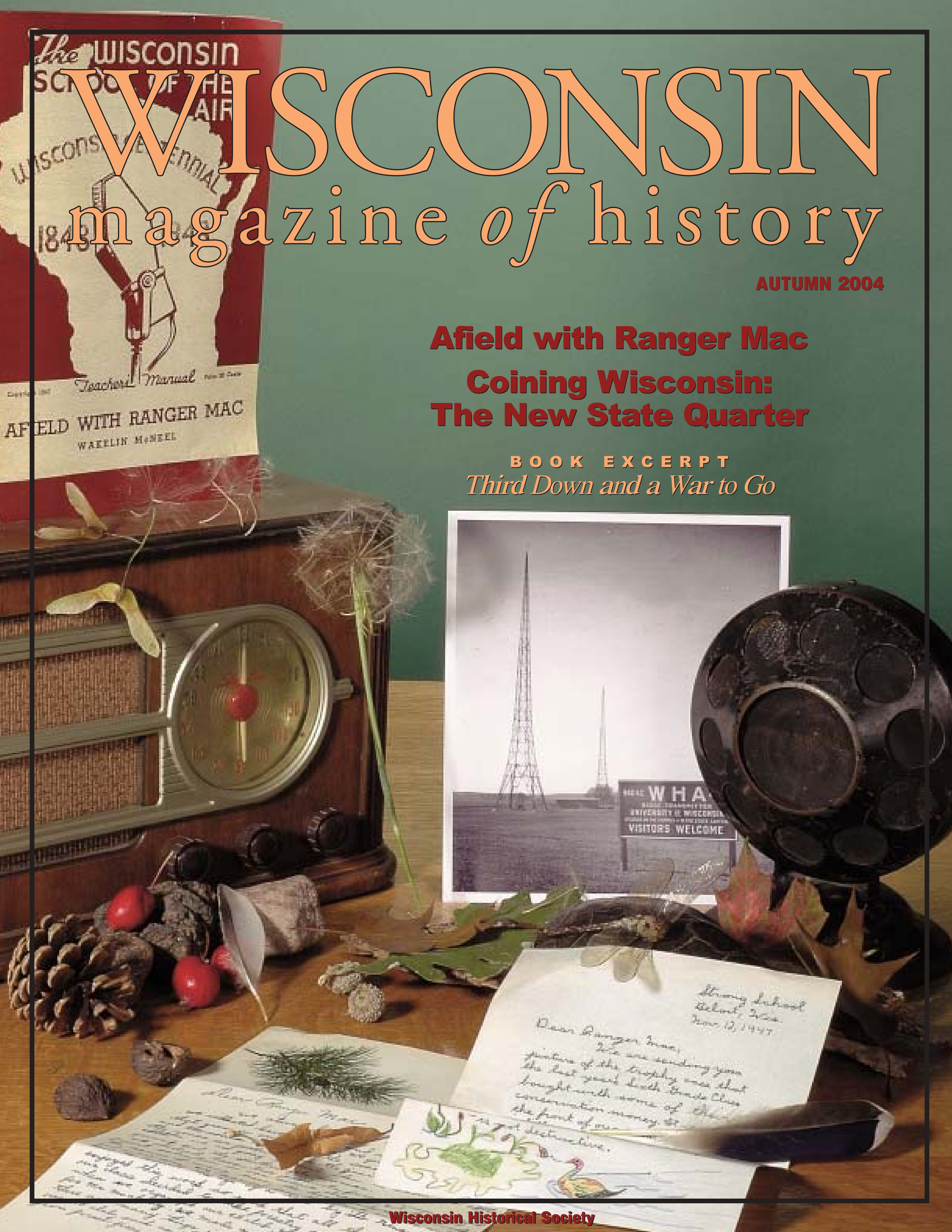

WISCONSIN
magazine of history
AUTUMN 2004
Afield with Ranger Mac
Coining Wisconsin: The New State Quarter
BOOK EXCERPT
Third Down and a War to Go
The Wisconsin School of the Air
Teachers' Manual
AFIELD WITH RANGER MAC
WAKELIN McNEEL
WHA
VISITORS WELCOME
Wisconsin Historical Society

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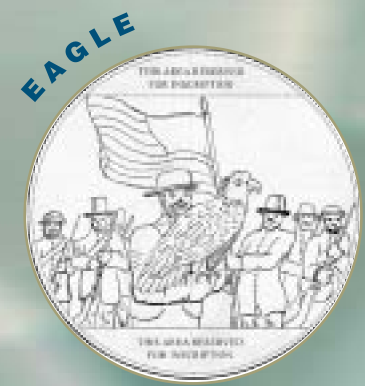
EAGLE



All quarter designs courtesy of
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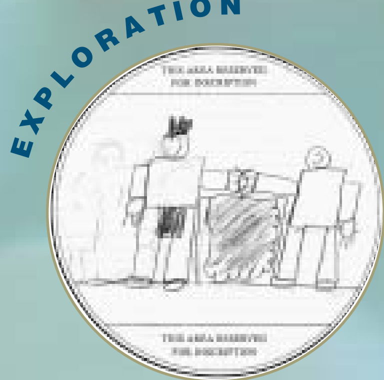
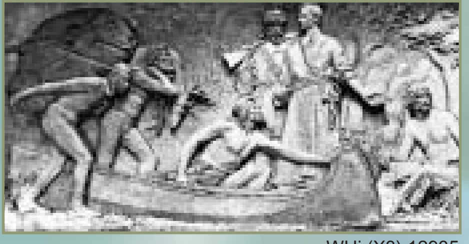
EXPLORATION





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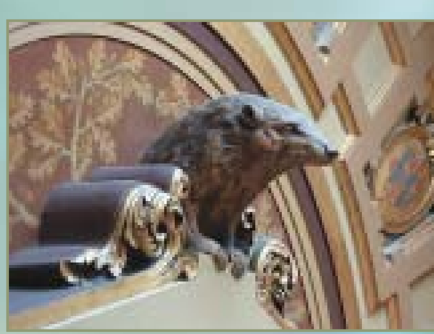

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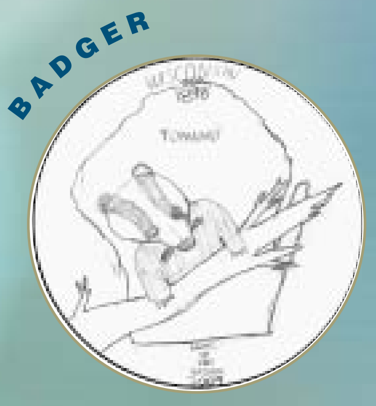

From October 2001 through January 2002, Wisconsin's Department of Financial Institutions (DFI) ran a statewide outreach program for children about the Wisconsin Quarter Project. As the state agency that regulates banking, DFI had the charge of managing the project, from coordinating the work of the Commemorative Quarter Council to visiting classrooms throughout Wisconsin to share information about and images of Wisconsin's historic and contemporary symbols. Children's designs were among the 9,608 designs submitted for consideration to the council, and three of them are pictured here along with the images that serve as models. Council member Larry Barish describes the work of the council in this issue.

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On the front cover: Artifacts from the Wisconsin Historical Society's Museum and Archives, the UW Archives, and nature itself form a tableau that reflects the life and work of radio broadcaster Wakelin "Ranger Mac" McNeel. Photo by Joel Heiman

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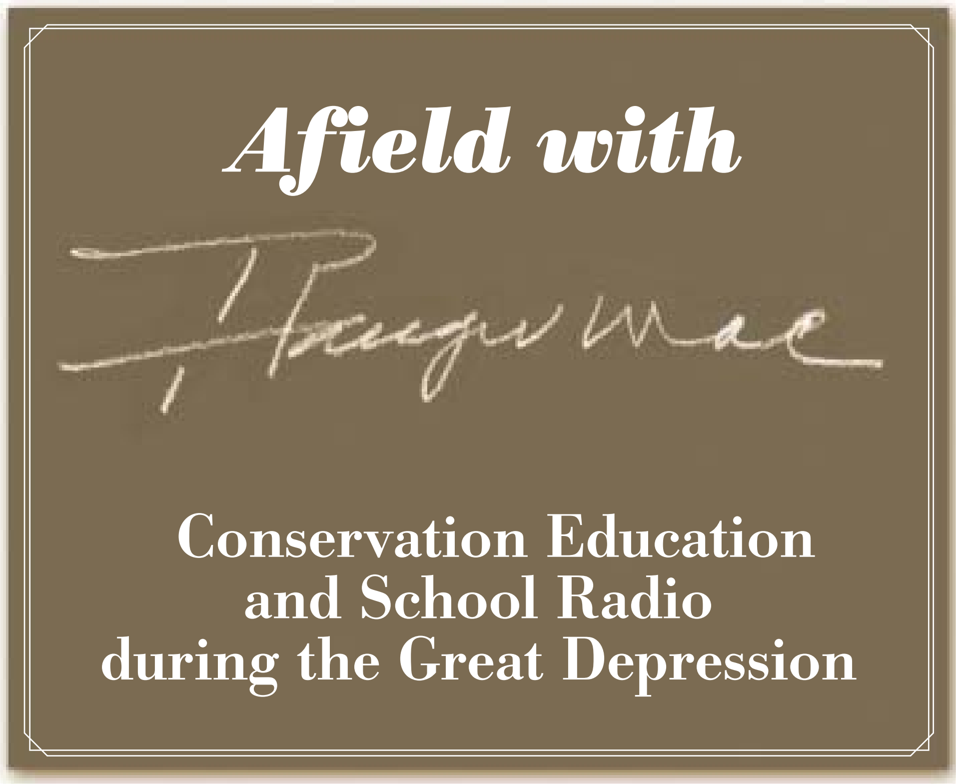


By Story Matkin-Rawn

In the heart of winter during one of the worst years of the Great Depression, classrooms scattered across Wisconsin grew still and hushed as teachers tuned in crackling radios to the University of Wisconsin's station WHA. On a Monday morning in January of 1933, thousands of schoolchildren heard for the first time the whistle of a pipe organ and a cheerful violin refrain followed by the introduction of the announcer: "This is the Wisconsin School of the Air presenting its first broadcast of the week, *Afield with Ranger Mac.* Off for today's hike, here's your leader, Ranger Mac." As he would for the next two decades, Ranger Mac warmly greeted his "Trailhitters" and then launched into a poem or story, delivering a rapid stream of facts in a distinctive, singsong style. "If you didn't take a walk yesterday, you missed out on many things that may not come again," he told

Classified File 917

UW Archives

Ranger Mac started as a naturalist and he became a radio personality, but through it all he was a teacher.

In the early 1930s, the success of shows like Afield with Ranger Mac *allowed WHA to increase its transmitter power from 2500 watts to 5000 watts, and extend its reception range to almost every part of the state.*

University of Wisconsin Archives

The Ranger Mac Science Corner in Mrs. Orpha Zajicek's classroom at Stony Point School in Gays Mills, Crawford County.

listeners in a characteristic opening sketch. He described the spectacle of a "myriad of silken threads that stretched from the tops of dead weed stalks and glistened like silver in the sunshine. If one stooped down so that he could look across the tops of the weeds with the sun's rays reflecting upon them, the whole scene looked as though the fairies were holding a great convention and had decorated the scene with silvery threads." Such arresting portrayals enticed students to reconsider what was familiar on the journey to school every day: barren winter landscapes, emerging buds, birds, beetles, soil, or trees, all common sights during the different seasons.[1]

From its start in 1931 until the mid-1970s, Wisconsin School of the Air (WSA) offered schoolchildren a variety of subjects—art appreciation, poetry, health, literature, music, history, French, and mental hygiene—through quarter- or half-hour lessons aired each weekday morning and afternoon. WHA, the University of Wisconsin station that was home to the Wisconsin School of the Air, reported that WSA programs reached an estimated eight thousand schoolchildren in the first year. Ten years later, WSA programs, which included literary dramatizations by the local Bartell Theater Company, a nationally imitated art program, and direct broadcasts from the state capitol for high school civics, received over three hundred thousand course registrations and reached countless other students.[2]

In its early and under-funded years, WSA survived through the generous assistance of volunteer teachers who worked, as advisors and on-air personalities, to ensure that

their passion—be it Nature-study or mental hygiene—would retain its tenuous place in Wisconsin's cash-strapped classrooms. One of the most memorable among these radio schoolteachers was youth forestry worker and radio celebrity Wakelin McNeel, better known as "Ranger Mac." From his microphone at the WHA studio, reading the lyrical lessons that he composed every Sunday afternoon, Ranger Mac taught Nature-study and environmental conservation to more than 1.1 million schoolchildren over his twenty-three-year broadcast career. In his eleventh year of school broadcasting, several years after most WSA shows had been turned over to grant-funded professional scriptwriters and production teams, the forester-turned-radio-personality continued to write and broadcast his own shows, winning the 1942 George Foster Peabody award for the best educational radio program. By the time McNeel retired in 1954, Wisconsin School of the Air received over half a million course enrollments per semester and reached over sixty-seven thousand area classrooms. *Afield with Ranger Mac* was consistently among the station's three most popular programs. WHA estimated that over one half of all Wisconsin schoolchildren met state requirements for conservation education by listening to Ranger Mac's Monday morning broadcast. These requirements included conservation literacy, democratic idealism, self-expression, scientific enlightenment, and use of scientific methods.[3]

In addition to volunteering for WHA, McNeel worked for the university as a professor of agriculture and an extension agent overseeing 4-H Clubs. These youth agricultural clubs were intended to lead a rural revival through agricultural reform during the farm depression of the 1920s. In 1927 McNeel founded a 4-H school forestry program that quickly became a tremendous success. Wisconsin school children planted between nine hundred thousand and 1.5 million trees each year in the 1930s. Local school districts started over three hundred forest plots, to which thousands of individual Junior Forest Rangers added their own small tracts.[4]

As a child, McNeel had connected deeply with the outdoors. Born in 1884 in Kilbourn (now the Wisconsin Dells), he grew up on a small farm and frequently went camping, fishing, and hunting with his father as well as exploring the land surrounding his boyhood home. Even as an adult, he enjoyed navigating Wisconsin's rivers in his birch bark canoe. After graduating from Appleton's Lawrence College in 1906, McNeel was hired by Black River Falls High School in Tomah where he became a superintendent at the tender age of twenty-two. He worked as a teacher and administrator in this rural, west-central Wisconsin town until 1910.[5]

In 1942 Afield with Ranger Mac *won the Peabody Award for Best Educational Program. This national broadcasting award came just nine years after the program's premiere in 1933, about the time this photo was taken.*

UW Archives

During McNeel's first four years of teaching, the prescribed course of study for public schools changed dramatically. Wisconsin's first uniform course of study, published in 1882, provided a simple mandate that teachers cover reading, arithmetic, and geography. The second manual, published in 1889 just as young McNeel himself was entering school, added nature lessons to the common curriculum. In his introduction to the new subject, the State Superintendent of public instruction, James B. Thayer, lamented that students "have been left to believe that the only source of information concerning everything about which they want to know is in the meager text-book they so laboriously strive to master," and suggested that schoolchildren consult the "great book of nature," whose study would strengthen "habits of observation and reflection." Recommended lessons included raising plants from seed, observing tadpoles develop into frogs, and taking trips outside to "search the fields for objects for the next lesson."[6]

In 1906, the year that McNeel was hired to teach in Tomah, yet another set of guidelines redirected the state course of study. Previous manuals focused on improving school buildings and standardizing subject content. By contrast, the 1906 manual, nearly four times the length of its predecessor, reflected increasing interest in pedagogy—how to teach and to what ends. Teachers were advised to keep daily recitations to a minimum and focus instead on asking questions that clarified pupils' understanding of the textbooks: "What does this mean?" "Why?" "Did you ever see anything like this you have just read about?"[7]

Concern about the schools was widespread around the turn of the century; it intensified in proportion to society's increased reliance on formal education as a bulwark against tremendous changes wrought by industrialization, low-wage labor, urbanization, and immigration. Reformers called upon the schools to shape rather than react to these profound transformations. "The problem of the 20th century," economist Frank Tracy Carlton wrote in 1908, "is to make education an engine for social betterment. Hitherto, educational progress has been conditioned by economic and social changes. Have we advanced far enough on the path of civilization to make it, in a measure, a directive agent?" The crises of the Great Depression would renew public sympathy for Carlton's progressive position and his question: Could education not serve to improve a society rather than reproduce it with all its flaws?[8]

By 1910 the Course of Study manual had

Ranger Mac made school visits and in December 1947, he explained how hornets live to Marlene Couture, Walter Thomsen, Joanne Sauk, Russell Mellend, and Joanne Horde at Marquette School in Madison.

UW Archives

grown into an exuberant (and for the average teacher surely overwhelming) expression of reformist zeal, and in it policymakers unveiled new outlines, drawn up by specialists, for nearly every course. A course called Nature-study received an especially enthusiastic promotion. "Nature-study is not a new subject demanding a place," rhapsodized expert Liberty Hyde Bailey, "it is an attitude toward life and expresses itself *in a way of teaching*. Its spirit will eventually pervade and vitalize all school work." This evangelical approach to the subject had three missions. The first was preparation for future studies in agriculture. The second and third missions of Nature-study, both conspicuous decades later in *Afield with Ranger Mac,* were development of intellect and character and "enrichment of life." Ideally, if students developed an ethos of appreciation, nature would become their "ever present teacher." Romantic poetry figured prominently in Nature-study because it sensitized children to "discern the spiritual" in nature.[9]

The same year this manual was released, McNeel took a year off from teaching in order to enroll in the Biltmore School of Forestry in Michigan. Those "glorious days" included a training period in the Black Forests of Germany with the famed professor and forester Dr. Carl A. Schenck. When McNeel returned stateside, he taught science to prospective teachers at Whitewater Normal for a year before becoming superintendent of the Fort Atkinson school district in 1912. He remained there until the U.S. entered into World War I. During the final year of the Great War, he temporarily relocated to France as a civilian in order to coordinate YMCA athletic activities for American soldiers overseas.[10]

When McNeel returned to Wisconsin after the war's end, he acquired a position through old college connections promoting 4-H activities for rural youth in Marathon County. His enthusiastic, hands-on service as 4-H County Secretary quickly caught the attention of the College of Agriculture in Madison, and in 1922 the University hired him as a professor of agriculture and a forestry extension agent.[11] The new professor immediately took up the cause of conservation education and could talk the talk of scientific efficiency when the occasion required, lamenting the absence of a "centralized far reaching [conservation] program" that would "unify hitherto diffuse efforts into new paths with regularly organized methods of study and with a direct and distinct goal of endeavor."[12] But this was language he used sparingly and reserved for memos. "Statistics are dull," he later told one magazine reporter, "kids prefer down-to-earth realism. Every creature has some place in the scheme of nature, from the

angleworm that burrows in the ground to the hawk that swings at anchor in the sky."[13]

For Wisconsin schoolchildren in the early 1930s, these symbols of a harmonious universe were overshadowed by a spectacular series of natural disasters. On May 9, 1934, after months of dry weather, flash floods, and a week of searing heat, a "black blizzard" swept over Wisconsin. Farmers watched as brown topsoil from as far away as Wyoming and Montana smothered their new crops of soybeans, alfalfa, oats, and peas and crushed young plants under powder piled knee-deep. In Monroe County, trucks stalled in deep drifts of sand that were heaped over the highways. So dense was the "thick, gray-brown pall" in Madison that observers standing atop Bascom Hill were unable to see the state capitol dome just eight blocks away.[14]

Remaining indoors provided some relief from choking airborne dirt and sand, but the seeping dust seemed inescapable. "When I woke up the next morning you could see the outline of my body on the bed," recalled a cooperative extension agent from Stevens Point. Farmers near the Wood-Jackson county line calmly ate their dinner, unaware, due to the impenetrable haze of dirt, that fire was devouring their land. Despite heroic efforts among neighbors, many homes and farms had already been destroyed by the time firefighters and Civilian Conservation Corps workers arrived. Four days passed and fifteen thousand acres burned before volunteers could extinguish the blaze.[15]

This dust storm was one notable example in a new crop of "natural" disasters with human origins. Three days later, the storm reached Washington D.C., having transported three hundred million tons of dirt across fifteen hundred miles. The precious topsoil that dusted Franklin D. Roosevelt's office carpet reinforced his conviction that more nation-wide conservation projects were necessary to avert agricultural disaster.[16] He was not alone. By the 1930s the severity and frequency of floods, fires, and wind erosion had persuaded many conservationists that earlier policies stressing enlightened professional management of public lands were inadequate. Despite increased public forest reserves, deforestation and ensuing soil erosion were accelerating. Wisconsin's Works Progress Administration director Ralph Immell, who was invited the following year by the CBS radio network to share Wisconsin's developing conservation program with a national audience, warned that "the threatened loss of our basic agricultural resources forebodes disaster."[17] "The basic problem is to induce the private landowner to conserve on his own land," observed Aldo Leopold, the University of Wisconsin's new chair of Game Management, "and no conceivable millions or billions for public land purchase can alter that fact."[18] Public education and the new mass medium of radio were two avenues through which environmental activists sought to mold popular opinion and influence individual actions for the cause of conservation.

When the Wisconsin Legislature added conservation education to the state curriculum in 1935, McNeil re-organized the themes of his two-year-old Nature-study show around the new state guidelines for conservation education. The first teacher's manual of the conservation instruction committee read like a manifesto. "Why should there be conservation instruction?" it asked in the introduction.[19] Citing dust storms, floods, forest fires, wildlife extinction, and the depletion of material resources, the authors predicted a nation-wide decline unless schools stepped in to produce an educated citizenry with a "willingness to do something (even if it sometimes means to do without in the present) to prevent waste and misuse, to restore, and to preserve our natural resources for the sake of our national prosperity, and of the welfare and happiness of future generations." The mission of conservation instruction—"to maintain the supply and qual-

Wakelin McNeel, one of the few times he posed for the camera in something other than his Ranger Mac garb of plaid shirt and outdoor gear.

UW Archives

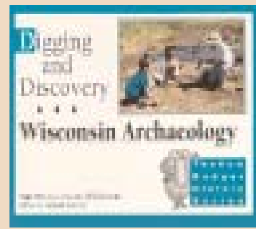
Do you Remember Ranger Mac?

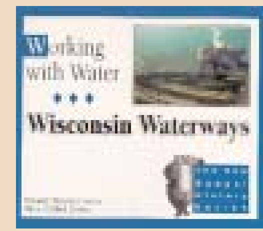
Do you recall listening to Ranger Mac, either at school or at home? We'd like to hear about *your* history with Ranger Mac, and share what we learn with other *Magazine* readers in a later issue. Please contact us at:

Wisconsin Magazine of History
Ranger Mac Memories
816 State Street
Madison, WI 53706
Or e-mail us at wmh@whs.wisc.edu

For Today's Trailhitters

The Wisconsin Historical Society Press continues Ranger Mac's tradition of teaching young adults about the connections between the environment and history by providing educational materials geared toward expanding students' understanding of Wisconsin's past. Several books in the New Badger History Series—designed for fourth-graders experiencing their first encounter with Wisconsin history—address environmental themes. *Digging and Discovery: Wisconsin Archaeology* uses archaeology as a means of investigating remnants of early Indian cultures and the state's early settlement. *Learning from the Land: Wisconsin Land Use* offers a variety of perspectives about land use, including segments on mining, lumbering, and farming, and their impact on Wisconsin. *Working with Water: Wisconsin Waterways* explores the way water resources have shaped the state's history, in both transportation and industry. Each book is accompanied by a teacher's guide, which includes activities that extend and enrich the content of the publications.





Cover designs by Jill Bremigan

Other publications also facilitate inquiry about the environmental past. *Mapping Wisconsin History* provides activities that allow students to visually conceptualize how geography and ecology are intertwined—especially in the chapters on landscapes, mining and shipping, timber, agriculture, and transportation and industry. This fall, the WHS Press will release *Wisconsin History Highlights: Delving into the Past,* as a research guide for middle- and high-school students on topics in Wisconsin history. The chapter on the environment includes several stories, such as "Menominee Tribal Enterprises and Sustained-Yield Forestry" and "Cleaning the Fox River: The Battle over PCB Removal." The richly illustrated stories provide students with a few primary and secondary resources as a starting point for additional research, and each chapter includes a comprehensive bibliography.

—Erica Schock
Office of School Services

ity of our natural resources"—would be carried out through six major activities: general learning about natural resources; the basic elements of preservation; the substitution of renewable resources (such as water power) for non-renewable resources (such as coal); and the efficient use, renewal, and restoration of forests, wildlife, soil, and water.[20]

Conservation activists and educators concluded that Progressive Era reforms from the 1910s and 1920s had proved insufficient because they left action to the experts. "We have tried regulation," explained the committee. "Now we are coming to realize that conservation is not the affair of any special group, or exclusively the function of state or federal or county government, but the concern and business of every citizen." Conservation advocates counted on schools to reach where government regulation of public lands did not, to succeed where other institutions and traditional politics had faltered: "We need a citizenry that has an understanding of the *principles* of conservation of natural resources. To meet this need society has turned to the school to do what the non-school agencies have failed to do fully."[21]

UW Archives

The Wisconsin School of the Air lasted much longer than radio education programs in other states, due largely to the longevity of Wisconsin's one-room schoolhouses, which relied heavily on radio programming.

Due in part to the success of the School of the Air, WHA grew rapidly in the 1930s. WHA won its request to increase its transmitter power from 2500 watts to 5000 watts, thus extending the range of reception to almost every part of the state. In the fall semester of 1935, McNeel bade farewell to the Sterling Hall basement studio and began recording his broadcasts at the new Radio Hall studios behind Science Hall. The pride of the station was a new pipe organ, the largest of its kind in a midwestern radio station. On the walls, a frieze of petroglyphs inspired by Wisconsin cave paintings depicted the history of communication in Wisconsin. The furnishings were

PH 3612

From 1933 until 1954, Wakelin McNeel broadcast on Monday mornings to students in classrooms all over the state. Ranger Mac continued after McNeel retired, with Bob Ellerson at the microphone.

handmade by the art department with Navajo wool weaving and tom-tom light shades to complete the effect.[22]

From the new studios, information on upcoming courses reached teachers through biennial bulletins published in the *Wisconsin Journal of Education.* Teachers could peruse semester offerings for *Afield with Ranger Mac: "Fur and Feather on the Highway*—The sacrifice made by animals and birds to modern speed; *Mexican Bandit*—Across the border into Texas came the boll weevil to raid the cotton fields of Dixie; *Conserve the Soil*—Across the centuries comes the warning that nations rise or fall on their food supply." The Wisconsin Research Project in School Broadcasting created the first teacher aids and manuals to accompany the Ranger Mac broadcast in 1937. In return for registration and a ten-cent payment, a teacher received a detailed manual complete with suggested activities and follow up questions.[23]

Many teachers eagerly responded, turning to "education's own station" as an aid in teaching the newly added conservation course. In 1938 WSA received registration postcards from 1,442 classrooms. The students who signed up for *Afield with Ranger Mac* alone numbered 31,109. The second semester WSA bulletin claimed that "compared with a year ago, twice as many teachers now use radio." By contrast, during its first year, WSA netted a total of 18,844 registered listeners for all programs combined. An estimated 70 percent of registrations came from one-teacher schools. And of the ten courses offered each semester, only music appreciation with "Pop" Gordon regularly drew more listeners than Ranger Mac.[24]

Standing in the shadows of Wisconsin's John Muir and in the company of colleague Aldo Leopold, Wakelin McNeel's primary aim was to impart a lifelong love for the outdoors to his students. His intended audience was growing up with electrical power, mechanized farm equipment, automobiles, and radio, even though their grandparents were most likely immigrant or migrant settlers who had carved farms from the prairies and forests. McNeel assumed that most Wisconsin farm families shared an indifference to their natural surroundings, "something like drug store clerks think of candy—they've had too much of it."[25] Children, however, did not share the settlers' view of the forest as a "menace" that "had to be sub-

In addition to answering students' letters, McNeel also awarded prizes to his "Trailhitters" for displays, field work, and scrapbooks, like those pictured here, c. 1950. These three boys met with Governor Oscar Rennebohm that same day.

UW Archives

dued."[26] Concerned that "coming late in our organized society, conservation education must adapt and correlate itself to already existing educational agencies," McNeel concentrated on the schools where "future citizens and leaders may be reached most effectively at their most impressionable time."[27]

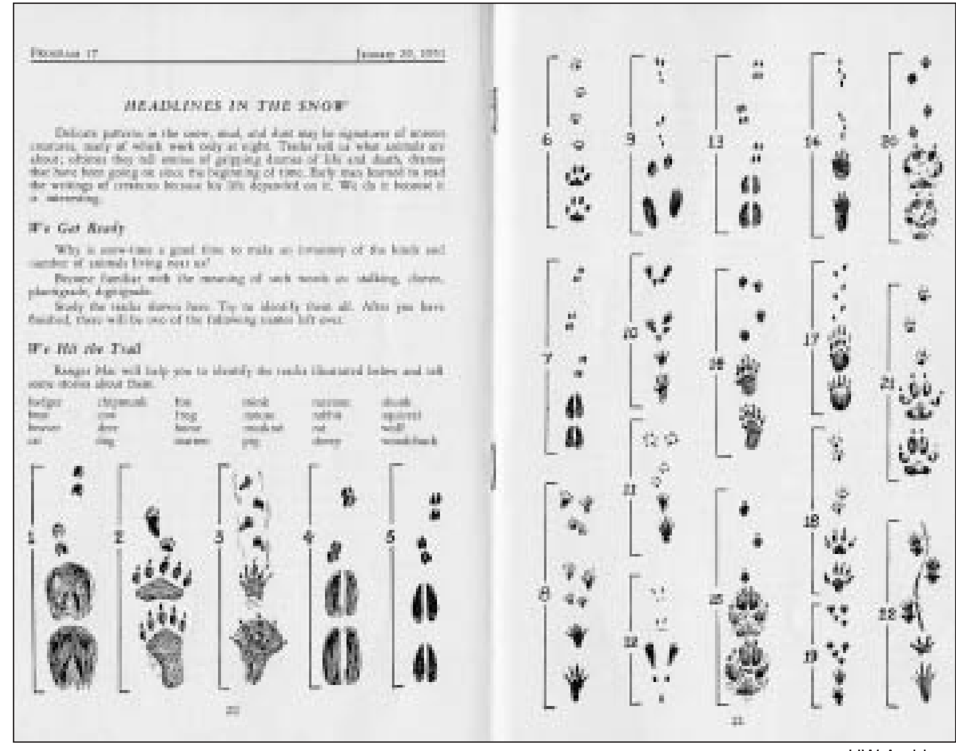
In 1936 there were still over six thousand one-teacher rural schools in Wisconsin, and the agricultural communities they served were mired in an economic decline decades old.[28] Although World War I had interrupted this trend, raising Wisconsin's agricultural income to $455 million by 1919, the agricultural depression of the 1920s followed by nationwide economic collapse during the 1930s kept farmers from regaining that level of income until 1942.[29] Having known only economic hardship, few students attending rural schools during the Great Depression saw scarcity as anything out of the ordinary.

Photographs of rural schoolhouses from the 1930s reveal simple, one-room wooden structures. A few are unpainted shacks. Others are prim white replicas of rural churches. Annual class pictures show grinning children from grades one through eight, lined up in their Sunday best on hard-packed dirt yards. These schools changed slowly despite decades of complaint by professional educators. Few rural schools had electricity at the start of the 1930s and virtually none were equipped with running water or indoor toilets. Hand-pumped or windmill-powered wells provided water for drinking and washing. Wood stoves generated heat in the winter and also helped to warm up the "hot lunches" that students brought cold in glass jars or pails.[30] On dark days, kerosene lanterns provided students with extra reading light.

The children often traveled several miles to school, some on foot, and others by ski, bicycle, pony, buggy or sleigh. The day's instruction generally began at 9 a.m. and ended at 4 p.m. Grading was imprecise in these rural schools. Students came forward individually and in groups to recite memorized lessons in reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, and geography. In this context, radio lessons were a respite for instructors in one-teacher schools. These radio lessons also provided lessons in art, music, French, or science—subjects in which few teachers had training. Though one-room schools always enrolled a minority of the total number of students statewide, they comprised over two-thirds of the schools registered for WSA. Thus windmill-charged, battery-powered radios topped the rural school wish list in the 1930s. Students performed plays, held school picnics, and auctioned off lunch

baskets and fine needlework to raise the necessary funds to purchase radios. Classroom radios came in handy for large, urban, graded schools, too. With the central set in the main office and loudspeakers in each classroom, programs could be broadcast into more than one classroom at a time.[31]

Reaching out to fifth through eighth grade pupils in tiny one-room schools, factory communities like West Allis, and graded classrooms in Madison, Ranger Mac delighted listeners of diverse backgrounds with explanations that sounded strangely familiar. Trees, tadpoles, birds, and even spiders, it seemed, behaved and did things that ten-, eleven-, and twelve-year-olds could imagine doing:


HEADLINES IN THE SNOW

We Get Ready

We Hit the Trail

UW Archives

"Headlines in the Snow" was the name of the lesson for January 29, 1951, and the Ranger Mac program guide distributed by WHA included a follow-along lesson for teachers to copy or share with students.

In the autumn young spiders and small spiders of many different kinds seem to become restless. They mount the tops of plants and fences and the like; they stand on tiptoe with their heads facing the currents of air and then give forth from their spinnerets fine silken threads which float out on the currents of air and get tangled up in a neighboring plant. When tens of thousands of spiders do this in one field on an autumn day, we have a sight that I saw yesterday. It is interesting to know that when one of these spiders has given off a thread of sufficient length, it springs off for a little balloon ride. Often the currents of air carry the little fellow in his airplane for great distances.[32]

White-faced hornets built their "paper palace," while other insects were cattle herders, warriors, upholsterers, underground engineers, and weavers. "[T]ree mothers" gave their seed "children" "balloons, wings, and parachutes" for traveling.33 "Birds are born educated," and didn't have to attend school because they "know what kind of nest to build without being taught."34 The crested flycatcher even dabbled in interior decorating, weaving molted snake skins into its nests. Everywhere one looked, the unity of the universe was apparent.35

Though he related nature, particularly animal activity, to human behavior, McNeel was careful not to caricature the out-of-doors as a series of entertaining animal high jinks. Frost, winter, disease, predation, rot, "a hundred drones are born and reared, all but one to die in vain"—these too were familiar, essential characteristics of nature and of life. "How pitiful the weak flight of the last yellow butterfly of the year," began Ranger Mac in a late-September broadcast:

. . . with tattered and battered wings it vainly seeks for a final sip of sweets, only to find the drops of sap have hardened. Little by little the wings weaken, the tiny feet clutch at the dried weed stalk, and the four golden wings drift quietly down among the fallen leaves, soon to become a part of the dark mould beneath. Forever and forever, year after year, century after century, the same tale unfolds. No wonder our hearts harden a bit against nature for the seeming cruelty of it all.[36]

Birth and death, the passing seasons—McNeel brought out the cyclical patterns in the natural world and the inevitable arrival of death to teach moral lessons, or "high principles of living" as he called them. The "quality of the awareness of beauty," he told his listeners during the worst year of the Depression, was "as important in life as the bread winning ability."37

These informal sermons on appreciation of beauty and moral conduct, mixed in with instructions on conservation, garnered *Afield with Ranger Mac* its strongest parent and teacher support. "It is just what is needed to counteract the present day undesirable influences," remarked a Madison mother. Another mother in Tomah reported that her son said that should he be "tempted to do something wrong and his [Ranger Mac's] face came to my mind I'd have to do what I knew to be right!"—a story that was much recycled in WSA literature.[38] A Madison woman praised the show as a step towards utopia: "You give the children and all who listen such

a natural merging of the spiritual world and the world of nature which it is and which is so needed today. If all of us in the U.S. could carry as real and great a message to as many as you do, I believe our whole world would be changed in a short time."[39]

Though McNeel believed that timeless lessons could be drawn from plants' and animals' interdependence and cyclical patterns in nature, he also reminded listeners that the world had been irreparably damaged by human activity. Farmers plowed up hillsides, exposing topsoil to rain that carved out deep gullies in the unprotected earth. Abusive agricultural practices exhausted the fertility of the soil. Trade with other countries imported "foreign pests" like Dutch elm disease, gypsy moths, and chestnut blight.[40] "When man interferes with nature's plans, throws nature out of balance, then man is sure to suffer." Each year he returned to an example familiar to many listeners—the dust storms:

When the wind was blowing such a gale the other day, the air was filled with dust particles. These dust particles came from plowed fields. It is the priceless topsoil. This is called wind erosion. The last few years wind erosion had been especially destructive in the west. Man in his desire to increase the acreage of cropland plowed up the buffalo grass that covered the area and bound the soil. With the grass removed the wind carried the topsoil away, piled it behind fences, houses and even deposited it on the high buildings as far east as New York.[41]

To counter such grim accounts of ecological disaster—daily reality to children in Wisconsin's stump-studded cutover region to the north and the Central Sands "dustbowl" region of Portage, Adams, Juneau and Wood counties—Ranger Mac offered the "adventure" of conservation work. "What boy or girl doesn't love to read the stories of frontier life with its great forest, untouched fish and game life, its dangers and hardships?" he asked. "We like to read these stories because the love of adventure still possesses us . . . but the present days are far more interesting and far more challenging, because it takes a better brain, more patience, and greater vision to restore than it does to destroy." To those who doubted that such a "great social feat" was possible, he referred to the three million men mobilized for the Great War and compared that number to that "vast school army" of twenty-five million boys and girls.[42]

Photo by John Nondorf

Radio Hall sits nestled at the foot of Observatory Drive in the heart of the University of Wisconsin campus, and has been serving WHA as a facility for decades.

The Monday morning broadcast served as the anchor of the radio conservation course, but ideally students participated in an activity-based curriculum that extended far beyond the quarter-hour broadcast. They were expected to discuss questions provided in the teacher's manual after each show. Participants kept scrapbooks of notes, drawings, leaves, feathers, and other clippings collected on their own walks. At the end of each semester, students were encouraged to submit their scrapbooks to a statewide contest. Participating classrooms also formed "nature clubs" which organized a "nature museum" corner to showcase feathers, snake skins, abandoned bird's nests and other treasures. Ranger Mac often praised these efforts on air, promising to send pine cones to the first hundred nature clubs that mailed WHA a postcard, or commenting by name on a student's letter, package, or question. Students reciprocated with a torrent of letters, leaves, valentines, and on one occasion, a dead rat for the Ranger's expert inspection.[43]

One exchange included a letter from a young girl in Peshtigo who attended school on South Beebe Avenue:

Dear Ranger Mac:

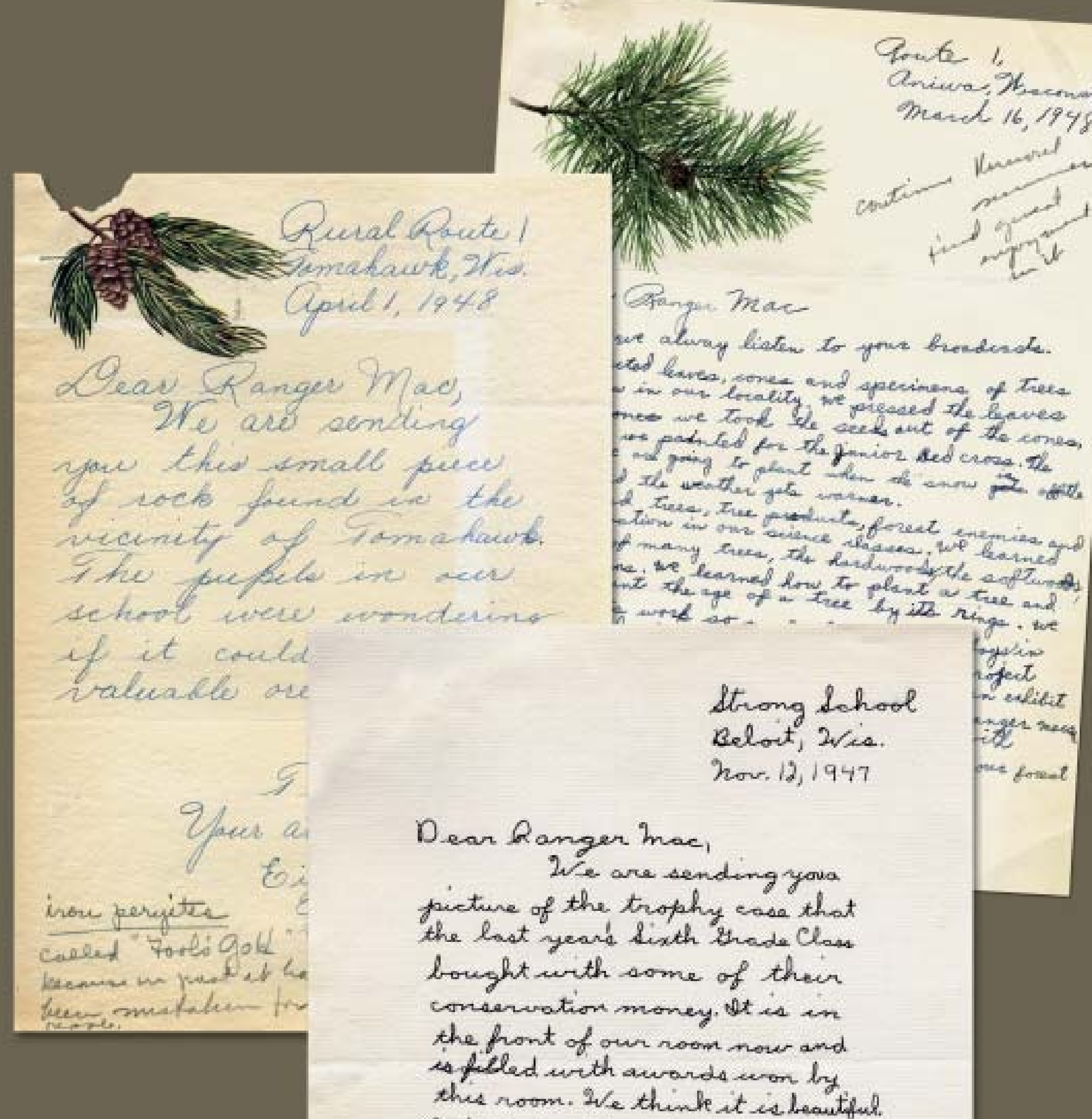
In our sixth grade science discussion today, one of our boys said that blow snakes are poisonous. Many of us disagreed, but we had no source of proof. Would you write and tell us the answers to these questions?:
1. What does a blow snake look like?
2. Is he dangerous?
3. Can he blow poison about?
4. Should we destroy them?

Thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,
Rita Brault
Sixth Grade Representative

Dear Trailhitter:

Your letter recalls how as a boy I used to run away from the hissing adder because I thought it blew poison which if breathed would kill me instantly. How foolish! And how many



Rural Route 1
Tomahawk, Wis.
April 1, 1948

Dear Ranger Mac,
We are sending you this small piece of rock found in the vicinity of Tomahawk. The pupils in our school were wondering if it could ... valuable ore ...

Your a...

iron peryitte
called "Fool's Gold" ... because in past it ha... been mistaken fr... people.

Route 1,
Aniwa, Wisconsin
March 16, 1948

... Ranger Mac
... always listen to your broadcasts.
... leaves, cones and specimens of trees ... in our locality, we pressed the leaves ... we took the seeds out of the cones, ... for the Junior Red Cross. ... going to plant when the snow ... the weather gets warmer.
... trees, tree products, forest enemies and ... in our science classes, we learned ... many trees, the hardwoods, the softwoods, ... we learned how to plant a tree and ... the age of a tree by its rings. ...

Strong School
Beloit, Wis.
Nov. 12, 1947

Dear Ranger Mac,
We are sending you a picture of the trophy case that the last year's Sixth Grade Class bought with some of their conservation money. It is in the front of our room now and is filled with awards won by this room. We think it is beautiful. And we do appreciate. Some of the money was spent on our school yard! The Halloween season is past for another year—and we really had a good one. We proved that a conservation minded class is not destructive.

Letters to Ranger Mac from schoolchildren throughout Wisconsin often included drawings or were written on stationery with nature themes. He answered their queries, jotting his initial notes on the letters themselves, and responding with typed, formal letters.

UW Archives

good times were spoiled by this foolish notion. Don't be afraid of any snake you will find around Peshtigo.

The Puff adder, Hog-nosed snake gets to be our largest snake. It averages 28 inches. It has patches of brown or black on top, smaller on sides, with abdomen yellowish or greenish. This color of the abdomen is the background for the patches, as well.

They are harmless, no doubt beneficial, and we are better off because the Creator saw fit to have them on earth.

Good luck to you and your companions.

Yours very cordially,
RANGER MAC[44]

In addition to emphasizing forestry and soil conservation, McNeel encouraged students to refrain from harming animals and to reduce waste. He took students on "field trips" to the Forest Products Lab on the Madison campus; celebrated the birthday of the Civilian Conservation Corps; followed the work of federal soil specialists, foresters, and engineers in his broadcasts; and reviewed the lives of famous naturalists such as Audubon and Muir. He reminded listeners that they too might ultimately work in the field of natural science. But technology and expertise could not replace the work of private citizens caring for farm woodlots, soil management, and erosion prevention. The future of conservation, emphasized Ranger Mac, remained largely in the hands of the future farmer.[45]

McNeel did not believe that educating children would make the world perfect, but he did believe that it could make it better. Or much worse. "Children are important," he wrote in a 1943 guest editorial, "just as important in building up a democracy as in building up a dictatorship." Nazi Germany was "the greatest psychological tragedy with children the world has ever known. Then was demonstrated to the world what could be done in one generation's time." His concerns for American children were more vague. He was hopeful that war rationing would provide a chance to build national character. " 'I am an American' was never intended to be a selfish boast inspired by a sense of security because of abundant natural resources," he wrote. It was not what the nation possessed, but what citizens did that formed national identity. Children had to learn "a tradition of struggles and the sacrifices that make up our nation's history."[46]

Nature's most basic lesson–and perhaps its hardest–is the cycle of life, and Ranger Mac made it understandable to the youngest of listeners.

WHS Archives

Wakelin McNeel retired as a professor in 1951, but continued *Afield with Ranger Mac* until 1954 when he turned over the reins to Bob Ellerson, an Aldo Leopold student. McNeel was then able to dedicate himself to Upham Woods, a 4-H camp located near his childhood home in the Wisconsin Dells. In 1958 he died at the age of seventy-four.[47] Though newspapers, university sources, and the many organizations with which he worked issued statements to mourn his passing, nothing spoke for McNeel with more eloquence than his own words to Wisconsin schoolchildren:

Now our little journey for today is almost ended. That old clock keeps ticking on and tick by tick the spring of the year turns to summer and summer to fall; and tick by tick babyhood into childhood, childhood into boyhood and girlhood, then to manhood and womanhood followed by old age when the hair turns white and time leaves its trace upon the face. And so it goes generation after generation; and so it will go on with you, my young listeners—the passing of time.[48]

Notes

[1] *Afield with Ranger Mac*,"Radio Broadcast" 6, file 2, box 9, McCarty papers, Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS). Audiotapes of Ranger Mac broadcasts can be found in series 41/6/25, box 33, WHA papers, UW Division of Archives. Not all broadcasts are identified with individual dates.

[2] Harold McCarty, "WHA, Wisconsin's Radio Pioneer: Twenty Years of Public Service Broadcasting," in *Wisconsin's Blue Book* (Madison, WI: 1937), 202; WSA: Enrollments 1932–1971, file 14, box 32, WHA papers, UW Division of Archives; Ross Browender, "The School with 150,00 Pupils," *The Nation's Schools* 45, n.4 (1950), 75–78.

[3] "Ranger Mac," in *Lawrence Alumnus* (Winter 1957), clipping from Wakelin McNeel vertical file, UW Division of Archives; WSA: Enrollments 1932–1971, file 14, box 32, WHA papers, UW Division of Archives; Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, "Teaching Conservation in Wisconsin Schools," *Curriculum Bulletin* 1, n. 1 (May 1937), 9.

[4] Letter from H.W. Noble, folder 1, McNeel Papers, WHS; Elwood McIntyer, *Fifty Years of Cooperative Extension in Wisconsin, 1912–1962* (Madison, WI: 1962?) 53, 121, 191–193; Walter E. Scott, "Conservation's First Century in Wisconsin," from a paper presented May 6, 1967, University of Wisconsin Library.

[5] "Memorial Resolutions of the Faculty of the University of Wisconsin on the Death of Emeritus Professor Wakelin McNeel," McNeel vertical file, UW Division of Archives; "Wakelin McNeel Works To Keep Wisconsin Fertile By Promoting State Conservation as "Ranger Mac," *Daily Cardinal*, February 14, 1942, from the McNeel vertical file, UW Division of Archives.

[6] Jesse B. Thayer, State Superintendent, *Manual of the Elementary Course of Study for the Common Schools of Wisconsin* (Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Company, 1889), 75–77.

[7] C. P. Cary, State Superintendent, *Manual of the Elementary Course of Study for the Common Schools of Wisconsin* (Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Company, 1906), 3.

[8] Frank Tracy Carlton quoted in Lawrence Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876–1975*, (New York: Knopf, 1961), 86; Alan Raucher, "Frank Tracy Carlton on Reform: A Note on Historical Methods," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 57, n. 2 (Winter 1973–1974): 117–122.

[9] C. P. Cary, State Superintendent, *Manual of the Elementary Course of Study for the Common Schools of Wisconsin* (Madison, WI: Democrat Printing Company, 1910), 226–228.

[10] "Ranger Mac," in *Lawrence Alumnus* (Winter 1957): 15, clipping from McNeel vertical file, UW Division of Archives.

[11] Wakelin McNeel, personnel file, McNeel vertical file, UW Division of Archives; "Ranger Mac, 4-H leader, to Retire; Once Headed Fort Atkinson Schools," *Jefferson County Union* May 15, 1950, clipping from McNeel vertical file, UW Division of Archives.

[12] Wakelin McNeel, "Preliminary Proposal for Conservation Education," October 19, 1931, folder 8, McNeel Papers, WHS.

[13] "Do You Know Wisconsin's Ranger Mac?" *Extension Service Review* (August 1943), 117, from McNeel vertical file, UW Division of Archives.

[14] "Sand Storm Hampers Travel," *Capital Times*, May 10, 1934, 6.

[15] "Housewives Irked; Dirt Coats Homes" *Capital Times*, May 10, 1934, 1; Quote from Michael Goc, "The Wisconsin Dust Bowl," 176.

[16] Donald Worster, *Dust Bowl: The Southern Plains in the 1930s* (Oxford University Press, New York: 1979), 13–16; Michael J. Goc, "The Wisconsin Dust Bowl" *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 73 n. 3 (Spring 1990): 175.

[17] Paul Glad, *The History of Wisconsin, 1914–1940* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 492.

[18] Aldo Leopold quoted from E. David Cronon and John W. Jenkins, *The University of Wisconsin: A History, 1925–1945* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 781.

[19] Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, "Teaching Conservation in Wisconsin Schools," *Curriculum Bulletin* 1, n. 1 (May 1937): 9.

[20] Ibid., 12.

[21] Ibid., 9.

[22] Harold Engel, "Wisconsin State Station Complete New Studio" *Education by Radio* 5, n. 12 (September 19, 1935): 45; Engel, "WHA—Wisconsin's Pioneer," in *Education by Radio*, 3.

[23] "WSA Bulletin 1938–1939,"*Wisconsin State Journal of Education* (September 1939): 27.

[24] "WSA enrollments" file 14, box 32, WHA papers, UW Division of Archives; "Wisconsin School of the Air Bulletin," *Wisconsin Journal of Education* 71 (January 1939): 230; Browender, "The School with 150,000 Pupils."

[25] Gordon A. Sabine, "Thousands Hike on Air with Jovial Ranger Mac," *Wisconsin State Journal*, February 21, 1941, McNeel vertical file, UW Division of Archives.

[26] McNeel, "Forestry Club 4-H Work," January 1936, file 6, McNeel Papers, WHS.

[27] McNeel, "Preliminary Proposal."

[28] Frank Lowth "The Activities Program in the Rural School," *Wisconsin Journal of Education* (December 1930): 220.

[29] McIntyer, *Fifty Years of Cooperative Extension in Wisconsin*, 121.

[30] For information on rural one-teacher schools, see Citizenship and International Committee of the Jackson County Association of Home and Community Education, *Schools of Yesterday in Jackson County, Wisconsin: a Collection of Memorabilia* (Black River Falls, WI: 1997); Estella Krohn Bryne, *The Early Schools of La Crosse County* (Wisconsin: Block Printing, 1985); Donald Hanson and Joan Paulson, eds., *Rural Schools of Waupaca County* (Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 2000); *Good Old Golden Rule Days: A History of Sauk County, Wisconsin* (Chelsa, MI: Bookcrafters, 1994).

[31] Harrison U. Wood "A Year of Radio Experimentation," *Wisconsin State Journal of Education* (December 1931): 178–180.

[32] *Afield with Ranger Mac*, "Radio Broadcast," file 2, box 92, McCarty papers, WHS.

[33] *Afield with Ranger Mac*, "Trail's End," file 2, box 92, McCarty papers, WHS.

[34] Ibid.

[35] *Afield with Ranger Mac*, "Birds' Homes," November 9, 1936, p.4, file 2, box 92, McCarty papers, WHS.

[36] *Afield with Ranger Mac*, "When the Frost" September 30, 1933, file 2, box 92, McCarty Papers, WHS.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Nomination for Nash Conservation Award, "Personnel: McNeel—School of the Air," file 15, box 74, McCarty Papers, WHS.

[39] "Ranger Mac Fan Mail," file 12, box 22, WHA papers, UW Division of Archives.

[40] *Afield with Ranger Mac*, "Enemies of the Forest," March 13, 1938, Tape 11, WHA papers, UW Division of Archives.

[41] *Afield with Ranger Mac*, "Save the Soil," November 30, 1936, file 2, box 92, McCarty Papers, WHS; "Presence of Radios in the Rural Schools of Wisconsin," file 14, box 32, WHA papers, UW Division of Archives.

[42] *Afield with Ranger Mac*, "Let's Take a Walk," September 27, 1937, file 1, box 78, McCarty Papers, WHS.

[43] *Afield with Ranger Mac Teacher's Manual*, January 1938, file 10, box 22, WHA papers, UW Division of Archives; *Afield with Ranger Mac*, "Let's Take a Walk."

[44] *Afield with Ranger Mac*, file 2, box 92, McCarty papers, WHS.

[45] *Afield with Ranger Mac*, "The Forest Products Lab," March 22, 1937, file 2, box 92, McCarty papers, WHS; *Afield with Ranger Mac Teacher's Manual*, p. 14.

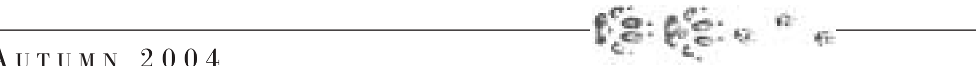
[46] Wakelin McNeel, "The Hope of the Future," *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 23, 1943.

[47] "Memorial Resolutions of the Faculty of the University of Wisconsin on the Death of Emeritus Professor Wakelin McNeel," Document 1340, October 6, 1958, McNeel vertical file, UW Division of Archives.

[48] *Afield with Ranger Mac*, "Leaves," file 2, box 92, McCarty papers, WHS.

About the Author

Story Matkin-Rawn grew up in Little Rock, Arkansas. After college, she studied the Montessori method and became certified as a teacher in Bergamo, Italy. She then received her MA in history from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is currently working on a dissertation about the Arkansas civil rights movement and its impact on local government and politics.



Coining Wisconsin

The Work of the Wisconsin Commemorative Quarter Council

By Lawrence Barish

And the winner is . . . the winning theme, chosen by Governor Jim Doyle, was agriculture and the design chosen to represent the theme (above) was submitted jointly by the Historic Cheesemaking Center, Inc., and Rose Marty of Monticello.

Photo by Joel Heiman

A stroll through the state capitol building in Madison is a visual feast of symbols representing the state of Wisconsin: historic figures, indigenous animals, and allegorical tableaux, all presented in an assortment of art forms such as sculptures, mosaics, and paintings, and found in a range of sizes, from entire walls to the width of a doorknob. The artists, artisans, and architects who designed and decorated the capitol had a vast canvas with which to work and display their vision for Wisconsin. But what if the available space was far more limited, let's say not quite an inch in diam-

eter? That was the challenge facing the Wisconsin Commemorative Quarter Council (CQC), a group of twenty-three citizens who were charged with the responsibility of reviewing thousands of designs submitted by Wisconsin citizens and making recommendations about which designs best reflected the state's collective identity—*and* could be captured on the back of a quarter.

One way to define the magnitude of the challenge is by the numbers involved. The almost four-year process from conception to completion involved 3 governors and their administrations, 10,277 Wisconsin citizens who submitted 9,608 designs, 23 individuals who were given the task of evaluating those designs, and 347,662 citizens who cast votes for one of three final designs. In addition, the staffs of the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions (DFI), officials at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, and the engravers at the U.S. Mint were instrumental in facilitating the process and shaping the final design. The culmination of that effort will occur in October 2004, when between five hundred million and one billion Wisconsin statehood quarters will circulate throughout the nation, featuring a cow, an ear of corn, and a wheel of cheese.

This is the story of how the design was selected for the Wisconsin quarter, told from the perspective of one member of the council. It is not intended to reflect the views and opinions of all members or of the council as a whole.

The story does not begin with the council, or even one of the three governors, but with President Bill Clinton, who, in December of 1997, signed into law the 50 States Commemorative Coin Program Act (Public Law 105-124). The law authorized the U.S. Department of the Treasury to issue a commemorative quarter dollar for each state over a ten-year period beginning in 1999 and ending in 2008. The law also provided that the U.S. Treasury would issue five coins per year, recognizing states in the order in which they ratified the U.S. Constitution or were admitted to the Union. Delaware, befitting its status as the first state to ratify the Constitution, was the first to be recognized when its quarter was released in January 1999 with the image of patriot Caesar Rodney, astride his horse, making the eighty-mile journey to the Continental Congress, where he cast the deciding vote in favor of independence. The state quarter program is scheduled to end in 2008 with the release of the Hawaiian state quarter. Wisconsin, the thirtieth state admitted to the union, will be the last of the five states recognized in 2004.

Public Law 105-124 decreed that our nation's coins and currency must reflect "dignified designs of which the citizens of the United States can be proud"; thus no "frivolous or inappropriate design" may be selected. Under the policy established by the U.S. Treasury, the governor was to submit three to five designs to the U.S. Mint eighteen months prior to the scheduled release date. In addition to an illustrated design, each submission was to be accompanied by a narrative explaining the significance of the concept. Although the

M2004-150

Cows prove to have staying power as a symbol, yet this design for the 1948 centennial stamp was not the final winner.

Lantern Slide CF 6045

This cheesemaker, ca. 1952, adds another wheel of cheese to a vast inventory. Cheese production is a significant part of both state history and economy.

WHS Archives, WHi (W6) 33216

Corn fields in Wisconsin are a common sight, and corn was featured on many quarter designs.

barns, agriculture, and dairy

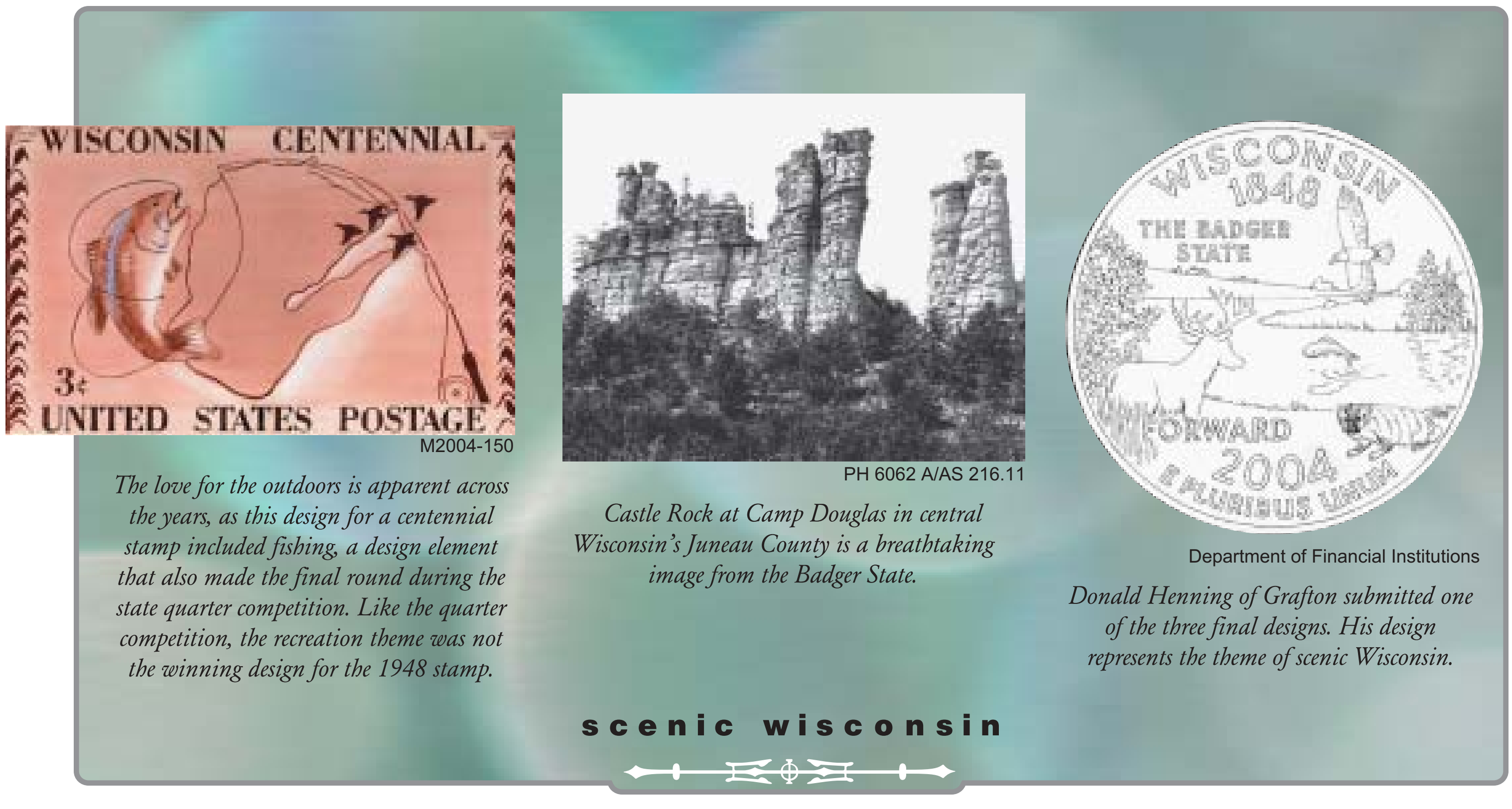
governor of each state establishes the process to be used in submitting a proposed design, the U.S. Mint and the secretary of the treasury retain the authority for determining the suitability and feasibility of the final choice. So, after receiving the final designs, the Mint reviews them for "appropriateness and coinability" and asks the Citizens Commemorative Coin Advisory Committee and the U.S. Fine Arts Commission to review designs and offer recommendations. After the secretary of the treasury reviews and approves the three to five submissions, they are returned to the governor who makes the final selection of the design for the state quarter.

Getting the Word Out

Although Tommy Thompson was at the state's helm when the federal law was enacted in 1997, it was his successor, Governor Scott McCallum, who issued Executive Order No. 27 on September 20, 2001, to begin the formal process to select a Wisconsin commemorative quarter dollar. Governor McCallum established the Wisconsin Commemorative Quarter Council, as an advisory group charged with reviewing the public's submissions and making recommendations to the governor regarding an appropriate design. The governor appointed a diverse group of twenty-three citizens to the council and placed the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions, the state agency that regulates banking, in charge of managing and coordinating the effort. Governor McCallum asked John Kundert, DFI Secretary, to chair the council, and appointed State Treasurer Jack Voight to serve as vice-chair. Before the council held its first meeting, DFI staff spent considerable time publicizing the state quarter program. The DFI also sought out their counterparts in states that had already been through the design and selection process to learn as much as possible about pitfalls and best practices. A Wisconsin Commemorative Quarter Web site was launched to provide information about the state quarter process and to encourage citizens to submit designs.

Encouraging the public was not a difficult task. As the first state quarters appeared in 1999, interest in them began to spread and newspaper articles appeared throughout the state with comments about the quarters already circulating, and speculation about possible themes for the Wisconsin coin. DFI staff embarked upon an ambitious public outreach campaign, partly in response to Congress's wish that one of the program's primary purposes be "to promote the diffusion of knowledge among the youth of the United States about the individual States, their history and geography, and the rich diversity of the national heritage. . . ." The design process was seen as a unique educational opportunity, and was first presented to Wisconsin's elementary school students.

From October 2001 through January 2002, DFI Research Analyst Rebecca Hogan crisscrossed the state, visiting forty-nine schools and making presentations to over five thousand students. At each school she used a PowerPoint presentation to explain the significance of the state quarter program, dis-



M2004-150

The love for the outdoors is apparent across the years, as this design for a centennial stamp included fishing, a design element that also made the final round during the state quarter competition. Like the quarter competition, the recreation theme was not the winning design for the 1948 stamp.

PH 6062 A/AS 216.11

Castle Rock at Camp Douglas in central Wisconsin's Juneau County is a breathtaking image from the Badger State.

Department of Financial Institutions

Donald Henning of Grafton submitted one of the three final designs. His design represents the theme of scenic Wisconsin.

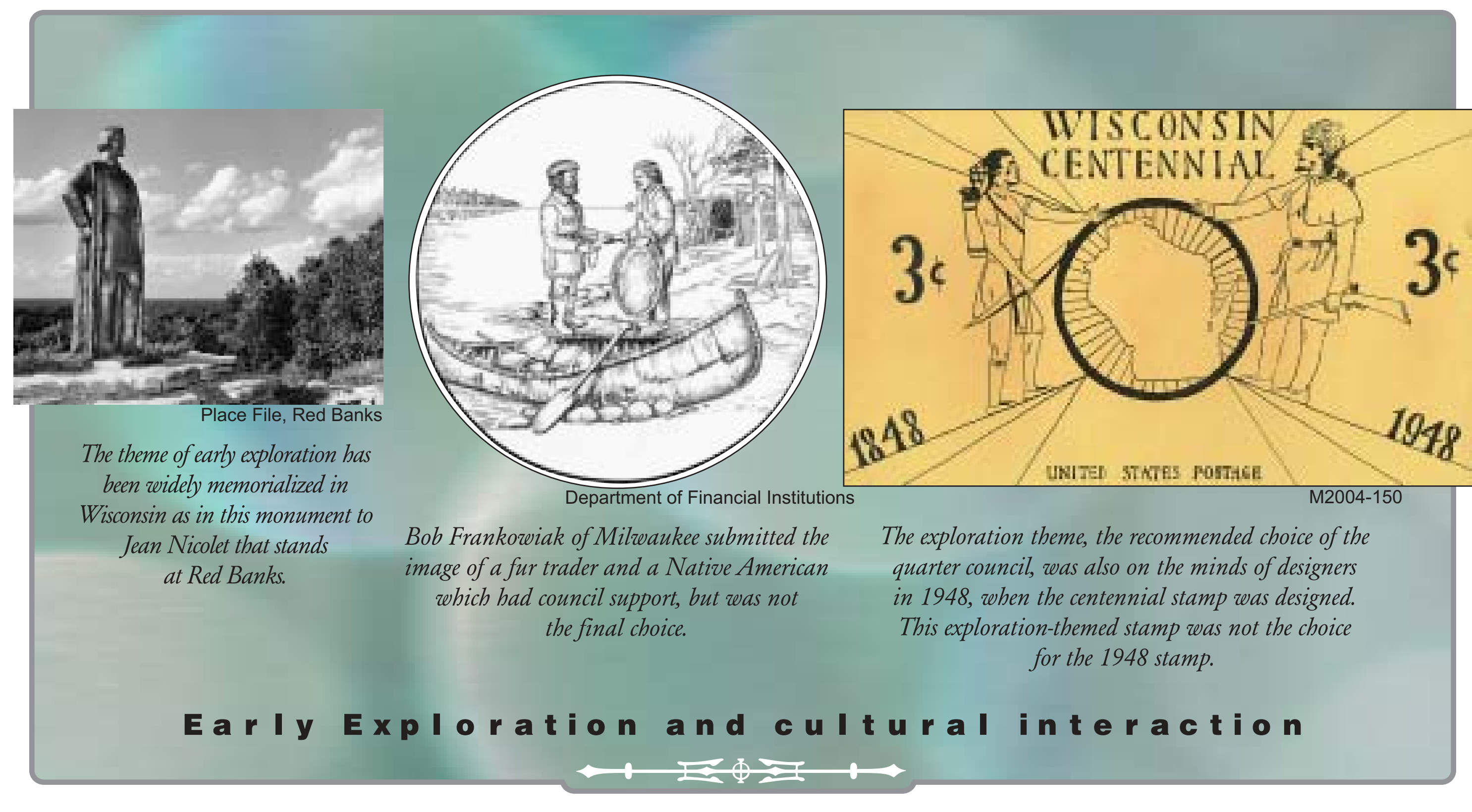
play the state quarters released during the first three years, and encourage students to think about appropriate designs for Wisconsin's commemorative quarter. Other schools participated in videoconferences that allowed many more students to learn about the state quarter program.

At the same time that the school road show was taking place, the DFI contacted state and local news media. The department's communications director, Kim Straka, and communications specialist, Cheryl Weiss, visited television and radio stations in the larger media markets and met with editors and reporters from more than thirty daily and weekly newspapers throughout the state. The department also issued a series of press releases to explain the program and generate interest in the design process.

In addition to making contacts with the media and schools, the DFI's Wisconsin Commemorative Quarter Web site served as the primary communication tool during the review and selection process. Unlike some states that established a committee to both propose and actually craft a design for their state quarter, Wisconsin opted to open the process to the public and encouraged citizens to offer their opinions as to what the state quarter should look like. The Web site provided guidelines and a submission form for those wishing to propose their own design and was eventually used to record votes from the public to determine the most popular design. When the final public vote was taken in September 2003, the DFI state quarter Web site had recorded an astounding 694,013 visits. In addition, the department produced and distributed a brochure providing similar information. Thousands of brochures were sent to Wisconsin schools, and members of the Commemorative Quarter Council distributed many more to the general public.

Because the council would initially review designs to determine the themes that would be submitted to the Treasury Department, the guidelines in both the brochure and on the Web site listed both appropriate and inappropriate topics. Appropriate design topics included "state landmarks, landscapes, historically significant buildings, symbols of state resources or industries, [and] official state flora and fauna or state icons." Inappropriate design concepts were "logos or depictions of specific commercial, private educational, civic, religious, sports or other organization whose membership or ownership is not universal." In addition, other designs deemed inappropriate were head or shoulder portraits of persons living or dead, and depictions of state flags or seals.

The DFI accepted design proposals from December 2001 through January 11, 2002. Each submission was to be accompanied by a brief written explanation of the design and its significance. Submissions began to arrive at the DFI offices slowly, then gradually increased as the deadline approached. Not surprisingly, considering the emphasis on the educational aspect of the state quarter design program, students submitted the overwhelming majority of entries.



Place File, Red Banks

The theme of early exploration has been widely memorialized in Wisconsin as in this monument to Jean Nicolet that stands at Red Banks.

Department of Financial Institutions

Bob Frankowiak of Milwaukee submitted the image of a fur trader and a Native American which had council support, but was not the final choice.

M2004-150

The exploration theme, the recommended choice of the quarter council, was also on the minds of designers in 1948, when the centennial stamp was designed. This exploration-themed stamp was not the choice for the 1948 stamp.

Early Exploration and cultural interaction

Commemorative Quarter Council Members

John F. "Jack" Kundert, Chair
Secretary, Department of Financial Institutions
Madison

Jack Voight, Vice-Chair
State Treasurer
Madison

Nora K. Weber
(Governor's designee)
Office of the Governor
Madison

Michael Stevens
(designee)
Wisconsin Historical Society
Madison

Ron Rasmussen
(teacher)
Reedsburg Area High School
Reedsburg

Lisa Kvernen
(high school student)
Reedsburg

Clifford L. Mishler
(numismatic)
Krause Publications
Iola

Mark D. Mueller
(artist)
Germantown

At-Large Members

Dean Amhaus
Milwaukee

Lawrence S. Barish
Madison

Gloria Cobb
Lac du Flambeau

Laura M. Davis
Madison

Frank C. DeGuire
Milwaukee

Lee Ellis
River Falls

Reuben K. Harpole
Milwaukee

Roger J. Hillebrand
Belleville

Trent E. Jay
Wauwatosa

Connie Loden
Hurley

Justin J. Perrault
La Crosse

John Reinemann
Madison

Dr. Leon A. Saryan
Greenfield

Douglas W. Stener
Janesville

Margarita Tamez
Evansville

Getting Down to Business

The first meeting of the Wisconsin Commemorative Quarter Council took place on January 17, 2002, at the Department of Financial Institution offices in Madison. In addition to Chairman Kundert and Vice-Chairman Voight, the council was comprised of both state government officials and private citizens. The latter included a high school teacher, a student, an artist, an art teacher, an architect, a coin hobby professional, several coin collectors, and others of various occupations, interests, and backgrounds. Public officials included staff members from the Governor's Office, the Wisconsin Historical Society, and the Legislative Reference Bureau. Council members exchanged introductions and shared perspectives about the task that lay ahead. The common denominator was a shared commitment to meeting the challenge of recommending a state quarter design that captured the essence of Wisconsin, however defined. As the council was soon to learn, this was not an easy task.

After their initial discussion, the group quickly got down to work. In order to provide the council with a sense of what lay ahead, for this first meeting the DFI staff had arranged a video conference with the committee's counterparts in Indiana to learn about the process that state had employed in designing their state quarter. A representative of the Indiana Office of the Governor and the Indiana Arts Commission summarized their experiences and discussed some of the issues the Wisconsin council would likely face. One major consideration was the technical problems associated with transferring an illustration to an actual engraving. According to the Indiana contact, the proposed design of the Indiana quarter had to be modified because the engravers felt that the design was too detailed. The final design was a race car superimposed on an outline of the state with the inscription "Crossroads of America" and nineteen stars signifying Indiana's admittance as the nineteenth state admitted to the union.

Following the video conference, DFI staff members briefed the council on their efforts to publicize the state quarter program in schools and the media, and the subsequent number of submissions these efforts generated. The council determined that it would need the continuing help of DFI to organize and reduce the submissions, a logistical challenge to say the least. How do twenty-three people examine almost ten thousand packets of information and reach a consensus about the merits of what they have looked at? Council members concluded that the highest number of designs that could be reviewed as a group was fifteen hundred, and with just over 9600 design, that left six groups of about fifteen hundred to be prepared by the hard-working DFI staff members for the next meeting. At that meeting, the council would begin the process of evaluating the designs within these six large groups, and use these groups to determine general categories from which

the council members would establish a narrower set of themes. Three themes and sample designs of each would ultimately go to the U.S. Mint.

When the Wisconsin Commemorative Quarter Council gathered at the DFI offices for their second meeting on February 18, 2002, a mountain of state quarter submissions bearing designs of various shapes, sizes, and artistic merit awaited them. In an attempt to introduce some semblance of order, the DFI staff had sorted through the 9,608 entries before the second meeting, discarding the inappropriate and organizing the remainder by subject matter. DFI staff eliminated designs that featured the Green Bay Packers, portraits of Vince Lombardi, logos, flags, cheese heads, bratwurst, beer steins, and the like because they did not meet the various criteria established by the U.S. Mint. There were also a significant number of state quarter designs that portrayed some aspect of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. These designs, submitted primarily by Wisconsin school children, were moving and poignant but had to be eliminated because the subject matter was not deemed specific to Wisconsin. The remaining submissions were grouped by general theme—resulting in thirty-two categories among the six general groups. The category with the most submissions, over two thousand or 22 percent of all entries, was "dairy," which included designs featuring milk, cheese, or cows. The "barns" and "agriculture" categories comprised an additional 20 percent of the designs. Other popular design categories included state symbols, either individually or in combination; robins, deer, badgers, and violets. Finally, symbols and events from Wisconsin's history rounded out the subject matter.

DFI staff members had pressed six offices into service as viewing galleries. The plan was for the council members to first identify general subjects or themes, and then to select specific designs that best represented those themes. Council members were free to use the categories that the DFI had used or to determine different categories as well.

Photo by Andy Kraushaar

Though the Packers and Lambeau Field are much beloved throughout Wisconsin, these were not appropriate subjects for the state quarter.

The council divided into six groups, and each one, accompanied by a DFI staff member, visited all of the six viewing areas and spent about twenty minutes in each area considering the submissions arrayed on every conceivable flat surface. After all the groups completed their assessments, the council members reconvened to compare notes. DFI had created a ballot with its thirty-two organizational categories as entries, twenty-nine of which were kept by the council. In addition to the agriculture and dairy themes previously mentioned, other categories included "Frank Lloyd Wright," "Polka," "Military and Shipping," "Logging," "Circus," and the avian-affirming "Eagle," "Robin," and "Dove."

After the members cast their ballots, twelve categories emerged. The themes chosen for discussion were:

- Historical (including themes of exploration, invention, and innovation, such as the establishment of the nation's first kindergarten in Watertown)
- Agriculture
- Barns
- Nature (including the Great Lakes, Mississippi River bluffs, and wildlife)
- State Symbols (either individually or in combination)
- Native Americans
- Madison (including the State Capitol and its statuary, and the Wisconsin Idea)
- Eagle (including Old Abe, the Civil War mascot)

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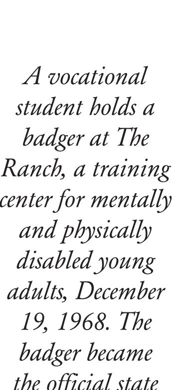

A vocational student holds a badger at The Ranch, a training center for mentally and physically disabled young adults, December 19, 1968. The badger became the official state animal in 1957.

WHS Museum, N06156

In 1936 the nation joined Wisconsin in celebrating the centennial of Wisconsin's territorial days, when half-dollars featured one of the most visible labors of that era–mining. The reverse side presented a badger from whom the miners earned a nickname for themselves and for the state.

WHS Museum, N07070

Connecticut selected the Charter Oak tree, an important symbol of Connecticut history, for its quarter design. Connecticut used the same symbol in 1935, when the oak that hid the charter from the British appeared on the state's tercentenary half-dollar.

WHS Museum, N07113

The Great Lakes Exposition took place in Cleveland, Ohio, from June to October 1936 and was promoted as "worthy of World's Fair" status. The U.S. Mint issued a coin that same year with Brenda Putnam's design of the lakes featured on the tails side.

- Dairy
- Wisconsin Dells
- Badgers
- Combination (any design that included elements of two or more themes)

The members then turned their attention to selecting specific submissions from each category. They decided to select up to ten submissions from each category to bring forward for discussion before the full council. Ultimately, a total of thirteen submissions were selected and three designs from each of the thirteen were designated for discussion at the next meeting of the CQC, for a total of 157 (the council allowed one category to have four submissions).

The council reconvened several weeks later on March 7, 2002, and spent the day reviewing the submissions with the goal of reducing the number of themes to the six that, in the opinion of the members, best represented Wisconsin. Early in the review process, it was apparent that a fundamental question regarding the purpose of the state quarter program and the design of the Wisconsin quarter needed to be addressed. Should the design of the Wisconsin coin reflect the intent expressed by Congress "to promote the diffusion of knowledge . . . [regarding] history and geography," or should it instead incorporate a design to make the coin immediately recognizable as the Wisconsin state quarter? In other words, should the design of the Wisconsin quarter highlight an immediately recognizable and significant aspect of the state or should it reflect a theme that, while not as well known, tells a story and educates the public about Wisconsin's traditions, culture, or history? It was an issue on which the CQC members never reached a consensus, although they wrestled with it throughout their deliberations. It was also the defining issue that characterized the final choice.

At this third meeting of the council, the members spent time discussing what makes Wisconsin unique and sets us apart from the other forty-nine states. The obvious connections to agriculture and the dairy industry were discussed as well as the various state symbols that have been adopted over the years. Other less tangible, but nonetheless significant characteristics of the state, such as its progressive tradition, good government, and the influence of the Wisconsin Idea were cited. The difficulty in translating these concepts to the small confines of the quarter dollar coin was discussed and it was also noted that there were relatively few submissions that reflected these themes.

Designs that featured only one state symbol such as the white-tailed deer, wood violet, or sugar maple tree were rejected because the council felt that the symbols on their own were not unique to Wisconsin and said little about the state. Some members argued that images of the Wisconsin capitol, although an impressive and symbolic building, did not seem to be sufficiently distinct from other capitols, including the U.S. Capitol. Submissions that combined multiple elements, resulting in a cluttered or difficult to recognize design, also were examined with a critical eye.

Although several states, including Connecticut and Georgia, featured a single design element, which in the opinion of some members was visually attractive, Wisconsin's diversity made a single design theme less feasible. Absent a logical counterpart to Connecticut's Charter Oak or Georgia's peach, more complex designs for the Wisconsin quarter were considered. A review and discussion of designs of the sixteen state quarters already minted and the designs of those that had been approved generated a wide range of opinion

regarding which designs were most attractive, effective, or captured the essence of the individual state.

This discussion also included a debate about whether the final design should have an outline map of the state. Some council members argued that Wisconsin's geographical boundary was distinctive and recognizable and added interest to the design; others felt that a state outline said little about the state and tended to clutter the design. One issue on which the council came to an easy agreement was the state motto. Council members unanimously agreed that whatever design was eventually recommended, it should incorporate "Forward," the official state motto.

After considerable discussion, the members voted and selected six themes which best represented Wisconsin from the twelve themes identified at an earlier meeeting:

- Early Exploration and Cultural Interaction
- Agriculture, Barns, and Dairy
- Scenic Wisconsin
- The State Capitol and statue *Wisconsin*
- Old Abe
- Badgers

Image ID 9566

The statue Wisconsin *by Daniel Chester French was raised to the top of the capitol building in July of 1914. The building and its symbolic details were the subjects of many quarter designs.*

DFI staff members drafted a description of each theme to accompany the submissions that were selected to represent that theme.

The council decided to select three designs for each of the six themes, for a total of eighteen individual designs. In a selection process that encouraged public participation, professional design and artistic merit were not the most significant criteria. Whereas submissions that showed a high degree of artistic or technical excellence, regardless of theme, certainly attracted the notice and attention of council members, not all of the visually appealing and polished designs made it through the selection process. For example, a submission bearing a stylized rendering of Old Abe, the Civil War eagle, did not advance because, as the work of an out-of-state artist who had submitted designs for other state quarter competitions, council members feared it might make the Wisconsin quarter too close to another state's in style. Later in the process, the Mint eliminated another striking design from consideration because it determined that the artwork was too detailed and could not be engraved.

The CQC selected the eighteen preliminary state quarter designs and had copies of the selected designs sent to Governor McCallum on March 13, 2002. The DFI also posted copies of the selections on the state quarter Web site and asked citizens to vote for their top three themes, using the three designs in each of the six themes as examples.

Over thirty-six thousand votes were cast during the balloting period that ran from March 15 to April 1, 2002. Three themes emerged as the clear favorites of those voting: Scenic Wisconsin; Agriculture, Barns, and Dairy; and Early Exploration and Cultural Interaction. Based on these results, Governor McCallum sent the three designs that illustrated each of the three themes, for a total of nine designs, to the U.S. Mint.

M2004-150

The final design of the 1948 Wisconsin stamp reflected some of the same themes that emerged in discussions about the 2004 state quarter.

Image ID 7536

Long before the quarter design competition stirred up interest in Old Abe the War Eagle and his Civil War exploits, he was photographed by H.H. Bennett for whom the connection was more personal. Abe and Bennett served together in the war.

Despite the design's excellence and historic relevance, this designer's work on other state quarters risked a repetition of style that the council wanted to avoid.

Daniel Carr, Designs Computed

He also requested that the state motto be included in the final design of the Wisconsin quarter.

At this juncture, the state quarter council had completed the first part of its assignment of narrowing down the mountain of submissions to a manageable number and making its initial recommendations to the governor. It would prove to be the final time that the entire council met in person. It was not until eighteen months later that the council was asked to make its final recommendations. A reception was held to recognize the eighteen individuals who submitted the designs that were considered and voted upon via the Web site. Also attending the March 26, 2002, reception in the Governor's Conference Room were members of the Commemorative Quarter Council and the media.

The Mint Throws in Their Two Cents

After the Mint received the nine designs, they began the review process that every state quarter design must undergo. The Mint enlisted the services of the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts to review the designs and make recommendations. The evaluation process considered factors such as artistic, aesthetic, and technical design; historical accuracy; proper representation of elements; and feasibility of converting a design to an engraved impression on a coin. Based on the review, the Mint suggested a number of changes in the designs. There were several discussions between representatives of the U.S. Mint and the DFI regarding design issues. Eventually, after a delay of eight months, in part due to state quarter design issues in states with release dates before Wisconsin's, five of the nine designs were modified and approved by the Mint.

During this review phase, changes in the Office of the Governor and the Department of Financial Institutions brought a number of new players to the state quarter selection process. Governor Jim Doyle assumed office in January 2003, and Lorrie Keating Heinemann was appointed DFI secretary in March 2003. The membership of the state quarter council remained unchanged.

From the five designs approved by the U.S. Mint, the governor selected three finalists, each representing one of the three design themes that had been previously voted on by the public. The scenic Wisconsin design featured a white-tailed deer surveying his domain as a muskie leaps from the water in the background. Several pine trees and the suggestion of a farm in the distance completed the bucolic scene. It was submitted by Donald Henning of Grafton. The early exploration entry was drawn by Bob Frankowiak of Milwaukee and depicted a fur trader and Native American negotiating a trade with a canoe in the foreground and a dwelling in the background. The agriculture design, jointly submitted by the Historic Cheesemaking Center, Inc., and Rose Marty of Monticello, reflected Wisconsin's status as America's Dairyland with a design consisting of the head of a cow, a wheel of cheese, and an ear of corn.

The three designs were posted on the DFI Web site and members of the public were again asked to vote, this time for their favorite design. During the third week of September, 347,662 votes were cast. The agriculture design was the clear

favorite of those voting, garnering 137,745 votes or about 40 percent of the total. The early exploration design was the second most popular, receiving 112, 907 votes, about 32 percent. The scenic Wisconsin design received 97,010 votes or about 28 percent of the votes cast.

The Recommendations

With a deadline for a final decision fast approaching, the CQC was notified that the time had come for the council to make a final, single recommendation to the governor. The council had not met since March 2002 and a meeting scheduled for July 2003 had been canceled because the Mint had not completed its review of the Wisconsin quarter designs. A conference call was arranged for the morning of September 29. Following a brief discussion, the members were asked to vote for one of the three designs. With nineteen of the twenty-three members voting, there was no clear consensus. Nine members voted for the exploration design, eight for the agriculture design, and two for the scenic design. Because of the closeness of the vote, it was decided to schedule another conference call the following day and limit the choice to the two designs receiving the most votes. During the period between the conference calls, several of the council members took the opportunity to e-mail their colleagues to make one final pitch for their favorite design. Again, opinion was divided as to whether the agriculture design or the early exploration design imparted a more meaningful message. One supporter of the agriculture design argued that this design was a better choice because it reflected this state's long-time connection to farming and has more meaning for Wisconsin citizens than the early exploration design, an experience not unique to Wisconsin. However, a supporter of the exploration design pointed out that Congress had enacted the state quarter program to allow states to educate the public about their respective history and traditions and that the early exploration design was more in keeping with that goal. Others argued that the early exploration design recognized the state's cultural diversity and common heritage and thus was a better representation of Wisconsin than the agriculture design.

Several members were also influenced by the fact that a majority of the public favored the agriculture design and argued that the council should consider that preference. In the end, however, it was not surprising that no clear consensus was reached. When the council's final vote was tallied, the early exploration design outpolled the agriculture design by a vote of thirteen to eight. The results were sent to Governor Doyle and that action constituted the last official act of the Wisconsin Commemorative Quarter Council.

Drawn and Quartered

When the deadline for choosing a design was just days away, Governor Doyle finally ended the suspense. In a press release issued on September 30, 2003, the Governor announced his selection of the agriculture design rather than the early exploration design. He cited the public support for the agriculture design as being instrumental in influencing his decision. The governor informed the U.S. Mint of his decision, thus ending the design phase of the Wisconsin state quarter selection process. Soon, a quarter-dollar coin bearing the image of a cow, an ear of corn, and a wheel of cheese will take center stage as the thirtieth coin in the state quarter program. Fittingly, it will be the first state quarter with a strictly agricultural theme.

The road that the members of the state quarter council traveled as they pored over the thousands of state quarter designs gave them a first-hand look at the diverse and vibrant cultural landscape that constitutes the Badger state. Wisconsin citizens submitted thousands of creative and imaginative designs that reflected this diversity. It became apparent very early in the process that it would be difficult to single out one design that would adequately reflect Wisconsin's collective identity and accommodate all the views expressed by members of the council. The fact that there were so many worthy alternatives to consider is a testament to the vitality of the state, our shared values and traditions, and the achievements of our citizens. In the end, it was the process itself, perhaps more so than the choice of the design, which was most significant. It provided an opportunity for all Wisconsin citizens to take a step back and consider what it is that makes Wisconsin a special place. The dialogue that followed was expressed in numerous newspaper editorials, letters to the editor, classroom discussions, and dinner table conversations. In October, the U.S. Mint will produce millions of Wisconsin state quarters which will be a tangible reflection of its citizens' pride in being able to call Wisconsin home. W

About the Author

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THIRD DOWN AND A WAR TO GO

THE ALL-AMERICAN 1942 WISCONSIN BADGERS

BY TERRY FREI

The following is adapted from Third Down and a War to Go: The All-American 1942 Wisconsin Badgers *by Terry Frei, published this month by the Wisconsin Historical Society Press. For more information about this title, see the inside back cover of this issue.*

As Veterans Day 2000 approached, my father was struggling. Jerry Frei was seventy-six, and heart, knee, and circulation problems limited his mobility. That was bad enough, but he also felt himself slipping away from the football community.

The sport was his occupational passion. After playing for the University of Wisconsin, he served as a high school and college coach, primarily at the University of Oregon; then he was a longtime offensive line coach in the National Football League, with the Denver Broncos, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, and Chicago Bears. Finally, he became a scout of college talent for the Broncos.

In late 2000, I mentioned to my father that I wanted to talk with him about his war service for a *Denver Post* column to run the Sunday before Veterans Day. He was reluctant. I emphasized that I would portray him as a representative of a generation we hadn't thanked enough and that it would be a "nice, little article."

My father and I went into his den. We began by talking about the start of the war, which came when he was a Wisconsin freshman, and of the time he spent at the UW before becoming a World War II pilot. Throughout the conversation, a point of reference was the 1942 Badgers team picture on his wall. Jerry Frei was number 65 in the fourth row, the eighteen-year-old sophomore guard from Stoughton, Wisconsin.

I had known for years that this Badgers team included famous players. Elroy "Crazylegs" Hirsch had visited our home in Eugene, and during a vacation we had visited him at the Wisconsin Athletic Department offices in Camp Randall Stadium. Dad had coached Hall of Fame players, but he sounded like an awestruck eighteen-year-old when talking about Dave Schreiner, the '42 team's senior All-American end. Fullback Pat Harder, the Badger next to my father in the team picture, became an NFL star and then an NFL umpire, and I knew that offensive line coach Jerry Frei thought Harder called too darned many holding penalties. (Dad thought that about all NFL umpires.)

I also realized that many of the players in the picture, like my father, had gone off to serve in World War II—and that not all of them had returned.

The column ran the day before Veterans Day.

After my father's death three months later, as I kept looking at the team picture, which my mother now had hanging in her retirement community apartment, I decided I wanted to know more about what it was like for the players to go through that 1942 season, knowing that they, like so many of their contemporaries, soon would be in another uniform, risking their lives for their country.

The 1942 Wisconsin Badgers were a terrific football team. As young men in that era, they were extraordinary, yet typical. Among other reasons, that's why theirs is an All-American story.

DAY OF INFAMY

Around 1:30 in the afternoon of December 7, 1941, Erwin Kissling strolled into Rennebohm's Pharmacy, on the edge of

Photo from the author's collection

Jerry Frei got his wings and became a full-fledged AAF pilot at age nineteen.

the University of Wisconsin campus. The stocky freshman halfback from nearby Monticello was proud to be considered one of the athletes on campus. Only his parents and his professors called him Erwin. A few called him Erv. Almost everyone else knew him as Booby.

As Kissling paid for his newspaper and headed out, another student rushed through the door. Kissling had never seen him before and never would again. But this guy had to tell somebody. He settled for Booby.

"Hey," he breathlessly informed Kissling, "the Japs just bombed Pearl Harbor!"

"What are you talking about?" Kissling asked.

"The Japs just bombed Pearl Harbor!"

Kissling hadn't noticed that at the lunch counter, two other Badger freshmen—halfback Jim Regan and quarterback Jack Wink—were having coffee after finishing their meals. As they talked, the guy in the white shirt behind the counter suddenly turned up the radio.

As other students crowded behind them to listen, Regan and Wink looked at one another. It was a look exchanged across America that morning. It meant "Our lives have just changed."

Many of the Badgers weren't aware of the events of the morning until they heard excited newspaper hawkers scrambling down the Madison residential streets. Four freshmen players—Elroy Hirsch, Bob Rennebohm, Hank Olshanski, and Russ Schultz—lived on the upper floor of the house at 812 West Johnson Street, renting rooms from the kindly Mr. and Mrs. Hanley.

"We didn't have our radios on," says Rennebohm, a distant relation of the family that owned the drugstores. "We were studying. We heard a guy yelling 'EXTRA!' on the street. So we ran out, bought a paper, and turned on the radio. We knew we'd be going somewhere by the time it was over."

Amid a final-fling atmosphere both on campus and in the football program, the Badgers got off to a strong start in the '42 season.

THIRD DOWN . . .

As the undefeated Badgers prepared to play the Great Lakes Naval Training Station's team in Chicago's Soldier Field in mid-October, Congress made it clear it was about to lower the draft age from twenty to eighteen. The youngest players on the '42 Badger varsity, Jerry Frei and Otto Breitenbach, wouldn't turn twenty until June 1944, but even they already were eighteen. While most of the Badgers were already in various reserves, the lowering of the draft age would mean the acceleration of callups. Unlike the Badgers, many men on campus hadn't yet made their military choices. On October 15 about 1,500 students attended a joint presentation by representatives of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps at the Memorial Union. The crowd was too large for the Union Theater, so the speeches were piped into other rooms.

Photo courtesy of the University of Wisconsin Sports Information Department

The T formation looked better in pictures, as in this shot of the usual 1942 starting lineup, but the Badgers more often ran out of the Box. The line, from left to right as the players face the camera: RE Dave Schreiner, RT Paul Hirsbrunner, RG Ken Currier, C Fred Negus, LG Red Vogds, LT Bob Baumann, LE Bob Hanzlik. QB Jack Wink takes the snap in front of RH Mark Hoskins, FB Pat Harder, and LH Elroy Hirsch.

That Saturday at Soldier Field, the Navy team led 7–0 at the half. In the third quarter, Elroy Hirsch raced 61 yards for the Badgers' first touchdown. Pat Harder's extra point tied the score, 7–7.

Later in the third quarter, the Sailors seemed on the verge of regaining the lead. Great Lakes reached the Wisconsin 34, and Smith threw a deep pass for Carl Mulleneaux, just across the goal line. Jim Regan was covering Mulleneaux and went up to fight for the ball. "I had the eye on the ball and was going to intercept it, and I kind of slipped," Regan recalls. Jack Wink, the sophomore quarterback, cut in front of both of them and made the interception, a yard deep in the end zone.

At the 10, Wink cut to his right. At the 12, Hugh McCullough missed him, and Wink made a beeline for the *left* sideline. Guards Ken Currier and Red Vogds made great blocks, and Wink burst out of traffic at the 40 and went on for the 101-yard return for the go-ahead touchdown. Because of Wink's circuitous route and his lack of speed, the Badgers swear it might have been the most time-consuming 101-yard run in the history of football. "Jack wasn't the fastest guy in the world," says a laughing John Roberts, another Badger guard. "He was kind of shifty, though."

Harder's extra point attempt was deflected and went wide, leaving the score 13–7.

That's how it ended.

On the train ride to Madison the next morning, many of the Badgers played cards. Senior tackle Bob Baumann took a nap, holding the captain's game ball. Others read the Chicago papers, noticing that Francis Powers of the *Chicago Daily News* wrote that Hirsch "ran like a demented duck. His crazy legs were gyrating in six different directions all at the same time."

Hey, Ghost, this says you have crazy legs!

Hey, Crazylegs!

The rest of the season, Hirsch was still primarily referred to as Elroy "Ghost" Hirsch, but Powers's story and the teasing of Hirsch got the Crazylegs name in casual circulation. Eventually, it supplanted Ghost and even Elroy. "Anything's better than 'Elroy,' " Hirsch says, smiling.

A month later, Hirsch's father, Otto, was part of the Dad's Day festivities at Camp Randall Stadium. The players' fathers were brought in the locker room after the Badgers defeated Minnesota 20–6 to finish 8-1-1 for the season. The *Wisconsin State Journal*'s Roy L. Matson reported the proceedings in the paper the next morning.

Bert Schreiner called out to his son, All-American end Dave Schreiner, as he crossed the room. "Davey! Davey!" he exclaimed. "Oh, Davey, what a game!"

Hirsch greeted his father.

"Hi, Pop. How are you, Pop?"

Elroy reached over and pulled his pop's hat down, scrunching it on his head. Otto responded with a warm hug. "Aw, Pop," Elroy said, embarrassed. Then he noticed that a photographer wanted to take their picture. "Hey, Pop," he said, "you better fix your hat."

Seconds later, they faced the camera.

Outside, the Wisconsin band was playing its post-game show. The strains of "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition" were audible in the dressing room.

The sting from the November 7 loss at Iowa was diluted, although the Badgers realized it had cost them the Big Ten title. Ohio State beat Michigan 21–7 that day to clinch the championship by a half-game over the Badgers. "I've never been more proud of a bunch of fellows in my whole life than I am this afternoon," Stuhldreher said.

In the press box, *Wisconsin State Journal* columnist Roundy Coughlin wrote for his Sunday readers: "Boy, I'll bet the Wisconsin boys in service celebrated last night when that score went out Wisconsin 20, Minnesota 6. I'll bet the closest tap room got an awful work out. Did Schreiner ever play a game. Did you see him ride those blockers. That's prettiest football picture I ever saw. All the printer has to do is get the type set up for Dave Schreiner as the All-American right end." He also had kind words for Schreiner's Lancaster buddy, halfback Mark Hoskins. "The blocking and tackling by Hoskins was really a thing of beauty and he had that winning spirit in his body."

Downtown, the bars and taverns were doing ring-it-up business. A bellman told the *State Journal* it was the busiest single night in Madison since the celebration following the repeal of prohibition.

"I think we sensed it at the time, that it was never going to be the same, that it was the last hurrah of carefree college kids," says Tom Butler, who celebrated the victory that night as a UW freshman. "Our age of innocence was over. I always said we were born in the middle of the roaring '20s, we grew up during the Great Depression, and graduated from high school and went into World War II."

By the end of the season, Schreiner was certain of his military decision. He wasn't going to medical school, and it seems a safe bet that even if he had remained on that academic track, he wouldn't have accepted the deferment. He didn't want to watch others serve. His partial color blindness ruled out trying to become a pilot and joining Hoskins in the Army Air Forces reserves, so he decided the best course was to follow many of his teammates and sign up for the Marine Reserves.

After the Christmas break, Hoskins and the other Badgers went back to school, but for the most part their hearts weren't in it. Most of the underclassmen stopped attending class and studying. "We should have all flunked out of school," says Jim Regan. "When football season ended, I got all Fs. Most of us did. Very few of us went to class."

Most of the Badgers in the Army Air Forces, including Jerry Frei, were indeed called in to the service before the end of the second semester, in early 1943. Hoskins even tried to speed up the process. The Badgers' potential flyers were so eager, they delegated their team cocaptain to go to Chicago,

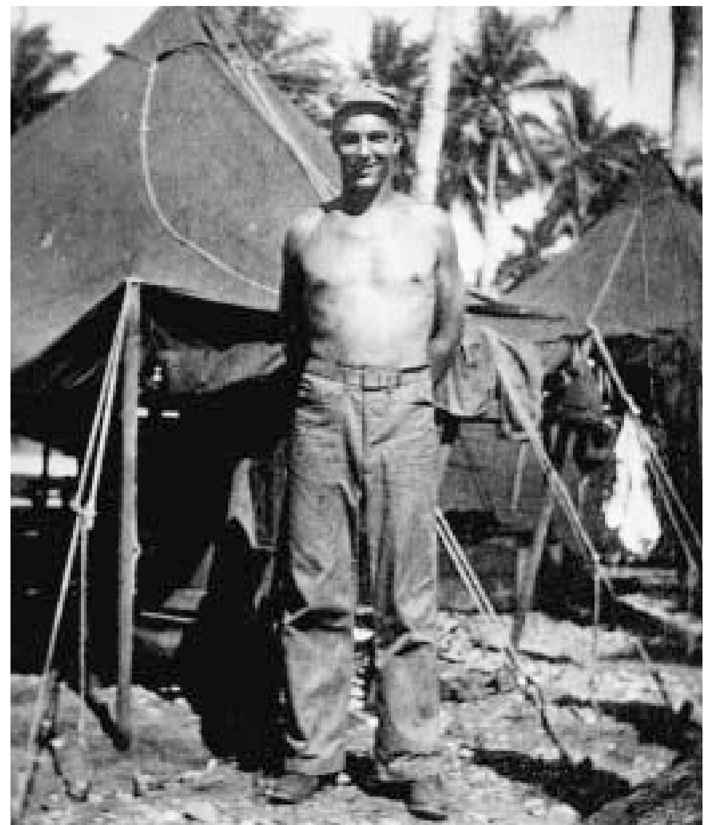

Photo courtesy of Judy Corfield

Dave Schreiner in the Pacific.

where Hoskins brashly made an appointment to see a general in the Fifth Army headquarters.

When he was called into the office, Hoskins asked: "Sir, when are we going to be called in?"

The general told Hoskins to pass along a message to his teammates and fellow prospective pilots: "Don't worry, boys, we'll take care of you!"

One by one, or in small groups, the Badgers left Madison and civilian student life.

"I think every one of us—and this was true across America—felt we might not come back," says Jim Regan, who ended up in the Army. "I know I thought that."

By 1944, the Badgers were around the world, in uniforms of a different sort.

. . . AND A WAR TO GO

The B-17 bomber was on fire. Copilot Mark Hoskins could see the flames, smell the cordite, and sense the crew's time running out. From the seat to Hoskins's left, the captain yelled the order to abandon the plane. Hoskins scrambled down to the nose, joining the navigator and bombardier, expecting to follow them out the opened hatch.

But they were struggling with the little door. They yanked and shoved and twisted but couldn't get it open. The flames burned and the smell grew stronger. If they didn't get out soon, they wouldn't get out at all, and their frenzy showed they knew it.

Hoskins pulled them away from the door.

The twenty-two-year-old airman told himself he was a blocker again, leading a sweep for Hirsch or Harder in Camp Randall Stadium. Against Notre Dame or Ohio State, it didn't matter. He backed up, charged at the little door, and crashed into it with his shoulder.

Not only did the hatch open, but Hoskins flew through it and found himself in the skies over Hungary. Stunned, he managed to pull his parachute ripcord and began to drift to the ground, where he would take his chances.

Then he saw the German fighter plane, presumably the one that had nailed the B-17.

The pilot, his guns at the ready, was flying toward Hoskins, a floating and defenseless target.

It was June 27, 1944.

Eight months later, on April 1, 1945, three of Hoskins' Badger teammates—Dave Schreiner, tackle Bob Baumann, and halfback Bud Seelinger—landed on Okinawa with the Sixth Marine Division. By the third day, the Sixth Division was almost across the thin Ishikawa Isthmus.

"Dave complained to me that he wasn't getting his share of action," Captain Clint Eastment recalls. "He wanted to get more action. I said, 'Just wait a while. It's a long campaign.' "

Eastment was right. The three Badgers, all first lieutenants, were in the thick of it.

By April 20, the U.S. forces had control of the Motobu Peninsula and there was a lull in the fighting. Schreiner had time for socializing, both to talk about the news that the Germans had surrendered and the war was over in Europe, and to talk football. Young Larry Parmelee of Milwaukee was a corpsman, officially a Navy pharmacist's mate attached to the Marines. One corpsman in Schreiner's A Company asked Parmelee if he would like to meet the Wisconsin All-American football player. Parmelee, who had played high school ball, jumped at the offer, saying he had listened to Schreiner and the Badgers on the radio and dreamed of playing in Camp Randall, too.

"They were bivouacked about a half-mile from us, and my friend came over and got me and introduced me to Dave," Parmelee says. "We just sat around, cross-legged on the ground, and we talked. We talked a lot about Wisconsin, the hunting and fishing, and about some of his football exploits. He asked me if I was interested in football, and I said, 'Boy, do I want to go to Wisconsin in the worst way.' He said, 'Well, if we get out of this thing OK, you look me up and I'll be available for you.' " Schreiner said he would introduce Parmelee to the Wisconsin coaching staff.

Parmelee returned to his unit and excitedly told his buddies about meeting one of his heroes.

On June 8, 1945, according to a later dispatch by Marine Corps correspondent Don Petit, Schreiner was heroic in grenade battles for two hills near Naha. Petit wrote that Schreiner twice charged up the hill and tossed grenades into Japanese positions, and the one hundred enemy soldiers withdrew.

Eastment was severely wounded that day. "Dave Schreiner pulled me out of the line of fire," Eastment says. "He looked at the holes. He said I had four of 'em, so we thought that I'd been hit by four bullets. But I found later, there were only two bullets that made the holes."

Eastment's fighting was over, and he hated leaving his men behind. Schreiner became company commander. And the battle raged on.

About the Author

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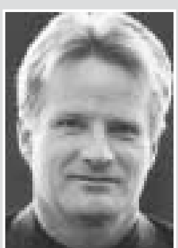


Photo by John Leyba

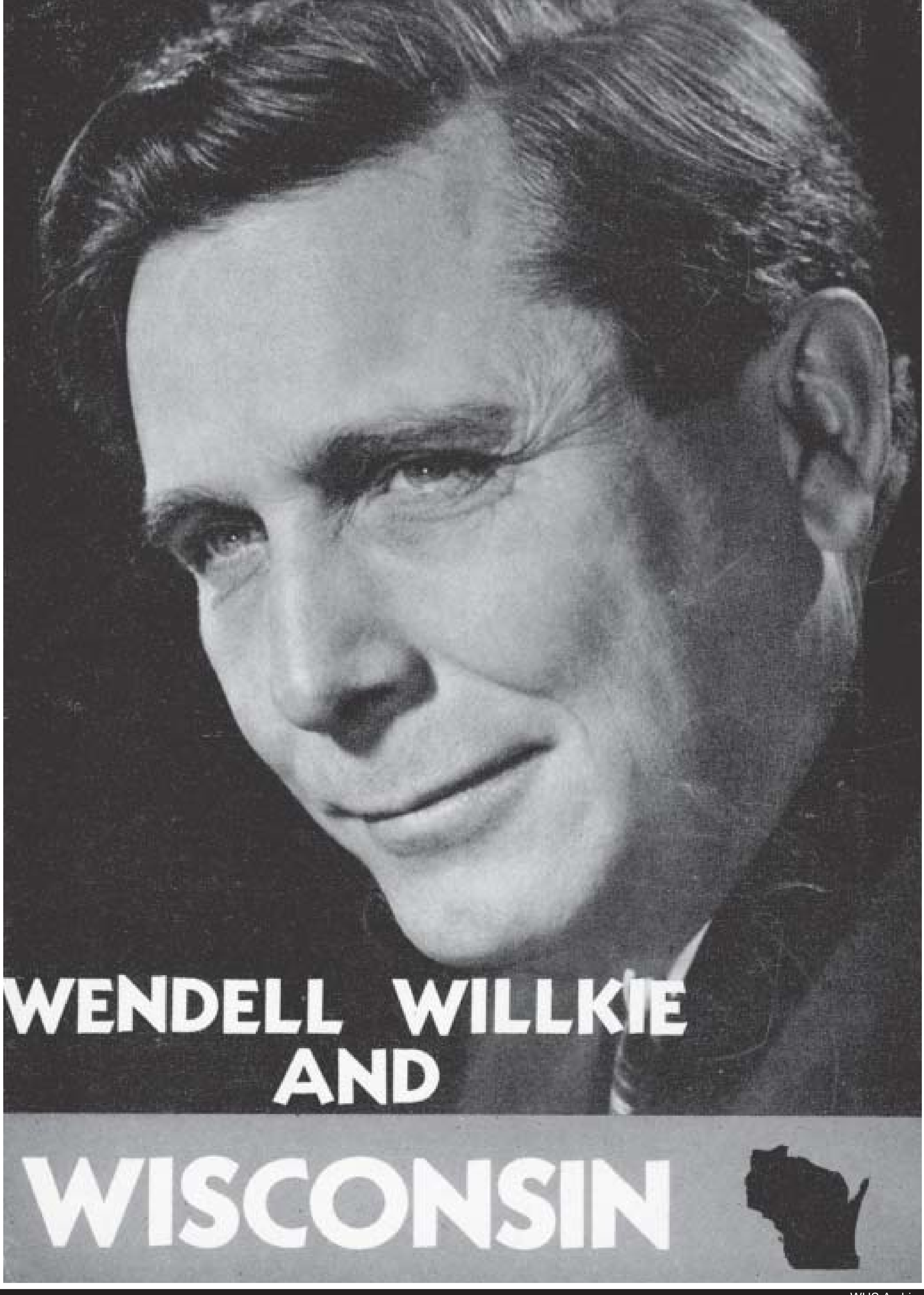
Wisconsin Ends the Political Career Of Wendell Willkie

By Ronald H. Snyder

It is difficult to imagine a presidential election year without the array of state primaries that have come to determine success or failure for the pool of candidates in search of their party's nomination. So critical have these contests become, and so intense is the attention that the media, campaign strategists, and political pundits give to them, that it would be easy to assume that state primaries have been a part of the national political landscape for generations. Yet the system so familiar to voters today only emerged in 1972. That year was the first presidential election year since the tumultuous 1968 Democratic National Convention, where serious disruptions of the proceedings caused the Democratic National Committee to establish new rules for the selection of convention delegates. These included a requirement that most delegates be elected by the voters in state primary elections or caucuses. The Republican Party soon adopted similar rules and primaries have become standard in the majority of states in the nation. Before 1972, that was not the case.

In 1903 Wisconsin became the first state to select delegates to the presidential nominating conventions through primaries. The purpose of the primaries was to open the nomination process to ordinary party members and to weaken the influence of professional politicians and party bosses. Presidential nominees were largely chosen at the national conventions by the party elite, office holders, and loyal party workers, who were mostly appointed to their state delegations.

Willkie's strong showing in Wisconsin during the 1940 presidential election was a major point in his 1944 campaign literature. The brochure cover pictured here was one of Willkie's most important pieces.



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Thomas E. Dewey, at far left, the Republican candidate for President, makes a whistle-stop in Baraboo during the 1944 election. Dewey carried Wisconsin by a slim margin, fewer than 25,000 votes.

Presidential hopefuls not favored by the party leadership sometimes chose to demonstrate their support among ordinary voters by entering one or more of the primaries. As one of the few states that offered this democratic voice, Wisconsin served on several occasions as a vehicle for these candidates. In the process, the voters of the Badger State exerted important influence on presidential politics, and in turn, on the course of American history.

In 1960, for example, Massachusetts Senator John F. Kennedy chose to make his first foray outside of New England at the Wisconsin Democratic presidential primary. Kennedy's victory over Senator Hubert Humphrey of neighboring Minnesota demonstrated the Bay State senator's ability to connect with midwestern and Protestant voters, anointed him as the instant "front runner" for the nomination, and set him firmly on his path to the presidency.

Historians continue to debate the impact of the 1968 Wisconsin primary on Lyndon B. Johnson's decision not to seek a second term as president. Many argue that Johnson's withdrawal, announced two days before the Wisconsin vote, reflected his fear of a humiliating defeat at the hands of insurgent anti-Vietnam war candidate, Eugene J. McCarthy, another Midwestern senator.[1]

The current presidential election season marks the sixtieth anniversary of a dramatic, but little remembered, chapter in Wisconsin political history. In the spring of 1944, the state's Republican voters decisively rejected the effort of Wendell L. Willkie to win a second chance to be the Republican Party's nominee for president of the United States. In so doing, voters of the Badger State influenced the politics of the World War II era and ended the career of one of the most polarizing and controversial figures of that generation.

Four years earlier, Wendell Willkie had risen to the Republican presidential nomination from an unlikely background. Born in rural Indiana in 1892, Willkie graduated from Indiana University School of Law in 1916. In 1929 he joined a prestigious New York law firm, specializing in public utilities law. Four years later, he became president of the Commonwealth and Southern Corporation, a giant utilities holding company.

Willkie was an active Democrat and a delegate to the 1924 Democratic National Convention. He supported Franklin D. Roosevelt for president in 1932. Six months into Roosevelt's first term, however, Willkie became one of the president's most articulate and visible critics. His break with the New Deal was prompted by the administration's proposal to create a government corporation to develop the Tennessee River basin and its adjoining territories. The proposed Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) planned to build dams and power plants and provide low-cost electricity for thousands of economically deprived residents living in the six states along the river's course. Competition from a publicly owned utility would be the ruination of the privately owned local electric power companies in the region, all of which were subsidiaries of Commonwealth and Southern, the company over which Willkie presided.

For the next six years, Willkie waged a fierce battle against government ownership of electric power. After exhausting all political and legal remedies, he

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When Willkie visited Richland Center on March 18 for this large public event, businesses closed for the day to allow his motorcade access to the streets.

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Willkie, second from right, enjoyed the hospitality of the Republican Party in Wisconsin and his campaign supporters were in attendance at a small reception in November 1943, including, from left, Vernon Thompson, George Skogmo, and William Aberg.

engaged in protracted negotiations with TVA authorities, and in August 1939, Commonwealth and Southern's Tennessee Electric Power Company was sold to the TVA for 78.6 million dollars (or 10.4 billion in today's dollars).

Willkie's highly public battles with the New Deal generated a great deal of attention and curiosity. He toured the nation, spoke to large and receptive audiences, and wrote articles for several major magazines. The image of an Indiana "farm boy" eloquently and passionately defending East Coast corporate wealth and private enterprise turned Willkie into something of a media star. In April 1940 he wrote an article for *Fortune* magazine entitled "We The People: A Foundation for a Political Platform for Recovery." It was organized in the form of a petition to the major political parties as they considered their platforms for 1940. The article consisted of six points for the parties to consider: stop thinking with a depression mentality, end negative attitudes toward private business, include private business in the operation of government programs, protect individual and states' rights, reveal the true costs of government programs, and adopt a foreign policy that opposes aggression and supports world trade. The article was enthusiastically received by a number of well-placed business, publishing, and financial leaders. Several of then, including Russell Davenport, managing editor of *Fortune,* and newspaper publishers John Cowles and Gardner Cowles Jr., organized a committee in support of Willkie for the Republican presidential nomination.

The movement quickly evolved into a grass-roots crusade. A twenty-nine-year-old attorney in New York, Oren Root Jr., spent forty dollars of his own money to design and mail petitions to Republicans around the country, in an attempt to secure signatures for a Willkie candidacy. Petitions containing three million signatures were returned to Root in fewer than sixty days, and about two hundred dollars a day in unsolicited campaign contributions poured in. Buoyed by the response, Root placed classified advertisements in newspapers across the country urging Republicans to organize local "Associated Willkie Clubs." Twelve hundred such clubs sprang up within weeks.

Despite the misgivings of many Republican leaders about the idea of bestowing their ultimate prize on a man without party credentials, the Willkie amateurs pulled off a storied upset. At the Republican convention in Philadelphia in June 1940, Willkie supporters packed the galleries, chanted Willkie's name incessantly, and stampeded the delegates. When the pandemonium ended, Willkie had emerged as the nominee. At a time when the Republicans faced the Herculean task of challenging Franklin Roosevelt's bid for an unprecedented third term and developing a viable alternative to the administration's foreign policy, they selected a recent convert to the party, who had neither political nor governmental experience, as their standard-bearer.

Willkie waged a vigorous campaign. He barnstormed the country warning that a third term for Roosevelt would jeopardize democratic traditions, but he supported most of the New Deal's domestic and international initiatives. He argued that he could provide fresh leadership and would administer those programs on a sounder economic basis. Most importantly, he bestowed the party's stamp of legitimacy on Roosevelt's internationalist foreign policy. Willkie supported aid to the allies and American military preparedness but charged that the administration was tired and incompetent and might blunder into war.

On November 5, 1940, Willkie received more votes than any Republican presidential candidate in history at that time—over twenty million. However, Roosevelt was the choice of over twenty-seven million voters. Willkie had cut the president's 1936 margin of victory in half, but it was not enough to overcome FDR's broad popularity. With the exception of the Milwaukee area, Willkie had done reason-

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Willkie's intense campaign for the 1944 Republican primary led him into all walks of life throughout the state; in Madison he spoke with typesetter Ed Mergen who was in charge of page layout for the Wisconsin State Journal.

ably well in Wisconsin in 1940, receiving 679,206 votes. He carried every congressional district in the state except those in the Milwaukee metropolitan area, losing Milwaukee by more than fifty thousand votes but losing the state overall by fewer than twenty-five thousand votes.

After the election Willkie was faced with a critical decision. He wanted to retain leadership of the Republican Party, but feared that as its titular head he would be expected to lead the opposition against the Roosevelt administration's foreign policy, especially its efforts to provide military aid to Britain. Willkie was convinced that the survival of the nation and the peace of the world rested on a British victory over Nazi Germany. He decided to work toward a redirection of Republican foreign policy and to recast the party as the "loyal opposition," placing national unity above partisan politics. Some political observers called Willkie's position heroic and critical to the efforts to defeat Nazi Germany. Journalist Walter Lippman, for example, wrote that "under any leadership but his, the Republican Party would have turned its back upon Great Britain, causing all who still resisted Hitler to feel that they were abandoned." Many partisan Republicans, however, thought Willkie's support for the opposition's foreign policy initiatives politically naive, at best.[2]

On January 10, 1941, HR 1776, the so-called "Lend-Lease" bill to provide U.S. military equipment to an embattled Britain, was introduced in Congress. As anticipated, the response of the Republican establishment was swift and partisan. Former President Herbert Hoover warned that passage would mean that Congress had surrendered its responsibilities to the executive branch. The party's 1936 nominee, Governor Alfred M. Landon of Kansas, called it "a slick scheme to fool the taxpayers."[3]

On January 18, 1941, Willkie announced his support for the legislation and warned that "if the Republican Party makes a blind opposition to this bill and allows itself to be presented . . . as the isolationist party, it will never again gain control of the American government."[4] In order to dramatize his point, Willkie testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in support of "Lend-Lease." In response to a question from GOP Senator Gerald Nye of North Dakota as to whether he still believed that FDR's policies would draw America into war, Willkie responded that the prediction was "a bit of campaign oratory."[5] That flippant remark enraged many orthodox Republicans.

If that were not insult enough, Willkie proceeded from the hearing room directly to the White House for his first face-to-face meeting with Roosevelt. Several days later, Willkie announced that he was going to England to observe the war situation and that FDR had provided him with a personal note of introduction to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

The split between Willkie and the traditional Republican leadership seemed nearly irreparable. Colonel Robert McCormick, publisher of the *Chicago Tribune* and a major figure in conservative circles, wrote the epitaph. "The party will take leave of its late standard bearer," McCormick wrote, "with the hope that it will never again see him or he it."[6] Senate Minority Leader Robert A. Taft of Ohio proclaimed that Willkie "does not and cannot speak for the Republican Party," and Congressman Dewey Short of Missouri made the following accusation, ". . . and now with Roosevelt's blessing, he is smashing the Republican Party wide open."[7]

However, the *Chicago Daily News* hailed Willkie as a man of principle and argued that his views coincided with those of a majority of Republicans.[8] Public opinion research seemed to support that conclusion. A Gallup poll, released in June 1941, indicated that two-thirds of those who voted Republican in 1940 supported Willkie's position on the "Lend-Lease" bill.[9] In a

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Although the war in Europe had been a significant issue during the 1940 campaign, by 1944 American lives had been lost, and veteran support was critical. On March 25 Willkie conversed with C.L. Coon, commander of Madison's William B. Cairns American Legion Post No. 57.

survey taken in December 1941 by *The Republican* magazine, Willkie was the first choice for the 1944 nomination of forty-seven percent of nine thousand registered Republicans and was well ahead of his closest rival.[10]

Willkie's insistence on portraying himself as the head of "the loyal opposition" strengthened the attacks against him, however, and his fortunes slowly began to change. In the summer of 1942, with the mid-term congressional elections approaching, the White House announced that Willkie would visit the battle fronts in the Soviet Union and the Middle East. Willkie pointed to the assignment as proof that, under his leadership, the Republican Party was playing an important leadership role in the war effort, but many Republican congressional candidates felt that Willkie should stay home and campaign for them rather than travel the world as the representative of a Democratic president. The GOP made major gains in the election, picking up forty-four seats in the House of Representatives and nine in the Senate, but Willkie's role in the party had changed dramatically. Historian Donald Johnson quoted an unnamed congressional leader who said that "after the campaign of [19]42, not five members of the House were willing to follow his lead."[11] A nation-wide Gallup survey revealed that Willkie had dropped to second choice among likely Republican voters, behind General Douglas MacArthur.[12]

Willkie announced in an interview with *Look* magazine on October 5, 1943, that he would seek the 1944 Republican nomination. He said that his brand of internationalist Republicanism was the party's only hope for survival. He argued that "the Republican Party can exist only if it catches the spirit of the times." He believed that the only way to demonstrate that the voters shared his vision was to take his case directly to them by entering several presidential primaries in 1944.

He decided to make his stand in the Wisconsin Republican presidential primary scheduled for April 4. "I have no illusions concerning the difficulties I will encounter in Wisconsin," he said, "but it is up to the Republican voters to determine their preference for president, and I am willing to rise or fall on such a test."[13]

Willkie believed that a decisive victory in the Wisconsin primary would convince the Republican leadership that he could win the presidency and return the party to the White House for the first time in twelve years. Some of his strongest supporters in Wisconsin were split over whether the Badger State was the right place to stage an all-or-nothing effort. Milton H. Polland, a Milwaukee insurance executive and an advisor to the former mayor, the late Carl Zeidler, feared an isolationist backlash among the state's large German American population and urged Willkie to stay out of the Wisconsin primary. By contrast, John C. Dickinson of West Bend, general sales manager for Amity Leather and Chair and member of the Washington County Republican Party, urged Willkie to vigorously contest the state. Even the press was conflicted about Willkie's plan to tie his fate to Wisconsin. The *New York Times* questioned if "a state in which pre-war Republicanism was the very antithesis of his own pre-war platform" was an appropriate place for Willkie to risk his candidacy. The *Milwaukee Journal,* however, welcomed the Willkie

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The Washington Evening Star *ran this cartoon by Clifford Berryman after Wisconsin's primary determined the futures of both Willkie and Dewey.*

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Although Wisconsin governor Walter Goodland, left, made clear that he would not support Willkie as a presidential candidate, he and Mrs. Goodland welcomed Willkie to the governor's mansion in November 1943.

effort and expressed the hope that it would "throw light on how the Middle West may react to Willkie and the things he represents."[14]

Willkie decided to make his stand in Wisconsin because he believed that the state presented many advantages for him. From a certain perspective, Wisconsin seemed to be *made* for Willkie. He had won the state except for Milwaukee in 1940, after all. A win here would prove his cross-over appeal, and earn him his credentials. None of the other potential Republican candidates—New York Governor Thomas E. Dewey, Ohio Governor John Bricker, Navy Lt. Commander and former Minnesota Governor Harold Stassen, or even Milwaukee native General Douglas MacArthur—planned to campaign in the Badger State. At first, Dewey asked that his name not be entered. His leading Wisconsin supporter, Secretary of State Fred Zimmerman, ignored Dewey's plea, however, and organized a slate of delegates pledged to the New York governor for the primary. Stassen and MacArthur were prohibited by law from campaigning while on active military duty. The only other declared candidate, John Bricker, announced that he would not seek delegates in Wisconsin.

Yet Wisconsin also posed potential dangers for Willkie's candidacy. The state's Republican congressional delegation had voted against every measure designed to aid the allied forces before Pearl Harbor. The *Chicago Tribune,* voice of uncompromising isolationist sentiment in the Midwest, was widely read throughout the state. It was difficult for Willkie and his staff to determine how his consistent support of American intervention in the war would be received by Wisconsin's substantial German American community.

Nonetheless, Willkie was not to be dissuaded. He visited Wisconsin in November 1943 for preliminary organizational planning and to meet with several key groups of potential supporters. The trip turned out to be disappointing. John Dickinson arranged for Republican Governor and Mrs. Walter Goodland to host a small dinner party for Willkie and his wife at the executive mansion in Madison. Willkie was at his eloquent best at that informal gathering, but was dismayed to learn that neither Governor Goodland nor state GOP Chair Thomas Coleman planned to support him. He was particularly stung when he learned that Coleman's decision had come after a visit to Wisconsin from Republican National Chairman John Hamilton. Willkie's resolve, however, was still apparent at a luncheon in Madison, where he declared, "I hope you're with me in Wisconsin because I want a state like this with a great liberal tradition. But whether you're with me or not, I'm sticking to my policies.[15]

Unable to hide his bitterness, Willkie proceeded to speak to three groups during his brief visit, and alienated all of them. He chided a group of German Americans in Madison for allowing the destruction of freedom in their ancestral homeland. He received a potentially friendly delegation from the AFL and the CIO at West Bend and told them that if he was successful in the election campaign "labor will have a hell of a lot of housecleaning to do." At a dinner for 125 corporate leaders in Milwaukee, he charged that business was indifferent to the public interest. At the conclusion of his remarks, only about ten people came forward to shake his hand.[16]

He returned to Milwaukee on February 5th to meet with the men who were planning to run in the primary as delegates pledged to vote for him at the Republican National Convention, and to map out his campaign schedule. The Wisconsin primary system required that each candidate select four "at large" delegates to run state-wide and separate sets of two district delegates to place before the voters in each of the state's ten congressional districts. Willkie's campaign organization had assembled a group of outstanding citizens to represent him. For example, the "at large" delegates included the Speaker of the Wisconsin State Assembly, Vernon Thomson of Richland Center. Thomson, a future governor and congressman, was one of the state's most prominent Republicans. The other "at large" delegates on the Willkie slate were William Renk of Sun Prairie, a former state Commissioner of Agriculture, William Aberg of Madison, chair of the Wisconsin Conservation Committee, and George Skogmo of Milwaukee, whose affiliation is not known.[17]

A campaign schedule was drawn up. Willkie would spend thirteen days in the state beginning on March 16. He would travel fourteen hundred miles and make forty speeches in twenty-two cities. Willard Smith, a Madison newspaperman, would handle logistics and serve as the campaign's official spokesman.

MILWAUKEE AUDITORIUM

February 28, 1944.

Mr. Milton Polland,
312 West Wisconsin Ave.,
Milwaukee, Wis.

Dear Milton:-

The writer is returning the copy of the contract for the use of Milwaukee Auditorium, for the Willkie for President Committee, because I have no other address and I am depending on you to return it to the gentleman who signed it - Willard E. Smith, Secretary.

The contract also has the receipt for the $100.00 down payment. The balance ... twenty-four hours before the day of the ...

WHS Archives

Milton Polland, one of Willkie's Wisconsin campaign leaders, booked the Milwaukee auditorium for the candidate's appearance in March of 1944. The crowd was disappointingly smaller than expected, and the financial cost was significant.

Willkie inaugurated the campaign in Milwaukee, the state's largest city, on March 16. In his first three days on the stump, he set the frantic pace that would characterize the effort. He made eight speeches in Kenosha, Racine, Beloit, Janesville, Richland Center, and Ripon. In those early appearances, he honed the themes of his campaign: the Republican Party needed redirection in its approach to social and foreign policy issues, and the incumbent Democratic administration was tired, secretive, and mistaken in its vision of the post-war world.

Several problems developed in the early days of the campaign. Willkie's throat became severely sore, and his voice became increasingly hoarse, requiring medical attention. This would plague him throughout the campaign and beyond. The other concern was that the *Chicago Tribune* kept up a drumbeat of invective against him. For example, it began a "news" story on his Richland Center appearance as follows: "The defeated 1940 Republican presidential candidate and a favorite son on Wall Street banking interests, tonight assumed the role of farm expert." In reporting on the size of the crowd greeting him at Ripon, the newspaper estimated that "about two-thirds of them (were) college students or persons of high school age who can't vote." His finance committee chair, John Kimberly, president of the Kimberly-Clark Corporation, was characterized by the *Tribune* as "a millionaire paper manufacturer and socialite."[18] As a result, Willkie thanked an audience in Racine for coming to hear him even though "morning after morning you have read distortions of my motives and misconceptions of what I have been doing."[19]

WHS Museum 1970.14.54
Photo by Joel Heiman

Although Willkie's appeal to Democrats was an asset in gaining crossover votes, the lack of trust it created in Republicans was ultimately a major political liability.

In Oshkosh, he criticized his "shadow" Republican opponents. He called upon his audience in Appleton to reject the hate-mongering of Wisconsin native Gerald L. K. Smith. He pleaded with voters in Sheboygan to help him remake the Republican Party. He presented a program for post-war economic recovery at Manitowoc. He criticized Roosevelt in Burlington for not protesting violations of Poland's borders. In Waukesha, he

WHS Vinje Collection

While campaigning, Willkie needed the support of the local press, and his visit with retired Wisconsin State Journal *editor and publisher Aaron Martin Brayton, took place in a local hospital.*

accused the New Deal of treating farmers as if they were idiots. His motorcade traveled two hundred miles through a major blizzard in Northern Wisconsin. It took five hours for a one-hundred-mile trip from Wisconsin Rapids to Eau Claire. While traveling to Beloit, a car in the Willkie motorcade ran over a dog in Walworth County. Willkie stopped the procession until the owners could be found, and Mrs. Willkie purchased a new dog for the family. (The owners named it "Wendell.")

In a March 29 dispatch from Milwaukee, *The Nation* reported that Willkie "has hit the towns and countryside with the personal zeal of the old-time circuit rider on the glory trail." At every stop the crowds were large. In Richland Center, most businesses closed their doors so that the community could give Willkie a big welcome; over twenty-two hundred people lined the motorcade route. More than a thousand people heard the candidate speak in Elkhorn (population 2,000). Six hundred turned out at Evansville (population 2,500) for a 10:30 a.m. appearance. An overflow crowd greeted him at Waukesha Stock Pavilion. A capacity crowd filled the Plaza Theater in Burlington. Five thousand jammed the Sheboygan Armory. Six hundred turned out at 10:00 a.m. on a Saturday morning in Wisconsin Rapids. Laurence C. Ecklund reported in the *Milwaukee Journal* that the crowd at Jefferson "filled the seats in the main courtroom of the Jefferson County Court House, lined the walls and spilled over the corridors and the judge's chambers."[20]

WHS Museum 1970.14.77 Photo by Joel Heiman

WHS Name File

WHS Museum 1989.52.6 Photo by Joel Heiman

Roosevelt's campaign of 1940 brought much criticism because he ran for an unprecedented third term. Political adversaries targeted him in 1944 with the same complaints when he ran for his fourth term.

The campaign was scheduled to conclude with a major rally at the Milwaukee Auditorium on March 27. It turned out to be one of the more disappointing events of the campaign.[21] Organized by a Milwaukee public relations firm, the rally was expected to draw sixty-five hundred people, but only about five thousand showed up. This was particularly disturbing because the *Milwaukee Journal* had predicted that the size of the crowd would be "a test of Willkie's drawing power."[22]

Nevertheless, the evening included one of the lighter moments of the campaign. An aging Republican worker was given the honor of introducing the platform guests. He described Mrs. Willkie as "one who bears the aroma of her native Hoosier State." When it was Willkie's turn to speak, he quipped that he had heard Indiana described in many ways but had never thought about its smell before.[23]

The Willkies left the rally and departed immediately for northwestern Wisconsin, en route to Omaha, to begin campaigning for the Nebraska primary. The Wisconsin primary belonged to the voters and to history.

Given the general response to the Willkie campaign across the state and the fact that none of the other Republican presidential hopefuls visited Wisconsin during the 1944 primary season, a large victory for the Willkie slate was widely predicted. Willard Shelton, writing in *The Nation,* reviewed the vote totals that Willkie needed to score an impressive victory and stated that "some of the experienced local newspapermen think he will score this kind of victory."[24] The *Wisconsin State Journal* in Madison forecast that sixteen to eighteen of the twenty-four delegates would go to Willkie. State Senator Bernhard Gettleman, a co-chair of the local Dewey organization, said that Dewey would win five delegates and Willkie would take the rest. Lester Bradshaw, a spokesman for Governor John Bricker, predicted that Willkie would win fifteen of the contested delegate spots. Leo Casey, director of publicity at Willkie headquarters in New York, wired campaign workers in every state asking them to secure statements from prominent Republicans on the meaning of Willkie's success in Wisconsin, and at Willkie's state headquarters, Willard Smith drafted a victory statement. It quoted the candidate as saying that "in vindicating my judgment, the voters of Wisconsin have made me very happy."[25]

Wisconsin Republicans voted on April 4. They elected seventeen of Dewey's delegates, four of Stassen's delegates, three of MacArthur's delegates, and none of the Willkie delegates. Willkie's slate ran last in every district. Fred Zimmerman, the leading Dewey delegate, polled 143,031 votes. The top Stassen delegate received 67,495 votes. The leading MacArthur representative won 76,811 votes. Vernon Thomson, who received the largest number of votes among Willkie delegates, tallied 49,535 votes.[26]

On the evening of April 5, Willkie delivered a blistering attack on the New Deal before a crowd of three thousand in Omaha. When his prepared text was complete, he took a slip of paper from his pocket and began to read it aloud:

I quite deliberately entered the Wisconsin primary to test whether the Republican voters of that state would support me and in the advocacy of every sacrifice and cost necessary to winning and shortening the war and in the advocacy of tangible . . . cooperation among the nations of the world . . .The result of the primary is naturally disappointing and . . . it is obvious now that I cannot be nominated. Therefore, I am

asking my friends to desist from any activity toward that end and not to present my name at the convention. I earnestly hope that the Republican Convention will nominate a candidate and write a platform which represents the views which I have advocated and which I believe are shared by millions of Americans.[27]

The Willkies left the Omaha auditorium and boarded an overnight train for their home in New York.

Several of Willkie's Wisconsin associates attribute the devastating defeat to the parochial attitudes of a largely rural state. Milton Polland said that Willkie's ideas were "too advanced for the countryside."[28] Willard Smith admitted that Willkie supporters "learned, to our great embarrassment, much about our state which we had not known before."[29] Other observers, removed from the state and the passions of the moment, saw the Wisconsin vote as an example of the way that traditional Republican voters felt across the country.[30]

Indeed, the fact that Willkie's career ended in Wisconsin was more a matter of coincidence and timing than a reflection of any unique message from the voters of the Badger State. To many Republicans across the nation, Willkie was a closet Democrat, who had captured the GOP nomination in 1940 and vainly attempted to lead the party toward a cooperative relationship with the nation's war-time leader. Yet, war-time or not, that commander-in-chief was Franklin D. Roosevelt, and orthodox Republicans would have none of it.

For Wisconsin voters, the other candidates may have snubbed the state by not bothering to campaign there, but they were *real* Republicans. Every one of them outpolled the ever-present pretender. The *Wall Street Journal* speculated that Willkie's humiliation in Wisconsin resulted from the fact that "the voters . . . wanted to do more than defeat Willkie. They were intent on punishing him."[31]

The possibility that Wisconsin Democrats would cross over and vote for Willkie in the Republican primary never materialized. Even the draw of a friendly Republican failed to prompt dissatisfied Democrats to forego the opportunity to vote for Roosevelt, despite the fact that the president ran without opposition in the primary.

The Wisconsin Willkie loyalists were left to pick up the pieces. They had raised $18,674. An additional $1,800 was contributed by the national Willkie organization to the Wisconsin effort. The campaign overspent its income by $7,500. Vendors and bill collectors pressed what was left of the local organization to pay their bills. Even Willkie supporters clamored for money that they had fronted during the campaign. State Senator Louis Fellenz Jr. of Fond du Lac, chair of the Wisconsin Willkie Committee, pleaded with Willard Smith to find some funds to reimburse him for campaign expenses. On June 24, Milton Polland wrote Smith that he had "been paying many small bills. . . and I am getting rather provoked having the bill collectors hound me daily. . . . It is all coming out of my own pocket." The Milwaukee public relations firm of Gauer and Block, the Shorewood Printing Company, and the Schroeder Hotel of Milwaukee threatened lawsuits. An attorney from Portage sought $60.95 for out-of-pocket expenses and the Independent Film Exchange of Milwaukee demanded $50. Polland sent the *Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle* a check for $25 to pay for an advertisement. The paper's business manager sent the check back to Polland and demanded payment in full of $40. Polland returned the check with a note that they could take it or forget it. Nearly a year after the campaign, the *Milwaukee Journal* was still writing about an unpaid bill of $5.33. It appears as if the bills were paid by Polland, John Kimberly, and Willkie himself.[32]

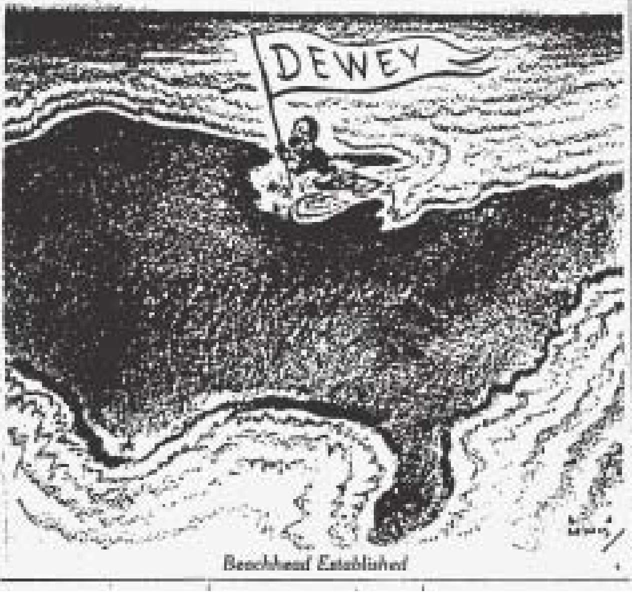
WHS Museum
1996.101.4
Photo by Joel Heiman

The Wisconsin campaign materials for Wendell Willkie were abundant and many of the bills were left unpaid by the debt-ridden campaign or were paid by private citizens who were never reimbursed.

Willkie was not invited to speak at the Republican National Convention and declined an "honored guest" pass. He delayed an endorsement of the party's nominees, Dewey and Bricker.

On October 4, 1944, the throat infection that Willkie had developed in Wisconsin returned. It weakened his heart muscles and produced an acute cardiac condition. He died in a New York hospital on October 8 of coronary thrombosis at the age of 52, with the election in which he had hoped to be the Republican candidate still nearly a month away. His hope that a success in Wisconsin would return him to the center of the national political stage proved to be a false one, but in his attempt he joined a number of politicians of both the twentieth and twenty-first centuries who found in the Badger State a political barometer that forecast success or failure accurately.

Turned Down by Wisconsin, Willkie Quits Race and Cancels Rest of Tour



Beachhead Established

Willkie Move Gives Rise to Varied Views

Political Leaders Differ on Probable Effect on Race; Decision to Quit Called 'Courageous'

Exit Willkie

'I Can't Be Nominated'

Decision Told From Omaha; Blast at Foes

Thrust at Zimmerman Is Seen in His Reference to 'America First' Move; On Way Back East

No Further Word

Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel

The political impact of Wisconsin's rejection was complete. Willkie left the presidential race on April 6, 1944, as reported by the Milwaukee Journal.

Notes

[1]The 1960 Wisconsin Democratic primary, and its impact on the candidacy of John F. Kennedy, is discussed in Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President–1960*, (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1961), 80–96. The possible effect of the Wisconsin Democratic Primary on the election of 1968 is discussed in a variety of sources including Lewis L. Gould, *1968: The Election That Changed America*, (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee Publishers, 1992), 48–50; Paul R. Wieck, "Wisconsin's Response to an Honorable Man," *The New Republic*, March 30, 1968, 16–18; "How McCarthy Scored: Wisconsin Primary," *Business Week*, April 6, 1968, 26; Ronald H. Snyder, "The 1968 Wisconsin Democratic Presidential Primary," Local History Collection, Milwaukee Public Library.

[2]*New York Herald Tribune*, October 19, 1944.

[3]Ellsworth Barnard, *Wendell Willkie: Fighter for Freedom*, (Marquette, MI: Northern Michigan University Press, 1966), 275.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid., 288.

[6]*Chicago Tribune*, January 18, 1941, sec. 1.

[7]Donald B. Johnson, *The Republican Party and Wendell Willkie*, (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1960), 187.

[8]*Chicago Daily News*, January 17, 1941, sec. 1.

[9]Johnson, *The Republican Party*, 187.

[10]Ibid., 201.

[11]Ibid., 216.

[12]Ibid., 238.

[13]Ibid.

[14]*New York Times*, February 22, 1944, sec. 1; *Milwaukee Journal*, February 20, 1944, sec. 1.

[15]Johnson, *The Republican Party*, 253–254.

[16]Mary Earhart Dillon, *Wendell Willkie*, (New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1952), 323, 325.

[17]The district delegates pledged to Willkie were: District 1—J. Harry Green (Janesville, exec. sec. Wisconsin Constructors, Inc.) and Alfred LaFrance (Racine, attorney); District 2—Robert Caldwell (Madison, former state senator) and Alfred Ludvigson (Hartland, affiliation unknown); District 3—Foster Porter (Bloomington, chair of the Grant County Board of Supervisors) and Lawrence Brody (LaCrosse, attorney); District 4—Peter Piasecki (Milwaukee, former U.S. Postmaster) and Harold Schultz (Wauwatosa, president, American Lutheran Association); District 5—Harvey Hartwig (Milwaukee, attorney) and Walter Dunn (Milwaukee, international representative of the Carpenter's Union, AFL); District 6—John Dickinson (West Bend, general sales manager, Amity Leather) and Frederick Foster (Fond du Lac, attorney); District 7—George Mead (Wisconsin Rapids, president, Consolidated Paper Co.) and Wendell McHenry (Waupaca, former district attorney); District 8—David Smith (Appleton, president, Badger Printing Co.) and Harold Krueger (Oconto, former district attorney); District 9—Robert Pierce (Menomonie, general mgr., Wisconsin Milling Co) and William Gharrity (Chippewa Falls, editor, *Chippewa Falls Herald-Telegram*); District 10—Ralph Nelson (Superior, Douglas County Register of Deeds) and Louis Nagler (St. Croix Falls, attorney).

[18]*Chicago Tribune*, March 19, 1944, March 20, 1944.

[19]Barnard, *Wendell Willkie*, 421.

[20]*Milwaukee Journal*, March 26, 1944, sec. 1.

[21]Papers of Harold Gauer, 1935–1959, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison.

[22]*Milwaukee Journal*, March 24, 1944, sec. 1.

[23]Barnard, *Wendell Willkie*, 464.

[24]Willard Shelton, "Willkie Against the Gods," *The Nation*, April 8, 1944.

[25]Records of the Willkie for President Committee, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison.

[26]*Milwaukee Journal*, April 5, 1944, sec. 1.

[27]*New York Times*, April 5, 1944, sec. 1.

[28]Dillon, *Wendell Willkie*, 331.

[29]Willard R. Smith to Wendell L. Willkie, May 7, 1944, Records of the Willkie for President Committee, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison.

[30]Barnard, *Wendell Willkie*, 471.

[31]*Wall Street Journal*, April 10, 1944.

[32]Records of the Willkie for President Committee, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison.

About the Author

Ronald H. Snyder is an instructor of American History at the West Campus of the Milwaukee Area Technical College. He holds a doctorate in American Urban History from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee and masters' degrees in both History and Political Science from UW–Milwaukee as well. He resides in the city of Milwaukee.

Handheld Fans in Fashion, Art, and Advertising

By Leslie Bellais

A Program of Exhibits USA, a National Division of Mid-America Arts Alliance

On a warm day the cooling breeze from a handheld fan can be so refreshing. Most fans made today are simple ones consisting of heavy cardstock attached to a stick. Usually found at sporting events and other outdoor venues, these fans often feature advertisements for beer, sports teams, tourist sites, and even political candidates.

Fans were not always so commercial. For several centuries they were known for their dazzling beauty and exquisite craftsmanship. A new exhibit at the Wisconsin Historical Museum will feature over one hundred and fifty years of the history of fans, illustrating the last heyday and the decline of fashionable fans and the concurrent rise of advertising and souvenir fans. About eighty of the fans will be part of the traveling exhibit, "Cool Breezes: Handheld Fans in 20th-century American Folk Art, Fashion, and Advertising," but in a special exhibit at the Wisconsin Historical Museum an additional forty fans from the Museum's collections will also be on display.

Maria Philipine (Pabst) Goodrich (1868-1947) of Milwaukee used this fan around 1900. She was the daughter of Frederick Pabst, founder of Pabst Brewing Company, and the wife of William Osborn Goodrich, an opera singer and owner of a Milwaukee linseed oil business.

WHS Museum 1956.1187
Photo by Joel Heiman

WHS Museum 1956.1196
Photo by Joel Heiman

Around 1910 a granddaughter of brewery founder Frederick Pabst, Lorraine MacDermott (1893-1977), used this exquisite Duvelleroy fan of silk and mother of pearl while living in Milwaukee. The firm of Duvelleroy, known for its exceptional fan painting, had begun making fans in 1827, and by the late nineteenth century had an extensive international export business in North and South America. Lorraine probably bought the love-themed fan from a Chicago shop selling Duvelleroy fans.

WHS Museum 1984.4346.a
Photo by Joel Heiman

This Chinese sandalwood fan, representing a typical early twentieth-century export, with its embroidered floral motifs and carved sticks, belonged to Eliza (Eliot) Fitch (1865-1955) of Milwaukee. She was the wife of Grant Fitch, an officer of the National Exchange Bank. These imported fans usually came in lacquered wooden boxes. Those with a fitted cardboard slot, such as the one for this fan, were considered the deluxe models.

Cool Breezes

HANDHELD FANS IN 20TH-CENTURY AMERICAN FOLK ART, FASHION, AND ADVERTISING

October 21, 2004–January 19, 2005

Wisconsin Historical Museum
30 N. Carroll Street
Madison, WI 53703
608-264-6555

Hours and other information can be found at http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/museum/

Although historians believe the Japanese invented the folding fan in the seventh century, Europeans only used flat fans until the sixteenth century when Portuguese traders brought the folding fan to Europe. Fans quickly became an important fashion accessory for the wealthy, for they helped cool those dressed in the increasingly popular, yet heavy, tight-fitting clothes. Only the well-to-do owned these fans because they were crafted by highly skilled artisans who carved the sticks from precious materials, painted well-executed images on the fan's paper or parchment, and decorated them with sequins, precious jewels, and other glittery materials. Fan craftsmanship peaked at the end of the eighteenth century, when fashions for women changed from hooped skirts and tight dresses to gauzy, relatively loose, Empire gowns. Fans seemed inappropriate with these delicate dresses and disappeared briefly as fashion accessories.

As Wisconsin was being settled in the early years of the Victorian era, women's fashions returned to a tighter fit, fuller skirts, and heavier fabrics. Fans returned as both a luxury and a necessity. By this time lithography had made printed fans possible, and machinery that cut and pierced sticks with intricate designs had been invented. These newly mass-produced fans were available to a wider range of people, and during the Victorian era more women used fans than ever before. Wealthy women could still acquire handmade fans produced in Europe as a way to distinguish themselves, and many women in Milwaukee did just that.

Fans continued as important fashion accessories through the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, especially for evening wear. Ostrich-feather fans dyed in a range of colors, usually to match a dress, were first seen at the end of the 1860s, and were extremely popular for sixty years. In fact, by the 1920s they were the only fans still in widespread use. By the start of the 1930s, many women wanted to appear more sophisticated, and preferred carrying a cigarette or cocktail at evening gatherings rather than a fan.

As fashion fans declined, advertising and souvenir fans became more popular. Businesses had dabbled with fans as a form of advertising by the mid-nineteenth century, but used them more frequently after the 1876 Centennial Exposition, where vendors sold souvenir fans. Until air-conditioning became common, these simple cardstock fans were seen everywhere and sold every product imaginable. Politicians also learned that fans were an efficient way to get their name in front of the public. Though these simple fans became less common after the advent of air-conditioning, they can still be seen at outdoor events like county fairs and sports venues.

The fans seen on the next few pages are just a handful from the collection, but they illustrate the range of quality, uses, and types found in Wisconsin between the 1830s and the 1970s. Visitors to the exhibit will see fans ranging from beautiful French folding fans owned by members of Frederick Pabst's family in Milwaukee, to advertising fans picked up at dry goods stores in Madison and Prairie du Chien, to an interesting array of souvenir fans brought back by Wisconsinites as they traveled around the country and around the world.

About the Author

Leslie A. Bellais is the Curator of Costume and Textiles for the Society's Museum Division. Leslie is originally from Maryland, and she earned her M.A. in American history at the College of William and Mary. She has been with the Society for fourteen years and lives in Madison.

The confident surfer depicted here indicates this decoupaged fan was probably made near the Pacific Ocean. Surfing experienced a revival during the first years of the twentieth century, after this type of recreation nearly disappeared from the culture. Hawaiians in Waikiki were the first to take up the surfboard again, but Californians had picked up the sport by 1907. The donor's in-laws, James L. and Elizabeth V. Foley of Wauwatosa, traveled extensively around the United States in the early decades of the twentieth century. They may have visited Hawaii or California and brought back the fan as a souvenir for their daughter and son-in-law.

WHS Museum 1956.1009
Photo by Joel Heiman

Around 1885 Sarah Esther (Ball) Allis (1853–1945) of Milwaukee, the wife of Allis-Chalmers Company founder Charles Allis, became the original owner of this elegant hand-painted red fan with its silk gauze and leather-covered guards and sticks.

WHS Museum 1945.652
Photo by Joel Heiman

WHS Museum 1955.480A
Photo by Joel Heiman

While a teenager in the late 1890s, Julia (Morris) Jackson (born c. 1881) of Madison created this scrapbook fan at a party. She started with a blank Japanese mai ogi *fan, a type of fan originally made for dancers who needed strong fans that could stand up to fast constant movement without breaking. Julia pasted photographs on the fan, and also added courtship advice, a popular topic for teenage girls of all eras, by cutting words out of newspapers and magazines.*

WHS Museum 1969.436.52
Photo by Joel Heiman

This fan was made as a souvenir of the completion of the construction of the current Wisconsin State Capitol in 1917. Like all Japanese exports of the period, the silk fan is marked "Nippon." Note the fan maker's misspelling of "Madison."

ALOHA DINNER

WHS Museum 1944.895
Photo by Joel Heiman

Zona Gale (1874-1938) of Portage, Wisconsin, became nationally renowned when she won the Pulitzer Prize in 1921 for her play, Miss Lulu Bett. *She was a world traveler and a souvenir collector. In the spring of 1937 Zona Gale Breese traveled to Japan aboard the ocean liner* M.S. Chichibu Maru. *This fan, which she kept as a souvenir of the trip, features the ship's dinner menu for May 3, 1937.*

WHS Museum 1949.439
Photo by Joel Heiman

The patriotic cockade cigar fan was introduced at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. This fan may date from decades later, since "Made in Japan" labels did not appear on Japanese exports until after 1921. It was probably handed out to women during a political campaign, in the way that real cigars were given to men.

What Is It?

WHS Museum
1977.203.10
Photo by Joel Heiman

This flyswatter fan is made from a printed paper band, featuring an old photograph of Richard and Pat Nixon, stapled around folded pages from the sports section of the November 16, 1973, edition of the San Francisco Chronicle. *The name and place of the dealers' contact printed on the fan may be fictitious, and "E.O.B." may be a reference to the Executive Office Building in Washington, DC. Curators at the museum have no more information than this. Readers, do you know anything about this fan? Have you seen others like it?*

The 1920s were the final years that fans played a role in fashion. This young coquette poses with a feather fan, the only type that was in regular use by then. By the 1930s, accessories for young women included cigarette holders and cocktail glasses.

Classified File 33

WHS Museum 1945.763
Photo by Joel Heiman

Jessie Knapp (b. 1855) of Menomonie, Wisconsin, wife of lumber company owner Henry Eno Knapp, probably owned this fan. Noted world travelers, the Knapps may have acquired the fan during one of their trips. London's Grosvenor Hotel (now known as the Victoria Thistle Hotel) had these fans made to commemorate the coronation of King George V, held on June 22, 1911.

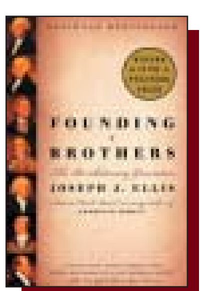
WHS Museum 1979.15.1
Photo by Joel Heiman

Mrs. Ellen M.S. Hawley (b. 1835) of Evansville, Wisconsin, gave this appropriately black fan to her neighbor, Lulu Blanche (Devereaux) Dixon (1866-1947), when she was mourning the death of her husband, Albert, in 1909.

WHS Museum 1952.38
Photo by Joel Heiman

Invented in the mid-eighteenth century, cabriolet fans drew their names from the wheels of the two-wheeled, single horse carriages that bumped up and down like young goats (capriolas). These fans, with their extra holes, let women survey a room without appearing to be doing so. Laura (Bowker) Chapman (1828-1909) of Milwaukee, the wife of Timothy A. Chapman, founder of T.A. Chapman's Department Store, owned this feather fan from the late nineteenth century.

Wisconsin Reads *Founding Brothers*



Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation
BY JOSEPH ELLIS
Alfred A. Knopf, New York, NY, 2000. Pp. 304. Index, notes. ISBN 0-375-40544-5, $14.00, softcover.

In response to Governor Jim Doyle's inaugural challenge for citizens of Wisconsin to restore good government to the state, the Wisconsin Humanities Council established the Wisconsin Reads: A More Perfect Union program. Under this program citizens around the state are meeting to discuss four books over the course of the year. From an ancient Greek tragedy about the founding of democratic justice, to a novel that dramatizes the effects of the Vietnam War on local politics, these books were chosen for their relevance to Americans today and their lessons about democracy's challenges to both leaders and citizens.

The American Revolution, the midpoint of the history of democracy, is the focus of one of the books selected: *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation* by Joseph Ellis, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 2001. Ellis tells a behind-the-scenes story of how seven leaders, their names well-known to all Americans, virtually created the new nation at the 1787 Constitutional Convention. Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton, Franklin, Adams, Burr, and Madison knew both the importance and the fragility of their experiment, and that the new republic's success or failure depended on them. As Ellis emphasizes, they had no idea whether or not their gamble would pay off, much less that it would create a superpower.

Ellis's approach is firmly based on the varied personalities of the "Brothers," and how their differences contributed to the nation they made. Similarly, in leading several discussions of the Ellis book all over southeastern Wisconsin, I saw how the varied experience, education, ages, and personalities of the participants informed their responses. A high school teacher might use her broad knowledge of American history to draw parallels with key moments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A senior citizen might recall his personal experience of crises such as World War II and the Bay of Pigs as lessons in leadership. Naturalized citizens might compare American democracy to the systems of their native countries. All drew parallels with today, and all were eager to share their point of view.

Ellis tells how the seven Brothers did the very public business of drawing up the Constitution in surprisingly private settings. They decided over dinner, for instance, to locate the nation's capital in what became the District of Columbia. The reading groups in which I participated met in similarly incongruous settings: in easy chairs around a gas fireplace, in a featureless boardroom, or in a lecture hall arrangement. At sessions scheduled during the lunch hour, the table might be covered with food (although not such as the Brothers might have dined on!). The enthusiasm of the participants always overcame the setting, however, as the discussion took off.

Ellis presents the Founding Brothers warts and all, especially as regards their attitudes to issues such as slavery. Many of the readers had never seriously evaluated the founders of the nation and how they dealt with such contemporary issues, and Ellis's book allowed them to do so. Many expressed shock at the Brothers' decision to write slavery into the Constitution, but refused to let our own society off the hook, either. One reader argued that if the Founders should have rejected slavery, we should refuse to accept sweat-shop labour in the Third World. Another remarked that some of the Brothers probably used the same argument for not abolishing slavery that politicians use today against certain reforms: "it will affect the economy." In any case, many agreed that we may have as much trouble deciding questions like gay marriage as the Founding Brothers did in resolving the issues of their time.

What the reading and discussion of *Founding Brothers* around Wisconsin indicates is that history books are not just for historians. The readers who participated read a version of America's founding story that shed a new light on our national heroes. But they also were inspired to think about the nature of our democracy and its importance to them and to all of us. I understood how many Wisconsinites care about these issues, even if they could not attend one of the discussions, when the session at the Whitewater Public Library was televised on the local cable service, and people who saw the broadcast stopped me on the street to talk about the Ellis book. The many discussions of this thought-provoking book taking place all over the state clearly contribute to a shared public debate about the nature of our democracy.

—JOHN KOZLOWICZ
University of Wisconsin–Whitewater

Look for Joseph Ellis at the Wisconsin Book Festival

Jerry Apps
on the History of the Circus

Jerry Apps, the well-known historian of midwestern rural life, has written a new history of the Ringling Brothers' Circus, *Ringlingville USA: The Stupendous Story of Seven Siblings and Their Stunning Circus Success*, which will be published this fall by the Wisconsin Historical Society Press. (For details on this and all upcoming publications from the WHS Press, please turn to the inside back cover.)

What is the historical importance of the Ringling Brothers' story for Wisconsin?

Wisconsin has a long and rich circus history, with circuses once located in several Wisconsin cities and especially in Delavan. But none of the many circuses that called Wisconsin home at one time or another could match the size and reputation of the Ringling Brothers. The Ringling Brothers and their circus were known throughout the world; they still are.

Circuses are usually associated with wonder and fun. Was this story fun to tell?

Like life itself, the circus had its wonder and fun but also its tragedy and despair. . . . I did not leave out the sorrow—train wrecks, people killed when storms blew down the tents, fires that burned tents in a flash, accidents and injuries, and the constant challenge for "the show to go on" no matter what.

But by and large it was a fun story to tell. Here were five brothers who were partners and two more brothers who worked for them, who grew up poor and achieved great success in one of the riskiest professions—entertainment. They showed the world that with hard work, attention to detail, and a constant concern for their customers, success was possible. That is not to say that they were saints—they were not. They absolutely hated taxes of any form and tried everything they could to avoid paying them, including threatening to leave Wisconsin at various times. They competed with other circuses without mercy, and their personal lives were not always exemplary.

How do the Ringling Brothers and the circus fit into the history of media and entertainment in our society?

During the later years of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, the circus was a major source of entertainment for many communities, especially rural communities. The Ringlings not only "wowed" their audiences with aerial acts, elephant antics, trained horses, and clowns, but they introduced thousands of people to high-quality classical music. They hired some of the best musicians in the world to travel with them, and for one ticket price (fifty cents for adults, twenty-five cents for children) a circus-goer was treated to an hour-long concert.

Many people had never seen an elephant, a zebra, a hippo, or a giraffe before. . . . Some religious groups were against the circus performance, but they allowed their members to attend for the "education" they would receive from viewing wild animals.

Different from some of the more bawdy entertainment available during the 1800s and early 1900s, the Ringlings prided themselves in putting on a family show, a show for "children of all ages."

How did you research their story?

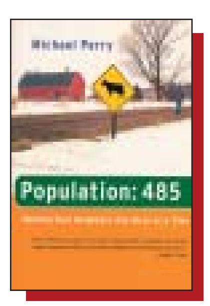
Researching the Ringling story was time-consuming, exasperating, and challenging, but one of the most fun research projects I've ever been a part of. The research started with Fred Dahlinger, circus historian at Circus World Museum in Baraboo . . . [and] the vast collection of Ringling materials at the Robert L. Parkinson Library and Research Center, a part of Circus World Museum. I then went on to spend weeks reading old newspapers, paging through account books, examining records, viewing photos and advertising materials, and interviewing people who had oral histories related to the Ringlings. For a week I examined the wonderfully important collection of Ringling materials owned by Fred Pfening III in Columbus, Ohio, where I had access to Ringling daily account books, employee records, correspondence, invoices, and so on. . . . I then spent several days in McGregor, Iowa, where the Ringling family lived for several years, and where the Ringling boys got their idea for a circus.

You've also recently published a historical novel, *The Travels of Increase Joseph*. How was this experience different from that of researching and writing straight history?

Not much different at all. For my novel, I researched pioneer life in Wisconsin from 1850 to 1900. . . . Writing historical fiction, for me at least, is a sneaky way of teaching history without readers being totally aware that it's a history book they are reading.

Look for Jerry Apps at the Wisconsin Book Festival

Pop History



Population 485: Meeting Your Neighbors One Siren at a Time

BY MICHAEL PERRY

Perennial Books, New York, NY, 2003. Pp. 256. ISBN 0-06-095807-3, $13.95, softcover.

When *Population 485: Meeting Your Neighbors One Siren at a Time*, was first published in 2002, its author Michael Perry made the usual promotional appearances. One of these was on Wisconsin Public Television, a logical venue since his book is about life in his hometown of New Auburn, in northwest Chippewa County. Unlike other authors, whose standard talk show segments involve a one-on-one interview or a panel discussion, Perry tramped about "Nobburn" on a cold day with a camera operator in tow, offering viewers commentary on the stark winter landscape, and engaging in short discussions with various friends and neighbors. This brief peek into Perry's life in northern Wisconsin becomes a full view in the pages of his book.

Population 485 combines memoir, local and community history, comedy, and a series of tragedies, all of which result in history at its most powerful, for it is shared by a gifted storyteller, willing to take the reader beyond artifacts and documents, to the real lives that those sources reflect. Although Perry comments on the often quirky nature of small town life, he never treats the people who live there—past or present—with anything but respect.

It is Perry's understanding of, and real affection for, this community that allows his respect to shine so clearly through his words. He knows that New Auburn is no longer the vibrant place it was generations ago, but he still celebrates the society, as in his first description of it:

> *. . . We complain about the heat and brag about the cold. Summer is for stock cars and softball. Winter is for Friday night fish fries. And snowmobiles. After a good blizzard, you'll hear their Doppler snarl all through the dark, and down at the bar, sleds will outnumber cars. . . . The farmers who came to town to grind feed and grumble in the café have faded away. The grand old buildings are gone. . . . But we are not dead here. We still have our Friday-night football games. Polka dances. Bowling. . . . Every day the village dogs howl at the train that rumbles through town, and I like to think they are echoing their ancestors, howling at that first train when it stopped here in 1883.*

Perry's romantic musings about the train's history are the first of dozens of references to New Auburn's documented past. Perry is not merely aware of the town's history, however; he embraces it. After a decade spent away, his decision to return home brings a new view of and curiosity about the place. He discovers that the town's name comes from the Oliver Goldsmith poem, "The Deserted Village," and recounts how the community changed names three times before making this poetic choice. In discovering this history, Perry puts his money where his curiosity is. At estate and yard sales, he buys old ledgers from local businesses and a New Auburn Commemorative plate, which lead him to discover that David Cartwright, the town's founder, wrote a lengthy-titled book about hunting and trapping, which he also purchases from a rare book dealer.

His fascination with his town is not limited to plates and papers. When he noticed that his backyard was sinking, he "grabbed a shovel, a sifter, and a notebook and went archaeological," digging up and noting bits of glass, cement, and a Jolly Rancher candy wrapper. Although these findings only led to the knowledge that the former owners burned their garbage in the backyard, Perry branched out to sites around town, including one that exposed the log surface of an old corduroy road. Just viewing the road for a few moments led him to think: "I felt a goofy little reminiscent tug when I looked at the yellow paint thinking the last time I saw it exposed to the sun I was probably sixteen and riding my bike home from football practice. Silly, I suppose, but it spoke to the ties between the archaeology of a place and the archaeology of the heart."

Perry's affection for place is far from silly, however, for it is equaled by his affection for the people who live there, and, as an EMT with the local rescue squad (hence the siren in the book's title), he regularly sees his neighbors at their most vulnerable, their most human. These moments are often understandably sad or frightening, yet many contribute the funniest moments in the book. Perry's ability to balance the range of emotions that he witnesses or feels himself, all the while setting these various scenes against the backdrop of the town's history, makes this book a success on every level. His sympathetic study reminds his readers that daily life and its neighborly nature are the foundation of all history, and such struggles, grief, and joys are universal, binding us together across time.

—MARGARET T. DWYER
Wisconsin Historical Society

Ned C. Blackhawk

I can say without too much hyperbole that Richard White's *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (Cambridge University Press, 1991) changed my life. I was immediately struck by how it did not limit "Indians" and "Europeans" to being antagonistic actors. Driven west and decimated, various Algonquian peoples rebuilt on the western shores of Lake Michigan a semblance of their former world, in close conjunction with the French, sharing language, family, trade, and diplomacy. This mutually constructed world precipitated the great Franco-Anglo conflicts of the mid-1700s and shaped the tensions between England and her colonial subjects. *The Middle Ground* writes Indians back into their rightful place at the center of this nation's history and it situates Wisconsin in the larger imperial contests remaking North America.

Ned C. Blackhawk is a professor of history at UW-Madison.

Robert Gough

Last year the Milwaukee Art Museum presented Colonial Williamsburg's touring exhibit, Mapping Colonial America. *Degrees of Latitude: Mapping Colonial America* (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in association with Harry N. Abrams, 2002), edited by Margaret Beck Pritchard and Henry G. Taliaferro, catalogs and explains the exhibit's seventy-three maps. With 159 full-color plates, it is a wonderful book to pick up and read selectively. Taken as a whole, it shows how Europeans gradually improved their geographical knowledge and used maps to dominate North America. For instance, the maps progressively define what is now Wisconsin, going from blank space on a 1592 map to more recognizable shorelines and borders in 1733. They also show how nations represented their territorial claims. In 1718 Wisconsin was claimed as "Partie du Canada ou Nouvelle France," in 1755 it was divided between French and British territory, but by 1783 it lay within the new boundaries of the United States.

Robert Gough, a professor at UW–Eau Claire, is the author of Farming the Cutover: A Social History of Northern Wisconsin, 1900–1940 *(University Press of Kansas, 1997).*

Brett Barker

Victoria E. Bynum's *The Free State of Jones: Mississippi's Longest War* (University of North Carolina Press, 2001) will change the way you think about the Civil War. On one level, the book is about non-slaveholding whites' resistance to the Confederacy, and their creation of a rebellious "Free State of Jones" within the wartime South, led by Newt Knight. But Bynum's narrative touches on more: the history of poor and non-slaveholding whites in the antebellum South; the roots and limits of southern Unionism; and how women, slaves, and entire communities opposed the Confederate war effort.

Perhaps most innovative is Bynum's examination of how this incident is remembered. Newt Knight's children intermarried after the war, confounding definitions of race for the next century, just as the Free State of Jones challenged the myth of unanimous support for the "Lost Cause."

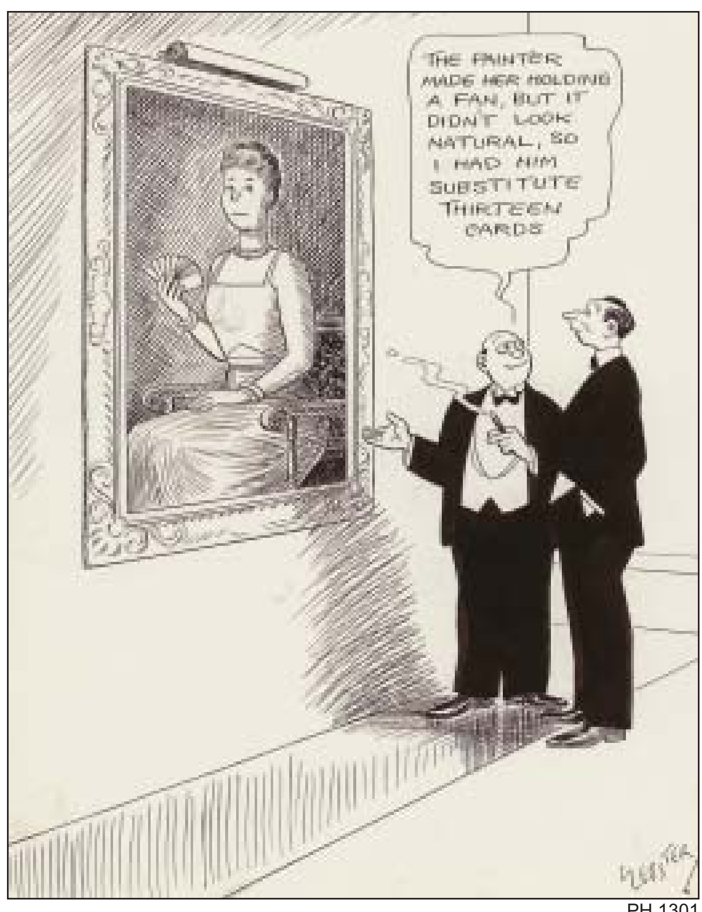
Brett Barker is assistant professor of history at University of Wisconsin–Marathon County in Wausau, and the author of Exploring Civil War Wisconsin: A Survival Guide for Researchers *(Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2002).*

Russell Kirby

Often as I drive across the interstate highway bridge at La Crosse and along the west bank of the Mississippi toward Winona, I reflect on the natural beauty of the river: its seemingly motionless surface and the majestic beauty of the river valley. But just upstream, civilization intrudes on nature, where a lock and dam, together with numerous highway and railroad bridges, disrupt the river's natural flow. *The River We Have Wrought: A History of the Upper Mississippi,* by John O. Anfinson (University of Minnesota Press, 2003) documents these two sides of the Mississippi, explaining how little of the river we see today remains in its natural state, unaffected by human intervention. The book recounts the history of the river as a mode of transport between the Civil War and the culminating nine-foot channel project completed in 1940. By identifying the key personalities and their motivations, Anfinson makes this history accessible and relevant, as the struggle between conservation and economics continues into a new century.

Russell Kirby was trained in historical geography at UW–Madison, and is now a professor of public health at the University of Alabama–Birmingham.

Letters from Our Readers



PH 1301

H. T. Webster's love of bridge was a constant in his work.

Summer 2004, another marvelous issue of the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*; great format, great graphics, wonderful choice of topics, and superbly interesting. In addition to giving us Caspar Milquetoast, H.T. Webster gave all card players the phrase, "Who Dealt This Mess?" Webster and Philo Calhoun are the authors of a book by that title published by Doubleday in 1948. It's a collection of bridge cartoons, with a foreward by Charles Goren, and for those of us playing bridge it's still funny, appropriate, and right on the money. Ask any bridge player how many times he or she asks, sometimes rhetorically, "Who dealt this mess?"

—LANDON RISTEEN
Chicago

Ms. Angela Fritz wrote a well-researched article on the many accomplishments of Lizzie Black Kander in the Spring 2004 issue of *Wisconsin Magazine of History*. Lizzie Black's heritage was attributed to be of English and Bavarian descent. On the 1860 Wisconsin Mortality Schedule, however, Lizzie's grandfather, Herman Black, was listed as having been born in Poland. Her father, John, was listed on the 1860 and 1870 Wisconsin Census as having been born in Poland.

By 1880, John was listed as born in Russia. As you know, Poland disappeared for better than a century and became part of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. The Perles family was from Bavaria but all evidence indicates that the Black family was from Poland.

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Lizzie Black Kander was a definite asset to Milwaukee and deserved such a fine article.

—ARLENE HALE BRACHMAN
Milwaukee

I had to write because of the article on the toy shop at the corner of Milwaukee Street and Michigan Street now called Michigan Ave—"toy loan center."

We were 4 of the 6 children in our family that used the "toy store," weekly—this was the only way we were able to play with "toys"; otherwise my sister would make dolls out of old stockings. We were at the opening day of the toy store—I do not remember the names of the ladies that worked there except that they were very nice and had dark hair. We lived in the 3rd Ward (now called "historic 3rd Ward")—so the toy store was about 4 blocks away. I was 12 or 13 before I got my own real dolls as a Christmas gift—and I still have it and I am now 75.

Your *Wisconsin Magazine of History* is the best book on the reading list for me. My downstairs neighbor buys it so I get to read it.

Thanks

—MARY M. TURDO
Milwaukee

The third annual Wisconsin Book Festival, an initiative of the Wisconsin Humanities Council, will take place this year on October 6–10. The free, public festival celebrates the written word, writers, reading, and books. A wide variety of events will again take place over the five-day gala at numerous venues in downtown Madison, from children's events, storytelling, and exhibits to readings, lectures, discussions, book signings, and other entertainment for all ages. Included in this year's Festival lineup are Wisconsin Historical Society Press authors Jerry Apps and Richard Carlton Haney. More details, times, and locations are available at the Wisconsin Book Festival Web site at www.wisconsinbookfestival.org.

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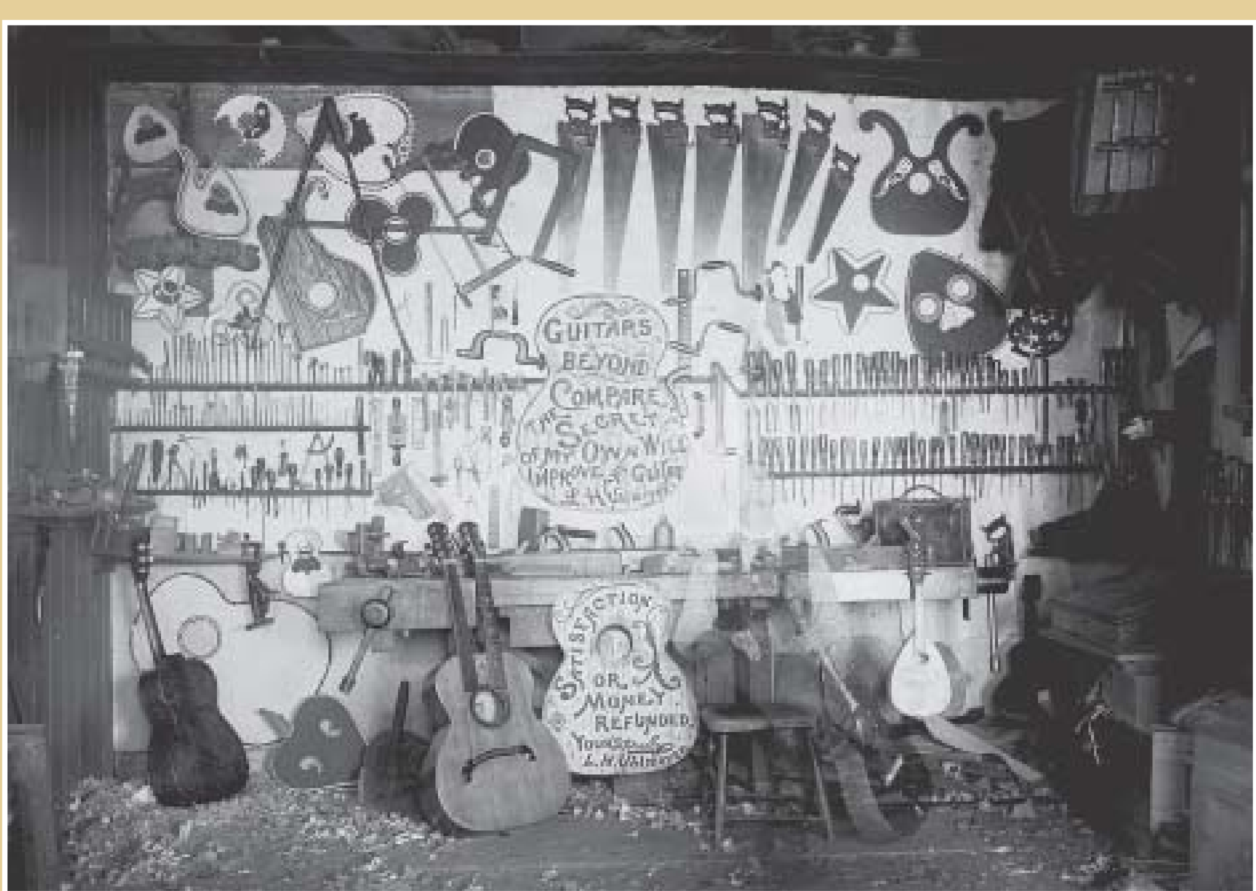

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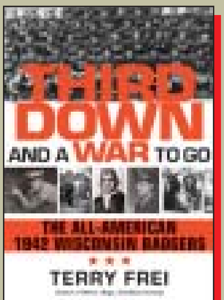
A ghostly apparition, most likely that of guitar maker Leo Uhlmeyer, sits among wood shavings, meticulously arranged tools of the trade, and the faces of several uniquely shaped instruments in this photograph by Henry F. Bergmann of Watertown taken around the turn of the last century. The shop owner was probably Uhlmeyer, the son of a Bavarian-born woodworker who immigrated to Watertown in 1863. Bergmann executed the trick photograph by beginning a long exposure with Uhlmeyer seated on the chair, then having him leave the scene before the exposure was completed. Bergmann's photographs are now a part of the Society's Visual Materials collection.

New from the Wisconsin Historical Society Press



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The 1942 Wisconsin Badgers football team had a host of individual stars, including two-time All-American end Dave Schreiner, fullback Pat Harder, and halfback Elroy "Crazylegs" Hirsch. As the first year of U.S. involvement in World War II was winding down, the Badgers climbed their way up the rankings and ultimately became one of the greatest college football teams of all time. Shortly after the season, the Badgers scattered into the various branches of the military. Not all were asked to be heroic in battle, and not all of them returned.

Author Terry Frei is the son of 1942 Badgers guard Jerry Frei, a decorated P-38 fighter pilot. Through extensive research and interviews with the remaining Badgers, their families, and combat comrades, Terry Frei tells the often heart-wrenching story of this band of brothers, describing their successes and losses both on the football field and in service to their country.

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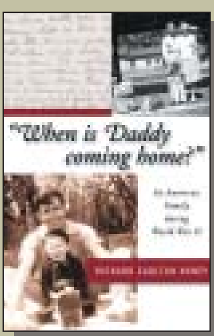

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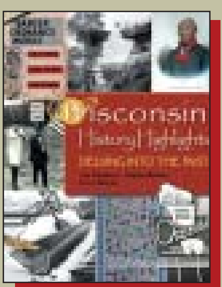
"When Is Daddy Coming Home?" is the moving story of one young American family during World War II. The war was coming to a close in Europe and Richard Carlton Haney was only four years old when a telegram arrived at his family's home, informing them of his father's death. Sixty years later Haney, now a professional historian, reconstructs his parents' lives during the war, drawing from their letters, his mother's recollections, and his own memories to create a unique blend of history and memoir. As the author recounts his father's experiences in the 17th Airborne Division, he also recalls the effects of wartime rationing, scrap drives, and censored mail at home.



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Wisconsin History Highlights: Delving into the Past

BY JON KASPAREK, BOBBIE MALONE, ERICA SCHOCK

Wisconsin History Highlights encourages middle school and high school students and teachers to use Wisconsin resources in their Wisconsin history projects, as they create National History Day presentations or do other research. Nine chapters on subjects such as immigration, environmental history, tourism, and manufacturing contain concise introductions to specific events, people, or places in Wisconsin history. Each short introduction is illustrated with the kinds of primary source materials students will discover as they begin their research. Each chapter closes with a detailed bibliography of available primary and secondary materials.

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To order books, call the Wisconsin Historical Museum Store at 608-264-6428 or visit www.wisconsinhistory.org/shop. Books can also be ordered by calling the University of Wisconsin Press Distribution Center toll-free at 800-621-2736 or fax 800-621-8476.

Dr. Thomas Steel (1809–1891) of Scotland worked as a surgeon aboard an East Indies trading ship in 1836, then lived for six months in China, where he acquired this lacquered wooden fan whose every blade has a unique individual figure. Steel returned to Britain after his travels in the east, but soon moved again, west to North America and Wisconsin, where he settled in Waukesha County's Genessee. Steel probably bought this fan for his sister, Lillias Steel born c. 1821. This and dozens of other fans are on display at the Wisconsin Historical Museum from October though January of 2005, and exhibit curator Leslie Bellais introduces several of them in this issue.

WHS Museum 1984.339.6
Photo by Joel Heiman

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