



# Gibraltar Historical Association

Fish Creek, Wisconsin

Spring 2012

## President's Report

Cheers!

Before long we will be raking, cleaning, and readying the Noble House, the square and gardens for another summer of visitors. It is exciting planning for Heritage Days, Gibraltar Talks and other events, and we are working feverishly to make sure there is something new for each and every one of our guests and residents. Be sure to visit the Doctor's Office on the second floor of Noble House, or Christmas in July, or A House in Mourning.

The GHA Fundraising Dinner is scheduled for Wednesday, June 6<sup>th</sup> and Heritage Days follows on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup>. Please be sure to join us. See you on the square!

✿ *Barb McKesson*

### GIBRALTAR HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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#### Our Mission

The Gibraltar Historical Association has been established to collect, research, and preserve objects and archival materials which directly reflect or illustrate Gibraltar Township history; to pass on from person to person, to advance history, and to educate residents and visitors about this history; and to plan the preservation of historical buildings and green space in the community of Fish Creek, Wisconsin.

**Noble House Museum**  
920.868.2091

Visit Our Website at: [www.historicnoblehouse.org](http://www.historicnoblehouse.org)

# From the Pages of History

If you peruse the yellowing pages of Gibraltar's history the name Chief Kahquados would appear in the faded print. His complete name was, Chief Simon Onanguisse Kahquados. This honored Native American was born May 18, 1851. He is known to be the last hereditary descendant of a long line of Potawatomi Chiefs who ruled over the vast early wilderness of the Door Peninsula. His family were the oldest inhabitants of Wisconsin, and his ancestors were said to have saved explorer Robert LaSalle's life when he was found starving in the forests during his early explorations in Door County.

Chief Kahquados was born in neighboring Kewaunee, but moved at an early age to live in his father's village at White Fish Bay, Door County. After his father's death at the early age of thirty, Kahquados moved to be raised by his grandfather at Black Earth. A few years later, in 1862, the U.S. government forced thousands of Indians to leave Wisconsin, but he and others remained in northwestern Wisconsin, living in a small settlement. Later he spent twenty years living at a church mission in Michigan. There he worked as a timber cruiser.



Historic records state that in later years he served as an elder spokesman for the Potawatomi Indians. He was an engaging speaker, serving as an interpreter who provided a wealth of information regarding Potawatomi culture and history. In the early twentieth century he made a numerous trips to Washington D.C. in an effort to regain lands his people had lost through government treaties. Other trips were made to Madison to research and present information about his ancestry. On these journeys he wore an army jacket elaborately decorated with Native bead work patterns. A tag sewn into the inside pocket of this coat read, "Gen. G. L. Gillespie USA June 1903." Gillespie served in the Civil War of the 1860's.

After an extended illness and a life devoted to helping his peoples he died in 1930 at his last home near Wabeno, Wisconsin which is due west of Gibraltar Township. He had lived on a government allowance of \$10 per month, so was living in poverty. Prior to his death he had requested to be buried near his ancestors in Door County. Fifteen thousand people attended the burial of the Chief at the Memorial Totem Pole located in Peninsula State Park. They came to show their lasting appreciation and to honor this great Native American man. Newspapers reported that hundreds of Model "A" cars blanketed the green grass of the park like a great, black blanket of death.

GHA will kick off the 2012 "Gibraltar Talks" program series on May 10<sup>th</sup> with a program call, "**Gibraltar Talks...Stories from the Memorial Pole.**" These stories will be presented by the Northern Door Story Telling Guild at 7:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall in Fish Creek.

**"Those that do not listen, will die; do not quarrel or scold one another, we must not hate each other, and we must love the entire world."**

The words attributed to Potawatomi Chief Simon Onanguisse Kahquados (1851-1930)

*Researched by Douglas C. Blahnik*

# September Storm Shatters Trees

(Excerpt taken from Friends of Penn. Park newsletter)

On September 29, 2011, a major wind storm roared through Door County forcing emergency closure of its five state parks for six days. Luckily, at Peninsula State Park there were no injuries during the storm and clean-up, no major damage to buildings, and only one crushed car.

What storm evidence will visitors see today? “A lot of downed cedar trees along Shore and Skyline roads, including a few *barber poles*,” (High winds that twist tree crowns and create downward pressure, splitting trees vertically). The DNR contracted locally to cut and remove 87.25 cords of lumber and 66,640 board feet of logs, including several magnificent red oaks lost to the winds. Employees cut an additional 400 trees marked for removal by DNR foresters.



Ranger Alyssa Gove helped with clean-up, including the night of the storm. complete

She remembers standing outside at 8 PM and noting calm. By 8:30, sustained winds of 30-40 mph with gusts up to 70 mph were pummeling the park. Within minutes trees blocked every road and had snapped a utility pole, power was out later requiring WPS repairs at nine separate sites, and campers were stranded.

Kudos to all who worked together so quickly and carefully helping people out of the park, cleaning up the debris and opening our beloved Peninsula State Park within a week. Only a crew that values this “treasure” could have done such a great job.

Like so many other areas in Door County, Gibraltar’s Historical Noble Square also incurred damage. If you have driven by, you will notice a huge “emptiness” in the yard. Besides losing a number of trees to the wind, six had to be taken down due to damage. It is hard to imagine the square with so many large trees gone. However, GHA has received its first donation of a tree to replace one of those blown down. We are thrilled to plant a new sugar maple. If you would like to help us in replacing a tree or a portion of a tree, please call GHA 920-868-2091. If no one is available to take your call, please leave a message and we will get back to you. We would like to replace at least some of those trees lost to that late September windstorm.

*Barb McKesson*

# Barn Quilting in Door County

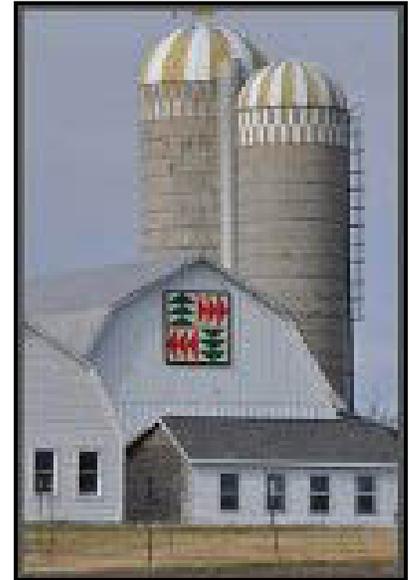
Barns, the icons of American Agriculture are sporting new looks. Twenty-seven rural barns in Door County have decorative barn quilts to draw attention to their distinctive styles and rural settings. Since the displaying of these quilts in several regions of Door County, there have been quite a few questions by locals as well as passing tourists. Just what is a barn quilt anyway?

The history of barn quilts can be traced back about 300 years ago with the arrival of many immigrants from Germany. They came to America where many settled in Pennsylvania, bringing along the familiar idea of decorating their barns as a form of folk art, and as decorative signs to direct visitors to their rural farm locations.

Prior to the 1830s, most barns were unpainted because of the cost of paint. As paint became more affordable, these farmers began to paint and decorate their barns. Barn decorating peaked in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. There were many artists who specialized just in barn decorating. These artists combined many folk designs, including geometric patterns from family quilt squares. Many of the symbols used had special meanings. A circle meant eternity, a four-pointed star signifies a bright day; a triple star means wealth and happiness; and a simple star stands for good luck. Quilt squares have special names and meanings.

Today barn quilts have become popular again with more and more becoming visible in Door and Kewaunee Counties. Maps have been developed and are being updated so that a leisure Sunday drive can become an enjoyable and educational journey through the country side.

At present, Gibraltar Township does not have barns with decorative barn quilts, but we hope to see a few in the near future. If you have an old or new barn which faces a paved road, why not add it to the ever increasing list of decorative quilted barns in our county. Show off Grandma's favorite quilt square as a lasting family memory. Barn quilting is done free, but applications must be filed for grants to be obtained. For more information about becoming involved in the Door County Barn Quilt Program contact Pam Peterson, Family Living educator with the Door County University of Wisconsin –Extension Office at (920) 746-2260 or [pam.peterson@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:pam.peterson@ces.uwex.edu)



*Doug. C. Blahnik*

# Heritage Days Schedule

## Thursday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012

- Quilt Show**                                      **11:30 – 4:00 p.m.**                                      **Old Town Hall**  
Visit the Old Town Hall and take in the beautiful quilts on display, both antique and contemporary. Enjoy traditional designs and today's modern wall hangings.
- Historic Walk**                                      **1:30 – 2:15 p.m.**                                      **Old Town Hall**  
Meet at the Old Town Hall and walk the village to the east. Learn about Fish Creek's founders and what life was like in the late 1800's.
- Boat Ride**                                      **3:00 departure**                                      **Clark Park**  
Enjoy a free boat ride along the west shoreline of Fish Creek. Enjoy listening to the history of Cottage Row and viewing the beautiful homes from the water. Be sure to bring a jacket along.
- Gibraltar Talks**                                      **7:00 p.m.**                                      **Old Town Hall**  
Richard Lauder will present "Fish Creek's Yesteryear" in post cards. Enjoy the evening reminiscing by viewing over 200 post cards of early Fish Creek. If you have some postcards, bring them along and share your treasure.

## Friday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012

- Quilt Show**                                      **11:30 – 4:00 p.m.**                                      **Old Town Hall**  
**11:30 – 4:00 p.m.**                                      **Community Church**  
Visit the Community Church and see how quilting became a mainstay for the women of the church. Learn what women of the Community Church are doing today to continue caring for others.
- Historic Walk**                                      **10:00 – 11:15 a.m.**                                      **Old Town Hall**  
Meet at the Old Town Hall and walk the village to the west. Discover how the early tourist spent their days at Thorp Hotel and Welcker's Resort.
- Orchard Tour**                                      **1:00 p.m. & 2:00 p.m.**                                      **Orchard Country**  
Take an historic walking tour of the Lautenbach's orchard and antique barn at Orchard Country atop the Fish Creek hill about ½ mile south of the village.
- Boat Ride**                                      **3:00 departure**                                      **Clark Park**  
See description above.
- Gibraltar Talks**                                      **7:00 p.m.**                                      **Old Town Hall**  
Holly Feldman from American Folklore Theatre will relate some history of AFT and then share news of "Victory Farm" which will debut in the 2012 season. Set in World War II Door County, the musical should be a must see on your list of things to do.

## **Saturday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

**Enjoy activities and music at Noble Square , the Old Town Hall, the Settlement and the Main Dock between 11:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. In addition to learning about creating from fiber, these artisans will bring some of their creations for you to purchase, if you so choose.**

### **-Quilting**

Watch and visit with the Trillium Quilters as they demonstrate their handwork Look at pieces both antique and contemporary.

### **-Quilt Tying**

Try your hand at tying a quilt. Look for the quilting frame at Noble Square and help to finish a quilt.

### **-Llamas**

Visit the llamas at Noble Square. What do they eat? How often are they sheared? Do they really spit, or is that just camels? After you have asked all the questions, check out some of the beautiful items made from this wonderful animal fiber.

### **-Spinning**

Meet Bonnie Connally of Arachne Spinners as she enjoys the art of making yarn ... of spinning (twisting) the animal wool into a useful strand of fiber; a fiber used in weaving, knitting and so many other handcrafts.

### **-Weaving**

Wonderful works of art ranging from clothing to wall hangings can be created on a loom. Rich patterns and luscious color draws all to watch in amazement

### **-Knitting / Quilting**

Join Jenny from Red Socks Knitting as she demonstrates and helps first time knitters get started and does some hand quilting on her quilt hoop.

### **-Sock-making**

Observe how to make socks with a sock making machine. Ms. Silvers will show us how it is done. These machines were popular at the turn of the century.

### **-Rug hooking**

Join Beth and friends as they hook rugs. Beth will share how she got into making rugs, and you will see some old rugs on display along with some rugs she created.

### **-Children's Activities**

Let your child experience the joy of some simple weaving, designing a quilt square, or doing some spool knitting.

### **-Fish Net repair**

Check and see how fishnet repair has become a dance between the sailor and his shuttle.

### **-Basket Making**

Katie will demonstrate the fine art of basket weaving, an art hundreds of years old. Learn how the change in fiber helped to create these strong pioneer vessels.

### **-Apron Style Show**

**2:00 p.m.**

### **The Settlement Shops**

Be sure to visit Sweetie Pies at the Settlement shops to take in the Apron Style Show.

View aprons that grandma wore. Learn about the many chores made easier by the apron

### **-Barn Quilts**

**1:00 p.m.**

### **The History Center**

Join Pam Peterson and learn about "Barn Quilts" . Take a look at a short slide show, learn about the history, then take a Sunday drive to find some of these works of art.

### **-Boat Rides 10:00 11:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. 2:30 p.m. 4:00 p.m. Meet at launch**

ramp across from Malibu Moos ...near Main Dock

Take a free boat ride with Capt. Schwaller as he shares the history of Cottage Row. Limited capacity- 6 persons. It will be cool ... bring a jacket.

### **-Orchard Tour**

**1:00 & 2:00 p.m.**

### **Orchard Country**

Take an historic walking tour of the Lautenbach's orchard and antique barn at Orchard Country atop the Fish Creek hill about ½ mile south of the village.

### **-Noble House Tours**

Take a free tour of Noble House. Be sure to visit the Country Doctor's Office. Tours at 12:00 p.m. 1:00 p.m. 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.

### **-Eagle Light Tour**

This is the weekend of the Lighthouse Tours. Visit Eagle Light House in Peninsula State Park and take a wonderful tour of this facility.

## **Look It Up !!!**

Are you looking for a Door County genealogy experience? If so, go to your computer and type in Sturgeon Bay Library. Next, find the Genealogy Tab, punch it, and take it to wherever it will lead you. For one, you will find a category heading, ... Birth, Wedding, Burial in the right hand column which will take you to your family or someone you know. Once your interest in Door County history "has you going", check out some of the many tabs found on this page. It will be an adventure, for sure.

*Gary Schulze*

## Calling All Volunteers

We have many faithful volunteers, but we do need more people to keep the organization running smoothly. Can we call on you to help? Helping to get the many mailings out, baking cookies for Gibraltar Talks Programs, planting, weeding, and watering the gardens are just a few of the things a volunteer can do.

This season we would like to keep the History Center open every day with a volunteer in attendance. It would involve greeting guests, giving a brief history of Fish Creek, discussing our historic women depicted in the “Garments of Our Foundations” exhibit, and answering questions. Don’t worry ... we have crib notes to help you out. The time would be from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. If you could lend a hand, please contact us as 920-868 2091.

Another opportunity for volunteering might come in helping us organize the many articles and photos that need filing, or doing some research on a family or monitoring some of the exhibits during Heritage Days. Just let us know and we’ll find just the right spot for you.

And speaking of Heritage Days ... this season we are featuring handwork that women and men did such as embroidery work, knitting, tatting, hardinger, woodworking projects like carving or whittling, or chip carving. By the way, did you know that in the late 1800’s the men often did the knitting in the family. The women did the mending. If you have any smaller items to display in our showcases, again, please call us. Your items will be well cared for and returned to you.

Thank you for all that you do to support GHA and we look forward to seeing you at the many upcoming events.

*Eunice Rutherford*

## Follow the Red Brick Sidewalk



If you want to remember a loved one, your family, or a friend in a special way, why not purchase a brick paver that will be carefully placed in the walkways around Noble Square. It is a lovely way to honor your special person while supporting Gibraltar Historical Association at the same time. The cost is only \$75 and the brick can be personalized with a short message, or family name. Call Gibraltar Historical Association for a form or more information.

(920) 868-2091 If no one can take your call, please leave a message and we will get back to you. If you prefer to write for a form, our address is GHA, PO Box 323, Fish Creek, WI 54212.

You can also find a form on our website ...

[historicnoblehouse.org](http://historicnoblehouse.org)

## **Our Very Own Centenarian**

A Door County living legend celebrated his birthday on March 11--and it was not just any birthday. This happened to be Herb Hardt's 100th and he was the life of the party - as usual. No wheel chair for him, he had his cane with him mainly for effect, it didn't get much actual use. He greeted the numerous guests who came by the Fish Creek Town Hall to wish him well and then got up and gave a riotous impromptu talk, laced with a constant stream of his favorite jokes, in many accents and with a touching tribute to his dear wife, Emily, who passed away in 1997.

Herb was born in Germany in 1912 and experienced the rigors of World War I and the disastrous conditions that faced Germans after that war. He has vivid memories of hyperinflation and piles of worthless money. He also remembers all the childhood pranks and moments of wonder in his early days in Sindelfingen, in the area of Stuttgart. In 1923, Herb's father saw the rising tide of fanaticism that was pushing the Brown Shirts into the center of German politics, so he made the difficult decision to take his family out of their homeland and on to the New World, America.

They landed in Chicago and Herb soon enough proved to be a talented singer and showman, leading a very successful career as a singer, entertainer, comedian and restaurateur. In the midst of this, a friend who ran a very successful butcher shop invited him up to Door County to spend his vacation. It was on this trip and his stay in Ephraim/Fish Creek that he met his future wife, Emily Cornils, his friend's daughter. They helped Ted Cornils run his farm and horse stables during the summers, and eventually bought what became the Herbie Hardt Motor Lodge (now the Peninsula Park-View Resort).

Herb was the person who transformed the men's club into the Fish Creek Civic Association and has been very active in the social life of Fish Creek since the 50's. He has provided a number of important items to the Noble House collection including, this year, two stunning chandeliers which give the perfect touch to the living and dining rooms.

We hope to have the chance to partake of Herb's reminiscences again during our Gibraltar Talks series this year. And we at GHA wish him many more happy birthdays!

*David Lea*

## **Juddville Town Cemetery**

The Gibraltar Historical Association is looking to enter into a study of the Juddville Town Cemetery located on Gibraltar Bluff Road just north of Peninsula Players Road. Records reviewed thus far indicate that this burial site may date as far back as 1865. Do to the movement of headstones, accurate information on the burial sites are available at this time. The study proposes to gather as much information as possible on each burial site. As the GHA moves into this study, it is hoped that families with ties to the Juddville Town Cemetery will assist these efforts through personal remembrance, old photos, letters or documents.

*Gary Schulze*

## Life Comes Full Circle



As part of Heritage Days, on Saturday, June 9th, **Sweetie Pies** will be hosting a Vintage Apron Style show. Sweetie Pies is located at the Settlement Shops, on Highway 42 just south of Fish Creek, adjacent to the Settlement Courtyard Inn, established by Andy and Elsie Redmann. In fact, the old farmhouse that has been Sweetie Pies for some 17 years at one time was home to the Redmann Family (and to several other families before that) and the Settlement Shops and surroundings, a working cherry orchard and farm.



It was Andy Redmann who came up with the idea of having a courtyard surrounded by small shops, a throwback to European and early American models with the “anchor” being the inn. Andy was an artist and came up with an embellished drawing of how he envisioned the transformation. Whereas the shops would be remodeled from the existing farm buildings, the inn would be built new, but in an earlier style to complement the shops.

The Redmanns were not strangers to the inn business. In 1959 they had purchased the Lakewood Lodge, renaming it the White Gull Inn. Between 1959 and 1963 with the help of Elsie’s sister, Frances Miller, that establishment began to take on the look that helped to make it famous. After the first year in the dining room alone, out went the blonde furniture with chartreuse vinyl insets and in came the handcrafted wooden chairs, benches and tables, the Early American style lighting, the exposed beams and hand-hammered wall sconces. In the second or third year the familiar two-way fireplace was added. The visual changes were accompanied by gustatory ones as well. It was in those years that an “early American buffet” and the popular fish boil were introduced, with Frances doing much of the baking and then changing clothes to entertain the guests with her accordion.



Frances’ daughter, Renny Miller Lea, remembers those early years, as she would accompany her mother to the inn each summer and help. “It was like an adventure that I looked forward to all year,” Renny reminisces. “It was great getting to know the staff, meeting all the guests and, in my time off, exploring beautiful Door County on my bicycle.”

Renny’s parents purchased the former Thorp farm in 1965 and eventually retired to Fish Creek in 1981 from Milwaukee. Renny and husband Dave joined Frances, by then a widow, in 1997. Their daughter Corinne got a job working at a pie shop--Sweetie Pies--owned by Susan Croissant, and when in 2003 Susan was looking for a buyer for her business, Corinne and Dave, her dad, stepped forward, bringing the story full circle!

Afterword: Frances Miller and Susan Croissant shared an appreciation of old things--from antiques to old-fashioned recipes to vintage aprons! To celebrate that connection, Sweetie Pies has been holding a “vintage apron style show” every other year. This year that event will take place during Heritage Days.

*by Renny (Miller) Lea*

# Talking Tombstones 2012, Save the Date

“Talking Tombstones” will take place on Thursday, June 21<sup>st</sup>. from 10-a.m. until 12 Noon at Blossomburg Cemetery in Peninsula State Park. This event will focus on the people and customs of Gibraltar’s past.

This event is a collaboration of the Gibraltar Historical Association and Friends of Peninsula State Park. Costumed folks will stand graveside to offer historical reflections of various past community and regional citizens who were interred in this peaceful resting place. Talking tombstones serves as a memorial to deceased history makers who left us so much to talk about.



Blossomburg Cemetery, located in the middle of Peninsula State Park, has been there for more than 100 years. This cemetery is not sponsored by a religious body, but has been, and is the cemetery for Gibraltar Township. The name was given to it by an old Scandinavian settler, Ole Klugeland, who in the 1850’s settled on a farm facing Eagle Harbor. Because of the strong northwest winds, he called it “Blaasenberg” or “Windy Mountain.”



Fourteen graves predate 1890. The earliest grave marker dated 1881, belongs to Libbie G. Churches, wife of Samuel Churches who served as a representative of Gibraltar Township on the Door County Board.

For more information on “Talking Tombstones” contact Kathleen Harris (920) 868-325

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## Thank You Member Donors

### Pioneers \$50+

Steven & Debra Brillion  
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### Settlers \$100+

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### Historians \$250+

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# Stitching History Together Piece by Piece



quilt was hand made stitch by stitch.

Over the years people have enjoyed quilts for many different reasons. Quilts can provide clues to the past. Quilts can provide warmth. Quilts can provide beauty and value. Quilts can provide heritage. Quilts can provide enjoyment from working with color, texture, and pattern.

Quilting has been done for thousands of years. Soldiers of the Middle Ages wore quilted coats and hoods under their armor. The colonists brought quilts to America to protect themselves from severe cold weather. And women and girls wore quilted petticoats. Men wore quilted vests. Quilts have been, and are part of our family histories. They were a common form of needle work. Each

The first American quilts were probably not patchwork or appliqué but whole quilts. With the popularity of quilting in the Nineteenth Century, American patchwork and appliqué design were created. These new designs became the inspiration for today's quilters. They are also an important part of American Folk Art.

A popular pastime and social event over the years has been the "Quilting Bee." These gatherings of women and young girls helped overcome the loneliness that so many rural women experienced. They would share family news, exchange recipes, give child-rearing tips and all in all support each other. Women would quilt all day, perhaps taking turns around the old wooden frame while others cooked up the grand meal that would be served to the men folk that evening. Then there was a time for singing, dancing and perhaps courting among the younger people.

If you have stories about the quilts that have been handed down in your family, please share them and photos of your special quilts with the Gibraltar Historical Association. We'll stitch your story pieces together for another chapter in Gibraltar Township's history.

*Doug Blahnik*