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RECOLLECTIONS

Monticello Area Historical Society News

Year 2024, No. 1



Inside: Voegeli Cited For Years As Car Dealer

MAHS Board of Directors

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- Secretary - Sue Rieder
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- Member - John Casey
- Member - Don Kubly
- Member - Kim Buehl

Coordinators

- Programs - Paul Rieder
- Window Display—May Burgy
- Membership - Carol Schultz
- Newsletter - Jules Cappelle
jules.cappelle@gmail.com

Dear Friends,

The streets of Monticello are being converted to the farms of our area. "Heritage Farms" will offer a glimpse into multigenerational area farms with artifacts and lots of pictures and historical narrative. We are still seeking "everyday photos" - gardening, gathering eggs, slopping the hog, laundry day . We can scan right from your collection - no need to take an album apart. Consider being part of our exhibit.

It's with heavy heart we mourn and celebrate the life of Marlene Schmalbeck. Marlene was truly the spark that ignited our current historical society. As the founding mother, Marlene was excited to see her vision become reality, and was always offering ideas and suggestions. We offer our sympathies to her family. Thank You, Marlene!

Is it *really* Spring??
Mary Davis, President

Museum Open

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

50 Years Ago
Monticello Messenger March 1974

Voegeli Cited For Years As Car Dealer

by Karen Brugger

From February 27, 1985 Messenger

Leon Voegeli, age 89 years is a resident of the New Glarus Home and selling cars has been a way of life for over 60 years. In recognition of his accomplishments he received a gold pin from a representative of Chevrolet Sales. Voegeli ranked as the sixth oldest Chevrolet dealer in the U.S. He became interested in the car business when his older brother Jack began selling Nash vehicles in Monticello in 1909. Leon entered the business in 1916, going into the military in 1918. For over a year his father, a Monticello area farmer took over the business. After Leon returned in 1919, his brother Jack and a partner from Monticello moved their dealership to Iowa and Leon became the Monticello dealer. Initially he sold Fords and the Nash line until obtaining the Chevrolet dealership in 1924 and adding the Buick line in 1934. It was a Model T Ford Voegeli sold as his first vehicle. He recalls selling it for \$380. It wasn't much more than tin, a steering wheel and four tires. In those days the cars came in by railroad. The body and chassis were separate and had to be assembled. Cars were relatively easy to sell in the early days as the "horseless buggies". "I sold a lot of people their first cars" Voegeli remembers. And of course, he added, there wasn't the problem of trade-ins. There also wasn't the problem of customers wanting various options and color combinations. "They were all the same "black." When he wanted more cars to sell, he would go to the Janesville plant and ask them for four or five cars. Leon admitted he has never been a mechanic, relying instead on good help. Until he entered the Home a year and a half ago, he spent most of his time at the familiar garage, enjoying visiting with all the people. He said "I put everything into the garage, it's my pride." In recent years, rather than sell cars he did a lot of driving for the company. "I like to be behind the wheel of a big Electra." Voegeli's pace has been slowed down by a stroke but remains alert and keeps current on the garage's daily transactions. "I still like to know what's going on there." John Stenbrotten is married to Leon's daughter Bea and serves as secretary-treasurer and grandson Jack is the company's vice-president. As he talks about the future of the garage, Voegeli points with pride to a picture of his great grandson. It seems likely the selling of cars begun by Voegeli in

Monticello so many years ago will continue in the family for quite some time. However this was not to be, as of January 2024 the Voegeli Chevrolet business was purchased by Symdom as Jack and his brother Dan both retired, no further family to take over. Monticello Ford also purchased by Symdom and grandson Steve



Photo taken January 17, 2024

"Removal of Voegeli sign."

March 21 meeting. Note week early due to Maundy Thursday.

The Monticello Woolen Mill began operation in 1866 as a water-powered mill on the Little Sugar River and created its iconic Monticello blankets, cloths, and yarns for nearly one hundred years. The mill tragically burned in 1950, leaving ruins and a local landmark, the 1868 limestone warehouse building. This presentation will trace the story of this small but influential area factory and detail the rejuvenation of a historic Monticello site.

Historical Society a Reality

Monroe Evening Times, Wednesday, July 19, 1995

By Susan Wetherington

MONTICELLO _ A year ago, a historical society in Monticello was a mere thought.

Today, however, the Monticello Area Historical Society boasts approximately 50 members and will soon be incorporated.

Although Marlene Schmalbeck was instrumental in organizing the society, the "coming together of community effort" was amazing, she said.

"I am thrilled by the response, enthusiasm, cooperation and generosity of the people of this community," she said. "It is absolutely overwhelming."

Several of the new MAHS members began their sojourn by joining the Albany Historical Society, which began in 1992.

That group was extremely inspirational," Schmalbeck said.

Involvement with Albany from the beginning encouraged her and Ralph Hammerly.

Then, last year, a turning point came for Schmalbeck that provided the needed push to do something in Monticello.

"I attended an auction of a family outside of Monticello and on that farm, there was memorabilia from five generations that had lived in that house," she recalled. "All I could envision was Monticello's history driving away down Highway 69."

After the auction, Schmalbeck received information on the 1994 annual convention of the Wisconsin Council for Local History in October and decided to attend. That convention provided her with the working information to begin an organization such as MAHS.

Schmalbeck had the idea and the knowledge she needed to begin some kind of history-preserving group, but she would need more than that to create a historical society.

Last December, she scheduled an information/interest meeting. The night turned out to be bitterly cold and Schmalbeck wondered if she should cancel the meeting.



Grand Opening May 13, 2007

“More people than I ever expected attended that night and they all agreed that we should begin a group for the preservation of Monticello’s history,” she said.

A February meeting was scheduled with speaker Tom McKay, coordinator for the State Historical Society of Wisconsin’s Office of Local History.

Tom McKay told us that to begin, we needed to elect temporary officers, create our own by-laws, hold regular meetings and get membership,” Schmalbach said.

That was all the people of Monticello needed to know. The society had begun.

Over the next three months, officers were elected. Schmalbeck became pro-temp president, Ellie Root was elected vice president and Mary Davis was voted in as secretary-treasurer. The officers, along with John Ramer and Heinie Babler, created the organization’s by-laws.

The May meeting featured area veterans, with many pictures and memories shared.

The June program featured country schools of the Monticello area and country school teachers were special guests that night. Twenty-eight people braved one of the hottest nights to share their memories and 10 teachers were honored at the meeting.

At the same time, other MAHS members began a project on their own that would greatly affect the direction that the society would start moving.

Ralph Hammerly felt that he wanted to give some copies of old photos he had to his daughter. He contacted Jules Cappelletti and asked him to make 8x10 copies of his pictures.

“I can do better than that,” Cappelletti told Hammerly. “We’ll make a video of your pictures.”

The first video that Cappelletti and Hammerly made had no narration and Hammerly’s daughter returned it to him.

“This means nothing to me,” she told her father.

Cappelletti suggested that Hammerly contact Lillian

Hefty to help create an extemporaneous narration for the pictures. Cappelletti worked with Hefty and Hammerly and created the first video, “Old Monticello.”

“It wasn’t an easy thing to do,” Hammerly said.

The first time they filmed, they found that the sound hadn’t been turned on. It took two tries to produce any results and the movie was featured at the society’s April meeting.

That presentation began a new vision for the group. When a society is formed, there is little money to collect items, maintain museums or even store collections donated to the group. Yet some momentum needs to feel that it is accomplishing its purpose.

For MAHS, creating a video library has become a natural step of growth.

Carol Strause volunteered to record the June country school meeting and the tape captured the memories shared by those in attendance that night.

For Schmalbeck, who returned to her roots in Monticello, and Hammerly and Hefty, who continue to live in family homes in the Monticello area, MAHS represents their hope of preserving the past and the present for the future of Monticello.

Scholarship Fund

At the December 5th board meeting it was determined to start a fund to encourage local youth to maintain the history of the area for future generations. Please be sure to mark your tax deductible donation to be designated for the scholarship fund. This fund will be separate from other accounts.

Past newsletters can be found on our website:

www.monticellohistoricalsociety.org



The champion Ponies are front row (left to right) Dale Saxer, Manager, Dave Riese, Dave Getman and Steve Seeholzer (Co-Captains), Kevin Buehl and John Strause; second row, Coach Woody Wilson, Stan Turner, Tim Feller, Kim

Bowman, Alan Stauffer, Coach Ron Buchholz; back row, Peter Graber, Manager, Bryan Babler, Mike Blum, Steve Babler, Jeff Zuber and Richard Hartwig, Manager.

State Line Final

	W	L
Monticello	15	1
Brodhead	14	2
Holy Name	14	2
Blackhawk	10	6
New Glarus	8	8
Barneveld	7	9
Pecatonica	7	9
Belleville	6	10
Juda	4	12
Argyle	3	13
Albany	0	16

SEASON RECORD

MONTICELLO OPPONENTS

72	Waunakee	69
80	Juda	41
65	Brodhead	54
60	Holy Name	50
77	Pecatonica	58
72	Barneveld	56
68	Argyle	54
83	Albany	27
52	Lena-Winslow	47
75	Blackhawk	55
56	Belleville	33
69	New Glarus	32
84	Juda	48
72	Brodhead	46
45	Holy Name	51
56	Pecatonica	51
83	Barneveld	37
89	Argyle	44

Rochester's HAYLAGE STRUCTURE

STANDARD: GOLD & WHITE ROOF
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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & SERVICE CONTACT:
Fred C. Durtschi
MONTICELLO, WIS.

50 Years Ago

Monticello Messenger March 1974

The Right Formula For Happy Living

A heart filled with God's Love, mixed with an abiding desire to do His Will, and stirred by regular and reverent worship in His Holy Sanctuary.

CHRIST INVITES YOU TO WORSHIP

Zwingli United Church of Christ

Charles G. Workman, Pastor

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.

School Class Visits Library

Twenty pupils in Mrs. Wenger's second grade class at the Monticello elementary school visited the village library on Wednesday morning of last week. Ten of the youngsters had borrowing cards but the other 10 took out cards to enable them to borrow books.

Fifty-eight books and eight magazines were taken out.

Groups are welcome to visit the library. Make arrangements with the librarian, Mrs. Henry V. Baebler.

Mrs. Ellen Stauffer has presented the library with a nice cash donation.

Plans are being made to hold a contest in Grades 1-6 at school to draw pictures of characters or scenes from stories they have read. This will take place during National Library Week, April 21 through April 27.

The pictures will be on display in the village hall and open to the public one day during the week. The pictures will be judged and ribbons will be given to the winning artists.

More details will be available later.

New Exhibit Coming for 2024



Ping Pong Event Leaders Listed

In the Monday evening Ping Pong Tournament at the Zwingli church, Todd Woelffer and Bryan Green won six matches as the top boys' team. They were followed by Ott-Randy Flesher, with 4 matches; Greg Elmer-Marvin Gilbertson, with 3; Bryan Riese-Pete Pinnow, with 1; Cindy Bacher-Stacy Schultz with 1.

The Jerry Rufer-Tom Cisewski and Tom and Joe Cisewski combos had a frustrating night.

Woelffer-Green were the only team to beat Coach Charles Workman and his boy partner of the evening, Joe Pinnow, who won 7 matches.

Polls will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Village Hall.

Lorraine Elmer, Village Clerk.

The following is a facsimile of the official ballot:

FACSIMILE OFFICIAL VILLAGE BALLOT

To vote for a person whose name is printed on the ballot, make a cross (X) in the square after the name of the person for whom you desire to vote. To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write his or her name in the blank space provided for that purpose.

TRUSTEE	Vote for Three
CLARENCE BLUMER	
FRED C. DURTSCHI	
ERNEST M. GEMPELER	
DAVID PEDERSON	
CHARLES ROLPH	
DAVID E. SEEHOLZER	
.....	
.....	
.....	
MUNICIPAL JUSTICE OF THE PEACE Vote for One	
EARL FELDT	
E. C. SOPER	
.....	

50 Years Ago

Monticello Messenger March 1974

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 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.

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

