



# RECOLLECTIONS

JANUARY 2011

## Museum news

### MAHS Museum

P.O. Box 463  
204 Main St.  
Monticello, WI, 53570  
(608) 938-4216  
MAHS@tds.net

### Hours of Operation

Saturday 10 AM – 2 PM  
or by appointment  
Closed for the season  
December – April

### Board Members

President – Mary Davis  
Vice-Pres. – Karen Brugger  
Secretary – May Burgy  
Treas. – Jennifer Blumer  
Member - John Casey  
Member - Michael Wayland  
Member - John Stenbroten

### Collection Manager

William Zimmerman

### Collection Archivist

Karen Gempeler

### Volunteer Coordinators

Docents - Alice Voegeli  
Programs - Donna Ferguson  
Membership - Carol Schultz  
Newsletter - Roger Dooley

Our second year of the Jimtown display has ended. This winter we will return the borrowed artifacts, repaint the display panels and prepare a new display for next April's opening day.

Our new 2-year display will feature Monticello area individual and team sports. We have many artifacts of various kinds: wooden skis, ice skates, trophies, etc., but would appreciate input from others who might have some unique items we could display or stories we can tell on our display panels.

Second floor renovation is scheduled to begin this winter. We are having many non-load bearing walls removed to open up storage space. A dropped ceiling and insulation will be installed, furnace/air conditioning duct-work will be added and the new furnace connected. These improvements will provide better long-term storage environment for the artifacts. The best description of the upstairs is "ten pounds of stuff in a six pound bag." We have no extra space for the artifacts so we'll have to continually move them from where construction is to where construction isn't.

Videotapes of two 1995 meetings—"Country school teachers and students" and "Area cemeteries and burial grounds"—have been digitized and added to the main floor computer for public viewing.

Museum visitors this past year ranged from our local school classes to visitors from Germany. We also were the meeting point for many Monticello class reunions.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Anyone who would like to volunteer to help design, layout and create the new display panels may volunteer by contacting us via email at [mahs@tds.net](mailto:mahs@tds.net) or leave a voice message on the museum answering machine. We'll be in touch with you before the first planning session. If you can't volunteer, but know of someone who might, be sure to let them know of this golden opportunity to do a good deed for their community.

After the upstairs renovation is completed we will be able to provide permanent storage locations for our artifacts. This opens opportunities for more folks to volunteer to learn the PastPerfect Cataloging software and help us catalog, clean and store our thousands of undocumented items. Volunteers must be able to climb enough stairs to reach the second floor office and should not find the smell of mold and mildew annoying. Volunteers can work as much or as little as they choose, day or night.

## Newsletters

We have discussed ways to save money and one idea we would like to try is sending our quarterly newsletter by email. If you would like to receive an electronic newsletter in PDF format instead of the mailed version, please let me know via mahs@tds.net or leave a voice message on the museum answering machine and I'll add you to the bulk email list.

## MAHS Wish List

- Donations for the purchase of acid-free storage boxes and other specialized storage containers are always appreciated
- Donations for the purchase of metal storage shelving
- Donations to help us offset the cost of upgrading our web site

## Welcome our new 2010 members

Lifetime members: **Donald Kubly, Hans Sulzer, Kathleen Sulzer**

Annual members: **William Loveland, Reid Zanoia, Michael Wayland, Edwin Frederick**

## The following artifacts were donated this past year

**Robert Elmer** - 4-volume set of "The History of Old Crawford County."

**Elsa Zimmerman** - Immigrant trunk, fur muff and scarf, her childhood doll with doll quilt, various advertising pieces.

**Marlene Schmalbeck** - Several boxes of Monticello Messenger newspapers. Photographs of some Monticello homes and of various Historical Society events.

**Joan Hicks** – WW-1 Navy uniform worn by her father Earl Zwickey and a 1916 postcard of Monticello's Main Street.

**Carl Wyss and Aline Schuerch** – Electronic copies of photographs of the Monticello House hotel during the time their father owned the business.

**Ruth Field** - 34 photographs, circa 1930, of Monticello residents taken by Clyde Field when he ran his watch repair business from a location in what is now the village hall building on Main St.

**Shirley Schommer** - Children's book.

**Hans Sulzer** - Scans from 35mm slides taken of 1978 train engine stuck in deep snow near the Schultz crossing.



### State Highways Which Ran Through Monticello

In 1917 Wisconsin became the first state in the nation to develop a statewide route numbering system for its highways. Our Highway 69 has not always had that numerical designation. In 1918 just after the Wisconsin highway numbering system began, the north-south route between Verona and the Illinois state line south of Monroe (and including Belleville, New Glarus, and Monticello) was called Highway 42. Also in 1918, there was a Highway 31 which linked Madison with Fond du Lac (present day U.S. 151).

Sometime in the mid-1920s, Highway 31 was extended on the eastern end from Fond du Lac to Manitowoc, and on the southern end from Madison to Verona and down (then) Highway 42 to the Illinois border. The entire stretch from Manitowoc to the Illinois border (south of Monroe) was then called Highway 31. In 1926, the U.S. Highway system was begun and the portion of Wisconsin 31 from Madison to Fond du Lac became (as it remains today) U.S. Highway 151. The portion from Madison to the Illinois border was renamed Highway 69 and ran concurrent with U.S. Highway 18 from Madison to Verona. In 1932, the Highway 69 designation was dropped between Madison and Verona, and Highway 69 became only the portion between Highway 18 in Verona and the Illinois state line. The last time that Highway 69 changed was in 1995 when the northern terminus of the highway became the U.S. 18/151 bypass at Verona.

The history of Highway 39 in Wisconsin goes back to 1918 and a stretch of highway in northern Wisconsin. In 1924 that stretch was redesignated and Highway 39 was reassigned to a new Wisconsin trunkline route extending from near Edmund (in Iowa County) southeasterly to near Albany. In 1999, the

Highway 39 designation for the eastern 15 miles from New Glarus to near Albany was removed. New Glarus then became the eastern terminus of the route.

The history of all the Wisconsin highways has been meticulously detailed by Christopher J. Bessert, a highway historian. His website is located at: <http://www.wisconsinhighways.org/index.html>

—RESEARCHED AND WRITTEN BY  
MAHS MEMBER ROBERT ELMER

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### Peter J. Babler: Monticello Cigar Maker

The Monticello Area Historical Society has recently acquired a piece of Monticello history for their collection – a cigar box from the Monticello cigar maker Peter J. Babler. The brand name Babler’s “112” is found on several places of the wooden cigar box. The name “112” apparently refers to the fact that the Babler factory was registered as factory No. 112 in Wisconsin. (The Wisconsin Historical Society was unable to determine any regulatory agency which oversaw the manufacture of cigars.) An advertisement promoting Babler’s “112” nickel cigars was found in the October 16, 1912 Monticello Messenger. Another Babler cigar box is already in the MAHS collection – that of his “La Morenda” brand cigar.



Peter J. Babler (1881-1949) was born in Matt, Canton Glarus, Switzerland, the son of Johann Peter and Anna (Babler) Babler. He came as a child with his family to Green County in late 1880s. Babler married Anna Alma Voegeli, the granddaughter of Jost and Barbara (Opprecht) Voegeli who started the Voegeli farm in 1854. She was also the granddaughter of

Markus Hoesly an original 1845 colonist of New Glarus and proprietor of the Wilhelm Tell Hotel.

Other area cigar makers included Charles A. Jordan of Monticello who produced the “Court House” brand. Jordan’s “Court House” cigar was described as being “As Fragrant as a Rose” and “As Mild as a Summer’s Night.” Ed Lipchow of Monroe (married to Barbara Hefty of the Town of Washington) made the “Shoe Peg” brand. The “Shoe Peg” and “Pony” brands were later made by retailer Reuben T. Holcomb of Monroe (brother of Ernest Holcomb of Monticello). Also making cigars in Monroe was Swiss immigrant Jacob Trumpy. In New Glarus, cigar maker Samuel H. Luchsinger made a brand called the “31” or “Highway 31” which referred to the numerical designation at that time of the north-south State highway running through Green County.

—RESEARCHED AND WRITTEN BY  
MAHS MEMBER ROBERT ELMER

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**Lea Kilgore**

**Monticello Native Writes Prize Poems  
Mrs. A. R. Nottingham, Detroit,  
Honored by Publishers**

Mrs. A. E. Nottingham, 84 W. Park Hurst, well known, in Highland Park and north Detroit for her creative poetry, this week received the first copies of her book, \*\*\*“Bittersweet,” just off the press. It was published by Horizon House, as the first prize entry in a poetry contest that it held, participated in by 300 contestants from all parts of the United States. Mrs. Nottingham, who writes under the name of “Lea Nottingham,” is an active member of the Detroit Writers’ League and is at present its poetry chairman.

The above is from a Detroit newspaper. Mrs. Nottingham is the former Lea Kilgore. She was born here, taught in the public schools for several years, and has made frequent visits to her hometown.

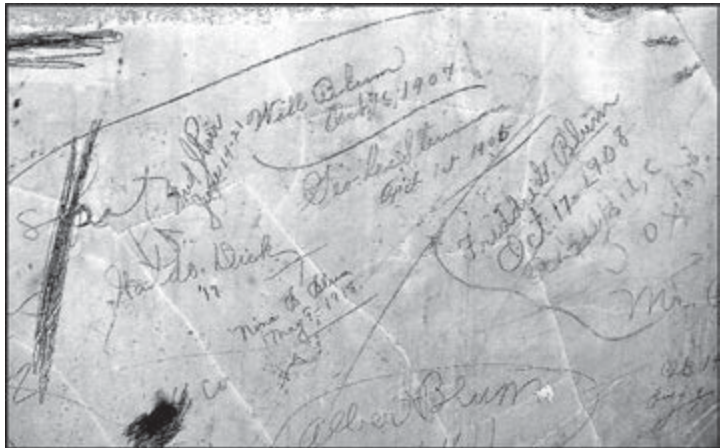
The book is now on sale at the leading bookstores in Detroit. It contains 75 of the author’s own poems, one of which is about Monticello.

Mrs. Nottingham is a sister of Mrs. Geo. C. Steinmann, of this village.

*MONTICELLO MESSENGER, MAR. 18, 1943*

\*\*The only known copy of this book is in the Detroit Public Library. That library refused our Monticello library staff’s request for the book via interlibrary loan. If any of our members have or know of someone who has a copy, please contact the MAHS staff.

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Names written on the stairwell wall, discovered after we had the museum’s interior stairway reopened.

- Fred Parr, June 14, 1921
- Nona B. Blum, May 9, 1918
- George L. Steinman, Feb 1, 1906
- Freddy G. Blum, Oct. 1908
- E. J. Blum
- Mr. Otto Blum, June 3, 1918
- Albert Blum, 1909
- Will Blum, Oct 16, 1907
- Waldo Dick, 1917
- Henry Marty, Oct 31, 1910
- Cloyance Karlen, 1913
- Hilda O. Dick, Mar. 1917
- Coyla Jordan

Someone had written the phrase: “Please don’t spit on the stairs” and someone else marked through the “p” so the phrase now reads: “Please don’t sit on the stairs”.

Our museum began life as the E. J. Blum dry goods store before it was incorporated into the “Peoples Supply” group in 1906. It remained part of Peoples Supply until it was bought by Royal Woelffer in 1922.

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Monticello's Main St. construction before the October 2010 completion. The museum's under-sidewalk coal bin had to be filled in to accommodate the new sidewalks.



These are the second floor rooms that will be renovated. Walls must be removed, loose plaster removed and replaced with drywall, 9' insulated dropped ceilings hung, flooring overlaid and tiled, and furnace/air-conditioning installed.

