

Celebrating 125 Years
of Shorewood History



1900 ~ 2025

Shorewood celebrates its Quasquicentennial in 2025. In the four 2025 issues of this newsletter, our goal is to help our readers visualize and understand what life was like here in the pre- and early-1900s.

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Shorewood
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Preserving Our Past For Our Future

SHOREWOOD

from the river to the lake

News from the Shorewood Historical Society

Issue 1, February 2025

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY SHOREWOOD, 1900-2025!

by Karen de Hartog

What is a Quasquicentennial? A 125th Anniversary.

125 years ago, the area we now know as Shorewood was home to just over 300 people. They were governed by the Town of Milwaukee Board. Town government was minimalist at that time, consisting of a town chairman, clerk, justice of the peace, constable, head of the Common School District and a "Fenceviewer" who helped solve property line disputes. Muddy streets and public utilities were not priorities. In early 1900, a few disgruntled residents gathered in the back of Pete Mead's tavern on Oakland Avenue (at Newton Ave.) and decided to file a petition for incorporation as the Village of East Milwaukee.

Today, nearly 14,000 people call the Village of Shorewood home (it was renamed in 1917). How has our Village changed over time and why? What remains the same? Who were the first residents and the inspired leaders? Over the coming year we will celebrate Shorewood's anniversary by telling the stories of early residents and the decisions they made that are still relevant today. In this issue there are a number of articles on pre-1900 history. In the spring issue, we will concentrate on 1900-1925, a time of explosive growth and inspired leadership.

Other community organizations will join our celebration. Watch for special programming at the Shorewood Library and the Senior Center and for recognition at the 4th of July celebration.



The Wunderlie home, likely built in the mid-1800s, located near the corner of Oakland Ave. and Kenmore Pl. (present day Metro Mart). It was a log cabin and later sided.



The railroad overpass in 1880s, current Hubbard Park. In winter, ice was hauled out of the river at this location and carried to the train for delivery to breweries and ice boxes.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Happy 125th Anniversary Shorewood!

Whether you are new to the Village or a lifelong resident, it is always possible to learn more about how our Village grew and developed its unique character. The more I learn about Village history and our well-built 20th-century homes, the more I appreciate the generations of residents who contributed their time and talents to create a strong foundation for our Village.

We provide several tools for the public to connect with our history:

- This newsletter, archived on our new website, is one tool (shorewoodhistory.org). Check out the decades of digitized phone books, school yearbooks, pictures and Village newspapers (*Shorewood Radio and Herald, 1923-1980*) for other ways to create your own historical "tours" of Village history.
- In-House Research with our volunteer Mary Jorgensen provides valuable information to residents seeking the history of their homes. Request an appointment to visit In-House by email, shorewoodhistory@yahoo.com.
- The Shorewood Historical Society Archives are a valuable tool. We have provided Village staff and residents with pictures and the history of the current Department of Public Works to help them plan for the future of that department. The Village Board and DPW staff are assessing relocation possibilities for DPW services and considering new uses for the current site. The Historical Society continues to urge that historic preservation options be included in the discussion.

We look forward to sharing our 125-year history with our residents and adding new stories and artifacts to our resources. Please contact us with your interests and stay tuned for future presentations and walking tours.

Kathy Kean

keank@aol.com

H: 414-962-2450

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Anne & Fred Vogel III

Laura Lutz

Derek Kempf

Eric Couto

Keith Stachowiak

Paul Lyman

Paige Hammond

Kelly Clark

Joseph & Kari Cincotta

Christine Collentine

Susan Forbes

Susan Fox

Josephine Gomez

Micaela Levine

Mary Ellen Mitchanis

Michael & Kristen Peden

Kathy Nusslock

Christopher & Teresa Mambu-Rasch

Thomas Colosimo

Sam Cutler

Tim & Shannon Reinbold

Mark D. Schwartz

Charles & Patricia Radtke

Judy Savick

Mary Best & Daniel Schuurman

Edward M. Turner

George Kidd

IN MEMORY OF RICHARD (DICK) ESCHNER, A SHOREWOOD VIP

by Karen de Hartog

Community service was a priority in Dick Eschner's life and Shorewood was the beneficiary. Dick passed away on Dec. 24, 2024. His service to the community is noteworthy.

Dick and his wife Carol and their three children lived on East Beverly Road. His name first appears in the *Shorewood Herald* on March 30, 1978, when he was serving on an ad hoc committee on Shorewood Parks. Drawing on his professional training as an architect, Dick was tasked with determining the structural soundness of the Atwater beach house. Deemed too costly to repair, it was demolished in 1984.

In 1990, Dick was appointed to fill a vacant seat on the Village Board. He was elected twice and served until April 2000. He was on a number of board committees and served as chair of the community and business relations committee.

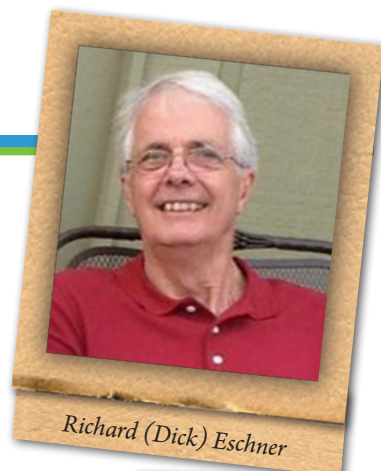
From 2000-2011, Dick was a member of the Community Development Authority (CDA) whose

purpose was strengthening the long-term economic viability of the Village. The CDA oversaw construction of the Cornerstone and Ravenna apartments during his time of service.

In 2008, the Village organized a Public Art Committee and Dick was appointed chairperson, a position he held until 2020. The committee's first project was arranging for the purchase and installation of the Plensa statue, Spillover II, in Atwater Park.

Dick and Carol were members of the Shorewood Historical Society, and Dick encouraged a connection between public art and the Society. The Ghost Train (recalling the Chicago and Northwestern 400 train) and Signaling History (signal boxes decorated by local artists) were accomplished with research and financial support from the Shorewood Historical Society.

Dick was a quiet man, not known to call attention to his own accomplishments. But he truly earned his place as a VIP in Shorewood's history.



Richard (Dick) Eschner



Plensa's Spillover II



Signal box at Oakland Ave. and Shorewood Blvd.

TAKING STOCK OF SHOREWOOD'S HOUSING HISTORY

***How the Working-Class Home Became Modern, 1900-1940;*
*Thomas C. Hubka; 2020, University of Minnesota Press; 260 pages.***

If you've ever wondered at the number of duplexes in Shorewood, Thomas Hubka has an insight.

Unlike Milwaukee, where apartments were often located above the city's ubiquitous taverns, Shorewood's approach was a bit more subtle. In the Atwater School neighborhood, for example, more than 20 duplexes were designed to blend in with single-family homes. Only double mailboxes and street numbers gave them away.

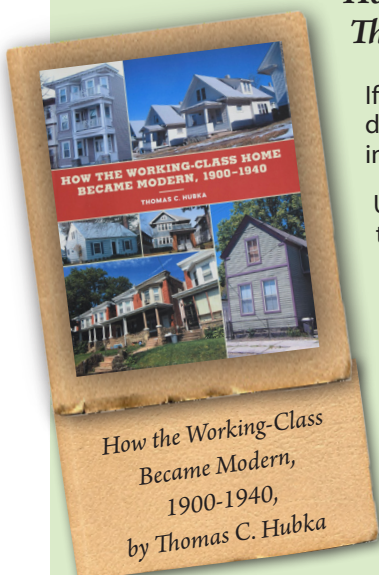
Although Hubka is trained as an architect, he was an early advocate for widening architectural history research to include vernacular architecture - which is described as building done outside any

academic tradition, and without professional guidance. He is a professor emeritus in the UWM Department of Architecture.

Hubka's emphasis here is on Midwestern home building trends, including Shorewood and Milwaukee.

He explains that the differences between urban and suburban homes in 1890 and homes in 1940 helped enable the American working class to move into the middle class. Electric lights replaced kerosene, people ate in the dining room rather than the kitchen and they enjoyed indoor plumbing.

A Shorewood homeowner, Hubka was the speaker at the Historical Society's 2010 Annual Dinner.



How the Working-Class Home Became Modern, 1900-1940, by Thomas C. Hubka

PRE-1900 SHOREWOOD HOMES THAT ENDURE TODAY

by Alex Vagelatos

We can see our past if we know where to look.

We may be living in a year that sounds like the title of a science fiction movie (quasiquicentennial!), but Shorewood residents can still stroll by houses and other structures built more than 125 years ago.

These houses are all listed as pre-1900 in village assessor's records. Some were moved from original locations (see 4514 N. Marlborough Dr.) When built, few if any had the technology for lighting, heating or laundry.

Note the different setbacks allowed before today's zoning standards. The area's simple farmhouses benefitted from cheaply milled lumber brought by railroads, and had little ornamentation.

Many have been significantly altered, with additions and new exteriors that disguise their age. A white-frame, three-room farmhouse at 4521 N. Oakland Ave., fell victim to "progress" and commercial construction years ago.

What will our village look like 125 years from now?

Photo credit: Carolyn Bucior



1814 E. Newton Ave., c. 1888

1814 E. Newton Ave.

Built in 1888, 12 years before the Village was incorporated, this farmhouse was in the Domer family for more than 100 years. A barn in the rear of the adjacent property once was part of this early dairy farm.

2408 E. Edgewood Ave.

Built by George Lueddemann, owner of Lueddemann's-on-the-Lake Resort, this 1889 house is in the Queen Anne style. The enclosed front entry was a later addition.



2408 E. Edgewood Ave., c. 1889

4019 N. Stowell Ave.

The original owner was Ed Podganski in 1894. A number of alterations were made over the years, including new siding, aluminum storm windows, wrought iron porch supports.



4019 N. Stowell Ave., c. 1894

2004 E. Kensington Blvd.

This 1892 structure began as a farmhouse, and was the home of William McFarland, the first president of East Milwaukee in 1900.



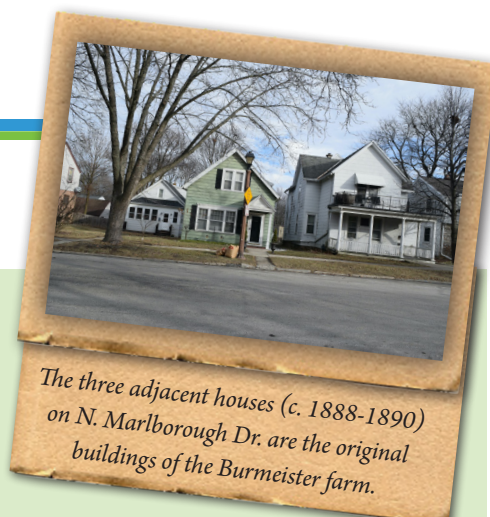
2004 E. Kensington Blvd., c. 1892

(Cont. on Page 5)

("Pre-1900 Shorewood Homes that Endure Today" cont. from Page 4)

4506/4510/4514 N. Marlborough Dr.

These three adjacent houses (c. 1888-1890) are the original buildings of the John Burmeister farm. 4506 is now a duplex. 4510 (green siding) was constructed as a house for his children. 4514 was built on Hampton Ave. and moved twice, the second time to the rear of the lot to allow more sunlight for both houses.



SHOREWOOD PRE-1900 TRIVIA

by Karen de Hartog

- The site of Shorewood was originally a hunting and fishing ground for Native Americans. The Sauk Trail, which ran from Green Bay to the convergence of the Milwaukee and Menomonee rivers, crossed the area. Native American mounds were found in the current Hubbard Park and were excavated in 1919 by Milwaukee Public Museum staff.
- In 1832, Territory of Milwaukee County east of the Milwaukee River was purchased from the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin by the United States government. The treaty provided a cash payment along with ammunition, clothing and food and hunting and fishing rights in the area until white men took possession of the property.
- Land speculators and a few farmers quickly bought the property. The first permanent residents were Thomas and Jane Bare, Irish immigrants, who farmed and raised apples east of the River and north of present-day Capitol Drive.
- Lumber and grist mills were constructed along the river. The Milwaukee Cement company had two mills on the river, north of Capitol Drive.
- A log cabin school was built in 1846 on the property currently occupied by Shorewood High School. It burned down at least twice before a more appropriate structure was constructed on the northwest corner of Oakland Avenue and Capitol Drive in 1896.
- Northwestern Union Railway constructed a rail line in 1873 on the plateau east of the river and provided passenger and freight service.
- The Town of Milwaukee governed all of the unincorporated areas in Milwaukee County north of the city. Whitefish Bay was the first village to incorporate in 1892.
- In 1898, street car lines were installed on Oakland Avenue, providing transportation for Milwaukee residents to the amusement park in Shorewood and Pabst Beer Garden in Whitefish Bay.
- In 1900, much of the territory known today as Shorewood was hilly, covered in spots by dense forests with areas flooded by natural springs. A few farmers struggled to make a living from the heavy clay soil. There were summer homes on the bluffs above Lake Michigan and the first amusement park – Coney Island – was getting ready to open in the southwest corner of the territory. There were a few businesses, bars and boarding houses on lower Oakland Avenue.



Sketch depicting the Milwaukee Cement Company mill, 1900-1920, on the Milwaukee River in Shorewood. The Milwaukee Cement Company mined the limestone along the Milwaukee River to make cement.



The Town of Milwaukee Town Hall where the incorporation vote took place was located near the cross section of Bender Road and Port Washington Road (photo taken in the 1920s). The hall was moved in 1963 to its current location behind Glendale's city hall at 5909 Milwaukee River Parkway and is now a museum.

INCORPORATION VOTE POSSIBLY THE CLOSEST IN SHOREWOOD HISTORY

(From *Shorewood*, compiled by the Federal Writer's Project in 1939):

"A petition was filed in the circuit court of Milwaukee on March 14, 1900, for the incorporation of the village of East Milwaukee. The Town of Milwaukee was alarmed at the impending loss of a large slice of tax paying property, firmly opposed the petition, contending that the territory to be incorporated did not have the population of 300 required by State law. The original census taken on May 21, 1900 was proven inaccurate. The court ordered that a new census be taken. When this too, showed the required population, the Town of Milwaukee gave up the fight and on August 21, 1900, the petition was granted. After an election, in which 68 votes were cast, 45 for incorporation and 23 against*, the village of East Milwaukee became a legal entity."

* The new census counted 325 residents. Only 103 were eligible to vote (men who were citizens).

We depend upon the commitment and support of people like you
to preserve and promote Shorewood's rich history.

Send your application to: Shorewood Historical Society • 3930 N. Murray Avenue • Shorewood, WI 53211

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

(Your e-mail address will be used only to alert you to upcoming programs and events. It will not be shared with any other individual or organization.)

- ☐ Individual \$15 ☐ Family \$20 ☐ Contributing \$35 ☐ Sustaining \$100 ☐ Associate \$250 ☐ Life \$500
☐ Additional Donation \$ _____ Please make check payable to the Shorewood Historical Society.

All memberships are per calendar year except the one-time payment Life membership.

- ☐ I am interested in becoming more involved in Shorewood Historical Society activities. Please contact me with further information.

Support the Shorewood Historical Society by becoming a member. Join online at shorewoodhistory.org or contact us at shorewoodhistory@yahoo.com for more information.

SHOREWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2024-2025

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414-962-2450

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Shorewood Historical Society
3930 N. Murray Ave.
Shorewood WI 53211

www.shorewoodhistory.org

Email: shorewoodhistory@yahoo.com

The Sheldon Room/In-House Research is located in the Shorewood Village Center (lower level of library) at 3920 N. Murray Ave. and is open by appointment via contact by phone: 414-847-2726 or email: shorewoodhistory@yahoo.com

The Shorewood Historical Society is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization. Your donations and in-kind gifts are tax-deductible as allowed by law.



3930 North Murray Avenue
Shorewood, WI 53211

Please keep the
Shorewood Historical Society
in mind when cleaning out
your attic or basement.

We are in particular need of
pictures, abstracts and other
information about Shorewood
homes and neighborhoods.

CONTACT US AT:
SHOREWOODHISTORY@YAHOO.COM
OR 414-847-2726 WITH QUESTIONS
OR TO MAKE A DONATION.



SAVE THE DATE!
**Annual Dinner Meeting
and
125th Anniversary
Celebration
at Hubbard Lodge
on May 8, 2025**



The Northwestern Railway station was located approximately where Corner Bakery is currently. Note that this depot has the Lake Shore Junction sign attached.

Happy Quasquicentennial! Shorewood celebrates its 125th Anniversary this year.

Over the coming year the Shorewood Historical Society will highlight Shorewood's 125th anniversary by telling the stories of beginning Village life in early-1900 history.

In this issue there are a number of articles on pre-1900 history.

See more about Shorewood's beginnings on Pages 1, 4, 5 and 6.