

# EAGLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

April 2018

### IN THIS ISSUE

Celebrating Her-Story; Women of Eagle	2,6
Election Bake Sale	2
Yard Cleanup Day	2
Lake Enterprises	3-6, 8
Plant Swap	6
Veterans Recognition Program	7
Obituary Kelsey, Meryl L.	7

*Check out Eagle Historical Society on Facebook.  
Please like and share to add more friends.*

### BAKE SALE

A big **THANK YOU** for a very successful bake sale held on April 3. We appreciate all of the time and effort put into baking, setup, take-down, and monetary donations. The community really looks forward to these events. **Next sale: Nov. 6!**

### EHS YARD CLEANUP DAY

Join us for a yard cleanup day from **10 am to Noon** on **Sat., Apr. 28**, with a rain/snow ☺ date (it is WI) of **May 5**. Just bring your energy, favorite garden gloves and tools and spend as much time as your schedule allows to help us maintain and beautify our museum grounds.



### ARTIFACT DONATIONS:

The following is a partial list of items donated. Thanks to the following donors:  
Mark Lake—Photos

Jeff Nowicki—Celluloid Mirror and Dresser Set

Warren Pett—1957 Copy of *Eagle Quill*

Wayne and Jan Radabaugh—Framed Photo Eagle Opera House

Toula Sievers—Class Photo from 1934



### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

#### Senior

John Nygren  
Wayne & Jan  
Radabaugh

#### Family

Stephen P. Foley  
James & Diane  
Frisch

#### Sustaining

Julie Ehlers  
Jean & Thomas  
Weedman

#### Patron

IBEW  
Stephen Muth

### RENEWALS

#### Senior

Yvonne Boranek  
Jerry Johnson  
Vonda Williams

#### Individual

Stephanie Kalnes  
Family  
Ralph Clark &  
Marian (Welch)  
Heinisch Clark

Thomas & Diane  
Poehnelt

#### Sustaining

Jeff & Ellie  
Hawes  
Reine Weils &  
Dean Herriges  
(Eagle Centre  
House Bed &  
Breakfast)

### EHS Board

#### **President**

Jeff Nowicki, 2020

#### **Vice-President**

Eloise Hall, 2019

#### **Secretary**

Ryan Hajewski, 2020

#### **Treasurer**

Pat Hawes, 2019

#### **Financial Officer**

Donald Ledrowski

#### **Board Members**

#### **2019**

Brian Breber  
Jessie Chamberlain  
Ryan Hajewski  
Jeff Nowicki  
Art Peavy

#### **2020**

JoAnn Gilbert  
Diana Hall  
Eloise Hall  
Gina Neist  
Mike Rice

#### **2021**

Pat Hawes  
Peter Jones  
Don Ledrowski  
Richard Moeller  
Carolyn Rosprism

#### **Curator**

Elaine Ledrowski  
594-3301

#### **Newsletter Editors**

Art & Carrie Peavy  
594-5454

#### **Webmaster**

Mike Rice

#### **Facebook**

Elaine Ledrowski

### EHS Museum

262-594-8961

### OPEN

Fridays and Saturdays  
9 am to noon  
Wednesdays, 3-6 pm

#### **Website:**

[eaglehistoricalsociety.org](http://eaglehistoricalsociety.org)

**Facebook:** Like us at  
Eagle Historical Society



Anticipation lingered in the air as one by one each last minute detail was checked off the task list on a Tuesday evening in March. About 105 eager guests filed into the Eagle Municipal Meeting Room quickly finding seats until only standing room was available. All eyes attentively focused on each interpreter as the lives of five Eagle pioneer women were re-enacted sparking chuckles or even moments of reverence from the audience. Light refreshments and a lot of camaraderie followed. See our website for videos from the event or contact us to order a printed book for \$8. Thanks again for the great show of support as EHS and ABL partnered together to celebrate Women's History Month.

Back row left to right: Carolyn Rosprim (Mistress of Ceremonies), Ellie Hawes and Gina Neist.  
Front row left to right: Mary Anderson, Elaine Ledrowski, and Jenny Chapman Arnold.

1. In 1883 I needed money, so I sold my pretty little yellow stone (found on top of gravel where I lived in Eagle) for \$1.00 and later learned it was a 16.25-carat rough diamond worth \$700.00. Who am I?
2. I taught 48 children in a one-room schoolhouse in Eagleville in 1944. The Nature Conservancy now protects our family homestead as a lovely wetland of the Mukwonago River. Who am I?
3. Indian arrowheads from the Pottawatomies were found on my father's farm. Who am I?
4. I noted the state militia passed through enroute for service in the Spanish American War. Who am I?
5. I taught Frances Sasso how to make delicious pies which I served to prisoners and tramps. A dose of Lydia Pinkum from the Drug Store could cure whatever ailed me. Who am I? *Answers on Page 6.*

## UPCOMING EHS EVENTS

May 19	Plant Swap on EHS Patio (10 am—2 pm)
June 2	Program Honoring Vietnam Era Veterans
June 24	Kettle Moraine Days Parade in downtown Eagle (EHS Float)
July 8	Ice Cream Social/PE Band Concert in Eagle Village Park
August 22	Member Appreciation Reception on EHS Patio
October 27	Pumpkin Party--Return of the Pirates @ EHS Museum
November 6	Bake Sale during Election @ Eagle Municipal Building

If you have any corrections or additions to membership, please contact Don Ledrowski at 262-594-3301 or [don@ledrowski.com](mailto:don@ledrowski.com).



# “Having fun since 1931” *By Beau Lake*

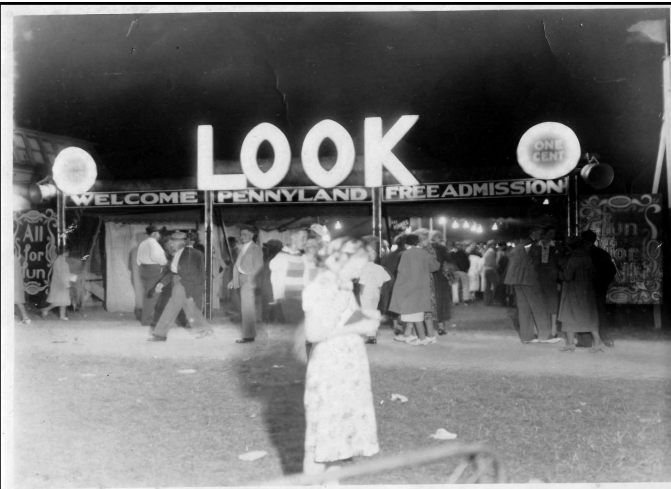
When a company has been in operation for 87 years one has to ask, "How did they endure?" Almost always they provide a service or product that the people prefer to an alternative. There are many other reasons they could have lasted like a great business plan, competition collapse, location, a competent workforce, an innovation, and luck. For the traveling carnival Lake Enterprises it is all of the above. The company still functions much as it originally did run by a Showman; offering thrills, tastes, and carnival trinkets to the best of our ability.

Luck affects us all in the decisions we make every day; some have good luck, bad luck, no luck, or some have the ability to make their own luck. This was the case with Scott William Lake who bought a traveling penny arcade in 1931. Scott had been in Kansas farming in 1928 where it was a hard life and there was plenty of work to go around. He had two boys, William and Herb, whom he was raising himself. He soon met Clara Kern of Lewiston, Minnesota, who also had a son named Roy. There was an instant attraction between the two of them. By April 1929 Frederic Kern Lake was born; six months before the stock market crash. Work was hard to find and there was lots of moving around but Scott worked something out. Somehow he bought a traveling penny arcade and by 1931 was traveling around with



*On Stephenson Island, in Marinette, Wisconsin, on July 4, 1938.*

Royal American Shows. Often Scott would travel with the crew and the family would be stuck at home; sometimes they would visit but the kids still had school to go to. It ended up providing enough for them to live a decent life. Instead of being a business folly Scott Lake created his own niche in an industry



*A Pennyland Tent likely at a WI County Fair about 1935.*

some of the biggest shows out there. These shows include Gold Medal Shows, Motor City Shows, and

## WIS. VALLEY FAIR & EXPOSITION WAUSAU, AUGUST 10 TO 15, 1940

### CARNIVAL SEASON TICKET

Issued To \_\_\_\_\_

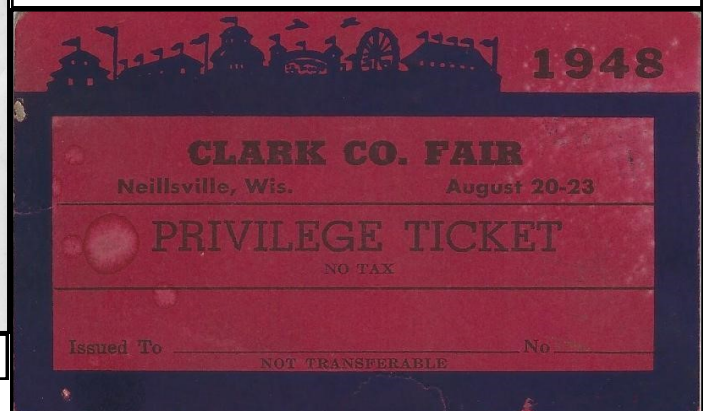
This ticket is issued to a regular employee or attaché of carnival and will be honored at Gate only. Holder must sign name above and ticket will be taken up if presented by any other person.

**MARATHON COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY**

D. M. GENRICH, President

HARRY A. KIEFER, Secretary

*Passes allowing free admission to carnival employees.*



*(Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 3)

with little competition; during some of the roughest times in this country's history.

Though Scott may have been able to get by on the income from just the penny arcade he hardly stopped there. Within the first few years of opening he acquired a car ride and a chairplane (swing ride). The car ride had a square center base which Scott would sell as advertising space each week to different businesses in the community they were in. In those days most rides didn't even have fence; on the swing in its day the kids would surround it hold hands and make a human fence. Around 1935 Scott won a "Flying Jenny" airplane in a card game with other show owners and decided to fly it home. (Back then there was a whole trailer which was actually a traveling bar; these were since outlawed by society.) A relative researched Scott and found he was arrested around the same time for flying in bootlegged Canadian whiskey with the same plane. Scott operated from the Wisconsin area to Florida often hopping from one spot to the next slowly reaching your destination. He operated a summer quarters in the Milwaukee area, winter quarters in Apalachicola, Florida, and he housed the arcade in St. Louis if not in operation. Scott bought several acres in Eagle, WI, where he moved his operation to in about 1940. Scott created a business called Lake Machine Works where he constructed his own rides at his address. He also constructed dozens of homes in the area under a company called Melody Homes. Although Scott created much in his time his lasting legacy would be his son, Fred Lake.

Frederic Kern Lake had the privilege of growing up on a traveling carnival during the Great Depression; the history involved, the tough choices they had to make, the constant struggle every day to do better than just survive. He was instilled with a terrific work ethic, which later in life had an intoxicating effect of people around him to work hard in an effort to win his approval. (This work ethic is gone; left society a while ago.) The show must go on has a little different meaning to those in the industry; it is more than a saying it is a way of life. With a carnival there are three phases: Setup, Run, and Teardown (Slough). Sometimes would have to make a "Circus Jump" where the teardown time plus travel time plus setup

time exceeds opening time. In that case the shift is usually longer for the average worker; it is whenever the last piece of steel leaves the ground and hits the trailer. The driver is awoken and the average worker would get to sleep on the ride to wherever. Then setup immediately upon arrival with the piece of equipment. Fred soon traveled more with the show every year. He would get the odd jobs for example when no one from the town wanted to box the giant carnival boxer Fred would have to get into the ring and put on a show. He dated a lady that rode a motorcycle in the Motordrome. Fred was in Manitowoc on August 15, 1945, V-J day; he said all the ladies were kissing him. He figured that after the news the whole town came out to the festivities that night to celebrate. Fred was a full-time driver, setup person, and operator long before he was of the age so to say; this all prepared him for the future.



*Frederic Kern Lake in 1948 in Eagle with his semi tractor ready to pull a load.*

Fred was drafted by the U.S. Army in 1952, due to his experience on the carnival with an electrical and

*(Continued on page 5)*



(Continued from page 4)

mechanical background he was placed into the 2nd Armored Division, "Hell On Wheels." He spent his time in West Berlin fixing tanks and equipment left over from World War II. Being a family who had often been drafted and deployed in the past Fred was not surprised he was drafted. He had relation who was taken prisoner at Cold Harbor, Virginia; who died in Andersonville. He had relation who died going up San Juan Hill. He had several relatives who never came home from World War I. His Brother was in the U.S. Army before World War II started; and stayed after it was over. Upon returning home Fred was offered a job at Teledyne, a part of Wisconsin Motors, where he worked as a millwright for decades. When Fred passed away, he was a 32 Degree Mason and active in many organizations. Fred met Carol Bergstrom whose uncle owned Paradise Springs, a local hotel at the time. They were soon married. As a wedding gift Scott Lake gave Fred several acres in the Village

of Eagle to put up a house in Melody Hills. Fred and Carol had four children: Virginia, Rita, Fred Jr., and Mark who had the luck of growing up around such an interesting life; the cycle had restarted for the Lake family. Fred also had nieces and nephews to help keep the show operating. Fred's siblings did not follow in the industry. William was in mainland Europe by 1943, Herb went out west to design warplanes for the military, and Roy went on to create Kern Engineering which helped develop the bumper for the 1964 Mustang. Fred worked his whole life as anyone with the last name Lake does, and kept his father's legacy intact. When Fred passed away, he left behind a life rich with travel, experiences, work—all that he built and crafted just like a Showman.

Lake Enterprises is still in operation today, still in Eagle, WI; still in Melody Hills. Fred Lake's son Mark operates the unit with son Beau, daughter Lindsey, and nephew Matt.

Please see Page 6 for nearby upcoming events.



*Lindsey Lake stocking her shelves in Shullsburg, WI, about 2003.*



*Above: Mark, Beau & other family members setting up the Tilt-A-Whirl in 1987.*



*All photos and data for this article were graciously provided by the Lake Family.*

*Left: Three-Generation Photo (Beau, Mark & Frederic) in 2003 at Queen of Peace Catholic Church on 27th Street in Milwaukee, WI.*

# ANNUAL PLANT SWAP "ON THE PATIO"



Calling all flower lovers, gardeners and gardener newbies! Our Plant Swap, "On the Patio" will be held on **Saturday, May 19, from 10 am—2 pm**. Share your perennials, annuals, herbs and vegetables.

Bring plants to swap with friends, neighbors or to be added to the heirloom gardens at the museum. No plants for exchange?



Bring non-perishable food items for the Eagle Community Food Pantry and choose plants to take home.



**Drop off plants at anytime on Friday or early Saturday morning.** Please identify your plants and their shade/light/soil preferences, if possible. If you are unsure, plant expert, Don Dane, will again be on site to share his tips on identification, care, best location for successful transplanting of plants and other green thumb-related questions. Enjoy sweet treats and coffee while you swap.



Hosted by  
Eagle Historical Society  
217 Main Street  
262-594-8961  
elaine@ledrowski.com



## ANSWERS

### UPCOMING LAKE ENTERPRISES EVENTS

St. John Neumann Catholic Church Festival  
2400 W. State Road 59, Waukesha June 1-3

Rib Fest @ Walworth County Fair Grounds National Rib  
Competition in Elkhorn July 12-15

Dousman Derby Days - Cory Park 118 S. Main St.  
Home of Wisconsin State Frog Jump July 27-29

1. Mrs. Wood
2. Eliza Mae Chapman Merideth
3. Alice Baker
4. Mary Churchill Coyler
5. Katherine Whettam



## ANNUAL VETERANS RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Please join us on Saturday, June 2, 2018 at 1:00 pm to honor all those whose service advance the universal hope of freedom and liberty for all. This year we will especially recognize Vietnam era vets. View the traveling exhibit, 'Wisconsin Remembers: A Face for Every Name' from 9 am-4 pm on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday (June 1-3) at the museum.

Music will be provided by the Kettle Moraine Blues; refreshments and reception to follow. We have lots of space but limited seating, so if you are able, please bring a chair and perhaps a spare. We've found many Vietnam era vets but want to be sure no one is missed. If you know a Vietnam era vet from Eagle or the surrounding area, please contact:

[elaine@ledrowski.com](mailto:elaine@ledrowski.com)

or (262) 594-8961

We look forward to seeing you!



The Eagle Historical Society  
217 East Main Street  
Eagle Wisconsin 53119  
(262) 594-8961

### Kelsey, Meryl L.

*April 30, 1920– March 31, 2018*



### OBITUARY

Meryl Lois (Peters) Kelsey passed away peacefully at home on March 31, 2018, just a month shy of her 98th birthday, with her daughter at her side. Meryl was born in Saskatchewan, Canada, migrating with the family to Wisconsin via horse-drawn wagon as a girl, and settling in Waukesha. Much of her early education came from the nuns at orphanages in Stevens Point and Green Bay, where Meryl lived on and off, when times were lean for the family.

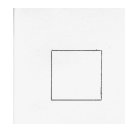
A lover of music, Meryl met her husband, John, when he was playing in a band, and married him at 16. The couple moved to their home in Eagle in 1947, and never left. Meryl's overarching philosophy was simply "be nice," and she was especially partial to children and animals; she adored the children in her life, and in addition to sporadic farm animals and traditional pets, she welcomed all manner of wild critters her children brought home, as well as the many cats that seemed to find their way to her doorstep. Though largely robbed of her eyesight by macular degeneration,

Meryl loved color, and enjoyed sitting out in the sunshine, looking at her flowers and watching the birds.

Meryl was preceded in death by her husband, John; her sons, Larry and Tim Kelsey; and her brothers Bob, Bruce, Leo, Vern, and Glen Peters. She is survived by her sister, Faye Treffinger; daughter, Kay Janssen; grandchildren Tricia Meade, Blake, Nicole, Carrie, and Joe Kelsey, and Kirsten Schmitt, and great-grandchildren Andrew, Julia, and Garret Kelsey, Kendall Klink, and Jaxton Kelsey, and many nieces and nephews.

A funeral Mass was held at 10:30 am on Friday, April 13, at St. Theresa's Catholic Church in Eagle, where Meryl was a parishioner for over 70 years, including singing in the choir for many years. The Mass was followed by a luncheon at the Wildflower Café in Mukwonago. Interment of Meryl's ashes at North Prairie Cemetery will take place at a later date.

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



Early 1940s Hampton-style car ride. Note that there is no fencing.