

# EAGLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Fall 2001

Eagle, Wisconsin

## 2001 EHS Board

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### Vice-President

Jerry Baker

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### Treasurer

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## EHS News

### Membership

Welcome to new members Terry and Hazel Wilton Connors, and Allen Howard.

### Donations

Allen Howard made a \$50.00 donation in memory of Katharine Bovee Howard; Harriet Koeser donated her Grandma Reiss' treadle sewing machine; Lynne Seitz donated wedding apparel (a suit and a dress) and Eagle maps from the 1889 U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey; and Lyle Hamann donated a Little Prairie grocery store book.

### Raffle Coming December 8

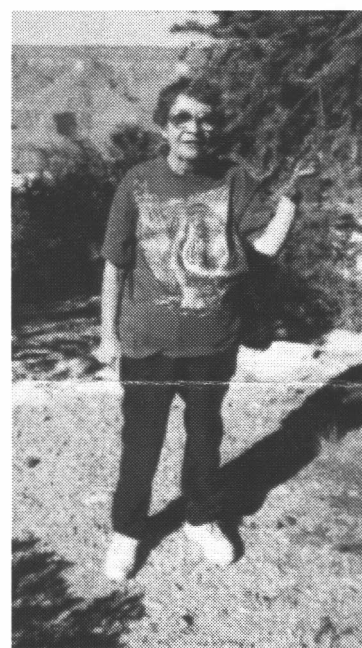
The museum will be closed Dec. 7 and 8. On Saturday the popular holiday raffle will begin at noon in the community room of the municipal building. The drawing will be held at 3 p.m. Browse tables decorated for the holidays and covered with items donated by businesses and private parties, each item numbered and having a corresponding canister beside it. Those who wish to try to win an item simply place one or more raffle tickets in the slot of the appropriate canister. Some people like to stay and watch the drawings, but you need not be present to win. Tickets—available in the room on the day of the raffle—cost 50 cents.

Anyone may donate an item for the raffle. (This is not a rummage event—items should be new or in like-new condition.) Handcrafted items are always well-received. Items may be dropped off at the EHS museum on Fridays or Saturdays between 9 a.m. and noon. If this is not convenient, call Pat Wilton at 594-2294 to make other arrangements.

A bake sale will be held in conjunction with the raffle this year. In addition to the usual items, we plan to offer homemade holiday treats in fancy tins (to be provided by EHS). Items can be dropped off after 4 p.m. on Friday, when

volunteers will be setting up the room and organizing the kitchen, or after 10 a.m. on Saturday. □

### Meet Your Officers



### Florence Neary

Flo was born in Brooklyn and graduated from high school in Bogota (pronounced Bo GO ta), New Jersey in 1948.

Driving to Florida a few years later, she stopped to visit friends in Birmingham and decided to relocate to that area.

There she met her husband, Jerry—a Wisconsin native—while he was in the military service. Married in Tuscaloosa in 1951, they raised 6 children and have 10 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

The Nearys moved to Eagle in 1977. In 1985 Flo retired after 14 years with A C Spark Plug. She had a used bookstore in Elkhorn for 8 years.

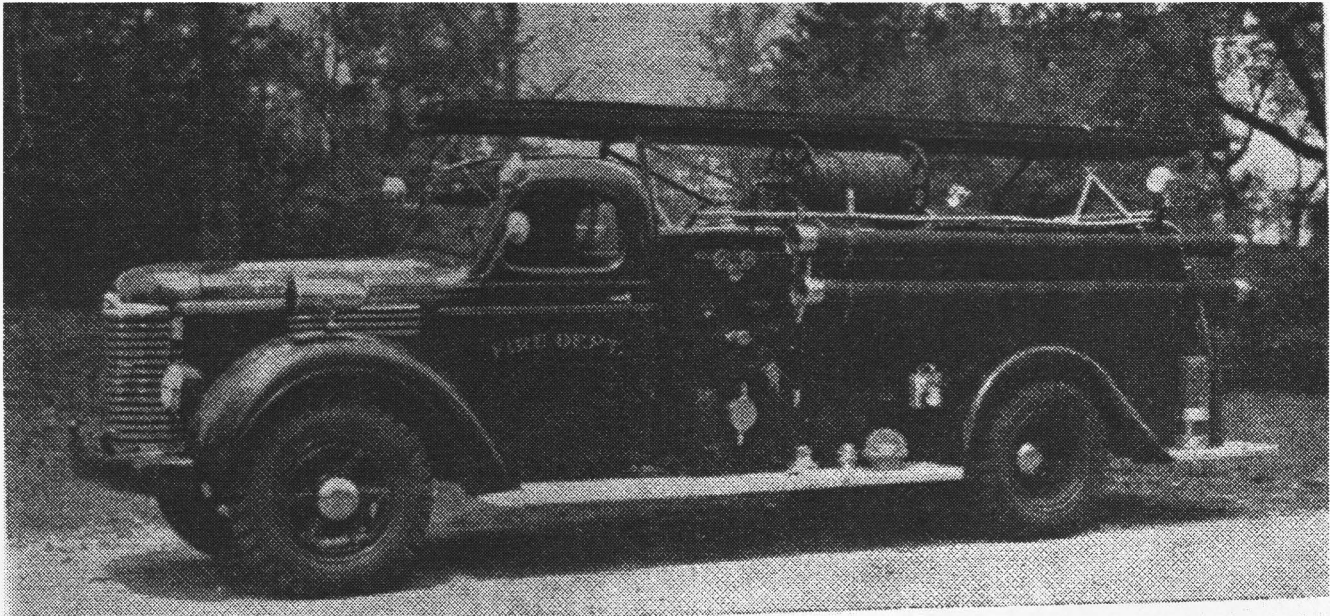
Family and collections of plates, spoons,

## Inside this issue:

Meet Your Officers - Florence Neary	1
Eagle Fire Department	2-4
Eagle Rescue Department	4-5
4th-Grade History Report - Mealy's	6
The Old Elm Feed Mill	7

## The Origins of the Eagle Fire & EMS Department

From information from Alice Baker Memorial Library, Ken Mealy, John Putnam, David Rockteacher, Mike Sasso, Pat Wilton, and the "Jefferson-Waukesha County Fifteenth Annual Firemen's Association Tournament" booklet (1950)



### Fire Department

"At a meeting of the village board, the committee on fire and police was instructed to provide protection to our people consistent with a village of this size. The question of fire was also taken up, but as Eagle cannot afford to have a substantial fire department, it was thought best to ask every home owner to provide himself with some kind of fire extinguisher to protect his home against small fires, which usually start from a stove or lamp."

—*Eagle Quill*, Nov. 11, 1921

Before the department was organized it was a helter-skelter conglomeration of volunteers who pushed, hauled or dragged along a two-wheeled cart upon which was mounted a chemical tank that doused everyone who came near. This crude outfit was still in use in 1927.

The Eagle Fire Department was organized on May 2 of that year with a membership of thirty-two. Archie H. Gale was named Chief of the department; J. V. Atkins, assistant chief; George Stead, captain; F. A. Breidenbach, secretary; and Jerome Mealy, treasurer.

A short time later the equipment was wrecked en route to a fire and the newly elected officers immediately started a crusade for a motor-driven truck. After taking up a public donation and using the proceeds from a home talent play, they purchased a Reo 1927 truck and a Barton pump was mounted thereon.

Now the firemen's meeting became a monthly affair, held on the first Monday night of the month, with a re-

cord of the proceedings, a lunch, and all that goes to make a successful meeting.

On July 19, 1928 the group voted to have the chief give the telephone operator the names of 15 members of the department, to be called in case of fire. (In the early days of the fire service, the bell of St. Theresa Catholic Church was the "alarm.")

"The Eagle fire department now has two fire trucks fully equipped for chemicals and water but they have no water unless they get out near a spring, pond or creek. We believe water reservoirs should be built to protect property owners in case of fire."

—*Eagle Quill*, Mar. 21, 1930

"Supplementing the report of last week on the Eagle fire on the morning of Wednesday, March fourth, ...Louis Sasso sustained a total loss of his building which was built last fall. The basement is all that remains to show the location...The Bank of Eagle building, second story, occupied by the telephone company, is a total loss, on the first floor where the banking offices are the loss is confined to the building and the damage to furniture by water and chemicals...A.A. Bellings' barn and ice house were a total loss...The damage to the meat market was small...The brick store building owned by Mrs. H. B. Burton was damaged to some extent as was also the furniture of Mr. J. Mealy, occupant...It was the most destructive fire Eagle has ever experienced and again shows the urgent need of a reservoir for water."

—*Eagle Quill*, Mar. 13, 1931

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(Continued from page 2)

As early as January 1930, the Eagle Volunteer Fire Department decided that a pumper alone would not fill their requirements. Consequently a small Chevrolet truck chassis was purchased for \$450, and the chemical tanks from the original hose cart were mounted on it.

St. Theresa's church bell, too, became outmoded and obsolete as the fire call, so in 1937 a siren was purchased and placed atop a windmill tower in the center of the village. The siren was operated from the telephone office and proved its value by saving many timely minutes when catastrophe struck.

In 1937 A.H. Gale was replaced as chief by Carl Belling, who held the position until he left the village.

Time waits for no man—and all things wear out with time. So it was with the old Reo—like the wonderful “one-horse shay,” she had her day. In 1940 a big Chevrolet was purchased to take the Reo's place, and the old Barton pump installed on the new vehicle.

In March, 1949, a new Peter Piersch truck (a K-7 International chassis with a capacity pump of 500 gallons per minute) was purchased through the combined efforts of

the Town and Village.

Several of the 1927 members were with the organization in 1950, including Everett Amann, Frank Breidenbach, Archie and Harold Chapman, Jerome Mealy and Frank Mich.

As of mid-1958, the fire commission consisted of two members from the town, two from the village plus Fire Chief Kenneth Mealy. New equipment was housed in the new municipal building.

The village and town formed a joint fire district in which equipment was owned on a 50-50 basis and operating and maintenance costs and purchase of new equipment were split based on the populations of the communities and the expected use of the facilities by each.

The Eagle Fire Department is one local organization that has held together through the years. Although its personnel changes somewhat from time to time, its members are all public-spirited members of the community. They have helped sponsor many a worthwhile project in the village, among them being the kittenball (i.e., softball) games under lights during the depression



1939 - first row, l. to r.: George Pitcher, A. Stocks, <sup>Heine</sup> Bob Markham, Waldo Shearer, Joe Bock, Warren <sup>Mid</sup> Cruver, Frank Breidenbach, <sup>AG</sup> "Butch" Belling, Joe Mealy, Dean Jones, Earl Crawley, <sup>Heine</sup> Markham, Jerome Mealy sr., back row: <sup>AG</sup> Leo Gibson, Ray Alpess, Ev Amman, Harvey Wambold, Ken Mealy, Bob Breidenbach, unknown, Frank Mich. <sup>Dick</sup>



years. The latter served its purpose well, being the only recreation many could afford. The whole family enjoyed two games in an evening for only a dime (and many a button was found in the collection box next day). The site of the former lighted ballpark is now occupied by the apartments on Parkview. The Field Day was an annual event for young and old in the summer and the Masquerade ball was the highlight of the winter season. In 1949 the Firemen sponsored the "Land o' Brooks" baseball team for teen-agers and in 1950 the "Land o' Puddles" team. They purchased and erected a Century backstop for the diamond in the park. The only thing they refused to do was to furnish nightly guards for the bank after the hold-up some years back. Santa now makes an annual visit to the fire station. Monies collected through Kettle Moraine Days have been used over the years to add equipment—such as a hose drying tower—to the fire department. □

### Rescue Department

Rescue service in Eagle had a modest beginning—on May 2, 1927 the fire department voted that Dr. Schmidt get an emergency first aid kit and present his bill to the fire company.

For many years, Ken Mealy transported emergency medical cases in a special vehicle he purchased in the

1950s. It could function as either an ambulance or a hearse. When it was needed as an ambulance, the floor was turned over and two seats popped up. The back area was heated and had an oxygen supply inside. In this mode, the vehicle was operated using a red light. Frank Breidenbach helped him, then later Frank's son Bob. Herman Thiele also helped after he retired.

The first vehicle purchased specifically for rescue work was a white Metro known to some as "the popcorn wagon." Never used as an ambulance, it carried equipment (e.g., the Jaws of Life) and personnel. After being replaced during the 1980s it was given to the Lions Club.

The Waukesha County Sheriff's Department took over the job of providing ambulance service until 1977. Eagle leased an ambulance for a while after that. Stationed in the fire department building, it was owned and operated by Bruce Behselich. Volunteers assisted on ambulance runs. State statutes require a minimum of two EMTs on runs, as well as an ambulance in all fire districts. A backup unit was stationed in the town garage.

*(Continued on page 5)*



Tom Crossewaite and Ken Mealy

*Photo courtesy of Ken Mealy*



**Most recent (1999) photo of Eagle Fire and EMS Department**—*Front row, left to right:* Lynn French, Jaye Snake, Rick Kivsto, Jeff Nelson, Jeff Steinbach, ass't. chief John Putnam, Chief John Klingele, ass't. chief John Kaiser, Fire Capt. Dennis Sudbrink, Kathy Sudbrink, EMS Capt. Karen Keys, Carol Thomas, Janet Whettam. *Back row, left to right:* Kevan Anderson, Scott Congdon, John Egly, Dave Rockteacher, Charlie MacDonald, Bob Lynch, Brian Jatczak, Bill Krestan jr, Scott Ahles, Al Speich, Craig Keys, Greg Laabs, Keith Cherek, Lynn Egly, Crystal Burton, Steve Wilton (not all members were present)

*Photo courtesy of Steve Wilton*

*(Continued from page 4)*

A joint Town/Village fire and rescue department was created, and in 1979 an ambulance was purchased. About 95% of the cost was raised in the town and village by private donations and contributions from local clubs and organizations. "It was a total community effort, and it is something we can be proud of," town chairman John Auberger said. "We just realized that being as far out as we are and on our own, this complete rescue service was needed."

Capt. Richard Barreau was chosen to put together an emergency rescue team because of his previous experience on the fire department, his training as an EMT and his proximity to the fire station. (He worked at the Brittingham & Hixon Lumber Company.) This original group consisted of both men and women. Two were registered nurses. Some of the rescue squad members were also members of the fire department, but others were recruited through advertisements and a community-wide call for interested and dedicated volunteers. Rescue operations went full-time in January of 1980. Unlike many rescue units, the Eagle squad members were not reimbursed for their work. They did not even receive compensation for use of their own vehicles. To this day, members of the rescue squad are unpaid volunteers. Fees charged for ambulance runs cover the operating costs of the squad.

The task of organizing emergency medical treatment for two communities was not an easy one. It was decided early in the planning stages that the ambulance service would be connected to the fire department. Such an arrangement would facilitate organization efforts, allow the rescue squad to use some of the department's communication equipment, and permit the members of the rescue teams to be covered under the department's umbrella insurance policy.

David Rockteacher was the first captain of the rescue squad, serving in that capacity from 1980 until 1994. A member of the Eagle Fire Department since 1969, he is still a member of the rescue squad "and proud of it." □

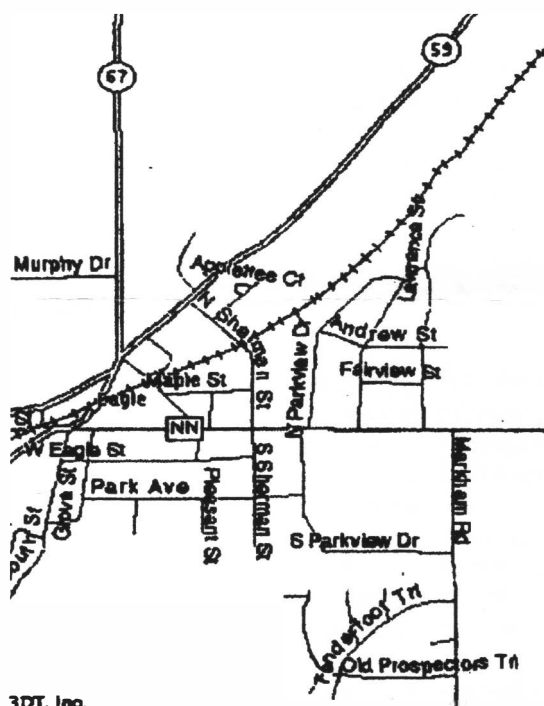
#### **Eagle Fire Department Chiefs**

A.H. Gale—May, 1927	Mike Sasso—July, 1961
Carl Belling—May, 1937	Jack Rolfe—Jan., 1971
Frank Mich—May, 1946	Fabian Tabat—Jan., 1982
Ken Mealy—June, 1950	Milton Mueller—July, 1988
	John Klingele—July, 1990

## Fourth-Grade History Report

# Welcome to Mealy's

By Dylan McCarthy & Robbie Guthrie



neth had to be at work 24-hours a day seven days a week.

He was born in Eagle. Kenneth Mealy has



been a funeral director for 42 years.

It's located on Main Street next to European Inn in Eagle, Wisconsin.

### Who is Kenneth Mealy?

Kenneth Mealy is the man that started Mealy's Carpets in 1917 in Eagle. Ken-

*Did you identify the summer issue mystery house? Read on....*



Kussmann home, 319 South Street

## Old Elm Feed Mill

By Bea Juedes Marquardt

In 1945 Mr. Arthur Juedes built Old Elm Feed Mill on one acre of his property in the Village of Eagle. Mr. Juedes was adept in making formulas for the differing feeds that other farmers came to purchase for their cattle; he also ground up the corn and oats that they brought to the mill.

The business was very successful and busy, for at that time there were still a lot of farms in the area.

After selling part of his farm, he subdivided the area

which now comprises Park Avenue and Grove Street and built homes there. From this time, he left the mill to be operated by his son-in-law, Harley Kramer.

Mr. Juedes sold the mill in the 1960s to Mr. H. Mitchell, who in turn sold it to Roger Kussmann in 1969. Mr. Kussmann remodeled the mill into a home and moved into it in 1974.

To this day, the outside structure of the mill still stands basically as it did in the 1940s. □

## IN MEMORIAM

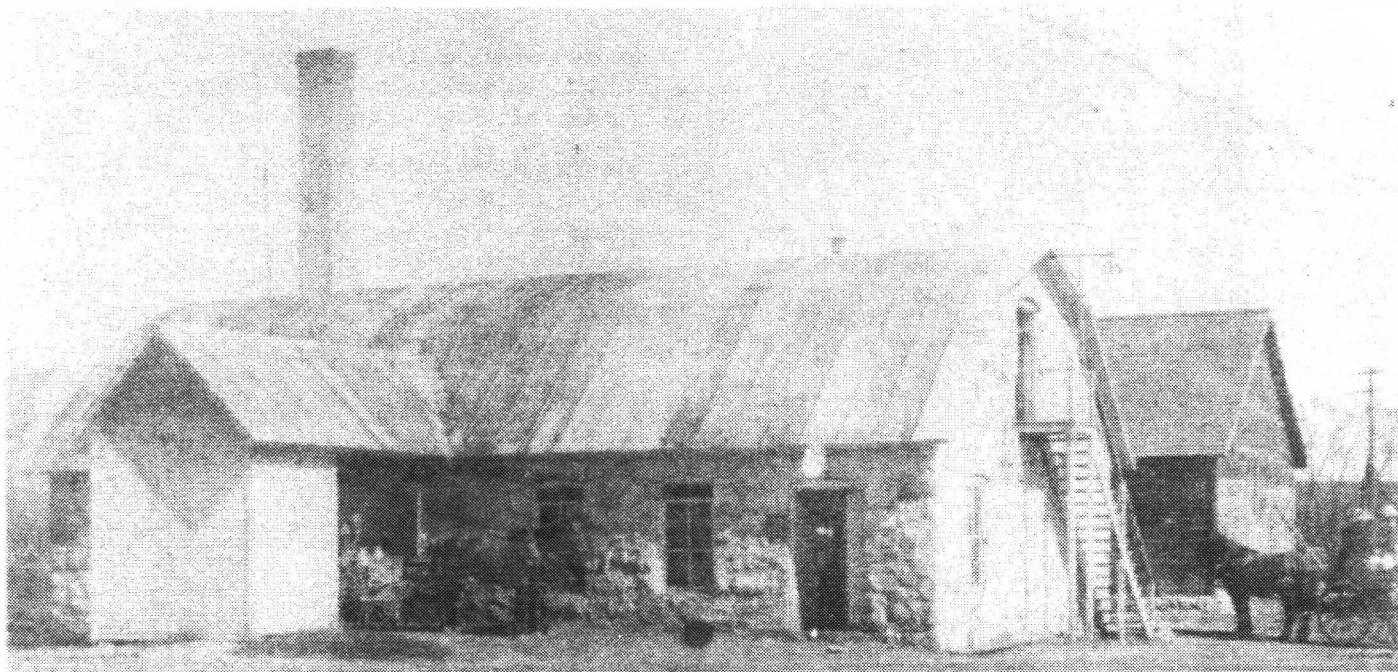
Robert Baker  
Archie Chapman



**Eagle Historical Society, Inc.**  
**217 W. Main Street**  
**P.O. Box 454**  
**Eagle, WI 53119**

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**

This building is now a house—do you know where it is?



*Photo courtesy of Pat Wilton*



## MYSTERY HOUSE

Were You Able To Find This House?



This mystery house is located at 22 Waukesha Road and built in 1849 by Augusta Verkins. A basement was dug in 1919. The cedar beams in the basement are pegged and hand hued. The different levels in the house indicate that additions were made as needed. Eileen and Jerry Juedes, the present owners, purchased the house in 1950 for \$4000.00 and the taxes that year were \$51.00.

## NEW MYSTERY HOUSE

This House Is Located Somewhere in The Village

