

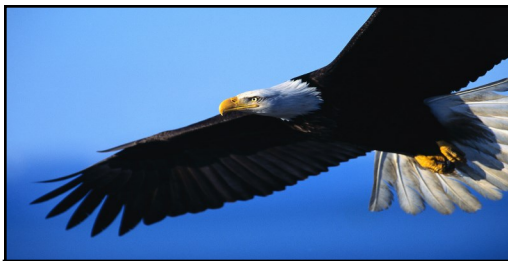
EAGLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

April 2015

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Welcome to New Members:
Amy Kinoshian
The Lane Family

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Senior \$8.00

Susan Hunt
Paul Kramer

Sustaining \$25.00—\$49.00

Jean Cisler
Richard & Nada Moeller
Martin & Vera Murk
Mike & Joanne Rice

Family \$15.00

Ralph & Marion (Heinisch) Clark

Hazel & Terry Connors
Robert & Joyce Curran
Martin Holzman

Edward & Susan Mack

\$50.00—\$99.00 Sponsor

Betty Isleb
Peter Jones

Any corrections or additions to
membership, contact Don Ledrowski at
262-594-3301 or dledrowski@wi.rr.com.

DO YOU REMEMBER MICHAEL HANDBAG COMPANY?

(Please see photo and article from EHS archive collection on page 5.)



EHS Board

President

Jeff Nowicki, 2016

Vice-President

Barbara Jatzczak, 2015

Secretary

Ryan Hajewski, 2016

Treasurer

Pat Hawes, 2015

Financial Officer

Donald Ledrowski, 2015

Members

Jean Bowey, 2016
Jessie Chamberlain, 2016
Jean Cisler, 2017
Mark Dexter, 2016
Diana Hall, 2017
Eloise Hall, 2017
Bea Marquardt, 2017
Richard Moeller, 2015
Carolyn Rosprim, 2015
Mike Rice, 2017

Curator

Elaine Ledrowski
594-3301

Newsletter Editors

Art & Carrie Peavy
594-5454

Webmaster

Mike Rice

Facebook

Ryan Hajewski

EHS museum / library
594-8961
open

Fridays and Saturdays,
9 am to noon

Wednesdays, 3-6 pm

Website:

eaglehistoricalsociety.org

Facebook: Like us at
Eagle Historical Society

We are very excited to announce the upcoming events and encourage you to attend and/or consider volunteering for some of them:

Saturday, May 16 Plant Exchange 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Share excess plants with friends and neighbors. Bring plants; take plants. If you don't have plants, bring food for the Eagle Community Food Pantry. Enjoy coffee and cookies as you select your plants. Drop off plants Friday between 9:00 am and 7:00 pm or on Saturday.

Saturday, June 6 Veteran Memorial

Dedication 12:30 to 4:00 pm

This beautiful memorial is the completion of an Eagle Scout project in combination with the Eagle Historical Society, local businesses and many community members. The program starts at 1:00 pm with a reception to follow. The keynote speaker is Lt. Col. John Hall, Ph.D., a UW-Madison professor of military history. John is a graduate of Palmyra-Eagle High School. Music will be provided by the Kettle Moraine Blues.

Sunday, July 12 Ice Cream Social and PE Community Band Concert

1:00 to 3:30 pm

The theme is "Come to the Fair". World Fair, State Fair, County Fair—everybody loves a fair, and so do we. Featured will be music that made fairs so special: Sousa, Rogers and Hammerstein, virtuoso soloists and thrilling performances. Show dogs from the Collie Club of Southern WI will be doing a routine to music. The fun starts at 1:00 pm with the concert beginning at 2:00 pm. Enjoy delicious cake and ice cream at this free event.



Another phase in the Veterans Memorial Project becomes reality as EHS President Jeff Nowicki is seen above carefully and steadfastly laying donated bricks. *Photo was taken by Elaine Ledrowski.*

Saturday, August 1 Tour and Reception 1:00 to 3:00 pm

Participate in tours at the Eagle Historical Society, 217 Main Street and at the Eagle Nature Trail, located behind the Alice Baker Memorial Library, 820 East Main Street. Theme: Flowers from Eagle's Past to the Present. View native plants along the trail. Stop at the viewing area above the pond. View new museum exhibit, the Art of Flowers. Receptions will be held at both locations.

Wednesday, September 16 Volunteer Reception 5:00 to 7:00 pm

Meet old friends and fellow members who keep EHS alive. Join the officers and board members, bakers, gardeners, newsletter editors, writers, mailing crew, weekly museum staffers, brick layers, painters, drywaller, donors and all-around handymen. Find out how much fun it is to volunteer. New volunteers are always welcome.

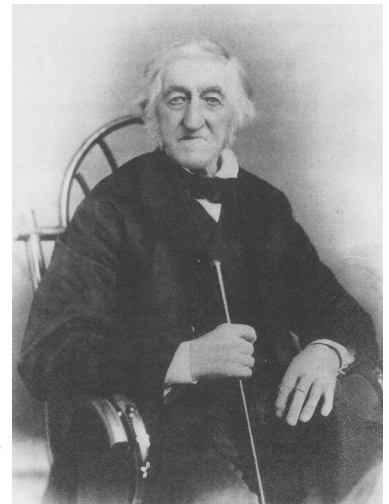
Saturday, October 31 Pumpkin Party 12:00 to 3:30 pm

Grandma Jean, our charming witch, will welcome you to this event. Play carnival games with a Halloween theme. Test your skill at the tombstone toss. Take selfies with the roaming monsters. If you are still a kid at heart and love to dress up for Halloween, join our ghoulish group for an afternoon of fun.

John Baker

The date was June 4, 1809. The setting was rural North Petherwin, England, where amidst rolling meadows, hills, woods, creeks and rivers John Baker entered this world presumably in a two-story home known as Pattacott. He was the second of six children born to “William the Soldier” and Rebecca Gimlet Baker and for reasons unknown was not given the name of William as had been the family tradition. One possible explanation given was that he was preceded by his sister Ann. His baptismal registry could not offer any clues to this mystery as it was either lost or destroyed. Contemporaries were Abe Lincoln and William Ewart Gladstone. Little did he know that he would eventually become a prominent land owner in Eagle’s history and make a major contribution to the local farming industry.

In his later years after being widowed, he lived with his son’s family in Eagle and the information herewith obtained was primarily due to the absorptiveness of his grandson who at nearly 11 years of age was “wax to receive and granite to retain” and would later recall and set to print the tales his grandpa eagerly shared with him.



John Baker at age of 83

Much of this locale remained very similar to this timeframe when the author visited it in the mid 1900s researching church records, tombstones and buildings with the exception of the many missing thatched-roof cottages which had previously dotted the countryside. Larger homes had replaced the cottages, but one could still see an occasional cottage, which was usually occupied by a handyman servicing the neighborhood or the parents of a current farmer.

Pattacott was a “cobb” house which was constructed with a wooden frame, well braced, resting on a masonry foundation. The walls consisted of pebbles and larger stones bound by a tightly fit mixture of clay and lime between the uprights and braces. If the walls are whitewashed every few years so that weather cannot attack the clay mixture, this type of home can last for centuries.

Because the Bakers were free holders—they owned their own land and no one could take it away from them, they had to maintain a position in the community—decent clothing in which to attend church services, tithes to the church, taxes. John learned to read, write and cipher in a school the vicar maintained and later was sent away for about six weeks to hone those skills which were evidenced in a diary he kept. John’s sisters were believed to have been schooled to some degree also as signatures were found written by a clear, bold hand rather than marked with an “x” as other females of that time would have signed their names.

John had an “ear for music” and learned to play the violin. His father, “William the Soldier” did not encourage his talent declaring, “viddler’s never come to nort” and referred to the violin as the devil’s own instrument. He did relent and allow him to take lessons and practice at night after the day’s work was done stating, “Thuh shan’t learn on my time; if thee’s bound to go to the devil it shall be on thee own time”. Superstitions flourished in the 1800s, and grandfather spoke of ghosts in tones of respect even in his old age. Since he believed ghosts could not cross water and he could only practice while it was dark, young John would go across Coudray “watter” to feel safe. Two incidents were shared regarding sightings of white moving objects making scary noises in the darkness which had sent his heart into his throat only to be identified later as the bray of a white mule which had strayed from a neighboring farm and another time a sow suckling her pigs. William was so pleased with John’s clear tenor voice that he insisted he sing a certain favorite hymn at William’s funeral, which John later did but stated, “most killed me, but ah darsent refuse” when retelling this story.



Grace Bone Baker at about 60

Grace Bone grew up in Treludick, about seven miles from Pattacott. Though she was raised in a higher standard of living than John who was viewed as a country musician he eventually won over Grace’s affection. They were married and blessed with six children: William, Mary Jane, John Jr., Julius, Frank, and James.

Grandfather told many tales of his Uncle Jan Horrell, who may well have been a mere legend like Paul Bunyan. One such story is told where Uncle Jan was much taken with a perfume he had sniffed that a maid was wearing. He stopped at an apothecary to purchase a

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sweet smelling trade that might impress maidens. After being pleased with the smell, the clerk sold him a bottle of vanilla which was put into his hip pocket. On the way home, his horse stumbled and while trying to keep his balance in the saddle a blow hard enough to break the bottle was dealt. The contents of which spread over his posterior, the alcohol burned the skin and the riding motion in the saddle soon produced a blister which broke and left a raw spot. Uncle Jan got off and walked. After arriving home well after dark, he concluded that country farmers had better stick to things they know about rather than seek city adventures.

The industrial revolution lured young men and women to the factories located in cities. Some ventured to Australia to continue farm life in what was thought to be happier auspices. Those who traveled to America spread word of dipping cattails in hot rendered tallow and burning them as candles so that Englanders thought the candles grew in swamps. Another story circulated regarding insects (fireflies) which could be collected on mucilage on a stick and used to illuminate a room. Stories such as these caused unrest amongst the listeners.

Primo-geniture law was in effect in England meaning that the oldest son owned the home, but since John's brother William held the same name as his father, grandfather and great-grandfather no one contested the holding of William. John received 600 pounds and he and his son promised never to return. It was reported that the land was worth 800 pounds.

Once the homestead was sold, John enlisted the aide of an auctioneer to rid himself of his furnishings since they would not be returning and could not take many possessions with him. This particular auctioneer encouraged John to offer hot cider to those bidders most likely to pay a good price for the goods. This tactic did lead to a profitable sale and allowed John to purchase a leather-bound notebook in which he recorded the travel to America and was still intact 100 years later. It contained information such as passenger and baggage charges, names of lodging houses they stayed in or passed along the way and even a remedy for ague which probably came in handy as family members did become ill during the passage.

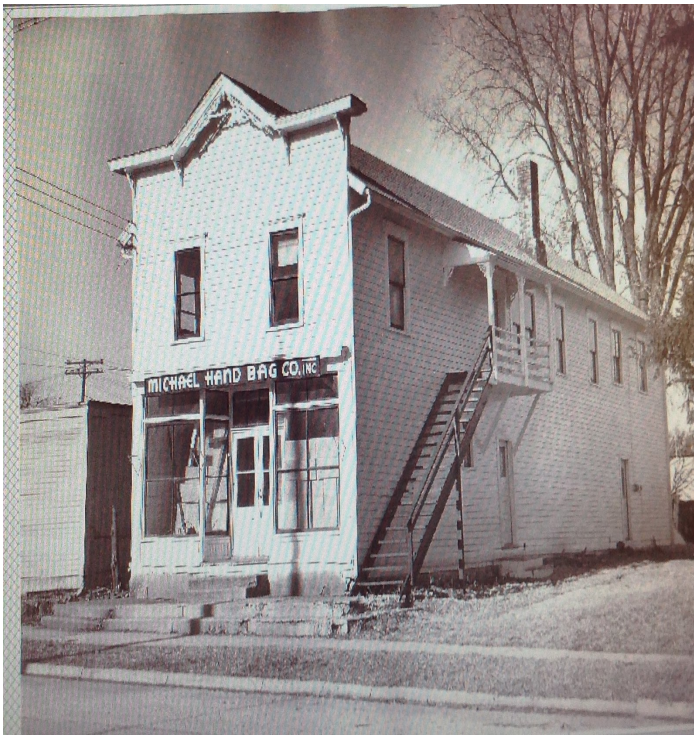
The trek to "Ameriky" began on April 9 and ended on June 7 of 1849. It began in Plymouth, England, and stops included Quebec, Toronto, Lewiston, Buffalo, Milwaukee and finally Melendy's Prairie. Modes of transportation included steamboat, railroad and finally wagon as the family of eight settled into the one-room cabin of a family of seven, the Peardons, (a family the Bakers had known back in North Petherwin parish in England), where they lived while Grandfather Baker searched for a farm to purchase which would be on land bearing "bur oak or white oak" and also serviced "living water". John decided on the purchase of two farms from Francis Draper consisting of approximately 200 acres at the sum of 310 sovereigns. The deal was made with a down payment of one sovereign and the agreement to pay the remaining 309.

Grandfather was very fit and accustomed to walking great distances in England, so it was not a problem for him to walk about 37 miles to a tavern in Milwaukee to conduct his business of payment of the 309 coins. It did become a problem when a patron in the tavern saw his remaining 50 gold coins and asked John to the bar for a drink. He was well aware of "Yankee tricks" and made a narrow escape through the stable running for cover into woods. He climbed into and fell asleep in the limbs of a tree after being spooked by eerie howling noises and sets of eyes which played on his imagination as dusk fell upon him and convinced him that he was surrounded by wolves. In early morn he slid out of the tree, returned home and shared many a laugh with others over the discovery that these noises were actually frogs and lightning bugs.

"Johnny Bull" was a nickname given to him by some locals. John Bull was a fictional character of the time often depicted in cartoons in a negative sense as a stuck-up Brit who possibly aided the Confederacy. As a boy, John's grandson got the impression that several "Yankees" sort of "picked on" the "Johnny Bull" as a sort of sport. He was sensitive and his temper was easily aroused. Yet, his anger rarely resulted in blows, although one interesting story is retold as follows:

. . . Grandfather was driving over that hilly road two miles east of our old home (he had a piece of marsh adjoining that road) when he heard screams from the yard of a certain Irish immigrant family. He whipped up his horses and as he came closer he saw the husband chasing his wife around the yard with an upraised axe. Again, he jumped off the load, ran into the yard and knocked the man down with a blow of his fist. Then he knelt on the prostrate figure to wrest the axe away. But at that moment he received a sharp crack on the head from a heavy stick and the woman yelled at him, "Can't me and the ol' man be having' a decent quarrel widdout you stickin' yer long English nose into it?" "Never interfere between man an' wife", was his caution to me as he told the tale.

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(continued from page 1) Michael Handbag Company which was located west of the Masonic Hall and east of the lumber yard.

NEW EAGLE ENTERPRISE HAS TWELVE STEAY EMPLOYEES

The Village of Eagle boasts of a new factory, with a regular force of twelve people employed and prospects for as many more within the next six months.

The Village of Eagle having a building on its hands were happy to put the building in good repair and offered it to the new factory. Upon its incorporation on Nov. 2nd, of this year, the Michael Handbag Company began the huge task of gathering together machinery, leather goods, etc. and securing able help for the shop.

By the 1st of December the plant began operation and now are gainfully busy making high class leather handbags for a number of large eastern and midwest retail stores. A salesforce of six are on the road and according to Mr. Sanders, President of the firm, orders are coming in for merchandise that will keep the plant busy far into the spring. Mr. Sanders has been in the leather goods business for the past twenty years and knows the business.

Other officers of the Michael Handbag Company are Jack D. Stacey of Palmyra, Sec., Treas., and Roger Tans, also of Palmyra, Vice-President, Edmund J. Whettam of Eagle, Vice President and Ruth Stocks, of Eagle, Director. *EHS Archives Dec. 16, 1949*

(Continued from page 4)

He eventually acquired farms from the following families: Childs, Underhill, Reeves, Smith, Lake, Bottrell, and DeWitt which brought his total acreage to about 1200 and fulfilled his dream of owning 100 acres for each acre he had previously owned in England before leaving his homeland for America.

When he first came to America he was horrified to see farmers burn their straw; for in England everything of this sort was saved and plowed under to return to the soil as much fertility as possible. His Yankee neighbors laughed at this idea, saying that Wisconsin was virgin land and the fertility would last for centuries. However, in the late '60s the fertility did give out, as shown by poor yields of wheat. John had never burned his straw but rather kept it in stacks and had his cattle tramp over it into the snow. The following spring this rotted straw was plowed under and at the next harvest he was rejoiced by a better crop of wheat than his neighbors gathered.

The excerpt below taken from page 195 of Marty Perkins' book, *From Farmland to Freedom The History of Agriculture in Waukesha County (1834-1982)* appears to support John's idea:

The grain was dethroned as "King" by 1880 due to lesser yields on thinning soils which failed to sustain so many successive years of single cropping. Insect pests, like the chinch bug, and plant diseases, such as smut and rust, contributed to the overall decline.

Grace died in 1891 and John in 1895. It was the author's goal to depict how the industrial revolution affected common people through snapshots of various stages of their lives. John Baker, the farmer, certainly displayed a spirit of determination and perseverance to achieve his goal, and we are very grateful for the detailed records of his life left behind for all to be inspired by.



The John and Grace Baker House as it appeared in 1997

We respectfully acknowledge that all of the information used in the article above was obtained from the book entitled *Life and Times of John Baker Farmer*, which was compiled and written by Dr. John Earl Baker and presented to the Eagle Historical Society by his great granddaughter, Eleanor Hulce Normington and his great grandson Richard West Baker shortly before Richard's passing last year and paraphrased by Carrie Peavy with the one exception noted above.

GOLDEN RULES FOR LIVING

- If you open it -- close it
- If you turn it on -- turn it off.
- If you unlock it -- lock it.
- If you move it -- put it back.
- If it belongs to someone else -- get permission to use it
- If you borrow it -- return it.
- If you don't know how to operate it -- leave it alone.
- If you use it -- take care of it.
- If you break it -- admit it.
- If you can't fix it -- call someone who can.
- If you mess it up -- clean it up.
- If it's none of your business, don't ask questions.



JAMES M. "MARTY" BOVEE*Jan. 25, 1931 – Jan. 12 2015*

Bovee, James M. 'Marty' Age 83, of Eagle, WI died on January 12, 2015 at St. Nicholas Hospital in Sheboygan. Marty was born on January 25, 1931 in Eagle, WI. He was a veteran, serving his country in the United States Army during the Korean War and worked at RTE in Waukesha as a welder.

Marty is survived by his sons, Scott (Lesley) and Steve (Linda) both of Eagle; grandchild Kayla Rae Bovee; step-grandchild Nick (April) Thompson; sister, Dorothy Clark of FL; nieces Cindy (Jeff) Mueller and Janet (Warren) Evans.

A visitation was held on Saturday, January 17, 2015 from 12:00 pm until 2:00 pm at the Haase Lockwood & Associates Funeral Home at 103 W. Eagle St. Eagle, WI, followed by a eulogy and burial with military honors at Jericho Cemetery,

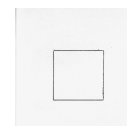
For online guest registry, please go to: www.haaselockwoodfhs.com. Haase-Lockwood & Associates Funeral Homes of Eagle, WI, assisted the family. 262-594-2442.

ROY FREDERICK RADUECHEL*Mar. 9, 1925 – Mar. 3, 2015*

Just days from his 90th birthday, died on March 3, 2015, peacefully at his home in Eagle, WI. Roy was born in Milwaukee on March 9, 1925, the son of the late Albert and Minnie (Knuth) Raduechel. Roy served his country in the

United States Army from 1949-1951 in the Signal Corp. On September 9, 1961, Roy married Gladys Bartelt Butzke. He was employed at Brittingham & Hixon in Eagle, Wilbur Lumber in Waukesha, and the Waukesha County Highway Department. He was an avid outdoorsman, enjoying hunting, fishing, morel hunting and deer processing with his brother, Ralph. He was a member of St John's Lutheran Church of North Prairie, VFW Post 7221, and the Eagle Volunteer Fire Department for 35 years. Roy bowled in several leagues and played horseshoes on the Eagle Horseshoe League. Beloved step-father of Robert Butzke of Eagle and Carol Tritz of Waukesha. Best Papa to Lori Tritz and Tammy Tritz of Waukesha. Brother of Beatrice Eggleston of Mukwonago, brother-in-law of Marguerite Raduechel and Harold Springer of Waukesha. Roy will be remembered by other relatives and his many friends, including those who waved to him every day as he sat outside his home to enjoy his yard and summer days. Roy was preceded in death by his wife, Gladys in 2011, step-son-in-law Edward Tritz, sisters, Helen Springer, Ruth Cross and Dorothy Diehl and brothers, Raymond, Robert, and Ralph. Funeral Service for Roy was held on Saturday, March 7, 2015 at 1:00 pm at St. John's Lutheran Church 312 N. Main St. North Prairie, WI, with Rev. Daniel Torkelson officiating. Burial followed at Oak Ridge Cemetery with visitation from 11:00 am until the time of service at the church. Memorials to St. John's Lutheran Church (address above) or the Eagle Volunteer Fire Department 126 E. Main St. Eagle, WI, 53119 were suggested.

Eagle Historical Society, Inc.
217 Main Street
P.O. Box 454
Eagle, WI 53119-0454



ELECTION DAY BAKE SALE



Once again, we experienced a very successful bake sale on April 8 thanks to about 40 volunteers who donated everything from jams, biscuits, pies, brownies, cookies, cakes, breads, cupcakes and potato salad, our customers and those who organized the event.

Pictured at left from left to right: Ellie Hall, Diana Hall and Pat Hawes who co-chair our bake sale committee.

Photo was taken by Elaine Ledrowski.