New Glarus Historical Society

Volume 7, Issue 2 :
May 2024

2024 Board of Directors

Larry Klassy, President

David Hustad, Vice President

John Freitag, Treasurer

Carol Hassemer, Secretary

Rebecca Forbes

Jackie Judd

Al Lienhardt

Tim Pauli

Kelly Ruschmann

Dwight Truttmann

Contact Us

New Glarus Historical Society
& Swiss Historical Village Museum

PO Box 745
612 7th Avenue
New Glarus, WI 53574

608-527-2317
admin@swisshistoricalvillage.org

Erica Loeffelholtz, Newsletter Editor

Board of Directors Update
By Carol Hassemer

The Board of Directors met on Wednesday, April 10th. John Freitag, treasurer, reported that the Balance Sheet through March showed a 3.1% increase, mainly due to interest accrued on CDs. Net income through March was down $6,100, with income higher than 2023, but Building & Grounds and Advertising expenses higher. These costs were expected.

The Board continues to review the insurance on all the Society's buildings to determine with the insurance agent the appropriate buildings to insure at determined rates.

The murals for the Hall of History are closer to completion and should be installed before Opening Day in May. These murals were graciously funded by the people of Switzerland. Watch for more details.

Buttercup (Butterblume in German), the Society's cow for the New Glarus Cow Parade, is in the process of being painted before sealing and installation. Schmidt Landscaping will be redoing the two beds on either side of the front steps to provide Buttercup a welcoming home!

Work continues on the point-of-sale system for the Gift Shop and employees, as well as planning for a new website. The PastPerfect archival software, which will be used for archival cataloging purposes, as well as tracking membership and donations, has been purchased, and Erica Loeffelholtz and Carol Hassemer are slowly training on the functionality.

The Board approved replacing the cedar shake shingles on the Smoke Haus, Sausage Shop, Water Well, and Portico over the entry to the School House. A grant application will be submitted to hopefully help cover the cost, or a portion of it. Board members will also be repairing and painting the perimeter fence around the property – which is two acres! Kudos to the team. This will help with covering the costs of other major projects.

A new cleaning person was recently hired, with the goal of getting the buildings cleaned before the Historical Village opens on Saturday, May 25th. Board members are busy working out and about to spruce things up a little, but look forward to teamwork with members.

Treasures from the Archives: Autograph Albums

By Erica Loeffelholtz

During the mid- to late-1800s, every fashionable young woman - and many young men - kept an autograph album. These days when we think of collecting autographs, we mostly think in terms of celebrity autographs, but during the 19th century the albums had quite a different purpose.

According to the American Jewish Historical Society, autograph albums actually date back to the 1500s, when German-speaking students traveling throughout the continent kept albums as a way to document their achievements. The “autographs” were more like personal letters, often taking up an entire page, written by teachers and fellow scholars. The albums might also include jokes, quotes, poems, and other personal mementos.

Autograph albums made their way to America in the early 1800s, and by the Civil War era, these decorative albums filled with blank pages were sold in bookstores and stationery shops, and were a popular gift for special occasions. The books would be passed around to friends and family, classmates and neighbors, who would fill the pages with personal messages. Often written in rhyming verse, the messages ranged from sentimental to silly, and might be accompanied by a hand-drawn picture. Album owners often pasted in calling cards or other ephemera, and sometimes pressed flowers or even a lock of hair from a loved one.

The New Glarus Historical Society has a small collection of autograph albums that have been donated over the years, including the two featured here, which once belonged to Barbara Ott and Oswald Kubly. The albums, which are now approximately 140 years old, are in very delicate condition. The bindings have loosened and the ink used has faded with age. But the beautiful handwriting and personal sentiments inside are still, for the most part, legible. Consider this missive found in Oswald Kubly’s album:

Dear Cousin,
When rocks and hills divide us, and you I can not see!
Remember it was your Cousin Verena who always loved you dear!
Your Cousin Verena Freitag
Monroe, Dec. 24th, 1885

What a sweet, old-fashioned message to find from a loved one who left this world many years ago!

Barbara Ott’s autograph album, circa 1880s.

Oswald Kubly’s autograph album, 1886.

A page from Barbara Ott’s autograph album. It reads:
Anna Barbara Ott!
When you are at home
And washing dishes,
Think of me
And my best wishes.
-Dietrich Stauffacher

Upcoming Events

The New Glarus Public Library is hosting a series of genealogy-themed workshops this year, which are free and open to everyone who is interested. All workshops are held in the Village Hall Community Room at 319 2nd Street.

Friday, May 31st @ 2:00 PM
Family Tree Friday

May's Family Tree Friday session will focus on the wealth of information and resources available through the Family Search website. We will also discuss the pros and cons of using Family Search's free platform to build your own family tree.

Tuesday, June 25th @ 6:00 PM
Genealogy Quest: Getting Started

This workshop will provide you with necessary tools and resources to get started on your genealogy journey. Perfect for people who have just started working on their family tree. We will take a look at popular websites for genealogy research and you'll also be provided with tools and charts for organizing your research.

Tuesday, July 30th @ 6:00 PM
Genealogy Quest: Telling Your Family's Story

Genealogy is far more than just lists of names and dates! What really makes your family history come alive is the stories of your ancestors' accomplishments and day-to-day lives. In this workshop, we'll talk about potential resources for finding those stories, as well as how to save and record them for generations to come.

There will be no genealogy workshops during the month of August.

Just Cheese It!

Saturday, June 15th from Noon to 4 PM
Swiss Historical Village Museum

Join us for a family-friendly, fun-filled afternon at the museum. Live music, games, and of course, cheese! More details coming soon!

Cooking Yesteryear

There is something about the fresh, tart flavor of lemon that says summer! I ran across this recipe in the March 6, 1940 edition of the *New Glarus Post*, and thought it sounded absolutely delightful. And after testing it at home, I can confirm, it's delicious! So here it is for you, presented exactly as originally written in 1940.

One of the recipes presented to Green County Homemakers Clubs this year, which has proven very popular is the following one for a Lemon pudding, which is supposed to serve six people but at our house serves four or five generously while a double recipe serves about ten people.

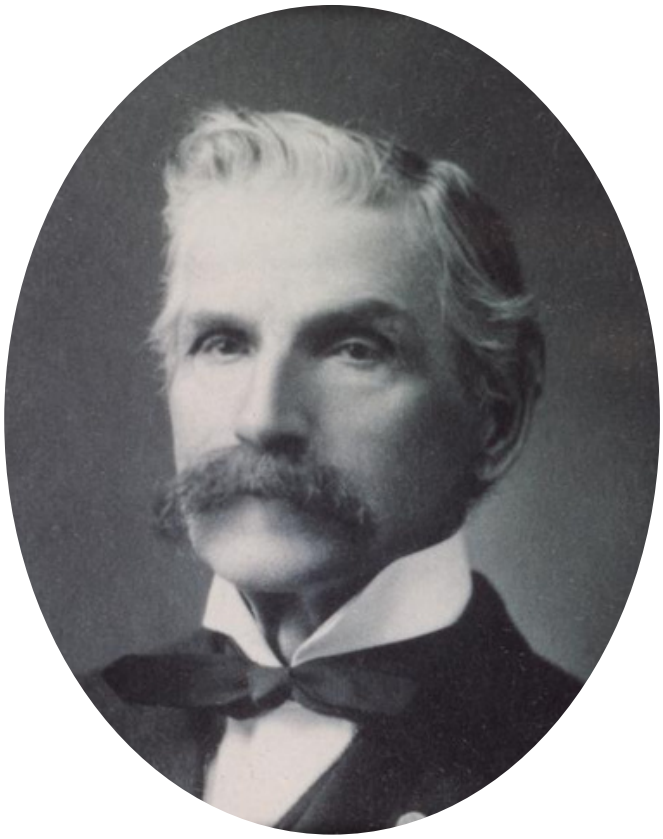
1 cup sugar, 3 tablespoons flour, 3 tablespoons butter, 1 cup milk, 2 eggs, 1 lemon. (Note: I used whole milk)

Combine sugar and flour and butter thoroughly. Add the beaten egg yolks, lemon juice, grated rind of the lemon and the milk. Fold in the egg whites which have been beaten with part of the sugar. Pour into a buttered dish. Place in a pan of hot water and bake 1 hour in a slow oven, about 300 degrees, or until the pudding leaves the sides of the baking dish. The finished pudding has a cake-like top with a smooth delicious lemon sauce beneath. Serve with or without whipped cream. Very light and refreshing after a heavy meal.

The pudding must have been well-appreciated amongst readers of the *Post*, because Ms. Theiler included this follow-up note in the March 13th edition:

A young married woman approached me the other day and said, "Oh, I must tell you about my experience with your lemon pudding recipe." Remembering how I had forgotten to include the chocolate in the State Fair prize winning devil's food cake recipe I included in my column, my heart sank and I wondered what had happened, for, you know, we newspapers are only reminded of our failures and mistakes and almost never given compliments. But this time the story was different. This woman said her husband almost never ate any dessert, so when last week the lemon pudding was served, he tasted only a small bite - and then said, "Um, this is good" and proceeded to go ahead and eat much more than his share of the day's dessert!"

Ancestry Corner



In recognition of Memorial Day, we remember one of Green County's Civil War Veterans.

Pictured here is Caspar Blum, who was born in 1838 in Bilten, Canton Glarus, and traveled with his parents to the new colony at New Glarus in 1847, settling in Washington Township.

During the Civil War, Caspar served in Company K, 9th Regiment of the Wisconsin Infantry from 1861-1862, and then in the 1st Regiment of the Wisconsin Heavy Artillery from 1863-1865.

He married Margaret Elmer in 1869 and together they had at least seven children. Caspar died in Minnesota in 1924.

Photo from the New Glarus Local History Collection in the UW Digital Archives.

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.

New Glarus Historical Society &
Swiss Historical Village Museum
PO Box 745
612 7th Avenue
New Glarus, WI 53574

Recipient Name
Mailing Address
City, State, ZIP