NEW GLARUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

The Board held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 22.

Treasurer Freitag requested that the Board approve the purchase of QuickBooks accounting software to manage the Historical Society's finances going forward. Following discussion, the Board decided to seek information from several accountants about options to support the use of QuickBooks, before making a final decision.

Board member Dibble provided an update on the Hall of History phase II exhibit development. She shared a list of images that she intends to use in the display and provided a preliminary list of tasks necessary to prepare for installation of the display.

Dibble will provide the Board with a written proposal, budget and estimate from Park Printing to consider in order to submit a grant request to the Community Foundation of Southern WI's New Glarus Community Fund. The grant would be used to cover the costs associated with Phase II exhibits. The Board agreed to communicate on this matter via email since the deadline for the grant application is October 15, 2020, before the next scheduled meeting.

Work continues on the artifact inventory project and volunteer Chip Williams has converted nearly all of the original accession records to a searchable Excel software format. The next step is to confirm the location of each of the items in the collection and update the electronic file to reflect this information.

RECENT DONATIONS

Rosemary Scott donated numerous items to the Historical Society belonging to Rudy and Rose Schweizer. Rudy and Rose were long-time volunteers and supporters of the Historical Society. Among the donated items are: a minature chalet with carved accessories made by Rudy, immigration and naturalization documents, postcards from 1958, family photographs and a hand-stitched sampler with a cross-stitch instruction book from Switzerland dated 1891. A photo of the sampler appears at the left. Do you notice anything unusual about it?

FIRST BREWERY HISTORY UPDATE

As reported in the August edition of the Historical Society newsletter, we received an inquiry from California resident Jack Murray, seeking information about the ownership of the Brewery by the Murray family. Details for this article were retrieved from newspaper clippings given to us by the Green County Historical Society, from member Linda Schiesser's clipping files and conversations with Jack Murray.

As you may already know, the New Glarus Brewery, operated by Gabriel Zweifel closed in 1920 after 31 years of operation due to Prohibition. Beginning in 1920, the space was used by the New Glarus Bottling company. In October 1924, the Monroe Evening Times reported that the plant had been purchased by Darrow & Cox, a corporation in Kenosha, WI and that operations for manufacturing cereal products, including a malt beverage, were scheduled to begin.

Prohibition had been repealed in February of 1933 and on May 12, 1933 the Times reported that the brewery property had been transferred again, this time by John Darrow to Jennie Murray. The article reports that "Darrow was a resident of Kenosha, but he was never known at New Glarus where it was understood that Chicago interests owned the brewery. The plant has been modernized and is ready for operations. Organization under the new ownership will be completed at an early date, it is planned."

So what do we know about Jenny Murray? A Monroe Evening Times article published in August 1934 notes that "Mr. and Mrs. James Murray, Chicago, were in the city yesterday on business in connection with the New Glarus brewery property. . . . Mr. Murray has disposed of his sandwich stand in Chicago and says he intends to retire to a quiet life. Recent charges against him resulting from transfer of government bonds stolen in an Indiana bank robbery, he said, were a matter of mistaken identity."

Jack Murray, who made the initial inquiry sparking this recent research, was not a direct descendant of James and Jenny Murray, but rather a great nephew. Jenny was the sister of Jack's grandmother, Mary. Jack's grandfather was Irish immigrant, Patrick "Paddy" Murray. James and Patrick were not related, despite the same last names. No photos were available of Jack and Jenny Murray, or sisters, Jenny and Mary, but we did find one of Patrick "Paddy" and his children. The picture at the left is of Jack's grandfather Patrick with Jack's father, Parnell standing in front. Jack's family history, although not directly connected with the Brewery included gang connections. Patrick "Paddy" Murphy, served as a body guard to Hymie Weiss, the leader of the Chicago *North Side* gang which was active during the prohibition era. Weiss was born Henry Earl J. Wojciechowski, and some historical references note that he was the only gang boss feared by Al Capone. Weiss and "Paddy" Murray were gunned down in front of Holy Name Cathedral in Chicago in 1926. Our contact, Jack reported that the gang activities and his grandfather's tragic death were seldom talked about in his family. However, the murders made headlines in many Chicago and national newspapers and included photographs of the gruesome scene following what was believed to be a gang hit. One photo shows Patrick "Paddy" Murray lying in the street, surrounded by onlookers, a hat covering his face to hide the bullet wounds. To view the photos and read about the history of Patrick "Paddy" Murray' death, his boss, Hymie Weiss and the North Side gang visit: http://www.myalcaponemuseum.com/id89.htm

No other news about James and Jenny Murray and the Brewery surface until the spring of 1939 when a Times article reported efforts by Green County to collect back taxes. The Murrays were on the list of delinquent payers. The County claimed the Brewery property tax deed for non-payment. The Times article said: "James E. Murray, notorious Chicagoan, recently, taken into custody on charges of participating in a Pennsylvania bank robbery, apparently does not find it convenient at this time to redeem the New Glarus brewery property that Green county has taken tax deed for. Here with his wife in March to talk over a redemption plan with the county property committee at the court house, he heard the committee's offer and agreed to an April 26 deadline for action on his part if he wanted to take advantage of the offer. Nothing has since been heard from him by the committee." Mrs. Jennie Murray appeared around this time and "with her were three men from Chicago, believed bodyguards and associates of her husband."

The matter of delinquent taxes was not completely resolved until 1942. Jacob Rieder, Swiss immigrant and architect that developed the plans and helped build the Community Building and Log Church in our Swiss Historical Village, purchased the property. Just a year later, Otto Anderegg, a local cheesemaker purchased the property planning to use it for cheese storage.

So, while we may never know what the Kenosha company or the Murrays actually planned or how they used the property, some pieces of the early Brewery history puzzle have now been completed. Thanks to Jack Murray for sharing his story and we look forward to hearing from him again if his cousin, the family historian finds more pieces of the puzzle in the future.

WISH YOU WERE HERE

The use of texting and social media is fast replacing the art of hand-written communications. Vacation photographs are posted to Facebook, sent via Instagram, and retained on cell phones and other electronic devices. Think about how many post cards you have received in the past several years that contain that familiar phrase, "Wish you were here!" While you may not have received many in recent years, it's likely you have some favorite post cards tucked away in a drawer or photo album that you received from others or collected as a souvenir of your own travels.

According to the Quester Quarterly published in the Fall of 1990, the post card idea was conceived at a postal convention in Germany in 1865. The Austrians approved a plan in 1869 and produced "Correspondenz Karte" without a picture. England followed Austria in 1870 and a million cards were sold in the first week. By October 1870, the United States issued its first card with a pre-printed postal rate of 2 cents. The first picture post card appeared in Chicago at the Columbian Exposition in 1893 where cards were used for advertising. By 1898 post cards were so popular that rates dropped to a penny a piece.

Initially no messages were allowed on the address side, so some people wrote messages over the picture on the front. The vertical line dividing the message space from the address area appeared in 1907. Post cards depicted a variety of subjects including holiday art and greetings, fine art, advertising for a variety of businesses, photographs of local and regional scenes as well as photographs of individuals. Also popular were humorous depictions of animals dressed in clothes, ladies wearing elaborate dresses, and cards honoring American presidents and European royalty. Some postcards were made of wood and others decorated with buttons, coins or fragments of textiles.

The Historical Society archives contains several hundred post cards in its collection including many of the types described above as well as those related to local tourism. The cards depict New Glarus scenery, its buildings, the Wilhelm Tell pageant and Swiss entertainment groups that performed here. A number of the cards are without messages representing keepsakes of trips to America's Little Switzerland. Others convey short messages about family activities or communicate plans for get-togethers. On some post cards sent to local residents in the 1960s, one can see a margin note that reads "Hi, Joe!" Why? Joe Haegeli was the assistant postmaster and apparently some believed Joe read every card that was processed through our post office! The Historical Society has produced and sold post cards of the Swiss Historical Village for many years and still do so today. These cards document the development and expansion of the museum over time. Enjoy this look at our past depicted in the post cards below. With COVID concerns limiting our operations and cancelling our annual, October Harvest Fest we do sincerely, "*wish you were here*."

DID YOU KNOW?

In August 1934 the New Glarus Woods State Park received its official name. The New Glarus Post announced that the park, which previously had no name, would now be known as “New Glarus Woods State Park, State Owned Roadside Park.” The article noted that the woods were being thinned for a picnic area with rustic seats being built and winding paths cleared to enhance its beauty.” The article noted that camping by tourists would not be allowed as previously planned. The work was being done by two crews of 25 men each, identified as county relief workers. Payroll for the work crews was estimated at $1632.00. The State was supplying the supervision, equipment and supplies for the project, with a total project cost of $4000.00.

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

The Bank of New Glarus
and Sugar River Bank Branches

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