New Glarus Historical Society

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Erica Loeffelholtz, Newsletter Editor

Board of Directors Update
By Carol Hassemer

The Board met on March 28th and April 18th, with the next meeting on May 2nd, and is focused on getting the Historical Society and its Village and Museum ready for the 2023 season. There will be grounds clean-up days on May 5th and May 10th, for which Society members are encouraged to participate. Ads highlighting the season are being placed in printed materials and on select radio stations. The first school group is scheduled for May 18th with the public opening on May 27th.

The Gift Shop is in transition with new vendors and a P.O.S. management system. Additional cashiers are needed, and all cashiers will be trained on the new system to ensure consistent and accurate tracking.

The Board approved the purchase of a cow! Not one that goes “moo," but one for which the Board will work with an artist to design and paint. It will be added to the “New Glarus Cow Parade” brochure put together by the Chamber. The goal is to draw more people to our Village and Museum. There is a long lead time before installation will occur.

The Board continues to slowly transition to more electronic systems for efficiency and archiving, as well as to undertake long-range strategic planning.

The Board regrets to inform everyone that John Eglsaer submitted his resignation from the Board. A replacement director is being recruited. The Board, on behalf of the Society members, thanks John for his dedicated years of service.

Meet Dwight Truttmann

I am one of the newest members of the Board of Directors of the Historical Society, and am excited to be a member. I have always been interested in genealogy, as was my mother, Viola Truttmann. Mom was a guide at the museum for many years and enjoyed it very much. She could speak a "little" Swiss and could communicate well with guests from Switzerland.

I am a life-long farmer on the farm that my great-grandfather Pius Truttmann purchased in 1899. My sons and grandson now run the farm (with a little help from me).

My wife Dianna and I were blessed with three children and six grandchildren and soon we will be great-grandparents.

Call for Submissions

Wedding season has officially started! For many generations, the Swiss Miss was a can't-miss destination for brides-to-be as they shopped for fabric for their wedding gown, and dresses for the bridal party.

Do you have memories of making a wedding gown or other special dress from fabric bought at the Swiss Miss? Would you be willing to share those pictures and stories with us? Your contribution may be featured in an upcoming newsletter or shared on our Facebook page! Please contact Erica at admin@swisshistoricalvillage.org if you have an item to share.

Attention all Subscribers!

In an effort to cut down on paper usage and reduce postage costs, we encourage members to consider switching to electronic newsletter delivery. If you would be willing to make the switch, please email us at admin@swisshistoricalvillage.org and we will update your mailing preference accordingly. Thank you!

Gone But Not Forgotten

Throughout the years of World War II, the *New Glarus Post* kept folks on the home front updated with letters from hometown "boys" serving in the armed forces. While some of the letters relayed day-to-day events or humorous stories, some were heartbreaking.

Here's an excerpt of a January 23, 1943, Sgt. Duane Alexander wrote to his parents from his post in Australia:

"I suppose I might just as well get the sad part of this letter over with, so here goes - Yesterday I was over to visit some of the boys from Madison that were in Vic Glenn's outfit, of course, hoping to see Vic among them. After talking for awhile, I just happened to inquire of his whereabouts. They told me that Vic had been killed on December 18th. This was certainly a shock to me and ever so sorry to hear it. One of the fellows had talked with an officer that had been with Vic, and his report gave an excellent record. It is impossible for me to write about it, but tell Mr. and Mrs. Glenn that every man in his company was proud of him, and grieved deeply to hear of his accident. Also, Mom, give them my deepest regrets and heart-felt sympathy."

Sergeant Victor S. Glenn was the son of Elmer Glenn & Verena Jenny, and the grandson of Glarus natives Fridolin & Elsbeth Jenny. He served 128th Infantry Regiment, 32nd Division of the Wisconsin National Guard. He was killed in action in Papua New Guinea on December 18, 1942, and was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for his gallantry & sacrifice. He was just 22 at the time of his death.

Remembering Those We Lost
By Abigail Biank

“We shall not ‘prove false to those who die’ nor to those now braving death for us.” Thus read a September 26, 1918, New Glarus Post article urging residents to meet Green County’s Liberty Loan contribution quota. The article was a call to action during World War I and included the powerful message “That call comes to us from Benjamin Johnson, Will G . Bartlett, Garnet C Butler, Alfred Ruchti, Stanley Coryell, Glen Zilmer, Gerald Caradine, Thomas McDermott, William Swann, Victor Zimmerman and Fred Amstutz, heroic dead.” The list of Green County men who died for their country during The Great War. New Glarus has always honored its fallen, remembering Memorial Day with various ceremonies through the years, and engaging in real wartime efforts. New Glarus newspapers remember two specific New Glarus men who gave their lives during World War I.

Will G. Bartlett was willing to sacrifice himself for his country, leaving behind his old life to join the war effort, though he died before reaching the front. This man from little New Glarus left a deep impression on those who met him, deep enough for a Paul S. Rhoads to send Bartlett’s family a letter, printed in the February 7, 1918 newspaper. Rhoads “assisted Caplain [Captain] Palmer with the spinal injection your son received, and from the first had felt a personal interest in the case.” Rhoads goes on to say that Bartlett “was such a game sport from the first of his sickness that we felt we must pull him through. He asked to see the first serum we drew from his spine to test. When he saw it he said, ‘Well it looks as if I have it all right, give me the injection I need and I’ll try to do my part.’ We did all we could and he surely held up nobly, but it was no use. He simply refused to admit his suffering until he had lost consciousness. His only worry seemed to be the agony of the man in the bed next to his…” Rhoads told Bartlett’s family, “His sacrifice and yours has been as great as that of the men who are falling on the battlefront, and he faced it just as unflinchingly as they.”

Walter Stuessy was a New Glarus soldier commemorated by the December 5, 1918, New Glarus Post. He died on November 3rd, 1918, from wounds he received in action in France. This “first death of a New Glarus boy reported from the battlefields” must have been mourned by the community. Stuessy, son of Mr. and Ms. Solomon Steussy, “grew up in New Glarus and during the last few years he devoted most of his time working on farms.” Stuessy ended up at the front quickly after getting to France and was in Company 1, 184th Infantry at the time of his death. Walter Stuessy was certainly a man for New Glarus to be proud of.

New Glarus has a long, rich history of remembering those who died for its freedom and has many to honor this Memorial Day.

Did you know that historic issues of the *New Glarus Post* have been digitized and are now available online?
Digitized papers are available through the Archive of Wisconsin Newspapers, and can be accessed through the New Glarus Public Library's website. For more information, or to get a library card, contact the library at 608-527-2003 or staff@ngpl.org.

(Years 1912-1933 are currently available online.)

Ancestry Corner

This lovely young lady was Verena Rhyner Zimmerman. Verena was born in 1894, the daughter of Johann Ulrich and Anna (Geiger) Rhyner. She grew up on the family farm six miles southwest of New Glarus.

Fannie married David Zimmerman on March 2, 1916, and after a brief honeymoon the two settled down to farming on the Zimmerman homestead. Tragically, Fannie died at the age of 25 after a sudden internal hemorrhage. She left behind two young children, Anna Verena, age 2, and David, who was not quite two months old at the time of his mother's death.

(Photo from the Sandy Disch Fransen collection)

The Bank of New Glarus
Powering Growth in Our Community

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

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