Swiss Historical Village

Newsletter Issue 1 (59) May 1, 2010

Leaders Line

Season 2010 at the Swiss Historical Village.
The 2010 tourism season at the Swiss Historical Village is off to a busy start with several bus tours scheduled.
The workers' schedules were organized by Jo Gehl. She reported that everyone wanted the same days as last year. Our college students, Kalie French and Julia Gartzke are returning as tour guides.
The Swiss Historical Village opens May 1 and will close on October 15 to general visitors. Bus tours will be given through October 31, 2010. The hours are 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Admission for adults is $9.00 and the cost of admission for children ages 6 to 13 is $3.00.
Mastercard and Visa are available.
Membership fees are the same. They are Individual - $20, Couple - $30, Family - $40 and Lifetime - $500.
Genealogy is available upon request for a small fee.
The gift shop has a wonderful display of gift items.
The popular big event of the season at the Swiss Historical Village is **Harvest Fest** held the Sunday before Columbus Day, October 10, 2010.
The newest addition to our entry building is a TV with a selection of New Glarus photos on Power Point with tracers reminding people that memberships and donations are always welcome!
We hope to have a wonderful year. Come and see us and bring others with you!

Historical Society Board News
The first order of business at the March 16, 2010 meeting was reorganization of the board. A unanimous ballot named John Marty for president, Peter Etter for vice president, Doris Arn for treasurer and Judy Reuter for secretary. Mary Dibble attended her first official board meeting.
President Marty noted that New Glarus would again be guests May 8, 2010 at the Tinker Swiss Cottage in Rockford, IL. Arn said she could attend. Marty and Colstad will attend with their singing groups.
Etter gave the history of the Swiss emigration and a tour of the Hall of History, Log Church and School House to Steve Hoelscher, German professor from Texas on March 27, 2010 and to the Group of German exchange students visiting in New Glarus on April 8, 2010.

"Family History Notes" to be Sent via Email
Future issues of the "Family History Notes" newsletter will move to email distribution. Advantages of receiving an electronic copy include the ability to file issues in a computer folder, the ability to forward issues on to others via email, the ability to link to related internet resources via embedded hyperlinks, and ability to view illustrations in color. The email newsletter also saves on copying charges.
If you would like to continue receiving quarterly issues of "Family History Notes", please send your email address to Bob Elmer at **raelmer@charter.net**
If you don't have a computer or email and would like to continue to receive a paper copy, please contact the New Glarus Historical Society.
Email distribution will begin with the Summer, 2010 issue.

Schwyzerdütsch
Partly because so many Swiss writers have used either French or German, a great many people believe that Switzerland has no national language. While there are four official languages – German, French, Italian and Romansch – the national language, spoken by 70 per cent of the people, is Schwyzerdütsch. Though there are many regional dialects of this Swiss-German, it is itself not a dialect but a branch of Alemannic, a language spoken in Switzerland and southern Germany for more than a thousand years. To outsiders the guttural mumblings of this Swiss language may sound like an epiglottic disease. For those who understand it, Schwyzerdütsch is uncommonly pithy and forceful – a fountain of picturesque speech. Zwingli's Bible, published in 1525, is in the Swiss language, and for the past century several generations of lexicographers have been compiling *Das Schweizerische Idiotikon*, a Swiss dictionary of which part has already been published. Swiss words used by the two most famous German-language novelists, Gotthelf and Keller, have become part of the language of written German. The Swiss feel that their language is one of their strongest shields against foreign penetration, an efficient weapon in the preservation of their cultural and political independence. *From LIFE WORLD LIBRARY SWITZERLAND by Herbert Kubly/LIFE Editors*

"Today is our future's past."

Around the Corner

Collecting Antique Irons

American country irons flourished from 1850 to 1950. The most common early irons were cast in one piece and weighed from five to seven pounds. In the nineteenth century, they were found in every country home and were heated on cast iron stoves. They are commonly called "flat" of "sad" irons. "Sad" is an archaic word meaning "dense" or "heavy"

Primitive irons are in a class by themselves, exuding an air of innocence. They were shaped by blacksmiths. They cost little when first made, but the best examples are marvelous finds for today's collector. An iron still revealing the mark of a hammer speaks the drama of its creation in every line.

In country homes of the last century, people did their own work. Each person had a job. Ironing was part of the circle of life. Washing was on Monday. Tuesday was ironing day. While Mother did the family ironing, daughter was busy pressing dolls' clothes. Play was training for the child's adult responsibilities. Those toy irons are the focus of some of the most appealing collections. Little irons are four inches or less. Hundreds of different examples offer an opportunity for almost unlimited variety. They occupy a small space and are evocative of childhood innocence.

A collection of irons can be color-infused with ancillary washday items: soap packages, bluing bottles, starch boxes and various patent products. Clothes sprinkler bottles are another way to introduce a bright spot. The colorful bottles are found in a marvelous congregation of figural characters. They happily coexist with irons.

Antique irons of surprising beauty and diversity are still available at affordable prices. Places to look: flea markets, antique shows, dealers and garage sales. Wonderful finds are coming out of attics and basements. Sad irons may be the starting point of any collection, but learn the different types: charcoal, box, sleeve, polishers, fuel, fluters and others. After getting a core collection of common irons, acquire a hunger for rare and special irons. As an example, the Geneva rocking fluter patented in 1866 is usually an early acquisition. But, instead of being satisfied with the most common rocking fluter, add the more desirable Improved Geneva Fluter.

Then look for other rocking fluters: The Star, The Lady Friend, Elgin, and The Erie with its detachable handle. Don't neglect the other types of fluters. The rolling fluter uses a roller instead of a rocker. Two common names are American Machine, Doty, Sundry and Shepard. The machine fluter accomplishes the same task with the turn of a crank. Collectors know the names of Knox, Osborne, American, Royal, Manville and Star.

The same in-depth spectrum can be realized with fuel irons, detachable handles, or any antique iron category. Look for the rare, different and the unusual. Even the basic sad iron has examples of fascinating attempts to keep the hand cool. Some handles were slotted for ventilation and air flow. Watch for spiral uprights, coiled handles, and folded uprights. These are rare and desirable. Combination irons, capable of doing more than one type of ironing job, reflect the nineteenth century's fascination with inventions and gadgets. They are found as sad/fluters and charcoal/fluters. Watch for these hybrids. They are loved by collectors.

Gasoline and kerosene irons arrived early in this century and were welcomed because they were a vast improvement over earlier irons. Some Coleman irons, in particular, have beautiful colored porcelain bodies and matching grips. Early electric irons didn't arrive in the country until rural electrification brought electric power outside the city. Sometimes salesmen would follow the newly-strung wires looking for customers. The oldest electric irons have porcelain connections and two-wire twisted cord.

Although lacking elegance and refinement, old-fashioned irons have warmth of character making them collectible and lovable.

By Carol and Jimmy Walker
Editors of "IRON TALK"

P.S. In our entry building at the museum, we have several types of these "old irons" on display. It is fun to hear the different comments from our visitors.

Cookbooks

We still have some cookbooks available for sale. If interested, contact the Swiss Historical Village, c/o Gail Beal, P.O. Box 745, New Glarus, WI 53574. Copies are $15.83 (tax included) plus $3.50 postage.

Swiss Historical Village

Newsletter Issue 2 (60) June 1, 2010

Leaders Line

Attendance

The Swiss Historical Village attendance for the month of May was 779, which included visitors on eight buses. Guests from 27 states visited the museum in May and 13 countries were represented.

May, First Month of the Season.

We know we have completed opening the museum when flowers are everywhere making a beautiful landscape for us and our visitors to enjoy!

Larry Klassy surprised many of us with the planting of tulip bulbs around the Swiss Historical Village grounds. So after we opened on May 1, 2010, we had beautiful tulips here and there, adding a variety of color.

Then, Ernie and Teressa Jaggi planted many beautiful geraniums, petunias and other colorful plants in our pots, in front of the entry building, around buildings, and their Swiss flag designed with red and white begonias. They take excellent care of our museum's landscape.

To help Ernie and Teressa out, John Marty waters the flowers everyday and when he can't, Larry Klassy is there to help.

We also congratulate Gail Beal and Doris Arn for doing a wonderful job of setting up the gift shop. We have baby cuddle wraps, doll cuddle wraps, tea cozies, embroidered dish towels, knitted dish cloths, jewelry, soap, candles, beeswax ornaments, Swiss fabric doll dresses, cookbooks, Brätzeli, Jerry Apps books, books related to the emigration of the Swiss to New Glarus and many other items. Remember, members get 10% off any gift item over $2.00.

TV PowerPoint in Entry Building

Installation of the television and the completion of the Power Point presentation developed by John Colstad showing the photos selected by the board members are giving our visitors an idea how the town grew and the museum was started. Not enough to ruin the tour but enough to give them an idea what the development of the town and museum was all about.

Visitors are watching the video and commenting about how much the town people have done to preserve its history. That makes us proud!

Help keep the History of the Swiss alive and well

Become a member and enjoy being able to visit at any time, receiving our newsletter and Bob Elmer's Family History Notes, getting 10% off gift items, and receiving genealogy help from Bob Elmer, raelmer@charter.net

Membership dues are Individual - $20, Couple - $30, Family - $40, and Lifetime - $500.

Tell your friends and family about the New Glarus Historical Society at 612 7th Avenue, New Glarus, WI 53574. Donations are welcome and that includes artifacts relating to the Swiss or New Glarus area. We are still looking for more items given by local businesses at Christmas time.

Donations received

Last month's donations were: a 1915 New Glarus framed banner from Jack and Marion Kundert of Monroe, Brad and Gail Beal gave from the auction of Patti Elmer store gifts (a basket Blanchardville Coop, Lord's Supper Plaque and clip board from New Glarus Feed and Fuel), Louann Bodenmann gave store gifts of butter dish from Zemp's Meat Market, pencil Farmer's Stock Exchange, ice scraper from New Glarus Welding, coin purse Kempfer Unlimited, Pen Wurgler's Southside Grocery and Shoehorn Walt's Toggery, plus some booklets, Carol Hustad gave some vintage clothing, and Patti Elmer gave some old hats.

Historical Society Board News

President John Marty called the meeting to order on May 11, 2010 at the Historical Village meeting room. Beal reported that Paula Stanton's photo shoot would take place on Sunday afternoon, May 23, 2010. Andy Beal would wear a full dress fireman's uniform and Peter Etter would dress in his lederhosen. Ms. Stanton will have young models wearing vintage wedding and bridesmaid dresses for her web-site. The 1933 GMC fire truck would be made available. After a discussion, the December board meeting of the New Glarus Historical Society will not be held due to the holidays.

This summer, June, July and August board meetings will be held on the second Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

"Today is our future's past."

Around the Corner

Sewing Machine

The sewing machine is a machine that uses a needle to bind materials together with thread. It has lightened the household work of women and helped families to have better and less expensive clothing than they might otherwise have had. In factories, it has helped make possible the mass production of clothing.

There are three main types of sewing machines for the home. They have different types of machine heads for sewing: the straight needle, the swing needle and the slant needle. All three kinds are made in both cabinet and portable models.

Straight needle sewing machines are designed to make sewing as quick and easy as possible for the home seamstress who sews constantly. These machines can be used to do many kinds of decorative stitching, without the use of any special attachment. Various attachments added to the machine assist in such sewing tasks as ruffling, cording, and binding.

The slant needle sewing machine resembles the straight needle type, but has its needle slanted toward the user so she can see the work more easily.

The swing needle sewing machine is especially suited for use by women who do much decorative or hobby sewing. It does zigzag stitching, as well as many other kinds of decorative stitches, without special attachments. It can even be used to make wired flowers. Many of the machines on which zigzag stitching can be done are manufactured in Europe. The Anker and the Pfaff come from Germany; the Necchi and the Borletti from Italy; Viking from Sweden; and Bernina from Switzerland. These machines cost more than straight needle machines.

History. Thomas Saint, an Englishman, patented the first sewing machine in 1790. It was wooden, and made a single-thread chain stitch to stitch leather. The machine fed the thread automatically to a needle which had a notch instead of an eye. An awl made holes for the needle to pass through the leather. This machine was not practical. In 1830, Barthélemy Thimonnier (1793-1859) of France patented a machine for making soldiers' uniforms. His machine used a hooked needle that made a stitch by passing backward and forward through the cloth. The French government had as many as 80 of these machines in use at one time. Thimonnier was almost killed when a mob of angry workmen wrecked his machines because they put many men out of work. An American, Walter Hunt, invented a type of sewing machine in the 1830's, but never patented it.

Elias Howe is usually considered the inventor of the sewing machine as we know it today. His model, patented in 1846, was the first practical machine sold to users. Howe's machine had a needle with an eye near the point. A shuttle carried a thread below the cloth on a small bobbin. The needle, carrying an upper thread, was fastened to an arm that vibrated on a pivot. Movement of the arm forced the needle through the cloth. The shuttle carried the under thread through the loop of the upper thread, thus making a lock stitch. Nearly all sewing machines used in the home today are of this double-thread, lock stitch type. A few women prefer the single thread, chain stitch machine, such as the Willcox and Gibbs. The lock stitch is much like weaving information. It is less likely to ravel than the chain stitch, which is somewhat like the stitch used in crocheting. Of the inventors who came after Howe, A.B. Wilson and Isaac Singer deserve special mention. Wilson introduced the four-motion automatic feed used on nearly all present-day machines. It was patented in 1854. *In 1851, Singer had patented the foot-operated treadle and the presser foot with a yielding spring, which holds the fabric down on the feed plate.* Today, there are special machines for sewing boots and shoes, books, umbrellas, and brooms. There is even a machine for sewing carpets together. This one travels along the carpet it stitches, because the carpet is too heavy to be moved easily. The Singer Sewing Machine Company first put an electric motor on a sewing machine in 1889. Today most sewing machines are electric, but some still have foot treadles. *From the World Book Encyclopedia*

At the Swiss Historical Village, we have four treadle sewing machines. An old one is in the Pioneer Cabin and its name is worn off. It was given to the museum by Mrs. Wm. Dittberger in 1969. Another old one is a Wheeler & Wilson, patented in 1872 located in the foyer of the Collectables Shop. A treadle machine, The Eldridge, donated by Dennis and Marion Streiff is located in the Collectables Shop and a treadle machine, The Eldridge, donated by Darlene Hoesly Voegeli, is located in the Farm Kitchen.

Insights...

"A very nice community, people are very friendly."
Couple from Salem, WI

"Feels like home."
A guy from St. Gallen, Switzerland

Swiss Historical Village

Newsletter Issue 3 (61) July 1, 2010

Leaders Line

New Glarus Historical Society News

President John Marty called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. on June 10, 2010 at the Swiss Historical Village Hall of History.
The minutes of the May meeting were reviewed and approved following a Gehl/Etter motion.
Doris Arn, treasurer, reported the admission was up compared to May of 2009 but miscellaneous sales and donations were down. Report was approved following a Colstad/Reuter motion.
Issues under old business were reviewed and new business included the FAM tour on June 21, 2010, Dairy Parade Entry and invitation to a minister for the August commemorative church service.

Family History Notes: Reminder

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raelmer@charter.net
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Attendance

The Swiss Historical Village attendance for the month of June was 829, which included visitors on four buses.
Guests from nine states visited the museum in June bringing the total from May 1st to 36.
Two countries were represented in June; the total to date is 15.

Insights…

"Beautiful place, very worth the price".
Couple from Hatley, WI
"Very well documented tour".
Couple from Switzerland
"Very informative and well done".
Couple from Ellsworth, Iowa
"Beautifully kept, thanks for being here".
A lady from the San Francisco area

New Exhibit at the Swiss Historical Village: Aprons, aprons and more aprons!

Do you remember your mother or grandmother's apron? Most of us do. Aprons were worn every day back when women wanted to protect their housedresses from all of the chores that might stain them. It was part of the daily uniform, and we probably can all remember that ever-present apron.

Now you can take a nostalgic trip back to the time when grandma's apron was the hiding place for a shy child if company should stop in unexpectedly. And speaking of unexpected company, it was quite amazing how much furniture that apron could dust in a matter of seconds on the way to answering the door.

Or, if mother was coming in from the wash line and spied some good apples on the ground, she used that apron for a basket and there was apple pie for supper. It also transported wood for the stove, berries that were newly ripe each day, as well as garden vegetables picked at the last minute.

And that old apron doubled as a washcloth when the wearer spied a dirty face or ears on an unsuspecting child. Or as a potholder, if a pan of bread needed to be removed from the oven immediately to save it from getting too brown on top. And if the day turned cool while mother was chatting with a neighbor, she wrapped her apron around her arms and finished getting the latest news.

Well, those good old aprons are now on display throughout the Historical Village. And to add to the fun, there is a Seek 'n Find worksheet for all the children who come to see the exhibit. Just ask Kelly Kummer, our first visitor to fill out the sheet on June 25, a beautiful summer afternoon the day before her birthday. Kelly called the experience "awesome," and added, "It was fun to see all the pretty aprons and the way people put patterns on them for decoration." She especially liked the display in the log church, where the dress-up aprons that ladies wore when serving church luncheons and dinners are shown. She liked the prize for completing the worksheet, too!

Stop in at the Historical Village and see for yourself how much fun it is to go back to a simpler time, and reminisce the days when mother's apron could wipe a bloody knee and tear-stained face to make things okay again. We are open daily from 10:00-4:00 until October 15. Just seeing those good old aprons might make you feel better!

Thank you Jo Gehl and Gail Beal

"Today is our future's past."

Around the Corner

America: the Melting Pot

From All Over Europe Came Immigrants to Be the Ancestors of Present-day Americans- and Still Are Coming, to Be Ancestors of Future Americans

By L.P. Denoyer

The subject of Immigration is one of the important questions before the people to-day. To solve the problem wisely it is necessary for us to answer the question: "Where did we Americans come from?" More than one-half of our entire population is composed of "Native Parentage". Their ancestors, however, or most of them, came from Europe, but from what part of Europe?

If we had a map for each group for each decade we could tell just where the different groups settled, but from what we can tell groups tend to follow in regular paths. The children and friends of Germans, for example, now coming generally settle where the Germans settled in the last generation.

The foreign-born Irish are to-day largely in a few city centers; from New York to Philadelphia, in and about Cleveland and in and about Chicago. The Irish as a rule did not settle on the farms, but remained in the cities becoming the policemen, the firemen, the aldermen and merchants. The decade from 1846-1855 inclusive gave us the largest number of Irish. This was the period of a potato famine in Ireland. In addition to this, there was a rebellion. The first half of the following decade was a period of hard times in the United States, and the second half of the next decade was the period of the Civil War.

The Germans came with or shortly after the large migration of Irish and many of them of course, settled in the cities, but just at this time, the frontier, that is, the region of cheap and good land, happened to be in eastern Wisconsin, northern Illinois, along the Mississippi River, down to St. Louis. In these regions the Germans settled and ever since that time the Germans have pretty well followed along the same route. The largest migration of Germans, however, was in 1881-1885 when nearly one million of them came to our shores. This was a period of relatively good times in the United States, but the period of introduction of modern militarism in Germany. There was also in Germany over-production in commodities, resulting in a depression. The Germans that came over at that time did not exactly follow in the paths of their predecessors, but many of them went to the regions that had then become the frontier; namely, eastern Nebraska and Kansas.

The introduction of farm machinery into Scandinavia about the year 1883 and continuing until 1890 threw a great many farm laborers out of work and they migrated to America. The Scandinavians have generally moved to the farms or worked in the lumber camps. The hard times of 1893 was due to the fact that there was a very large migration in 1891 and '2 and it fell off suddenly in '93, '94 and '95. The migration again started in 1898.

The subject of immigration is one of the important subjects of to-day, but there are others like the prohibition question, woman suffrage, manhood suffrage, the primary system, the initiative, referendum and recall, and a great many others equally important which are difficult to teach without visual aids. A number of scholars have been working for many years to visualize these subjects in map and chart form and considerable progress has been made and is now being made along these lines.

Excerpts from the article, America: the Melting Pot published in The World Review dated February 28, 1927.

Emigration from Switzerland

In the early 1840's, the textile industry became mechanized and it put over 2,000 people in the Canton of Glarus out of work. The canton was already over-populated and there was a general food shortage so morale was low. Arable land, owned for the most part by parishes and communes, had been divided and re-divided so often ending with no more than a few acres often only a garden size parcel. Most bread stuffs came from Hungry and Italy and even in the good times that was limited. Also, there was a potato famine.

In 1844, the Emigration Society posted a notice asking if anyone was interested in going to USA. 140 people signed up. The Emigration Society then sent two guides, Fridolin Streiff and Nicholas Duerst, to the Midwest USA to look for 1,200 acres of land and 80 acres of woodland. When they settled on land that is now New Glarus, the Emigration Society agreed to send the Swiss earlier than planned. At sailing time on April 16, 1845, the 140 colonists were joined by 53 more so 193 persons jammed the ship Felder bound for Zurich. That was the first part of the journey to Rotterdam where they eventually loaded onto a schooner, the Superb. The Swiss left Europe on May 13, 1845 to sail 49 days across the Atlantic Ocean bound for Baltimore, USA.

Thanks to all for your interest in the local and family history of the New Glarus area. And thank you to those who wrote to say how much you have enjoyed the past issues. It is gratifying to know this work is appreciated.

This Summer 2010 issue -- the first offered as an e-newsletter -- offers a number of new articles on a variety of topics. It also reruns two articles (updated from previous issues) which may be fun to read again. And at the end is a history detective challenge to those who may be curious about the changes along New Glarus' main street from 100 years ago. On a practical note, the font size has been increased and illustrations enlarged which will hopefully improve the readability.

I also wanted to let the subscribers know that since this newsletter is in e-newsletter format, it can be made available to anyone who is interested in our family and local history past. If you have other family members and/or friends who might appreciate receiving this newsletter via email, please forward it on to them and have them contact me -- raelmer@charter.net -- and I will add them to the email distribution list. Membership in the New Glarus Historical Society is not a prerequisite for receiving this information. If at any point you wish to discontinue receiving this material, send me an email and I will remove your name from the distribution list.

Finally, I would invite anyone who may wish to share their family history stories, local history recollections, historical insights, questions, old photographs, etc. to email me and I will be happy to include your submissions in future issues.

I trust you will enjoy this issue and look forward to any questions or comments.

Bob Elmer
360 W. Washington Avenue #714
Madison, WI 53703-2767

Swiss Historical Village

Newsletter Issue 4 (62) August 1, 2010

Leaders Line

Log Church Service

The annual worship service in the Log Church will be held Saturday, August 14, 2010 at 5:30 p.m. Guest minister will be Rev. Mary Gafner, Washington Reformation UCC. The New Glarus Yodel Club will sing and Amber VandenWymelenberg will be at the pump organ.

This is the 51st year of the Commemorative service in the Log Church.

New Glarus Historical Society Board News

Board member, Jo Gehl, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. at the Historical Village meeting room. Gehl received the approval of the board to read the agenda in the absence of the President and Vice President.

The secretary's and treasurer's reports were read and approved. The membership report included two new members and two renewals.

Amy Legler sent a thank you and a $100 check from the school district for the week the summer students studied in the Schoolhouse.

Plans for the church service were made.

It was agreed that all the trees need trimming and one removed. Three Tree Services will be contacted for bids.

It was determined to enter the float, "Historical Village is Reaping History," in the Cheese Days Parade. The same float was in the Dairy Day Parade and won second prize of $30 in the non- commercial category.

Attendance

The Swiss Historical Village attendance for the month of July was 1,058, which included visitors on four buses. Guests from six states visited the museum in July bringing the total from May 1st to 43. Nine countries were represented in July; the total to date is 25.

Insights…

Bless you for preserving this wonderful heritage…
Couple from Ohio

A great remembrance….
Couple from Illinois

Family History Notes: Reminder

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Featured Speaker

Jerry Apps will be a featured speaker at the Local History and Historic Preservation Conference on October 15-16, 2010 in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Jerry Apps talks about the new edition of his classic book, **Barns of Wisconsin**, and his lifelong interest in these icons of our rural landscape. Jerry presents a brief history of Wisconsin barns, discusses historic and noteworthy examples, and entreats us to identify and cherish "what of the old is worth keeping."

Jerry Apps is professor emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the author of more than 25 books. Many of his books are on rural history and country life.

Jerry was born and raised on a small farm in Waushara County, where he spent countless hours working in the barn, milking and feeding cows, helping to store hay in the haymow, and appreciating the barn's importance to the life of a farm.

On May 18, 2008, Jerry Apps was available at the Swiss Historical Village to sign his then newest book, **In a Pickle** (*A Family Farm Story*) which mixes humor with rural history. It's a hopeful story about the strength tradition still has to inform and inspire daily life.

We are proud to have available many of Jerry Apps' books in our gift shop. They are: One Room County Schools, Cheese The making of a Wisconsin Tradition, Old Farm "A History", Breweries of Wisconsin, When Chores are Done, Humor from the Country, Casper Jaggi – Master Swiss Cheese Maker, In a Pickle and Living a Country Year.

Web Site Address

Our internet address is
www.swisshistoricalvillage.org

"Today is our future's past."

Around the Corner

Inventor of the Combined Reaper and Binder

James Fraser Gordon, 1842-1886, made his press debut in the June 12, 1862 edition of the Rochester *Union and Advertiser*. At only 20 years of age, Gordon invented the first two-sided printing press. The design of the press consisted of a circular form and a flat form that allowed a sheet of paper to be simultaneously printed on both the front and back sides. The author of the article stated the machine worked by some "new movements" in the press "which are ingenious" ("A New Printing Press"). At the time of publishing, Gordon had submitted his printing press to a judge who advised him to patent the model. According to the **History of Livingston County**, Gordon never had the printing press patented (Doty 653). There is no explanation of what occurred, however lack of funds may have been an issue.

Around the time Gordon was inventing the printing press he was also working on a machine to bind grain. He completed his first binder model sometime in 1862, and his first full-sized binder in 1864 ("James F. Gordon"). However, when it came time to file for a caveat, Gordon did not have the money. Gordon went to work for the government then after a short stay in Kalamazoo, Michigan, he moved to Detroit. Gordon returned to Kalamazoo in the spring of 1866 to seek employment, however, all his traveling was not in vain. There, he met a party which enabled him to build a full-sized experimental binding machine, and take out a patent for the machine. Gordon's new partnership allowed him to return home to Rochester in the winter of 1866 to continue his passion of inventing.

The first patent for a harvesting and reaping machine was obtained on May 12, 1868 (James F. Gordon"). Gordon's binder was composed of a "simple apparatus that puts a small wire around each sheaf, fastens it by a good twist, and then drops it into the field" (A Combined Reaper and Binder"). The machine was also adjustable so that the operator could bind grains of various lengths by simply moving a leaver to the proper height. Gordon's invention greatly increased the productivity of farms. Before the binder, a team of horses drew a reaper with a self-raker across a field to lay several acres of grain a day. However, five to seven men were still needed to manually bind the sheaves ("A Combined Reaper and Binder"). Binding was a daunting and laborious process. During harvest farm owners were hard pressed to find men willing to perform the task. Gordon's binder alleviated the worries of farmers because the task could now be mechanically done. The popularity of Gordon's combined reaper and binder is documented in the Union and Advertiser. An author of a July 13, 1868 column stated that the binding machine was "destined to produce a revolution in the harvest field" ("A Combined Reaper and Binder"). An issue from July 24, 1869 admired "how quickly and easily, in comparison with the old mode, the fields are shorn of their golden fleece" ("Caledonia-Its Harvest"). On August 24, 1871 an article titled, "Gordon's Self Binding Harvester" pronounced the binder as "perfect." As a result of the vender, "the ground was denuded of its oats with readiness and rapidity," and the "binder's artificial arms dropped more elegant sheaves that would by farm hands with twisted straw" ("Gordon's Self Binding Harvester"). Although Gordon's name is unknown today, his impact in the agricultural society of nineteenth century Rochester, and America, was quite remarkable.

Gordon continued to invent and improve machines for harvesting and binding grain throughout his lifetime. Patents for his continued work were issued on December 11, 1877 and May 12, 1886 by the U.S. Government (Google patents and "Received Patent"). Gordon's inventions made harvesting grain quicker and more efficient. Not surprisingly, harvesting manufacturers incorporated Gordon's designs into their machines, but sometimes without permission. On June 27,1882, a patent suit was begun by James F. Gordon, John H. Gordon, and D.M. Osbourne against the McCormack Harvester Machine Company of Chicago ("An Important Patent Suit") John H. helped his brother perfect the binder and reaper, and D.M. Osbourne, of the firm D.M. Osbourne and Company of Auburn bought an interest in Gordon's inventions, so they were also plaintiffs in the law suit ("John F. Gordon"). The party claimed two hundred thousand for alleged infringements on their design, and for profits from the sale of machines by McCormack Harvester ("An Important Patent Suit"). Gordon and his party ultimately won the patent suit and were each paid almost a quarter of a million dollars ("James F. Gordon"). At the time of Gordon's death, suits were pending against companies that disregarded Gordon's patents.

Just as Gordon was about to enjoy the profits from his hard work and timeless energy, he died on July 20, 1886. *Excerpts from Katherine Olson, History 167K: Speaking Stones, Prof. Homerin 12-13-07.*

Swiss Historical Village

Newsletter Issue 5 (63) September 1, 2010

Leaders Line

Harvest Fest

Many special crafters and demonstrators will be present October 10, 2010 for the Harvest Fest event held each year the Sunday before Columbus Day. The hours are 10:00 to 4:00. That is the only day of our season cheese is made in the Cheese Factory and sausage made in the Sausage Shop!

John Marty and Gail Beal are scheduling activities for the annual festivities. Harvest Fest is the high light of our season as many presenters have a good time entertaining and educating our guests demonstrating their skills.

In addition to watching the cheese makers and the sausage makers, the smithy will be demonstrating the tools of his trade. You can learn about weaving, spinning, quilting, wood carving, bee keeping and honey making, soap and candle making, basket making, sauerkraut making and broom making. The Civil War re-enactors will be present in costume to answer any questions regarding the cannon and the civil war days.

We welcome new members in the New Glarus Historical Society. For a small fee, sign up for genealogy search of Swiss from New Glarus and the area.

Bräzeli, bars, hot cider and coffee will be for sale. This is a special event and we hope you will join us!

New Glarus Historical Society Board News

President John Marty called the meeting to order on August 11, 2010 at the Historical Village meeting room. The minutes of the July meeting were reviewed and approved following a Gehl/Klassy motion.

A financial report dated July 31, 2010 was prepared by Arn. The comparison from last year to this showed the total expenses were down some in 2010. The report was approved following a Reuter/Beal motion.

Members toured the buildings before the meeting to see the progress made with the gates for self-guided tours. The Log Church and the Schoolhouse will be left as is for now.

Advertising for Harvest Fest will be included on the Cheese Days float for the parade on September 19, 2010 by the New Glarus Historical Society.

Attendance

The Swiss Historical Village attendance for the month of August was 1,062 that included visitors on three buses. Three states were represented for the total of 45 for the year. States needed are Hawaii, Maine, North Dakota, Montana and Vermont. Two countries were presented in August for a total of 26. For the first time, the Swiss Historical Village will be closing on October 15, 2010 except for buses that planned for tours in advance.

Log Church Activities

The 51st commemorative service held August 14, 2010 was conducted by Rev. Mary Gafner of the Washington UCC. The Yodel Club sang and Amber Vanden Wymelenberg played the 1900 pump organ. It was enjoyed by all present.

On September 4, 2010, there will be a wedding held in the church. The bride-to-be is Angie Strack.

Insight...

Lovely history lesson - Thank you -Well done.
Couple from Illinois

Handout for Small Grains and the Small Farm

"This handout was presented at the 1999 Northeast Organic Farming Association Summer conference at Hampshire College on August 15. Note that I don't claim to know a great deal about small grains – to someone who grew up farming grain in the Midwest, this is going to be a daring foray in to the depths of the obvious. However, in coastal New England hardly anyone knows anything about grain farming and equipment any more, so the following wasn't achieved without a good bit of effort on my part."

By James Van Bokkelen (Internet)

Small Grains

Grasses whose seeds we harvest. The straw (stalks and seed heads after seeds are extracted) can also be useful: straw bale houses, mulch, animal bedding. The first signs of cultivation of wheat date to around 3000 BC in Abyssinia, however shortly thereafter it is found in Egypt, the birthplace of leavened bread, and by 2700 BC it was being cultivated in China.

"Today is our future's past."

Around the Corner

Continued from front page.

Spring grains are planted early, before last frost – many grains will germinate and grow when soil temperatures are below 40F. Depending on the variety and the climate, they can go to seed and dry enough to harvest by mid-summer, but I don't believe that you can do two crops of even Buckwheat in New England.

Winter grains are planted in late summer or early fall, and establish themselves before going dormant when the ground freezes. If the plants aren't killed by freeze/thaw drying or frost heaving over the winter, they take off in early spring and set seed with other grasses; however, they aren't harvested until the plants are completely dead and the seed heads dried out.

- Barley is mostly used as animal feed and for brewing.
- Buckwheat, spring planted and fast growing, is often used as a smother crop. It is the grain found in Kasha and the Japanese make "soba" noodles out of buckwheat flour.
- Oats, a spring planted crop, need to be hulled for uses other than seed.
- Rye: A winter crop, widely used as a cover crop and green manure, is easy to grow but has no gluten, and has some risk of ergot contamination.
- Spelt: This is the only grain other than wheat with sufficient gluten to bake conventional yeast-risen breads.
- Wheat: Both Spring and Winter wheat are widely grown. Hard red wheat has the most gluten, and supplies the majority of our flour. Soft red has less gluten, and is used for pasta, among other things. White wheat has too little gluten for anything except pastry flour.

Basic grain culture as first developed in the dawn of agriculture.

Planting: Grain is broadcast seeded by hand into tilled ground, then raked or dragged to cover the seed.

Cultivation: Tilling is used to make a seedbed and kill weeds before planting. Rogueing weeds by hand can help in the middle stages of growth.

Cutting: When the whole plant is dry, the base is cut with a sickle (later scythe or cradle) and manually bundled into shocks. If the grain still has too much moisture to thresh (the seed heads won't keep) or store (vulnerable to fungus attack, for example ergot), the shocks can be left in the field to dry. Once the grain has a low enough moisture content, the shocks are hauled to threshing floor.

Shelling: The seeds are removed from the seed heads by beating the grains on a hard surface, pounding it with a flail, or having an animal walk on it. (Best done on a smooth floor i.e. wood, stone or pounded earth.

Cleaning: Rake the straw out, and toss the mixture of chaff and grain on a breezy day; the grain will fall fastest, and the chaff will blow away.

Storage: Grain must be kept in a dry, rodent- and insect- proof container until ready to grind into flour or prepare otherwise. Community granaries were common in ancient times, but sometimes served as a focal point of power for tyrannical governments.

Major technological advances in grain culture

- Seeding with a "grain drill" – This tool gives a more uniform seeding rate, and buries the seed at a relatively constant depth, allowing use of less seed. Many drills are also set up to apply fertilizer in the same pass over the field. Drill technology hasn't changed a great deal since the original horse-drawn units appeared in the mid 1800s.
- A "Reaper" (see Cyrus McCormick, et.al.) cuts the grain using a sickle-bar mower. The earliest models simply left the grain in heaps in the field, which still required manual bundling. By the turn of the century the equipment used "binder twine" to leave bundled grain in the field to be picked up. Most grain binders were set up for horse-drawn ground-driven operation, but some tractor-pulled units (converted or from the factory) may turn up.
- A "Threshing machine" cleaned the grain by feeding the whole plants against a rotating "cylinder" where bars beat the heads against a "concave" loosen the grain. The grain was then extracted from the mixture of loose grain, chaff and straw by a vibrating "straw rack", winnowed by a blast of air from a power fan, and then sieved by screens in a vibrating "cleaning shoe".

Threshers evolved from original treadmill-powered units in the early 1800s through large belt-driven machines produced until the W.W.II era. *To be continued in the October newsletter.*

Swiss Historical Village

Newsletter Issue 6 (64) October 1, 2010

Leaders Line

Harvest Fest

Harvest Fest festivities at the Swiss Historical Village will be held October 10, 2010, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Come and enjoy old time craft demonstrations, real cheese making, sausage making and special foods. Our guides will be available to talk about the unique an interesting history of New Glarus and time can be spent with the Civil War re-enactors.

Corn shocks, pumpkins, gourds and mums decorate the grounds. There will be Swiss music to enjoy. Admission at a reduced price of $5 for adults and school age children 6-13 at $3 does not include AAA or use of credit cards. If you are a member, this is a chance to use your membership card. Harvest Fest is the highlight of our season and the biggest fundraiser. Please tell your friends about this exciting event and we hope you can join us!

New Glarus Historical Society Board News

President John Marty called the meeting to order on September 14, 2010 at the Historical Village meeting room. The minutes of the August 12, 2010 were reviewed and approved following a Gehl/Colstad motion. A financial report dated August 31, 2010 was approved following a Colstad/Beal motion.

Plans for the Harvest Fest are progressing well. The board welcomed Kim Tschudy's offer to display his Civil War pictures in the Hall of History for the event.

Wright received the order of pencils to be given out at the Cheese Days Parade on September 19, 2010. They are red and the words printed in white are Swiss Historical Village – New Glarus, WI, and our website and phone number.

Gehl reported that a gentleman from Monroe would like to donate a carriage (buggy) to our museum. The board members agreed that it is a generous offer but want to see it to see if room can be found to display it properly.

The restrooms have been restored. The walls and stalls look great and the vanities are new.

The meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Website Address

www.swisshistoricalvillage.org

Recent Guests

On Sunday, August 29, of this year we were pleased to have guests from Switzerland. Actually, it is not unusual for us to have guests from Switzerland, as we are fortunate to have many of them each year, and we enjoy the connection we have with all of our friends from the homeland. But these guests, Beatrice and Peter Huber, had a special connection to New Glarus. Their daughter, Sabrina, is here for six months, working in the New Glarus Hotel, and they were here to visit her. While their daughter was at work, Beatrice and Peter decided to come to see the Historical Village. They thought it was great and encouraged their daughter to find the time to make a visit herself. She did just that on Friday, September 10, and brought two of her new friends who also work at the Hotel as well. We were delighted to have all three girls, Sabrina, Barbara Dieffenbacher and Daniela Huppi, come through our Museum. The girls were very complimentary and seemed to enjoy their visit very much. But the thing that caught our eye was Sabrina's comment in our Guest Book of "impressive," because that is exactly what her parents wrote when they had visited a little over a week earlier. *Jo Gehl's own experience*

Attendance

The Swiss Historical Village attendance for the month of September was 763, which included visitors on four buses. States we need are Hawaii, Maine, Montana, North Dakota and Vermont.

Insights...

Impressive museum for a small community
Couple from Random Lake, WI

Finally we made it! To find our ancestors graves.
Couple from Switzerland

Being from Switzerland (Roots) we loved it.
Couple from Andover, MN

Great tour – amazing items to see. Thank you.
Family from Janesville, WI

Worth every dollar!
Gentleman from California

"Today is our future's past."

Around the Corner

Major technological advances in grain culture from September 2010 issue continued.
Around the turn of the century these were powered (and often towed over the road) by steam traction engines, later by specialized high-HP (for the era) tractors. The manpower required to haul the bundles of grain in from the field, feed it to the thresher, and haul away the straw meant that threshers were often used communally, by a "threshing ring". The ring might own the machine jointly, or assemble when a traveling thresher owner passed through at harvest time.

•"Combine harvester": Combines were first developed in horse-pulled (actually often "horse pushed") form before the turn of the century. The name comes from their ability to cut the grain and simultaneously clean it in the field – the grain was sacked or stored in a bin, while the straw was left behind to be picked up later if desired.
Combines remained a specialized item until the Depression, used in areas which specialized in grain and had either manpower shortages or short harvesting seasons. However, capital equipment (and thus debt) began to replace manual labor between the wars. Large tractor-pulled combines began to replace custom threshing on large grain operations.
Meanwhile, as small cultivating tractors began to become more common on less-specialized sized farms, smaller combines were developed.
Manpower shortages during W.W.II led to the end of many threshing rings – for less than the price of a new car a small farmer could do his own harvest, without the long days, uncertainty and friction between individuals that often came with community threshing. The 1950s were salad days for farm equipment suppliers, but eventually easy access to equipment loans under government programs began the trend to gigantism that prevails everywhere in mainstream farming these days: Hundreds of thousands of small farms mechanized, but now their descendants are mostly working in town, while a small fraction of the population uses ever larger machines to feed the urban population.

•"Grain Cleaners": Growing grain for seed purposes often requires more cleaning than a combine can do on its own – the combine is designed for high throughput in clean fields, and doesn't do the fine grading required to eliminate weed seeds that are in the same size range as the grain. Grain cleaners usually combine a fan for winnowing chaff and dust with two or more sieves mounted in larger than the desirable grain, and one or more others slightly too small to pass the grain to remove smaller weed seeds.

Excerpt from **Small Grains in New England**

•Before cheap transportation arrived in the form of railroads and canals, grain was grown everywhere in New England. However, we had hills, rocks and a variety of industrial jobs to draw off surplus labor. Meanwhile in the early days of the westward expansion grain was the only possible cash crop – little else could travel well enough to be gotten to market. New England grain growers were so regularly undercut that by W.W.II the few remaining were mostly producing animal feed and cover crop seed. Grain milling capability vanished in parallel.

•The New England climate doesn't favor winter wheat – freeze/thaw cycles often kill the over wintering plants if there isn't reliable snow cover. Oats and other summer grains do OK, but my crops are often just maturing as July and August rains spur weed growth. Maybe I should plant earlier. Winter rye seems to be easy to be successful with, but most people who plant it do so only to plow it down as a cover crop. Some rye is grown to be harvested for seed purposes, but most seed comes from elsewhere.

•To date, I haven't found a lot of places in New England to sell grain other than for seed purposes. Businesses that use grain, organic or not, usually purchase it already cleaned and milled, malted or otherwise processed. Facilities equipped to do this pre-processing are rare outside the grain-growing areas. Right now, I'm using a small farm sized grain cleaner purchased new by a farmer a couple of towns away – it's a Hance *Vac-Away*. Another manufacturer, which I found on the web but have no personal experience with, is Farmstead Products of Hinckley, MN. I have heard of places that can mill wheat or other grains into flour, but I haven't encountered anyone with a small-commercial capability to hull or roll oats, or malt barley.

•Instead, my primary long-term purpose in experimenting with grain is feeding my family and our animals with grains we grow. The whole thing started after we settled into a routine of baking our own bread about 7 years ago. From there, we experimented with buying our own grain and milling it using home-scale tools. This worked well once we found the right equipment. Meanwhile I had found and brought home a serviceable grain drill. I put it to work sowing cover crops and continued doing research on grain harvesting equipment.