NEW GLARUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Hosta Princess Wu in museum garden below.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

Discussion of financial matters was the primary focus at the July 28th meeting of the Board of Directors. Finance Committee members President Klassy, Treasurer Ott, and Director Lienhardt recommended the Board implement measures to reduce the projected $20,000 loss for calendar year 2020, by 50 percent. The proposal was not adopted and led to a lengthy discussion of the list of measures documented in the proposal. We applied for and received a CARES Act grant through the Wisconsin Humanities Council in the amount of $6489. Discussion of other proposed strategies may continue at future meetings. The Board took the following actions:

- Fund Phase II of the Hall of History exhibit with Society funds, if no grant award is available. No estimate of the cost is currently available. The Board approved the motion on a 7-2 vote.
- Eliminate payments for meetings to the Board members who accept them
- Recruit new members and offer extended membership through December 2021 as an incentive
- Deposit membership dues to the Society's endowment fund with the Community Foundation of Southern WI, at the member's request.
- Patch the chimney on the entrance building at a cost of $600; the cost could rise as high as $2400, if replacement is needed.

RECENT DONATIONS

In response to last month's newsletter we gratefully acknowledge donations for the student employment project from members Duane and Jan Freitag of Greendale, WI, Dorothy (Heller) and Robert Abendroth of Ames, Iowa. and Mary (Ingwell) Usher of New Glarus. Your generosity will keep University of WI-Eau Claire student Stephanie Janssen, (pictured at left), busy until she returns to school in September. Stephanie began work on the inventory project a few weeks ago, taking photographs and documenting artifacts for the Settler's Cabin, the Log Church and the Community Building.

Another respondent to last month's newsletter is member Chip Williams of Plymouth, MN. Chip, a retired band director with Schindler and Luchsinger family history roots, offered to support any project suitable for remote work. He has agreed to assist with the inventory project and will convert existing details about artifacts from original paper log books into a searchable Excel format. Once complete, we'll be able to compare the data to Stephanie's documentation. Thanks, Chip!

IN THE AIR

Before Dallas Wild could drive a car, he was in the air! Dallas, who lived most recently in Monroe, passed away in January of this year at 97 years young. He was born in the Town of Montrose, the son of Jacob J. and Markert (Prior) Wild. Mr. Wild's son, Dennis Wild, and daughter, Dianne Kundert, visited the Historical Society recently and offered a memorial donation on behalf of their family to commemorate not only Dallas' lifelong interest in his New Glarus roots and Swiss heritage, but also his interests in photography and flying.

Dallas was just 12 years old when the New Glarus Post reported that Herman Lufi had bought a small airplane in August 1934. The Post reports that "it is the first aeroplane to call New Glarus its home port. The plane was first in use in Iowa, was a year old and had a 50 horsepower Ford motor." Upon arrival via truck, the plane was worked on in the B.T. Kundert shop; recanvassing and painting were in progress. According to the article, "Mr. Lufi had finished four months flying school in Kansas, six or seven years ago. . . and had about 15 hours of solo time in the air." Mr. Lufi planned to "brush up" a little on his flying in Madison before taking the plane into the air from a local field.

Dennis and Diane related that their father was always a curious person and willing to try anything new. And the arrival of the airplane in New Glarus offered an adventure. According to Dallas' children, Dallas was about fifteen years old, out and about when he ran into Mr. Lufi who was getting ready for a quick flight to Kenosha to pick up a needed part. Mr. Lufi asked Dallas, "Would you like to ride along?" Dallas couldn't say NO! So without his parents' knowledge, off he went into the air. According to Herman's estimate, the flight reportedly would only take about an hour each way, so Dallas would not be gone long. However, when they landed in Kenosha, the part wasn't readily available. So rather than fly home and back again, the two stayed overnight. Dallas reported that Mr. Lufi and the man providing the part decided to enjoy the evening out on the town and by the next morning, Herman wasn't feeling very well. The part arrived and Herman and Dallas took off on the return flight to New Glarus. Herman, still not feeling any better, said "I can't fly the plane, you will have to do it." Dallas' story included that Herman instructed Dallas to "keep it level!" and that Dallas did.

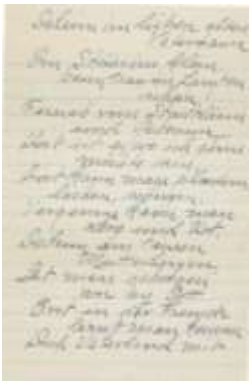
Dallas worked hard in his youth both at his father's little restaurant in New Glarus, where hamburgers were the most popular fare, and performed manual labor. He shared stories with his family about how he helped to dig the trenches for the first sewer lines in New Glarus and also reported that he was on the building crew for the first grade school (now the apartments on Sixth Avenue). With his hard earned money, Dallas bought a little Brownie camera, pictured below. And his subject matter? Aerial photography, of course! Once again, Dallas was in the air, this time taking photographs of New Glarus from above. It is believed that the photo dates to about 1937 and captures a view to the north and east of current cemetery.

With the Wild donation, we will be creating a new display that will include Dallas' camera, his aerial photos that are part of the Historical Society collection and group them with other early cameras. Visitors will be able to view the cameras, Dallas' photos, and compare them to today's photographic technology. We thank Dennis and Diane, not only for the donation to make the new exhibit possible, but also for sharing the memories of an adventurous man. May Dallas inspire us to be curious and try new things, too!

LONGING FOR HOME

Although the museum is closed, we continue work in the Historical Society archives. Volunteer Rebecca Forbes is doing an inventory of our collection of scrapbooks and found the document pictured below, which was then translated by Volunteer Lee Camarigg. As we celebrate the anniversary of the founding of New Glarus this month, we are reminded that those with Swiss roots may perhaps always long for their fatherland.

Daheim im lieben alten Vaterhause
Im Stübchen klein beim trauten Lampenschein
Fernab von Stadtlärm und Gebrause
Dort ist es wo ich gern möchte sein
Dort kann man plaudern, lachen scherzen
Vergessen kann man Sorg und Not.
Daheim am teuren Mutterherzen
Ist man geborgen wie bei Gott.
Erst in der Fremde lernt man kennen
Dich Vaterland mit.



At home in the dear old father land
In my dear room by trusted lamplight
Far away from city noise and hustle
That is where I enjoy being
There one can visit, laugh and joke
One can forget one's cares and troubles
At home by my dear mother's heart
one feels protected like with God.
Only when far away, one gets to know
one's Fatherland.

Deinem Reiz, wenn Heimwehtränen
in den Augen brennen
Dann weiss man erst wie schön du bist
wie schön du bist –o Schweiz!
Noch einmal möchte ich dich sehen
Mit deinen Bergen ohne Zahl

Das Schweizerb anner flattern sehen
Daheim, nur noch ein einzig mal

Your charm, when homesick tears
burn the eyes,
then does one finally know how
beautiful you are – Oh Switzerland!
Once more I would like to see you
with your mountains that cannot be
counted
See the Swiss banner fluttering
To be home, only once more.

With love and respect to my new adopted country, America.
If however you have read anything more beautiful, send it to me,

Who might have written or shared this poem with Herman Schmid? Do you recognize the initial and last name that concluded the letter? If you are able to identify it, please contact us with your thoughts.

NEW GLARUS ARTIST

This lovely, original watercolor painting, about 14 x 18 inches in size, was recently donated to the New Glarus Historical Society. It was found in an old frame with a notation pencilled on the back: "*Mrs. W Stauffacher*." As you may know, Esther Streiff Stauffacher was an original founder of the museum. The artist, identified by his signature on the painting is Robert Gmur. Kim Tschudy's book, *The Swiss of New Glarus,* includes a photo of Gmur in his WWII service uniform and notes that Robert spent several years in a German Prisoner of War camp. When he returned home he was no longer steady enough to continue his artwork. Bob Elmer, New Glarus genealogy expert, shared that Robert was the son of Robert M. and Marie (Dudler) Gmur and a cousin of Herbert Gmur. Robert lived his later years in North Carolina where he was awarded a POW/MIA medal. He died at age 88 in 1999, and is buried in North Carolina. Does any Gmur art hang on your walls or do you have some in your attic? We'd love to see the art pieces and photograph them, if they exist. Contact us!

GANGSTER CONNECTION?

A story has long circulated in New Glarus that Al Capone may have been running beer and liquor from our community during prohibition. No evidence to verify this story has ever been found. But recently, we received an inquiry from California resident Jack Murray, seeking information about the ownership of the Brewery by the Murray family, which apparently did have Chicago gangland connections! We found newspaper clippings about the Murray family and the brewery in our archives and are in the process of exchanging information. Member Kim Tschudy has been doing some research, too. We hope to have an update for you in a future newsletter!

We thank the Bank of New Glarus for their support in publishing the New Glarus Historical Society newsletter.

Contact Us

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