

Museum Notes

for the week of March 31 – April 6, 2024

by Kristen Parrott, curator

Spring has sprung, and the Vernon County Museum and History Center is moving to its springtime hours. During the months of April and May, we will be open Monday through Friday, 11AM to 4PM, or by appointment.

Cleaning gravestones will be the topic of the next genealogy class. If you've ever visited an old cemetery, you will have noticed that some of the older stones can be almost unreadable when they are covered in lichen. Grass clippings blown onto a stone can also build up a layer of decomposed plant matter over time.

Kathy Anderson of the Westby Area Historical Society will talk to the class about how to safely and effectively clean gravestones. Kathy has experience doing this work at the Coon Prairie Lutheran Church cemetery, located just south of Westby.

The class will meet on Thursday, April 11, at 10AM, in the conference room at the history center. New students are always welcome. Vernon County Historical Society members attend for free, and non-members are asked to pay \$5 per class session.

The Ridges and Rivers Book Festival is coming up in Viroqua at the end of April! Our history center will again be a venue for this exciting two-day event. On Friday, April 26, writer B.J. Hollars of Eau Claire will lead a writing workshop in our conference room. You must register and purchase a ticket for this workshop from the book festival's website:

<https://ridgesandriversbookfestival.org/>

On Saturday, April 27, start your day by visiting the Waffle Wagon, which will be parked outside the history center from 8:30 to 1, to buy traditional Norwegian waffles. Six Wisconsin authors will then be speaking in our conference room that day from 9 to 4:30. No tickets or registration required for any of Saturday's events at the history center.

Kevin and Patsy Alderson of La Farge will present a program about their Vernon County round barns book from 9 to 10AM. They'll be followed at 10:30 by UW Eau Claire English professor David Shih, who will talk about his recent memoir, *Chinese Prodigal*.

After lunch, Eric Schlehlein will give a program starting at 12:30 called "Forged in Blood," about his two Civil War novels. From 2 to 3, Larry Scheckel of Tomah will talk about his *Country School Days* book. The day will finish up with Gary Jones' presentation at 3:30 on his memoir *Ridge Stories*, about growing up in the Driftless region.

And that's just what's happening at the history center – there will be many other book festival events happening around Viroqua that Friday and Saturday. Be sure to make your calendars!