

"Busy Farmer's Telephone Company"

By Karen Brugger

Patrons and stockholders organized May 18, 1907 in the Town of Mt. Pleasant and formed a mutual telephone company, named Busy Farmer's telephone Company. The object was to build, extend and keep in repair a line from Monticello in a southeasterly direction as far east and south as the company deemed necessary. The construction to be of infinite value to the rural population and to bring the community into a "brotherly and fraternal relation." The expense derived from building and maintaining of such line shall be divided with the number of stockholders and equally paid by them. The line may be extended as the company sees fit and new subscribers willing to become stockholders who then pay into the treasury an amount of money to defray expenses. Residents living within 20 rods distance from the line may become subscribers. Said company shall install an instrument (telephone) and pay for such instrument and for its use a sum of \$18.00 annually. The instrument is property of the company, any damage done to instrument while on subscribers premises is to paid by subscriber, such as fire, malicious used or unreasonable wear and tear. The company will elect from its members a president, secretary and treasurer for a term of one year elected by ballot. Annual meeting or whenever necessary, only stockholders vote. At that time there were eleven. John Babler, Albert Babler Sr., Rudy Freitag, C.J. Purintun, Eugene Truax, Conrad Baebler, Jacob Rhyner, George Clark, Casper Hammerly, Edward Kundert, and Henry Milbrandt. Note: These farms all located on what are now County F, Purintun, Oliver and Gilbertson Roads. Annual meetings held at Albert Babler schoolhouse. They purchased 280 poles from Karlen & Steinman for \$253.76. Charles Purintun name manager and his assistant Eugene Truax to keep the line in proper condition. Their compensation being 25 cents an hour, tools furnished by the company. It was noted 35 meals at 20 cents. Kellogg Switchboard &

Supply of Chicago provided 12 phones at \$8.25 each. Total cost of line being \$948.65.

Stockholders numbered 16 in 1909, line extended. By 1914 there were 22 and a special meeting held to let United Telephone Co. provide central service. This was defeated by a 11 No vote and 7 in favor. Lineman Henry Baebler received \$1 per hour in 1920 and other labor 75 cents and common labor 40 cents per hour. Dues were \$12 per member in 1935 and if behind in dues must help the lineman. Landlord responsible if renter didn't pay. The fee was \$20 for one phone in house and \$10 for second phone in 1948. Annual meetings ended in 1949 with no explanation. Walter Ringhand family donated the record books to MAHS.

I found there were 26 telephones in the Village of Monticello in 1901. We have one of the old wooden wall phones in our Museum display area which belonged to Jacob Schlittler family south of town. That private line was extended to Dr. B.L. Clark, local veterinarian who resided on the farm where Wade Wittenwyler now farms. A common problem was vandals shooting out the insulators.

Children are fascinated by ringing central (switchboard) to put a call through. Persons could ring each other on the same line with no operator drop. When a subscriber called central, the bells of others on the same line did not ring.

The 1926 Messenger states the Smith-Burgy Telephone Co. held its annual meeting at the Bank of Monticello and election took place. Elected were: Roscoe Smith president and Jacob Burgy secretary-treasurer. This line would have been in Washington township.

Risking Everything: A Freedom Summer Exhibit

A Traveling Display

On display all October



On display all October

Around the Town

Sue Steinmann, UW-Madison student, visited over the holiday week-end at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Steinmann.

Curt Getman, who spent the summer at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Getman, has returned to Beloit to resume his studies at Blackhawk Technical Institute, classes beginning on Tuesday of this week.

Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Wittenwyler visited Sunday afternoon at the home of their daughter, Mrs. Gail Klemme, and sons, Beloit.

Mr. and Mrs. Gary Zweifel and daughter, Ann, came from Atlanta, Ga., Friday for a week's visit at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Zweifel, and with his grandmother, Mrs. Nellie Zweifel. Mr. and Mrs. David Zweifel and sons, Mark and Andrew, Waukesha, were also over Saturday night guests at the home of his parents, the Dwight Zweifels. On Sunday they were all guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. James Zweifel, Dodgeville. Also attending the family picnic there were Mr. and Mrs. Edward Zweifel, Mr. and Mrs. Philip Zweifel, Madison, and Mr. and Mrs. John Zweifel, Whitewater.

Florence Loveland attended the Art Show in New Glarus Sunday afternoon. They were accompanied to New Glarus by Mmes. Bertha Loveland, Louise Klassy and Anna Elmer, who visited at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Roger Klassy.

Mr. and Mrs. Emil Zentner went to Middleton Sunday for a several days' visit at the home of their daughter, Mrs. George Boyce, and family.

Sunday afternoon visitors at the home of Mrs. Edyth R. Stoll were Mrs. W. J. Yahn, Janesville, and her grandson, Steven Yahn, and Miss Sally White, Chicago.

Mr. and Mrs. Philip Knobel and son, Cory, Elkhorn, were Saturday visitors at the homes of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Knobel and Mr. and Mrs. Fred C. Durtschi.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Gempeler, Washington township, visited in Cross Plains Thursday with their daughter, Mrs. William Erb, and family. Mrs. Erb has been confined to her home since last Wednesday with a blood clot in her leg.

Mr. and Mrs. Alvin F. Moritz, Milwaukee, visited over the holiday week-end at the



Monday: Wieners in buns, baked beans, cottage cheese, apricots, bread and butter, milk.

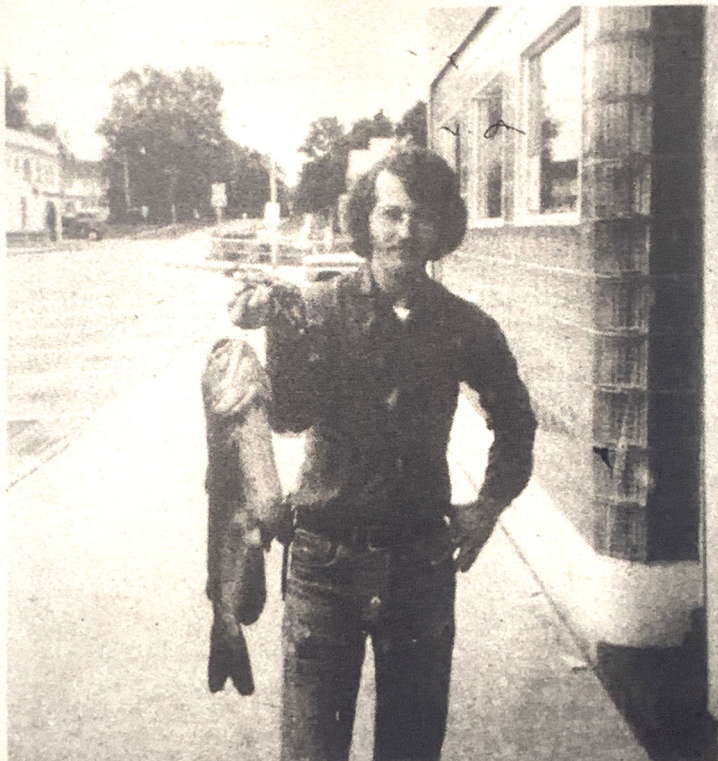
Tuesday: Turkey roll, mashed potatoes, bean salad, sweet potatoes, cookies, bread and butter, milk.

Wednesday: Ground beef and macaroni casserole, carrot and celery sticks, cheese slices, pineapple sauce, bread and butter, milk.

Thursday: Baked chop suey, lettuce salad, chocolate pudding, peanut butter sandwiches, milk.

Friday: Fish portions, cabbage salad, Fritos, assorted fruit, peanut butter sandwiches, chocolate or white milk.

Among those from this area attending the Rock River Threshere Association reunion over the week-end at the Threshere grounds, near Edgerton, were Messrs. and Mmes. Fred C. Durtschi, Edward Riese and family, Frank Riese, Frank Loveland, Robert Durtschi and family, Edward Soper, Mrs. Mary Peterson, Dr. and Mrs. E. C. Aquino and family and Lawrence Bidlingmaier.



LAKE MONTESIAN LUNKER—Carlton Wichser, Monticello, is shown holding a 25½ inch, nearly 9 pound catfish which he caught in Lake Montesian last Thursday morning. This fish appears quite well fed. The DNR is gradually lowering the water level of Lake Montesian and the fish which remain trapped in pockets will be poisoned. Then shore improvements will be made to repair damage caused by the muskrats. The lake will then be stocked with game fish by the Department of Natural Resources.

Misses Florence and Ruth Purinton, Madison, were Sunday afternoon and supper guests at the home of Mrs. Fred Babler and daughter, Edna. Other evening visitors there were Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Hoesly, Belleville.

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Listen to Station WEKZ Every Monday for our Sale Listings.

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Week-end guests at the home of Mrs. Conrad Stauffacher were Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Halverson, daughters, Heidi and Connie, and son, Eric, Waupaca, Mrs. Walter Ingold, Lake Geneva, Irvin Aebly and Herbert Schmidt, Marietta, Minn. They also visited at the home of Mrs. Fred G. Haldiman.

Lake Montesian Being Drained; Plan 'War' on Pesky Muskrat Population

With the removal of some of the boards which regulate the water level of Lake Montesian at the overflow last week, an idea of how far the water has receded from the shoreline is shown in the above photo.

Fish in the lake which pass through the overflow will be allowed to enter the Sugar river. Some will be seined by the Department of Natural Resources and placed in the river, and those remaining trapped in pockets will be poisoned.

Muskrats have played havoc with the shoreline of the lake and the Monticello Community club plans to reinforce the most heavily damaged portion of the shoreline with rocks to discourage further damage by the muskrats.

Once the lake is refilled, the Department of Natural Resources plans to stock it with game fish.

If sufficient funds are available, it is possible that other improvements of the lake might be considered.



Gottlieb Theiler Gravestone Pieces

Recently the descendants of Gottlieb came looking for his gravestone. After not finding a gravestone, research was done to find the location. Using records, the location was discovered at the cemetery by church. There was no stone, along with many other graves. Finally stones were found in the woods with the help of Brian Grossen. A sad treasure. The family now plans to purchase a new stone.

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.



Museum Open House

Wednesday, October 4

6-8 p.m.

Since 2014, "Freedom Summer" has traveled to more than 50 venues around the nation and been seen by over 100,000 people. The Wisconsin Historical Society currently provides this display to schools, public libraries, historical societies and civic organizations in Wisconsin.

A Traveling Display



16 - 39" X 87" panels

Because this is such a special display, any group can arrange to visit during October. Call Sue (608)862-3992

44th Annual

Native American Indian Artifact Show

The Badger State Archaeological Society will hold its 44th Annual Native American Indian Artifact Show on Sunday, October 22nd. The event will be held in the Rehmstedt gym at Monticello School, 334 South Main Street, Monticello, WI from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Cost of admission is \$2.00 for 14 years and older.

There will be experts on hand to identify your artifacts.

The show was started by Ralph Hammerly, Paul Severson, & James Beer, with only 5 tables in Monroe. The show has grown to over 80 tables of artifacts on display or for sale, including points, stone, bone, copper artifacts, prints, books, pottery, jewelry, rugs and a whole lot more. The show itself is a history lesson.

This year the 4th grade students at the Monticello Schools will be making Indian villages. They will be made out of all natural materials.

The Boy Scout Troop #106 will have a lunch stand.

There will be awards for best of show, best personal find, judge's choice, and best educational display.

For more information contact Steve or Janet Gobeli 608 -329-4781

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Remembering September 1973

By Jules Cappelle

Can it really be 50 years??? Yes, 50 years ago I started teaching here in Monticello. Everyone was so friendly and inviting. I was single and fresh out of college. To start the school year off there was a picnic for staff and the board at Richard Smith's farm. Hazel Kundert was my elementary principal in addition to teaching fifth grade. She, more than anyone else, helped me figure out what teaching was. My job was to teach a combination 5th and 6th grade room. There were grade 1-2 and grade 3-4 combination rooms also. The combination rooms were designed to keep the classroom numbers lower to improve learning. My room had only 30 students which I considered small after having done practice teaching in a classroom of over 40 and having been in classrooms when younger closer to 50. When being hired, one of the highlights was that each elementary classroom was equipped with technology: a radio and a black and white TV for PBS for over the air classes.

In 1973 I used to enter the village of Monticello on Coates Ave. going past a large barn with cows to get to Main Street. Once on Main Street the corner included a smaller version of Voegelli Chevrolet, a fire station, trailer homes and gas station. Going down the street was a large hotel where the Village parking lot is, with a really cool building across the street where they drove tractors upstairs to repair. In addition, there were two hardware stores, two

grocery stores, two lawyers and numerous bars. I was told by the superintendent that if I wanted to go to a bar, do it out of town so no one would talk. If you were buying groceries, hardware, or a car, try to buy it town because the businesses paid the taxes which paid my salary and supported the school in many other ways.

Cousin's: A Swiss Immigrant's Family Story



By Douglas L. Karlen

Recently Doug Karlen donated three copies of his recently published book to the museum. The book is a well documented story of his mother's family coming from Glarus, Switzerland and their new life here in Monticello and New Glarus. Included are reflections on farming, cheesemaking, owning land and family life.

Call 515-537-6557 for a copy or read a museum copy.

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: _____

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YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN

THE MONTICELLO AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

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
jules.cappelle@gmail.com.

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

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Monticello Area Historical Society in
your will.

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

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Monticello, WI 53570

