



FORT WINNEBAGO
SURGEONS QUARTERS HISTORIC SITE
Wisconsin Daughters of the American Revolution

"Preserving Wisconsin's Territorial Past for Citizens of Tomorrow"

HISTORY BY DATE FOR FORT WINNEBAGO SURGEONS QUARTERS

1816-1819

The log house of Fort Winnebago Surgeons Quarters was built by fur trader/portager and 'metai' Francois Le Roi on the hill overlooking the portage in Portage, Wisconsin. The U-shaped building with a central courtyard is a French post-and-log construction. The asymmetrical gabled roof having the shorter slope on the inside courtyard side is also French. The cabin was built of hand-hewn tamarack logs with wide chinks. It consists of two front-gabled wings, each with two rooms, connected by a passageway. The bournig room is above the kitchen. There is a trap door in the front fur trading room with storage in a crawl space. The four-room log house was occupied by the Le Roi family until 1828.

1828

The Department of the United States Army purchased the Le Roi home in 1828. For six years the building was used as a sutler's store serving the military.

1834

In 1834 it became the home for the doctors who served at Fort Winnebago. The inside walls were plastered with lime over hand-sawn and hand-tooled lath before the Surgeons of Fort Winnebago and their families called it home. One of the interesting notes is that plastering was slowed by the access to hair. The Army purchased hair from Native Americans.

1845

In 1845 the Department of the Army disbanded Fort Winnebago. Following the Army's departure, the surgeon's cabin was occupied by a local physician.

1853

The four thousand acres of Fort Winnebago were sold at auction in 1853 to J. Martin of Milwaukee. In 1871 the Fort Winnebago Cabin was owned by Wm H. Wells of Fond du Lac and F. H. Masten of Buffalo. Eventually, the log house was used as a home for immigrants who moved to the Portage area to work on the building of the Canal. The original four rooms were divided into eight small rooms. The fireplaces were removed, wood floors covered and siding was installed over the exterior of the logs.

1938

Wisconsin Society Daughters of the American Revolution (WSDAR) purchased the property in 1938. The log house was in shambles.

The decision by WSDAR was made to restore the log house as it was during the years the Fort doctors occupied the house. The blueprint of this restoration was requested from the Department of the Army. During the years between 1938-1954 the added partitions were removed, the fireplaces were restored, walls re-plastered and painted and the original floors exposed. The exterior "lean to" structures were removed, and the siding removed from the exterior logs.

1940

An Agreement with Wisconsin State Highway Department was negotiated to use 5/8 of an acre of FWSQ property on the opposite side of Highway 33 for a Wayside Park. The arrangements included the grading of FWSQ property, putting a road in part way, and installing culverts. IF no longer used as wayside park, the property reverts to FWSQ ownership.

1954

The building had been updated with the process slowed by WWII. It was opened in 1954 as a tourist house museum for public tours. The building was furnished with original artifacts from the period 1828-1850.

1957

The Curator's Cottage was completed in the Fall of 1957. Some of the original stones of the Fort Winnebago Commissary were used in the construction of the Curator's Cottage. It was dedicated by WSDAR on June 14, 1958 and houses the Heritage Gift Shop

1960

Garrison School was moved to Fort Winnebago Surgeons Quarters Historic Site

1970

Fort Winnebago Surgeons Quarters was named to the National Register of Historic Sites on 28 October 1970

1989

Fort Winnebago Surgeons Quarters was named to the State Register of Historic Sites on 1 January 1989

2016

The dedication of 0.73 acres of newly acquired property on the Fox River was held on 14 May 2016. WSDAR-ownership of property on the Fox River is now 0.97 Acres in Parcel B.

2018

FWSQ is **two hundred** years old. A weekend gala June 20-21, 2018 was held to celebrate the Two Hundredth Birthday of FWSQ.

A Pollinator Garden was created.

2020

WSDAR created the Patriot Memorial Garden, with 250 bricks engraved with names of Revolutionary War Patriots. A bronze NSDAR plaque was placed on Cottage and dedicated October 20, 2020.

Compiled from documents, speeches, books by Judy N. Mason January 30, 2021