



www.monticellohistoricalsociety.org

RECOLLECTIONS

Monticello Area Historical Society News

Year 2021, No. 4

Inside: Monticello House reopening 1989

MAHS Board of Directors

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Vice-Pres. - Kay Frietag
Secretary - Sue Rieder
Treas. - Karen Brugger
Member - John Casey
Member - Don Kubly
Member - Kim Buehl

Coordinators

Docents - Kay & Bill Dickson
Programs - Paul Rieder
Newsletter - Jules Cappelle
Window Display—May Burgy
Membership - Carol Schultz

Collection Archivist

Jules Cappelle
jules.cappelle@gmail.com

Dear Friends,

Another 'historic' year is nearly over. The MAHS and museum has fared well, though definitely in the neutral, coasting mode. During the past two years, all board member positions had expired and a mail in ballot was sent to members to elect the new board. We had a very good response; Bill and Kay Dickson tallied the ballots. From these board members, officers for the coming year were elected. (See roster at left) A big thank-you to Nancy Ruefener for serving on the past board. We appreciate your dedication.

Year-end brings suggestions and solicitations for donations. MAHS welcomes your tax-saving contributions. Our front awning is showing its age and needs to be replaced. We already have some interest in partially funding the new awning.

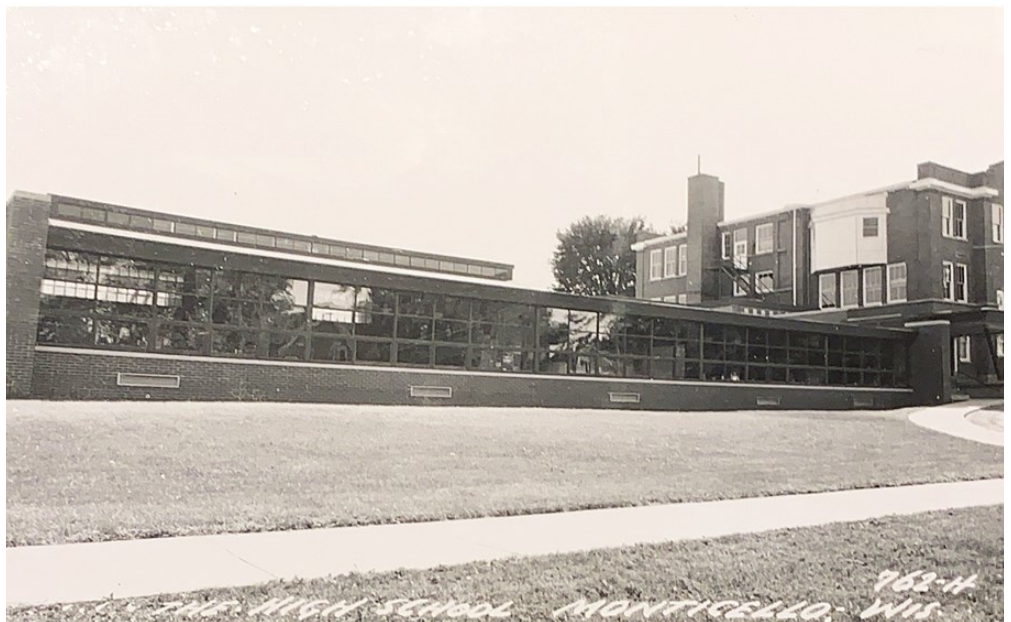
I wish all of you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Mary Davis

Museum Open

Saturdays May thru October
from 10 am - 2 pm
Our docent coordinators
Bill & Kay Dickson welcome all
volunteers.

Call them at 938-4315.



Researched by Karen Brugger

Looking back through the years winter seemed to be a time of many fires. Homes were heated with wood and coal, faulty chimneys and no smoke detectors or fire extinguishers. Here are some excerpts from Monticello Messenger of the past.

February 1951--A fire on unknown origin severely damaged stock in Rick's Shoe Store, owned by Vernon Guptal, located in the basement of the Loveland building today at 11:40 A.M. The volunteer fire department brought the blaze under control before it spread to other parts of the building. The Loveland law office and Boone's Sporting Goods located above the shoe store were damaged by smoke. No estimate of the loss was available immediately.

January 1, 1969--New Year's Day in sub-zero weather cold Monticello firemen were at the scene of the Voegeli Funeral Home for about nine hours. The funeral home had been in operation since 1919 and was completely destroyed. The fire believed to have started from a heat lamp used to thaw a frozen fuel oil pipe. Fred Voegeli, owner-operator was asleep on the second floor and was awakened by the sound of breaking glass. The home was already filled with dense smoke but he managed to get out of the burning home and ran next door to neighbor Elmer Freitag sounding the alarm at 5:45 A.M. His mother Elfa had spent the night with a friend. The loss is covered by insurance, including caskets on hand. The funeral home was recently remodeled. The fire did not endanger nearby homes.

1971--TWO FIREMEN'S HOMES STRUCK by FIRE. A fire at 7 P.M. gutted the home of Leonard Cisewski on North Pratt Road. Cisewski was not home but the fire is believed to have started behind the wood burner and got into the walls filling the house with smoke making it impossible for firefighters to enter the home. Cisewski's possessions were destroyed and apparently he carried no insurance. Firemen remained at the scene until midnight and were at the station cleaning up equipment until 3 A.M. The home is owned by Alfred Aeberhard Sr. The second fire was in the apartment above the Harvey Kubly office in the building owned by

Dr. Jim Winn. Steve Hodgson escaped serious injury when he jumped from a second floor apartment window after smoke filling the apartment at 5 A.M. The blaze started in a cupboard by the stove, He ran across the street to phone in the fire call, then went to the fire station to don fire fighting gear and fight the fire. Firemen at the scene two hours.

February 1979--The Donald Robert farm home declared a total loss after three to four dozen firemen struggled six hours to save it. Mr. and Mrs. Robert and their five children between ages of two and eleven got out safely. The call at 2:49 A.M. and firemen were at the scene within 20 minutes with assistance from Albany department. Albany was called away to a barn fire and New Glarus responded. 34,000 gallons of water were tanked to the scene. The fire caused by a LB White auxiliary gas heater located in the kitchen. Mr. Robert was awakened and alerted family running outside six below zero weather. In pajamas and with bare feet they ran to the barn and called her sister Sue Marty who notified the fire department. Minutes later the phone line went dead. By 7 A.M. donations of food, clothing and money were arriving. There was full insurance coverage and rebuilding will take place. The wind was in the right direction so other farm buildings were not in danger. However, the driveway is about a mile long, narrow and steep in places. Fire trucks got stuck in their way in and out.

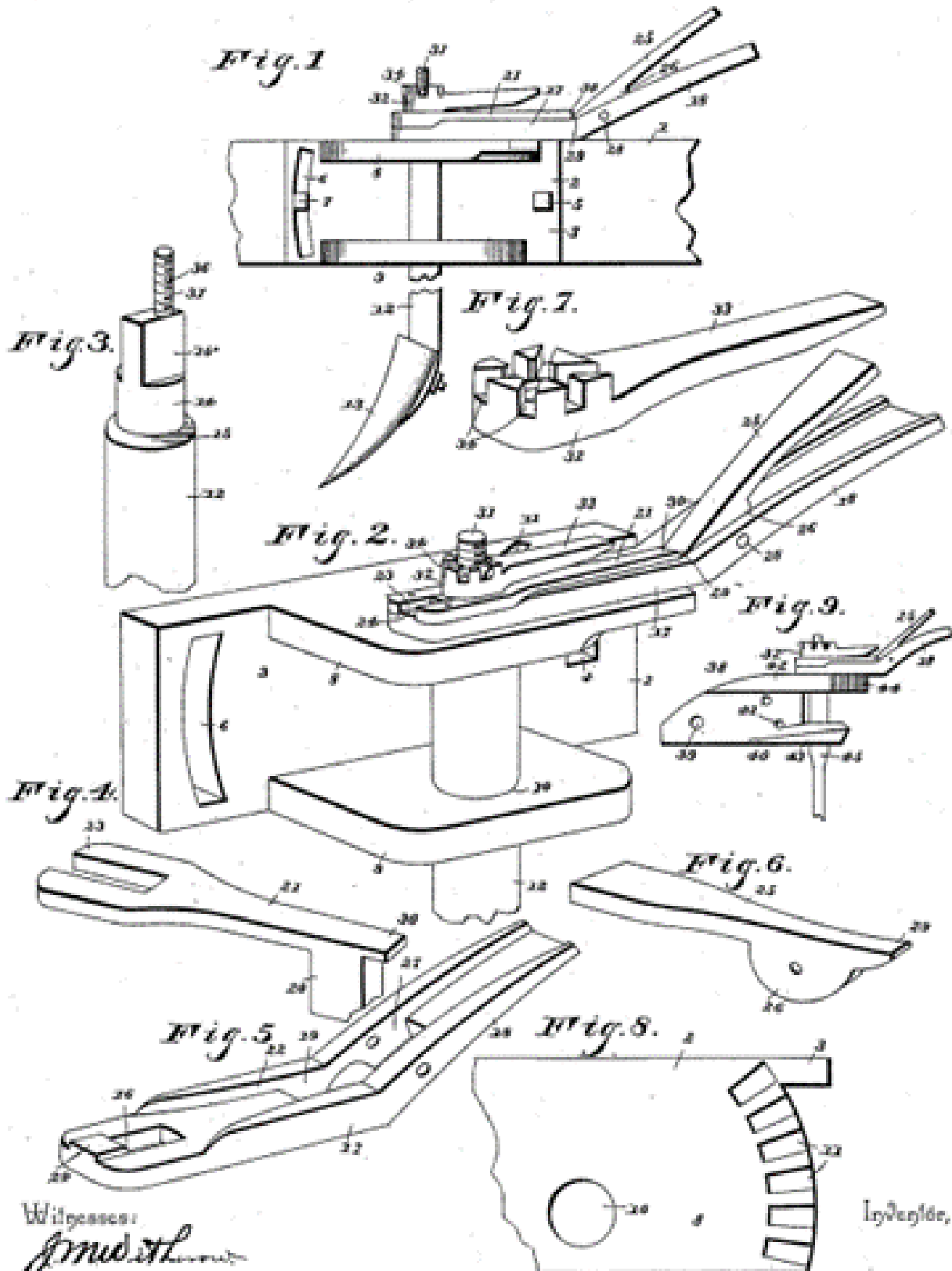
Christmas Day 1980--Mr. and Mrs. Richard Gilbertson and their three children lost their home and all their belongings in a fire in Mt. Pleasant township. The family was away and the fire reported at 4:15 P.M. The entire house was engulfed in flames when firemen arrived. The house on the former Albert Marty farm now owned by Gordon Smith was completely destroyed and all the contents. Firemen were on the scene five hours with assistance from Monroe and Albany departments. A wood-burning furnace likely the cause. The children range in age from two months to eight years old. An appeal for clothing donations is being made and family looking for a place to live. Mr. Gilbertson works for Gordon Smith on the farm.

(No Model.)

W. H. PRISK
PLOW.

No. 429,060.

Patented May 27, 1890.



Witnesses:

J. M. ...

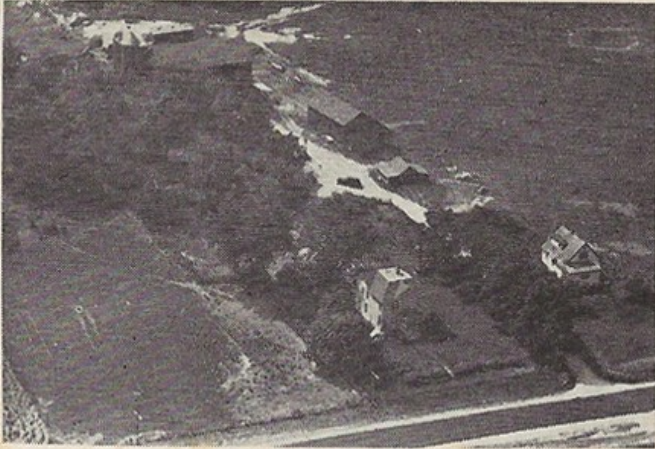
W. S. ...

By *John* Attorneys.

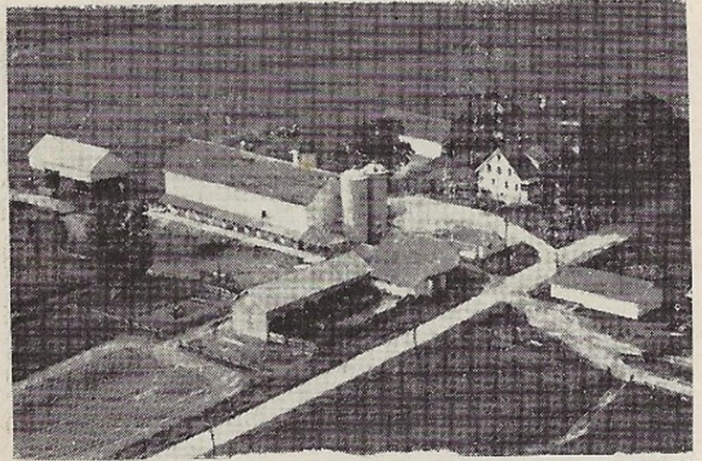
W. H. Prisk,

Calnow & Co.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE. WILLIAM. H. PRISK, OF MONTICELLO, WISCONSIN. POW. SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 429,060, dated May 27, 1890. Application filed March 28, 1890, Serial No. 345,716, (No model.) To all whom it may concern: Be it known that I, WILLIAM. H. PRISK, a citizen of the United States, residing at Monticello, in the county of Green and State of Wisconsin, have invented a new and useful Plow, of which the following is a specification. This invention has relation to improvements in plows, and especially to the means of connecting the plow standard or post to the beam. The objects of the invention are to provide a simple and inexpensive means for swiveling the Standard or post in such a manner as to permit of a ready and quick lateral adjustment of the shovel or a removal of the same, and this without the necessity of unscrewing nuts or the employment of any hand-tools.



Rt. 2 Monticello
ADAMSON GUS 6-559-22
 355 acres

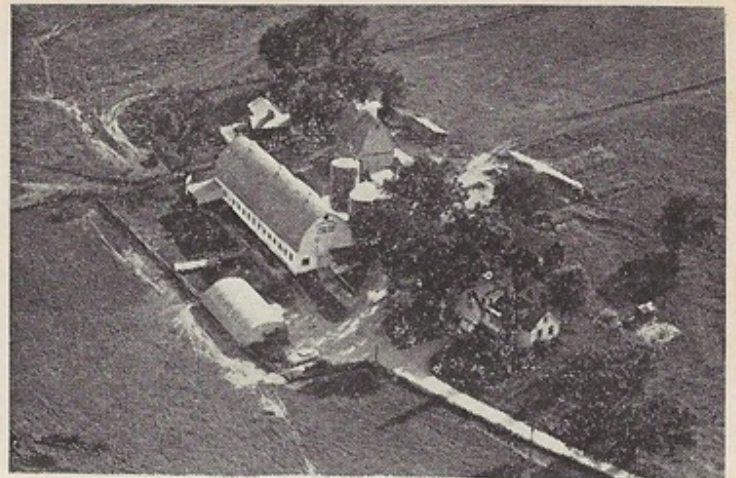


Rt. 2 Monticello
ALTMANN FRED 6-566-15
 274 acres

Greater Green County 1954



Box A Monticello
AEBERHARD ALFRED 6-566-13
 10 acres



Rt. 2 Monticello
ARN ERNST 6-502-23
 220 acres

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Monticello Area Historical Society is the acquisition, documentation, preservation and exhibition of artifacts relating to the history and culture of the Monticello area. This collection will be located in our museum, the former Woelffer Drug Store on Main Street in Monticello, Wisconsin.

VISION STATEMENT

The Monticello Area Historical Society strives to promote an interest in the uniqueness of the Monticello area by collecting and displaying artifacts that tell our community history. We further endeavor to enrich the community by connecting them to the past and saving the present to enhance the future.

March 19, 1921 Monticello Messenger

MONTICELLO MAN KILLED IN AUTO WRECK

Otis Breylinger, 42, hardware merchant of Monticello, was instantly killed at 3:30 Saturday afternoon when his automobile turned turtle on the road between Monroe and Monticello.

Breylinger was returning home from Monroe when the accident happened. He was driving a small machine and when about three miles from Monroe, the steering gear gave way and the machine ran to the side of the road and overturned. He was pinned under the machine and, judging from the position of the body, he is believed to have tried to jump from the machine.

Coroner Frank Shriner of Green county reported last night that no inquest would be held. The body was removed to an under-taking establishment at Monroe. Breylinger was a life long resident of Monticello. He was married and leaves a widow and one child.

Editor's note—for complete details read detailed obituary on our website. What a contrast to an obit today.



Thank you Aldeen K Fjelstad—Madison for photos.



MAHS Board of Directors

From left Don Kubly, Karen Brugger—treasurer, Kay Freitag—vice president, Mary Davis—president, John Casey, and Kim Buehl

Monticello House reopening

Original building was once a well-known Monticello hotel

By Kim Tschudy Times Correspondent

MONTICELLO—"If you want to know the history of the Monticello House the man to talk to is Leon Voegeli," Monticello residents will quickly tell you.

And they are right—Voegeli is quick to tell any and questioners about the history of the Monticello House.

"For years it was known as the Casino, but now that it is reopening as the Monticello House, they are just going back to its original name when the building was erected in 1895," he said.

Voegeli should know. His grandfather, Jacob Figi, and his uncle were the ones who built the Monticello House "in the year that I was born," Voegeli proudly says.

The Monticello House replaced an earlier hotel on the same site which was built in about 1852 by Jacob Marty and operated by Marty until 1872, when he sold the establishment to Peter Wilson and his son.

In 1883 Ira Wilson became the owner of Monticello House until it burned in 1895.

"My uncle operated the hotel for 23 years until he traded the place to J.H. Heeren for some property in Ripon, Wis.

"At that time the Monticello House was a very popular stopping place for agents and salesmen who were in Monticello to sell their wares to local businesses," Voegeli said.

And busy they were. At the time when Monticello House was a booming center of activity bringing the latest fashions and new-fangled inventions of creative men to the hinterlands of the Midwest, Monticello was served by two train lines.

The original Monticello House consisted of a saloon which was housed in the basement of the new building, several large dining rooms and an "Opera Hall" which was the site of many an evening of entertainment for area residents.

The Milwaukee Road, which connected Brodhead, Albany, Monticello, and New Glarus, ran a train each morning afternoon and evening to the four communities it served.

The Chicago, Madison and Northern Railroad, which linked Madison and communities throughout Green County with the rest of the United States, also stopped at the depot in Jimtown section of Monticello.

Through this vital rail link the Monticello House became the booming business that it was.

The original Monticello House consisted of a saloon which was housed in the basement of the new building, several large dining rooms and an "Opera Hall" which was the site of many an evening of entertainment for area residents, sleeping rooms for traveling agents and an Owner's apartment which faced Monticello's main street.

Twenty-three years after Figi built the Monticello House, J.H. Heeren, the new owner, leased the hotel to Otto Wyss.

Two years after Otto Wyss took over operation of the Monticello House one Alois Wyss took over ownership of Monticello's other hotel, the Grand Central Hotel a block away on the opposite side of the street.

Following the ownership of Otto Wyss, Herman Schlittler, Claire Puttkamer, Col. William and Belle Elliot became owners of the Monticello House. The Elliots eventually became owners of Monroe's now defunct Mansion Supper Club.

In 1954 Bill and Mary Gibbons purchased the hotel and in 1956 Dick and Sue Wong began operation of the establishment offering a Chinese menu.

Of the entertainment offered at the Monticello House, the thing most remembered by Voegeli were the chautauquas, which were often held there.

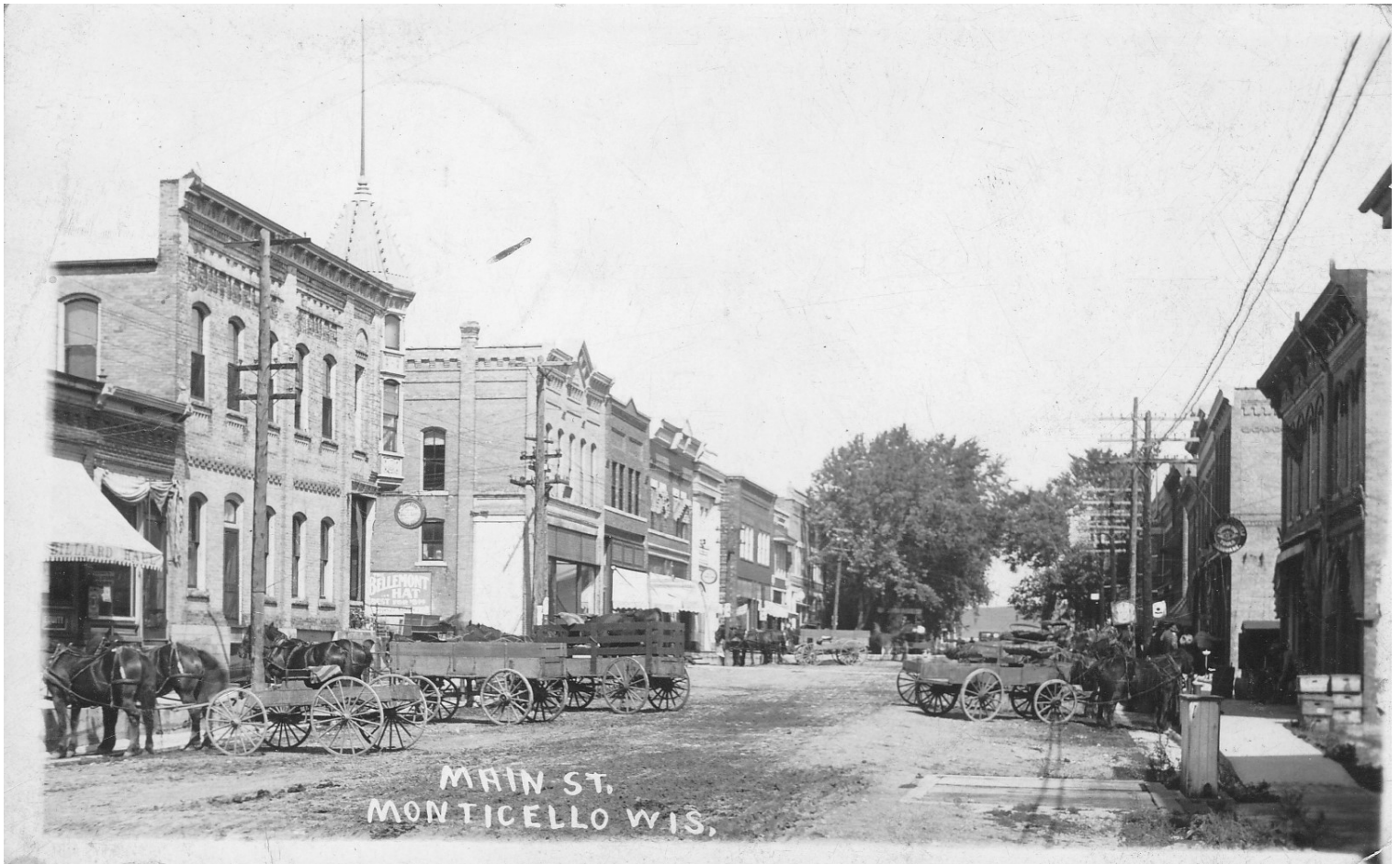
(Editor's Note—Chautauqua was an adult education and social movement in the United States, highly popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.)

"They were so popular," Voegeli states, "that it was hell in high water to try and get a ticket to get in for the days entertainment and speeches on current events, and politicians.

The entertainment function of the Monticello House began to taper off when Karlen Hall was built across the street in the early 1920's.

"At that time," Voegeli reminisces, "the community team basketball games were held in Karlen Hall. Monticello, Monroe, New Glarus, and Brooklyn each had community teams and they would play at Karlen Hall on weekend nights. And across the street in the Monticello House saloon, guys would be betting anywhere from \$50 to \$100 per game and that was a lot of money back then."

So the building in Monticello called for years the Casino has come full circle to its beginning to again be the Monticello House—just as Leon Voegeli's grandfather and uncle had intended it to be.



MEMBERSHIP

Mail this form and payment to the museum address or give them to our membership chairperson.

Membership year: May—April

Individual dues - \$20/yr

Family dues - \$30/yr

Lifetime dues - \$500

CASH

CHECK PAYABLE TO MAHS

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN

THE MONTICELLO AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEETINGS NORMALLY HELD THE 4TH THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH, **EXCEPT** JULY, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER, IN THE NORTH ROOM OF ZWINGLI CHURCH AT 7:00 PM ARE ON HOLD AT PRESENT.

MAHS Museum

P.O. Box 463
204 N. Main St.
Monticello, WI 53570
Phone: (608) 938-4216
Email: mahs@tds.net

Hours of Operation

The museum will be open
May until October
but can be open by appointment for anyone or a
group wishing to stop by.

For special group or individual tours,
call the museum at (608) 938-4216 or send your request to
mahs@tds.net.

Admission to the museum is free and
a quarterly newsletter from Monticello
Area Historical Society is included with
your membership.

Please consider including the
Monticello Area Historical Society in
your will.

A guided tour of the museum can be
arranged for all groups anytime.

MAHS Museum
P.O. Box 463
204 N. Main St.
Monticello, WI 53570

