



www.monticellohistoricalsociety.org

### MAHS

#### Board of Directors

President - Mary Davis  
 Vice-Pres. - Hans Sulzer  
 Secretary - May Burgy  
 Treas. - Karen Brugger  
 Member - John Casey  
 Member - Michael Wayland  
 Member - Don Schneider

#### Collection Manager

#### Collection Archivist

Karen Gempeler

#### Coordinators

Docents - Kay & Bill Dickson  
 Programs - Donna Ferguson  
 Membership - Carol Schultz  
 Newsletter - Tere Dunlap

### Wanted

Many annually paying members have let their memberships slide! We would like to welcome them back as we have many interesting speakers at our monthly meetings and lots of ways to volunteer, if they wish.

Speaking of volunteers, we could use help sorting and organizing the storage area upstairs, also someone with "Past Perfect" skills to catalog donated artifacts. Hopefully some of this can be done this winter.

# RECOLLECTIONS

*Monticello Area Historical Society News*

Fall 2015

## *From the President:*

Dear Friends,

The frost is on the pumpkins, and fall is falling all around us. Our museum is closed for the season, and our final meeting of 2015 is over.

Before you get too comfortable in your recliner, take off for sunny climates or get busy preparing holiday foods, I ask you to give another thought to MAHS. Almost all of our current members are "life-time." That translates into no on-going income in the form of annual dues. Our dues are a real bargain – either life-time or annual. You enjoy an amazing, free museum and a variety of interesting programs throughout the year.

This summer we had a cement slab and retaining wall replaced behind the museum. This fall we are having the south wall of the building stabilized and sealed to prevent further deterioration. Fortunately, we have the funds to pay for these. But we, as a board, realize our investment portfolio is not infinite and should be replaced to insure long-term financial health.

I'm hoping those of you who are interested and able would consider contributing to our operational and maintenance expenses. Unlike the current commercial "One and done," do consider a donation for any purpose you designate.

Have a Happy, Healthy Winter!

Mary Davis, President

### Lost...

**MAHS Collection Manager** is needed.

Does anyone have **Monticello Messengers or Post Messengers** dated from August 1977 to May 1994? These are missing from our files.

### and Found

We still have a good supply of "**Drizzle**" (\$20) and "**Those Who Served**" (\$30) on hand. They would a nice Christmas gift, as would a MAHS membership.

We have many **MHS yearbooks** and a book of **MHS alumni** from 1892-2012 to browse through. They also make good references for genealogy research.

## Acknowledgments

### Thank you, Volunteers.

Volunteers perform many tasks during the year. There are those who serve as docents once or several times; plant and water the flower tubs; and make repairs such as changing light bulbs, checking smoke alarms, painting the upstairs balcony

Many volunteers answered our plea for rummage sale donations, took time to set up and work for three days, and then got the leftover items to the Easter Seal truck. Many hours were spent planning and putting up the new school display in place for our opening week.

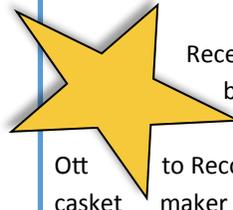
Roger Dooley keeps up the website, and he also submits a picture and story to the Monroe Times each month. Tere Dunlap came forward and offered to put the newsletter together, and John Casey continues to print, address and mail them, donating his time and supplies.

You know what you did to keep the museum up and running, and you are appreciated. We are fortunate to have individuals who donate hours of time to support us.

Donna Ferguson keeps us supplied with very interesting programs, and has been doing so for many years. She is always open for suggestions. Thanks, Donna, for doing such a great job.

Two of our members, Robert Braem and Jim Hopkins, passed away, and we extend our sympathies to their families.

## Recent donations to MAHS



Recent donations include a chair from Fred Gerber furniture store built in 1913, which would be the brick building formerly occupied by Ott to Recover. Mr. Gerber was the local undertaker and casket maker as well. The chair was donated by Robert and Chris Gmur.

John Oschner brought in a photo of Company B, 53<sup>rd</sup> Med., from WWII. His uncle Paul Derendinger was a member and was the first Monticello soldier killed in Italy, August 1944, in an accident. He was an ambulance driver.

Kathryn Grenzow moved from her home of many years, and her family brought some Grenzow Grocery store advertising items.

Bob and Donna Durtschi donated a copy of "Cheese County," a history of the dairy and cheese industry in Green County, Wisconsin.

The annual rummage sale netted \$871.55. We use this money for utilities and small repairs. We presently sealed the south wall above the post office. Some loose bricks were falling, and it was necessary to get this done before winter set in. In early spring, the area behind our building was renovated. A cistern was filled in, and a new retaining wall, as well as the entire entrance, was cemented. We think we have the best looking "back yard" along the alley!

Being asked to lay out the MAHS newsletter was an unexpected joy. I semi-retired in December from The Monroe Times, where I had worked as a news reporter for more than seven years, covering mostly city government and features.

I wanted to spend more time helping my family and tending to our family farm in South Dakota. I also wanted to indulge in some of my other interests – local history, herb gardening and decluttering my home. But freelance editing and writing were to remain my main occupation. We got a late start with the Winter issue and combined the Spring and Summer issue. Hopefully, we will be ready for quarterly issues next year.

I graduated in 2007 from Edgewood College with a BS degree in English-writing concentration and a MA in Religious Studies. I have an extra 50 undergraduate credits related to ethology and neuropsychology from Iowa State University.

Our family moved to Monticello in early 1993. My husband, Raymond, works for a computer maintenance company

based in Omaha, Neb. Our children, Christopher and Brittany, graduated from MHS in the early 2000s. Brittany is now married to Ben Workman, and they have a son, Silas, 2, who is the main reason I want more time with family.

I am also now involved with the Friends of the Chalet of the Golden Fleece in New Glarus, helping with public relations writing and inventory.

Local history is of interest to me, because my grandfather, Otto Zimmerman, and all his brothers and sisters were born in Monroe. His mother, Lizette, died in May 1906. I found her death recorded in the newspaper and in St. John's records, but I have yet to find her grave site. His baby sister, Ida, was adopted by Fred and Frances Benkert of Monticello and Albany. His father, Fred, later went to live with Otto and his family in South Dakota and is buried there. I still have blood relatives in the Green County area.

~ Tere Dunlap

## Monticello's library property — before it was a funeral home, 1991.

MONTICELLO — Someone set fire to an old, Victorian house along East Lake Avenue in Monticello on March 9, 1991. But it was all right; the house was a training exercise for firefighters of 13 local fire departments.

The house had been donated for the training to the Monticello Fire District by Lowell Stuessy of Monroe. Stuessy had purchased the property to build a new funeral

home on the lot. The village hadn't had a funeral home since 1969, according to an article published in Monroe Evening Times, March 11, 1991.

Habitat for Humanity was allowed to go through the house first and salvage what it could use.

Fire department volunteers from Monticello, New Glarus, Albany, Orfordville, Evansville, Footville, Brodhead, Juda, Monroe, South

Wayne, Browntown, Woodford, and Fitchburg participated in the seven-hour exercise. About 80 firefighters took part; each had a chance to enter a burning room. Many of them had never been in a burning building before.

The on-site, live-fire training followed two weeks of various training exercises presented by seven instructors from Blackhawk Technical Institute in Janesville. Monticello Fire Chief Jerry Klassy coordinated the training. Monticello's pumper truck, under an experimental pumping operation, set up about 1,500 feet away at the Little Sugar River and provided the water for the day.

A video crew from Blackhawk Technical College filmed the house burn, which was to be used as a training tape. At the time, according to a media specialist from the college, no training films that covered many of the lessons being taught that day were available.



Did you stop by to see the wonderful window display by the Washington 4-H Club, which was placed for National 4-H Club Month?

These were exhibited at the Green County and Wisconsin State fairs and show awesome talent and skills. Sally Roe and Carolyn Schwartzlow are leaders of these young folks. Future MAHS members, we hope.

Attendance at our Saturday openings was down this summer. The bike trail seems to have lost its appeal, and there were many rainy weekends early in the summer and mosquitoes.

Kay Dickson and Karen Brugger hosted the two, second grade classes last month. One evening, the M&M Women's Club were given a tour.

## MAHS museum helps visitors reminisce on school days

*This article was originally submitted for publication Sept. 14, 2015, in The Monroe Times.*

"Oh, I remember this."

"Hey, I had one of these!"

Many summer visitors to the Monticello Area Historical Society's newest museum display, Slate Boards to Smart Boards, stepped back into their own school days.

The society has transformed the museum's main display room into a school room, where books, desks, lunch boxes and sports equipment highlight the history of Green County schools and the evolution of teaching and learning.

In the back corner sits the old potbelly stove. Those whose desks sat near the stove always seemed to be too warm, while those who sat furthest away were too often chilly.

A portable blackboard and a wall-mounted white board, displayed side by side, show the advance in presenting daily lessons to students. Afterschool chores for students have gone away with the days of banging clean the dusty erases.

An array of school desks show the progression of student seating. Once mounted to the floor and even attached to one another, desks became lighter, airy and plastic – easier to move for group projects.

A hard-covered book was at one time a valuable item, and students were required to treat them as such. No marking in books was allowed. But once in a while, a lucky student may find his copy

was written in and not erased well, leaving faint but readable answers to the questions at the ends of chapters –and homework became a breeze.

The use of books in school remained unchanged for many decades in American schools, but the internet changed all that. Computers and tablets now provide online access to reading materials, more



commonly than books.

The most common writing utensil has become the computer keyboard now too. But writing began with an erasable slate board and chalk, reusable when writing paper was premium. Eventually though, ink and pens came to school. Ink wells, circular holes cut into the desktops, held the ink bottles secure – and so began the stories of dipping in the ink the pig-tails of the girl sitting in front of you.

Fountain pens and ball point pens arrived on the scene, making life a little less messy for everyone.

Pencils were graphite rods sandwiched between wooden sticks. Pencil sharpeners were invented - and replaced the pocket knife - to grind off the wood and leave a sharpened point for writing. Erasers were sold separately, before they came crimped to one end in the mid-1850s. And then, the rods were dispensable through hollow, plastic tubes with just a click of a button.

Typewriters became electrified and then computerized, televised and miniaturized. The QWERTY keyboard is the only familiar part remaining.

Computers are replacing books on the shelf; maps on the wall; radios on the desks; stenographs, duplicators and copy machines in the corners; and test papers. The MAHS museum may be the last place to see them.

But not everything about old school has evaporated. Baseball bats and gloves still line the sports closets. Footballs, basketballs and soccer balls still have to be rounded up after recess play.

And lunch, whether it comes to school in a tin pail with you or gets served up hot from the cafeteria kitchen, is still the most important period of the day for some kids.

Slate Boards to Smart Boards opened this season and will remain on display to the public through next year.

What's in your closet?



Remember the penny postcard?

Postcards could be mailed for one cent from 1873 until 1917. The rate was increased that year because of WWI. In 1919, with the war's end, the rate dropped back to a penny, where it remained until 1952.

"Photoshopping" a picture didn't start with Microsoft Photoshop.

This particular postcard, left, is one of the many spoofed postcards made sometime between 1917 and 1925. It shows the busy streets of Monticello with a cable car. Its tracks and overhead cables are even visible.

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.

TO BECOME A MAHS MEMBER

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

Membership year: May through April

► Type of membership:

- Lifetime membership - \$100
- Individual annual dues - \$10 /person

►  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 ANNEX IN MONTICELLO, WIS.

### 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 closed October 31 until the first Saturday in May 2016, 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.

**Did you know?** Member Lillian Hefty celebrated her 100th birthday in July.

She is featured in the Oct.-Nov. issue of "Country Woman" magazine. The article and pictures were submitted by her granddaughter Anne Veit (daughter of member Thomas Hefty). Newly graduated from Green County Normal school, Lillian began her teaching career in 1933 at the Marty rural district. When she married, old-fashioned rules required her to leave. After raising her family, she returned to teaching and later became Monticello School District's first female school board president. She can show you a handwritten notebook of all the students she has taught since 1933.

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