

Museum Notes

for the week of September 6 – 12, 2026
by Bridget Van Beckum, assistant curator

The Vernon County Fair is fast approaching! Come find our booth in the VMH building to say “hi” and play some trivia! Or, if you’d like to be more involved, we are still looking for volunteers to staff our booth. To sign up for a two-hour shift, you can either contact us at museum@vernoncountyhistory.org or 608-637-7396, or stop by the museum. Our fall hours are Monday through Friday, from 11 to 4.

Even after the Fair is done, we will still have plenty going on here at the VCHS. This month’s program at the Vernon County Museum and History Center will be on Tuesday, September 22 at 7 PM. Jarrod Roll, Director of the Monroe County Local History Room & Museum, will present “Gone But Not Forgotten: History of the Wisconsin State School / Child Center,” exploring the history of State Public School for Dependent and Neglected Children in Sparta. Thousands of orphaned and neglected children from all over Wisconsin, including Vernon County, found themselves living at the State School from 1886 until it closed in 1976. This program should be particularly interesting because the stories of children are not often told or recorded in history – especially those of vulnerable children living on the edge of society.

Be sure to also join us on September 27 at 4 PM for a cemetery walk at the Vernon County Cemetery, the former site of the Vernon County Poor Farm & Asylum. Costumed actors will bring to life the stories of those who lived and worked there. (And if you’d like to volunteer to be an actor for the tour, it’s not too late to sign up!) In case of rain, the cemetery walk will be postponed to Sunday, October 4.

Last but not least, the Cheyenne Settlers Heritage Society is having a Historical Presentation/Fundraiser on Saturday, September 19, at the Hillsboro Fireman’s Park on Hwy 33. There will be guest speakers (including VCHS board member Kevin Alderson), food, raffles, door prizes, and more! Doors open at 10 AM. For more info, find the Cheyenne Settlers Heritage Society on Facebook, or stop by the Vernon County Museum to pick up a poster. Now and then people come to the museum to research Cheyenne Valley, so this event is an excellent opportunity to learn more about the area’s unique history from the perspective of some of the original settlers’ descendants!

As you can see, there’s a lot of local history in store for you this month! We hope you’ll take advantage of at least one of these opportunities to learn about the rich history of Vernon County.