Generations passed down the story that mortised sockets in the cross held floor joists for a second floor on which soldiers would sleep, although it was unknown precisely which fort building ... family tradition was preserved in an interview for the 2008 PBS Special, “Wisconsin Hometown Stories: Portage Memories.”

The Amish gentleman was able to sketch many intriguing details he had discovered when he had dismantled the barn with his brother some years previous. He easily recalled specific measurements and pointed out special features still present among the elements of the building. We then ... a period of research in which fascinating information emerged, pointing to the likely identity of this old fort building.

while it is unknown what may ultimately be done to protect what remains, this building is too important not to receive every chance for historicindianagencyhouse/historicindianagencyhouse@ gmail.com

Phone: 608-742-6362

SPARK
From Page 2

wated herds of cattle mattered little. In a way, history still lived at that place.”

“The 1918 gathering at the site was a consequence of research in visiting the disappearing relics of the early days. While talk of the agency house grew, something comparatively mundane was about to touch off a new chapter in the history of that most ‘unusually interesting place.’

In 1929, the Wisconsin Archaeological Society coordinated another public gathering in regard to the Agency House’s fate—this time at the state capitol.

“A pilgrimage was made to the [agency house] site four weeks later. Participants turned out two hundred strong from across southern Wisconsin. Justice Chester Fowler of the Wisconsin Supreme court officiated. For those who had taken up [Mrs. Charles E.] Buell’s call to read Wau-Bun, the experience of walking the cobweb halls of times past provided a valuable taste of the wonder evoked by history in three dimensions. They understood the reason why they labored to save the decrepit home. If something weren’t done, the palpable presence of the historic which they felt that afternoon would soon, as Brown warned, ‘disappear and be forgotten.’”

Fast forward to July 17, 2021, as the WAS plans to return to the site which had sparked a historic preservation movement 130 years prior. Members of the society will be able to experience the fruit of their predecessors’ efforts in the form of a restored and preserved landmark which has endured as a museum for ninety years and counting. A nationally significant site on the National Register of Historic Places, the Agency House continues to bring history and its crucial lessons to life for visitors, generation after generation.

The newsletter of the Historic Indian Agency House

Volume 21, Issue 2

July 2021

Year two of archaeological dig underway

Learning & discovery abound

A multitude of eager participants and spectators converged at the Agency House on July 10 and 11 for the first of two weekends of a public educational archaeological dig. Archaeologists Constance Arzigian, John Wackman, and Dan Joyce are again leading the annual efforts to locate the Agency Blacksmith shop and learn more about how the Agency functioned in the early 1830s. Adults and children alike and up are invited to work alongside the professionals after participating in a five-minute “Archaeology Boot Camp.” Our objective is to be able to more holistically understand the site’s story, as well as foster an appreciation and basic understanding of this important scientific process by which history is preserved and interpreted.

Detective work leads to significant find

Fort Winnebago discovery unexpected and intriguing

The officers’ quarters which was the Kinzies’ first home at Fort Winnebago has now possibly been found exist.

[Excerpt from Wau-Bun, by Juliette Kinzie, wife of Indian Agent John Kinzie at Fort Winnebago in the 1830s]: “Major and Mrs. Twiggs and a few of the younger officers gave us a cordial welcome. How cordial those alone can know who have come, like us, to a remote, isolated home in the wilderness. The Major insisted on our taking possession of the quarters assigned to us on the opposite side of the spacious hall. The first involved assisting the Cherrywood Neighborhood Association of Middleton in research and design of a historical marker being placed where the Blue Mounds trail cut through that area. We also provided a program in May for the Mount Horeb Area Historical Society’s ‘Difficult Perspectives’ series. In April and May, HIAH was involved for the second year in a national education initiative called Remake Learning Days, and we were subsequently invited to include our Archaeology Kids’ Camp program in the Wisconsin Science Festival in October.

In June, we placed a temporary exhibit on ‘The Forging of History Preservation’ at the Portage Public Library, and of course we plan to be back at the Columbia County Fair in July to share the history of frontier Portage with those who call this area “home” today.

Gift shop makeover

The gift shop was overhauled in April to reflect the themes within our site’s permanent exhibit and to provide a unique space in which to highlight our new 2021 Historic Preservation Edition of Wau-Bun.
A look back at some June events at the Agency House

(Left) Work progresses on our fire-wrighted dugout canoe project. Join us the last Friday of each month through September; agencyhouse.org/dugout-canoe (Center) Pastor Mike Goodwin is an 1830s itinerant preacher at the Praise on the Prairie event. (Right) Collections care expert, Nicolette B. Meister, presents an engaging workshop on how to best preserve antiques and family heirlooms.

DIG

From Page 1

General Engineering Company has again generously sponsored this rare opportunity for community involvement in a professional scientific and historical endeavor. The George L. N. Meyer Foundation and the H.L. Palmer Masonic Angel Fund have offered additional logistical support.

June 17 and 18 will be our final dig weekend. Pre-registration for dig times is available here: https://www.agencyhouse.eventbrite.com. You may also register at the door for any time slots that are still available.

More details may be found at agencyhouse.org/archaeology-2021.

Tree gets vaccinated

Every three years, the historic elm tree in front of the Agency House receives an inoculation against Dutch Elm Disease. The tree is known to be over 200 years old.

Hamms’ Arborcare inoculates the tree, not with a syringe, but by drilling and pumping the solution—all 70 gallons of it—directly into the roots of the tree. It takes a few hours.

Watch a brief video blog produced by Hamms’ Arborcare featuring our historic tree receiving its booster shot this year: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMzDQbB8cIw.

Then and now | 1918, 2021

Group returns to HIAH after 103 years

When the Wisconsin Archaeological Society in conjunction with the Wisconsin Historical Society and Sauk County Historical Society in order to commemorate the import history that happened at locations around Portage.

[Quoted material below is excerpted from the new addendum in Wau-Bun, 2021]

“Visitors milled about the historic structure—one of the last surviving vestiges of the history they had gathered to commemorate. Then it was off across the river to old Fort Winnebago, although after ninety years very little remained to intimate the existence of the formerly impressive compound.

To all these gathered history enthusiasts, the material remnants previously unseen in this part of the world. The fact that the agency had become a farm and the fort’s well now

A new outdoor exhibit is coming to the Agency House by the spring of 2022, thanks in part to a grant from Wisconsin Humanities with funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the State of Wisconsin. HIAH is partnering with the Ho-Chunk Nation to create a cultural center to create an exhibit designed to powerfully present the history of the First Infantry Regiment drawing water from the fort’s well and of Juliette Kinzie furnishing the brand new agency house with marvles previously unseen in this part of the world. The fact that the agency had become a farm and the fort’s well now

May 1918, 2021

Visit provided spark that set movement ablaze

When the Wisconsin Archaeological Society in order to commemorate the import history that happened at locations around Portage.

“A new outdoor exhibit is coming to the Agency House by the spring of 2022, thanks in part to a grant from Wisconsin Humanities with funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the State of Wisconsin.” HIAH is partnering with the Ho-Chunk Nation to create a Cultural Center to create an exhibit designed to powerfully present the history of the First Infantry Regiment drawing water from the fort’s well and of Juliette Kinzie furnishing the brand new agency house with marvles previously unseen in this part of the world. The fact that the agency had become a farm and the fort’s well now

A look back at some June events at the Agency House

(Left) Work progresses on our fire-wrighted dugout canoe project. Join us the last Friday of each month through September; agencyhouse.org/dugout-canoe (Center) Pastor Mike Goodwin is an 1830s itinerant preacher at the Praise on the Prairie event. (Right) Collections care expert, Nicolette B. Meister, presents an engaging workshop on how to best preserve antiques and family heirlooms.

DIG

From Page 1

General Engineering Company has again generously sponsored this rare opportunity for community involvement in a professional scientific and historical endeavor. The George L. N. Meyer Foundation and the H.L. Palmer Masonic Angel Fund have offered additional logistical support.

June 17 and 18 will be our final dig weekend. Pre-registration for dig times is available here: https://www.agencyhouse.eventbrite.com. You may also register at the door for any time slots that are still available.

More details may be found at agencyhouse.org/archaeology-2021.

Tree gets vaccinated

Every three years, the historic elm tree in front of the Agency House receives an inoculation against Dutch Elm Disease. The tree is known to be over 200 years old.

Hamms’ Arborcare inoculates the tree, not with a syringe, but by drilling and pumping the solution—all 70 gallons of it—directly into the roots of the tree. It takes a few hours.

Watch a brief video blog produced by Hamms’ Arborcare featuring our historic tree receiving its booster shot this year: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMzDQbB8cIw.

Then and now | 1918, 2021

Group returns to HIAH after 103 years

When the Wisconsin Archaeological Society in order to commemorate the import history that happened at locations around Portage.

[Quoted material below is excerpted from the new addendum in Wau-Bun, 2021]

“Visitors milled about the historic structure—one of the last surviving vestiges of the history they had gathered to commemorate. Then it was off across the river to old Fort Winnebago, although after ninety years very little remained to intimate the existence of the formerly impressive compound.

To all these gathered history enthusiasts, the material remnants previously unseen in this part of the world. The fact that the agency had become a farm and the fort’s well now

A new outdoor exhibit is coming to the Agency House by the spring of 2022, thanks in part to a grant from Wisconsin Humanities with funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the State of Wisconsin. HIAH is partnering with the Ho-Chunk Nation to create a Cultural Center to create an exhibit designed to powerfully present the history of the First Infantry Regiment drawing water from the fort’s well and of Juliette Kinzie furnishing the brand new agency house with marvles previously unseen in this part of the world. The fact that the agency had become a farm and the fort’s well now