the Native American show may not have fit in with Hub City Days, we may revisit it again! Next year maybe we'll do carriages! A HUGE thank you to **Ernie & Danielle** for all their donated time and effort, and to **Doug Miller, Chris Buchanan, and Dick Woiak** for bringing their collections, **John & Karen Bittrich, Chris Buchanan** and **Shirley Burt** for lending artifacts for the exhibit.



Left: Ernie Boszhardt looks over a war club on loan from John Bittrich.

Above: Doug Miller exhibited some of his collection

## Yard & Gardens Report - Tom Ptak Master Gardener



Earlier this summer the Governor Upham House hosted a successful Respite Garden Tour. Many visitors who attended the Marshfield garden tours came and admired the Heritage Rose Garden. Our largest project this year was severe pruning of the honeysuckle hedge behind the arbor. This is performed every 7 years to enable fresh growth for next year. A huge thanks goes to **Adrian Mayagoitia** who worked alongside me this summer. Adrian put in many volunteer hours not only with pruning but many other gardening projects.

We had some unwelcome insect visitors this year called Japanese Beetles. They were mostly invasive after the primary rose bloom period. Hand picking worked well over insecticide use.

Our Master Gardeners worked on their individual assignments throughout the growing season establishing a colorful view on most of the gardens. They will be assisting our society members on **"make a difference day" October 28 at 1:00PM to 4:00PM**. This is a huge project for preparing the yard for winter. Won't you please consider helping us?

We wish to thank all the volunteers, **Master Gardeners**, and **Dana Anderson** who provided many flowers and much labor during the growing season, and to **Gail Snorheim** who has kept the ferns hanging on the Upham House's porch looking lovely all summer!

One of the tallest Blue Spruce trees in Marshfield sits in our front, garden and will need to be cut down due to declined growth. Branches are starting to fall off and posing a hazard. The cost for removing this tree will be considerable. If you would be willing to contribute towards this project please see information on page 5 regarding online giving through the **Marshfield Area Community Foundation**. Donations of any sort are appreciated!

## Re-wallpapering Upham House Rooms

The NWCHS purchased the Governor Upham House in late 1975. For the next two years the house went through some cosmetic updates in order for it to be ready to open to the public on June 25, 1978. Wallpaper was one of those updates. This was 40 years ago and the 1970s wallpaper is showing its age.

Initially, the Board of Directors thought to freshen up with paint the two upstairs galleries until money could be raised to re-paper using period appropriate wall paper. We were told paint over wallpaper does not work. So, choosing the smallest room, we decided to start scraping off the 1970s wallpaper to prep for painting. This quickly came to a halt when we ran into original wallpaper and plaster patchwork used to repair cracks in the wall.

We will need to re-paper the walls starting in this room, and will seek out period appropriate paper. If you would like to donate towards this project, please see how to give online through the **Marshfield Area Community Foundation** on page 5.



Top: Brad Allen works on scraping wallpaper in preparation for painting.



Right: View of three layers of wall paper. The pussy-willow design is the oldest paper.

## Jan Thomas Remembers—The Central Wisconsin State Fair



Marshfield News-Herald 3 Sep., 1960  
Doc, Kitty, and Chester of *Gunsmoke*  
were Grandstand features during the  
1960 Central WI State Fair.

Going to the Central Wisconsin State Fair was always a special week for my family. My family, especially my Mother's side, are native to the Marshfield area and are 'carney's' at heart. I started going to the fair, probably at the early age of 4 or 5 with my parents, Bill and Louise Holubets, and Grandma and Grandpa Gandt. We looked forward to seeing all the animals and horse races, food stands and just walking around meeting friends; and we always went to at least one Grand Stand show. I remember one time we went to see all the performers from the TV series 'Gunsmoke'.

In 1941 we moved from my Grandparent's farm in North Hewitt to Marshfield. My parents bought a home at 214 East Bakerville Street (now 14<sup>th</sup> Street). We were only three blocks from the fairgrounds, it was exciting to go up to watch the rides and food stands (and there were many!) get set up. The Fair provided a week of good, old-fashioned fair food. Corn dogs, burgers, funnel cakes, cream puffs, ice cream treats and all the other good, deep-fried foods you could think of! Yum!Yum!

Early in the week my brothers, Jerry and Bob, would go up to the fair grounds to secure a job helping the Carnies and doing odd jobs for anyone who needed help. My Mother was the Culinary Superintendent in the Exposition Building (the main Expo building built by the Felhofer Brothers near the Grand Stand). She helped set up the canned vegetables, fruits, and all the great baked goods. She also helped with the judging these exhibited goods. I believe she did this for at least 25 years or more!

My husband, Gordie, was a grocer and butcher and we supplied the hamburgers and other food items for the food stands. He would end up grinding 100s of pounds of hamburger. One of the biggest customers was the Schirpke/Zahn food stand, owned by sisters, Anita Schirpke and Arlene, (Tootie) Zahn. They specialized in homemade pies and soups and were one of the best food stands. *(Incidentally the Schirpke/Zahn food stand opened in 1948 and closed in 1996).*

In 1957 Gordie and I outgrew our apartment and built our first home at 1006 South Ash Ave. ½ block away from the fairgrounds. We had 4 children and they all experienced our excitement for the fair at an early age. They would love to go to the fair and see Grandma Louise, go on the children's rides and eat some good treats. We loved walking up and down the midway and going to see the animals.

In 1968 we outgrew our Ash Ave. home and bought the Old Noll Farm house at 308 E. 15<sup>th</sup> St. which is still there, however much of the property was sold to become a part of the fairgrounds which currently encompasses the Hockey building and horse arena. The children loved the fair as much as their parents did and would find holes in the fence between the fairgrounds and our property to sneak in! For six days our neighborhood would be enveloped with all the fair's excitement, noise and activity.

Today, at age 85, my grandparents, parents, and husband are deceased and my children are grown and live out of town. But guess what? I still go to the Central Wisconsin State Fair on Senior's Day! For me, the highlight of Senior's Day was going to the Howie Sturtz Show on Thursday afternoon. Even though times have changed, there are still the same smells of fryers, funnel cakes, burgers and animals. There are still Grand Stand shows to go to... I'm still a 'Carnie' at heart! -Jan Thomas



1961 CWSF Midway  
NWCHS P110.22



Anita Schirpke and Arlene  
(Tootie) Zahn in front of their  
food stand in 1977



Louise Holubets, 2nd from right,  
served as Culinary Superintendent in  
the Exposition Building.

## One way you can give online to support the NWCHS



NWCHS realizes that some folks would be inclined to donate online to the Historical Society. Although we currently do not have the ability for individuals to give directly to the NWCHS online, we are working on it!

One way you can give a **non-membership** gift online is via the Marshfield Area Community Foundation. MACF is a public charity managing a number of permanent endowment

funds serving multiple community needs including arts and culture, education, environment, health, human services, and recreation. The Foundation is classified with the IRS as 501(c)(3), meaning it is non-profit and tax-exempt.

Since 2016, the NWCHS has a designated fund with the MACF to which individuals may donate. If there is a specific project towards which you would like your funds to go you can give via MACF. After you designate the **North Wood County Historical Governor Upham House** fund and enter your information, you will be able to indicate what project you would like your donation to go towards: e.g. "Tree cutting project", "Wallpaper project", "House repairs" or even "General". Please understand that membership dues are not eligible for this online giving. Hopefully soon, through a different means we will have this ability.

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## In Kind Donations

The NWCHS Board of Directors would like to thank the following individuals for their in kind donations and donated time to the support the NWCHS

Yard & Garden:

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| ◇ <b>Dana Anderson</b>     | ◇ <b>Tom Ptak</b>   |
| ◇ <b>Adrian Mayagoitia</b> | ◇ <b>Rick Rhodes</b> hired to repair the garage roof, but he donated a bit of his time and Menards rebate \$ from supplies! |
| ◇ <b>Master Gardeners</b>  |   |
| ◇ <b>Gail Snortheim</b>    |   |

Native American Artifact Show & Exhibit:

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| ◇ <b>Ernie Boszhardt</b> and <b>Danielle Benden</b> for their donated time and expertise. They traveled up from Lodi and missed a big archaeology event to be with us! |                                     |
| ◇ <b>Doug Miller</b>   | ◇ <b>Dolly Kobs</b>                 |
| ◇ <b>Ben Allen</b>   | ◇ <b>Annette &amp; Roy Matteson</b> |
| ◇ <b>Lori Belongia</b>   | ◇ <b>Bill Reholz</b>                |
| ◇ <b>John &amp; Karen Bittrich</b>   | ◇ <b>Dick Woiack</b>                |
| ◇ <b>Jenny Bravener</b>  | ◇ <b>Ken Wood</b>                   |
| ◇ <b>Chris Buchanan</b>  | ◇ <b>NWCHS Board</b>                |
| ◇ <b>Shirley Burt</b>  |                                     |

## To make a non-membership, online donation through the MACF

[www.marshfieldareacommunityfoundation.org](http://www.marshfieldareacommunityfoundation.org)

Click on 'Contribute' and click on "Donate"

In the area that says "Please specify name/purpose of fund, etc." type the fund name: **North Wood County Historical Governor Upham House**

After you give your information you are able to indicate any specific project you would like your donation to go towards—or say general gift.

## Sad Good-byes

It's always sad when you have to say 'thanks and so long' to folks, especially when they have been such great additions to the team effort that takes place behind the scenes.

This year **Annette Matteson** logged 304.75 hours- much of it cataloging artifacts, but also doing a very detailed, and thorough audit of the photo archives. Though sometimes monotonous, it was extremely valuable work. Especially an index of all donors from 1959 to present!

**Jenny Bravener** had to bid us farewell, too. Jenny was a University graduate with a degree that focused on house museums. Jenny enjoyed working with youth and dove right in to school tours, helping set up exhibits, research, collections care and helping with events. Jenny is following her dreams and has taken an intern position with AmeriCorps in Beverly, West Virginia Heritage Center.

Thank you **Annette** and **Jenny!** We will miss you!

North Wood County Historical Society  
PO Box 142 (mailing address)  
212 W. 3rd St.  
Marshfield, WI 54449

PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE



#### Office Hours:

Mondays & Thursdays 9-1

Wednesdays 12-4

Tours: Wed & Sat 1-4

Or by appointment

Phone: 715.387.3322

E-mail:

nwchs@uphammansion.com

We are seeking stories for *Mansion News*! If you have a story pertaining to history in the north Wood County area, please contact Kim in the office.  
Thank you.

#### Upcoming Events

<b>All Nov.</b>	Decorating for Christmas! Starting the first wknd. Call the office if you would like to help!	Various times
<b>Nov. 5</b>	<i>Great Things Are Happening Here!</i> - Everett Roehl Marshfield Public Library	1-4pm
<b>Mon Nov. 27</b>	Annual NWCHS holiday potluck banquet—open to everyone! Bring a dish to pass. Board Members will bring main	6:30 pm
<b>Sat &amp; Sun Dec. 2 &amp; 3</b>	<i>"A Victorian Wedding Christmas"</i> Annual Christmas event	1pm-4pm Both days
<b>Jan 7 — Feb 11 2018</b>	Docent training classes <u>Saturdays</u> @ the Gov. Upham House, 212 W 3rd St, Marshfield.	12pm— 2pm