

EAGLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

July 2022

The museum officially entered into and is actively engaged in a construction project as of Sat., May 21 (Armed Forces Day), with the removal of the back porch. (See photo at right.)

HELP US SPREAD OUR WINGS!

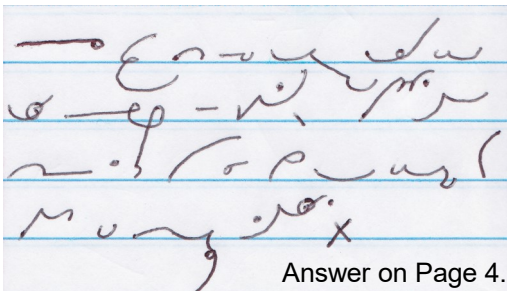
See the enclosed insert offering ways for you to participate in our exciting expansion project.



CASH DONATIONS

Anonymous	\$100.00
Gilbert, Bernard & Deborah ..	\$100.00
Anne Jung	\$300.00
i/m/o Betty Weimer	\$335.00
June 4 Event	\$ 64.00

SHORTHAND QUESTION



Answer on Page 4.



PLEASE NOTE



It has become necessary to postpone the Aug. 16 Open House until further notice due to our current ongoing construction.



Wrecking Crew Back row left to right: Phil Hall, Jim Neist, Scott Bovee, Chris Ballman. Front row left to right: Art Peavy, Jeff Nowicki, Tristan Ballman. *Photo by Carolyn Rosprim.*

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

Evans, Jean \$100
Hawes, Don \$10
Hyland, John \$10
Kuhn, Jaci \$8
Ridgeman, Irene \$8

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Family \$15.00

Gilbert, Bernard & Deborah
Muth, Stephan
Sherman, Tom & Bonnie

Sustaining \$25.00

Peterson, Kathy & Harley

Sponsor \$50.00

Eagle Business Association

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EHS Board

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Elaine Ledrowski
594-3301

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594-5454

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EHS MUSEUM

262-594-8961

OPEN HOURS:

Wednesdays: 3-6 pm
Fridays: 9 am-Noon
Saturdays: 9 am-Noon

WEBSITE:

www.eaglehistoricalsociety.org

FACEBOOK: Like us
at Eagle Historical Society

IF TOMBSTONES COULD TALK



Cemetery Walk Committee

Back row left to right: Scott Bovee, Steve Foley, Dean Herriges. Middle row: Riene Wells, Dana Houk, Roger Houk. Front row: Elaine Ledrowski, Jeff Nowicki. *Photo taken by Anne Jung.*

The weather was picture perfect on May 7 for this very well attended event, which began at Oak Ridge Cemetery. Scott Bovee and Dana Houk, descendants of Eagle pioneer families, were group leaders who shared the history of the cemetery, early pioneers, and burial stone art and symbolism.



Samples of artwork creatively crafted using a loved one's locket of hair, a common tradition in some families.



Samples of post-mortem photos, often the only opportunity to have a keepsake family photo of the deceased.



After a short break with refreshments at the Municipal Building, Gina Neist introduced former funeral director and Victorian Undertaker Steve Person who gave a very interesting, detailed presentation (including a display of several 19th century "tools of the trade" and artifacts) to a very captive and engaging audience.



Photos above by Gina Neist.

SCHOOL TOUR

by Elaine Ledrowski



We had the opportunity to host a visit by 40 third-graders from Eagle Elementary School on Tuesday, May 31. The students pictured at left were playing games from 1904. They also participated in a one-room schoolhouse, were given a quick museum tour and then went on a scavenger hunt looking for artifacts. *Photo taken by Jeff Nowicki.*

MILLENNIUM QUILT

by Elaine Ledrowski

Working as a volunteer at a historical society teaches you patience. Case in point—our millennium quilt. We started it in 1999 hoping to have it completed by 2000. Quilt patches were given to area churches, businesses, and local individuals (to name just a few) hoping it would take them a month to finish, but it took much longer. The individual who offered to make the quilt decided to go back to work and found that with work and family she didn't have enough time to finish the quilt. The unfinished patches sat on a shelf until 2020 when we tried to finish it again. EHS president Jeff Nowicki volunteered his sister, Heidi Thessin, and we were very excited when Heidi finished the quilt in 2022. The quilt is beautiful, tells the history of Eagle, and is now proudly on display at the museum.



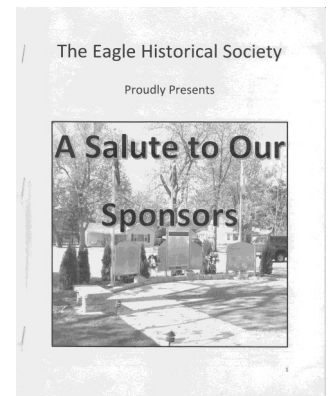
Photo at right of Jeff Nowicki and Heidi Thessin was taken by Elaine Ledrowski.

A SALUTE TO OUR SPONSORS



Phil Hall addresses the crowd.

Because of threatening weather, our June 4 event was held inside of the Methodist Church. Jeff Nowicki welcomed an audience of about 60. The Kettle Moraine Blues entertained us with special selections. Retired US Army veteran Phil Hall honored veterans and encouraged us all to record our family stories lest they be lost to time, Gina Neist remembered loved ones, and Pat Hawes recognized area families and businesses.



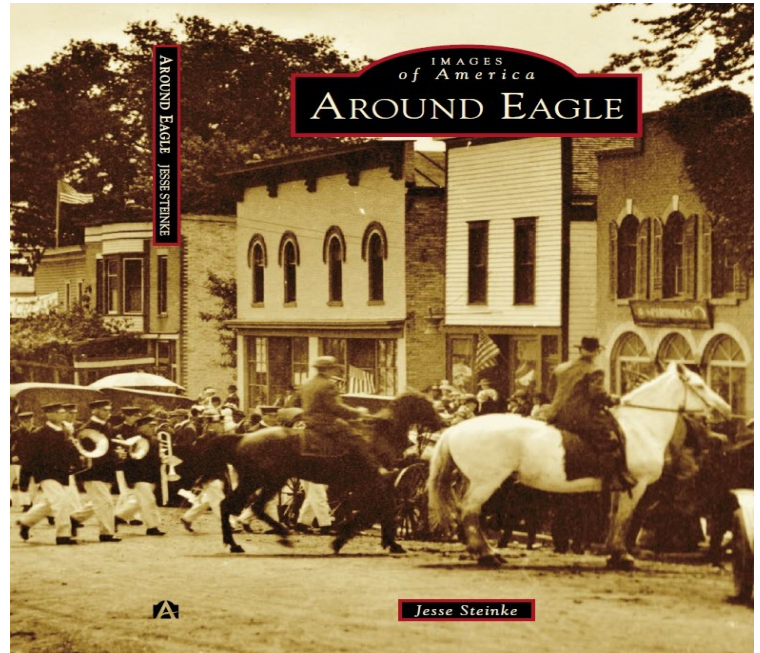
A booklet listing all of the names honored with a brick gracing the walkway to the Eagle Veterans' Memorial was given to each of our sponsors. Elaine Ledrowski concluded the event with closing remarks, and refreshments and homemade treats provided by Ellie and Diana Hall and Pat Hawes were enjoyed in the church basement. Thank you to all who helped make this day special and to the Eagle United Methodist Church for allowing us to hold this event out of the rain.

Photos by Carolyn Rosprim.

by Jesse Steinke

A new book has been published documenting Eagle's history through about 200 photos written by Jesse Steinke, who is an 8th generation descendant of Eagle's pioneers who have been in Eagle since 1842. Many of the photos are from his family's private photo collection and were passed down by his Great Grandfather's brother, Sidney Sprague, from the early 1900s.

Through photos, the book documents details about some of the families that created Eagle, how they lived, worked, played, and built Eagle into the town and village that it is today.



In addition, there are portions dedicated to the almost-forgotten hamlets of Palestine, Jericho, Eagleville, and Melendy's Prairie that were stifled with the building of the railroad that created the population center of Eagle Centre (Village of Eagle).

Jesse is a descendant of the Sprague, Bovee, Brady, McCabe, Cole, Earle, and King families that were instrumental in creating Eagle. In addition to these families, he has extensively researched the descendants of the pioneer families who settled Eagle. He manages a Facebook Group called "Descendants of the Pioneers of Eagle WI" to help people connect to the details they may not have known. Jesse is a member and supporter of the Eagle Historical Society and has contributed articles to the Society's newsletter.

The book was released at Kettle Moraine Days in 2022 and is available for purchase at various retail locations in Eagle or by directly contacting the author at either jessesteinke@gmail.com or (262) 751-9594. The Facebook Group called "Around Eagle", Images of America has the most up-to-date information regarding places where the book is offered for sale as well as upcoming book signings and sales events.

ARTIFACT DONATIONS

This is a partial list of items donated.
Thanks to the following donors:

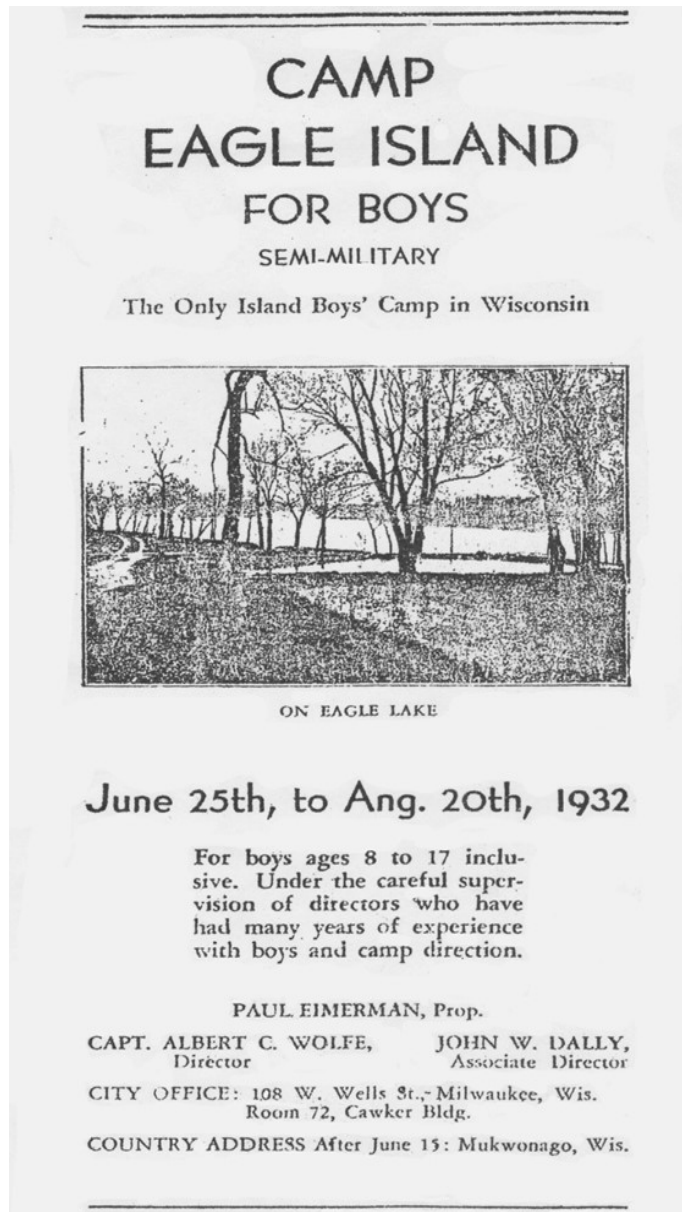
Adler Family—Two books, two stack tables
Peggy Dore—Madame Alexander doll
Pat Hawes—Three class photos
John Hyland—Book, *The Breidenbach Family*
Peggy Michel—Framed bank photo
William Weimer—Vintage bottles

ANSWER TO SHORTHAND QUESTION

Many people can no longer read or write messages in shorthand. Do you think there will come a time when that will also be true of cursive handwriting?

CAMP EAGLE ISLAND FOR BOYS

by Art & Carrie Peavy



Our museum receives many interesting artifacts. Some are easily explained, and some require deeper research to reveal their purpose, function, and place in history. The latter scenario has proved to be the intriguing case of the Camp Eagle Island For Boys.

A copy of an old brochure promoting the camp was brought in to us many years ago (see above) after being discovered in the drawer of a home purchased by Mike Wiza. Marion (nee Travers) Schillo shared memories of her time growing up on this island and stories passed down by her father about the boys' camp with former EHS officer and board member Barb Jatczak. We took on the challenge of researching and documenting this camp's place in history 90 years ago with little else to go on except the notes left behind by Barb and her expressed interest in this

potential story. Initially, not much information turned up except for a very few local residents having heard that it had existed, perhaps for one or two seasons, if that long. Most had never even heard of it. So, we decided to look more closely at the brochure and see where its information might lead us. We also talked with several current or former residents of Travers Island and were not disappointed with the many twists and turns that each path of discovery took us on.

Big Island (about 11 acres in size and the largest of nine islands located in Eagle Spring Lake) was the site of the camp built back in the early 1930s. Several cabins were built on the spine of the eastern side and its headquarters on the western side. Today, we know it as Travers Island, named after an early owner, George Travers, who plays a key role in this account.

The purpose of the camp was to develop health, character, and leadership and was to be achieved with a very ambitious list of activities: swimming, boating, canoeing, horseback riding, golf, campcraft, scoutcraft, woodcraft, hiking, field events, track, tennis, baseball, soccer, fishing (casting and fly), military drill, boxing, wrestling, dramatics, archery, and first aid. Boys were to be divided into squads of eight, and each week a member of each squad was to be the appointed corporal, thereby providing every boy with an opportunity in leadership training.

Ten boys at a time would be taken on a three-day trip to Madison, Devils Lake, and the Wisconsin Dells or a five-day trip to the Lac Du Flambeau Indian Reservation in northern Wisconsin. Overnight canoe trips to Lulu Lake were available to the older boys. All boys were offered an all-day hike to the state-protected game reserve and bird sanctuary, a weekly hike to Eagle and a campfire.

Transportation was offered every Sunday from the Camp to Eagle for those desiring to attend church services of their particular religious affiliation.

The camp experience included exceptional facilities with the best of bedding, individual beds, electric lights and other comforts in new open-air cabins situated in a semi-circle along the crest of a hill running the length of the island. Meals would be served in a spacious central dining room.

Capt. Albert C. Wolfe, the camp director, was a very well-liked man with an exemplary military service record. He entered the U.S. Army at age 19 during WWI and earned the award of a Meritorious War Department Scholarship allowing him to attend the University of Wyoming, Creighton University and

(Continued on page 6)



Capt. Albert C. Wolfe

Louisiana State. He was honorably discharged as Sergeant, commissioned in U.S. Army Officers' Reserve Corp. as Second Lieutenant in 1923, promoted to First Lieutenant in 1927 and to Captain of Infantry in 1931. The Captain served as an instructor (1930) and then coordinator at Milwaukee Vocational School (1933) and was active with several social service organizations in Milwaukee, acting as a friend of the court to minors brought into the district court on first offenses of a minor nature as Executive Secretary of the Big Brothers organization. The associate director, John W. Dally, also was a veteran of WWI, had many years of experience in boys' clubs and the Big Brothers. He was a college graduate and then a teacher in Milwaukee in 1930. Records list him as married and living in Mukwonago in the 1930s.

Proprietor Paul A. Eimerman was born in Portage, WI, worked as a teacher for a short time out of high school, served in both WWI and WWII, and helped work his father's farm until his father died in 1926. Records indicate that he then moved to Milwaukee about 1929 as a married man with a growing family and worked as a sales manager for Wis.-Minn. Gas & Electric Household Appliance Co. in Port Washington.

The city office address referred to on the brochure is that of the Cawker Building, which is a historic five-story Queen Anne style built in 1897 for Lenore H. Cawker. It can still be seen today (although renovated) on the western end of the Wells Street Bridge in downtown Milwaukee and was referred to as "the lawyers building" due to the high number of attorneys conducting business within it. In 1932, Room 72 was occupied by Big Brothers Big Sisters of Milwaukee County.

Miss Cawker, a member of a socially prominent family, spent a personal fortune of a quarter of a million dollars to establish a shelter for stray animals on 37th Street and Wisconsin Avenue. She was moved to do so due to the cruel destruction of stray animals by the city pound, and her animal ambulances were familiar sights on Milwaukee streets for 40 years.

Early plat maps and official records in Eagle list Bernard H. Helming, Jr. as owner of the nine acres of land that the cabins were built on. He worked with his father as a real estate broker and lived in downtown Milwaukee as a single man for his entire life.

George and Marie Travers lived in Wauwatosa where George worked at the Transportation Co. settling arrangements with those who were injured. Around 1924, George bought a two-acre parcel on Big Island so that he could go duck hunting. He put together two big corn cribs with a sloping roof as the basic structure of a cottage and later sold that in 1926 to Ed and Fanny Bruhy.

Back to the brochure. We were fortunate to have had the opportunity to speak with George's son-in-law, Frank, who provided background information and clarification of some of the research notes left behind. Here is what he shared with us:

George retained ownership of a strip of land 100 ft. wide extending from the front to the back of the island. He built another two-story cottage on that land but didn't tell his wife because he was not sure whether she'd like it. One day, he decided to surprise Marie and brought her out to the island to show her the cottage. She fell in love with it. George made many improvements to the property over time, and Frank chuckled when he remembered helping him transport many, many rocks from the top of the hill to the lot. George also strung some type of wire between cottages on the island to communicate between them and thereby invite neighbors to his house where they would all sit on his screened-in porch and sing Irish songs. George and Marie had two daughters, Joan and Marion (born in January of 1932, the same year referenced on the brochure), who grew up loving and making lasting memories of the island.

The Travers family would come to spend their summers and most weekends in the fall and spring on the island. On one such return, George was greeted with an unusual, unwelcome discovery. During their absence, several cabins and buildings had been built without his prior knowledge or consent. Frank confirmed the story that had been passed down over the years describing someone being confronted and chased off the island by George. A Model-A truck owned by George was pushed into the lake off the west side of the island (camp headquarters location) and sunk into a slough never to be seen again. He had brought the vehicle across the ice and stored it in a shed, which according to Bob Buss was such a tight fit that George had to roll down and climb out of a window to get out of it. All of the buildings were left behind.

Court documents name Mr. Helming as one of several defendants named in a lawsuit brought about by building contractors attempting to collect debts owed to them for materials and labor performed by them on a certain parcel of land on the island. Mr. Eimerman was another defendant in this case. Records confirm that Mr. Eimerman gave Wis. Gas and Electric Co. rights and \$1 to install a line of poles and to string and main-

(Continued from page 6)

tain wires thereon for the purpose of supplying light, heat, and power to his property on the island in July of 1931, but we found no record confirming him as having deeded ownership. This included trimming and keeping trimmed all trees along said line upon his said premises. The Court made many findings of fact including a false representation of ownership by Mr. Eimerman to the contractors when they entered into a written agreement in 1932 and that said labor was performed and material furnished without the consent or knowledge of Mr. Helming and ordered Mr. Eimerman to pay \$3040 (about \$65,000 today) plus interest. He filed bankruptcy in 1940 and was discharged from all debts and provable claims in 1941, and so it appears that the contractors were never paid for their materials and services. A mechanic's lien had not been secured.

Mr. Travers tried many times to buy the nine acres and was finally able to do so in 1942 after the owner, Bernard H. Helming, Jr., died in 1939. He then tore down some of the cabins and sold the lumber. Two of the cabins were bought by a person on the mainland and taken across the lake on the ice and made into a home on Hwy. E between Hwy. LO and South Shore Drive.

George sold the intended headquarters to good friends Bob and Gertrude Kierstead who made it into an attractive cottage and sold it in 1974 to Mike Wiza. Mike's daughter, Ann Hurley, now owns this home.

When George and Marie could no longer maintain the cottage, it was sold to a man from Milwaukee in 1968. Several years later, it was sold to two brothers, the Bolands, in 1993 to Bob and Mary Buss, and recently to Steve Hamilton.

In 1950, George gave a 100-ft. lot on the front of the island to his daughter Joan and her husband Jack Nelson who built a home on that property.

In 1958, George gave another 100-ft. lot to his daughter and son-in-law, Marion and Frank Schillo, who built a cottage there in 2004 using an East Troy contractor. Frank was very happy when the house was completed "on time and under budget." Although the Schillos lived busy lives in California, they made the cross country trip to their lake home as often as possible (even if only for a day or two) to refresh and reflect. Marion passed away in 2020, but Frank and the family still return to enjoy the peaceful lake view of the island and relive those very fond memories.

Captain Wolfe became connected with the federal transient bureau as regional director at Lexington, KY, just prior to being called to active duty with the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1934. He assumed command of CCC camps in Necedah, WI, Battle Creek, Harrison, and Ludington, MI. The Captain later met several of the young men whom he had befriended and obtained probationary periods under his supervision as members of his camps in northern Wisconsin. He was called back into service again during WWII from 1942-1945 and served in the Southwest Pacific Theatre in the Philippine Islands. Rising to the rank of Lt. Col., he became a prisoner of war and survived the notorious Bataan Death March.

Mr. Dally moved to Madison and then CA. He remained active in teaching organizations in Wisconsin and California, became a sociologist and belonged to the International Order of Foresters.

Many questions may go unanswered. Did any boys ever attend a session at this camp? What did a camp session cost? No mention of fees is listed. Where was the brochure printed and marketed? From the inverted "u" in "Aug", we can assume that it was likely produced in a print shop, and Milwaukee was a national leader of printing operations at that time. How well, if at all, did the organizers of the camp know each other? Did the Captain and Mr. Dally ever meet Mr. Eimerman, and/or Mr. Helming? Who was chased off the island, maybe Captain Wolfe checking on the progress of the construction (although he was reportedly studying and traveling in Europe on a scholarship in 1932), or perhaps Mr. Eimerman? The crash of the stock market occurred in the autumn of 1929, and the Great Depression following it left many in dire straits. Could this have been the motivation or one of the factors involved in the construction of Camp Eagle? Squatting and adverse possession were very common practices at this point in time, and vacation homes were prime targets.

While we may never know the full intentions of the organizers, it does seem as though great care and planning went into the execution of this potentially great mission. Had things been done differently, maybe Big Island could have truly been the site of "The Only Island Boys' Camp in Wisconsin" in 1932, as advertised, and still assisting in the development of health, character, and leadership skills to boys of today.

Thank you: Scott Bovee, Bob Buss, Tom Day, Mike Rice and Frank Schillo, without whose help this story may never have been told. And especially to the late Barb Jatczak for providing the groundwork, curiosity, and inspiration to make this happen.

All photos for this article were taken from EHS archives.

OBITUARY

Weimer, Elizabeth F. 'Betty'

June 30, 1926—May 25, 2022



Elizabeth F. "Betty" Weimer, 95, of Eagle, joined her husband in heaven on Wednesday, May 25, 2022, at Oconomowoc Memorial Hospital in Oconomowoc.

Betty was born on June 30, 1926, in Milwaukee, the daughter of Arthur and Lillian (Kemmer) Juedes. She grew up in the Eagle area and was united in marriage to William (Bill) Weimer on July 27, 1946, at St. Theresa Catholic Church. Bill and Betty were blessed with three loving children, Sharon, William and Cindy. Betty was a wonderful wife and mother. She and Bill had a very close and loving relationship and shared nearly 67 years of marriage together until his passing in 2013. Betty had many different interests during her life. She enjoyed physical activities such as horseback riding, dancing with her husband,

singing, and camping and she also appreciated more leisurely activities such as gardening, fishing and shopping. Betty was a long time member of St. Theresa Church, and she also belonged to the Eagle Historical Society. She will be deeply missed by her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. Her loving family takes comfort that Betty and Bill are dancing together again in Heaven.

She is survived by her three children, Sharon (James Schaefer) Bashaw of Hartland, William (Susan) Weimer of Eagle, and Cindy (Dale) Sunstrom of Washougal, Wash.; her grandchildren, Rodney (Liz) Bashaw, Dawn (Todd) Tesky, William (Lindsey) Weimer, Lindsey (Josh) Gajewski, Erica (Jim) Stockwell, Rachel (Greg) Wilson and Kelly (Josh) Edgerton; her great-grandchildren, Zachary, Tanner, Brandon, Taylor, Ella, Elyse, Reese, Presley, Monroe, Miley, Jordan, Dylan, Lucas, Sawyer and Liam; and her great-great-grandchildren, William and Christopher.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her loving husband, William; her two brothers, Jerome and Ronald; and her two sisters, Dorothy and Beatrice.

A private memorial Mass was held at St. Theresa Catholic Church in Eagle. Betty was laid to rest next to her husband in St. Theresa Catholic Cemetery in Eagle following the Mass.

Memorials in Betty's honor were made to the Eagle Historical Society.

Gibson Family Funeral Homes of Eagle and Palmyra served the family. Online condolences were placed on gibsonfuneral.com.

OBITUARY

Hyland, Kenneth 'Ken'



May 11, 1929—May 28, 2022



Kenneth (Ken) Hyland died on May 28, 2022, at the age of 93. He was born on May 11, 1929, to John and Louise Hyland in Eagle.

Ken discovered a lifelong love of music while attending Messmer High School in Milwaukee. He became proficient in several brass instruments. His musical skills were noticed when he joined the Army in 1948. He was assigned to the 421st Army Band, which was stationed in Bremerhaven, Germany. His unit was part of the Army of Occupation and traveled post-war Europe playing concerts for troops, dignitaries and local residents.

Upon returning from Germany, Ken met the love of his life, Eleanor (Ellie) Schellinger. They were married on October 3, 1953, and together enjoyed a happy 68-year marriage partnership. They raised their family of four children in Eagle before moving to Wales and eventually to Hartford. In each of these communities, Ken was very involved in his Catholic parish. He served in leadership roles on parish council, the Knights of Columbus and as a choir member. He was also a long time member of the Genesee-Wales Lions Club, where he served as president and could frequently be found working at events or tending the bar.

Ken worked hard to support his family. He retired from the Waukesha Engine Co. with 35 years of service as a machine operator. At home, he could often be found in his basement shop, working on his latest project. After retiring, he resumed his love of music, singing in several groups, including his favorite, the Brookfield Highlanders Barbershop Choir.

Ken's quiet kindness and welcoming manner made him a friend to many people. He will live on in the hearts of his four children, John (Elizabeth) Hyland, Susan (Pete) Schicker, David Hyland and Peter (Mary) Hyland; his four granddaughters, Jennifer (Chris) Rhode, Eileen Hyland, Denise Hyland and Lillian Hyland; his two great granddaughters, Eleanor and Ashlyn; and his brother James Hyland.

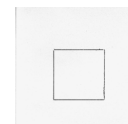
He was preceded in death by Eleanor (2022), his sisters Patricia (2020), Maureen (1936) and Kathleen (2004), and brothers Robert (1989), and Gerald (1990).

A Mass of Christian Burial was held at 11 am on Friday, June 3, at St. Theresa Catholic Church in Eagle. Fr. Loyola officiated the Mass. Visitation took place from 9:30 am until the start of the service. Ken was laid to rest in St. Theresa Catholic Cemetery immediately following the service.

The family requested that memorials be made to the Wales-Genesee Lion's Club or to the charity of the donor's choice.

Gibson Family Funeral Homes of Eagle and Palmyra served the family. Online condolences were placed on gibsonfuneral.com.

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



Mailing Label

Upcoming Events

Annual EHS Ice Cream Social and Band Concert Sunday, July 10 Eagle Village Park

Enjoy cake and ice cream starting at 1:30 pm followed by the Palmyra Eagle Community Band Concert under the direction of "Mr. Ed" Pierce at 2:00 pm. The performance is entitled An Afternoon Filled with Musical Stars, and it showcases our local "Stars" in the Band. Bring a lawn chair and enjoy an afternoon of complimentary treats and entertainment.

- Aug 13 Picnic with the Police
- Oct 29 Pumpkin Party—on the Museum Patio—12:00-3:30 pm
Party Like the Seventies—Enjoy a Display of 1970s Halloween Costumes on the Porch, Play '70s Trivia, Complete games to win prizes.
- Nov 8 Election Day Bake Sale and Community Outreach