NEW GLARUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

We are pleased to announce that our Historical Society is one of 17 Wisconsin Historical Regional affiliates to receive a Collections Care mini-grant for 2022 to support collections and archives improvements. Fifty one applicants sought grant funds. The Board extends its thanks to members Erica Loeffelholz and Ann Marie Ott for filing the application, which resulted in the award of $390 to purchase additional supplies to store and preserve donations of print and photographic materials.

In other business the Board is looking at means to address financial concerns. No bus tours have been scheduled as of this date and these tours had been a significant source of revenue in past years. A new credit card machine is needed to meet the demands of current technology. The cost is $750, plus it appears internet access is required to support this function at an additional cost. Staffing the museum is also proving challenging this year.

The Historical Society is supporting the Heidi Festival group by hosting the start of the Wine and Chocolate Experience fundraiser on Saturday, July 9 at 4 p.m. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend the Annual Log Church Service on Saturday, August 13. Pastor Pat Pluss will lead the service and music will be provided by the New Glarus Maennenchor to honor the original settlers who founded our community in 1845.

DONATIONS

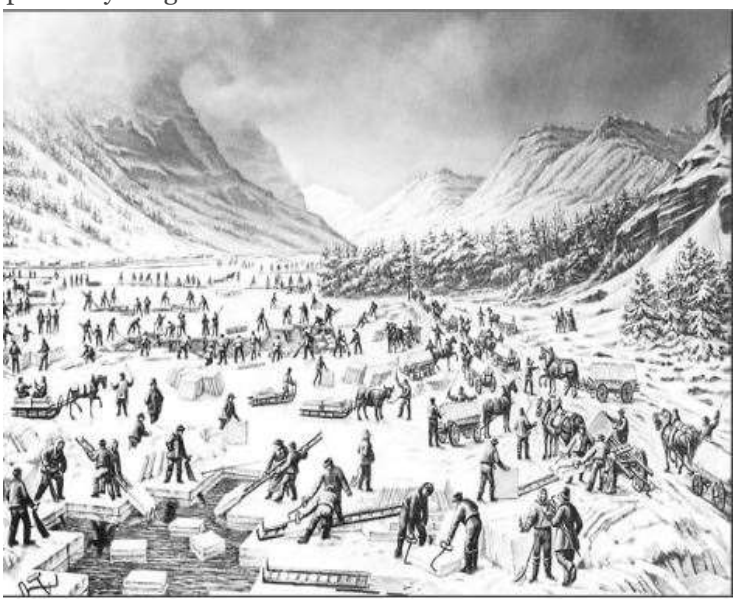
The Green County Historical Society (GCHS) recently transferred this photo of Civil War soldier George Legler to the New Glarus Historical Society. GCHS had reviewed its collections and identified items which could be shared with other historical societies, in order to increase its own space for storage. George Legler, Jr., the son of one of the first colonists, George Legler, enlisted in the Union Army in October 1861. George became a member of the 9th Wisconsin Infantry, a unit comprised of men of German descent and others who spoke German. The unit was formed at Fort Sigel in Milwaukee, WI. According to the Wisconsin Historical Society, the 9th WI left for Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, on January 22, 1862. From there it marched to Fort Scott, Kansas, conducted expeditions on the southern plains, and then moved through Missouri and Arkansas. The company's roster and records indicate that George died on June 3, 1864, as the result of wounds suffered at Princeton, Arkansas, likely in the Battle of Jenkins Ferry which took place just north of Princeton. No official record of his burial place has been found as of the time of this writing.

Have you experienced a heat wave in your locale yet this summer? And how has your refrigerator and ice-maker been working for your family? In these days of modern conveniences, we take you back to the days when ice-harvesting was the means to keep foods cold and cool our drinks. We thank Historical Society members Bob Elmer and August Berlinger for sharing the following information with our readers.

ICE HARVESTING IN CANTON GLARUS

This article is reprinted with permission from Bob Elmer's Family History Notes, Fall edition, September 2012
Additional photographs shared by Historical Society Life Member/Canton Glarus resident, August Berlinger

Harvesting ice in Canton Glarus was a major industry in the days before refrigeration. In the winter of 1862 a Netstaler named Gabriel Leuzinger (1827-1891) cut the first blocks of ice from the Klöntalersee (Lake Klöntal) near Glarus. And he was laughed at for doing so. Despite the early skepticism, Klöntal ice soon was considered Switzerland's best ice due to the crystal-clear water. In 1873, the Glarus newspaper was so bullish on the potential of ice harvesting that it proclaimed the Klöntal a new California affording the opportunity for great riches.



The Klöntalersee lies deep below the Glärnisch massif which effectively blocks the low winter sun from hitting the cold, dark lake. The ice was cut into blocks using large saws. The blocks were loaded onto wagons and sleds then transported from the Klöntal down to warehouses in Netstal and Glarus. From there it was shipped by rail to such destinations as Zurich and Basel in Switzerland, Frankfurt and Cologne in Germany, and Paris and Marseilles in France. The ice even found its way onto ocean steamships. A hundred weight of ice was called a Zentner and cost from 30 Rappen to over 1 Schwiizerfranke depending on the quality. The image shows ice harvesting on the Klöntalersee.

A decline in the Klöntal ice industry began in the 1930s with the advent of ice-making machines and refrigeration. The last ice harvest of 3000 kilos occurred on January 7-10, 1953 and was sent to a Wädenswil brewery. This final ice harvest was filmed and a 12 minute documentary of that historic event can be viewed on the following YouTube link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VaSwMeLXnMo Thank you to Felix Stüssi, Sr. for this link.

August Berlinger, of Canton Glarus, shared these photographs of ice harvesting in Glarus after he read about the replacement of a photo display in the Farm Implement building. That article that appeared in an earlier edition of this newsletter. The photo depicted a horse pulling an ice plow which is also on display in the Farm Implement building. August reminded him of the ice cutting photographs of Glarus, because they were so similar.

A photo of the ice saw on display at the museum is pictured on the left. The photo was provided by Board President, Larry Klassy. In the series of photos on the next page, sent to the Historical Society by Herr Berlinger, you'll see the horses, men, ice blocks and other equipment, so very similar to those in the You Tube documentary of ice harvesting in Glarus in 1953, which Bob shared in the article above. The Glarner photographs date back to the late 1800s to the early 1900s. Do take a few minutes to watch the documentary. If you're warm , you'll feel a lot cooler after watching it!

The picture above provides a wide angle look of the activity taking place all over the lake and the wagons and teams lined up waiting to pick up their load. It was a big operation involving many men and horses.

Illustr. C. Die Eisblöcke werden ans Land befördert. Phot. J. Brunner-Haffter, Glarus.

In the photo on the left, notice the bundles of hay placed for easy eating by the horses, while the men are loading the blocks of ice on to the wagons.

Blankets cover the blocks of ice as the horses and men maneuver their loads up the icy paths from the lake.

Two additional photographs below show the horse and wagon transports arriving at the railroad yard and men loading the large blocks of ice onto train cars. Did you notice that some men are not wearing gloves to protect their hands?

DID YOU KNOW?

Fifty years ago the last load of lumber reached New Glarus by rail, just before the Milwaukee Road railway terminated its line to New Glarus on April 1, 1972. This final delivery contained 38,233 square feet of Douglas fir, shipped from Missoula, Montana and sold to the New Glarus Lumber Company by Robert "Buz" Holland. At that time, the carload of lumber was valued at $6426, which included freight costs of $1304. Future lumber deliveries arrived via the Illinois Central railroad and were unloaded at Belleville or Monticello. Pictured unloading the car from left to right are Anton I. "Tony" Ott, Geoff Canfield, and Don Ott, owner of the New Glarus Lumber Company at the time of the photo.

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The Bank of New Glarus
Powering Growth in Our Community

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