



Shawano Has History



The Shawano Has History Project began in April 2022 when Ben and Diane Hartwig visited the Shawano County Historical Society looking to bring plaques to historic buildings in Shawano that would outline the history of the property, businesses, and owners.

This was the impetus that would become the Shawano Has History Project, a partnership between the historical society, Leadership Shawano County teams, the Business Improvement District of Shawano, the City of Shawano, and Chamber of Commerce.

With many of its original buildings that date from the late 1800's to mid-1900's, Shawano's business district has been on the National Register of Historic Places since 1999. This foundation makes it straightforward for the project to choose relevant historic properties. A property's history is told through the use of a cast bronze plaque with text, a historic photograph, and a QR code that leads the visitor to a page on the Shawano County Historical Society's website with further information.

It took over two years to research the historic properties, develop the website, and information for the plaques. By January 2024, after several meetings with project partners, we started taking donations and selling plaques to business and property owners.

We've researched over forty properties that span the City of Shawano which are listed on the Shawano County Historical Society's website. The Leadership Shawano County team is working on fund raising and promotion where we've met with newspaper, radio, and TV organizations to get the word out. In the future we hope to partner with the history department at the high school to involve our students in this local history. We also hope to continue to add properties in the city and could expand the project to Shawano County.

