



EAGLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

April 2004

Eagle, Wisconsin

EHS Board

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594-3301

Newsletter Editor

Darlene Landmann

594-3430

EHS

museum/ library

594-8961

open

Fridays and Saturdays,

9 am to noon

Website: eaglehs.org

EHS News

Membership

EHS currently has 305 members.

New Members: Welcome to John & Julie Mann, Carl & Wilma Pettis, Eileen (Topsy) Von Rueden and Vonda Williams.

Many thanks to those who joined at higher levels:

Sustaining, \$25-\$49: Bill & Jackie Adams, Gerald & Lori Heckel (Heckel Tool Co.), Jim & Diane Olive (Eagle Springs Pub) and John & Kay Reilly.

Patron, \$100 and over: Generac-Waukesha.

Honorary Memberhips

At the April 20 board meeting it was decided that people with a connection to Eagle—village or town—who have reached the age of 85 will be eligible for honorary membership in the Eagle Historical Society. If you or someone you know qualifies for this benefit, please call the museum/curator at one of the numbers listed in the column to the left or write to the return address on the back page and request an honorary membership.

New Board Members

Also at the April board meeting, four members whose terms had expired (Jean Bowey, Ed Mueller and Flo & Jerry Neary) were replaced. The new board members are Mark Dexter, Diana Hall, Pat Hawes and Dottie Murphy.

Donations

We thank the following for donations received: Dale Arenz, Bob Batzler, Jean Bowey, Roseanne Carter, Eagle Fire Department, Donna Fanshaw, Mabel Finney, Gary

Klingbeil, Frank Latona, Eleanor Martens, Marge Moots, Welthy Mueller, Martin Murk, Bea Nowicki, Elaine Potrykus, Terri Sorensen, John Viegut and Pat Wilton.

Martin Murk: In February Mr. Murk donated copies of the wildlife prints he had designed for use on stamps. These included the 1977-78 federal duck stamp print (Ross geese), 1979 Wisconsin trout stamp print (rainbow trout), 1980 Wisconsin duck stamp print (widgeons), 1982 Wisconsin Great Lakes salmon print (Chinook salmon), 1982 North American endangered species stamp (eastern timber wolves) and the 1989 Wisconsin inland trout print (German brown trout). Each print is signed and accompanied by its stamp. He wrote, "I am pleased to have my stamp prints be a part of the Eagle Historical Society's archives." EHS is very pleased also.

Memorial Donation: EHS received a donation in memory of Mike Sasso.

EBA: The Eagle Business Association held an award dinner on April 12 at which EHS was given a check for \$100. This support is greatly appreciated.

Eagle: Did you know that both the Village and Town of Eagle are generous supporters of EHS?

Bake Sales

EHS held an election bake sale on February 17 and another on April 6; including sale of EHS shirts, we took in over \$1,100 from the two events. More than 40 generous donors supplied a wealth of irresistible treats. Thank you, bakers and buyers!

Round Robin Dinner

Those who worked to bring office furniture from the law firm of Hirschboek, Whyte & Dudek in Milwaukee and set it up in Eagle were honored with a progressive dinner on the evening of February 29. "We're so excited to show you the fruits of your labors," read the invitations.

Guests began at the Eagle Historical Society, where hors d'oeuvres were available from 5 to 5:30 pm and they could view the new "look" of the EHS.

Next they traveled to the Eagle Fire Department for salads and inspection of the new setup in that building. From there they went on to the Alice Baker Memorial Library, where they were treated to lasagna and an appreciation program featuring Barb Jatzak, Sheryl Allmann, and Crystal Laabs.

The elementary school, where desserts were available, was the last stop of the rewarding evening.



Eris Thurston, Pat Wilton and Elaine Ledrowski



Photos by Don Ledrowski

EHS Library Acquisition

We have acquired a copy of the Wisconsin Historical Society book, Index to Waukesha County, Wisconsin Marriages, 1846 to 1907, which contains information taken from the records in the county courthouse. Included are date, name/birthplace of bride and name/birthplace of groom, and father's name and mother's maiden name of both the bride and groom. The book is divided into 2 sections: one arranged alphabetically by surname of the groom and the other by surname of the bride. This valuable historical/genealogical tool is available for your use on the second floor.

Plant/Rummage Sale

The annual EHS sale will be held in the municipal building on May 14 and 15 during the 2004 Eagle community rummage sale. New t-shirts and sweatshirts with the eagle design will also be available.

Ice Cream Social/Band Concert

The EHS ice cream social will begin at 1:30 pm on July 11 and the concert by the Palmyra-Eagle Community Band, at 2 pm. The treats are reasonably priced, the music is free and the shelter protects us in case of rain—join us in the village park. Bring your own seating.

Submissions to the Newsletter

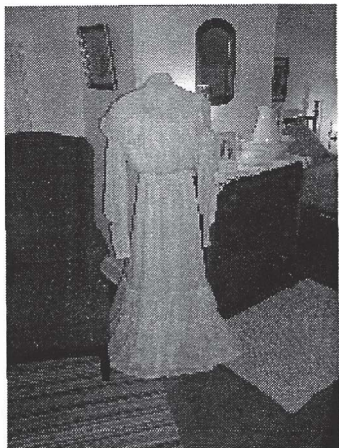
Please don't hesitate to send your photos, poetry, historical accounts, etc to the newsletter. Any item relevant to local history will be considered for inclusion.

Eagle Town Crier

EHS has in its possession some copies of this free local newsletter. If you or anyone you know has copies of the Crier, please consider arranging for EHS to photocopy them. Or better yet, please donate them to the EHS collection.

Tea With Mary Todd Lincoln

On Saturday, April 24, the Eagle Centre House bed and breakfast held two sessions of this tea sponsored by the Friends of the Wisconsin Historical Society. Costumed interpreter Judie Balderson of the FWHS board performed in the role of Mary Todd Lincoln. The Eagle Historical Society loaned Riene Wells vintage clothing items for displays to add to the period atmosphere of the event. Some of these are pictured below.



Photos by Don Ledrowski

NORTHWARD AND OUTWARD: A FIVE-DAY GUIDED TOUR

On Monday, September 20, a well-appointed motorcoach will leave Madison on a guided tour along Lake Superior. The tour will include lakes, islands, lighthouses, peoples, archaeology, architecture and Madeline Island Historical Museum, among other things. The coach will return on September 24. This will be the fifth tour Judie Balderson has led for the Friends.

Registration forms will be mailed to those who request one by phone (608-258-0050) or e-mail FRIENDSofWHS@hotmail.com. Participants will receive additional information after registering. The information will include directions to the meeting place, a park-and-ride lot where cars can be left for the length of the tour. Since departure will be early in the morning, out-of-town travelers may want to arrive the day before. Upon request, FRIENDS will provide information about nearby hotels.

The fee will be determined in May, at which time a deposit of \$65 will reserve a space for you.

Obituary

Donald D. Donahue
April 19, 1907—March 4, 2004

Donald Donahue of North Prairie passed away on March 4 at the age of 96. He was born in Troy Center on April 19, 1907. He is survived by sons David and Patrick (Mary); grandchildren Kim and Rich Warner; brothers-in-law George (Marjorie) Kastenholz, Clete (Betty) Rivard; friend Constantine Belissary; nieces and nephews and friends. He was preceded in death by his wife Marie; his sister Norma and her husband Fred Haeuser; sisters-in-law Eleanor and husband Roland Marks and Joyce Rivard. Visitation was Monday, March 8, from 5-7:30 pm and mass at 7:30 at St. Paul's Catholic Church in Genesee Depot. Burial in St. Paul's Cemetery on Tuesday, March 9, at 11 am. In lieu of flowers, please send memorials to St. Paul's at PO Box 95, Genesee Depot, WI 53127. Arrangements were handled by the Randle-Dable Funeral Home, 1110 S. Grand Avenue, Waukesha, Wisconsin.

Obituary



Michael J. Sasso
June 11, 1925-February 3, 2004

Michael J. Sasso, 78, died Tuesday at Kindred Hospital in Greenfield. He was born June 11, 1925, to Louis and Frances (Novilla) Sasso. A lifelong resident of Eagle, he had operated Sasso's Kettle Moraine Inn and was a veteran of the Navy. A member of St. Theresa's Catholic Church in Eagle, he served on the Eagle Fire Department (he was fire chief for 10 years), Eagle American Legion Post 535, Eagle Village board (he was the water commissioner), and the Palmyra State Bank board.

He is survived by his wife, Rosann; they were married in St. Theresa's Catholic Church on August 18, 1992.

He is further survived by his daughters Sandra (John) Fugarino of Sussex and Shari of Eagle; his step-children Mark (Sally) Searing of Waukesha and Lynne (Scott) Teal of La Crosse; and grand-children Alex and Lauren.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, Iris, and his sister Mary Crosswaite.

Mass of Christian Burial was held on February 6, 2004 at St. Theresa's. The Rev. Dennis Ackert officiated. Burial was in St. Theresa's Cemetery with military honors.

Memorials to St. Theresa's (126 Waukesha Road, Eagle) and fund for Eagle EMTs (PO Box 186, Eagle) would be appreciated.

Mealy's Funeral Home, Eagle, served the family.

Obituary



Vivian I. Wagner
May 10, 1926-February 22, 2004

Vivian I. Wagner of Eagle, formerly of Mikana and West Allis, died at home on Sunday, February 22 at the age of 77. She was a member of St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church in North Prairie.

She was born in Mikana on May 10, 1926, the daughter of Henry and Martha (nee Ewen) Ertel. A 1947 graduate of the Milwaukee Co. School of Nursing, she married Harold S. Wagner on November 5, 1949, in West Allis. In 1987 she retired as a nursing supervisor at Milwaukee Co. General Hospital. She was president of the Mukwonago Senior Citizens and a member of the East Troy Senior Citizens.

Survivors include her husband, Harold; three children—Craig (Christie) of Mukwonago, Bruce (Roberta) of Middleburg, Fla. and Karen (Timothy) Sperstad of Mukwonago; her grandchildren Paul (fiancee Amy Melstrand) and Michael Welden, Erik, Spencer, Ian and Tracy Wagner and Ben and Tom Sperstad; brother Dr. Kenneth (Dr. Madge) Ertel of Amherst, MA; sister Alice (Dr. Demosthenes) Pappagianis; other relatives and friends.

Her parents, brother Wainwright Ertel and two sisters, Helen Carter and Gladys Kulwin preceded her in death.

The Rev. Mark Below officiated at the Feb. 28 visitation/memorial service at St. John's. Burial was in Highland Memorial Park in New Berlin. In lieu of flowers, memorials to the church would be appreciated.

Schmidt & Bartelt-Van Valin Funeral & Cremation Services, Mukwonago served the family.

Oral History— Mike Sasso

Taken in 1990 by Irma Jolliffe

The Sasso family moved to Eagle in March of 1925, to Mrs. Lyons' house out on Elkhorn Road. "My parents came to Touhy's Resort on Eagle Lake in 1925 and found that this tavern [the Diamond Hotel] was for sale. I have no idea how he got interested in the tavern business, he was working for International Harvester at the time. " Mike grew up in the tavern, with the business on the first floor and the residence on the second. There were no pool tables in the Blue Diamond; however, they did serve meals and hold dances. "I have menus from that tavern where they used to serve roast beef, hamburgers, everything for 10 cents a sandwich. "

"When the Blue Diamond tavern burned on March 5, 1931, my dad ran the St. Paul Inn while he was having the tavern rebuilt." The rebuilding was completed about four years later and the new structure was named the Pall Mall. Full meals were served starting in 1932—chicken, t-bone steaks and hamburger steak. On Saturday night they had band music. The music played was like the music played on radio station WLS—country-western. Dances were different from those held at the Masonic Hall. In 1936 the business was renamed Sasso's. When his father passed away in 1942, Mike was already part of the tavern business. He stated that "It was all I knew, so I had to stick with it."

In 1956 the business became known as Sasso's Kettle Moraine Inn. A different type of customer frequented the Inn. The trade became more transient, consisting of vacationers, snowmobilers and the like. Previously most of the customers were local people and farmers. But even after the changes, the number one seller was still beer.

The motel was built in 1978. Mike was building his mother a house and the basement got too big, so he put in four motel rooms. "Everybody in Eagle thought I was nuts, but we are completely filled all the time—hikers, campers, salesmen and construction workers. A lot of horse people, too."

When asked if there were ever any big-name people who came to the Inn, Mike answered, "Yes, Stan Musial, Robin Roberts and Red Schoendienst—the Milwaukee Braves. They came out to Eagle to get away and to hunt and fish. I met them through Bob Rush, a pitcher for the Chicago Cubs who later came to Milwaukee. Bob Rush was a roommate of mine in Davenport, Iowa when I tried out for the Chicago Cubs right after the war. He made it, I didn't."

Mike remembered that his mother always made homemade spaghetti for the Milwaukee Braves. She would put on rolled steak and chicken cacciatore. His mother passed away in 1981 but Mabel Finney, who has been with them for 40 years, has all of Mrs. Sasso's recipes, so the menu served to customers now is nearly the same as then. Only the prices have changed.

When asked about what he saw in the future for Eagle, Mike did some comparing. He said, "Eagle had 4 gas stations and about 40 cars. Now it has 3 with about 1000 cars. It had 3 grocery stores and 2 barber-shops. The only thing that has stayed the same is the 3 taverns. Modern transportation puts the small man out of business." He feels that the restaurant trade will not be lost, as people still have to eat. He noted that they have expanded the Inn. Mike Sasso sold the business in 1991.

Eulogy for Michael Sasso

By Bob Batzler

Michael J. Sasso, 78 years of age, longtime member of the Eagle Fire Department, chief of department, American Legion Post 535, village board, water commissioner, Navy veteran, proprietor of the Kettle Moraine Inn, and many other things. These are well-known facts about him. He was referred to as "Mr. Eagle."

Today I want to talk about my friend Mike. I got to know him about 35 years ago when my wife and I and our kids moved here. Having been known to warm a stool in the watering holes of the community, I soon

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became good friends with Mike, the saloon keeper. (He didn't like to be called a tavern owner.)

He enjoyed woodworking, once building a beautiful cabinet with cove moulding around the top that would have thrilled a professional. He loved to go out to dinner and enjoy his favorite meal (a good steak) but he also like to stop at some small joint for a "sammitch." He liked music and would sometimes grab the microphone near the dumbwaiter that was used to call patrons when their food was ready and belt out his version of Sinatra's "New York, New York."

Mike loved baseball. He played for Eagle's team in the old Land-O'-Lakes league. His favorite player was Joe DiMaggio—I think there was an Italian connection there. He was a fan of both the Braves and the Brewers. Behind his bar was a book of signatures of many players of these teams. He was especially proud of Stan Musial, Red Schoendienst, Henry Aaron and Eddie Mathews. That book was referred to as the signatures of his friends and guests, and not an autograph book.

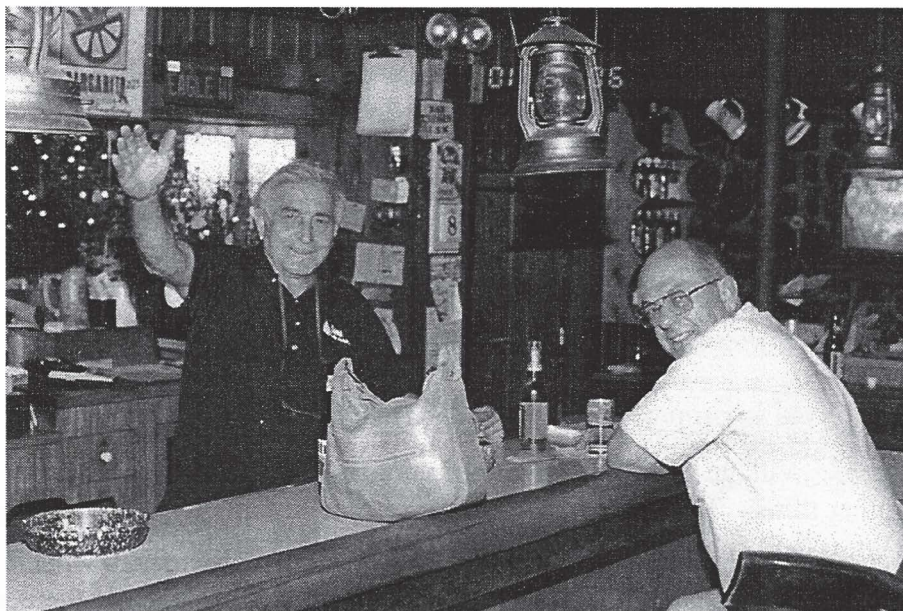
Mike always said, "If you make a friend in Eagle, that person is a friend for life." He also felt you should help others as much as you can.

He also had a good sense of humor and was quite the practical joker. As the water commissioner he was instrumental in putting the "smiley face" on the water tower; not everyone in the community appreciated that. In the fall of its first year he had a scarf wrapped around the tower to keep it warm. The next year there were going to be earmuffs placed on the tower, but Mike nixed that job, saying it was too dangerous.

Mike loved to play cards. Right now he is probably in that saloon in heaven behind the bar with his elbow on the bar rail and the cards are being shuffled for a game of euchre with his buddies Tex Tabat, Poncho Houk, Harvey Wambold and Squirt Nelson.

My wife, Joanne, came home from church last Saturday night and told me about the sermon that Fr. Dennis had used. He told of the minister who was going to throw all of the wine into the river, and then throw all of the whiskey into the river, and finally throw all of the beer into the river. Well, if Mike had been at that service, he would have jumped up and led in the singing of "Let's All Gather at the River."

Mike, may you rest in peace. All of your friends will long remember you, especially this friend.



Mike Sasso and Bob Batzler

Photo courtesy of Don and Dottie Murphy

School-Day Mempories

There stands by the side of a clear, shady pool,
A little white house, called the Eagleville school
And there ev'ry day, as we go, to and fro—
We learn of the things that we all ought to know.
I'm sure you would think we all do our best,
If you could but see the results of our test.
Our number is few, we wish there were more,
But they are gone, they have passed thru' the old
schoolhouse door.

There were Delia, Lucy, Alice and Jess—
Rosie, Annie, Lizzie, Rollie and Ches,
Oren, Sidney, Archie, Mary and Belle,
And so many others I cannot tell.
Roy, Leo, Benny, Mabel and Jack,
How we wish they all would come back.
They have left us, they are gone from our ranks,
They left but the marks of their old school-day
pranks

Too soon we will pass thru' this old schoolhouse door,
Other will write of the schooldays of yore.
To "consolidate" now seems to be the rule;
But our hearts will still cling to our "district school."
It has sent from its ranks teachers, fully a score,
Hurrah for the pupils of School District Four!
In day of the future, school days of the past,
We ne'er shall forget you so long as life lasts.

Katharine Anna Bovee
Eagleville School

Sunday School Reunion

Getting together again
A reunion of sorts
The Sunday School Class
Of the 30's
The teachers are here
Checking the rolls
Come when you can
There's no hurry
They come through the gate
With flowers and flags
And are greeted
With much ceremony
A reunion it is
They are gathering now
In the church yard
At Little Prairie

Richard West Baker
25 February 2003

Ralph and Vivian Baker lived in the Eagle area most of their lives. They lived on Eagle Prairie during the winter of 1935-36 and moved to the Richard and Ella Baker farm in the Town of Troy in March of 1936. They farmed there until after the death of Ralph's mother, Ella, when the farm was sold to settle the estate. They lived in Troy Center from 1946 until about 1964, when they sold their farm to Wallace Chapman. They then moved to 222 East Street in Eagle and resided there until their deaths. Vivian was always interested in poetry. She expresses her feelings about her favorite time of year in this poem. Vivian died in 1980.

WINTER IN WISCONSIN

Some folks like the sunny South,
Away from ice and snow.
Others think the West Coast
Is the place to go.

But give me old Wisconsin,
With its deep, white, beautiful snow,
That sparkles in the sunshine
Like diamonds nesting in the hair
Of a sweet young maiden,
Or on her hand so fair.

Wintertime is playtime
For people young and old.
We don't mind if the weather
Does get a little cold.

Children making snowmen,
With rosy cheeks and mittened hands,
While others are gliding o'er the ice
On skates with charming grace,
Or skiing down the hillsides,
Sometimes sailing into space.

No matter what your age is,
You enjoy the winter days
And the long evenings to sit
In your cozy home and knit
And recall your childhood days.

So give me old Wisconsin,
With all its ice and snow,
Where folks are always friendly.
It's home, sweet home, you know.

Vivian Baker

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Built in the mid-1800s, this structure at the intersection of Highways 67 and 59 has been remodeled and has had many names over the years. The Wisconsin Historical Society lists it as Kline's Hotel. In 1876, after the discovery of the Eagle diamond, its name was changed to the Diamond Hotel. Since 2002 Tracie Berndt has operated it under the name Stumble Inn. To many it will always be "Sasso's."