

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kara O'Keeffe
Wisconsin Historical Society
E-Mail: kara.okeeffe@wisconsinhistory.org

Monday, January 30, 2017

Susan Caya-Slusser Appointed Director of the Wisconsin Historical Society's Southwest Regional Sites

Mineral Point, Wis. – The Wisconsin Historical Society has appointed Susan Caya-Slusser to the newly created position of Director of Southwest Regional Sites. This position will provide vision, leadership, and general management to First Capitol (Belmont), Pendarvis (Mineral Point), Stonefield (Cassville), and Villa Louis (Prairie du Chien) Historic Sites and will be based at Pendarvis.

"Susan prevailed in a search which attracted top candidates from across the country," according to Brian Thompson, administrator of the Society's museums and historic sites division. "Her strengths in building strong public programs and deepening community ties make her the perfect person to champion these four magnificent sites."

Initial priorities will address the grounds and visitor experience at Pendarvis, with a commitment to enlivening the site's storied role as a catalyst for preservation and tourism in southern Wisconsin. According to Thompson, the museums and historic sites division will anchor its annual retreat in March at Pendarvis. "As Susan begins to reimagine our storytelling at Pendarvis, we'll take a fresh look at the experience we are providing at the other southwest sites and across the state."

The Society's twelve museums and historic sites attract over 300,000 visitors each year and are supported through a combination of state, earned and gift funds. The First Capitol Historic Site recently hosted Governor Scott Walker for a town hall listening session. Preservation of the Cornish miners' cottages at Pendarvis, supported through the operation of a successful inn, sparked tourism and preservation in Southern Wisconsin. Stonefield is home to the State Agricultural Museum. The picturesque Villa Louis mansion became the state's first historic site in 1952. "The four southwest sites celebrate the boundless entrepreneurship, industriousness and community-mindedness that shape Wisconsin's history since its Territorial days," says Caya-Slusser, adding, "those are timeless lessons to share with children, families, and all of our visitors."

Caya-Slusser recently directed Villa Louis Historic Site in Prairie du Chien, and has been employed by the Wisconsin Historical Society since 2000. She holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in public history from the University of Wisconsin Whitewater and University of Wisconsin Eau Claire.

For more information on the Wisconsin Historical Society historic sites, visit wisconsinhistory.org/sites.

About Wisconsin Historical Society

The Wisconsin Historical Society, founded in 1846, ranks as one of the largest, most active and most

diversified state historical societies in the nation. As both a state agency and a private membership organization, its mission is to help people connect to the past by collecting, preserving and sharing stories. The Wisconsin Historical Society serves millions of people every year through a wide range of sites, programs and services. For more information, visit www.wisconsinhistory.org.

###