

# EAGLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Volume 6, Issue 2

Spring 1999

## Community Rummage Sale

The Eagle Historical Society will participate in the Eagle Business Association community rummage sale on Saturday, May 8, 1999. We will hold a White Elephant & Plant Sale beginning at 8:00 A.M. If you plan to rummage around on that day, stop in and visit us in the Municipal Building. We will be offering a hot dog luncheon plate and soda for sale.

We are in need of items to sell. Thin out your flowerbeds and share your plants. Also clean out your closet, attic, basement and garage and donate your unwanted items. (No clothing, please) You may drop off these items at the municipal building on Friday from 1:00 to 4:00 P.M., Saturday morning or call a board member to make other arrangements.

The Eagle Historical Society Museum (217 E. Main Street) will be open Friday and Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, from 8:00 A.M. till 2:00 P.M. Stop in and see our new exhibits. Anyone visiting the museum will be entered into a free-gift raffle for an Eagle sweatshirt. The drawing will be held at 3:00 P.M. on Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup>. We appreciate all your support of our fund-raising activities. ♦

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## Curator's Corner

**By Elaine Ledrowski**

The fourth graders from the Eagle Elementary School went on a walking tour of Eagle to kick off the annual fourth grade history writing contest. The two classes were organized into four groups led by Mrs. Gnatzig, Mrs. Linse, Mrs. Zell and Mrs. DeLosh. Fifteen-minute tours were held in each building they visited.

Kathleen Chapman, Mabel Finney and Jean Bowey greeted them at the Methodist Church, where they learned about the history of the church and were able to ask questions.

Dressed in a long white coat, Elmer Kilian greeted the groups at the door and encouraged them to visualize his home the way it would have been when Dr. Fitzgerald used it as the Eagle hospital.

During the stop at Novel's Country Inn and Coachhouse, Karrie Houlton (the owner) pointed out some interesting features of the one-hundred-three-year-old house. The children were most impressed with the library in the attic.

Don and I greeted the students at the Eagle Historical Museum and explained various exhibits. The children enjoyed the toy corner and were interested in the display of wedding dresses.

The classes wrote and sent thank you notes to everyone involved in the tour.

### CRAZY QUILT

A quilt similar to the one donated by Bea Nowicki and on display at the museum is under construction as part of a fund-raising project. When the quilt is finished, a raffle will be held. Approximately twenty-five people are involved in making this quilt.

*continued on page 3*

## Thank You

On behalf of the historical society I want to thank you for the donations to our two bake sales. We received many compliments on the good variety of bakery.

Several people asked for the recipe of almond bark clusters, so I am including it in the newsletter. We are looking forward to a good year.

Thanks again.

Welthy Mueller,  
Food Chairperson

## Almond Bark Clusters

- 2 lbs. almond bark
- 2 C. dry roasted peanuts
- 3 C. Rice Krispies
- 1 C. chunky peanut butter
- 2 C. miniature marshmallows

Melt almond bark, stir in peanut butter and rest of ingredients. Mix well. Drop by teaspoonful on waxed paper. Makes 6 dozen cookies ♦

## Membership

There are 252 paid members as of April 28, 1999. Your help is needed to reach our goal of 300 members. Invite your friends and neighbors to join. When asked why they haven't joined the Eagle Historical Society, many people reply that "they were never asked." Ask them today.

Welcome to all our new members since our last newsletter.

### Patron - \$100 and over

Jay & Kelley Cavaiani  
Richard & Sally Harthun

### Sponsor - \$50-99

Dorothy Clark  
Roy Leonhardt  
John Eiring  
Don & Dorothy Murphy  
Arthur & Betty Isleb  
Walter & Lois Zenner

### Sustaining - \$25-49

Timothy & Diane Theumling

Eloise Richards  
Clare Turner  
Jim & Diane Tate  
Robert & Carol Kwiatkowski

### New Members

Ralph & Betty Arndt  
George & Arlene Baumhardt  
Ronald & Yvonne Beranek  
Harry & Gladys Bowey  
Jeffrey & Marie Collom  
Jean Dernell  
Jo Ann Gilbert  
James & Kara Green  
Lee & Lynn Greenberg  
Rob & Pat Hawes  
Martin & Ada Marie Holzman  
Don & Marie Jones  
Mark & Anne Jung  
Amy Kinosian  
Dorothy Kramer  
Wm. & Claudette Krestan, Jr.  
Ted & Nancy Kucharski  
Francine Lake  
George & Joanne Loshaw  
Bill & Sandy Mooney  
Bill & Kathi Orchard  
Marge Plainse  
Tom & Diane Poehnelt  
Meinette Reichold  
Jean Richardson  
Brian & Elaine Rudy  
Robert & Joan Rockman  
Bernice Sadenwasser  
Gregg Scheff  
Roy & Diane Smale  
Fred & Mary Smart  
Jerry & Shari Tranchita  
Thomas C. Varrelmann  
Steve & Wanda Wilton

### Honorary Members

Welcome To:

Anna Chapman  
Archie & Helen Chapman  
Harriet Cruver  
Katherine Bovee Howard  
Art & Evangeline Stocks

*(Honorary membership to the Eagle Historical Society is granted to Eagle residents over the age of 90. Please call the museum with suggestions for additional honorary memberships.) ♦*

## EHS is on the Web

The Eagle Historical Society has a presence on the World Wide Web (WWW). We are located at <http://www1.wcf.net/~ehsriddle>. Dick Riddle has graciously offered his internet service provider (ISP) for our use in locating our web page.

Our web page can be viewed by anybody in the world who has a computer and access to the Internet. Our web page will be our newsletter to the world. We will be able to share with the world the wonderful history of Eagle. The world will be able to see pictures, read stories and find information about our little corner of the world.

Your input to our web page is strongly encouraged. Our page will be dynamic, it will be updated at least monthly. If you have any suggestions or comments regarding our web page, please do not hesitate to contact us. If you have any historic pictures, stories, or other information that you would like to share with the world and us, please do so. We want our web site to be a place to learn and to reminisce. We hope that you will enjoy visiting our web site.

Roy Leonhardt ♦

## Fourth Grade History Contest

A reception will be held to honor the participants of the Eagle history writing contest. Check Margo Momer's column in the Mukwonago Chief newspaper for the date of the awards presentation. The reports had to be about a person, place, building or event involving the Village or Town of Eagle.

It was extremely difficult to select the winners. It is obvious that all of the students put a great deal of effort into their reports. Every student will receive a Certificate of Participation.

Congratulations to:

**First Place:** Chris Meyer

**Second Place:** Jarrett Heil

**Third Place:** Brandon Miller

## Honorable Mention:

Nicki Bennett, Carla Benson, Larry Egly, Rachel Haas, Ryan Leary, Kyle MacDonald, Danielle Siewert, Jane Smessaert, Shane Suhm, and Brittni Vukodinovich.

A special thanks to Mrs. Gnatzig for encouraging her students to become involved in the history of Eagle.

Also thanks to this year's judges, Mary Alice Ruckwardt and Jo Ellen Rubach. ♦

*Continued from page 1*

## Curator's Corner

### NEW BOOK

The Society received a copy of John D. Bunker's Volume IV of the history of Wisconsin "The Progressive Era" (1893-1914), which was recently published. This completed the six-volume series begun in 1973. The Wisconsin legislature appropriated funds to allow all affiliated county and local societies to receive a free copy.

### NEW DONATIONS

We have received many donations, including a large watercolor painting of Eagle, painted by Margaret Richards in 1947. (Donor: Eloise Richards) While cleaning his garage, Tim Deuster found a board from a packing crate with the name Thiele Hardware Co. stenciled on it. He also found a framed canvas with the name Partridge Co., Eagle, Wisconsin, written on the back of it. Marjorie Mueller donated many items, including an oak table large enough to accommodate the fifteen board members at the monthly meetings. Mary Japp donated items from the American Red Cross, including a flag, her uniform and pins. She was a Red Cross volunteer for many years.

Other donations were received from Elmer Kilian, Welthy and Edward Mueller, Dick Riddle, Pat Monroe, John and Eleanor Normington, Meinette Reichold, Darlene Landmann, Jean Bowey, Carl and Eris Thurston, Irma Jolliffe and Bea Marquardt. ♦

*Irma Jolliffe interviewed three members who celebrated their 96<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1999.*

### **Arthur Stocks**

Arthur Stocks was born March 6, 1903. His wife, Evangeline, was president of the senior citizens and did a lot with the nutrition site. Arthur was a lineman for the telephone company and also worked for the Waukesha County Highway Department. He was a handyman for all the women in Eagle, fixing everything that didn't work.

### **Anna Chapman**

Anna Chapman was born January 22, 1903. She taught at Ward School for 2 years. After that she was a farmer's wife. She enjoyed the senior citizens group, Historical Society and Methodist Church.

### **Archibald and Helen Chapman**

Archie (born September 14, 1903) came to Eagle when he was 20 years old. He ran the Standard (now Amoco) station. He was also a member of the fire department. Archie delivered fuel to the farmers with a tank truck, and had to use 5-gallon buckets to fill the farmers' barrels. ♦

### **Memories of Liza Meredith (nee Chapman), 1893-1991**

**Irma Jolliffe interviewed Liza on 11/30/89. Liza was Harold and Archibald's older sister; she had one sister, older than she. Liza grew up on a farm on what is now known as "Chapman's Hills." This farm was located approximately 3 miles south of Eagle, on what is now Scout Road, in the Town of Troy in Walworth County. The Illinois Girl Scouts bought this property. One side of the road is kept for their use—camping, etc.—and the other was platted into 5-acre parcels and sold. Liza's memories are as follows:**

They were blessed with good parents and there was a lot of love and kindness in their home. They were not wealthy, they were a poor family, but much goodness was given to them. Liza received her diploma from School District #5 in the year 1908. (This was the 8<sup>th</sup> grade diploma.) The school was located near Troy Center; from there she went to high school in Palmyra and graduated in 1912. She went to Whitewater Normal School for 6 weeks and then went out teaching. Liza did not think you were prepared too well to go out and teach with such little training. She taught at a small (one-room) school near Troy Center. She had 6 pupils to start with and taught in that school from 1912 through 1913. She said there were only 2 pupils left, so they closed the school. She had 2 pupils who graduated under her; they were Carl Hopkins and his sister, Eleanor. She said they were both very smart—sometimes smarter than the teacher! Both of them are deceased now. Carl Hopkins became a mail carrier and Eleanor, a housewife. From there Liza taught in District #5 in the town of Troy Center from 1915 to 1918. Liza got married in May 1925 to Irving Meredith, who had lived not too far away from the homestead. He was a farmer and was proud of Liza's profession. Liza taught school for 10 years and then worked for Dr. Fitzgerald, who had an office and hospital in the Village of Eagle. She stayed home basically after that and was just a "farmer wife," which she enjoyed. The original Meredith homestead was on Hwy 67 about a mile south of Eagle. Today, only an abandoned windmill remains on the site. They had been married less than 2 years when Irving passed away. Liza's father wanted her to come home and live, saying she wouldn't be able to farm the 80 acres on her own. She also worked for Dr. Schmidt, who also had an office in Eagle; this was about the year 1928. She took care of pregnant mothers and their babies...probably in Dr. Fitzgerald's hospital.

1912-1913...Randall District (where Liza Meredith taught in one-room schools)



1914-1915... Baker School (This little one-room school was situated on the corner of Bluff and Scout Roads )

It was torn down about 1977 or 1978.

1917-1918... Adams School

1918-1919... Stewart School

1923-1925... Baker's School Corners (East Troy)

1929-1944... Jericho School (taught 15 years here)

1944-1954... Eagleville School

Most of her pupils were farm children until she taught at Eagleville School; then some of her pupils were only living at the lake.

Liza said she's glad she's not teaching school now because from what she reads about the problems the school system has now with its teachers, pupils, etc., she says it was much better in her day. Very seldom did she have to discipline her pupils, and when she did, all she did was talk to them. She lived in "the Best Age." Some of her old pupils still keep in touch with her, and many, having chosen good professions in their life, still come to visit her. Liza taught all 8 grades in the one-room schools. The last year she taught at Eagleville School she was teaching 48 pupils in all eight grades. The older children would help teach and take care of the younger pupils. Her sister, Elizabeth, would also help Liza correct papers, etc. In 1950 when the school had rooms added on, more teachers were hired to teach. Liza says they didn't have so many days off from school as they have now. She thinks they had to teach 180 days per school year. Mr. Stole was their principal then and he was also an excellent teacher. Liza was also a substitute teacher, but doesn't remember for how many years. She would substitute for Dorothy Mason from Palmyra, who always went deer hunting. Liza would go to night school with Tina Kavaneck from Palmyra for further training because she didn't graduate from college. She took the night classes at Whitewater. She doesn't remember there being any fundraisers for the school like there are now. She remembers the Waukesha Dairy Show, which was held in Waukesha along the river. All the school children participated, making posters, etc. This was the forerunner of the county fair. When she taught at Jericho School, she stayed with the Walter Schaefer family instead of commuting back and forth because the roads were so bad. Liza Meredith had a new house built in Eagle by Arthur Juedes, who sold his farm and sub-divided some of the land in Eagle. The home was built in 1957 on Park Avenue. Liza moved to Eagle with her mother from the home farm, which had been sold. Her mother passed away 2 years later, in 1959. Liza passed away in 1991 at the age of 98. ♦



## IN MEMORIAM

**Helen F. Johnson - Marjorie Mueller**

## A Sheaf of Wheat



Pat Wilton interviewed a few Eagle residents who remembered the "sheaves of wheat" on caskets and had differing ideas of the symbolism.

Louella Bowey thought it may have been from the song "Bringing in the Sheaves" or from a reference from the Bible (Matthew 13:30 – At harvest time I will tell the reapers...gather the wheat into My barn.)

Don Betts thought the sheaves of wheat might have been used because wheat was the main crop that was grown at the time.

Pat also found the obituary of Lucina Betts, December 28, 1906, which mentioned the sheaf of wheat.

What do you remember? People often took pictures of caskets at this time. Do you have a picture showing sheaves of wheat on caskets? If so, your input would be appreciated.

*(From the Eagle Quill,*

*Dec. 28, 1906)*

### Lucina Betts Succumbs at Eighty

On December 16, occurred the death of Lucina E. Betts at the advanced age of seventy-nine years, nine months and twenty days. Mrs. Betts' maiden name was

Ewer and she was born in Sodus, Wayne County, N. Y. At the age of twelve years she came to Milwaukee with her parents and was married in that city to Jonathan Betts, Feb. 17, 1845, coming to her late home a bride. She resided continuously on the same farm here up to the time of her death. When Mrs. Betts and her husband, now deceased, settled in Eagle, there were no railroads and Eagleville, now Eagle Lake, was the local trading place. At that time hotel accommodations could be obtained at Isaac Severance's near O.H. Bigelow's at Palestine and Jericho. The present village of Eagle was established six years after Mrs. Betts' arrival here, when the Milwaukee & Mississippi R.R. was built through this section. The only pioneer of those days now living in Eagle is A. R. Hinkley, who is ninety-six years of age. It would be difficult to comprehend the many events which have taken place between the years of 1845 and 1906. Mr. Betts died in 1891. He left for his family sufficient of this world's goods to enable them to live in comfort. The Betts homestead is in the southwest part of the town, nicely located on the edge of fine prairie lands bordered on the west by large oak timber. Here the mother passed her declining years. Death came to her after a life well spent.

The funeral was held from the family home Wednesday, Dec. 19, Rev. E. B. Boggess of Palmyra, assisted by the Eagle M. E. church choir, officiating. On the casket there was a sheaf of wheat which the pastor characterized as emblematical of her life. His sermon was full of food for deep thought. There was a large attendance of neighbors and friends besides all of the children of the deceased. Those acting as pallbearers were I. L. Grosse, Harvey Clemons, Francis Draper, John Chapman, Joseph J. Lurvey and John D. Skidmore. Interment was in the Eagle cemetery where lie buried her husband and two sons, William, who died in 1862, and John, who died in 1875.

The following sons and daughters survive her: Mrs. William Bigelow, Mary J. Bigelow, Whiting, Iowa; Mrs. Lemuel Bovee, Abrams, Wis.; Melissa Betts, Charles M. Betts, Fremont A. Betts and Daisy Burton of Eagle. We all extend our sympathy to the bereaved family. ♦

## Cot Hesse

During the 1940s the population of Eagle was 392 but in the 1950s the population was 391. However, there were some very unique individuals walking the streets. There were Fink, Twink, J.P. Shortell, Jakie and his Boston Terrier Mickey, Charlie Ashton, and Leo Gibson.

However, one of the most interesting was a lady by the name of Cot Hesse. No one is sure where she came from, but she had once been married and her husband had died many years before. Now she lived in two rooms on Main Street next to V. J. Sherman's store with a painter by the name of Frank Rashley. Theirs was probably the first common-law marriage in town. Cot was a large, one could almost say huge, woman although it was hard to tell how big because she always wore four or five aprons. She would sit on a park bench in front of the door with her feet in tennis shoes. She had a small terrier-type dog which she called "Piss Pot" and she could be heard calling the dog at the top of her lungs several times a day. She also had three crows which would perch on her shoulder and the bench. One of the crows had its tongue split so it could talk. Unfortunately, it did not learn its vocabulary in church, and the favorite expression was "G\*\* D\*\*\* it, Piss Pot, come here!"

I had noticed at a large number of funerals that a small sheaf of wheat tied with a ribbon would be on the inside cover of the casket. When my grandmother died in 1947 there was one in her casket also, and my mother told me that Cot Hesse made them in remembrance of the deceased.

Strangely enough none of those characters left any descendants and they vanished into the sea of time leaving only a ripple in the memories of a few of us.

Doc Crawley  
Palmyra ♦

## Eagle in the Civil War

By Julie and Mark Dexter

On April 12, 1861, artillery of the new Confederate States of America would open fire on Ft. Sumter in Charleston harbor, sparking the start of the American Civil War. Throughout the Midwest, in big cities and

small villages, outraged citizens would hold rousing meetings to support the suppression of the rebel states. Eagle would be no different. Making speeches promoting strong unionism and their forefathers' "spirit of '76," Mssnrs. Hendrickson, Benson, Green, and Stuart would encourage Eagle young men to be the first to heed President Lincoln's call for volunteer soldiers. Enlisted at this meeting were Wm. Sherman, Alverson Bigelow, H. Skidmore, Frank Fox, David Kindar, Thos. Lacy, Chas. Brown, N. Neustadt, and M. Schultz. On April 19, 1862, the Waukesha Freeman would proclaim: "WAR! WAR! WAR! That's what's the matter. And we must end it speedily., Our country calls on every man who is able to shoulder a musket. We propose to raise a company for service and we have but one week's time to work in. Forward is the word, fall in and report to: C.C. White, Waukesha or D.G. Snover, Eagle."

Most people at the time believed the war would be over in a matter of weeks. But, with war dragging on for over four years, more soldiers would be needed. Eagle, through voluntary enlistments and three drafts, would supply the Union with over 150 soldiers. At the time Eagle's entire male population (including young and old alike) was approximately 600.

Eagle men would fight and die in almost all major battles of the Civil War. Andrew Craig would die at Cedar Mt., VA; Hiram Daniels would die at Vicksburg, MS; Hans Shilburn at Prairie Grove, AK; Franklin Bigelow at Petersburg, VA; and George Logan at Chickamauga, GA. And at Girardeau, MO, R.L. Grove and H. F. Potter would pen a newspaper called the "Eagle."

Edward Hinkley would survive the war and at the age of 92 be one of three surviving veterans to attend a soldiers' reunion in Waukesha in 1942.

John Lins enlisted in April of 1861 and fought in battles at Williamsburg, Antietam, Gettysburg, and Cold Harbor, where he was shot in the side, breaking three ribs. In the fall of 1864 John returned to Eagle to join his brother Edmund in the butcher business. Lins became the Commander of the Grand Army of the Republic Eagle Post. The G.A.R. was a Civil War veterans' organization similar to the present-day VFW. ♦



## Scraps of War History on the Home Front *(from the Landmark, autumn 1964)*

Folks here at home during the Civil War had mixed feelings about their part in the rebellion.

There were women who sewed and men who recruited, others went off to war. Boys left home to join up ...and not everybody around Waukesha County sympathized with the Union.

Here are scraps of unrelated home incidents which, when put together, make up a related effort.

The "Constitutional Guards" organized for home protection in case of emergency was a company of men considered too old or physically unable to fight. But Governor Randall refused to commission these officers, because he said the company was unfit for war.

On June 1, 1861, a young son of the Editor of the *Oconomowoc Free Press* enlisted. His patriotic father wrote in his next issue: "It is tough, but we cheerfully resign him at the call of the nation. And more— whenever necessity shall seem to require it, we shall as cheerfully go ourself wherever duty may point."

The next year Mr. Curtis did enlist even though his age and physical disabilities almost kept him home. In his paper he wrote "When the country is in peril, every man should be able-bodied, and I shall therefore shoulder a musket."

Joseph Doty, an editorial writer for the *Waukesha Democrat*, turned rebel and became a commissioned officer in the Confederate army. Three or four citizens here signed resolutions endorsing his action and requested their publication. But neither editors of the Democratic or Republican papers would print them.

Michael Thompson in August of 1862 offered to furnish firewood to the families of any Waukesha village men who would enlist. George Babcock offered to board free during the war the family of one volunteer.

F.B. Ward, the deaf printer of "Humbug City" near Waukesha, was asked by his third and last son if he should enlist. "Yes, yes, don't stay for me. I would go, too, if they would take me. I can care for myself; if not, it won't matter much." His third son, not yet eighteen, signed the roll.

In January 1863 a large meeting was held in Genesee to raise funds for soldiers' families. It was a big success. The ladies of that town also had "Mite Societies" which were organized for the same purpose. They raised good sums of money and large amounts of food and clothing.

Some of the bundles sent out by the Ladies Aid Society bore pathetic little notes. On a package of eye shades this note was scrawled: "Made by one who is blind. Oh, how I long to see the dear old flag that you are all fighting under."

In December 1861, Governor Alexander W. Randall was offered the commission of Major General. This is the reply he sent back to President Lincoln: "Whenever you want a caucus managed, send for me; but the military business would be better off in other hands, for this country is in peril and her affairs are not to be trifled with." That letter could still be on file at Washington. Randall was a Waukesha man.

*By Libbie Nolan*

## WARNING!!

Beware of Irma Jolliffe, a.k.a. the president of the Eagle Historical Society & the Eagle Senior Citizens; member of St. John's Lutheran Church, Mukwonago; member of RSVP; volunteer at Eagle Elementary School and Old World Wisconsin. Irma is 5'3" and is reputed to have a green thumb. She has been known to play cards occasionally and has been seen soliciting donations for the ice cream social and tour of homes raffle. Often carries a concealed blank EHS membership application in her purse. If approached by Irma, your best defense is to submit and join the EHS.

THANK YOU, IRMA, FOR ALL OF YOUR  
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY OF  
EAGLE!





April 18, 1999

9/00410, B.E 156

Dear Irma,

Since you are the President of the Eagle Historical Society, I will send my message of Thanks to you to share with the members.

Last Friday, April 16, Niece Kathleen Chapman visited me and brought the beautiful framed certificate that "The Eagle Historical Society had honored me with full rights of membership in the Society - dated April 1999."

Of course I had nothing to do with being over 90 years of age, but am responsible to the Society to send a Ton of Thanks for each year.

I am highly honored to be recognized by Eagle citizens because wherever I travelled in my re-

Therment on all the continents except South America. To get acquainted with my world neighbors and was asked



who and where I was from I would respond, "I am a Teacher-farmer from the Town of Eagle in Wisconsin, U. S. A."

May future generations honor the history you are preserving, because you cannot reap the fruit without the tree!

Loving greetings to all the Historical Society members.

Harriet Cramer.

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



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Donald & Elaine Ledrowski  
W370 S9563 Hwy 67  
Eagle WI 53119

***Fifth Annual Ice Cream Social  
and Band Concert***

***Sunday July 11, 1999  
2:00 P.M.  
Eagle Village Park***

***Sponsored by the  
Eagle Historical Society***