

Eagle Historical Society NEWSLETTER

Vol. 2, No. 3



Fall 1991

A Note from the President

By Elaine Raduechel

Another year is coming to an end and with the limited time everyone has to give, I believe the society is still alive and well. Thanks go to: Ed Mueller for all of his work on the signs that were placed on the Lions display boards; to the members that helped during Kettle Moraine Days; to the members that worked on getting pictures, maps, etc. made; to those persons involved in ongoing research and those bringing in artifacts that were donated; to Irma Jolliffe, vice president, who brings so much to our society -- information and artifacts! She seems to be everywhere and knows everyone! (Of course this is certainly a plus where the Eagle Historical Society is concerned!)

Thanks also go to: Pat Wilton, treasurer, who manages to keep track of our small fortune, who hunts down pictures and information and also, like Irma, gets around; to Jean Jolliffe, secretary, who seems to make sense of our discussions and gets our minutes typed and to me so I can plan the next meeting's agenda; and to Charlene Ritchey for setting up a format and putting our newsletters out.

Thank you to all the members that renew their memberships each year whether they are able to attend meetings or not -- we appreciate you very much; to the many generous and thoughtful people that have contributed historical information, documents or other artifacts -- the society is grateful to you; and lastly, but most importantly, a very special thank you to the members who attend every meeting or as many as their schedules permit -- you are appreciated so much!

The Battle for Wade House

On Sunday, September 28, Charlene and I were in Greenbush for a Civil War Re-enactment on the grounds of the Old Wade House. The battle re-enactment was a first for me; I had been to the one at Old World Wisconsin this year which was about the soldiers rounding up draft evaders and protesters. Charlene remarked about the horses and their composure during the battle and when the cannons

were fired. (Certainly bothered my ears!) A medical unit was also set up and staffed by "doctors" and "nurses." After the battle, we toured the Old Wade House and it brought to mind Eagle Centre House.

We toured the Jung Carriage Museum, which is also on the Wade House grounds. It has old buggies, fire wagons, covered wagons, farm wagons, children's wagons and doll buggies on display. There seemed to be a conveyance or wagon for just about every occupation and/or business and carriages from plain to fancy.

Annual Meeting November 9th

Our annual meeting for the election of officers will be Saturday, November 9th, at 1 p.m. After the meeting, Anita Baerg-Vatndal, director of the Waukesha County Museum, will talk. There will be refreshments and some of the society's collection will be on display. I hope everyone will be able to attend.

Many of our memberships will expire as of December 31. If yours does and you want to renew for 1992, at this time, Pat Wilton will have a table at the annual meeting to accept the dues for renewals and/or new memberships. She will also give you your '92 membership card at that time.

Ending on a sad note -- The society lost a valued member and good friend with the passing of Don Ross. Don always managed to get laughs -- and groans -- from us with his many quips and jokes. The society and I will miss him very much. Our sincere sympathy to his family. As a memorial, we will put a book(s) pertaining to one of Don's many interests in the Alice Baker Library.

1865 Letter Tells of Deep Grief At Lincoln's Death

By Alice Baker

The following article appeared in "The Capital Times" on February 12, 1968. The Mrs. Aurel Pardee mentioned in the article was Miss Baker's sister.

A century-old letter written by Ahira R. Hinkley, first settler of Eagle, Wisconsin, to his son, Leonard who was stationed with the Union army near Nashville, Tennessee, gives a vivid picture of the joys and sorrow of those days -- the wild excitement over Lee's surrender and the deep grief at the assassination of President Lincoln.

The letter is now in the possession of his grand daughter-in-law, Mrs. Aurel Pardee, of Eagle. Hinkley was not a college-trained man, but the tone of his letter gives evidence that his basic schooling was good. His penmanship is very legible and there is a cultured literacy of a person who, knowing a three-syllabled word, had no compunction about using it.

Portions of the letter, dated April 30, 1865, follow:

"I rec'd your very welcome letter of the 24th last, last eve and of course was very glad that no accident happened to you on your way to Nashville. When I last wrote you, the whole people almost were wild with joy at the fall of Richmond and the surrender of Lee's army.

"How very little we knew what was in store for us. Language would fail me to describe the woe depicted on the countenances of every intelligent man and woman through the land and the anguish that rent every loyal heart when the lightning flashed the dreadful news that President Lincoln had fallen at the hands of an assassin. Had the Arch Angel's last trumpet sounded to call the nations to judgment, the consternation could hardly have been greater.

"A deadly pallor rested upon every face. Strong men met, embraced each other, and wept like children, and even many of those who have traduced and vilified him and wished him dead a thousand times joined in the sad lament. Now that he has fallen by the foul spirit that has drenched our once happy country in blood, even his enemies are beginning to discover that he was no ordinary man.

"I will attempt no eulogy upon him but this much I will say that I fully believe that he was raised up by God to deliver this land from the curse of human slavery as Moses was to deliver the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage. It seems to me that the visible hand of God can be traced in this terrible

conflict as well as in defeat as in final success."

The letter continues:

"Who can tell why General Sherman should make the terrible blunder he has unless it were to show the American people that a man may be a very great military general and be entirely unfit for a civil ruler. General Sherman's fame had become very great, so much so that he had already been talked of for the next president but his negotiation with Johnson (Johnston -- a Confederate general) will forever bar him from the White House, but Noble Grant has set that matter all right and last night we got the glad news that Johnson (Johnston) has surrendered all the rebels east of the Mississippi. So the war is ended, thank the Lord."

This part of the letter piques the present day reader's curiosity. What was Sherman's "terrible blunder?"

Investigations show that Sherman made no blunder. Previous to the surrender, Lincoln and Sherman met on the River Queen to talk about conditions the Union leaders would submit to the defeated foe. In this conference Lincoln showed his true nature, that of mercifulness and true magnanimity, and when Sherman met Johnston, he gave to him the conditions which his commander-in-chief had designated.

In the short time which followed this conference, Lincoln had heard the talk of the Radicals about him, the men in office who wanted Confederate officers tried, convicted, hanged for treason and their property confiscated. Lincoln hedged somewhat in his lenient stand but no word of this change of policy was sent to Sherman.

Newspapers carried flaming headlines about Sherman's blunder and much derogatory wordage was printed against the truly loyal general. Secretary Stanton accused Sherman of nullifying all the effort of the war, of wanting to push himself into the presidency. Other papers brought the former charge of insanity against Sherman, but "Noble Grant" set the matter right by extending the same merciful terms that Lincoln had formerly diverged on the River Queen.

As the letter continues, the reader can see that there was a wise fatherly relation with his son:

"I can see no good reason why you should be kept in the service until August. I have strong hope that you will be home in a month and be assured you will receive a cordial welcome. In relation to your voting for McClellan, I have only to say that I am very thankful that I have never reproached you with one unkind word for voting as you thought best. I thought very strange of it and felt very bad about it at the time but have acted upon the principle that what could not be cured must be endured.

"I have always felt confident that upon calm
(Continued on Page 3)

From the Pages of the Eagle Quill

From the May 21, 1921, "Eagle Quill."

Railroad Wreck Claims Life of Bernard Marsh

On Saturday afternoon at about 2 o'clock a disastrous railroad wreck occurred three miles west of Eagle. The train was the regular way freight which left Eagle at 1:48, west bound, and contained sixteen cars loaded with merchandise and other freight. When about 3 miles west of Eagle a tank car containing oil left the track and ran along on the ties for 20 rods when the car ahead and ten cars following left the track and plunged down the embankment on either side of the road bed in a tangled mass. Cars were tipped upside down and the heavy steel rails were twisted like wire.

Bernard Marsh, head brakeman, was riding on top of one of the cars and when he saw the inevitable, he jumped, only to be struck by the car on which he was riding and be hurled to his death. People residing nearby who witnessed the accident phoned to Eagle and soon Drs. Fitzgerald and Schmidt arrived at the place but Mr. Marsh was dead when he was taken from the wreckage, having sustained a broken neck, collar bone and thigh, and was bruised about the face. Conductor Raymond, Engineer Bonham, Fireman Frank Rodgers and Brakeman Connolly escaped injury. A tramp who was riding on one of the cars ahead of the tank car also escaped injury.

One car was loaded with cattle being shipped by Sol Engle from Genesee to Whitewater and all but one escaped injury. A wrecking crew soon arrived and Sunday morning trains were running over the track as usual.

Bernard Marsh was born in Caledonia, Wisconsin, April 12, 1890, and was a son of Joseph and Lena Marsh. The family moved to Eagle and owned and occupied the farm now owned by Sam Engle. Here Bernard grew to manhood and here attended school and later became interested in railroading. When the family moved to Milwaukee a few years ago Bernard went with them and made his home there. Twelve years of his life were spent as brakeman and conductor on the Prairie du Chien division, passing through Eagle, his boyhood home. Bernard was a model young man, of quiet disposition, and had many friends here who mourn his untimely and accidental death. The body was brought to the Mealy undertaking rooms and then sent to Milwaukee, to the home of his parents. The funeral was held Wednesday morning. There were many floral tributes from

relatives and friends and those in the railroad service.

He leaves surviving him, besides his parents, one sister, Mrs. Fred Zunker, five brothers, John, Herman, Alvin, Lawrence, and Joseph, all at home.

The Quill extends sincere sympathy to the bereaved family in the loss sustained by the untimely and sorrowful death of their beloved son and brother.

From the January 13, 1928, "Eagle Quill"

A Bit of Eagle History

Back in 1844 there was built by Thomas W. Pittman, a native of New York City, the first frame house in what is now known as Eagle village, the setting of which was chosen amidst a grove of huge old oaks and facing the stretch of Eagle prairie that ends in the line of hills to the east which resemble the foot hills of the mountains. From the house the village is reached by an avenue through the oaks which adds much to the charm of the location. To this home Mr. Pittman brought his wife, one son and three daughters and the place has been retained by some one of the descendants ever since, a condition not frequently found about here. It is now owned by Mrs. L.J. Wingerter, daughter of Nonia Pittman Clemons, and occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Minett, a bride and groom, Mrs. Minett being a great granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Pittman. Much of the early day romances and gay social life of the community clings to the history of the place which was for so many years the center of wide hospitality up to the time of the death of Mr. and Mrs. Pittman in 1882. Their deaths occurred just a week apart. An interesting and curious incident marked the recent remodeling of the house interior by the finding behind one of the walls a silver dollar of 1836. A hole had been bored in the edge as though it might have been worn as a pendant. Just how or when it got there is not known.

(Editor's note: The house described is at the southeast corner of Grove and Eagle Streets.)

(Grief at Lincoln's Death continued)

reflection you would see the mistake that was made, that when an impartial history of the rebellion and its managers should be written you would fully realize the awful maelstrom we avoided by keeping the old pilot at the helm. I have great faith in Andrew Johnson but there is no man living that the people have such implicit confidence in as they did in Mr. Lincoln. Oh, my son, he was a great and good man."

Saying Goodbye to a Friend

Eagle Historical Society charter member **Donald J. Ross** died on Wednesday, October 9th. He was 79.

Don, who was born in Michigan, lived in Troy Terrace. He operated the Ross Tool & Dye in Jackson, Michigan, and was a design engineer in Wisconsin for A.O. Smith, Lincoln Tool & Dye, J.I. Case and A.C. Spark Plug. He was a member of the Sergeant Splechter-Schmidt American Legion Post #535 in Eagle where he was a past commander. Don's daughter Jill lives in Flagstaff, Arizona; daughter Jean is from Milwaukee and Janice makes her home in Portland, Oregon.

The society has lost a good friend, whose enthusiasm and interest in local history and lore helped get us off the ground. We will remember his extemporaneous presentation at the last annual meeting on the geology of the area and the Indians who first called this place home. Don was a top-notch salesman, who increased our sales at Kettle Moraine Days with his charm. Thank you, Don, for your contributions and the memories you have left us with.

His daughter, Jean, wrote the following tribute to her father and we wanted to share it with our membership.

ABOUT DON ROSS

He loved nature; sandhill cranes flying overhead, spring frogs, the robins in the tree outside his window.

He was interested in many things: Scottish history, tinkering on his cars, world politics, football, chess, geology, the Civil War.

He never met a dog he didn't like.

He gave good advice if you asked him and sometimes even if you didn't.

He loved and was supportive of his three daughters, encouraging them, proud of them, wanting them to be happy.

He loved and missed his wife, Julie, who passed away in 1968. He will be buried beside her in her hometown of Osceola, Indiana.

He had a great sense of humor and got a big kick out of kidding, teasing and playing little jokes whenever he could get away with it.

He enjoyed life -- enjoyed each day; he always looked for the positive in things and people.

He was creative and had quite an imagination. His daughters all have special cards and letters that he drew, wrote and gave them over the years.

He always wanted to go to Scotland -- never did, but travelled many places through his reading and his interest in the world.

He called the couch where he read, relaxed and watched TV "the command module."

He couldn't resist a red car -- especially a Triumph.

He loved Eagle, the beauty of the Kettle Moraine, the friendliness of the people in Eagle. After working in Milwaukee as a design engineer, his fifteen years of retirement in Eagle were the most fulfilling and happy of his life.

He was a very rich person. Not rich in terms of money or worldly goods, but rich in his values; rich in the way he lived his life and rich in the loyalty and love of people who knew him and knew how truly special he was.

And so we say goodbye to a wealthy man who enriched the lives of those who knew him. Don, you were one of a kind and we'll miss you.

Pittman Historical Society?

(The following biography is from the Waukesha County "1880 Book.")

T.W. Pittman, farmer, Secs. 21 and 22; P.O. Eagle; born in New York City, Dec. 2, 1798; was educated in his native city, and early became a speculator; resided about eight years in Newbern, N.C.; came to Waukesha Co. May, 1844, and at once settled where he is now. But little of the land was then entered, and the old Janesville and Milwaukee was about the only road; Waukesha was Sol. Juneau's trading post, with a few houses; Mr. P. soon built a part of his present house, which was the first frame structure in the vicinity, and is the oldest in the village -- sowed wheat that fall, and his yield from 65 acres was 1,600 bushels. Mr. P. has bought and sold over 2,000 acres of school and other lands. Eagle was platted by him about 1852, and at the time it was proposed to call it Pittman, but he insisted upon the present name; was Station Agent here ten years, and also Postmaster, besides Town Treasurer, Assessor and Supervisor; politics, a stalwart Democrat; owns 600 acres and a beautifully situated home on the outskirts of the village; married in Amsterdam, N.Y., 1836, Miss Sara J., daughter of M.J. Bovee, she being a native of Amsterdam; they have had four children -- Matthias B., now a druggist at Boscobel, Wis.; Emma (deceased), Noria (Mrs. Harvey Clemons), and Sara (Mrs. William McWilliams). In transferring land and village lots, this old couple have probably signed more deeds than any in Waukesha County.

Heating Up the Methodist Church

By Alice Baker

(In 1971, Miss Baker published a history of the Eagle Methodist Church. The society has obtained several copies of the original pamphlet thanks to Mabel Finney and has them available for sale. The following excerpt describes the community involvement needed to install the first furnace in 1913.)

At this time several groups of the church seemed to get an urge to improve the physical condition of the church. The huge old chunk stoves were decidedly passé, and according to records, the Ladies' Aid was the prime mover for improving the heating system. At a board meeting they boldly offered to buy a furnace and, what was more, divulged that they had money enough in their treasury to pay for it.

But buying a furnace was small part of installing it. Every member was in favor of improving the heating system and the first step in installing was excavation of the basement. Messrs. Edward Parsons, Arthur Stead, and Winfred Cox (son of Rev. Cox) were named to a committee of excavation. A.J. Badinger, Leander Wambold, and Arthur Stead were in charge of the studding and concrete work. Later they were put in charge of buying and installing the furnace. This was done at a cost of \$250, but that sum was insufficient to cover all the costs, hence the remaining cost was to be paid by subscription.

The task was a cooperative one and all groups turned in to the job. The Sunday School paid for the basement lights; the Girls' Club finished the ceiling. Young boys, Roy Wambold and Dexter Badinger helped with the actual excavation in that notable year of 1914.

The digging began with sweat and grunt until a horse and scraper could get under. Then the dirt came out from the rear of the church.

One of the efforts to pay for the furnace was made by sponsoring a lecture by Bishop Quale, a popular man on the lecture circuits of that time. Minutes of that lecture show Quale's fee as \$10, but nothing of the church's net.

The costs of the furnace still were not met; owners pressed for payment. Money was borrowed at the bank and even in 1917 members were solicited for funds for paying for the furnace.

Items Available from the Eagle Historical Society

If you are interested in any of the following items, please contact Elaine Raduechel (594-2676) or visit the Alice Baker Memorial Public Library on Main Street in Eagle.

| <u>Item</u> | <u>Donation</u> |
|--|---|
| Postcards (8 views of old Eagle) | \$.50 each or all 8 for \$3.50 |
| 1873 Town of Eagle plat maps (Reproduction) | \$2.00 |
| "The Methodist Church Story" by Alice Baker (pub. 1971) | \$3.50 (\$1 is donated to the Methodist Church) |
| Reprints of early Eagle pictures (6 different views) | \$.75 for 3x5 \$2.50 for 5x7 \$5.00 for 7x10 (paid in advance only) |
| 1873 & 1914 Village of Eagle plat maps (Copies) | \$3.00 |

Memorials to the Past

By Jean Jolliffe

A cemetery can be a place of profound sorrow, but it also can be a place of honor. Wander through the cemeteries of Eagle, Palmyra and Little Prairie sometime. The names of the known and unknown literally jump out at you. Who were these people? Where did they come from? Why did they come to this area? What were their lives like? The soil is steeped in history!

In the northwest corner of the Town of Eagle lies an area known as Melendy's Prairie, named after Daniel Melendy of Vermont, one of the earliest pioneers in the township. If you stroll through the cemeteries of Siloam and Melendy, or look over a pre-1900 plat map of this area, you'll notice names such as Lean, Peardon, Wilton, Cory, Rundle, Gilbert, Uglow, Burton/Burden and Stacey.

Travel about five miles south of here to the southwest corner of Eagle Township, on the Waukesha-Walworth County line, and stroll through Little Prairie Cemetery. Look again at a pre-1900 plat map for Eagle or the adjacent Troy Township in Walworth County. You'll observe such names as Chapman, Baker, Smale, Box, Littlejohn, Lean, Coombe, Credicott and Strike.

Now, you may ask, what do these people have in common? Their ethnicity is the common thread. These pioneers of the Eagle area all came from Cornwall, or the adjacent area of northwest Devonshire, England.

If you have ever visited the Mineral Point area in southwestern Wisconsin, or know anything about English history, you may think, "Weren't all Cornishmen miners?" While it is true the miner of Cornwall is the most notable, not all of Cornwall is devoted to mining, and not all Cornish immigrants were miners. The Cornish who settled here in southeastern Wisconsin were mostly farmers from north Cornwall (the parishes of Jacobstow, Poundstock, Stratton, St. Genny's, Egloskerry, Blisland, North Petherwin and Tremaine).

What was the motivation that caused these farmers to come? Most certainly the primary motivating factor was economic.

"The spirit of emigration continues active in the neighborhood of Stratton. High rents, heavy rates, and obnoxious and impoverishing taxes are driving some of the best of our agriculturists to climes where these demons of robbery and ruin are unknown. Upwards of 280 are said to have taken their passage by the *Spermaceti* of Plymouth.."

17 February 1843

(From "Life In Cornwall In The Mid-Nineteenth

Century - Extracts From The West Briton Newspaper 1835-1854)

Landholdings were small in Cornwall, compared to those available in the US. Many Cornish farmers were tenants and owned no land of their own. Mechanization was reducing the amount of farm labor needed. Grain prices were low and transportation cost high. Farming was a hard life and profits were almost nonexistent.

With farmers and their families beset by these problems, there were only two options open to them. They could continue scraping out a meager living from the land, or they could pack up what they had and try for a new beginning in a new land. Many chose the latter, and the port of Padstow, on the north Cornish coast, became a departure point, regularly sending ships to Quebec, Canada. A large number of these immigrants made their way down the Great Lakes to Wisconsin.

The northern area of Palmyra Township and the southeastern sections of Sullivan Township in Jefferson County, and the aforementioned area of Eagle and Troy were a large area of Cornish settlement, beginning about 1842 and lasting well into the 20th century. About 10,000 people immigrated from north Cornwall and a good many of them bought land and settled in this area of Wisconsin.

I haven't discovered who the first Cornishman to settle here was. What is known is that by 1844, there were Uglows, Jolliffes, Hoopers, Pipers, Staceys, and Burtons/Burdens in the area. "Cousin Jacks," as the Cornish immigrant became known as, wrote back to relatives and friends in Cornwall informing them of the wonderful opportunities in Wisconsin. By the spring and autumn of 1845, the Lean and Chapman families had arrived, buying land in the sections of Eagle and Troy. The Peardons came in 1846, the Credicotts in 1847, and the Cory and Rundle families in 1848. The Bakers arrived in June 1849, staying for a time with the Peardons; the Coombes also came in 1849, probably on the same ship. The 1850s saw the arrival of the Bluetts, Effotts, Gilberts, Orchards, Pearses, Strikes, and Trewyns. During this decade, other Leans and Burtons joined relatives already here. In the 1870s, additional Stacey, Strike, and Uglow family members came. The Dymond, Littlejohn, Parson, Ridgeman, and Smale families were in the area by the turn of the century. All throughout the last half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, "Cousin Jacks and Jennies" continued to arrive. Some returned home, but the majority remained and prospered.

When these pioneers ended their fulfilled lives, they were buried in the above-mentioned cemeteries. Many of the tombstones remain, but many are gone. Still these cemeteries honor all those hardy pioneers who made it possible for our success today.

Cemetery Buffs Preserve Heritage

By Toni Becker
for the Sheboygan Press

(Editor's note: The following article was reprinted in The Wisconsin State Old Cemetery Society's newsletter, "Inscriptions." It was first published July 16, 1991, and seemed a fitting supplement to Jean Jolliffe's article elsewhere in this newsletter.

It's amazing what history and genealogy can be found in a cemetery. Although the article refers to Sheboygan, it raises the question, does Eagle have any cemeteries or abandoned family plots that should be transcribed and/or cleaned up? Please contact a society member or leave us a note at the library. If you are interested in more information about the Wisconsin State Old Cemetery Society, you can contact Elaine Raduechel.)

With care, they copy gravestone inscriptions

Cemeteries -- some folks come to stroll their peaceful paths, some to browse at the evolution of grave architecture, some to collect curious epitaphs. Some come to preserve history.

Those who preserve history come armed with unlikely tools -- tire irons, probes, Popsicle sticks, chalk and brushes. They are members of the Wisconsin State Old Cemetery Society. They are busy copying Calvary Cemetery in Sheboygan.

After hours of copying, many more are spent organizing the mass of data into lists: names, alphabetically indexed; plot locations for all names; inscriptions that are engraved on all stones. The lists enable people to find a hard-to-locate grave. Gravestones are often the only tangible link a family has with its ancestors.

"Helping families to locate those links to their past is the cemetery group's most popular service," said Marge Jagler, Sheboygan County coordinator for the cemetery society. Many cemeteries have no burial records prior to 1907, the year documentation became mandatory. In other cases, cemetery records have been lost or destroyed by fire.

"Each gravestone has a story to tell," says Jagler. "Each stone tells of a person or a family of people who did live. They deserve not to be forgotten."

To date, volunteers have copied 83 of Sheboygan County's 107 cemeteries and in June began work at Calvary Cemetery. Jagler and her volunteers must often act as detectives, using their "tools" to decipher

the cryptic messages on some old stones.

One gravestone is shaped like a tree trunk with an open book. The pages appear blank until Jagler wipes her banana-size chalk across the surface. When she blows the dust away, a German inscription miraculously appears. Using a foreign language dictionary, Jagler records an inscription that would still be unclear to an untrained eye.

Another volunteer kneels beside a stone that is partially buried. He uses a tire iron to gently roll it from its earthen cover. After removing debris from the inscription using a Popsicle stick -- "metal could mar, and we would not want to damage a stone," says Jagler -- he replaces the stone exactly as he found it. Nearby someone is jabbing the ground with a probe where she suspects a stone is completely buried.

Copiers strive for accuracy and so work in pairs and proofread each others' work. They will tell you that copying is a challenge. They will also say it is an interesting avocation. Jagler calls it fascinating and at times, poignant.

"Once I spotted a distant rainbow of colors waving wildly in the wind. I investigated and found it to be a bright pinwheel that was placed on a child's grave. How appropriate."

There is also the unusual. "A local English teacher wrote her own epitaph -- a 16-line poem, personal philosophy of life and death that is inscribed on her gravestone in Greenbush Cemetery," Jagler said.

And there is the mysterious. "Some gardeners on Sheboygan's north side have dug up gravestones in their backyards. The stones are from local cemeteries. How in the world did they get there?"

The State of Wisconsin Burial Sites Preservation Office has identified more than 7,000 burial sites -- both prehistoric and historic -- within the state. It is believed that there are several hundred more that have not yet been identified.

From the December 18, 1866, "Waukesha Plain Dealer"

New Town Hall at Eagle is to be formally opened on Christmas night. Kline's new hall in the Village of Eagle will be opened by a grand inauguration ball to which the public is invited to attend. The new hall is 25x60 feet, 15 feet to ceiling, and admirably calculated to accommodate 100 couples without interference. The music is to be furnished by Severance & Williams' Band in full, and a grand time is expected. The Kline brothers, active and enterprising young men, are the proprietors.

Society Enlists Help of Community for School Project

One of the objectives of the Eagle Historical Society is to stimulate interest in history and what can be learned from the past. Life today is such that it seems few people have any interest in their history and heritage, and so have little appreciation for, or understanding of, how the past impacts life today.

This is especially true of young people. When interpreters at Old World Wisconsin ask their school tours what they would miss most if they were living in years gone by, the answer more often than not is "Nintendo!" Their perspective changes quickly when it is pointed out that they would have no running water, no showers, no indoor toilets, no blow dryers. Ugh!

Suddenly, history and the past are tangible and brought down to a very personal level they can relate to. History can be more than memorizing dry dates which make little rhyme or reason and have no relevance to the students' lives.

The Eagle Historical Society has been invited to work with Mrs. Sue Gnatzig and the fourth grade classes at the Eagle Elementary School. Fourth grade is the traditional year for looking at local history and we hope to make it more vivid for the students this year.

Diane Thuemling, committee chairman, and Elaine Raduechel, are working with Mrs. Gnatzig to put a local history unit together that includes both an overview of how Eagle was founded and its subsequent growth, and a glimpse of what the students' lives would have been like if they had lived here a half a century ago.

By recruiting members of the society and other long-time Eagle residents, Diane and Elaine intend to have several guests visit the classroom, in order to "tell it like it was" and answer the students' questions about what school was like, what chores they had, what they did for fun.

The unit will be presented during the first two weeks in December and will culminate in an essay contest. Students will be asked to write a paper on some aspect of local history, which will then be judged by their teachers. The society will reward the best efforts with cash prizes and prizes with connections to Eagle's history. We want to make this an annual event and would welcome suggestions and help with next year's project.

**Eagle Historical Society
c/o Alice Baker Library
217 W. Main St.
Eagle, WI 53119**

