New Glarus Historical Society, Inc.
Swiss Historical Village

Newsletter Issue 3 (97) **July 1, 2016**

Board and Committee Updates

The Board welcomed Phil Hanna as a new, on-call cashier and Stephanie Janssen, New Glarus High School senior as a short-term volunteer. Stephanie will research and write an article for the newsletter over the summer, based on her interests in writing and to meet volunteer requirements for graduation next spring.

As a result of adding several new staff to perform cashier duties on an on-call basis at the museum, the Board approved a formal job description for the position, prepared by Ann Marie Ott. In addition, Ott and Gail Beal, re-wrote and updated the cashier procedures for processing admissions and gift shop sales. The new materials were developed with input from Board members and individuals who have been working as cashiers for a number of years.

The Building and Grounds committee is seeking an energy audit to identify areas for improvement, increased energy efficiency and cost savings. Since the last meeting, committee members continue to focus on the tree trimming project and reviewing the maintenance log to identify priorities for the season, other than those associated with repair and restoration of the log buildings.

The Board approved a new policy presented by the Exhibits and Collections committee that delegated decision-making authority for the acceptance or rejection of donations of artifacts and media to the New Glarus Historical Society to the committee. The new policy will be tested over the next three months. Previously, all decisions about donations required approval by the Board of Directors. This new approach will streamline the process and reduce the time frame for decision-making.

Recent donations include: books from the early 1900s about farming in and statistics for Green County; a New Glarus Fire Department red vest, beanie and badges; a high school memory book covering the years of 1930-1936; New Glarus photo postcards, event brochures and a WIAA basketball scorebook from a tournament held in 1952.

Log Buildings Assessment and Restoration

The Board was disappointed that no estimates for the log church stabilization project and settler's cabin restoration were received since requests for bids were sent to area contractors following the May Board meeting. Members of the Board will follow-up with the individuals to ensure receipt and determine the reasons that no bids were submitted. One contractor is reported as being in disagreement with the temporary stabilization approach for the log church, which limited his interest in submitting a bid. The Board also plans to contact Rick Bernstein, the Wisconsin Historical Society regional representative to seek his input for any additional contractors that may have been added to the list previously provided to the Board approximately two years ago.

In May, the Board reviewed an estimate for the restoration of the settler's cabin and as a result, requested additional information and details about the contractor's plan. Although a response was received, insufficient detail was included in the response to consider the bid. The Board sent another request to clarify details and expand information in the original estimate and to submit it as soon as possible. One additional contractor was identified as a potential resource and will be contacted to determine his interest.

Swiss Historical Village

Insights

"Well worth the visit and the price. . . "

"Good experience about the Swiss culture and village. . . "

"Feel at home here. . .very nice"

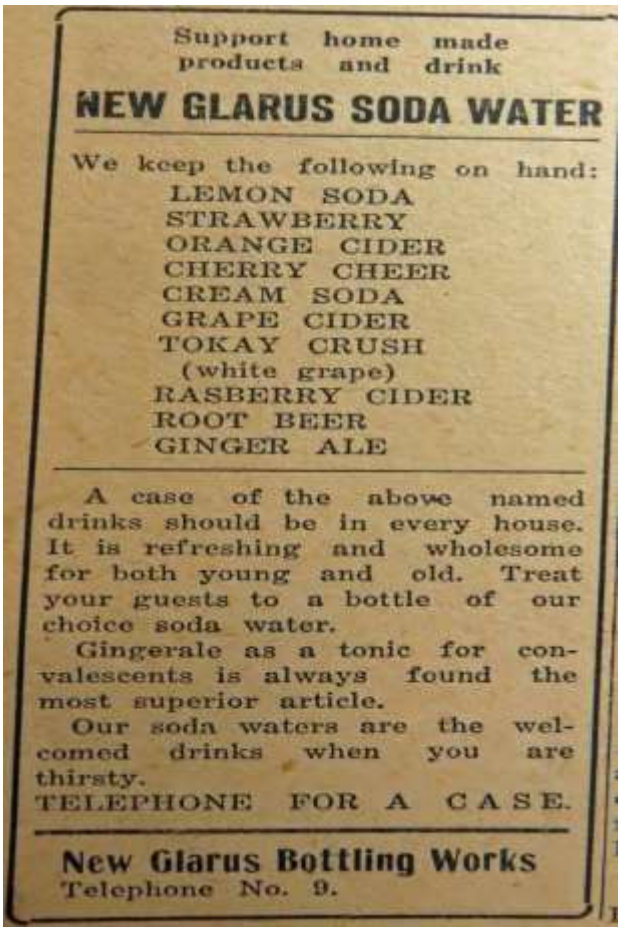
"Really enjoyed the videos with the buildings. . ."

"Loved the bee house . . ."

In the News July 1916

Celebrations

No 4th of July celebration is complete without an assortment of cool, refreshing drinks! In 1916, one only had to pick up the telephone, ask for Telephone No. 9, and a case of New Glarus Soda Water would be on its way to your home, courtesy of the New Glarus Bottling Works. Notice the wide selection of flavors listed in this advertisement from the New Glarus Post newspaper!



Support home made products and drink

NEW GLARUS SODA WATER

We keep the following on hand:

LEMON SODA
STRAWBERRY
ORANGE CIDER
CHERRY CHEER
CREAM SODA
GRAPE CIDER
TOKAY CRUSH
(white grape)
RASBERRY CIDER
ROOT BEER
GINGER ALE

A case of the above named drinks should be in every house. It is refreshing and wholesome for both young and old. Treat your guests to a bottle of our choice soda water.

Gingerale as a tonic for convalescents is always found the most superior article.

Our soda waters are the welcomed drinks when you are thirsty.

TELEPHONE FOR A CASE.

New Glarus Bottling Works
Telephone No. 9.

Holiday Driving

Many people will be on the road over the long, 4th of July weekend this year. The State Department of Transportation encourages safe driving, especially when traffic volumes are high. The Post-Recorder-Messenger today, includes regular reports of accidents that occur around our area, just as the New Glarus Post shared with its readers, 100 years ago. The details offered then, seem quite similar to the information we read today, with the exception of references to the use of seat belts and the cost of repairs!

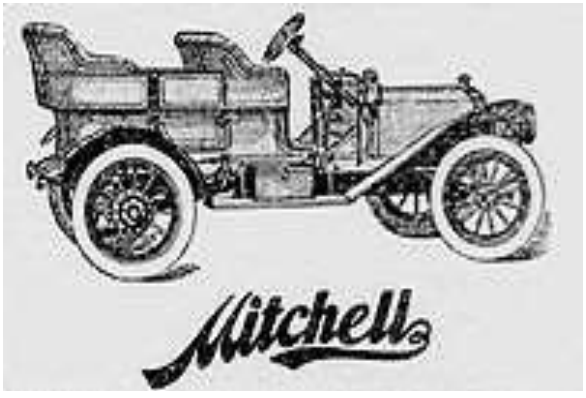
Auto Accident

"Auto accidents on the 4th are reported from several places as there were several at Monroe and a serious one at Brooklyn, while New Glarus was not without its mishap.

While returning from a spin north of town in the M. F. Hoesly Mitchell car, the driver lost control and it jumped a ditch, went thru a wire fence, down an embankment toward the river and turned on its side. The accident happened near the shooting park. The occupants were Herman Hoesly, J.J. Ott, Ed. Gmur Jr. "Happy" and Peterson, bartender at the William Tell House. Peterson was at the wheel, while Hoesly was at his side giving him instructions, how to run the car, and they were coming at a pretty good rate of speed when the accident happened.

The passengers escaped with only a number of bruises and scratches, the worst of which is a "blue eye" suffered by "Happy." The damage to the car will amount to about $150."

After reading the article, are you wondering about the Mitchell car? No, it is not a car owned by a Hoesly and a Mitchell, but rather is the name of a car manufactured in Racine, Wisconsin by the Mitchell-Lewis motor company. Short-lived, the company produced automobiles from 1903 – 1923, having transitioned from making carriages and then motorcycles for a period of time. Wikipedia reports that the Nash Motor Company purchased Mitchell-Lewis in 1924. An internet search discovered several advertisements for Mitchell automobiles with the purchase prices ranging from $1800 for a 30 HP, 4 cylinder roadster to $1325 for a 5-passenger touring car. While the model is not named in the Post article, perhaps it was a model K that ended up down by the Little Sugar River, pictured below.



Robbie Schneider

Fifty years ago, July 1966, the *New Glarus Post* reported that "Robbie Schneider, champion Swiss yodeler and flag thrower would represent New Glarus at the second annual folk festival at Camp Randall stadium in Madison, Wisconsin." The Folk Festival was originated the previous year by Governor Warren Knowles to perpetuate the traditions and arts of various ethnic groups in the state.

This July, the residents of New Glarus will mourn the passing of Robbie Schneider at a memorial gathering at the New Glarus hotel on July 10, from 1 to 5 p.m. Robbie died at his home in Greeley, Colorado on May 31. Robbie will be remembered for his contributions to helping the community of New Glarus transition to a true, tourist destination, following the closure of the Pet Milk plant in 1962.

Robbie's immigration from Zurich, Switzerland to New Glarus occurred six years earlier. Businessmen Gilbert Ott and Ernst Thierstein placed an ad in a Swiss entertainment magazine, seeking an individual to teach the youth of New Glarus the traditional singing and flag throwing arts. In addition, the local Yodel club sought an experienced yodeler to expand their repertoire. On behalf of the Yodel Club, the job was offered with a $150 transportation subsidy. In the early years of his residence, the full-time jobs arranged with Robbie's electrical engineering degree in mind, fell through. As a result, he lived with Thierstein and worked at the Swissconsin cheese factory for 75 cents per hour. He sang and yodeled regularly with the New Glarus Yodel Club suggesting to the group that people should pay to see their performances. He returned to Switzerland in 1959, leading a tour group on a two month visit. After this respite, Robbie made plans to go into business offering electrical repairs. But those plans changed.

In 1960, with financial backing from local businessmen and farmers, along with a land contract option, he purchased the only business that was available at the time, what is now the New Glarus Hotel. Although operating cash was limited, Robbie found support among his new friends in America, added a balcony to the building in order to to offer outdoor eating and remodeled the former opera house for more dining space and a dance floor. Robbie's Yodel Club was born!

New Glarus Hotel – 1960

Cheese and beef fondue, along with other Swiss specialties brought diners in droves and the dance floor was filled with polka-lovers.

Menu photo Wisconsin Historical Society

While the restaurant business kept Robbie very busy, the advertised reason that brought Robbie to New Glarus was not forgotten. In September 1968, the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel* reported "the opening of the nation's first and only yodeling school and flag-throwing school, with 82 youngsters meeting for free lessons at the Yodel club, once a week."

With a continuing interest in bringing tourists to New Glarus, and based on the success of the hotel, Robbie announced plans to develop a multi-million dollar resort outside the village limits. The project drew lots of attention, including an article in the January 20, 1975 issue of the *New Yorker* magazine titled "*Swissness*." The plan was abandoned, Robbie passed his Yodel Club on to Hans Lenzlinger and moved to Colorado with a mountain view more similar to his original Swiss home. Robbie made more than one return visit to New Glarus and joined in special celebration events over the years, since his departure.

Cheese in the News

As June Dairy month celebrations and events come to an end, we continue to reminisce about the importance of cheese to our community and greater Green County area.

Seventy-five years ago, in July 1941, Great Britain was seeking food products to support its citizens during World War II. The following article appeared in the *New Glarus Post* documenting the patriotism of the cheesemakers of Wisconsin in responding to Great Britain's call for assistance. What remains a mystery, are the reasons for the rejection of the offer presented by cheese producers in our area of the state. Read on. . .

AG. Dept Refuses Monroe Cheese Offer
New Glarus Post, July 1941

"Monroe—The recent offer by the Wisconsin Swiss and Limburger Cheese Producers assn. of 1,600,000 pounds of Swiss cheese to Great Britain has been refused by the United States Department of Agriculture, it was learned last week.

A letter sent to Pres. Albert Stoldt, of the association, by O.M. Reed, chief of the dairy division of the department of agriculture, has declared that the offer had been turned down "because thus far the British have only asked for American cheese."

The Association's suggestion of furnishing Swiss cheese for Britain followed an earlier suggestion by the association that the U. S. Department of Agriculture encourage use of Swiss cheese because of the heavy shipments of American cheese to England. Both suggestions drew little encouragement from the department.

Charles Stone, secretary of the Cheese Producers Association, reported that the association will again query the United States Department of Agriculture on plans to ship Wisconsin made cheese to England.

"Before the war, England, after the United States, was the best customer for Swiss cheese made in Switzerland, " Stone said. "We don't understand why the English do not want Swiss cheese on the list of foods they have requested from the United States.

Attendance, Tours and Events – June 2016

Visitors from around State continue to tour the Swiss Historical Village. In June, residents of the following counties signed our guest book and were noted on our counties listing for the year: Bayfield, Clark, Door, Langlade, Monroe, Oneida, Outagamie, Richland, Sheboygan, Waupaca and Wood.

Flags representing visitors from these states in the month of June were added to the group documented since opening day: Arkansas, Alaska, Arizona, Delaware, New Mexico, Nevada, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Vermont, Washington and Wyoming.

Foreign visitors came from these countries in June, not yet represented in our record book: Belgium, Canada, China, Egypt, India, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand and Poland.

During the month of June, we shared our history with 1 adult bus group and 280 school children from around the area, including Monticello, Madison, and New Glarus. Of the total children, more than 150 3rd and 4th graders from the New Glarus Elementary school spent time with us. A special thank-you to the New Glarus Parent-Teachers' Organization for donating $150 to the New Glarus Historical Society.

Mark Your Calendars -Cemetery Tour

The Swiss United Church of Christ Cemetery Committee will host its cemetery tour beginning at the Swiss Historical Village on August 6, at 9:00 a.m. Two, concurrent tours will feature visits to numerous tombstones and stories about the persons buried in the Swiss Church cemetery next door to the museum. This year a tour of the Evangelical United Brethren cemetery located on Highway 39, is added beginning at 10:30 a.m.