

We are housed in the historic Hilgen & Schroeder Mill Store at the corner of Portland and Columbia Roads in downtown Cedarburg. The Cedarburg History Museum creates unique spaces for permanent installments, rotating exhibits, and interactive technology. Built in 1856 from cream city brick, Frederick Hilgen and William Schroeder utilized the building as a retail outlet and living quarters for employees of the Cedarburg Mill across the street.

By the late 1800s, the lower level converted into a tavern. In 1931, the small Riverside Café was built east of the building. In 1941, Barth's Tavern occupied the space. It enlarged over the years eventually evolving into Barth's Cocktail Bar Restaurant and finally Barth's at the Bridge before closing in 2001. In 2015, local benefactors Mal and Jill Hepburn offered the building to the Cedarburg Landmark Preservation Society as a place to house the Cedarburg History Museum and the Visitor Center for the Cedarburg Chamber of Commerce.

**FREE ADMISSION**

**Hours:**

Wed-Sat 10am-4pm

Sunday noon-4pm

**Cedarburg History Museum**

N58 W6194 Columbia Ave

Cedarburg, WI 53012

[cedarburghm.org](http://cedarburghm.org)

The museum's permanent exhibit is the Port Washington State Bank Gallery with General Store items. Additional museum galleries showcases a typical Great Depression drugstore and Speakeasy Bar. The Rita and Carl Edquist Gallery includes an interactive kiosk with "all things Cedarburg". Cedarburg Immigrant History, the **Jepson Collection**, a Local Cedarburg Corner, changing exhibits and front windows offer a chance to display the several collections calling the Cedarburg History Museum home.

2022 will include several special exhibits.

**Opening March 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Ozaukee County During WWI**

**Opening April**

**Milwaukee Baseball Champions  
with Home Town Teams**

**Opening October 14th**

**Wisconsin Great Circuses and  
Posters History**



**2022**

**Welcome to the**

## **CEDARBURG HISTORY MUSEUM**



Starting in 1842, Cedarburg began as a fresh start in America and has grown into Wisconsin's #1 Small Town. Located just 20 miles north of Milwaukee with gently rolling hills, Cedarburg was settled by German immigrants escaping religious persecution. Building flour and textile mills to harness the hydropower of Cedar Creek, Cedarburg's first settlers established a rural trading center by 1846, while harvesting limestone with local quarries for functional houses and businesses. Faith centered lives meant many churches with religious schools and strong public schools. First families such as Groth, Hilgen, Schroeder, Wittenberg, Worth, and Dobberpuhl envisioned a well-planned out business district with manufacturing and a robust retail service industry to support residents, travelers, and businesses. Cedarburg grew and prospered.

Before electricity, the river was a source of power. Mills soon dotted the small but fast flowing Cedar Creek.

While the river was an advantage for power, clean drinking water was just as important. Breweries such as Weber and Cedarburg Brewing locally supplied thirsty residents. So too did natural springs such as Ritter's Victoria Springs or those at Hilgen Spring Park.



The Cedarburg Bridge, originally named the "Red Bridge" spans the creek to the north of the city so farmers could buy and sell wares. It is now the last covered bridge in the state. If the industry and markets weren't enough of an attraction for out of city dwellers, the Hilgen Spring Park drew in many visitors from throughout the state as well as from Chicago. Food, music and an ever-changing entertainment scene brought many Milwaukee and Chicago vacationers.

Modern transportation followed Cedarburg's rise in population and development in the later 1800s with the Green Bay Road just east in Hamilton, a wood plank road in Cedarburg, and a train line stop in 1870. By 1908 electric rail service went through Cedarburg from Milwaukee to Sheboygan that transported travelers and functioned as a commuter line too. Rail Service continued through Cedarburg until 1948, when the construction of automobile highways and car ownership became very popular.



A post-World War II baby boom also led to more families moving to Cedarburg with new housing subdivisions ready for them to move in. The migration out of the cities and into the suburbs and surrounding areas, helped Cedarburg's population grow 84% from 2,810 in 1950 to 5,191 in 1960. While many towns "tore down the old and put up new" in the 1960s and 70s, Cedarburg saw the value in preserving its old buildings and thriving downtown. In 1972, Jim Pape and Bill Welty helped saved the Woolen Mill from demolition and jump-started the revitalization of Cedarburg. Using the Cedar Creek

Winery and shops as a backdrop in 1973, the Wine & Harvest Festival began, followed by the February Winter Festival and then in June 1985, the Strawberry festival. These festivals brought a sense of pride and tourism to Cedarburg, with the downtown named to the National Historic District in 1986. After Washington Avenue, the residences and businesses along Columbia became the second National Historic District in the city. Containing more stone buildings than any other Wisconsin community, Cedarburg's own landmarks commission helps identify and preserve the unique architecture.

Additional festivals such as Oktoberfest, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Country in the Burg and A Cedarburg Christmas join the Ozaukee County Fair to help make the Cedarburg festivals a year-round tradition and Cedarburg a year-round destination.



## CHRISTIANSSEN COLLECTION

Roger Christiansen, a Cedarburg resident, collected the great variety of mercantile items on display as a tribute to his father's grocery store in Green Bay. Many Cedarburg residents and tourists to our city were invited to see the displays that he originally set up in his home. After Roger's death, the collection was entrusted to the Cedarburg Landmark Preservation Society, History Museum and Cultural Center. His long dream of having his collection viewed and appreciated by all had come true.

The **Christiansen Collection** is displayed throughout the building and items rotate as the exhibit themes change. However, the General Store is where the bulk of that collection can be viewed. The items on display were produced from 1900-1950s. The range of goods span the breadth of a typical general store from food and hardware to clothing and more.

The general store proprietor was very involved with each customer. Merchandise might be weighed, shelved products were not self-serve and those who could not pay would have their account kept "on the books".

## CHUDNOW COLLECTION

Avrum Chudnow's family emigrated to Wisconsin from Russia at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His father was a junk peddler and it was this interest which started his lifelong collecting hobby. He expanded his interests to the activities and occupations of early immigrants. Mr. Chudnow was a regular attendee at antique stores, flea markets, and rummage sales. Cedarburg's Maxwell Street Days, was one of his favorite "picking" places.

The **Chudnow Collection**, of over 100,000 items, constitutes the foundation of this museum. Although Abe was a 1937 graduate of Marquette University Law School, most of his career was spent as a residential builder and real estate developer. He served as a port battalion longshoreman in World War II and participated in the landing at Normandy.

Our Pharmacy exhibit is where the detail of the Chudnow Collection can be seen. Jars, ads, papers, notes and tools were all preserved for future generations to appreciate. Some original products are still contained in their sealed containers.