NEW GLARUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

No information was available from the Board of Directors meeting held on Tuesday, September 27 at the time this newsletter was printed. However, the following facts gathered from other individuals may be of interest to you.

The cashiers at the museum review the visitor guest book regularly and record the residence of visitors when noted. At the end of September the museum had been visited by residents of 24 different foreign countries and every state in the United States except: Maine, Nebraska, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia and Wyoming.

Paid members of the Historical Society as of September 30, 2022 include: Seventeen single members, 21 couples, 12 families and 47 lifetime members for a total of 97 memberships. Although we have experienced some non-renewals or deaths among our members, new memberships have made up for the change. At this time last year, our paid membership total was 98 memberships. Consider gifting a membership to someone to help us grow!

As you may know, the Historical Society advertises its email address to members and the general public. Since the first of the year, volunteer Erica Loeffelholz has managed communications and directed messages to the Board in response to over 200 emails (not counting the Spam!) Thanks for your help with this important task, Erica!

IT'S TIME FOR HARVEST FEST!

Harvest Fest will take place on Sunday, October 9th from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission for adults is $5.00 and $3.00 for children. Members of the Historical Society receive free admission to Harvest Fest as a benefit of membership. The Board is contacting a number of individuals who participated in Harvest Fest in the past. Those demonstrators taught visitors about old time crafts including: soap making, rug and broom making, cheesemaking, corn grinding, poster printing, leather tooling, beekeeping, rope-making, roof thatching, blacksmithing, spinning, weaving, quilting, and making sauerkraut. The Maennerchor/Yodel Club has been invited to entertain guests as well as Alphorn musicians George Albright and Heinz Mattman. Members of the Green County Genealogy Society are scheduled to share information about researching family history, too. Kids activities are planned for the schoolhouse! Brats and grilled cheese sandwiches will be available for purchase to raise money for the Historical Society.

WEDDING DRESS ADDED TO DISPLAY

A friendly conversation between our museum cashier and gift shop manager, Gail Beal and a visitor to the Swiss Historical Village resulted in a donation and addition to the wedding dress collection of the New Glarus Historical Society. Jill Counselman Norton of Oshkosh shared the story of her wedding dress in a letter to Gail: "after graduating in May of 1971 from University of Wisconsin – Madison with a Bachelor of Science degree in Home Economics Education I got a job at the Swiss Miss in New Glarus as a clerk for the summer with the possibility of staying on through the fall, if I did not get a teaching job. I should add that my fiancé and I were both from Monroe and that our wedding date was August 7, 1971. He also graduated from the U.W that year.

So, of course I purchased all my dress materials from the Swiss Miss and made my dress, as well as all of my attendant's dresses, from an entire bolt of a silk shantung. There was just enough fabric left for me to make myself a "going-away" shift dress that I still have. It was quite short however.

It was a fun, busy, stressful summer doing all the math on the paper bags. (Note: staff at the Swiss Miss fabric store were required to note yardage purchased, cost per yard and calculate the customer bill by hand, recording the calculations on the Swiss Miss paper bags). I remember working for Bud, Edna and another young girl named Pat. I had one day off to drive up to Stevens Point for a job interview. About a week later, surprisingly at work, I got a phone call from the principal at Point offering me the job. And the rest is history."

As a postscript, Jill stated the following: "Some of my construction techniques were certainly not up to today's standards. I had a basic Singer sewing machine, the $88.00 school special, that did zig zag. However, I did hand sew the pearls and hand-picked the zipper."

We hope you take the opportunity to visit the Collectibles building at the museum to see this beautiful dress as well as other unique gowns made from fabric purchased at the Swiss Miss. Note that the museum will close for the season on October 16.

CORRECTION

In the last edition of the newsletter we published a picture of the Meadow Valley School (on the left below) from our collection of photos in the archives. Lifetime Historical Society member and New Glarus history expert, Bob Elmer wrote to us to say that the school was actually the Pioneer School. He shared the photo on the right below for comparison. Thanks Bob for noting the error, so that we can correct the labeling of the photo in the archives.

NOT QUITE RICOLA

We were fortunate to have Lula Miller, Master Herbalist, as a public program presenter at the Swiss Historical Village in August this year. The program was co-sponsored by the Green County Master Gardeners Association and the New Glarus Public Library. Lula's presentation had been postponed from 2020 due to public gathering restrictions as a result of the COVID pandemic. Lula offered a presentation on Swiss herbalism and also demonstrated just how easy it can be to create tinctures, infused oils, and infused vinegars at home. Attendees had the opportunity to make a herbal dream pillow. In addition, attendees toured the village grounds and gardens while doing a scavenger hunt for some of the plants mentioned in the presentation. Master Gardeners Linda Uttech and Mary Hillstrom were on hand to help answer any questions. Lula's Whole-Hearted Apothecary products were also available for purchase.

If you were unable to attend the program, you can review the slides from Lula's presentation titled, *Not Quite Ricola*, along with a written overview of the museum's Settler's Prairie plo,t on the New Glarus Public Library's website. The Settler's Prairie plot overview contains a plant list provided by the Green County Master Gardener Volunteers, Linda Uttech and Mary Hillstrom, who maintain the plot.

https://www.newglaruspubliclibrary.org/sites/www.newglaruspubliclibrary.org/files/Handouts%20-%20Swiss%20Historical%20Museum%20Presentation.pdf

https://www.newglaruspubliclibrary.org/sites/www.newglaruspubliclibrary.org/files/Prairie%20Plot%20info.pdf

NEW GLARUS FIRE DEPARTMENT (NGFD) – 120 YEARS OLD

Information for this article was gathered from the New Glarus Post Messenger NGFD 100th Anniversary Supplement

This month and year mark the 120th anniversary of the NGFD. The Department elected T.C. Hefty as its first chief at the organizational meeting held on October 18, 1902. Chief Hefty led the development of the New Glarus Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, a copy of which is among the artifacts and is displayed in the Fire Haus at the museum. It was during Hefty's tenure as Chief that the hose and ladder wagons were purchased by the Department. Those pieces of equipment are displayed at the museum and are still in use. The NGFD Ladder team made an appearance last month in the Cheese Days 2022 parade to the delight of large crowds. S.A. Schindler followed Hefty as Chief in October 1911 and served for two years. Fred Ott followed as Chief and served in that role for 29 years until January 1941. Notable was the enrollment of the Department into the Southern WI/Northern Illinois Fireman's Association in 1916 and its first fire school held in New Glarus in 1934. Ott was an original member of the Department in 1902 and inspired four more generations of the Ott family to serve the community as members of the Fire Department including sons Gilbert and Harvey, grandson Don, great-grandson Peter and great-great grandsons Andy (formerly a NGFD firefighter and now employed by the Sun Prairie Fire Department) and Aaron Funseth, who is a member of the Department today. Jacob Bruni was appointed to replace Ott in 1942 during a time when the Chief was appointed by the village trustees. Bruni served until 1961 and was instrumental in implementing first aid training and civil defense activities under the Department umbrella and implemented hose testing according National Fire Protection Standards. Henry "Hank" Opfermann, succeeded Bruni in February 1961 and led the Department until 1977, then serving an additional ten years.

Other Chiefs included: Bernie Wilde, January 1977-October 1981; Russel Reuter January 1982 – August 1987; Kent Anderson, January 1988 – January 2001; Darrel Hustad, January 2001 – January 2002; and Dave Anderson, January 2002 through February 2022. Josh Kammerud currently serves as the Fire Chief, replacing Anderson following his retirement. Thanks to all past and current members of the Department for your service and Happy Anniversary!!

DID YOU KNOW?

October has been designated Fire Prevention Month since 1922, in commemoration of the Great Chicago Fire in 1871. The New Glarus Fire Department has long promoted prevention as part of its services. This photo is of the New Glarus Fire Department in 1949 with Chief Jake Bruni standing in the center front row dressed in dark colors. Jake offered silver dollars as prizes for the prevention poster contest held in the New Glarus Elementary School in the 1960s.

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

The Bank of New Glarus
Powering Growth in Our Community

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