



HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES DISCOVERING OUR HISTORY

1860 LIGHT STATION AND RESOURCE CENTER
NEWSLETTER



Volume 37, Issue 1

Spring 2026

2026 PWHs Speaker Series

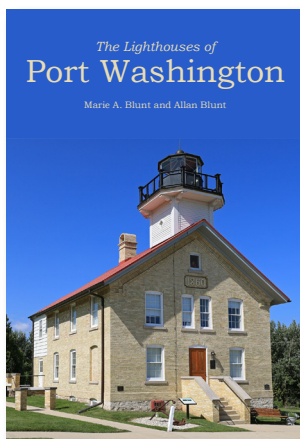
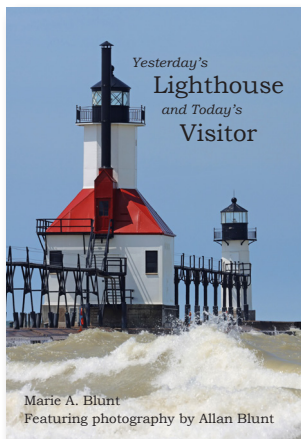
Inventors Brewpub

305 E. Washington Street 7:00 p.m.

Wow! What an emotional evening at Inventors on Thursday, February 17. The PWHs Speaker Series welcomed Kate Erickson, faculty member at MATC and member of the Oneida Tribe. Everyone there was deeply touched by her family story told through generations of denial and acceptance of their heritage as Indigenous. She is a superb storyteller. Attendees who are deaf and hard of hearing were pleased with the quality of the ASL interpreters who were present through grant funding. We plan to have certified interpreters for the April and June speaker presentations. Learn more and register on our website pwhistory.org under Events.

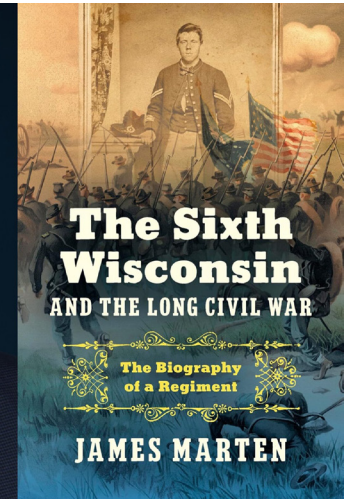
Thursday, April 9

Marie Blunt, former Resident Keeper and lighthouse aficionado, will make a return visit to present "Navigating the Seas (Lakes, Rivers, and Oceans too)". Marie's presentations are interactive, engaging, and always entertaining. Marie and her husband Allan have recently published a new book, *Yesterday's Lighthouse and Today's Visitor*, which will be on sale at the presentation along with her book, *The Lighthouses of Port Washington*, featuring our 1860 Light Station.



Tuesday, June 16

James Marten, retired Marquette University professor and former president of the Society of Civil War Historians will present, "The Sixth Wisconsin and the Long Civil War". A portion of the presentation will feature local area soldiers who served in the Sixth Infantry, one of the elite regiments in the legendary Iron Brigade. Professor Marten's book with the same title will be on sale that evening.



St. Mary's Church Tour

Join local historian, Kevin Wester, on **Saturday, July 25 at 10:00 a.m.** for a presentation and tour of historic St. Mary's Church in Port Washington. Wester will reveal fascinating aspects of this Port Washington historic icon that have been lost in history. Wester co-authored the history of St. Mary's in 2003 for the parish's 150th anniversary. Kevin is the founder and CEO of Luxembourg Legacy, where he assists individuals pursuing Luxembourg dual citizenship and leads annual group tours to Luxembourg.



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\$40 Individual

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Contact Information

PO Box 491
 205 N Franklin Street
 262-268-9150
 pwhistory.org

*The Port Washington Historical Society
 is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization.*

President's Message

Hello PWHS Members and Friends,

I would like to extend a special word of thanks to each of you who contributed to our Annual Fund Drive and Gala in 2025. We received \$110,000 in donations from those two events last year. Your generosity has been nothing short of inspiring! Your donations continue to play a crucial role in the success of our 2026 initiatives and overall financial health of the Port Washington Historical Society. To our Board of Directors, past and present, and our committed volunteers — thank you for your hours of time and efforts given to the success of PWHS.

You are invited to our Annual Spring Gala (May 19), for which I hope you have already returned your invite and reserved that date on your calendar. I look forward to seeing and meeting you there. FYI... for those attending, you will be able to drop your name in the bin for a chance to win a gift certificate to a local restaurant. The drawing of that lucky winner will be held that evening.

I make note of our mission statement: "The Port Washington Historical Society preserves and shares community history that connects the past to the present with a view to the future." With the thought of greater community connections, collaboration, and visibility, I challenge you to explore Port with your friends and visitors in the months ahead. Take the walking tour of our historic downtown, eat at our restaurants, stop in at our Resource Center to see new exhibits, and visit our 1860 Light Station.

With regards to our 1860 Light Station and Generator property, this year marks the beginning stages of planning future exhibit use for the property and investing dollars into the needed restoration, maintenance, and landscaping. We welcome your thoughts on the uses for this property as we plan over the months ahead.

So, remember the challenge to you is to explore Port—easily done by letting your friends and acquaintances know about PWHS, sharing our website, visiting the Light Station property and RC, and inviting them to events organized by PWHS. Thank you again for your past and continued support toward the success of PWHS, and if you are wondering how you could contribute to our success with a small investment of your time and unique skills, we are always looking for volunteers. **Please call the Resource Center: 262-268-9150.**

Sincerely,
 Kevin Grady, President



Executive Director's Report

Dear Friends,

As we turn the page onto a new season, I'm filled with both gratitude and anticipation for all that lies ahead. I'm stepping into my 8th year as an Executive Director, and the Port Washington Historical Society into its 35th year, with fresh energy, renewed purpose, and a heartfelt commitment to being a place where history brings people together in meaningful, joyful, and sometimes unexpected ways.

As spring arrives, we continue the momentum and look forward to the continuation of our 2026 Speaker Series which will shine a light on lighthouses in April and the Wisconsin's legendary Iron Brigade in June. We're also looking forward to the installation of a new exhibit at the Resource Center in May. "The Newspapers of Port Washington" will offer an immersive thought-provoking experience that will spark conversation.

Additionally, we're planning exciting - and long overdue - investment in the restoration of the Generator Building at the 1860 Light Station. By making that building more welcoming and accessible, we're continuing to grow as a vibrant place where community, creativity, and well-being thrive through history. We hope you'll join us this spring and summer whether by attending a public program, exploring our exhibits, or celebrating with us at our annual fundraiser, Spring Fling, on Tuesday, May 19, at Salt (formerly The Venue at Newport Shores). That evening we'll raise vital funds that keep PWHS inspiring and dreaming boldly. Tickets can be purchased online through April 30.

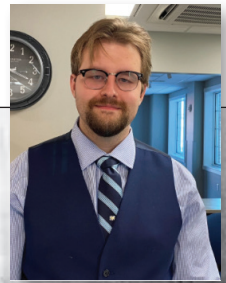
Thank you for being part of our journey. Your belief in our mission allows us to build intentionally for this season and beyond.

With gratitude,

Dawn



360 Degree Panorama of Exterior Design of Generator Building Restoration



2026 Speaker Series



2025 Spring Fling



*Rendering of Generator Building Restoration Interior
-KSK Architects*

LIGHT STATION REPORT

What we call the 1860 Light Station is on the National Register of Historic Places and includes three buildings: a Lighthouse; a Generator Building; and a replica Oil House. The site has been lovingly cared for by the Port Washington Historical Society since the late 1990s.

The 1860 Lighthouse was beautifully restored from top to bottom between 2002 and 2005. But the adjacent Generator Building—constructed in 1934 and now nearly 100 years old—has never undergone a full historic restoration.

The Generator Building actually played a large role in the City's history – supplying power both to the adjacent 1860 Lighthouse when it was electrified, and also to the recently restored Art Deco 70-year-old pier lighthouse on the harbor.

Our plan is to restore the Generator Building's exterior to its original 1934 appearance and adapt the interior for public use with interpretive exhibits focused on Port Washington's maritime history and Lake Michigan's role as a working waterway that carried cargo and passengers to a growing Wisconsin.

A central part of the project is making the building fully ADA accessible. A sensitively designed accessible ramp will ensure that all visitors—regardless of mobility—can experience this site equally.

We will be working with our partners, the City of Port Washington, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association/Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary, and you, our members, to enhance the learning experiences for visitors of all ages. We are at the beginning of the process. If you are interested in helping with the planning process, please contact us at the Resource Center.



New ADA Accessible Generator Building Restoration



Drone image of the Light Station Grounds



Pier Light Restoration Ribbon Cutting Celebration

RESOURCE CENTER NEWS

These have been happy times at the Resource Center as volunteers pour through an unusual donation of 60 old scrapbooks dating from 1941 through 2000. The scrapbooks are a collection of news articles including the happenings of the times, bridal and wedding showers (and there were many of them in those days), baby photos, obituaries and much, much more. Many clippings are of service men and women of war time, reminding us of the heavy times of the 1940s. Gratefully, all items are labeled with a date, which historians greatly appreciate. Volunteers are busy copying and filing the articles related to Port Washington.



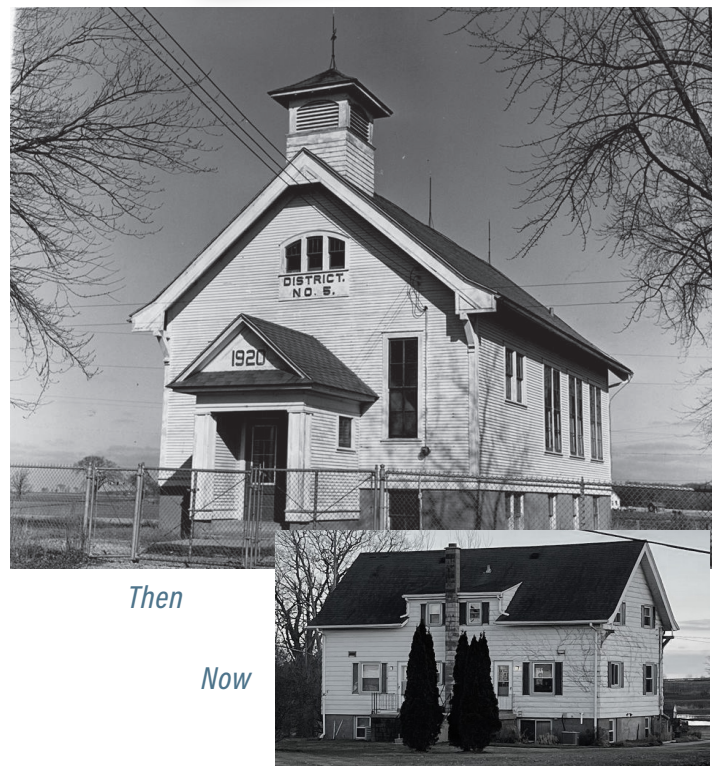
The scrapbooks accompanied the donation of a vintage student desk from the Maple Grove School which was established in the 1880s as part of the Norwegian settlement located just west of Port Washington. The school closed in 1961, but the building still exists as a duplex at the intersection of Mink Ranch Rd and County KK. The student desk was produced by the Wisconsin Chair Company with its old identifying label on the bottom of the chair. Articles and pictures of the schoolhouse were located, some in the old scrapbooks. All will be on display at the Resource Center.

This spring, the local history exhibit is shifting to focus on Port Washington's newspapers, some of which date back to the late 1800s. In the early years of these newspapers, prior to radio, television or social media, content in newspapers covered everything from local news, advertisements, local gossip, announcements, remedies for ailments, to national and world developments. Newspapers were how citizens got information in 1898, which might explain in part why there would be four newspapers, *The Zeitung*, *The Star*, *The Herald* and *The Pilot*. All of this in a community of 3,450 plus a greater rural population that spoke not only English but also German. Two of those newspapers were published in German.

This exhibit creates an opportunity to bring out some of these newspapers and highlight articles as well as advertisements from businesses within the community. The exhibit also provides an opportunity to bring out some of the business-related items contained in Society collections.

A recently acquired display case will feature some of our newest donations. Stop into the Resource Center to see the Maple Grove school desk with its accompanying information, along with several fascinating business items from our collections. The newspaper exhibition will open in May. For Resource Center hours see PWHS Seasonal Hours section

Geri Zehren & Jackie Oleson, Co-Managers at the Resource Center



Then

Now





A Donation: A Well-worn Little Red Book

Last fall a lady walked into the Resource Center. She had driven up from Chicago for the afternoon. She had a large envelope filled with items: receipts from various stores of the past, items from old businesses, and newspaper clippings. She also had a small red book showing some wear and tear. It was a University of Wisconsin (UW) campus booklet filled with old varsity fight songs.

The booklet was a very early edition dating back to the dedication of the University of Wisconsin Memorial Union in 1928. The donor said she didn't know what to do with it. I told her she could leave it with us with the understanding that if we could not find it a proper home, I would return it to her.

A few weeks later, on a Thursday afternoon at the Resource Center, Nancy Holley said that she and husband Tom, both alumni of UW, were going to the Saturday football game in Madison. They were really looking forward to the weekend. I showed her the little red book, and Nancy, a gifted alto, started singing some of the fighting songs and I suggested she take the book and use it during the weekend game.

The following Monday at the Resource Center, Nancy related a story about the little red book. She said that on the drive to Madison she and Tom joyfully sang the songs in the booklet. Following the drive and before the game, they attended a reception at Chancellor's home. During a quiet moment during the reception, Nancy showed the book and its dedication page to UW Chancellor Jennifer L. Mnookin, suggesting that she would like to donate the little red book to the university. Chancellor Mnookin happily accepted the songbook and said it would be placed in her special collection in a case for all to see. So, the little red book found its proper home.

Volunteer News Thanks to our volunteers

The Port Washington Historical Society sincerely thanks all the volunteers who made 2025 a great success. Your energy and enthusiasm filled every part of the year. Our first-floor docents at the Resource Center welcomed visitors, shared stories, and showcased our exhibits. On the second floor, volunteers carefully accessioned donated objects for our collection. And at the 1860 Lighthouse, our tour guides brought local history to life. We are grateful for your expertise, attention to detail, and commitment to creating a smooth and memorable experience. We also appreciate the behind-the-scenes efforts that kept everything running well. We said huzzah at a soiree in December.

Gavin Cain is starting his third year as a Resource Center volunteer! Gavin began working at the RC when he was in 8th grade at Thomas Jefferson Middle School to earn service hours for the National Honor Society. Now in 10th grade at Port Washington High School, Gavin earns Port Pride hours toward school exemptions and future college applications. Gavin helps out at the RC with copying, filing, and mailings, but his favorite activity is helping with display and gala setups! He is the son of Amanda and Michael Cain (the Society's IT specialist).

Gavin Cain
Resource Center Volunteer



Christmas on the Corner

Our Make & Take Lighthouse craft was a huge hit during Christmas on the Corner this year. Crafting over 100 lighthouse bedside night lights for 315 kids and parents wouldn't have been possible without our PWHs volunteers helping out. We are especially grateful to new volunteers, Pam and Pete.



EXTRA! EXTRA!

SPECIAL EDITION

Newspapers of Port Washington

Two years ago, volunteers with the Port Washington Historical Society began the arduous task of cataloging donated copies of the German paper **The Zeitung** established in 1855, **The Port Washington Star** established in 1879, **The Port Washington Herald** established in 1896, **The Port Washington Pilot** established in 1898, **The Ozaukee Press**, established in 1940, **The Advertiser** and various other publications from the area. In the early years of these newspapers, prior to radio, television or social media, content in newspapers covered everything from local news, advertisements, local gossip and announcements and remedies for ailments to national and world developments. Newspapers were how citizens got information in 1898, which might explain in part why there would be four newspapers, **The Zeitung**, **The Star**, **The Herald** and **The Pilot** in a community of 3,450, plus a greater rural population. Why do we keep original copies of these newspapers? Because it gives us the context of the times, the expanse of what was covered in these weeklies, and a window into daily life as families live in this small community.



As an Archive Center, we can glean historic information of the times from newspapers whether through articles or advertisements. An article in the December 25, 1920 issue of The Port Washington Star recounted a time when Port Washington was without a hotel. From the Washington County Blade of March 27, 1851, fire consumed the Powers Hotel the day previously with every room occupied and a financial loss of \$6,000. The city had a population of 1,200 and the hotel was located on the southeast corner of Franklin St. and Grand Ave. On a cold January 21, 1852, the following year, the Wisconsin House caught fire likely from a chimney, with the furniture being saved. There was a general need for a hotel with 2 flouring mills, 2 sawmills, 2 piers and warehouses, 5 stores and other businesses and 4 steamboats arriving daily the previous year.

Some of the short-lived papers of the area were the **Ozaukee County Democrat** 1854, the **Advertiser Democrat** 1855-1859, the **Ozaukee County Times** 1857-1859, the **Eagle or Der Adler** 1860-1862, the **Republican** 1859 for 18 months, the **Dairy News** 1895. The **Port Washington Herald**, a German newspaper initially, changed to an English newspaper around World War I and was renamed **The Port Washington Herald**.

In the May 12, 1897 issue, Joseph Eidenberger was the proprietor of the Wilson House Livery and advertised the boarding of horses behind the Wilson House hotel in the German Port Washington Herald. Charles W. Guy had a shop on Franklin Street selling bicycles, a boy's model for \$50 and a girl's model for \$40.

In the July 17, 1920 Port Washington Star, Boerner Bros. general merchandise store sold men and young men's suits for \$15, boy's knicker suits for \$7 and men's Stephenson union suits for \$1.95.

Recently the Society was gifted the first twenty issues of The Port Washington Pilot, August 4, 1898 to December 29, 1898. Weekly newspapers covered local happenings, local gossip, informational pieces as well as national and world news. An article in the August 11 issue's agricultural column informed chicken owners about chicken lice, also called chicken bedbugs, that bother both chicks and hens and ways to get rid of the pests. A story of the War in Spain was included in the August 8 issue. In the August 15 issue, homemakers were instructed how to keep butter cool by digging a hole 3 ½ feet deep and 3 ½ feet square in the cellar floor, line it with brick and add a hinged frame cover. The December 8 issue included a story of white polar bears.

During WWI newspapers like *The Pilot*, *The Star*, and *The Herald* kept local citizens informed of the happenings overseas. They often printed letters from soldiers written home to family and friends. In the February 7, 1918 issue, Emil Borst wrote from France about the area being good for farming, and that farmers had cows instead of horses pulling plows, presumably because horses had been requisitioned for war purposes. He would ask a friend in his letter home for smoking tobacco. Emil Schuknecht was a member of Supply Company 137th Infantry NG and wrote about his beginning service time before he shipped out to Europe. Schuknecht would later be killed while serving in France.

The *Ozaukee Press*, established in 1940, ran an article in the June 21, 1945 issue about the Little Kohler POW camp where 350 German prisoners worked in local canneries in Cedarburg, Fredonia, Belgium, Saukville, Knellsville and West Bend. Canneries paid the Army who ran the camp 55 cents an hour, and prisoners were paid by the Army 80 cents a day in canteen coupons. Prisoners were not allowed outside of the camp area. An Army medic and dentist were on site.



Image courtesy of the Luxembourg American Cultural Society, Belgium Wisconsin

Harbor improvements of the 1980s and of the early 2000s finally solved what were perennial issues for boats of all sizes. A November 11, 1943 *Ozaukee Press* issue headlines "Lake Storm Lashes Port" article about damage from 40 mph easterly winds to fishing operations, a road and a bridge. The editorial of the issue stressed the need to correct Port Washington's harbor before there were bigger storms, bigger property damage and the loss of more than one fishing firm's relocation to a safer harbor in Sheboygan. It would take 60 years before the harbor would be considered safe.

Norman Dix and His Mother Escorted Home by the Guards.



you are hugging the stove there now. It is not very cold here. At that we are dressed pretty warm. The way the French people talk it does not get any colder. It is about 30 above today. This country is pretty good for farming they have cows instead of horses to do the plowing. They are so far behind us that it will take them a hundred years to catch up. A fellow can walk as fast as those trains go. We had a 200 mile trip. It took us 36 hours to make it. Was to town the other night, place of about 35000 population. The streets are 18 feet wide. Instead of horses the men pull a two wheel cart around. Its a joke when first you see it, however, I am used to it.

of tell you where the place. Please ing tobacco. It ence what kind. I will get it about that. Best nds. nd, Emil C. Borst.

KILLED IN FRANCE.



ELMER N. SCHUKNECHT.

WHOLE NO. 2318

BIG PARADE IS HELD

Port Washington's Peace Celebration on Monday Afternoon Will Never Be Forgotten.

EVERYBODY TURNED OUT TO HELP CELEBRATE THE DAY

Signing of Armistice Is Greeted With A Great Chorus of Toots and Ringing of Bells.

On Monday morning when Port Washington people arose, they found that armistice terms had been

Another article in the issue talked about high water levels and the breakwater causing drinking water to be muddy. The city applied for a water filtration plant that would end up being delayed until after conclusion of WWI and had a cost of \$248,000. A newspaper can bring to the public local concerns and developments.

As Port Washington grew and access to news became more varied, newspapers became more focused on local happenings and concerns. As radio and television convey world, national and state news, newspapers continue to fill the need to inform and become the voice of local citizens. Where communities have a local newspaper, citizens are fortunate to have such local reporting. Are we not compelled to support their mission?

Please check out our exhibit on Port Washington newspapers opening in May at the Resource Center.

Jackie Oleson, Collections Manager

Ozaukee Press was named the best large weekly newspaper in Wisconsin, winning the first-place General Excellence award at the March 2026 Wisconsin Newspaper Association convention. The paper secured 23 awards, including first-place honors for Investigative Reporting and Photography. **Congratulations!**

Mission

"To preserve and share community history that connects the past to the present with an eye to the future."



JOIN

The Port Washington Historical Society is supported through sponsorships, donations and memberships from individuals, foundations, and corporations. By becoming a member, you play a vital role in preserving our community history and ensuring the success of the Resource Center and the 1860 Light Station.

ALL MEMBERS RECEIVE:

- Free admission to the 1860 Light Station and PWHs Resource Center
- Free admission to special programming and the PWHs Speaker Series
- Free guest passes based on the level of your membership
- Our newsletter, Historical Perspectives
- Free admission to the Research Center archives at the Luxembourg American Cultural Society & Center in Belgium, Wisconsin

Join online at pwhistory.org/donation-membership

Thank you.

FOLLOW US ON



PWHs Seasonal Hours

Resource Center
205 N Franklin Street

Now-May 28:
Monday & Thursday, 1:00–4:00 p.m.

Starting June 3:
Wednesday & Thursday, 1:00–4:00 p.m.

Additional summer hours

June 5 - August 29:
Friday: 1:00–4:00 p.m.
Saturday: 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

If you need more information or want to volunteer, call the Resource Center at (262) 268-9150.

1860 Light Station
311 N Johnson Street
Reopening June 24, 2026

The Historical Society is always looking for volunteers to serve at the Resource Center. Currently we are looking for weekend greeters who would volunteer to share their knowledge of Port Washington one Saturday morning a month from 10:00 a.m. to 2 p.m. beginning May 30 through October 31, 2026. If you are interested in helping this way, please contact Geri Zehren or Jackie Oleson at 262-268-9150.

John McGivern's Main Streets travelled to Port Washington last summer and visited the 1860 Light Station. The Season 5 episode featuring unique attractions in Port Washington is scheduled to air on Milwaukee PBS (Channel 10) and PBS Wisconsin on Thursday, May 7 at 7:00 p.m.



Donations & Memorials

SOCIETY DONATIONS

Captain Dave's Foundation
Ken & Lucy Buchholz
Don Cosentine
Dr. Kate Erickson
Louise Mollinger & David Franks
Todd & Kathie Gordon
Mary Kay Schuknecht
Douglas Smith

MEMORIALS

In Memory of Lloyd & Toni Smith
Maragaret Smith Lamude

ARTIFACTS, ARCHIVES, PHOTOGRAPHS

Jodi Dickmann
Mark & Nancy Gierach
Stanley Guokas
Donald & Bernadette Hoeller
Madelyn Pinnow
Port Washington Senior Center
JoAnn Stade
Robert & Janet Traynor
Randy & Debbie Weyker
Scott & Susan Westerbeke

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Mike & Jodi Dickmann
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Lawrence & Diana Verheyen
Geri Zehren

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Richard & Sylvia Ansay
Thomas and Allison Antoine
Brian Barber Family
Nancy Bodenstein
Allon Bostwick
Allen Buchholz
Ken and Lucy Buchholz
James and Mary Burmesch
Mike & Jodi Dickman
Drewitz Family
Rick Ewig
Richard & Sylvia Ansay
Thomas and Allison Antoine
Brian Barber Family

Nancy Bodenstein
Allon Bostwick
Allen Buchholz
Ken and Lucy Buchholz
James and Mary Burmesch
Mike & Jodi Dickman
Drewitz Family
Rick Ewig
David Franks & Louise Mollinger
Kevin Grady Family
Don & Barb Gilmore
Todd & Kathie Gordon
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Ken Grigas
Jerry & Diana Gutzman
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Jeffrey & Susan Killey
Tricia Kraiss
Carol Pomeday McElwee
Barbara Metz
Lori Mulloy
Ted Poull
Roseann St. Aubin
Mary Kay Schuknecht
Doug Smith
Ken & Barb Wardius

In Memoriam

In Memory of Paul Trump

The Port Washington Historical Society remembers Paul for his generosity and support given to the Society by him and Judy over the years. Judy grew up in Port Washington, her mom and dad were Marshall and Edith Moeser. Paul and Judy always appreciated the history of community. When the Society began the restoration of the current Resource Center on Franklin St in 2012, the development of the Port Exploreum in 2015, and the restoration of the S.S. Milwaukee lifeboat and its shelter at the 1860 Light Station in 2019, to mention just three, they were there to help make them happen. We thank them both for their support and send our condolences to the Paul Trump family.



In Memory of Richard (Lefty) Fowler

With great sadness we bid farewell to Richard (Lefty) Fowler – a friend of the Historical Society who helped with the renovation of the Resource Center.

Our sympathies to the family of Pat Wilborn. Pat has been a friend of the Port Washington Historical Society over the years. When the Society was looking for a permanent home in 2010, Pat extended his appraisal services to the search for a visible location that could house Society offices, archive center, and display areas. Pat will be missed.

CALENDAR / UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, April 9

Marie Blunt, author of *The Lighthouses of Port Washington and Yesterday's Lighthouse and Today's Visitor*,
Inventors Brewpub, 305 E. Washington Street 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 7

John McGivern's Main Streets featuring Port Washington
with a visit to the 1860 Light Station, Milwaukee PBS
Channel 10, 7:00p.m.

May (TBD)

Exhibit Opening - "The Newspapers of Port Washington",
PWHS Resource Center, 205 N. Franklin Street

Tuesday, June 16

James Marten, emeritus professor Marquette University,
*The Sixth Wisconsin and the Long Civil War: The Biography
of a Regiment*, Inventors Brewpub, 305 E. Washington
Street, 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, July 25

Kevin Wester tour of historic St Mary's Church,
451 Johnson Street, 10 am

YOU'RE INVITED



Spring Fling

ANNUAL FUNDRAISER TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2026

THE VENUE AT NEWPORT SHORES - 324 N. LAKE STREET

5:00PM - 8:00PM

Complimentary Hors d'oeuvres
and Beverages

\$65 per person until March 31

\$80 per person April 1- April 30

Silent/Live Auction/Paddle Raise



PO Box 491

205 N. Franklin Street

Port Washington, WI 53074