



# EAGLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

July 2004

Eagle, Wisconsin

## **EHS Board**

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**Curator**

Elaine Ledrowski

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**

#### **New Members**

Welcome to Dick Adduci and Jackie Lewis, who joined at the sustaining level.

#### **Honorary Memberships**

Mildred Breidenbach, Betty Enright, Jerome and Eileen Juedes, and Newell Meyer are now honorary members.

People with a connection to Eagle—village or town—who have reached the age of 85 are 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 columns to the left or write to the return address on the back page and request an honorary membership.

#### **Donations**

We thank the following for donations received: Harry Bowey, Jean Bowey, Kathleen Chapman, Mabel Finney, Dave and Gail Harding, Jack Hopkins, Don and Elaine Ledrowski, Welthy Mueller, Dottie Murphy, Bev Nelson, Edward and Lisa Stephan, Kathleen and Russell Wambold, Riene Wells, Pat Wilton and Kathy Winzenried.

#### **Memorial Fund Donation**

EHS has received a donation in memory of Leona Babcock; her name will be added to the memorial plaque near the front door.

#### **New Exhibit**

The museum now has another display cabinet. Working with a wooden cabinet, President Jeff Nowicki installed locks and glass shelves and

doors; lighting is being considered. This additional exhibit space has become the temporary home of vintage dolls. Kewpie dolls are among the items from the museum collection in the exhibit. In addition, dolls and a doll carriage from the collection of Julie Dexter are on display. Her portion of the exhibit is composed of dolls made in the period from the late 19th to the early 20th century and includes a Mae West doll.

#### **Museum Decoration**

If you are observant, you have probably noticed the black wooden eagle decoration attached to the front of the EHS building on the second story. Made and donated by Roy Raduechel, it was added at the time the building was decorated for the Fourth of July holiday. It fits so perfectly between two windows that it looks as if it had been designed to fit.

#### **Forthcoming Exhibit**

We plan to introduce our Civil War exhibit, "Sleep Softly...Eagle Forgotten...Under the Stone," at the open house on August 15. Among other things, it will include uniforms and photographs on loan from a private collection.

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## Kettle Moraine Days

EHS decided to enter a float in this year's parade on Sunday, June 27th. We decided on a replica of the Royal Neighbors of America entry in the 1915 4th of July parade in Eagle (see photo).

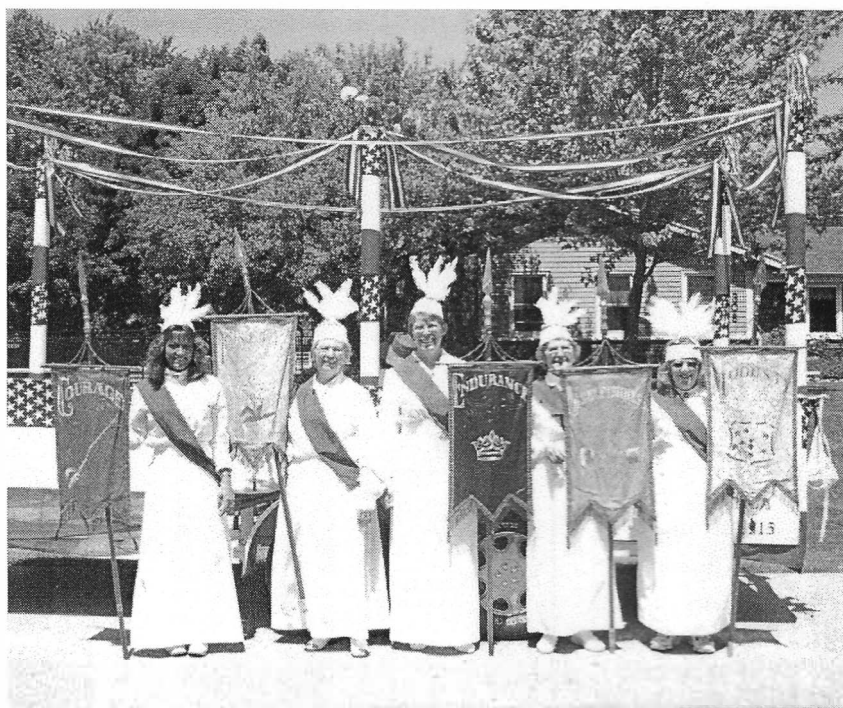


*Photo from EHS archives*

Conrad and Elaine Potrykus offered the use of their trailer, and on the cold, rainy Monday morning before the parade EHS members gathered in the Potrykus pole barn to decorate.

Five authentic standards which had been donated to the EHS museum were carried on the float. They represent the five qualities of the RNA members: courage, faith, endurance, unselfishness and modesty. They were carried by Julie Dexter, Elaine Ledrowski, Darlene Landmann, Eris Thurston and Sally Klatkiewicz, respectively.

Pat Hawes and Welthy Mueller created the costumes for the group.



*Photo by Don Ledrowski*



Other members of EHS also appeared on the float. The photo below shows Mabel Finney and Ras and Donna Kalnes, all seated. Seated on the opposite side of the float were Bea Nowicki, Irma Jolliffe and Marilyn Wilms. Most of the women wore hats from the EHS clothing collection. Four youths (Caitlan Nejedlo, George Klatkiewicz, and Jessica and Brittany Berkahn) handed out candy along the parade route; three wore EHS t-shirts.

EHS members Ed and Welthy Mueller rode the St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church float in the parade.



*Photos by Don Ledrowski*

Walking behind the float in a Civil War uniform (complete with authentic sword) was Mark Dexter. He handed out bookmarks advertising the EHS Civil War exhibit, which we plan to open in August.

Thanks to all who participated in this effort—especially since the heat was so bad that day. The parade was a lot of fun, and we believe we accomplished our goal of bringing the Eagle Historical Society and our forthcoming exhibit to the attention of the public.



**Ice Cream Social/Band Concert**

July 11 was a hot and humid Sunday here in Eagle, but the annual social was held as planned and—as you can plainly see in the photo to the right—a good time was had by all. Our marvelous bakers brought cake, pie and bars to accompany the ice cream that was purchased. They were even thoughtful enough to provide sugar-free cake!

The Palmyra-Eagle band included a tribute to Bob Hope in its performance. Songs included “Road to Morocco,” “Moonlight Becomes You,” “Two Sleepy People,” “Buttons and Bows” and, of course, “Thanks for the Memories.”

EHS thanks all who contributed to making Sunday such a pleasant memory.



Welthy Mueller, Eris Thurston, and Bea Nowicki *Photo by Don Ledrowski*

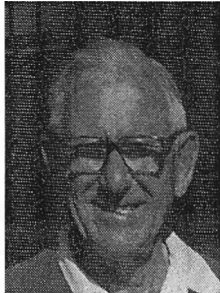


Director Ed Pierce introduces a number

*Photo by Don Ledrowski*



### Obituary



**Kenneth E. Mealy**

Ken Mealy, 86, died at Waukesha Memorial Hospital on July 6 from complications of open heart surgery.

Ken was born Nov. 6, 1917 to Jerome and Cecelia (Sosinsky) Mealy. He was a lifetime member of St. Theresa's Catholic Church, a past member of the Eagle Fire Department (where he served as fire chief from 1949 to 1961), was a member and past commander of American Legion Post No. 535, was a charter member and past president of the Eagle Lions Club and was a member of the Wisconsin and National Funeral Directors Associations.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held at 10:30 am on July 10, at St. Theresa's in Eagle, Father Dennis Ackeret officiating. Burial was in St. Theresa's Cemetery with full military honors. He is survived by Helen, his wife of 58 years; their children, Karen (Thomas) Matters and Jerome (Karen ) Mealy of Eagle; his grandchildren, Kathy (John) Bender, Tim (Sarah) Matters, Renee (Todd) Johnson and Curtis Mealy; his great-grandchildren, Rebecca Bender and Haley Johnson; his step-grandchildren, Kristy and Steven Moeller; his niece, Charlotte Kuhl of Mukwonago; and other relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by his brother, Joseph (Ruth) Mealy. Memorials to St. Theresa's Catholic Church, 136 Waukesha Road, Eagle, would be appreciated.

### Obituary



**Ann M. Meyer**

Ann Meyer, age 82, of Eagle, died June 30, 2004. She is survived by her husband Newell, her son James (Linda) Obermeyer of East Troy, stepson Richard (Gail) Obermeyer of Ohio and grandchildren Troy, Bradley, Mark, and Jennifer. She is further survived by other relatives and friends. Ann was preceded in death by her first husband, Woodrow Obermeyer, her son Charles and her brother Otto Stibbe.

Ann was born in Trachenen (sic), Germany in 1921 and came to the United States when she was 3 years old. She met her second husband during the 12-year period that she worked as a secretary in the advertising department of the Milwaukee Journal, where he was vice-president for promotion, research and marketing. They were married in 1970 and built a home in the Town of Eagle in 1976.

In her 60s, Ann became a student of Pat Morgan and began painting. Working exclusively with oil, she produced 76 pictures between 1985 and 2001, including—but not limited to—landscape scenes of foreign travels, wildlife, portraits and whimsical works like that of an elf painting green leaves fall colors.

Funeral services were held at noon, July 3, 2004 at the Family Center at Wisconsin Memorial Park, 12875 W. Capitol Dr., Brookfield. Pastor Timothy Kuyath of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in East Troy officiated. Entombment was in Wisconsin Memorial Park. Memorials to Kiwanis Manor Nursing Home, 3721 North St., East Troy, would be appreciated. Mealy's Funeral Home, Eagle served the family.

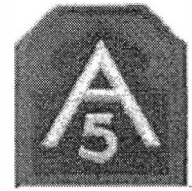
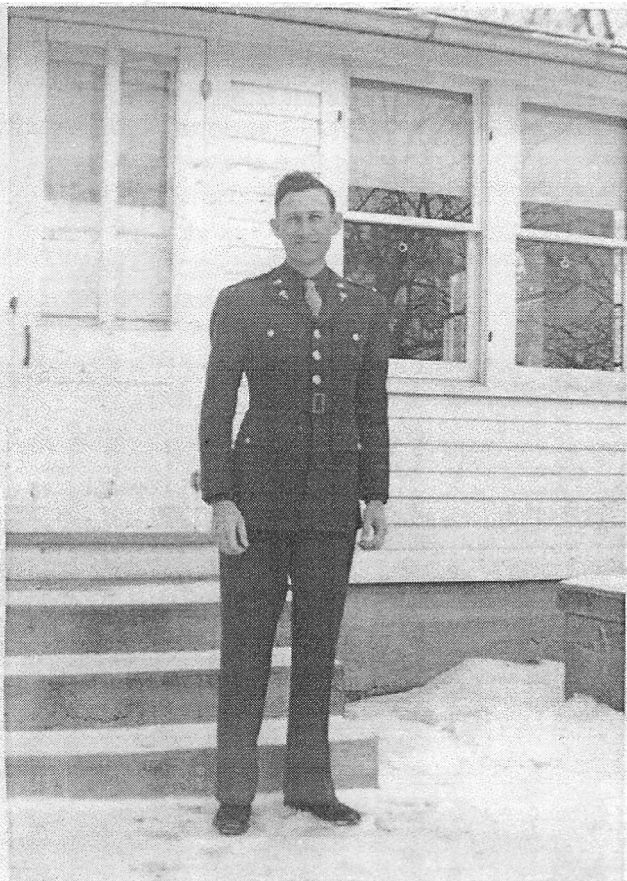
## Ken Mealy Remembered

Ken owned and operated Mealy's Funeral Home, a business started by his father in 1917. After graduation from high school in 1935, he went to work at Waukesha Motor Co., but was laid off in 1939 due to the Depression. In 1940, having attended the Institute of Mortuary Science in Milwaukee, he received his mortician's license and went to work for his father.

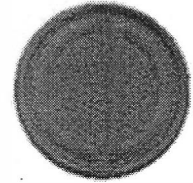
A veteran of World War II, Ken served in Italy and earned the rank of first lieutenant. Back from the war, he married Helen Bremser at St. Bernard's in Watertown on June 15, 1946. Ken took over the family business in 1952, upon the death of his father.

He was very well known and very well liked in Eagle, where he lived out his life except for his time in the military service. Some people may not be aware of that part of his life, so we publish the following:

*Photos courtesy of the Mealy family*



Fifth US Army



85th (Custer) Division

## Efforts of Eagle Soldier in Italy Win Commission

*With the 5th Army in Italy*—For performing his duties in a “superior manner” during combat operations of the 5th Army, Staff Sgt. Kenneth E. Mealy of Eagle (Waukesha County) Wis., was promoted recently to the rank of second lieutenant.

His commanding officer reported that Mealy, a surgical technician with the medical detachment of the 85th division during the assault at Tremensouli, “by untiring effort and skill rendered medical treatment to a large number of casualties that passed through his aid station.” He also was commended for having evacuated a wounded soldier and for having faced crossfire from enemy machine guns to aid four casualties and bring them to the aid station.

Mealy recently was awarded the bronze star for meritorious achievement. The 26-year-old lieutenant entered service in May, 1942. He is the son of Jerome Mealy, an undertaker at Eagle, and had worked for his father.

*(Article from the Milwaukee Journal)*

*(Ed. Note: U.S. troops fought to take control of the hills near Tremensouli, Italy from German troops in May of 1944. Army records of this struggle relate “Every yard was bitterly contested by the Germans” and “Evacuation of the wounded and dead...was a serious problem.”*



## Eagle Residents in the Civil War: Andrew Jackson Reeves

Andrew Jackson Reeves was born in New York state on December 14, 1839, a son of William and Mary Reeves, who came to Wisconsin in 1845. He married Rhoda N. Sewall of Palmyra, the daughter of Samuel and Hannah Johnson Sewall. On August 23, 1862 he enlisted in Wisconsin's 1st heavy artillery regiment and served until June 26 of 1865.

The following article was printed in the Milwaukee Journal in December of 1929, just after Jack Reeves turned 90:

"Look any direction from here—there's a house that Jack built." Townsfolk of Eagle said that when asked to point out a building that Jack Reeves had put up. Some went on to say that Reeves helped construct nearly every house and barn in the town of Eagle, built back to 40 years ago. "And if you don't think he made them to stay made, look at all that's standing," one man remarked.

Reeves was 90 Saturday. Eighty-five years he has spent in Waukesha County, 44 as a carpenter. They have taken their toll, naturally, for he is bent now and "can't see so good since that automobile accident I was in last year," he explained.

Yet his daughter, Mrs. Leander Wambold, said that "he's still pretty spry and strong."

Though Reeves obviously delights in telling of his experiences as a mail carrier and a Civil War soldier, his carpentry is his greatest love and it is to recounting its practice that he turns most habitually.

"After I got through building a little shack for some people back in 1900," he said, "I threw my tools into the weeds and says, 'Jack, you've been a carpenter long enough.' I'd been at it since I was 17. They's so many houses and barns and buildings in this neighborhood that I built that I don't believe they could be counted.

"When I first started learning the trade I got 50 cents a day. The next year I got 75 cents and the third year a dollar. That shows how much better the country is off now than it was before the Civil War.

"Before getting to be a carpenter I'd been mail carrier from Mukwonago to Whitewater. There weren't no railroads then but I used a pony. I started when I was 14 and earned \$6 a month for three years, so you can



see the carpenter business was a pretty good one for me."

Believing from newspaper accounts that the Civil War would be over in a month or six weeks, Reeves said, he enlisted as an artisan, left a bride of a month and served three years around the Potomac River district under Gen. Grant. While there he saw Abraham Lincoln, who was "like any other old farmer," he recalled.

"Well, I came right back to my wife and Eagle and started in t' buildin'. And that's just what I kept doing until I thought I'd built enough. If I wasn't building houses, it was barns, and if it wasn't neither, it was fancy things. By "fancy things," Mrs. Wambold explained, was meant two excellent violins, toys, furniture, and elaborate cases.

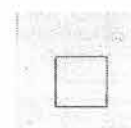
"Damn hard work," the aged carpenter said.

"That was my Bible and that's why I'm alive today when everybody else but one who was here in 1845 when my father brought me from York state, is gone."

Jack reached into a cabinet he had made, pulled out a bag of chewing tobacco and took a pinch. "Don't drink or smoke," he warned. "They're bad, but a little chew won't knock you out of any birthdays."

Andrew Jackson Reeves died at his home on January 14, 1931. The funeral was held on the afternoon of January 16 from his residence. Interment was in the Oak Ridge Cemetery, where he was buried in the plot with his wife, who died on August 17, 1923. The Rev. Petherick of the Methodist Episcopal church officiated. He was survived by his daughter (Mrs. Leander Wambold) of Eagle and his sons, Frank and Norman, of Oakland, California. Another daughter (Mrs. Fran Vandevan of Michigan) and his brothers and sisters preceded him in death.

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



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## **EHS Open House**

**1-4 pm on Sunday, August 15, at 217 Main Street**  
**Introducing our Civil War exhibit**

*Sleep Softly....*  
*Eagle Forgotten...*  
*Under the Stone...*

