



## **Friends of Jonathan Clark House Museum**

**We Bring History to Life at the Corner of Cedarburg and Bonniwell Roads**

### **Mission of the Friends of Jonathan Clark House:**

To collect, preserve and share the history of the Jonathan Clark House  
and the early settlers of Mequon Thiensville

### **Organization Overview**

Set high on the corner of Bonniwell and Cedarburg Roads in Mequon, the extraordinary beauty of the Jonathan Clark House is immediately apparent to all those who pass. The house is one of the most architecturally significant historic buildings in southeastern Wisconsin and is a key part of Mequon and Thiensville's rich history. The beautiful Greek Revival home was built by the Clarks in 1848, the year of Wisconsin's Statehood, and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Clark was a prominent early Yankee settler who along with his father-in-law Peter Turck and their friend William Bonniwell developed the government of the town of Mequon.

The Friends of Jonathan Clark House was established in 2012, through the leadership of Mayor Curt Gielow, the Mequon Community Foundation, and a task force of community leaders. It is a 501c3 organization with a nine-member board of directors as well as a non-paid staff under the leadership of an Executive Director and a Preservation Manager. A cadre of dedicated volunteers from ages 8 to 90 support the mission. Signature programs include the "Become a Young Historian" project, the summer-fall "Heritage Days" series as well as the "Pie on the Patio" and "Holiday Lights" donor recognition events.

The education team of retired teachers has designed tour and programming concepts for youth using the Thinking Like a Historian curriculum developed by the Wisconsin Historical Society and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The lives of Jonathan and Mary Clark, Mary's parents Peter and Rachel Turck and their neighbors, the Bonniwell family, are used as teaching tools to study the life of early Wisconsin settlers.

In 2013, a "Society of 1848" donor group was established. Since then fund development efforts have included a year-end fund drive. Donations and grants from area families, businesses, foundations, and service clubs have sustained the operating budget that includes mortgage payments. Education events are presented at no charge and are targeted to families.

### **The Next Critical Step in Organization Sustainability**

The Friends of Jonathan Clark House Museum is at an important crossroads. Executive Director Dr. Nina Look and Preservation Manager Frederick Derr, have provided volunteer museum leadership since the Friends started in 2012. They recently announced that they will step down from executive-level administration and will serve as volunteer museum Curators. To address the next critical step in the organization, the Friends Board of Directors has announced the establishment of a half-time paid Executive Director position that will begin July 2021.

#### **2021 Board of Directors**

Gary Heckendorf, President  
Linda Chay, Vice President  
Margaret Bussone, Secretary  
Diana Hetzel, Treasurer  
Judy Button, Director  
Justin Racinowski, Director  
Dr. Patrick Steele, Director  
Dan Umhoefer, Director  
Joel Willems, Director

#### **2021 Volunteer Staff**

Dr. Nina Look, Executive Director  
Frederick Derr, Preservation Manager  
Margaret Bussone, Education Director  
Anne Bridges, Assistant Director  
Shaw, Bridges, Technology Director  
Reed Perkins, Historian  
Jean Hill, Photographer



**Young Historian at  
“Pie on the Patio”**



**Lindenwood 4-H volunteer  
and his sheep at “Heritage Days”**



**“Become a Young Historian”  
Project Participants**

**Friends of Jonathan Clark House**  
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