

Amanda Bartmann Henrichs  
Nominated by North Wood County Historical Society

The North Wood County Historical Society nominates Amanda Henrichs for membership on Marshfield's 150: Heroes and Leaders, Past and Present Honor Roll.

As the city celebrates its 150th anniversary it seems only appropriate to recognize Marshfield's first "Lady of History," Amanda Henrichs for her lifetime effort of compiling, preserving and sharing details of the community's early history.

Amanda Bartmann, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Albert (Alvina Witthuhn) Bartmann, was born July 18, 1885 in the Town of Greenville, Outagamie County. The family came to Marshfield in 1891 to open a shoe store which remained a part of the local business scene well into the 1930s.

At eight years old Amanda went to work in her father's store, and by the time she was twelve was quite an accomplished saleslady. While she helped at the store, she also attended Marshfield schools, graduating from Marshfield High School in 1903.

She began newspaper work on an amateur basis as a high school correspondent for the Marshfield News, and in later years became the Nasonville correspondent for the Marshfield Herald. In January 1926 she started as a reporter and rural editor for the Herald, and in August 1927 was one of four employees of that weekly to join the staff of the Marshfield News-Herald, a consolidation of the Daily News and weekly Herald. John White, editor of the Marshfield Herald had assured Amanda that her position would be secure, so Amanda often enjoyed joking that she had been sold along with the Herald.

Amanda held many positions with the News-Herald, she was a writer, reporter, society editor, and proofreader to name just a few. As part of her newspaper work, she spent a great share of her time interviewing pioneer residents and studying historical documents and photos.

Between August 1, 1927 and August 30, 1930, the Marshfield Daily News and later the Marshfield News-Herald ran a daily column written by Amanda known as "We Have with Us Every Day." When Amanda was laid off from the News-Herald during the depression the column was discontinued. Following the depression, Amanda returned to the News-Herald staff and resumed the series, but only for a brief few months late in 1936 and early 1937. The column featured more than 1,000 biographical sketches about local residents from Marshfield and some of the surrounding communities.

In 1937, Amanda started editing a daily column, "Looking Backward," published on the editorial page. She continued as its editor for the next 43 years.

Her weekly column, "Recorder," was begun in September 1944. During the 24 years when she wrote the "Recorder," she missed only one deadline, when she was hospitalized. Amanda ceased writing the



"Recorder" in August 1968 because she felt it was becoming repetitive. She refused to produce a column which was not up to her standards.

Special historical sections of the newspaper, such as the 50th anniversary fire edition in 1937 and the Wood County Centennial in 1956, were the work of many staffers, but Amanda Henrichs was always available to volunteer the odd fact or the missing piece to the historical jigsaw puzzle. As such, the stories stand as her contributions to community history which continue to serve as solid building blocks for contemporary researchers and writers.

Until her retirement in 1970, she had been continuously employed by the News-Herald from its inception, with the exception of a short period in the early 1930's, during the Great Depression, when she was laid off from the newspaper. At that time, she was engaged in a local history research project funded by the federal government's Works Project Administration. In this project, she put her knowledge of local history to work by collecting and correlating the history of the city of Marshfield.

Amanda's stature as a historian was recognized by professionals and public alike with several awards. On June 21, 1954 she and the News-Herald were given an 'Award of Merit' by the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

The award, said Dr. Clifford L. Lord, director of the society, was voted to the Marshfield News-Herald "for its columns by Amanda Henrichs on the history of Marshfield and vicinity which have lifted it above its peers and made it one of the richest files in the state on the history of its own community."

She was also honored as Marshfield's "Lady of History" in 1971 by the North Wood County Historical Society, the Old Settlers Club and the Senior Citizens Club in conjunction with the celebration of the 84th anniversary of the city's rebirth after the great fire.

As the city celebrates its 150th anniversary and we reflect on the community's history, it is only appropriate to recognize Marshfield's first "Lady of History," Amanda Bartmann Henrichs as a member of the Marshfield's 150: Heroes and Leaders, Past and Present Honor Roll.

Information taken from articles of the Marshfield News-Herald, and the Marshfield Story, Windows to Our Past.