NEW GLARUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 4/Issue 1/April 2021

2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Jim Hoesly, Vice-President

John Freitag, Treasurer

Erica Loeffelholtz, Secretary

John Colstad

Mary Dibble

David Hustad

John Lienhardt

Vacancy

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

For the second year in a row, due to Green County Public Health Department recommendations to avoid gatherings with individuals outside your own household, the Board of Directors has canceled the annual meeting for the New Glarus Historical Society.

As a result we are using this edition of the newsletter to communicate the information that is usually shared at the annual gathering of the membership. In particular, please review the Secretary's report that follows for information about the 2021 Board of Directors election and which requires member action.

Secretary's Report, by *Erica Loeffelholtz*

I think it's safe to say that none of us could have anticipated what 2020 would bring. The Board of Directors started the year looking forward to celebrating the 175th anniversary of the founding of New Glarus, never suspecting that our plans would be turned completely upside down. In the spring of 2020, when it became clear that the pandemic was going to get much worse before it got better, we made the decision to keep the museum closed for the 2020 season. It was not an easy decision to make, but ultimately we felt that protecting the health of our volunteers and visitors was the most responsible choice.

Your Board of Directors was not idle during those months though. We have been hard at work behind the scenes, making necessary repairs, refreshing displays, carrying out a large inventory project, and helping with genealogy requests. You can read more about our activities of the past year in the treasurer's report.

This spring there is a feeling of hope in the air. With vaccines promised to all, the end of this pandemic is finally in sight, and we are very much looking forward to opening the museum again this summer. Keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for announcements about hours of operation and upcoming events. And be sure to visit the Chamber of Commerce site at www.swisstown.com for details on upcoming festivals and other special events.

As it is not safe to gather in groups just yet, we will not be holding an in-person annual meeting this year. We do however invite your feedback, as well as your votes to confirm Board members this spring. I, Erica Loeffelholtz, will be stepping down at the end of my term in April. Board member Ann Marie Ott resigned last summer due to moving away from New Glarus. We have two wonderful volunteers, John Eglsaer and Rebecca Forbes, poised to join the Board. Additionally, Board members seeking re-election now at the end of their three year terms include: John Colstad, Larry Klassy, David Hustad and Al Lienhardt.

John Elgsaer is a retired middle and high school teacher. He and his wife Holly moved to New Glarus 10 years ago and since then John has been an ambulance driver and Board member of the local EMS, a seasonal DNR employee and a

substitute teacher. During his first couple of years here in town he joined the New Glarus Historical Society and learned to be a guide at the Historical Village. John says he is looking forward to getting involved again with these activities.

Rebecca Forbes and her family joined the Historical Society in 2018 when they moved to New Glarus from Madison. She has a long standing interest in genealogy and research experience documenting the history of older homes. Since she began volunteering at the Historical Society in 2018, Rebecca has assisted with planting flowers as well as bringing artifacts indoors for the winter season and re-setting exhibits in the spring. In addition, she has been helping to document the holdings in our library archives collection over the past two years.

We need your votes to confirm the election of the Board nominees and re-election of Board members wishing to continue their service. If you receive this newsletter in the mail, please take a moment to complete the stamped postcard included with this newsletter and drop it in the mail. If you receive this newsletter electronically, please send an email to admin@swisshistoricalvillage.org to submit your vote. Thank you!

Treasurer's Report, *by John Freitag*

I am John Freitag, the new treasurer for the New Glarus Historical Society. I want to thank Ann Marie Ott for her help and efforts to get me into the flow of everything. There are not a lot of transactions to make in one year, but there are a lot of different things that impact the financial position of our museum and trying to follow them all was a learning experience for me. Thanks to Ann Marie I feel much more comfortable now than when I started being the treasurer back in September. One thing that I did was to put the financials for the entire year into QuickBooks. This makes it easier for us to access different records if we need to, as well as making an easier transition when a new treasurer takes office. It also makes it easier for us to submit different records or reports to government agencies and other organization.

2020 was not only a challenge for us, but for the museum as well. The Board made the decision to not open for the 2020 season. Ann Marie projected an approximate loss of $20,000 for the year when the Board began to think about not opening for the season. I am very happy to say that our year-end financials showed a net loss of $3,189.87 for fiscal year 2020.

Ann Marie had a very accurate projection. Two things are responsible for this reduction in losses. We had some very generous donors who stepped up and contributed money to the museum. Your Board also applied for a couple of grants and did receive some monies from those grants. These efforts helped to reduce the projected loss by a little over $17,000. Your Board would like to thank those who donated to the museum in the past year, it was much appreciated!

We had four major projects that were paid for this year as well. The front of the Print Shop was totally replaced, and then Larry Klassy and some of the Board members painted the exterior of the building. We also had to tuck point the chimney on the entrance building to the museum. Phase I of the Hall of History project was completed and partially paid for with one of the grants. Mary Dibble has been the driving force behind that project.

We are in the process of completing Phase II before we open, and are excited for you to see the new look in our Hall of History. One other thing that was done to help maintain our investment was that Roseann Ott was hired to paint the inside of the Collectibles building during the time the museum was closed. Thanks Roseann! All these things contributed to the well-being of our museum.

If anyone has questions about the Treasurer's Report, or would like to see the year-end balance sheet, please call me at 608-575-5000 or email Jfreitag8@gmail.com.

Generous Gifts Allow us to Complete our 3-Year Hall of History Project, *by Mary Dibble*

Thanks to the generosity of two donations, visitors to the Swiss Historical Village and Museum will be treated to new permanent exhibits in the Hall of History that share and celebrate the community's historical significance. As the pandemic forced the museum to close for an entire season, drastically impacting its revenue, these gifts made it possible for the New Glarus Historical Society to meet its goals and continue its plans.

A grant of $5,000 awarded at the end of 2020 from the New Glarus Community Foundation **(**NGCF), a component of the Community Foundation of Southern Wisconsin, will help fund the design and manufacture of panels that illustrate the early years of the New Glarus settlement, representing Phase II of the project. This second major exhibit is scheduled to be completed in May. The award comes on the heels of three other grants from NGCF in 2018 and 2019 that helped fund Phase I of the project, the emigration story, completed in May, 2020.

In addition, a portion of a grant we received at the end of 2020 from the Kubly-Disch Foundation will be used within the next few months to cover costs of the new exhibit that aren't covered by the grant from the New Glarus Community Foundation. This award will also be used to update the lighting in the Hall of History to be more efficient and coordinate with the design of our exhibits. The current plan is to apply the remainder of the funds to other projects in the Hall of History as they are developed.

Major Revamping of Hall of History Exhibit on Schedule for Completion, *by Mary Dibble*

Over the winter we made significant progress toward completing the second phase of our project to update exhibits in the Hall of History. As before, we relied a great deal on the extensive work already done by others. Duane Freitag's book, *A Common Treasure*, was a primary source, and Bob Elmer provided critical review and input for the drafts. Along the way, a century-old story purporting to explain why the men stood as the women left Swiss Church was quickly pulled from the draft after being revealed as suspect, at best. (See Bob Elmer's "Family History Notes, Winter 2021") Brian Bigler, the museum consultant who designed the dioramas, verified the age and origin of artifacts, and assisted with texts and image selection, returned on short notice to design vitrines to display selected rare artifacts.

Phase II covers the early years of the settlement, from survival to gradual development into a thriving community, and includes a large diorama. It is a quick overview of 1845 to 1910 and is intended to provide the foundation for what visitors will see as they tour the outlying buildings. The design layout submitted by Park Printing in Verona was approved by the Board, and we are on track for installation in late May. As they did for the Phase I exhibit, Board members will paint and prepare the walls and assure that the carpentry work necessary to support the exhibit is completed.

We had originally planned for a celebratory opening event to introduce the new exhibits to our membership and the community, but that will depend on the status of the pandemic and guidelines from the CDC and public health departments. A grand reopening may instead need to be a quiet reopening. In either case, we are grateful to the New Glarus Community Foundation and the Kubly-Disch Foundation for making this possible.

NEW ARRIVAL – TRANSLATION OF THE WILD NOTEBOOK

A rare artifact in the collection of the New Glarus Historical Society is a notebook which belonged to Glarner immigrant, Josua Wild. Wild first arrived in the United States in September 1845, settling in Syracuse, New York before moving to Green County in 1850. August Berlinger, a Village of Glarus resident pictured at the left, has long been interested in Glarner history and the industry of the Linth Valley. His historical interests extended to New Glarus where he became aware of the Josua Wild notebook in the Society's collection. As a result, Professor Anita Auer, photographed the notebook for Berlinger. Patrick Wild, a fellow Glarner historian, helped August to translate the notebook to English converting this treasure to a booklet that others might enjoy. The diary entries cover the years from 1845 to 1877 and include notations about "the weather, notable events, agricultural and village growth, income, tax and civil statistics and the joys and suffering of the up-and-coming community." Berlinger, a master upholsterer and decorator by trade, had hoped to present the book in New Glarus in 2020 as part of the 175th Anniversary celebration, which was canceled. Since that event cancellation, Berlinger has generously donated and shipped 60 copies of the booklet to the Historical Society and those books will become available for sale to members and the general public in the near future.

DID YOU KNOW?

A picture of a New Glarus baseball team, circa 1947 was posted on our Facebook page recently, naming members of the team, including Cloyance "Noisy" Zweifel. The posting prompted an inquiry to the Historical Society about the name Cloyance and its origins. Bob Elmer, expert on New Glarus family history, has not found any details in his research that sheds light on the origins of this name. Erica Loeffelholtz checked public Social Security records and found that Cloyance Karlen, Monticello, b. 1901 was the first Cloyance on record. In the years that followed other individuals in the area received the name Cloyance including: Cloyance Zimmerman b. 1916, Cloyance Hefty b. 1921, Cloyance Zentner b. 1922, and Cloyance Hoesly b. 1925. Almost no other individuals on record have the name Cloyance and nearly all are affiliated with Green County. Can you shed any light on this local history mystery? Share your theories or insights by contacting us.

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

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