



2018 Annual Report

Our mission is to identify, collect, document, preserve, and interpret material culture, ideas, and values representing Oshkosh and the Lake Winnebago Region. The museum will strive to promote and nurture an understanding and an appreciation of this valuable legacy through easily accessible, quality exhibitions, programs, publications, and other educational experiences.

A Message from Museum Director Brad Larson

Thank you for your steadfast support of the Oshkosh Public Museum. We have been a superb community resource for 95 years. As the Museum and City of Oshkosh progress toward the extraordinary milestone of our centennial in 2024, the strength of our Members and supporters is needed more than ever.

As you discover in this report, we engaged in many projects at the Museum and in the community, and the Museum continues to successfully meet its mission. I give credit for this to the hard working staff, for they function as a close, dedicated team and together achieve amazing things. The Board is a committed advocate for the Museum and I value their input and extend my gratitude for their service.

We determine annual accomplishments and overall progress in specific, measureable ways. The number of people using the Museum's internet-based collections continues to increase; volunteer hours illustrate growth; and collections are being processed at an expanded rate. The latter is key for new projects such as the upcoming long-term exhibition, *Deep Roots, Growing City*, set to open in 2022.

The Museum faces significant challenges. The chief obstacle remains the building, which was constructed for another era. Among other things, it lacks a lobby, visitor amenities, and any type of loading capability for traveling exhibitions and large artifacts. In some areas, such as the Archives, space is exhausted. Collectively, this impacts what the Museum is able to present and services we can offer, our yearly attendance, and the amount of annual income generated. Over the last six months staff worked with Engberg Anderson Architects (Milwaukee) to design and plan changes to the Steiger Wing. Moving this vital building project forward in time for the 2024 centennial will be determined during City budget deliberations.

As one of Oshkosh's oldest and most esteemed quality of life assets, we proudly continue to be careful stewards of your tax dollars, and your private contributions. Staff always welcome and appreciate your views and comments. I extend my deep gratitude to our Members and the people of this community for your continuing support of this extraordinary place.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brad Larson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Brad Larson
Director

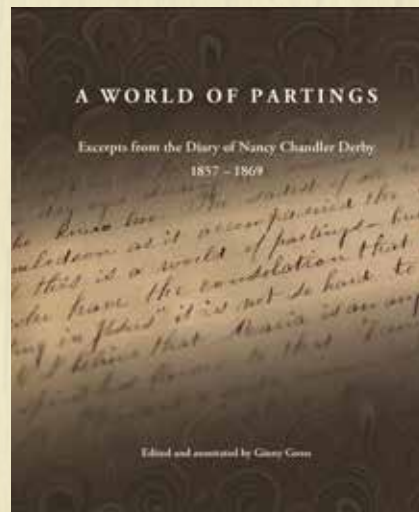


▲ Bust, 1909, bronze, gift of the Oshkosh Area School District, OPM #2010.74.1.

► The very name of our community — Oskas (“His Claw”) — illustrates the importance of this region to the Menominee people. The Museum acquired an amazing collection of carved and painted figures depicting the Clans of the Menominee people. Meticulously carved in the 1980s and 1990s by James Frechette, Jr., each incredibly detailed Clan figure is a work of art. A series of web pages on the Clans, figures, and Menominee launches at the same time as the exhibition opens in autumn 2019.



▲ A goal set nearly 30 years ago was realized on October 8, 2018, when the 45-year-old Fire Barn building on the northwest corner of the grounds was demolished. The reproduction structure had structural and mold problems. The removal of the building opened up the view of the Museum from the northwest. The Museum extends its appreciation to the Streets Division of Public Works for their good work.



▲ The Museum hired Emily Rock as Registrar in January 2019. Emily came to the Museum from The History Museum at the Castle in Appleton and brings an amazing skill set and level of experience. Former Registrar Joan Lloyd retired in February.

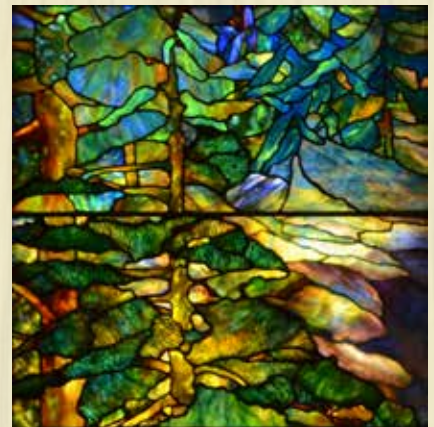
◀ A diary held in the Archives was the basis for a Museum publication by Ginny Gross, *A World of Partings, Excerpts from the Diary of Nancy Chandler Derby*. In this remarkable diary, Nancy Derby recounts daily life in Oshkosh during the late-1850s and 1860s. Her record of life in Oshkosh throughout the Civil War enables readers to become part of the Derby household during that disturbing time in our history, and helps readers understand a world now long gone.



BELLS OF PEACE
A World War I Remembrance

▲ The Museum’s World War I Commemoration Committee, chaired by Board member Rebecca Matzke, helped the community remember the end of that war by coordinating a city-wide bell ringing to coincide with the national “Bells of Peace” event. At 11:00 a.m. on November 11, 2018, dozens of church bells across Oshkosh rang out for ten minutes, just as they did 100 years ago.

▼ The 1926 model of the Paine Lumber Mill was removed in February 2019 to make room for a new exhibition on sports and recreation. Under the guidance of Assistant Curator Katrina Achilli, the mill was meticulously digitized by Weston Photography before it was removed so that it can be used again in a new, interactive format in *Deep Roots, Growing City*. Former Exhibit Technician Bill Radig built and installed elements of the Paine Mill exhibition in 1997.



▲ One of the most incredible features of the 1908 Sawyer home is its beautiful stained glass windows. In 2018, an anonymous donation enabled the illumination of those gorgeous windows with modern LED lighting. Brilliant color explodes through the windows and creates an amazing view at the top of the grand stairs.



◀ In 2018, the Museum acquired several superb examples of silver once owned by Edgar and Mary's daughter, Nia, including this teapot. The fine, historically important pieces had been passed down to Nia's descendant, and she wanted them to return home. The extended family of the donor held a reunion in Oshkosh and spent time at the Museum looking at the Sawyer collection. Teapot, 1929, sterling silver, gift of Andrea Taylor-Brochet, OPM #2018.75.8.



"Thanks for sharing this information [about my grandfather, Eli Rice]... My family is honored to share our family photos and stories with you and to expand your images of Eli beyond those of him at his shoe shine stand in Oshkosh."

~Richard Rice via email,
August 17, 2018

◀ Standee, Eli Rice. P2012.86.97



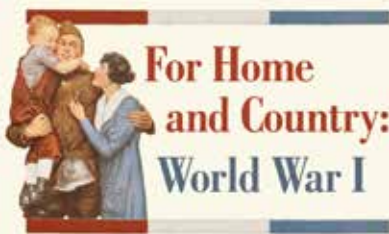
▲ President Lincoln gets a bath and a hot wax! The Museum takes its preservation role seriously and in June 2019, the 1909 sculpture by noted artist Adolph Alexander Weinman was cleaned and hot waxed by Venus Bronze Works of Detroit. The bronze bust was purchased by Colonel John Hicks and once graced the grounds of Lincoln School on Algoma Boulevard.



▲ Neenah 4th graders learned about prehistoric technologies, like this drill, during a March 2019 field trip that included specialized activities as part of their *People of the Waters* tour. In the summer of 2019, Education Assistant Sidney Lehman worked with the Oshkosh Area School District to augment field trip experiences. Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, the Museum will unveil new and exciting field trip activities and enhancements.



▲ The 1874 fire bell that once sat atop a former City Hall, and then the Museum's Fire Barn, now has a home at the Ceape Street fire station. Over the winter months, Maintenance Technician Matt Reinke constructed a bell tower of Douglas Fir timbers recovered from the former Waite Grass Matting building. Firemen once rang this bell to peel out warnings and announce celebrations; now the old bell will tell its story to a new generation of citizens.



▲ The Museum looked back 100 years in 2018 and captured the experience and emotion of the nation's first major overseas war (1917-1918). The impact of World War I on the community was significant, and the Museum helped bring awareness of how the conflict affected the people of Oshkosh. Full-sized "standees" of Oshkosh men and women from that era, along with their stories, were rotated throughout diverse community businesses in 2018.



◀ The dignified beauty of the Sawyer home, fully decorated for the holidays, is evident to everyone during the Museum Auxiliary's annual November Gala. As always, the 2018 Gala was first-rate, with mouth-watering food and desserts, and unique, sought-after raffle baskets and prizes. This yearly event brings a diverse group of people together to usher in the season and to support their Public Museum. Thank you, Auxiliary!

A Few Voices of Those We Served

"Thank you for the great tour and visit to the museum. Our classes had a great time . . . they are still talking about the clock, their baskets, and the longhouse. Thank you!"

~Ms. Pfaff, Read Elementary School, March 2019

"Once again you have done a wonderful job with the Oshkosh Centennial Exhibit. It was especially meaningful to my husband, whose father was stationed in France . . . Again, your museum is so remarkable."

~Rose Larkin, October 2018

"The Dionne Dollies article [in The Muse] was wonderful — so well written and informative. I loved it! I am so glad the dolls have a good home at the museum."

~Betty Taugher, December 2018

"Thank you Ginny [Gross] for your presentation to the study class — it was outstanding . . . I was amazed at the depth of your research . . . your attention to detail is very thorough."

~Barb Liljander, May 2019

Strength in Numbers

Statement of Revenue and Expenses for the year ending December 31

	2018
Operating Funds	
City Appropriation	907,500
Admission Fees	44,594
Gift Shop and Photograph Sales	14,541
Miscellaneous Revenue	8,408
Transfers In	145,373
Total Revenue	1,120,416
Total Expenses	1,118,972
Balance For Fiscal Year	1,444
Membership Fund	107,680
Exhibition Fund	100
Collections Fund	603,953
Dr. Richard and Jeanne Kitz Director's Fund	259,182
Lona and Edward G. Kitz Trust Fund	66,227
William E. Bray Trust Fund	19,089
Ethel J. Behncke Museum Trust Fund	288,599
Frederick and Marion Hughes Durow Trust Fund	3,307,144
Dr. Norman Marohn Museum Endowment Trust Fund	130,166
Capital Fund at the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation	333,752
Endowment Fund at the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation	263,406
Collection Fund at the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation	101,920