



Walworth County Historical Society  
 PO Box 273  
 Elkhorn, Wisconsin 53121

# THE WALWORTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**The Webster House Museum**

**Doris M Reinke Resource  
 Center**

**Heritage Hall**

**Boyd Carriage Barn**

**Blooming Prairie School**

**Sharon Town Hall**



**Walworth County Historical Society**  
 PO Box 273  
 Elkhorn, Wisconsin 53121  
**Email:** walcohistory@tds.net  
**Website:** walcohistory.org  
**Phone:** 262-723-4248 (Webster House)  
 262-723-7848 (Reinke Center)

*The Walworth County  
 Historical Society is  
 dedicated to collecting,  
 preserving and  
 sharing  
 yesterday's memories  
 for the generations of  
 tomorrow.*

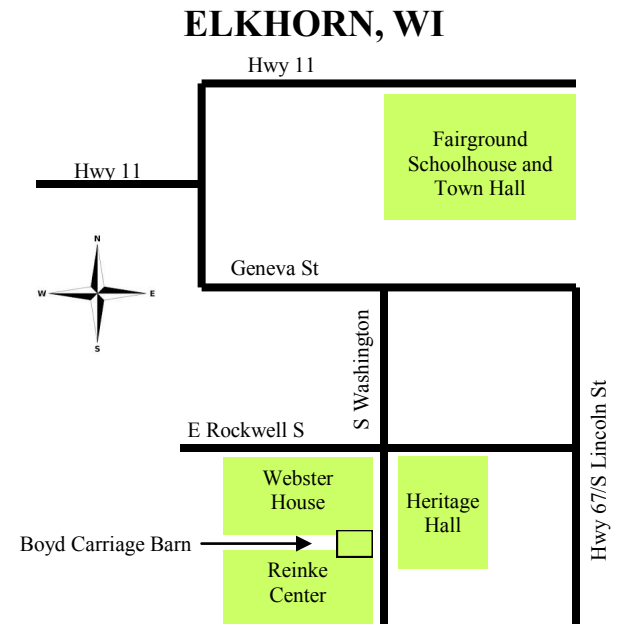
In our *Webster House*, priceless collections of timeless treasures offer a wide variety of ways to experience times long gone. You can view a day in the life of an 1800's Victorian family, or listen to the haunting melodies of a nationally renowned composer. While looking over the artifacts of Native American Chief Big Foot and his Potawatomi tribe, you can imagine their day-to-day struggles. Or perhaps you would like a first hand look at the Civil War period—complete with gun exhibits, period portraits and musical instruments. There is also an impressive assortment of American and international waterfowl specimens — the creatures who shared land with our brave pioneers. Our collections offer literally thousands of captured moments in time.

Next door is the *Reinke Resource Center* which holds a vast amount of geographical, historical, and genealogical documents of the county. It also includes the Paul and Katherine Schmidt Library. A dedicated research staff is available to assist you. We also welcome donations in kind, of memorabilia you or your family wish to contribute.

Between the Webster House and Reinke Resource Center is the *Boyd Carriage Barn*. The carriage once belonged to General John W Boyd who later became a senator in Wisconsin.

Across the street is our newest acquisition, *Heritage Hall* which houses a large meeting room available for public meetings as well as our history programs. It has a full media system, kitchen, and tables and chairs. On another level is our Veterans Room which contains catalogued military artifacts donated and by the public dated from the Spanish American War until present. Other rooms are being prepared for additional displays.

At the nearby Walworth County Fairground is the home of the *Blooming Prairie Schoolhouse* and the *Sharon Town Hall*. We provide teachers, in period costume, to instruct fourth graders in an 1889 researched curriculum to help them appreciate Wisconsin history. Area schools bring students for instruction and at the end of the session a diploma is issued to each scholar.





### THE WEBSTER HOUSE

This is the home of the famous composer Joseph Philbrick Webster– best known for Civil War song *Lorena* and hymn *The Sweet By and By*. The house is filled with period pieces that belonged to the family. In addition, the annex contains many collections including American and international waterfowl, 350 Kutil Dolls, and Potawatomi Indian artifacts. A replica of the historical Westgate II is featured as are the original elk horns which gave Elkhorn its name. The house and annex are open for guided tours and is also part of the schoolhouse program.

**Days/Hours:** May - October, Wednesday - Saturday or by appointment; 1:00 - 4:00 PM  
**Tour Fees:** \$5.00, \$4.00 county resident  
**Phone:** 262-723-4248



### BOYD CARRIAGE BARN

Directly behind the Webster House stands an imposing 1850 Hand-hewn oak beam barn. Inside the carriage of General John W Boyd – often called Wisconsin’s “Abraham Lincoln.” There is also a rare collection of the Boyd family artifacts that honor this great state senator’s lifetime achievements.

**Days/Hours:** May - October, Wednesday – Saturday or by appointment; 1:00 - 5:00 PM  
**Fees:** Included in Webster House tour



### DORIS M REINKE RESOURCE CENTER

The resource center provides the public an opportunity to research or explore the history of Walworth County. Civil War records, as well as maps, journals, books, scrapbooks, pictures, and family genealogies are just a few of the items that are contained in the center. The center is open and staffed year-round. Files of historical value date back to the mid 1800s.

**Days/Hours:** Wednesday and Thursday, year round 1:00 - 4:00 PM or by appointment  
**Fees:** For copied materials - visit website for pricelist  
**Phone:** 262-723-7848



### SHARON TOWN HALL

The hall is next to the Blooming Prairie Schoolhouse on the fairgrounds and is the original gathering and voting place for residents in the 1800s in Sharon.

**Days/Hours:** During Walworth County Fair  
**Fees:** none



### HERITAGE HALL

Purchased in 2012, Heritage Hall was a home built by John Harris. Presently we have refurbished many of the rooms. We hold programs and public meetings in the main room. The Veterans Room holds hundreds of post Civil War memorabilia donated by the public. An authentic WW II jeep will soon be housed there. A way of honoring citizens is a donor tree that consists of 650 leaves for engraving. Future rooms and collections are under construction.

**Days/Hours:** May - October, Wednesday - Saturday, 1:00 - 4:00 PM or by appointment  
**Fees:** Donations or charge as per agreement

### BLOOMING PRAIRIE SCHOOLHOUSE

Located on the Walworth County Fairgrounds, the Blooming Prairie School comes from Darien, Wisconsin and brings to life a turn-of-the-century one room classroom. Former teachers, in period costume, instruct fourth graders in an 1889 researched curriculum to help them appreciate Wisconsin history. Schools bring students for instruction and at the end of the session a diploma is issued to each scholar.

**Days/Hours:** May - October by appointment only or during Walworth County Fair (free)  
**Fees:** \$2.50 per child



## WALWORTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_NEW\_\_\_RENEWAL\_\_\_GIFT

### Membership Level

\_\_\_Single \$15 \_\_\_Family \$20

\_\_\_Contributing \$25 \_\_\_Patron \$50

Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_Webster House \_\_\_Heritage Hall

\_\_\_General Fund

### VOLUNTEER OPTIONS

Docent, Clerical, Gardening, Painting, Carpentry, Research, Sewing, Baking, Photography, Maintenance

Please clip and send form to:  
**Walworth County Historical Society,  
PO Box 273, Elkhorn, WI 53121**

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

As a Walworth County Historical Society member, you help support the dedicated efforts needed to preserve our past for our future generations. You also receive the following benefits

- ★ Quarterly newsletter
- ★ Free tours
- ★ Educational programs
- ★ Discount on gift shop and research prints