

Museum Notes

for the week of September 4 –10, 2022

by Kristen Parrott, curator

The Vernon County Fair starts next week! Be sure to stop by our booth inside the Expo Center to play the history quiz, pick up brochures, and purchase your copy of our newest book, *Country Schoolhouses of Vernon County, Wisconsin*. The book has been out for one year now, and we've made lots of corrections and additions during that time, so the new, second edition is even better than the original. The Fair runs from Wednesday, September 14, through Sunday, September 18.

The Vernon County Historical Society's annual pork chop dinner will be held on Saturday, September 24, from 4 to 7PM or until the food runs out. Like last year, the dinner will be a drive-through, carry-out event in the museum's parking lot at the corner of S. Main and E. South Streets in Viroqua. For \$12, you will receive a delicious meal of pork chop, baked potato, baked beans, coleslaw, applesauce, roll, and cookie. This is an important fundraiser for the Historical Society, so please come out to support your local history.

The Vernon County Museum is 100 years old! How can that be, you say, since you've heard that it started in 1942 in the Dawson house on Main Street in Viroqua. Well, 20 years earlier, in 1922, several local people began a museum in one room of the new Vernon County Normal School. They were interested in preserving the history of the area, especially as pioneers and Civil War soldiers passed away.

In the June 29, 1922, edition of the *Vernon County Censor*, an article about the "Museum at Co. Normal" stated that, "The County Normal Museum is growing, and as time goes on and more and more articles are donated... this ... depository of antique various heirlooms and other valuable gifts or loans will contain many articles of historical value. It is a most suitable place for the safe keeping of such articles as it is a county institution, educational in character, absolutely fire proof and safe."

Over those early years, the museum moved around from one place to another, but today the Normal School building is again home to the Vernon County Museum. And, some of those original artifacts are still part of the museum collection. A small exhibit in the museum's conference room celebrates this centennial, and you can come view it during regular opening hours.

The museum is now on its autumn hours of Monday through Friday, noon to 4PM. As always, it is also open by appointment – just call 608-637-7396 to make an appointment.