

Exploring Ozaukee County history through our many museums

By The Ozaukee County Tourism Council

The winter season is an excellent time to explore, engage and learn at the many wonderful and unique indoor museums in Ozaukee County. Did you know that among the many local museums here in Ozaukee, some are state and national museums?

In Belgium, the Luxembourg American Cultural Society and Museum (LACS) is housed in a rebuilt 1872 Mamer-Hansen stone barn. The center includes information and artifacts that tell the story of the Grand Duchy past and present, the history of immigration from Luxembourg to America, and the experience of the immigrant families. Its Research Center is the largest research library for Luxembourg history, culture and genealogy in North America. Note though, the LACS is under renovations – scheduled to reopen March 7. Until then, there is a temporary exhibit at the Belgium Village Hall across the street.

The Port Exploreum is an interactive maritime museum with changing exhibits focused on the Port Washington area's history. The current exhibit is "Murmurs From the Deep," which shows almost all of the known shipwrecks in Ozaukee County area waters. You can also learn about the story of Port Washington's Unsung Hero, USCG Captain Roger Erdmann.

The Port Historical

Society Resource Center is an 1852 historic building which houses the organization's collections, offices and research area. The current exhibits at the Resource Center are "The Artwork and Studio of Port Washington Artist Shirley Schanen Gruen" and "The Maritime Art and Nautical Artifacts from the Society's Bienlein - Burke Maritime Collection." Visit their website for winter hours and fees.

Waubesa is known as the birth place of Flag Day, since its inception in 1885, and its National Flag Day Foundation, Americanism Center, offers the Avenue of Flags, a full museum featuring military and local memorabilia and a commemorative outdoor courtyard. Visit www.nationalflagday.com for more information or to book a museum tour.

In Newburg, there are historic walking tour maps located throughout the village. Ask locals about the prohibition era underground tunnels.

Cedarburg is filled with history! Located in the heart of Cedarburg, the Cedarburg Art Museum welcomes you with their beautiful historic 1898 red brick Victorian home, where you will enter to find historic and contemporary local art collections and exhibitions. Through May 10, "The Human Spirit," presented by the League of Milwaukee Artists, displays the work of more than 42 artists who artistically and uniquely celebrate how the human

soul helps us through difficult situations and on to a better existence.

The former Electric Interurban Railway Depot located on Center Street in Cedarburg is the last remaining building of the Milwaukee to Sheboygan Interurban Transit System that served Ozaukee County from 1907-1948. Currently the building serves as the Hazel Wirth Archive Research Center and Museum where you can research the rich history of Ozaukee County.

On Columbia Road, the Cedarburg History Museum highlights the rotating Edquist Exhibit Gallery featuring interactive technology, and the Jepson Collection and images from the Rappold and Dobberpuhl historic photos collections. The museum is housed in the historic Hilgen-Schroeder mill-store, built in 1846.

The Cedarburg Cultural Center (CCC) for Art, Music and History provides access to and participation in the visual and performing arts, the humanities and local heritage. There is a free gallery with frequently changing exhibits. Exhibits include curated shows of artistic and historical interest and juried shows by local artists. Classes are also offered for children and adults.

The Wisconsin Museum of Quilts and Fiber Arts, the only museum of its kind in the state, operates out of a restored 1850s barn on Portland Road. The museum offers rotating exhibitions, tours, classes and a gift shop



Submitted photos

A family enjoys the Port Exploreum museum in Mequon.



The front of the Jonathan Clark House in Mequon.

filled with handmade gifts. Feb. 6 through April 26, the "Infinite Ivory and Blue" exhibition will be providing a major collection of the museum's spectacular blue-and-white quilts and textiles from the 1800s to the present day.

The Jonathan Clark House, located at the corner of Bonniwell and Cedarburg Roads in Mequon, is one of the most architecturally significant historic buildings in southeastern Wisconsin. Built in 1848, it was home to Jonathan and Mary Clark,

their eight children and two hired men. Their home also served as a community meeting place during a time when early settlers such as Clark, his father-in-law Peter Turck and neighbor William Bonniwell were developing the government of the township. The Clark House has been developed as a historic house museum of mid-19th century Mequon and Thiensville that interprets the life of the early settlers. Furnishings and accessories throughout the house reflect the era of 1840 to 1860. Please visit their website at jonathancarkhouse.com for more information or to schedule a tour.

For more information on these indoor museums, pick up a copy of the Ozaukee County Tourism Guide available at area chambers and visitor centers, or visit www.ozaukeetourism.com. Follow the Ozaukee County Tourism Facebook page.