

What is Archives Month?

Historical Records: Keys to Our Cultural Heritage

Archives Month is an annual celebration of the value of Wisconsin's historical records, the original documents that tell the stories of our families, communities, business and civic organizations, and government institutions. During Archives Month, archival repositories, libraries, and other institutions around the state hold programs and exhibits to promote the value of historical records.

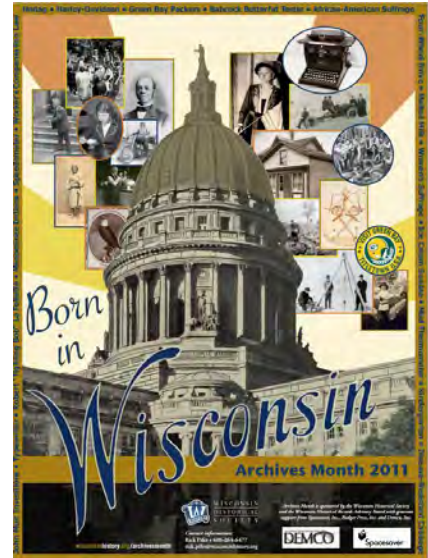
How do others celebrate Archives Month?

Each October the Society of American Archivists promotes American Archives Month, a nationally focused campaign to spotlight archives and archivists around the country. As part of this effort, the Wisconsin Historical Society and other archival institutions throughout the state celebrate Wisconsin Archives Month. This local effort brings attention to the rich historical record of Wisconsin and its people.

Participate in Archives Month!

Comb your archives and historical collections for historical materials for use in programs that reflect Wisconsin's wide and varied stories, such as:

- photographs and posters
- audio recordings
- letters
- newspapers
- diaries



Have Questions?

For more information about American Archives Month, see the Society of American Archivists website and the Council of State Archivists website.

Contact Us

The Wisconsin Historical Records Advisory Board staff will be glad to answer your questions and provide sources for help in planning your own Archives Month program.

Phone: 608-264-6470

Who Sponsors Archives Month?

Archives Month is an annual celebration and is co-sponsored by the Wisconsin Historical Records Advisory Board, a volunteer board appointed by the Governor in association with the Wisconsin Historical Society.

The Society would like to thank Demco, Inc. and Spacesaver, Inc. for their generous support of Archives Month since 2002.

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Historical Records Are Everywhere!

Historical records are not just dusty papers in an attic or dark archival repository; historical records are alive and everywhere! How many of the following items do you have in your home?

- Social security card
- School report card
- Immunization record
- Speeding ticket
- Record of births, marriages & deaths (sometimes recorded in the front of a family Bible)
- Birth certificate
- Diary or journal
- Letters that you've received or copies of letters that you've sent
- Marriage certificate
- A newspaper clipping about your child's basketball team or an obituary
- Bills, check stubs, mortgage papers
- Letter of acceptance to a college
- Photographs
- A scrapbook holding any of the above

These are all examples of historical records, and you can probably add many more. Here other ways records are part of our daily lives:

- Churches keep records about the baptisms, marriages, and deaths of its parishioners
- Doctors and hospitals keep records on the patients they treat
- Businesses keep records that document a new invention or product
- Civic organizations (such as Kiwanis, Lyons Club, Rotary International) keep a constitution, meeting minutes, and a membership roll

- Courthouses have criminal, divorce, and civil case records

The lists go on and on! Modern lives are extensively documented, and repositories that have historical records contain the keys to understanding lives from the past.

Programming Suggestions

Here are some suggestions for launching Archives Month programming in your community.

Classroom Collaborations

- Give an educational presentation for National History Day students on how to use primary sources.
- Conduct a class project to write about the historic topic.
- Work with a teacher to develop lesson plans that incorporate historical records by or about the historic topic.

Local Media

- Work with your local newspaper to print a photograph or letter from your collections each day or each week of Archives Month.
- Publicize any events underway in conjunction with Archives Month.
- Suggest a news story that contrasts the historic event that occurred in your area of Wisconsin with its popularity today and how that's changed.

Public Programming

Interested in creating a public program for Archives Month? Here are some ideas to get you started. You may want to brainstorm with others in your community and in your institution to develop other ideas that fulfill the mission of Archives Month and that work for you. Involve as many people in your area as you can. Be imaginative!

- Develop a campaign to collect documents from your community that should be preserved for posterity. Publicize your collecting efforts during Archives Month and enlist the interest and support of your community.
- Create an exhibit of items from your collections and invite school classes and community groups to guided tours of the exhibit and of your institution. For even greater exposure, move the exhibit from your institution to other public spaces, such as the post office or a school exhibit case.
- Work with community groups to create public programs or panel discussions about the history topic, both past and present.
- Record reminiscences of your community members. Their recorded memories can be your most precious historical records.
- Host a viewing of films featuring the historic topic.
- Organize a family history night, when your genealogy patrons have your collection to themselves. Encourage parents and grandparents to bring members of their families' younger generations to learn about their family history.
- Put on a Home Movie Night event, bringing people in your community together to watch the films and videos related to the historic topic. Remind the audience that home movies are historical records like every other document in your archives.
- Work with other archival institutions in your area to host an Archives Bazaar. The bazaar would allow participating institutions to showcase examples from their collections for the public in one location.
- Digitize a portion of your collection and create an online exhibit to premiere in October.
- Design a scavenger hunt that highlights historical landmarks in your area. Penn State University Archives designed their scavenger hunt around historic campus trivia.
- Develop a self-paced walking tour of historic places in your area. To facilitate the use of archival material and to bring history alive, make available a guidebook with copies of historical records such as photographs, clippings, deeds, and other archival items to complement their tour experience.
- Record a podcast to accompany an exhibit or a self-paced walking tour that patrons can download from your website. All you need to create a digital audio file is a computer, a microphone, and free audio-editing and recording software, such as Audacity®.

Send Us Your Comments

We continually update our materials to serve you better. If you have other ideas that will expand this toolkit or other suggestions, please forward them on to us!

Archives Month Sample Events

These sample events from previous Wisconsin Archives Months are here to help you find out what's been done in the past. From blogs to film screenings, award ceremonies and workshops, these are a sampling of the possibilities.

DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENING

Chosen Towns - The Story of Jews in Wisconsin's Small Communities

This documentary film was created and sponsored by the Wisconsin Society for Jewish Learning (WSJL). Screenings available throughout October. See the WSJL website for the schedule of screenings that are free and open to the public. Multiple and locations throughout Wisconsin (see WSJL website)

WORKSHOP

Oh Darned! Where Did I Put Uncle George? Organizing and Compiling Your Research 9 am - 12 noon at Memorial Library, Rm 126

WORKSHOP

From Daguerreotype to Digital File: Organizing and Caring For Family and Personal Photographs 9 am - 12 noon at Memorial Library, Rm 126

WORKSHOP

Immigration and Naturalization Records Learning How To Use Records in Your Genealogy Research 9 am - 12 pm at Memorial Library Rm 126

AWARD PRESENTATION

Kay Demrow Presented with Governor's Archives Award

6 pm at the Church of Christ, 117 Church St., Footville, Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Historical Society and the Wisconsin Historical Records Advisory Board will present the 2008 Governor's Award for Archival Advocacy to Kay Demrow at a reception to be held in her honor. Demrow, a volunteer, is the archivist, treasurer and newsletter editor for the Luther Valley Historical Society and has done outstanding work to help preserve and educate the public

about the history of Southwestern Rock County. She has indexed the local historical society's holdings of more than 4,000 items and continues to transcribe many of the diaries, church and town records in the collection. In addition, she organizes speaker engagements and often speaks herself.

BLOG

UW-Madison Society of American Archivists Student Chapter Archives Month Blog

www.archivesmonth.blogspot.com

In celebration of Archives Month 2008, the Society of American Archivists Student Chapter at the University of Wisconsin-Madison will present an Archives Month Blog. This blog will focus on Wisconsin's archival heritage by featuring repositories around the state. Each posting will describe the repository and discuss each repository's unique collections using images. To view postings or leave a comment, go to www.archivesmonth.blogspot.com. Contact Information: Greg Kocken, SAA Student Chapter Coordinator, kocken@wisc.edu, 608-264-6410.

Add Your Event to Our Schedule

Interested in participating in Wisconsin Archives Month? You can choose to add your event by mail or email. To add your event by email, please contact the Wisconsin Historical Society archives with the following event information:

- Name of Event
- Time and date(s) of event
- Description
- Locations
- Address
- Contact Person's name
- Contact Person's phone number
- Contact Person's e-mail address
- Name of Sponsoring Organization

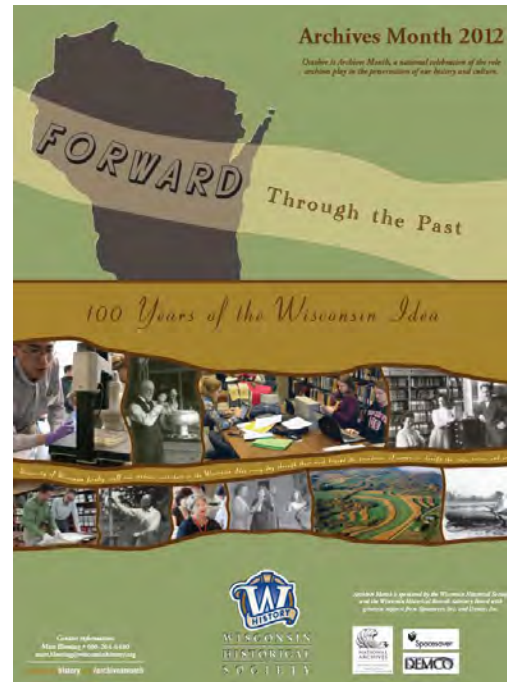
Past Wisconsin Archives Months

In the following pages you will find posters and information about previous Wisconsin Archives Month programming.



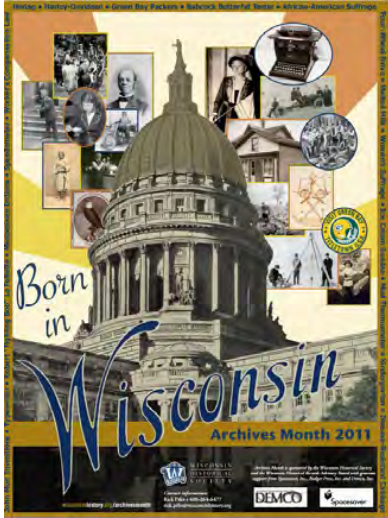
2013 - Preservation: Connecting to Collections

The WHRAB selected preservation as the focal theme of the 2013 Archives Month to emphasize the centrality of preservation in all archival efforts. The theme sought to highlight several statewide preservation initiatives, including a major “Connecting to Collections” grant program funded by the Institute for Museum and Library Services.



2012 - Forward through the Past: 100 Years of the Wisconsin Idea

The 2012 Wisconsin Archives Month theme links the Badger state’s official motto and the Wisconsin Idea (the concept that our public university system serves all Wisconsin residents). The theme also aimed to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Wisconsin Area Research Network (ARC), a model example of the Wisconsin Idea.



2011 - Born in Wisconsin

The 2011 Wisconsin Archives Month theme, "Born in Wisconsin," highlights materials that reflect our state's varied stories, focusing on people, ideas, organizations, products, and events native to or associated with Wisconsin. It allows you an opportunity to showcase your holdings, programs, and services.



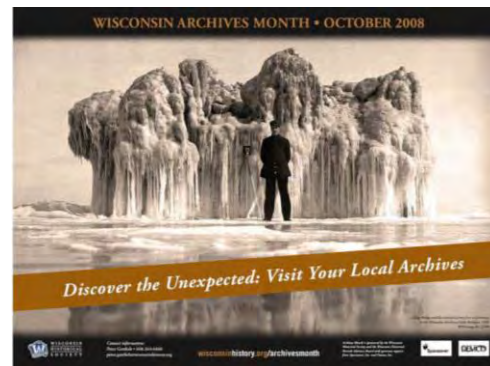
2010 - Postcard Wisconsin

The 2010 Wisconsin Archives Month theme, "Postcard Wisconsin," focuses on historical postcards to highlight how people keep archival documents about themselves, their families, and their experiences to preserve memories and share stories. Whether or not your archives has a historical postcard collection, Wisconsin Archives Month brings you an opportunity to showcase your holdings, programs, and services.



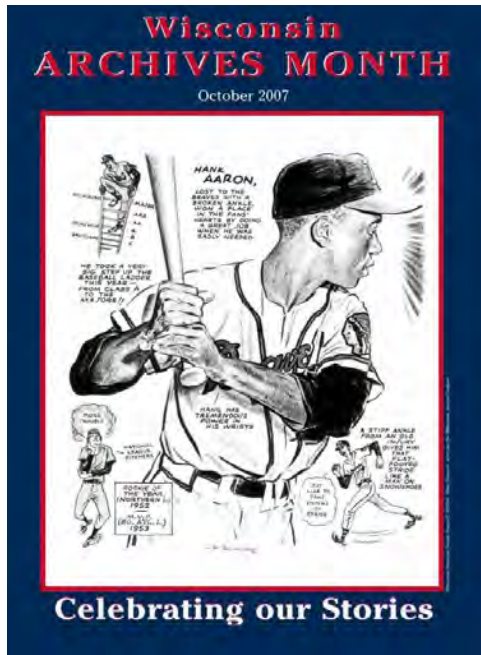
2009 - Scrapbook Wisconsin

The 2009 Wisconsin Archives Month theme, "Scrapbook Wisconsin," spotlights one familiar way that many people use documents to keep their own records and recall meaningful events in their lives. Whether they are the traditional paper variety pictured in the poster or the newer versions made possible by computers and digital photography, scrapbooks are frequently found in our homes and in Wisconsin archives.



2008 - Discover the Unexpected

In 2008 the theme encourages people to visit local archives. Wisconsin archives can surprise and delight as well as inform visitors. Their collections include fascinating windows on state and local history that sometimes reveal events, people and trends we never knew before. During Archives Month 2008, we featured the unexpected riches that our state's historical records hold.



2007 - Celebrating Our Stories

In 2007 the theme explores how the people of Wisconsin remember the past, share stories about this land and its people, and celebrate their heritage, common values and accomplishments.



2006 - Wisconsin at Play

In 2006 the theme reflects on how Badger State residents have engaged in many types of recreational activities, leisure pursuits, sports, hobbies, and games over the years. Wisconsinites were encouraged to comb their archives and historical collections for items that document this off-hours part of Wisconsin life.



2005 - Wisconsin Women

In 2005 the theme chronicles of the significant role women have made to life in Wisconsin.



2004 - Wisconsin Votes

In 2004 the theme reviews how Wisconsin voters have made themselves heard every election day with electoral politics, campaigning and voting activities.



2003 - Immigrant Wisconsin

In 2003, the theme reflects on immigration to the Badger State. From the arrival of Wisconsin's first human inhabitants to naturalization ceremonies for our newest foreign-born citizens, immigration to Wisconsin has played a significant role in the state's history. In fact, Wisconsin, often called "the most ethnic state," has always been home to a broad array of groups from other countries.



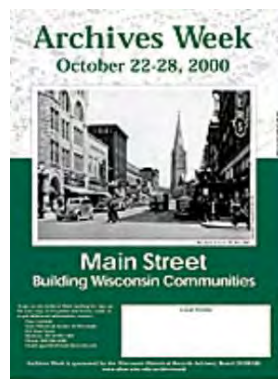
2002 - Wisconsin in Wartime

2002 theme invites the public to reflect on Wisconsin's experiences in war, from the battlefield to the home front. Historical records such as photographs, posters, audio recordings, letters, newspapers, and diaries capture wartime experiences and remind us of how war has changed and shaped our state.



2001 - Wisconsin Family History: Digging Our Roots

The 2001 theme reflects on the many different aspects of life for Wisconsin families, from remembering your loved ones to chronicling your entire family tree.



2000 - Main Street Wisconsin: Building Communities

The 2000 theme highlights the importance of main streets as commercial, social, governmental, and cultural centers - the place around which Wisconsin communities were built.



1999 - Making the News: Wisconsin in the Media

The 1999 theme focuses on Wisconsin's own Hans von Kaltenborn (1878-1965), who started out as a newspaper writer but later became the "Dean of American Radio News Commentators." papers, scripts, and recorded broadcasts.

Open House Toolkit

This toolkit walks you through the entire open house planning process, with tips to make your event a success.

On the following pages you'll find:

- **Invitation template** which allows you to modify, print and mail your own invitations
- **Press release template** which allows you to modify, print and send a press release to local newspapers, helping promote your event
- **Sign template** which allows you to modify, print and post signs helping direct traffic through your facility and to parking areas

Open House

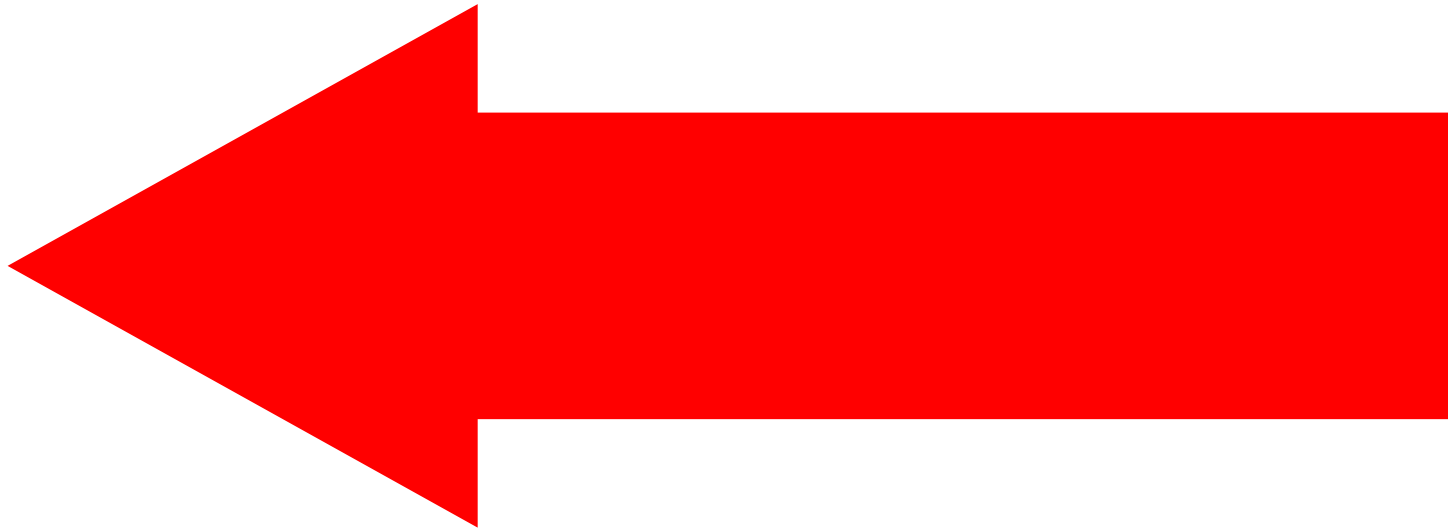
Press Release

OPEN HOUSE



PARKING

OPEN HOUSE



PARKING





