Historic Madison
The Journal of the Four Lake Region

Madison’s Women and the Civil War
Winifred Ford Watercolors • Hoyt Park
Smith Photos 1900-1901 • Hess Buildings

Volume XXIII • 2011 / 2014
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Journals

The Journal of Historic Madison, Inc.
Volumes I through XI

The Journal of the Four Lake Region
Volumes XII through XXIII

On the front cover:
State Street and Bascom Hill from the roof of the Capitol, February 1, 1901. Photograph by Elroy Smith
In many ways, the experiences of Madison’s women during the Civil War were typical of women everywhere in Wisconsin. Mothers and wives and daughters worried about husbands and sons and fathers who had marched off to war, fearfully scanned newspapers for accounts of battles and casualty lists, mourned those who died, provided medical care for those who were wounded. Some were plunged into poverty. Some aided soldiers’ families. For the most part, though, these war-related experiences were superimposed upon daily routines that continued much as they had before April 1861. Women still raised their families, shopped on the Square, celebrated holidays, and attended church and the theater and minstrel shows and circuses and masquerade balls.

But in many ways the experiences of Madison’s women were not typical of women elsewhere in the state. No other city in Wisconsin hosted tens of thousands of neophyte soldiers, a military hospital serving men wounded in battle, and a prison camp for captured Confederates. Camp Randall, the Harvey Hospital, and the presence of Rebel prisoners each created issues that few other women outside Madison had to contend with.

**Madison in April 1861**

At the outbreak of the war Madison was a city of fewer than 7,000 persons. Most stores were located in relatively new stone business blocks on Main and Pinckney streets along Capitol Square, a few more spilling down King Street towards Lake Monona, still referred to by almost everyone as Third Lake, and a handful at the head of State Street. Houses with large yards and barns and orchards lined the rest of that street, stretching all the way to the university atop a hill at its west end. The University of Wisconsin consisted of the central part of Main Hall, and South and North halls. The wealthy lived in elegant stone mansions on Fourth Lake Ridge along the south shore of Lake Mendota. More modest homes clustered in the blocks close to the Square, with some trickling east along Williamson Street and Third Lake Ridge towards the village cemetery and the Catfish (now Yahara) River. More dotted the Greenbush west of what is now Park Street and north of Lake Wingra, also known as Dead Lake. The central

**Madison in 1861**

This photograph of State Street and two Capitol buildings was taken by John Fuller from University Hill. The original Capitol is the facade facing State Street; the larger building then under construction can be seen behind it. Bruen’s Block (1853) is to the left of the Capitol; to the right are the Vilas House (1853), Grace Episcopal Church (1858), First Baptist Church (1854), Wells’ Block, and the Dane County Courthouse. Lake Monona is visible at the top of the image.

Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-27109
People gathered awaiting a parade. The American House Hotel and Bruen’s Block (the tallest stone structure) flank East Washington Avenue. Mansion Hill is in the distance. Note the awnings in front of the stores that shaded shoppers.

Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-26959

Pinckney Street, 1861

King and East Main, 1861

This photograph was taken by John S. Fuller in 1861 from the Capitol roof. The large building on the right is the Fairchild Block, constructed by Jairus Fairchild in 1853. The smaller stone business block on the left corner was erected by Simeon Mills in 1852. Lake Monona is in the distance.

Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-23465
part of the eastern isthmus was vacant swampland; a mill stood where Lake Mendota flowed into the Catfish. The new Forest Hill Cemetery lay west of town, a mile beyond the State Agricultural Fair grounds. Madison was connected to the rest of Wisconsin by the five year-old Milwaukee & Mississippi Railroad; it crossed Lake Monona atop a railroad bridge.

Lack of Unanimity

There was little unanimity in Madison at the start of and during the war over its purpose and prosecution. The Republican Wisconsin State Journal clashed daily with two Democratic organs, the Argus and the Daily Patriot, over the conduct of the war. Madison was largely Democratic; the majority of city voters chose Stephen A. Douglas in 1860 and George McClellan in 1864 over Abraham Lincoln. Two quotes illustrate the great divide, the first by Governor Alexander Randall addressing the Wisconsin legislature on May 15, 1861, the second a letter from Judge Harlow Orton to his brother John on April 29 of that year.

“This war began where Charleston is; it should end where Charleston was!” proclaimed the governor. “These gathering armies are the instrument of His vengeance, to execute His just judgments; they are His flails wherewith on God’s great Southern threshing floor, He will pound rebellion for its sins!”

“I fully and totally and emphatically disapprove of the course that seems to be indicated by the Administration, to fight the South,” wrote Harlow Orton. “I say seems, for only God and Lincoln know what he does intend to do... The catch phrases ‘enforcement of the laws,’ ‘punishing treason,’ and ‘possessing the forts and places’ are merely flippant and meaningless uses of words. It is war, war, war and nothing but war, upon fourteen sovereign states of the Union with eight million people, by the other twenty states with twenty million people... This will destroy all hope of Union forever, and probably result in destroying all government, North and South.”

In September 1864, during the presidential election, controversy erupted when ladies in favor of Democrat George B. McClellan for president presented 15 like-minded soldiers recovering from wounds at Madison’s Harvey Hospital with silver fruit knives “as a token of our regard for your bravery in the field and your unswerving fidelity to principle under persecution.” The Daily Patriot subsequently charged that Republican women presented the same men with a banner reading “Fifteen traitors in Ward E.” The soldiers vowed to buy only from Democratic merchants while they remained in Madison.1

Two weeks earlier Democrats assembled in Capitol Park to celebrate McClellan’s nomination. Judge Levi Vilas’ address “arraigned the present Administration for its imbecilities, blunders, and violations of the Constitution.” Uniformed soldiers armed with muskets tried to break up the meeting. Democrats cheered for McClellan and fired a cannon and the mob rushed it; Governor Lewis tried to calm everyone.
and Dr. Chittenden told him to “get away from that cannon, for, by the Eternal, the first effort that is made to capture this gun I will touch the match no matter who stands in the way.” Republicans hauled the state gun from the other side of the Capitol and aimed it at the speakers’ stand. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed and blood was not shed.2

The War Begins

On April 23, companies E and K of the 1st Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry – local men, without guns or uniforms – took a train from Madison to Milwaukee to rendezvous with the rest of the regiment and train for war.3 They were sent off from the Capitol Square by nearly the whole population of the city. Even before they left, Governor Alexander Randall ordered the 2nd Wisconsin to assemble on May 1 at the state fair grounds outside Madison. His order created, virtually overnight, a small city nearly half Madison’s size on its western border.

The fair grounds had been established in 1858 by the state agricultural society on farmland two miles west of the Square. Ten acres in size, the grounds were enclosed by an eight-foot high fence. Around the inside of the fence were 90 stalls for horses and 170 for cattle, 50 pigpens, and a number of double-tier poultry coops. Facilities included refreshment tents and four large exhibition buildings. There was a racetrack, a Ladies Reception Hall, a speakers’ stand, and an executive building.

The governor appointed Horace Tenney to transform the grounds to host troops. Tenney quickly removed agricultural fences, cleaned animal sheds, and turned the exhibition halls into makeshift barracks and hospitals.

By the end of the war, Camp Randall would boast 94 buildings and could accommodate 5,000 men at a time. The northwest corner, where Breese Terrace and University Avenue meet, was occupied by the post and general hospitals. South of the hospitals, just east of what is today Breese Terrace, under the west football stadium bleachers, were rows of barracks, with a mess hall and the officers’ headquarters building in their center at about the 50-yard line. East of the hospital, on the north edge of camp along University Avenue, were stables and more barracks. The east gate was fifty yards or so west of where the Camp Randall arch is located today. The prison yard, or bull pen, was roughly where the Shell is today. The bull pen was a large area inside Camp Randall surrounded by a high board fence with a parapet on the outside constantly patrolled by guards; inside it was a barracks building and a number of trees. But that elaborate Camp Randall was far in the future. Tenney had only been at work for three days when the 2nd Wisconsin began to arrive - the La Crosse Light Guard, Portage Light Guard, Beloit Guards, Belle City Rifles, Oshkosh Guards, and Citizen Guards of Fox Lake. For a time the men slept in wet straw-filled bunks in the former cattle sheds or, if they were lucky, local hotels.

Daily Life During the War

Even as Camp Randall came into being, life in Madison was progressing much as it had before the war. Women shopped on the Square at Klauber’s Emporium, recently enlarged. The ladies’ section was on the first floor, displaying plain dress goods, linens, silks, satins, merinos, shawls, balmorals, and hats. W. J. Sullivan’s embroidery, dress trimming and variety store was next to the Baptist Church on Carroll Street. He offered corsets, trimmings, veils, handkerchiefs, hosiery, skirts, buttons, gloves, laces, ribbons, and zephyr worsteds.

An ink sketch of Camp Randall made from the top of Main Hall (now Bascom Hall) on May 20, 1864, by W.F. Brown of Company B, 40th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. The additions in pencil were made by William Fiske Brown.

Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-33603
A room was attached for ladies to examine corsets and skirts “with shop ladies in attendance.” The Daily Patriot announced that this season the barrel-shaped skirt, full flowing sleeve, basque, and short waist had given way to the bell-shaped skirt, small and tight sleeves, and a long plain waist. 4

Madisonians attended events at the five-year-old City Hall. W. H. Paul lectured on Dr. Kane’s Arctic Expedition in search of Sir John Franklin. His talk was illustrated on thirty thousand feet of canvas which was slowly unrolled behind him on the stage as he spoke. Similarly, J. T. Chesley’s Panorama of the War came to town in January 1863. Its canvas featured the battle between the Monitor and Merrimac, the bombardment of New Orleans, Mississippi River gunboats, and Major Anderson leaving Fort Sumter.

General Tom Thumb rode to his hotel from the railroad depot in a miniature carriage drawn by Lilliputian ponies. He was attended by elfin coachmen and footmen. After his performance in City Hall, where he imitated Napoleon and Grecian statues, he was kissed by 300 women and girls.

Madisonians raced their horses on ice-covered Third Lake, ice skated by torchlight and moonlight, or flew before the wind in iceboats. They attended the circus, though when a thunderstorm broke during a performance by Bailey’s circus nearly 2,000 women were left standing in shoe-deep water in the dark and were then “driven pell mell into the mud, many falling.”

They visited Barnum’s traveling museum to see a sea lion in a tank of water. They went to the theater to watch Our American Cousin. They listened to 17-year-old Susannah Evans of Aberdare, South Wales, speak in favor of temperance.

Those with green thumbs competed in the annual Horticultural Society fair in the Capitol’s Assembly chamber. “Elegantly attired ladies” exhibited roses, bouquets, strawberries, pansies, and house plants.

They enrolled in Professor Lyon’s and, later, Professor Martine’s dancing academies in Atwood’s Hall, taking lessons in dancing, calisthenics, and deportment. Ladies and juveniles learned together; gentlemen were taught separately.

They sailed or took the steamboat to festivals on the Water Cure grounds (now Olin Park). They listened to bands, strolled through leafy mazes, and drank foaming glasses of lager.

They answered Mr. Darwin’s ad for three good Norwegian or German girls for his new railroad depot restaurant - one for the kitchen, one to wash and scrub, and one for the dining room – and another for a good cook: “a Protestant will be preferred.”

Madisonians loved to dance. In December 1861 the Hook and Ladder Company held a typical soiree at Atwood’s Hall. The billiard room of the St. Nicholas dining establishment served as the ladies’ changing room. There was a card room for gentlemen only, and another for mixed ladies and gentlemen. The walls were decorated with mirrors and flags, the ceiling framed with borders of evergreens. The white canvas tightened on the floor under bright light looked like marble. “No tobacco juice spitting will be in order on such a floor,” organizers warned. The Turners held annual masquerade balls in City Hall. Fancy costumes and dresses were brought to Madison from Milwaukee by Bierbads; they were exhibited in Turner Hall a few days in advance so they could be rented. Dressing rooms during events were managed by “careful and reliable attendants.” Miss Flesh won the costume contest, dressed as Pocahontas, beating out Miss Heike in a 17th century outfit and Mrs. Bartels as Preciosa. Other costumes included a Greek lady in blue, the queen of the night, a Holstein girl with a black hat, a fortune teller, a clown, a harlequin in blue, Siamese twins, Richelieu, a sailor, a Hungarian mice catcher, an old woman with an apple basket, and a Flying Dutchman with long white hair.

Schools were a mixture of public and private. Mrs. Rachel Tappan operated a boarding and day school for young ladies and her students annually performed a concert in City Hall. In June 1861, because of a lack of funds, Madison High School was suspended indefinitely. At that time the University of Wisconsin had about 100 male students and four professors; with so many students joining the army (all but one of the seniors left before graduation in 1864) a normal department was opened in March 1863, allowing 76 women to study at the UW for the first time.

Early in the war a money crisis gripped Wisconsin. There was no national currency and the bills issued by banks had, in some cases, become worthless. Others were worth only 45 cents on the dollar. Each day the newspaper listed bills which were still being accepted by merchants. Storekeepers met to discuss the problem. There was considerable anger that bankers were making money off of speculation while merchants and citizens were losing their savings. Because of problems with credit, a significant number of Madison merchants converted strictly to cash trade “for the duration of the National troubles.” 6

In October 1862 salesmen posted a notice asking their employers to close their businesses every evening at 8 p.m., except Saturday. A few agreed.

The city continued to expand and grow during the war. The state let a contract to erect the west wing of the lunatic asylum for $31,000. Abel Rasdall opened the City Hotel on King Street. Nathaniel Dean replaced half the wooden buildings in the row beginning at King and Pinckney streets with a three-story stone block. Samuel Klauber built a stone building between Beemis’ lot and the store corner. Andrew Bishop drained the marsh near Spaight and Jenifer streets. Mr. McDonnell won a contract to complete St. Raphael’s (though the steeple would not be added until the 1880s). The “Israelites” bought a lot on West Washington Avenue near the Congregational Church in January 1863 and in April laid the cornerstone for a synagogue they called “Portals of Heaven,” designed by August Kutzbock. The Madison & Beloit Railroad attempted to get a right of way along the bank of Third Lake from the railroad bridge to the foot of West Canal Street, but the majority of property owners voted against the
proposal, despite claims that the railroad would keep effluvia and decaying carcasses away from the shoreline.

Madison’s dominant construction project during the war was the new Capitol building, which had been underway for a couple of years before the attack on Fort Sumter. In May 1861 the bid to erect the west wing was won by A. R. Moxley of Madison for $78,300. In May 1863 James Livesey was awarded a contract to dig the foundations of the south wing and rotunda and erect and complete the north wing for $50,855. As the foundations were dug, the walls of the old Capitol were finally pulled down.

If anything, Madison’s annual holiday celebrations became even more spectacular with the addition of Camp Randall’s soldiers as participants, though the celebrations did not always go as planned. The first Fourth of July of the war was a case in point. A parade to Capitol Park featured bands, local military companies, state and local officials, Revolutionary War veteran Nathaniel Ames and soldiers who’d served in the War of 1812, the chancellor and faculty and students of the UW, 34 young ladies representing the states, fire companies, civic organizations, and both the 5th and 6th Wisconsin regiments. While Madisonians listened to speeches under shade trees on the Capitol lawn, the soldiers stood in the sun in the street. “It was a disgrace,” said editor Pump Carpenter of the Daily Patriot. Colonel Amasa Cobb had been promised by parade organizers that his men would be liberally supplied with ice water, but they weren’t. Instead, boys circulated among the troops, selling drinks for as much as ten cents. The regiments marched away before the exercises concluded. Their officers sent twenty kegs of lager beer to Camp Randall that afternoon to compensate.

Caring for Soldier Families

As husbands went to war, wives were faced with the sole responsibility of caring for their children. While most soldiers sent at least some of their pay home, the amount was meager at best. Days after the fall of Fort Sumter, citizens assembled in the Assembly chamber to raise funds to support the families of men who had already volunteered. Attendees subscribed $8,000 as speeches were made and the Star Spangled Banner was repeatedly sung. Two months later only a quarter of the amount pledged had been paid; it had been distributed to 16 soldier families. Not everyone honored their pledge. “One man refuses to pay in consequence of the Governor’s and Madison Guards having been paid $10 each, and the other five who won’t pay were richer on the night they subscribed, surrounded by an overwhelming gush of patriotism, than they have felt since.” A year later, 18 Madison women were receiving monthly allowances from the volunteer aid fund. They were supporting 66 children between them, eight of those in one family. Monthly payments ranged from $4 to $7, or $90 in total.

In August 1862 Madisonians were threatened with a
These 12-by-18-inch posters appeared on Madison billboards and buildings in August 1862 with the goal of enlisting 124 volunteers. The Zouave recruiting officer was William F. Vilas, the 21-year old son of Mayor Levi P. Vilas. Vilas had graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1858 and earned a law degree in 1860. He later served as colonel of the 23rd Wisconsin Infantry, U.S. senator, postmaster general, and secretary of the interior.
draft unless 127 men enlisted. War meetings were held in the Capitol for five straight days, each becoming more elaborate and crowded, with singing, speeches, firing of the state cannon, and bell ringing in an attempt to raise $10,000 to induce enlistment (each volunteer was to receive a $50 bounty and their family $5 per month). Many subscribed; amounts ranged from $10 to $500. B. F. Larkin pledged a horse. Nine-year-old Florence Hastings, daughter of the state treasurer, donated all $6 she had saved. Mrs. Fuller, who had given her husband to the 1st Wisconsin Cavalry, came to Madison to convince her sons to enlist. Madison met its quota. As reported in the Daily Patriot on August 16: “The 23rd regiment is more than full. Our army can now march on that God-cursed and doomed capital Richmond without the aid of base or entrenchments.”

In March 1863 came complaints that the needy were not getting enough to support them from the volunteer fund, and that many of the wealthiest Madisonians had not paid what they had subscribed. So a month later the Ladies Aid Society held a ball in the Capitol to raise money. Soldiers from the 30th Wisconsin were in attendance, as well as musicians from Milwaukee and Madison. Professor Lyon, the dance master, gave instruction in several dances - Lancers, Horse Guard, and Caledonian quadrilles. The Senate chamber was used as a card playing and refreshment area.

In December the ladies, led by Harriet Morris, Mrs. S. D. Hastings, Mrs. George Jarvis, and Eliza Bright, held a dinner in the Assembly chamber to raise money for soldiers’ families. Farmers were asked to contribute wood, flour, potatoes, turnips, beets, carrots, meats, poultry, and clothing. Attendees paid 50 cents. The proceeds subsequently helped 61 families. The ladies’ committee found instances of extreme destitution as they distributed the proceeds, in part caused by an intensely cold January (soldiers were actually dismissed from Camp Randall and told to seek shelter in Madison hotels and homes because they could not be kept warm in the drafty camp buildings – this after they’d burned many of their wooden barracks). Ladies found three families who couldn’t even afford to bury their dead. The ladies collected $28.05 from Camp Randall soldiers. Merchants Samuel Klauber and Thomas & Stoltz pledged to furnish dry goods for soldier families at cost. Mr. Bowman turned donated wheat into flour for free. Samuel Klauber pledged $3 per month as long as it was needed.

The following December another relief ball was held in Turner Hall. Benjamin Hopkins, head of the gas company, supplied free gas for the event. Simeon Mills pledged $200 and Samuel and Caroline Klauber $100. Fifty tickets to the ball were sold to soldiers from Camp Randall and the Harvey Hospital. Supper was supplied by Anna Abbott, Sophie Klauber, butchers, grocers, and some soldiers’ widows. Lager was donated by Madison brewers Rodermund, Breeckheimer, and Hausmann.

In January 1865, Quartermaster Napoleon Bonaparte Van Slyke received enough material from the army to manufacture 17,000 pairs of trousers. He announced he would employ wives, widows, and female relations of Wisconsin soldiers who were “in want” to sew the pants. The work was distributed from the Soldiers Aid Society headquarters in the Capitol basement. The work came at a critical time – the Society had no money remaining in its treasury. One 20 year-old woman had just applied for aid because her family was out of food, wood, and clothing. There were, according to the chairwoman of the Society, at least 100 soldier families in Madison just as destitute.
The women of Madison also provided relief for men who were on active duty in the East and South.

In October 1861 a Ladies Aid Society was formed as an auxiliary to the United States Sanitary Commission (USSC). Cordelia Harvey, wife of the current secretary of state and future governor, Louis Powell Harvey, was its president; Susan Britton the secretary; Mary Hopkins the treasurer. Members included Esther Vilas, Mrs. Kittredge, Annie Main, Mary Tredway, Miss Carman, Flora Moseley, Harriet Dean, Mrs. Huchting, and Sophie Klauber. The ladies met regularly in the Assembly chamber to fill boxes for the USSC. The boxes typically included dried fruits, blankets, quilts, woolen socks, wrappers, undershirts, drawers, pillows, cushions for the wounded, and slippers. Particularly after major battles, the society sent hospital necessities to Washington City. To raise money for the supplies and postage necessary to mail the boxes, they held frequent fundraisers.

On April 9, 1862, came news of the “bloodiest battle of the 19th century” at Pittsburg Landing in Tennessee. Initial reports said the Union had lost 20,000 men and the Confederates 40,000. Telegrams poured into the Daily Patriot office all day long and were read aloud to a gathering crowd. Ladies were requested to bring linen shirts and other articles to make lint and bandages to the Assembly chamber that evening. “This appeal cannot, must not, be made in vain.” Long before night every desk in the Assembly chamber was covered with linen and cotton scraps. The ladies worked all evening and filled ten boxes. At 5 a.m. the next morning Governor Harvey and Surgeon Wolcott and his staff left for the battlefield with the medical supplies.

Officer’s wives acted as interfaces between the men in the field and their families back home. One of these was Diana R.
Oakley, the wife of Eri, captain of Company B, 11th Wisconsin, composed largely of men from Dane County. “Mail in the country was received only once or at most twice a week. Mrs. Oakley, as the captain’s wife, residing at the capital city where news was first received, became the so-called mother of the wives whose husbands were in Captain Oakley’s company. Women coming to town invariably called on her for news from the front, and though she might have no news, she had the ready sympathy which sent them home cheered and comforted. Many articles sent home by their husbands reached their destination through Mrs. Oakley’s hands.8

Women also raised money to benefit wounded soldiers. On April 10, 1862, Mrs. Daniel McFarland gave a series of readings in City Hall. Her program featured The Welcome, by Thomas Osborne Davis; The American Flag, by J. Rodman Drake; Ballad of the Oysterman, by Oliver Wendell Holmes; a scene from School for Scandal, by Sheridan; scenes from Macbeth and Romeo and Juliet, by William Shakespeare; The Bridge of Sighs, by Thomas Hood; Fontenoy, by Thomas O. Davis; and The Building of the Ship, by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. She raised $37.50.

Service With the Troops

Not all women stayed home during the war. Some served directly with the troops.

In April 1861 a young woman from Sun Prairie, attired in Bloomer costume, brought lint and bandages to Quartermaster General Manning Tredway and offered herself for service. She was refused “because she was only 22.”

Mrs. Foster, a nurse at the Camp Randall hospital who had followed her husband to war, was dismissed because the camp commander thought her “too handsome.” After a heated protest by soldiers she was allowed to stay.

Emilie Quiner diary

These diary entries for July 7 and 8, 1863, were written by Emilie Quiner while she was caring for Union soldiers in Memphis, Tennessee. The first entry, dated April 14, 1861, reads: “News came this morning that Fort Sumter has been taken by the Southern forces under General Beauregard and it caused a good deal of excitement here, though it had been expected for some time.”

Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-75362
Hannah Eubank, 20, a teacher, “good looking,” served as the vivandiere (sutler) of the 7th Wisconsin. “She wears a Zouave jacket of blue merino trimmed with military buttons and gold lace; a skirt of scarlet merino, trimmed with blue and gold lace; pants and a vest of white Marseilles; a blue velvet hat with yellow plumes; and white kid gloves.”

Eleanor Ward, whose husband Andrew was the Iron Brigade’s surgeon, accompanied him to war, and “by her gentle courage and indomitable faith won the love of all who met her.” She showed “courage and cheerfulness under hardships at the front,” particularly in the hospital after the battles of Antietam and Gettysburg. According to Lucius Fairchild, “she needed only a newspaper and a packing box to turn her husband’s tent into a home of luxury and refinement.”

During the summer of 1863 Fanny and Emilie Quiner, Hannah Chapman, and Louisa Richardson went to Memphis to nurse sick Wisconsin soldiers in the hospital there.

**News From the Front**

Madison women spent much of their time waiting for word about where their men were and what was happening to them. Letters from soldiers and newspaper accounts were their primary sources of information. Those newspaper accounts often sent Madisonians on an emotional rollercoaster. For example, on July 22 came news of the first large battle of the war at Bull Run in Virginia, one in which the 2nd Wisconsin fought. Initial reports were of a glorious Union victory, followed next by the reality of defeat.

“Fight at Bull’s Run. A Bloody Sunday. The Union Troops Victorious. Near 4,000 Soldiers Slain on Field. The Most Bloody Fight on This Continent. That a most brilliant victory has been achieved by our gallant troops there is no doubt.”

Later that day General Irwin McDowell telegraphed that the Rebels were completely routed, even though they outnumbered him two to one, and were retreating towards Manassas. Then came the reality: “The Very Latest: Rejoicing Turns to Deep Mourning. Our Troops Retreating. A Stampede by Our Troops.”

Sergeant Humphrey of the 2nd Wisconsin wrote home: “There was a splendid footrace took place last Sunday about thirty miles from here, in which the grand army of the Union took part. It is the most disgraceful thing on record. Where were our officers, and what were they doing, allowing infantry to charge on infantry backed by artillery? The fault was not in the men, but in the officers, who were nothing more than old political office seekers who wanted a position in the army. Almost in the face of a victory we were forced to run, and such a run was never before recorded. The dead and wounded were piled up in the ravine between the two armies, and the adjoining woods were full of wounded. It was a very hot day; water was scarce, and the suffering of the wounded for water seemed greater than from wounds. I drank water that I would not wash my hands in, from a mud puddle.”

Newspaper reporting on the battle of Chancellorsville was similar to that of Bull Run. May 3, 1863: “Hooker has crossed the Rappahannock. There are casualties in the 2nd, 6th, and 7th Wisconsin regiments. Lee is retreating towards Richmond.” May 4: “Advantage with Hooker. Stonewall Jackson turned our right but was repulsed with heavy loss. The Rebels are hemmed between Hooker and Sedgwick. Hooker’s position is impregnable.” May 5: “Glorious news from Hooker. He has taken 30,000 prisoners.” May 6: “General Hooker is whipped. There was a terrible slaughter. He has recrossed the Rappahannock. The total loss of our men is between ten and twelve thousand. The army is demoralized by the inglorious retreat.”

Every battle brought with it casualty lists, published in local newspapers for weeks after, growing longer and longer as the war intensified. In December 1862 the telegraph brought sickening details of another slaughter before Fredericksburg. “…in this battle we were butchered.” The casualty list occupied several columns in the paper.

**Caring for Madison’s Wounded**

Some wounded Madisonians came home to recuperate. The first was Fred Huchting, a brewer, color bearer of the 1st Wisconsin, who was shot in the ankle at Williamsport in early July 1861. His brother went east and brought him home at the end of July; he never fully recovered and did not return to the army.

Lt. Colonel Cassius Fairchild was shot in the hip at Shiloh in April 1862 and returned to Madison, cared for by his mother, Sally, in his father’s mansion overlooking Lake Monona. It wasn’t until mid-1864 that he was able to rejoin Sherman’s army and participate in the Atlanta campaign and the March to the Sea. His older brother Lucius, colonel and later brigadier general of the 2nd Wisconsin, joined him in the mansion in July 1863 after losing his left arm at Gettysburg.
Sally Blair Fairchild

Sally (above) was the wife of Jairus Fairchild, Madison's first mayor, and the mother of Lucius, Cassius, Charles and Sarah (Dean Conover). This photograph was taken in 1862, the year in which her husband died and she was nursing Cassius back to health.

Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-37906

Cassius Fairchild

Fairchild (top right) served as colonel of the 16th Wisconsin Infantry. This photograph was taken in 1865, at the end of William Tecumseh Sherman's campaign through Georgia and the Carolinas.

Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-70236

Lucius Fairchild

This photograph (bottom right) was taken by Mathew Brady in Washington, D.C., about three months after the Battle of Gettysburg. Fairchild had returned to the nation's capital to receive his promotion to brigadier general of the 2nd Wisconsin Infantry. He was still recovering from the amputation of his left arm. He did not return to the battlefield; he was elected Wisconsin's secretary of state, and then served three terms as governor.

Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-34330
Theodore Read, son of Professor Daniel Read of the UW, spent several months in Madison being cared for by his mother and sisters after being hit in the shoulder by a cannonball at Chancellorsville.

Few Madison wives had husbands with more medical issues than Cornelia Shipman, wife of Stephen, an officer in the 1st Wisconsin Cavalry. On May 1, 1862, a horse kicked his leg and broke it and he returned to Madison for a short time to recover. In October 1862 he was badly injured when his horse collided with another in Missouri with such force that both animals were killed. He came home again to recover. In April 1863 he was shot in the leg while leading his men in a charge against several thousand Confederate infantry (after surgery, the leg was three inches shorter than the other). Cornelia joined him in Missouri to take care of him. She wrote to friends in Madison: “Since the operation he has continued about the same – suffering most intensely. His situation is most critical – chances unfavorable.” Shipman did survive, recuperated in Madison, rejoined his men as soon as he could ride (though not yet walk), and fought through the end of the war.12

Death

For some Madison women, there was no escaping the dreadful news that a husband, son or father had been killed. The first was Sgt. J. W. Staples, Co. G, Brendan’s Sharpshooters. Before the war he’d been an assistant in Fuller’s boot and shoe store and had composed newspaper ads on his behalf. He was buried in the Soldiers’ Lot, a cemetery for Union soldiers created in the midst of Forest Hill Cemetery, a direct consequence of the war.

Rachel Bradford lost a son, Oscar, at Gettysburg. A member of the 2nd Wisconsin, he was one of 233 casualties among the 302 men in the regiment who fought that day. Another was his brother, Bongillyan, whose left arm was fractured when struck by a shell that killed two others. He returned to Madison to recover, but died in his own bed in November. He was 19 years old.

In December 1864, Lydia Ford learned she’d lost a second son in the war. A third, John, was still serving with the 36th Wisconsin in the lines near Petersburg.

A month before the end of the war a mother came to Camp Randall looking for her 16-year-old son who had lied about his age and enlisted. To secure his discharge she had to return north to get papers proving his real age. Upon her return she found he had taken sick, died, and been buried at Forest Hill.

Camp Randall

The presence of Camp Randall ensured that Madison’s women had wartime experiences that few other Wisconsin women did. In a very real sense, they acted as surrogates for other women in the state, doing what they could to bring comfort to soldiers as they passed through Madison.

On June 8, 1861, ladies treated the men of the 2nd Wisconsin to a feast in the Operative Machinery building at Camp Randall. It was the first of many they would provide over the next four years. They brought bread, butter, pies, rich cakes, sweetmeats and other delicacies to camp. John Brien placed his omnibuses, which had begun running from the Square to the camp daily a few weeks before, at the disposal of the ladies free of charge to transport their food. The Young America Cornet Band played and everyone sang the Star Spangled Banner. Reverend Taylor of the Congregational Church said grace. The soldiers paraded after supper. F. A. Dyke, the regiment’s aged drum major, thanked the ladies for their kind reception: “We will carry patriotism on the points of our bayonets to the hearts of the traitors who have disturbed our family peace, and when we have admonished them this way, and victory is ours, we will come together, perhaps on a far-off cotton field, and then lift up our hearts to God, and our glorious steel, in the center of lakes of blood, in fond remembrance of the spirit of patriotism.”14

On a separate occasion Margaret Allen presented “choice puddings” to the Oshkosh Volunteers, who “relished the feast.”

On July 19 the ladies of Madison and Dane County provided another supper. They covered 21 tables with pies, meat, small roast pigs, delicacies, and elegantly ornamented cakes that were “greeted with thunders of applause.” In the evening there was a parade, a gymnastics demonstration, and a dance. Said Major Larrabee: “Now boys, don’t be afraid, but go and ask the first young lady you see to dance.”

In November the ladies entertained the 11th Wisconsin to a repast with delicacies.

On Christmas Day, 1862, Mary Hopkins arranged the delivery of six wagonloads of food, enough to feed 3,000 a special dinner.

Early in the war the ladies set up a box in the post office so people could deposit newspapers they’d read to be given to soldiers at Camp Randall. In addition, they provided blankets and comforters for the soldiers of the 2nd Wisconsin before the government started supplying its own blankets to the troops.

Not all comfort supplied by women to Camp Randall’s soldiers was of the benevolent variety, however. In June 1861 police court was crowded during a trial over the reputation of a house in Greenbush near Camp Randall. Mr. Pardee was convicted of keeping a disreputable house and fined $20 and court costs. A few months later John Yates Smith sought to vacate the lease of one of his rental homes by Pardee’s wife, alleging it was being used for immoral purposes. In November 1864 a fire broke out near Camp Randall and firemen let it burn. It was “a building in the course of erection for purposes, it is alleged, inconsistent with the morals of the community and the good order of the camp.”15
Leaving for War, and Returning

Madison’s women attended the departure of each regiment from Camp Randall when it headed east or south, and welcomed it back when its term of service was over.

On June 20, 1861, the 2nd Wisconsin left Camp Randall, its soldiers the first of the 70,000 destined to pass through the facility. Early in the morning the men assembled on the parade ground. Governor Randall spoke to them and hundreds of spectators, including the entire UW student body, telling them that “on the field of battle they would represent Wisconsin and do them and herself honor, and would show no wounds in the back though cowardly conduct.” The soldiers then marched to the tracks and filled 24 cars. “Many of the men audibly prayed they’d set foot on Wisconsin soil again.”

On August 23, the 80 Madisonians of the 1st Wisconsin, who had enlisted under President Lincoln’s first call to serve for 90 days, arrived home on the afternoon train. Their homecoming became the model for others that would follow over the next four years. The whole city turned out to welcome them. There was a “splendid” repast in Darwin’s dining room at the railroad depot, then the men in their soiled and torn uniforms marched to the Square, accompanied by a cannon, the Young America Cornet Band, fire companies, and the Turners. The parade was accompanied by ringing bells and firing guns. Governor Randall spoke from the steps of the Capitol. A dance was held in the soldiers’ honor in Assembly Hall that lasted until 2 a.m.; refreshment tables were laden with large cakes lettered “welcome home” in pink on white sugared crust; others had flags and patriotic devices.

On June 18, 1864, Madisonians welcomed home the decimated remnants of the 2nd Wisconsin. Citizens waited under a broiling sun for the late-arriving train, then cheered as it chugged in to the depot. After greetings by friends and family, the men fell in line and marched to the Square. “Welcome the Second” was spelled out in evergreens over the Capitol gate. Flags decorated streets, stores, shops, and private residences along the parade route. Cannon boomed in five minute increments and bells tolled. Sidewalks, doors, and windows were filled with people. Little girls strewed flowers before the veterans in Capitol Park. Reverend Maxwell gave the blessing. The Capital House provided food. The Huchting Brothers supplied their celebrated bottled lager. Ladies attended tables and attached satin badges to each soldier reading “Honor to the brave, presented to the surviving heroes of the Second Wisconsin Infantry by the ladies of Madison, June 18, 1864.” They placed a copy of the Wisconsin State Journal next to each plate. Said the editor of the Democratic Daily Patriot: “This attempt to cram abolition down the throats of the boys of the 2nd was in exceedingly bad taste.” Governor Lewis introduced “what was left of” the regiment’s former colonel, now brigadier general, Lucius Fairchild, who’d lost his left arm leading them during the first day’s battle at Gettysburg. Fairchild made a brief speech.

Caring for the Enemy

For parts of April and May 1862 Madison’s women were put in the unique position of caring for Confederate prisoners of war. Three thousand Rebels, captured at Island No. 10 on the Mississippi River (in part by the 15th Wisconsin, which had departed Camp Randall in March), traveled by steamboat to Prairie du Chien and then overland by rail to Madison, the first contingent of 881 arriving on April 21. The 19th Wisconsin, training at Racine, was sent to Camp Randall to guard them (the men of that regiment “disposed” of all the medicinal liquor intended for the Confederates in five days). The 19th Wisconsin brought three brass cannon to supplement the one that was already on the grounds. Still, the camp was far from secure; numerous citizens later encountered Confederates who had escaped their prison walking on country roads and marched them back to Camp Randall at gunpoint.

Citizens flocked to the camp to see the captured enemy. Reported the Daily Patriot of a visit by its reporter: “The 38 men of Memphis’ Washington Artillery were sitting around a fire, civil and pleasant. Men from Tennessee were playing ball. All were thinly clad in butternut or light gray that failed to protect them from the sharp wind. Some looked barely 16. Many sat listlessly before fires. Some were reading light literature, others testaments; some were debating verses. A few were playing cards. 180 guards were carefully walking beats.”

Madison women visited the camp daily. They donated postage stamps, tobacco, reading material, jellies, custards, brandy, and shirts for the prisoners. “Lightening the heavy hours of misguided and unfortunate men is a godly act and one that mutually blesses.”

More prisoners arrived in early May. As recorded by the Daily Patriot: “About 4 o’clock yesterday afternoon three hundred more prisoners from Island No. 10 arrived at Camp Randall. A large crowd awaited their arrival and regarded their removal from the cars to the camp with curious interest. They were received by a guard of the 19th regiment, accompanied by a fife and drum band playing lively airs. They passed between the files to the camp – many of them heavily laden with baggage. They all looked tired and jaded, and the pale faces of some of them showed that they were more seriously affected. When they were nearly inside the camp the band struck up Dixie and the steps of the prisoners were at once made firmer and their eyes brighter. There were about 60 sick prisoners, and the removal of these afforded a painful spectacle. Its sadness was relieved, though, by the tender manner in which the soldiers of the 19th Wisconsin supported their tottering steps while helping them to the stretchers. Among them was a little fair-faced, black-eyed boy. He looked barely 14 years old, and bore along baggage like his elder comrades.”

A woman was with the prisoners, suffering from lung fever. She’d lost her husband and two children to the disease on the way upriver; they’d been buried at Prairie du Chien. Her brother was among the prisoners. She was treated in a section...
of the camp hospital screened from the men by a blanket hung from a rope, and received special attention from the ladies of Madison. “Her conduct affords an inspiring instance of womanly devotion in the midst of sorrow and suffering that must make all feel a sympathy for her.”

The sick prisoners began to die almost immediately upon their arrival, up to 10 per day. Despite the nursing of Madison’s women, by the time the Confederates were transferred to Chicago at the end of May, 144 of their comrades lay together in a section of Forest Hill Cemetery today known as Confederate Rest.

Harvey Hospital

In October 1863 the mansion of ex-governor Leonard Farwell on Spaight Street was converted into a hospital for wounded Union soldiers. It was named after Governor Louis P. Harvey, who had drowned in the Tennessee River bringing aid to Wisconsin troops after the Battle of Shiloh. The hospital was run by his wife, Cordelia, who had personally convinced President Lincoln to allow sick and wounded Wisconsin soldiers to come home to recover in a familiar climate instead of trying to recuperate in battlefield hospitals in the deadly heat of the South.

A month later the 150 patients were given a Thanksgiving dinner by Mary Hopkins, Harriet Morris, Aurelia Wiser, Alice Askew, Sarah Jarvis, Lizzie Fuller, Mrs. George Jarvis, Sallie Richardson, Mrs. M. W. Briggs, Mrs. Stray, Mrs. Captain Bull, Mrs. Moses L. Daggett, Caroline Rowe, Elizabeth Bradley, and Ellen Lamb. They set up tables in a newly-built 70-foot long hall, draped with flags and evergreens. Rodermund, Breckheimer and Hausmann supplied beer. As they ate the soldiers were serenaded by a choir of 14 young ladies from the Third Ward and waited on by the women.

The ladies contributed food to Harvey Hospital with such regularity and in such quantity that in March 1864 the head nurse, Linda Hunt, announced that thereafter – to avoid disrupting the diets of the convalescents - she would disburse donated delicacies only with the doctor’s orders.

Citizens vs. Soldiers

The presence of so many soldiers in Camp Randall, many of whom frequented the saloons on State Street and the “disreputable houses” nearby in their free time, created considerable conflict between citizens and soldiers. On May 29, 1861, the Daily Patriot reported two “terrible outrages” on defenseless women at the hands of soldiers. It was the first of many incidents that would occur over the next four years – at least three attempted rapes, six assaults, seven fights, five thefts, three killings, much property damage, and several nights disturbed by large groups of drunken soldiers roaming the streets.

The Daily Patriot expressed the frustration of citizens in January 1862: “Drunken rowdies infest the streets at all hours of the day and night. The street from Camp Randall to the city is filled with squads of them at all hours; such has been the case all summer.” Said David Wright after being attacked by several soldiers: “It seems to me that an outraged people will not submit to these outrages much longer. For my own part, I intend to go prepared for them after this, and the first one that molests me again I will send him where it will save him the trouble of going to secesshdom to meet the reward so many of them richly deserve.”

Confederate Rest

More than 140 prisoners who died at Camp Randall in April and May 1862 are buried in Confederate Rest, a section of Madison’s Forest Hill Cemetery.

Photograph by Mark Gajewski
The War Ends

After four long years of war, in April 1865 good news seemed to roll like a tide over Madison.

April 3: “Glory! Hallelujah! Richmond is Ours! City on Fire. Petersburg Evacuated. Grant after the Rebel Army. President Gone to the Front.”

April 5: “Rout at Five Forks.”

April 7: “Victory! Sheridan Utterly Defeats Lee’s Army.”

April 10: “Victory! Glorious News! Lee’s Army Surrenders. Glory to God in the Highest! On Earth Peace and Goodwill!”

The news of Lee’s surrender reached Madison about 9:30 in the evening. The governor ordered John McFarland to fire the national salute with the cannon in Capitol Park. Church and City Hall bells rang. A bonfire was kindled on the Square near the Capital House. A crowd gathered to listen to speeches; the whole town was “uproarious with noise and rejoicing until late in the night.” The law office of mayor-elect Elisha Keyes next to the telegraph office was crowded as dispatches were read. The crowd sang the *Star Spangled Banner*, *John Brown’s Body*, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again*, *Praise God From Whom all Blessings Flow*.

Sophie Main wrote a long letter to her brother, a missionary in Turkey, between April 10 and May 7 that illustrates the mixture of emotions that the end of the war brought to many of Madison’s women: “My dear brother: I cannot study. I cannot work. I can do nothing. I am in a fever of excitement and will try to wear it off by writing, for it seems to have accumulated at my fingertips. And what is the matter? Why Lee has surrendered! Do you wonder I cannot work? Never was such excitement in our streets before. The city is one jubilee. Everyone is out, not knowing what to do… Richmond is taken; Lee has surrendered… Nature itself rejoices. Later - one week. Shall I begin a new sheet? Shall I blot out this page of rejoicing, and tell you that you must not read that we have been glad because there is nothing but mourning for us now? Shall we forget that we ever had joy because there is nothing but sorrow for us now? To tell you of that which fills our hearts on account of the death of our beloved president, I will not try… May 7th. Yesterday the body was interred in its tomb in Springfield. The funeral cortege on its way from Washington to Springfield has taken 14 days, I believe. And wherever the procession passed, a crowd of mourners rose to meet it. In the large cities on the route the body was laid in state. In Chicago it was kept Monday and Tuesday. Many went in from here, and the crowd was so great that all rooms in the hotels were engaged one week previous. All of the soldiers except 160,000 are to be mustered out of service soon. It is hard to see the boys come home and none coming to us, since our two brothers are gone.”

Harvey Hospital

Originally the home of Wisconsin governor Leonard Farwell, the octagonal mansion on Spaight Street overlooking Lake Monona was converted into the Harvey Hospital by Cordelia Harvey, widow of Governor Louis Powell Harvey. The wooden wing was added at that time. After the war the building served as a home for soldiers’ orphans.
Endnotes

1 *Daily Patriot*, September 30, 1864 and October 1, 1864. Among the women in favor of McClellan were the wives of two Madison mayors – Esther (Levi) Vilas and Eugenia (George B.) Smith; two judges – Philanda (A. B.) Braley and Mrs. Eleazer Wakely; and a businessman – Mrs. Fred Briggs.

2 *Daily Patriot*, September 19, 1864


4 *Daily Patriot*, April 20, 1861

5 *Daily Patriot*, December 24, 1861

6 *Daily Patriot*, January 22, 1862

7 *Daily Patriot*, June 22, 1861

8 *Madison Democrat*, August 12, 1918

9 *Daily Patriot*, September 20, 1861

10 *Daily Patriot*, July 22, 1861

11 *Daily Patriot*, August 3, 1861

12 For more about Stephen Vaughn Shipman’s service in the Civil War, see the *Journal of the Four Lake Region*, Volume XXI, 2008, pages 3-18.

13 Dyke had served in the War of 1812. He fought with the 2nd Wisconsin at Bull Run, then left the army. He reenlisted in the 29th Wisconsin in 1862. He died of chronic diarrhea while stationed at Milliken’s Bend, Louisiana, on June 27, 1863.

14 *Daily Patriot*, June 11, 1861

15 *Wisconsin State Journal*, November 22, 1864

16 *Daily Patriot*, April 22, 1862

17 *Weekly Wisconsin Patriot*, May 3, 1862

18 *Daily Patriot*, January 27, 1862

19 Two of Sophie Main’s brothers – Lt. Henry Smith and Lt. William Smith – died in Arkansas while serving with the 11th Wisconsin Infantry.
In 1938 and 1939, Winifred Ford painted more than 40 watercolors of historic Madison residences, City Hall, and University of Wisconsin buildings. These paintings, now in the collections of the Wisconsin Historical Society, are realistic and detailed representations of these buildings — bold in treatment, using bright colors that have held up remarkably well. Since almost half of the buildings she depicted no longer exist, her paintings serve as an important architectural record of some of Madison’s finest homes.

Winifred Bonnewitz Ford (June 11, 1876 - April 5, 1957) was born in Van Wert, Ohio. As a young woman she performed on Broadway and toured the United States in a number of shows. In 1897 she married her first husband, Frederick Lewis, in Macon County, Illinois. She met Marcus C. Ford in San Francisco in 1900 when they starred in Quo Vadis; they married four years later (she received great reviews from critics; he did not).

Marcus, son of Reverend Frederick Fenelon and Margaret C. Ford, was left a fortune by his father while still a teen. He and his mother lived at 1033 Spaight Street (see Winifred’s painting and Elroy Smith’s photo of the house in this Journal). Marcus graduated from the UW in 1897 with a law degree, but pursued a career in the theater as an actor, dramatic director, playwright and producer — especially for Haresfoot (the UW men’s drama club). From 1935 to 1937, Ford was state supervisor of drama and public speaking for the Federal Emergency Education Program under the Wisconsin Works Progress Administration.

The couple lived for 25 years in Kansas City, where Marcus had real estate interests and she was a member of several Kansas City art clubs. In 1933 they returned to Madison, residing at 10 East Gorham Street. After Marcus died in 1941, Winifred moved to 1023 Spaight Street, near her husband’s boyhood home, and worked as an artist and draftsman in the engineering department of Gisholt Machine Company. She spent the last few years of her life in Atlantic City, New Jersey, where her son, Marcus Jr., worked in the entertainment industry. Both Winifred and Marcus are buried in Madison’s Forest Hill Cemetery.

Although several paintings in the collection were donated to the Wisconsin Historical Society by the families who bought them from Mrs. Ford, about 30 were purchased from her by Elizabeth Hopkins Johnson and Mary Esther Vilas Hanks. They donated them to the Society in January 1941. The watercolors were displayed from April to June 1941 in the Historical Society’s museum.

In honor of the 75th anniversary of the original paintings, Barb Essock, long-time HMI board member and artist-in-residence, created modern-day versions of Winifred’s originals. Each of the paintings chosen for reproduction is of a Madison building that still exists, though sometimes in altered form.
Willett S. Main House
511 North Carroll Street

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29803
This house was built in 1858 by Willett and Eliza Main. He settled in Madison in 1847 and for much of the rest of his life was either undersheriff, sheriff, or a deputy marshal. He also operated a general merchandise store at 101 State Street. As this edition of the *Journal of the Four Lake Region* goes to press, the house is being renovated to more closely match its original appearance.
Fuller/Bashford House
423 North Pinckney Avenue

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29808
This Italian villa-style house was designed by Samuel Donnell & August Kutzbock and erected in 1856 by banker H.K. Lawrence, with the help of Napoleon Bonaparte Van Slyke.

Morris Fuller resided in the house from 1866 to 1915, along with his wives Amelia (died 1872) and Anna (died 1916). He came to the city in 1856, took charge of supplies for Camp Randall during the Civil War, and began selling hay mowers in 1862. By 1868 his agricultural implement business was the second largest in Madison. In 1880 he and John A. Johnson founded Fuller & Johnson; sales of their Bonanza Prairie Breaker plow made their business the largest commercial enterprise in the city.

Morris’ daughter Sarah married Robert McKee Bashford, and beginning in 1890 they lived in the house along with her parents. They died there, he in 1911, she in 1915. Bashford was an attorney, Madison’s 25th mayor (1890), and a supreme court justice. His first wife, Florence, was the daughter of Governor William R. Taylor; she died in 1886.
Bascom Hall

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29757
Originally known as Main Hall, the central section of the university’s premier building was erected atop a turtle-shaped effigy mound in 1857. A Mr. Tinsley from Indianapolis won the design competition. The structure was officially named Bascom Hall in 1920.

The painting on the opposite page is from a photograph which was taken sometime before 1895. In that year the round portico was replaced by the current rectangular design. The dome in the painting was replaced in 1898 by a ribbed dome, which burned in 1916 and was never replaced (a plan to install the iron-framed dome of the destroyed second Capitol atop Bascom Hall never came to fruition). Wings were added in 1899, 1906, and 1927.
Elmside
302 South Mills Street

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29729
Peter and Verila Van Bergen erected Elmside, which was situated in the heart of a 56-acre estate in the Greenbush area. In 1851 Peter served as Madison’s eighth and last village president. He operated the Madison Hotel in the 1840s, built the first Congregational Church in 1846, and constructed a stone business block in 1856 at 120-128 South Pinckney Street (later called the Burrows Block). Verila came to Madison in 1838, making her one of our earliest pioneers.

Dr. James Bowen and his wife Susan bought Elmside in 1852, the year they settled here. As the first homeopathic physician in Madison, he overcame much skepticism to build a successful practice. In 1871 he was elected Madison’s tenth mayor. St. James Catholic Church, built on land that was once part of the estate, is named in his honor.
Executive Residence
130 East Gilman Street

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29730
This Italianate sandstone house was built between 1854 and 1856 by Julius T. White, an insurance company vice president. George and Emmaline Delaplaine bought it from him in 1858. Delaplaine came to Madison in 1838. He served as secretary to governors Dodge, Dewey and Barstow. He was a real estate speculator and, with Elisha Burdick, built the Water Cure – a hospital/spa - in 1854 at what is now Olin Park. Emmaline, sister of Simeon Mills’ wife Maria (see the painting of Park Place) died when a kerosene lamp set her dress on fire while she was trying to close windows in the cupola of a subsequent residence during a storm.

J.G. and Amelia Thorp bought the house in 1868. Their daughter married world-famous Norwegian violinist Ole Bull; more than 1,000 guests attended the ceremony at the house. The first croquet game in Madison was played on its lawn, and during a remodel the Thorps installed the first hardwood floors in Madison.

Governor Jeremiah Rusk bought the house in 1883. After he failed to win reelection the state acquired it for use as a governor’s mansion. Robert and Belle Case LaFollette changed its designation to “executive residence” during his term as governor (1901-1906). Sixteen governors resided there; the University of Wisconsin purchased it in 1950 after a home in Maple Bluff was acquired to house Wisconsin’s governors.
Francis Fenelon and Margaret Ford House
1033 Spaight Street

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29732
The house, built by a Mr. Harris prior to 1875, became the Ford residence about 1880. Reverend Ford died a decade later, leaving the house and a large fortune to his wife and teenage son, Marcus. Marcus graduated from the UW law school in 1897, then had a long career as an actor, director, playwright and producer. He married Winifred Bonnewitz, an actress, in 1904; they’d starred together in *Quo Vadis* in San Francisco in 1900.
McDonnell/Pierce House
424 North Pinckney Street (northeast–facing view)

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29737
Designed by architects Samuel Donnell & August Kutzbock, the house was erected by Alexander A. McDonnell between 1857 and 1858, a contractor who used some of the same stone he’d used to erect the Capitol.

The house was next owned by J.H. and Roberta Garnhart; he operated the Garnhart Reaper Works. After his death, sometime before 1875, Roberta continued to reside there. A neighbor, Orsamus Cole, chief justice of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, married her in 1879 and moved into the house. Cole had served in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1848, and served on the supreme court from 1855 to 1892.

The house was purchased by Sarah Fairchild Dean Conover in 1887. She was the daughter of Jairus Fairchild, Madison’s first mayor, and was the first woman to travel overland from Superior to St. Paul when her first husband, Eliab Dean, was receiver of the land office in Superior. She married Obadiah Conover in September 1882; he died two years later while on a world tour. Conover was the UW’s third faculty member beginning in 1850. In 1864 he was appointed supreme court reporter and supervised publication of Volumes 17 through 54 of the Wisconsin supreme court decisions.

Mrs. Caroline Pierce, widow of George, operated a rooming house in the structure beginning around 1907. It is now the Mansion Hill Inn.
McDonnell/Pierce House
424 North Pinckney Street (southeast– and northeast–facing view)

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29738
Keenan/Knight House
28 East Gilman Street

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29736
The house was designed by architects Samuel Donnell & August Kutzbock and erected by Napoleon B. Van Slyke in 1858. It was later purchased by John and Ella Knight. He served in the Civil War and afterwards at Fort Laramie and Fort Bridger on the western plains. He was William Vilas' business partner; they bought much timberland in northern Wisconsin and founded the Superior Lumber Company at Ashland in 1881. He was that city’s first mayor.

George and Mary Keenan lived in the house from 1900 to 1915. He was one of Madison’s most prominent physicians, and served in the diplomatic service as U.S. consul at both Kehl and Bremen, Germany, between 1893 and 1898, obtaining his posts through the influence of his uncle, William Vilas, a member of President Cleveland’s cabinet. He was a prime mover in the establishment of St. Mary’s Hospital.
Kendall/Storer House
104 East Gilman Street

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29733
This house, built in 1855 by banker John E. Kendall, a bachelor who never occupied it, was designed by architects Samuel Donnell & August Kutzbock. William Mears and his family were its first residents. D.R. Garrison of St. Louis, president of the Southern Pacific Railroad, bought the house in 1868.

George W. and Abigail Stoner lived in the house beginning in 1875. The son of pioneer John Stoner, George arrived in Madison in September 1837; his brother James Madison Stoner was the first white male child born in the city, in December of that year. George was one of the UW’s first graduates. He was enrolling clerk of both the Wisconsin and Colorado legislatures at various times, and spent many years seeking gold in Colorado. He was a prolific writer, and often contributed articles about early Madison to local newspapers. Abby was the sister of J.A. Noonan, a prominent Madison newspaperman. After her death in 1907 the house was purchased by Mrs. F. W. Montgomery, widow of the owner of the Madison street car company.
Leitch House
752 East Gorham Street

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29745
The house was built by William T. and Jane Leitch in 1858; she died in 1863 and he lived there until 1881. He was Madison’s fifth mayor and was elected three times, though he declined the nomination the third time and did not campaign. In fact, he went to Idaho seeking gold during his third term, returning to Madison in the middle of it. He planted cuttings he’d taken from eight willow trees that lined Napoleon’s grave on his lawn beside Lake Mendota.

Moses and Amelia Doyon lived in the house from 1881 to 1902. He was Madison’s 24th mayor (1888-1890). He owned a lumber company and was vice president of the Capital City Bank.

Nils and Belle Haugen owned the home from 1902 to 1933. Haugen, a native of Norway, was one of the most prominent figures in the Progressive movement. He served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1887 to 1895. He was instrumental in implementing the graduated state income tax, winning national renown as a tax expert and taking direct charge of railroad valuation.

On April 8, 1905, Anna Stewart drowned in a cistern in the Haugen’s yard. She is memorialized in the Annie Stewart fountain near Henry Vilas Zoo.
Livesey House
719 East Gorham Street

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29748
This unusual double house was erected by Robert Livesey, a mason, before 1858. He lived in one half until 1883. Long-time residents in the other half were John and Margaret Swetmore. Swetmore worked at various times as a mason, lamplighter, teamster, janitor, and purifier at the gas works.
Simeon Mills House
Elmside
2709 Sommers Avenue

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29765
Simeon and Maria Mills built this house as the centerpiece of an estate that lay far beyond Madison’s eastern limits. Mills reached Madison on June 10, 1837, only hours after the arrival of the original Capitol workers, and stayed the rest of his life. He was Madison’s first entrepreneur; on the day of his arrival he contracted with some of the Capitol workers to build him a store, then headed to Galena to acquire goods to fill it. He served two terms as village president, in 1851 and 1854. He served as territorial treasurer in 1848 and was the first state senator from Dane County. Mills introduced the bill that became the charter of the UW; he was a member of the first board of regents, purchasing the site of the university and supervising the erection of its first building. He sold this house and moved to a house on Wisconsin Avenue (now Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard) because Maria didn’t like living so far from town.

Mills named his house Elmside, the same name given by Seth Van Bergen to his house in Greenbush several years earlier. Today the house is known as Park Place.
Music Hall

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29762
Originally called Assembly Hall, construction began in 1878 and was completed in 1880. It housed a library, clock tower, and auditorium; the entire student population regularly gathered there to be addressed by the UW’s president. The library was moved to the new State Historical Society headquarters in 1900 and the school of music was assigned to part of the hall. It was officially named Music Hall in 1910.
North Hall

*Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-30333*
In 1851, John F. Rague drew up a plan for the development of what was then called College Hill. It showed a central University Hall, flanked by North Hall and South Hall, each of which were in turn flanked by dormitories (which were never built). North Hall was the first erected, opening on September 17, 1851 (its cornerstone was laid by a teenaged Daniel K. Tenney). For three years it was the entire University of Wisconsin, serving not only as classroom and library but as dormitory (John Muir resided there while a student). From 1904 to the 1960s the Madison Weather Bureau made observations from the building.
South Hall

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29764
Augustus A. Bird, the contractor who erected the first Capitol in Madison, was awarded the contract to construct South Hall in 1854. The second building on the fledgling campus, it was initially used for general college purposes and to house faculty and their families. One professor, Daniel Read, used to graze his horse on Bascom Hill. In 1863, with the admission of women for the first time, South Hall served as a women’s dorm. In 1871 it became a men’s dorm, and from about 1887 was used by the College of Agriculture. Thereafter it housed offices.
Stoner House
321 South Hamilton Street

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29740
Joseph J. Stoner built the house around 1868. He was a publisher of bird’s eye views of cities and traveled around the

country selling them.

Thomas Regan, a plumber, steam and gas fitter, occupied the house beginning in 1886 along with his family. One daughter, Alice S., was a piano teacher and music instructor at the UW and lived in the house until 1922.

Varley and Ellen Bond purchased the house that year. He managed several department stores in Madison, including F.W. Woolworth’s and Manchester’s, of which he was secretary-treasurer and vice president. Varley’s son died under tragic circumstances; subsequent tenants of the Stoner House report being haunted by Varley’s white-haired, one-armed ghost.
Napoleon Bonaparte Van Slyke House
510 North Carroll Street

Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-29751
This house was built in 1859 by Samuel Fox, a hardware merchant. He sold it shortly thereafter to Napoleon Bonaparte Van Slyke and his wife Annie. They lived there until their deaths in 1909 and 1911 respectively. Van Slyke was a banker, founder and president of the Dane County Bank, a member of the first city council in 1856, and a quartermaster at Camp Randall during the Civil War. His handling of the sale of city bonds in 1856 was considered a great scandal.

UW professor Charles Mendenhall and his wife Dorothy subsequently owned the house.
Hoyt Park area in the early 1920s

Owen Parkway runs from the northeast corner of Calvary Cemetery due west and curves south along the crest of a glacial moraine at Sunset Point. From there it traverses the William Larkin farm to Mineral Point Road. The quarry later became Hoyt Park.

Map of the City of Madison
Published by the Madison Association of Commerce
I grew up one block away from Hoyt Park on Madison’s near West side, a 26-acre plot comprised mostly of woods and meandering trails. When I was younger, I remember my disappointment when a colorful, cookie-cutter playground replaced the old wooden play structures I had enjoyed. On walks through the woods, I noticed the eerie sandstone fireplaces that dotted the many clearings. Though never in use, their charred, blackened facades stood out as the only remaining artifacts of an ancient, arcane civilization.

The pyramid presented an even greater mystery. A five-foot high homage to Chichen Itza, it sat at the edge of the forest, marked with haunting faces and esoteric carved symbols. This highlighted my boyish suspicions of aliens and lost societies. As I grew older and eschewed the involvement of supernatural phenomena, I continued to walk that same path, wondering what that pyramid could possibly be doing in the middle of a city park. The real answer is more plausible than my imagination conjured up: the pyramid and other stone structures, in addition to the vegetation and topography of Hoyt Park, derive from a tradition of Progressive idealism and volunteer efforts that have prevailed in the Madison area for over a century.

Today’s Hoyt Park was probably an oak savanna before non-native settlement, reads a sign on the largely deserted Hoyt Park interpretive trail near the open field in the park’s center. Though a shelter atop a sloping hillside and a desolate basketball court now border the mowed field, I imagine its original patches of oaks and lush grasslands.

In 1863, real estate merchant Nathaniel Dean first platted a large section of land west of Madison for use as a quarry. Hoyt Park now comprises the southern third of this tract. Madisonians praised the fine, versatile, cream-colored sandstone extracted from Quarrytown. It quickly became the material of choice for many university buildings, among them Bascom, Birge, and Lathrop halls. Though the quarry was shut down in 1915, a trail through the forest now runs adjacent to the 30-foot high exposed rock face on the park’s north side that marks the quarry’s southernmost extent. The absence of any visible manmade structure here provides the most pristine view of the park. However, a closer inspection of the rock face reveals jagged edges left over from quarrying, a reminder that despite the park’s presumed wildness, human imprints touch its every corner.

Modification of the Hoyt Park area in line with evolving human ideals of nature began with the creation of the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association (MPPDA). Proposed in 1892 (it was incorporated two years later) by Edward T. Owen, professor of foreign languages at the University of Wisconsin, the highly visionary MPPDA was the first and only volunteer group in the nation to promote park development, relying entirely on the time, money, and commitment of its members. Owen did not just make suggestions; in 1892 he and his wife Emilie donated 14 acres of land for a pleasure drive in honor of their daughters Ethel and Cornelia, victims of a diphtheria epidemic in 1890. This was the first private donation to Madison green space. Cost of the grounds and the dirt road (which the Owens also paid for) was $3,000. Owen Parkway ran due west from the Highland Avenue-Regent Street-Speedway intersection, edged the north side of what is now Resurrection Cemetery and the south side of the future Hoyt Park, then turned south along the crest of a glacial moraine and through the William Larkin farm to Mineral Point Road. That same year other benefactors created Lake Mendota Drive, which followed the south shore of Lake Mendota from Willow Drive to Spring Harbor.

Owen’s proposal came at a time when ordinary Madisonians were beginning to prize urban beautification. The 1880s witnessed a 30 percent growth in Madison’s population; by 1892 it numbered around 14,000. That year concerned citizens spoke out against the blighting of lakefronts and the destruction of scenic areas in the city caused by construction projects. They were concerned also about crowded conditions on the unpaved city streets caused by too many horses and horse drawn vehicles. Madison’s only parkland at the time was Orton Park, the former village cemetery on the east side of town. The city had no park department and had no interest in creating any more parks, so it was up to visionary citizens like Edward Owen and Frank Hoyt and others to take on that...
View from Sunset Point, 1913

Annual Report of the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association

Looking west from Owen Parkway, 1914

Annual Report of the Madison Park and Pleasure Drive Association
Upon formation, the MPPDA elected John Olin as president. An attorney and Progressive reformer who believed that citizens needed parks to renew themselves physically and spiritually in an escape from city life, Olin recruited 400 members and raised $25,000 in donations in the first five years alone. Funds supported the beautification and upkeep of the pleasure drives (Farwell Drive was added in 1897, the Yahara River Parkway in 1903) and established area parks - Vilas (1904), Brittingham (1905), and Tenney (1899). Madisonians esteemed the unique organization, and it attracted the attention of urban developers across the nation. The formation of the MPPDA coincided with the City Beautiful movement, and the pleasure drive adjacent to the future Hoyt Park followed in its Olmsteadian aesthetics. Its many winding trails still meander between the forest and the open field, and the hilly, twisting path of Owen Parkway leads to a tree-lined clearing and an expansive view of the city below.

The Progressive spirit continued to shape this area as the city gradually took over the full cost of park maintenance from the MPPDA (the organization transferred the last of its properties to the city and dissolved in 1938). The fledgling Madison Parks Department was created in 1932 at a time when the parks and pleasure drives were deteriorating due to decimated Depression-era budgets. In 1933 Mayor James Law was called to a national city officials’ meeting with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who revealed creation of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), designed to put the nation’s unemployed to work. Mayor Law called the Madison parks superintendent immediately, ordering him to put 300 men to work the following Monday to begin rebuilding and refurbishing Madison’s old parks and establishing infrastructure for new ones. According to Madison park superintendent and historian James G. Marshall, “Such a program (WPA) was a natural for the parks.”

Hoyt Park was one of the parks created that year with WPA funding. It was named after Frank W. Hoyt, a founder of the MPPDA who served as its treasurer the entirety of its 38-year existence. He and his wife Mary had first donated land in the area to expand Owen Parkway in 1924 (they gave more in 1941). WPA workers, mostly Italian stonemasons from the Greenbush neighborhood, cleared trails and constructed the main shelter, walls, staircases, a drinking fountain, and about a dozen fireplaces with native sandstone. Interestingly, though...
WPA funds for Hoyt Park dried up before the structures were completed, the workers finished them anyway out a sense of community pride. Joe Brusca, a park worker, recalled that local adults would roast meat and boil spaghetti over fireplaces while children frolicked in the abandoned quarry grounds. (In my two decades of visiting the park, I have not seen anyone use the fireplaces, especially to cook spaghetti). Fireplaces, stairs and the shelter remain as examples of the labor and dedication of the individuals who saw the potential the park held for them and future generations.

During the post-World War II era, Madisonians viewed Hoyt Park as a spot for outdoor recreation. A playground was constructed in 1954, followed by a parking lot and a ski jump. According to a sign on the interpretive trail, the UW Hoofers Club used the jump frequently until it was removed a decade later. For non-skiers, a toboggan run down the steepest hill in the park provided winter adventure until an accident forced it to close. At that time, the park was on Madison’s outskirts and offered a perfect place to picnic and enjoy the best of both city and country. Now, as a city park serving the near West side, it is still used, its playground revamped. The area on the opposite side of the park where the toboggan run and ski jump were located lies forgotten under the trees.

The neglected ski jump and toboggan run could have served as appropriate symbols for the entire park until the mid-1990s. In the preceding decades, the city budget for park maintenance had drastically diminished. As Cindy Hoffland, member of the Friends of Hoyt Park board of directors, recalled: “So many parks were just left to deteriorate.” William Tischler, in the 1993 Martell article, called attention to the erosion of the sandstone structures and the increasing vandalism in the park,
Barbeque pits

Photos by Lyle Anderson

Hoyt Park shelter

Photo by Lyle Anderson
Stairsteps in Hoyt Park

Photo by Lyle Anderson
concluding, “It’s probably time to start a ‘Friends of Hoyt Park.’” A centennial celebration of the MPPDA also brought renewed attention to the park, and in 1995 the Friends of Hoyt Park (FHP) organization was established.

With the help of a $75,000 trust fund from the Madison Parks Division and volunteer contributions, the Friends hired a stonemason to tuckpoint the crumbling walls and fireplaces, and a university student as a summer park ranger to clean up vandalism, conduct public relations, and curb the spread of invasive species. Jim Morgan, Madison Parks Superintendent until 2008, similarly promoted the use of a trust fund and a student ranger in other parks across Madison. These progressive initiatives are beginning to be employed elsewhere at urban parks regionally and nationally.

Besides having implemented these policy changes, the Friends actively influence the park’s vegetation and layout. The Hoyt Park Interpretive Trail, which they designed and constructed with a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources forestry program, features seven signs scattered throughout the park, offering interesting tidbits about its history, geology, vegetation, and community involvement. The Ready Prairie, established and cared for by Audrey Ready and other FHP members since the mid-1990s, dominates over an acre of the northern corner of the park. Interestingly, one of the signs admits that a prairie likely never grew there in the past, which would explain the trail’s abrupt transition from prairie grass to the hackberry and box elder forest that covers the old quarry face. Each month, the FHP meets at the prairie to curb encroachment of walnut and poplar seedlings, as well as to remove invasive thistles and Queen Anne’s lace. Influence of a nature ideal also prevails in the opposite corner of the park, where the FHP sprays oaks in an effort to treat iron chlorosis.

Volunteer contributions toward certain nature ideals in Hoyt Park over the years provided its rich history and highlight the changes in its land use. The Park and Pleasure Drive’s winding trails provided an idyllic escape from city life. WPA-built stone structures provided a location for a community of workers and their families to enjoy the outdoors, while the post-war period emphasized outdoor recreation.
With Hoyt now a completely urban park, efforts to restore it to prairie and forest environments suggest a resurging ideal of escapism from urban life. Because these land use changes were driven by Progressive initiatives and volunteer efforts, they offer a relatively unfiltered look at peoples’ views of nature.

The type of nature ideal that initiated the pyramid’s construction still eludes me. A project built by Hoyt School children long after the park’s other stone structures,¹⁹ I can only guess that it served as a gift to the park whose history, recreation, and beauty continue to intrigue visitors today. These days I rarely see more than a few individuals in the park every time I run through it. The concerted efforts of the FHP and the support of local citizens reassure me that its unique character and influence on Madison’s history will not pass unnoticed.

**Acknowledgments**

Special thanks to Bruce Gregg for providing me with many of the research sources, and to Bill Tischler and Cindy Hoffland for sharing their wealth of knowledge about Hoyt Park.
Endnotes

1 The city of Chichen Itza, located on Mexico’s Yucatan peninsula, is a UNESCO world heritage site. Built by the Maya, its great pyramid, El Castillo, dominates the center of the city.


4 Marshall, p. 3.

5 Marshall, p. 4-5.

6 The City Beautiful Movement was a reform philosophy of architecture and urban planning that flourished in the 1890s and 1900s. Its purpose was to introduce beautification and monumental grandeur in cities, not for its own sake, but to create moral and civic virtue among urban populations.


8 Marshall, p. 15.

9 Mattern and Brock; Marshall, p. 15; and the plaque Frank W. Hoyt on the Hoyt Park Shelter, 3902 Regent Street.


12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 “Volunteerism in Hoyt Park,” telephone interview with Cindy Hoffland, IT and web administrator for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, on November 18, 2010.


17 Hoffland interview.

18 Tischler interview.

Hoyt Park restrooms

Photo by Lyle Anderson
Elroy Smith, a native of Milwaukee, took these photographs while studying law at the University of Wisconsin. He boarded at the home of William and Bridget Ryan, 122 N. Franklin Street. Ryan was a clerk at the American Exchange Company. The mirror in the picture above can be seen in the view of the room to the right. Note the basin and water pitcher, from an era when few Madison houses had running water. The map on the wall is of the new Madison waterworks.
These glass-plate photographs of Madison were taken by Elroy Smith while he was attending law school at the University of Wisconsin in 1900 and 1901. They were recently discovered and digitized by his family.

Smith was born in Milwaukee in 1880. His grandfather, Charles Jeremiah Smith, emigrated from England to the United States in 1843 at age 23. Near the mouth of the St. Lawrence River he jumped overboard to rescue another passenger, Mercy Johnson. They married shortly thereafter.

In 1874, Charles founded C.J. Smith and Sons in Milwaukee along with the two youngest of his four sons. By the end of the century the company was the largest bicycle parts manufacturer in the world. Charles’ oldest son, Alonzo, Elroy’s father, invented and manufactured instructive toys. In 1886 he patented a spelling board game that became one of the most sought after and used spelling tools for children over the next several decades, sold exclusively through Selchow and Righter Company. Alonzo patented and manufactured three additional products, including a cardinal number board to complement his spelling board.

In 1904 Arthur, known as A.O., Charles’ son and Elroy’s uncle, founded A.O. Smith Corporation in Milwaukee and began manufacturing automobile frames. He hired Elroy’s brother, Reuben Stanley Smith, an engineer, to work for him. Reuben registered 46 patents between 1914 and 1923.

While attending law school in Madison, Elroy boarded at the home of William and Bridget Ryan at 122 North Franklin Street. After his graduation, he moved to Pasadena, California, where his immediate family had relocated at the turn of the century, and opened a law office with his brother Walter in downtown Los Angeles.

The family owned Camp Sierra in the San Gabriel Mountains. Elroy and Walter had an agreement that when either of them was at Camp Sierra alone they would flash a large mirror that could be seen from their office in Los Angeles at a specific time each day to indicate everything was fine. On one of Elroy’s visits to camp in 1911, no signal came. Walter hiked up to Camp Sierra and found Elroy delirious in bed. He carried Elroy off the mountain, but Elroy died soon after of pneumonia.

More about the history of the Smith family can be found at www.smithpumps.com. On the homepage, highlight “About Smith Pumps,” then click on “Family Legacy” on the drop-down menu.

See Historic Madison’s Facebook page for more of Elroy Smith’s photographs. Historic Madison is grateful to Walter Smith, Elroy’s great-nephew, for sharing them with us.
View from back window of 122 N. Franklin Street

1900

This photograph was taken from the window of the room where Elroy boarded. Note the outhouse in a neighbor’s back yard, as well as several barns. Both were typical of Madison in that era.
Ryan daughters
June 16, 1901
The daughters of William and Bridget Ryan. Note the bicycle, and the outhouse in a neighbor’s back yard.
Fountain and Civil War cannon
June 8, 1900 and March 31, 1901

Winter and summer views of the Capitol grounds. Olson & Veerhusen’s Clothing is among the stores visible on North Pinckney Street. The pedestrian in the winter photo is Walter Smith, photographer Elroy Smith’s brother.
Sleighs and wagons on South Pinckney Street
March 11, 1901

Businesses in the photo include Edwin Sumner & Son, wholesale and retail druggists, at #15; Sumner & Morris hardware at #17, and James Moseley’s bookstore at #19. The triangular building at far right is Hinrichs & Thompson’s Dry Goods, located at 101-103 King Street.
The Capitol from the Post Office
February 15, 1901

View from the corner of East Mifflin Street and Wisconsin Avenue. The cannon in Capitol Park is a relic of the Civil War; today it can be found at Camp Randall Memorial Park. The Capitol building was rendered unusable in a fire three years and twelve days later.
The Capitol from Main Hall
February 22, 1901

Visible are buildings on University Hill—Science Hall, the Wisconsin Historical Society, and, behind the trees, Music Hall and the Law School. State Street angles up the center of the scene to the Capitol. In the background are the water tower on East Washington Avenue, along with the steeples of Holy Redeemer, Grace Episcopal and St. Raphael churches.
View down East Washington Avenue from the Capitol roof. Horse-drawn sleighs loaded with wood are parked at the base of the water tower; the area served as Madison’s first Farmer’s Market. The building on the corner of North Pinckney and East Washington still remains (American Exchange Bank Building). Note the lack of development along East Washington; the process of filling the marshy area had begun just a few years earlier. Note also the awnings on the storefronts that provided shade for shoppers.
Monona Avenue from the Capitol
February 1, 1901

Looking south down what is now Martin Luther King, Jr., Boulevard. A fountain is on the lawn in the foreground and statues on pedestals flank the entrance to the Capitol grounds. The large building at the corner of East Main Street is the Pioneer Block, which hosted businesses and professional offices. The law office of John Olin is across the street at 1 West Main. Monona Terrace now occupies the empty space at the end of Monona Avenue.
Wisconsin Avenue from the Capitol
February 1, 1901

Looking north on Wisconsin Avenue towards Lake Mendota. Picnic Point is visible to the left. City Hall stands on the corner of West Mifflin Street; the Post Office is on the corner of East Mifflin.
Main Hall, University of Wisconsin
February 10, 1901

Note the wood sidewalk climbing University Hill. In the photo Main Hall still has its dome (it burned in 1916). The north wing had not yet been erected, nor had the statue of Abraham Lincoln.
Wood sidewalks on University Hill
June 18, 1901

The view is from Main Hall, looking towards the Capitol. The clock tower of Assembly Hall (now Music Hall) is in the center and the Law School is to the right.
West Main Street
June 18, 1901

From the left, businesses include the City Newsstand, John Damm Cigars, Olsen Barber Shop, and One Minute Coffee House, featuring single meals for twenty-five cents. The large building to the right of the restaurant is the Marston Block, which hosted multiple businesses and professional offices. The Square was once ringed with such blocks.
UW campus from a boat on Lake Mendota
June 19, 1901

From left to right, major buildings include the UW boathouse, Red Gym, Wisconsin Historical Society, Science Hall, Chemical Laboratory and machine shop. North Hall and Main Hall, with its dome, are the rightmost structures. The small structure along the shore at the end of North Park Street is a boathouse erected by Lucien S. Hanks, Madison banker and charter member of the Madison Yacht Club.
Armory & Gymnasium, University of Wisconsin
February 24, 1901
Note the UW boathouse, barely visible behind the “Red Gym.”
In 1900, State Street was still largely residential. 545 State Street was the home of lawyer Michael Leahy and his wife Rose. Their sons, Stephen J. and John H., students at the UW, resided with them. Sometime during 1900 the home was divided into two boarding houses, one operated by William H. and Fannie Ashard, the second by Anna Moffitt, widow of Leroy. Stephen Leahy continued to reside in the house. Note the streetcar tracks on State Street, and the street sign attached to the side of the house. Street signs were not placed on poles until years later.
View is looking west from Langdon Street. The Wisconsin Historical Society’s new building is to the left and the President’s residence, occupied at the time by Charles Kendall Adams, now the site of the Memorial Union, is to the right. The house next to Adams’ belonged to John Olin and his wife, Helen.
The rightmost house, with the gable in the center, is 837 East Gorham, the residence of Thomas L. and Hannah Thompson. He was a carpenter. The house just beyond is 841 East Gorham, the residence of Mrs. J. Hungerford and Grace A. Koch, who worked at FFF Laundry. The white house at 847 belonged to traveling salesman Charles R. Adams and his wife Clara. Frederick and Minnie Ottow (he worked at Gisholt) and Ole A. and Mary Nelson (he was a carpenter), resided at 849. The last house on the block, 851, was the residence of Peter O. and Lena Fosaid. He was a machinist at Gisholt.
This house belonged to Margaret Ford, widow of Reverend Francis Ford, and her son Marcus, an actor (later a director, playwright and producer as well). Left a fortune by his father while a teenager, Marcus graduated from the UW law school in 1897, likely where he and Elroy became acquainted. His wife, Winifred Bonnewitz, was a Broadway actress; they appeared together in *Quo Vadis* in San Francisco in 1900. She later painted watercolors of dozens of Madison houses (featured in an article elsewhere in this issue of the *Journal*).
Storefronts of the Wisconsin School of Music, East Side Variety Store and Hess Grocery Market, June 14, 1927

 Owned by the Hess family, this two-story brick building, erected in 1924, property was located at 154 Atwood Avenue (the address was changed, in 1929, to 1962-1964 Atwood Avenue).

 Wisconsin Historical Society, Image WHS-5011
In 1904, Henry Fauerbach of the Fauerbach Brewery persuaded Frank J. Hess to relocate from Prairie du Chien to Madison to start an independent cooperage business. Frank was born in Kardasova Recice, Bohemia (now the Czech Republic) in 1870 and learned the cooper trade in Pilsen, Bohemia. He immigrated to America in 1890 and practiced his trade in Chicago for a time before moving with his wife Anna (Stluka) and infant son James to Prairie du Chien, where her parents had a farm. Frank made barrels there for nearby breweries and pickle factories.

Upon his arrival in Madison he built a two-story wood-frame house with a wide front porch at 1952 Atwood Avenue. The cooper shop was behind the house, near the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad tracks. Five more sons and one daughter were born into the family. Frank taught his four surviving sons – Joe, Tony, “Foots,” and Eddie – the cooper trade and together they made thousands of white oak barrels at Schenk’s Corners for breweries all across Wisconsin and the eastern United States until 1966. His daughter Josephine was the business manager for the enterprise.

In addition to his own house and cooperage, Frank J. Hess built two other buildings on either side of these, initially to provide employment for his sons during Prohibition, when orders for beer barrels came to a stop.

When the photograph (opposite page, bottom) was taken in 1927, the East Side Variety Store (on the left) was being run by Erwin Last, and the Hess Grocery and Market (on the right) was being run by “Foots” Hess (who is standing in front of the store with his hands on his hips). Eddie Hess is the delivery boy standing next to the truck. The Wisconsin School of Music had a branch studio on the second floor.

In 1929 Tony Hess took over the East Side Variety Store and renamed it the Hess Variety Store. In 1931 “Foots” Hess sold the Hess Grocery and Market to Henry Struckmeyer, Arnold Field, and Arnold’s brother Eddie.

Earle “Bud” Larkin started his retail “motorist supply” store in Beloit in 1928. In 1932 he relocated the store to 720 University Avenue in Madison. He opened a branch store in the Hess Building at Schenk’s Corners in 1934, taking over the variety store space. About 1942 Larkin’s expanded into...
Larkin’s newspaper ad

Wisconsin State Journal April 19, 1934

Hess family and friends celebrate New Year’s Eve at the Trophy Tavern, December 31, 1949

Seated, from left: Frank J. Hess, Sr., son Tony Hess and his wife Gladys. Standing, from left: Isobel Minter (her husband Bill was a bartender in the tavern), Nancy Corrine and her husband Frank “Foots” Hess, and Joe Matush, owner of the Trophy Tavern.

Photo courtesy Hess family
the grocery store space, selling hardware and fishing tackle in one half and auto supplies in the other half. In 1944, Frank J. Hess sold the building to Elmer and Thelma Nystrom, who owned the Larkin business at that time.

Larkin’s always had a booth, displaying its merchandise, at the annual East Side Business Men’s Association Festival. Al Lunde was the manager of Larkin’s from 1952 to 1966, when he left to work at the Post Office.

In 1964, the Nystroms sold the building and business to Joseph O. Cox and moved to Arkansas. Joe Cox lived in Beloit and only worked at Larkin’s on Fridays. The annual inventory was taken on a Sunday in January. When the inventory was completed, Joe would take his employees – Al Lunde, Jim Weber and Gordy Smith – to dinner at Leske’s Supper Club, 2425 Atwood Avenue.

Everett “Jim” Weber worked for Bud Larkin from the time Larkin opened his store in Beloit. Within the Larkin store in Madison, Weber owned and operated a wholesale Auto Accessories Company from 1952 to 1960. He continued to clerk for Larkin’s, becoming the manager when Al Lunde left in 1966. Jim Weber closed the store in 1972.

Since 1992 the building has been owned by Thomas Garver and Natasha Nicholson and is being used as their home and studio. An historical marker was installed in front of the Hess Cooperage in 2008.

The Trophy Tavern was built about 1926 by Frank J. Hess as a restaurant. A short time later it became a billiard and pool hall run by Frank’s son Charles. In 1931 Joseph Matush and his friend Don Riley took over the business and operated it as a soda fountain and pool hall until 1933, when Prohibition was repealed. Then Joe Matush obtained a liquor license and it served as a tavern until it closed in 1967.

Matush, a native of Austria-Hungary, came to America in 1920 at the age of 14. He married Edna Peterson, a lifelong resident of the east side of Madison, who became his partner in the operation of the Trophy Tavern.

The tavern had a good reputation, considered one of the cleanest taverns in town. Matush was recognized by city officials and police as “one of the most honest tavern keepers in the city.” Drunkards and loiterers were never permitted in the tavern and were ushered out the minute they were spotted.

The Matushs lived at 1959 East Washington Avenue.

During World War II, Joe would tell the soldiers that came into the tavern during the holidays that they were invited to his house for a home cooked holiday meal.

The tavern served beer, mixed drinks, vanilla ice cream and malted milk shakes. Irma Jo (Sorge) Balser, known as “Josie,” worked as a bartender and barmaid at the Trophy Tavern from 1936 through 1951, including all of the New Year’s Eve parties. Her hours were Tuesday through Saturday from 5:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. Her friends would say, “Let’s go to Josie’s” when they wanted to go to the Trophy Tavern. She loved her work and knew all the Madison policemen who were assigned to the Schenk’s Corners beat. Often when a customer had been drinking too much, a policeman would drive the customer home at closing time, telling him to come back for his car the next day. Other Trophy Tavern employees were Bill Minter and Norbert Morehouse.

Joe Matush and his wife retired from the tavern business in 1967 when the building was purchased and torn down (along with the Hess house and cooperage) by the Security State Bank to expand their parking lot. Joe died at age 66 in 1972 and Edna died in 2002 at age 89. They had three sons, Richard, Edward and Tom, and three daughters, Nancy, Judy and Sue. Tom, a soldier, was killed while serving in Viet Nam in 1967.

Gary Hess and Ann Waidelich are writing a book entitled Roll Out the Barrels: History of the Hess Cooperage, Madison, Wisconsin 1904—1966. This article is a chapter in the book. It will be published in Fall 2014 and will be available from Amazon for about $20.
About the Authors

**Lyle Anderson** has been a member of the board of Historic Madison for over a decade, working on the Journal and editing the past three issues. He has served as the University of Wisconsin carillonneur since August 1986. He regularly plays piano and organ for services at First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ. He is also Wisconsin State Climatology office manager and has worked on the crew of Michael Feldman’s Whad’Ya Know? since the first show.

**Gary Hess** is a retired machinist who worked at Oscar Mayer, and a retired guardsman for the Wisconsin Air National Guard. He serves on the board of the Historic Blooming Grove Historical Society, and is an active community volunteer. He is also the Hess Cooperage family historian.

**Barb Essock** is an artist and long-time member of the board of Historic Madison. For many years she has been in charge of HMI’s Alternate Parade of Homes.

**Scott Klasek** grew up in Madison (one block away from Hoyt Park), attended UW-Madison, graduating with a degree in Biochemistry and Environmental Studies in 2011. He then worked for the UW Genetics department as a researcher and lab technician, and as an organic farm manager at a local CSA. In the fall of 2013 he moved to Oregon State University in Corvallis to begin a PhD program in Microbiology.

**Mark Gajewski** is an amateur historian, president of Historic Madison, and former president of the Wisconsin Historical Society. He has written articles for the Journal about Theodore Read, the Kehl School of Dance, Madison becoming a city, and Madison during the Civil War. He helped write the Forest Hill and Resurrection Cemetery guides and has worked on all of Historic Madison’s annual calendars. In addition, he wrote many articles for Historic Madison’s series in the Capital Times - Connecting with the Past.

**Ann Waidelich** is a retired Madison Public Library reference librarian, avid post card collector, and long-time president of Historic Madison. She is currently a curator at the Historic Blooming Grove Historical Society and co-leader of the East Side History Club.
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