

New Glarus Historical Society

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Board of Directors Update By Carol Hassemer

With the 2023 season winding down in mid-October, the Board met on October 10th. The last official Village & Museum open date was Sunday, October 15th although there was a group tour on October 18th. The season's attendance was approximately 3800, which included seven adult tours and one children's tour, and great attendance at the Pie & Ice Cream Social and Harvest Fest. The Village also hosted the annual "Country School" for the New Glarus Schools.

Harvest Fest was a success with about 500 people in attendance and 30+ exhibitors demonstrating old-time crafts, which were fascinating to observe. Demonstrations included wooden handle carving, blacksmithing, coopering, beekeeping, chair caning, weaving, yarn spinning, and so much more. Kids loved to shuck and grind corn, make rope, jump rope, and do sack races. We also had many Swiss musicians. The Jodlerklub, Maennerchor, alphorns, concertina, and spoons took turns throughout the day. Swiss flag throwers and talerschwingen entertained. The bake sale and brat/hot dog stand were busy. It was a wonderful day to celebrate autumn in the Swiss Historical Village!

The author presentation by Susan Apps-Bodilly who presented her book, *One Room School Houses* on Thursday, October 12th was delightful and most interesting. There was a good turn-out even though the event needed to be moved to the Village Hall Community Room due to the weather. Ms. Apps-Bodilly looks forward to a return visit to share more. The event was co-sponsored by the New Glarus Public Library and the New Glarus Historical Society, with support from the Wisconsin Historical Society's Speaker's Bureau, a part of the History Makers Tour.

November is dedicated to working on the 2024 budget and planning for increasing membership and attendance. Work progresses on the painting of the cow, developing a new website, and finishing murals for the Hall of History. We will hear soon if the CFSW New Glarus Community Fund will support the purchase of archiving software.

Thank you to all who helped to make a successful 2023 season at the Swiss Historical Village & Museum!

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Erica Loeffelholz, Newsletter Editor

Thanksgiving Dinnner

Thanksgiving dinner wouldn't be complete without plenty of side dishes, and every family member has their own opinions when it comes to what to make. Is green bean casserole a must have or a hard pass? Scalloped potatoes or mashed, and is it permissible for the mashed potatoes to contain lumps? Should the cranberry sauce be homemade, or do you prefer it in a jellied log complete with ridges from the can?

One thing that's not up for negotiation in our household is dressing, and plenty of it. This humble side makes good use of stale bread that might otherwise go to waste, and has been a popular Thanksgiving dish in America for nearly 200 years, though its history likely stretches back much further.

If you'd like to try your hand at making homemade dressing, instead of resorting to a box of Stove Top, why not try out this recipe we found in the November 25, 1936 edition of the *New Glarus Post*.

Good stuffing for the Thanksgiving bird is of prime importance to the success of the yearly feast. It must, first of all, be well selected, a delicately flavored stuffing for the roast chicken and turkey, a more strongly flavored one for the roast goose or duck.

Second, it must be perfectly seasoned. Not too strongly to overwhelm the deliciousness of the bird, nor yet so bland in taste as to be uninteresting. Third, it must be of the proper consistency, not too moist, nor yet too dry. And fourth, there must be enough.

Bread being the usual foundation of the dressing, let us talk of it first. All kinds of breads may be used in the dressing providing the white bread predominates. Cold biscuits, pieces of corn bread, slices of whole wheat and rye may all be used. Use part crust too, as well as the crumb. The bread should be dry and if part or all is lightly toasted, so much the better. And bread cut into small cubes makes better dressing than when crumbed.

Celery, oysters, mushrooms, chestnuts, the other ingredients you will use are of course dependent upon your own personal tastes and upon the bird you are serving. Here is a basic recipe for dressing for the twelve to fifteen-pound bird.

3 qts. stale bread cubes	Sage to taste
2 Tbsp. salt	1 cup melted butter
1 tsp. pepper	2 cups chopped celery
1 Tbsp. chopped parsley	Cooked giblets

Prepare bread, sprinkle with seasonings. Pour over the melted butter and enough boiling water or stock from cooking giblets and neck to moisten. In adding butter and stock, toss the ingredients together lightly with a fork. Never press them together.

If you like onion in dressing, saute one or two slices in a portion of the butter before adding it to the dressing.

Chestnut dressing is usually liked. To make it, prepare one-half pound chestnuts, chopping them rather fine. Mix with bread.

Midcentury Christmas with Leslie Goddard



Mark your calendars for Thursday, December 7th and come to the New Glarus Public Library at 6:30 PM for a fantastic presentation from historian Leslie Goddard.

Christmas in America from the 1940s through the 1960s meant aluminum trees, department store Santas, and cartoon specials on TV. Every kid in the suburbs had to have an Easy-Bake Oven, a G.I. Joe, or a Slinky. The coolest houses had rotating color wheels for their trees. Join Leslie as she explores this optimistic era in a new illustrated lecture, using photographs, advertisements, greeting cards, and catalogs to explore why this era was a turning point for how we celebrate the holidays.

This free holiday event will be held in the community room at the New Glarus Village Hall. All ages are welcome. Holiday treats will be provided. Sign up for the library's mailing list for a chance to win a door prize!

Letters from the Boys

Being separated from family at Christmas is never easy, but wartime absences are felt especially keenly. During the years of World War II, many soldiers took the time to write to the *Post* to provide updates and share their appreciation for all the cards, letters, and gifts from home.

December 9, 1942

Staff Sergeant Kenneth Hoesly is here from the Army Air Base at Anderson Field, Waterboro, S.C. Kenneth works with a doctor, who is a prominent New York City surgeon making rounds in sanitation inspections, doing office work, etc. This is a new camp and the hospital is just opening up. He has also been assisting with the physical education work there.

Kenneth says that Southern hospitality really doesn't come up to the northern kind as far as the soldiers are concerned. At Thanksgiving time, Kenneth's mother sent him a box of all kinds of baked goods. The boys looked at the "Zureibieter" in rather a doubting manner but he finally persuaded them to take a taste and then Kenneth says, the two large "Zureibieter" disappeared before he had more than a piece or two.

With the limburger, however, he says, it is different. The only boys he found willing to help him eat that were a Melland boy from this vicinity and a Bieri boy from Mt. Vernon

From Pfc. Robert E. Gmur
Somewhere in Italy, November 21, 1943
Dear Mother and Dad:

Have received two packages, Swiss cheese a little dry but it tastes all right. Also have the cigarettes, handkerchiefs, tooth powder and shaving cream and other items that were in that package. I want to thank you very much for sending me these things.

Everything is well with me, nothing wrong except that it is noisy and a bit cold and wet, but our Uncle Sam gives us plenty of good and warm clothes. Food we have plenty and with Christmas packages coming in we have more than enough. But a soldier can eat like a horse, no matter how much he gets he can still push down an extra piece of Mother's cake or a handful of candy. So far I am not running short of cigarettes. All is well. God be with us all, Your Son,
Bob

December 25, 1942
Great Lakes, ILL

Hello Art:

Well, it's a nice Christmas that we had anyway I can say that I hope the same for all the folks back home.

First of all I want to thank all the people and organizations for their fine cards, especially the church organization for the nice remembrance. I think the folks of New Glarus do a very fine job for the boys in service, cause I appreciate it very much. As it is I figured on being further away by this time, but we got in a little jam.

I and about fifty other fellows are locked up for scarlet fever right now. The way it was one fellow got it, and then they take tests of all kinds to see if we were supposed to get it. But we are all O.K. I don't think there are anymore going to get it. I haven't had it and don't hope to get it.

I don't know much else to write, but hope to get out of here soon, cause I haven't been out side for a few days.

But those cards and gifts sure gave me a lift as I was plenty lonesome with nothin' to do. So here's wishing you all a very Happy New Year, as ever.

Harold Maurer

December 6, 1943

T3 Serg. Arthur Elmer is now on the famous Ledo road in India. He has written his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Julius Elmer that he was to have a furlough soon and expected to go to Calcutta and would try to look up Clifford Kubly who is stationed there. The two boys had been in touch with each other.

Art also sent his mother and sister a handsome carved wooden box and carved ivory jewelry.

December 1, 1943
Somewhere in England

Dear Art:

I have time to write a few lines, I have moved quite a ways since my last address. We are somewhere in England now. The country is pretty nice around here, but I'll still take the States for mine. We are in some old buildings which are little better than sleeping outside. It rains most of the time usually when the sun shines.

I would really enjoy seeing a town with lights again, at 7 o'clock it is so dark around here that you can't see your hand in front of you.

I received the Christmas package from the folks back home, and I want to thank them very much, also for the cards sent to me. I haven't received the New Glarus Post yet, but the mail is pretty slow here.

I hope this finds everybody O.K. in New Glarus and thanks again.

Pfc. John Aebly

December 13, 1944

Mrs. Walter Wenger on Monday received a card and letter from her husband, Lt. Wenger, German prisoner of war. He says there is no need to be concerned over his welfare as his wants are taken care of. There are books to read and the boys in prison put on plays and have an orchestra. The Red Cross food parcels come to them regularly.

Dear Santa

Christmas just isn't complete without a visit from Santa Claus! Throughout the 1950s and 60s, the *New Glarus Post* invited children to write to Santa and mail the letters to the *Post*, where they would be published. These old letters are a delight to read, and they also reveal much about the changing trends of years gone by.

(December 10, 1958)

Dear Santa, Please bring me a Winchester gun, a pocket radio, Cheyenne with his horse, a china horse, a radar set, doctor's kit, and some surprises. For my brother Giffy bring a china horse, a farm set, Matt Dillon and his horse, a Winchester gun, and some surprises.

For my brother Rex bring him some china cows and calves, Tom Jefford with his horse, a Winchester gun, some building blocks and some surprises. Thank you very much.

-Edward John Hoesly



Western movies and TV shows remained hugely popular throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and brought with them a huge variety of toys, books, and other merchandise.

(December 10, 1958)

Dear Santa, I am in first grade and six years old. Please leave me a doll, two front teeth, and clothes for my doll. I want some play high heels. Leave toys for Brad, Bob, Brenda and Colleen. We will leave the door open and some lunch on the table. Leave me other toys, too.

Love, Cindy Mae Stuessy



The Tiny Tears doll debuted in 1952. Not only did she cry "real" tears, she could also drink her bottle, wet her diaper, and blow bubbles!

(December 17, 1958)

Dear Santa, I would like a Lionel freight train for Christmas, with lots of track. I will take good care of it.

Have a Merry Christmas. We will leave some cookies and milk for you on Christmas Eve. Thank you.

-David Earl Duerst



Young inventor Joshua Lionel Cowen founded the Lionel Manufacturing Company in 1900, and his toy locomotives quickly became a favorite. Their popularity was at a peak in the 1950s, but the appeal of toy trains continues to this day.

(December 17, 1958)

Dear Santa, Would you please bring me a Tiny Tears doll with clothes and a doll bed, ironing board and a surprise.

My sister Cindy would like the same things, and together we would like a bike with training wheels.

All my little sister Brenda says she wants is a dolly, but she is a pretty good girl so you could bring her some surprises. We will leave a lunch for you.

Thank you, Connie Wickline

(December 5, 1956)

Dear Santa, Please bring me an electronic cannon truck for Christmas. Please bring Mary Ellen a doll for Christmas. I have been good all year, so has Mary Ellen. I have to go now to watch "Do You Trust Your Wife" on TV. Well, that is about all I can say, Santa. Merry Christmas.

-Steven Hoesly

(December 5, 1956)

Dear Santa, How are you and the Brownies? We are all fine and are waiting for Christmas.

Petra would like a Betsy Wetsy doll and an accordion and a surprise. Susan would like a bath robe and a jewelry box and a doll with clothes and a surprise. Christine would like an Angel doll, a pair of ice skates with one runner, a school bag, and a surprise. Stuart would like some bath toys like a boat or a duck and a surprise.

Please remember all of the children. Merry Christmas to you and the Brownies and Christmas Carol.

Sincerely, Christine, Susan, Petra and Stuart Streiff



Holiday Traditions

By Abigail Biank

“Someone has said that they sometimes wondered whether Thanksgiving wasn’t originated by and for parents whose sons had survived the football season.” This opinion appeared in the November 11, 1947, *New Glarus Post*, followed by a list of “local happenings” describing town Thanksgiving events. New Glarus was officially jumping into yet another new holiday season, and the town was ready.

New Glarus newspapers around both Thanksgiving and Christmas managed to print news about every single gathering of family and friends. Also, they included long lists of college students and former New Glarus residents who were back in town for the holidays. The vast majority of local news notes in November and December look something like this one from December 28, 1932: “Homer Zweifel, student at Manhattan, Kansas, is spending the holidays with his mother Mrs. Appolondia Zweifel.” It seems students like Homer had solid motivation to return home. New Glarus newspapers indicate that the town had traditional holiday dances and parties for many years. Thanksgiving after Thanksgiving, and Christmas after Christmas, the newspaper announced special dances and events for locals to enjoy.

Another New Glarus newspaper holiday tradition seems to have been local store advertisements. Engler’s Cash store ran many advertisements over the years claiming to be an unparalleled source of Christmas gifts. On December 14, 1932, the New Glarus Hardware Store assured the community, “Well we know of another man that found the Hardware Store a good place to buy a Christmas present for his wife, but the best thing to do is to keep still and not spoil the surprise.”

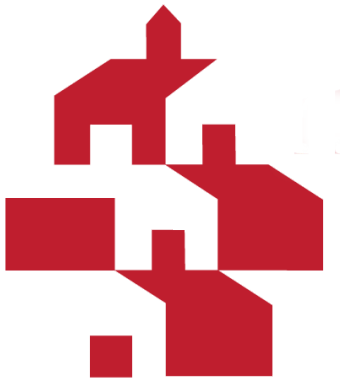
New Glarus seems to have had an interesting and long-lived Thanksgiving tradition in the 20th century of Thanksgiving Day weddings. Of course, it is never called a tradition, but several weddings in New Glarus history have taken place on or around Thanksgiving today. The Legler family embraced this practice, as noted in the December 3, 1947, newspaper, which reads, “All three of the Legler’s daughters were married on Thanksgiving day. The two oldest, Mrs. Hoesly and Mrs. Zentner were married on a double wedding on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 30, 1922. The Gilbert Duersts were also married on a Thanksgiving Day.” New Glarus local Scot Hilton also married on Thanksgiving, according to the May 21, 1947 *Post*. He married Barbara Zweifel in 1910 and went on to run a jewelry and watch repair business and lived in New Glarus his whole life.

And what would Christmas be without the children’s Christmas performances? The December 23, 1946 newspaper points this out with the relatable story: “Then there were the 15 years or more that we [the writers] taught a Sunday School class. There weren’t many of those years that we missed out on helping practice for the Christmas eve program. When the night finally came the youngsters were all excited and later in the evening so tired out that we had a hard time keeping the youngsters from falling off the pews as they fell asleep, one by one.”

New Glarus Post issues from 1912-1979 are now available online!

Digitized papers are available through the Archive of Wisconsin Newspapers, and can be accessed through the New Glarus Public Library’s website. For more information, or to get a library card, contact the library at 608-527-2003 or staff@ngpl.org.

Ancestry Corner



**The Bank
of New Glarus**

Powering Growth in Our Community

*We thank The Bank of New Glarus
for their support in publishing the
New Glarus Historical Society
newsletter.*



Family resemblance? What family resemblance?

Pictured here are two of the earliest immigrants to New Glarus, brothers Abraham and Fridolin Schindler. They were the sons of Andreas Schindler and Dorothea Knobel from Schwandi.

Older brother Fridolin (1805-1872) married Elsbeth Schiesser and had twelve children. His headstone can now be found at the Swiss Historical Village. Abraham (1811-1853) married Anna Baumgartner and had eleven children before his untimely death at the age of 42.

*(Photo shared publicly on
Ancestry.com)*

**New Glarus Historical Society &
Swiss Historical Village Museum**

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