

Middleton Area Historical Society Newsletter

March, 2017

Number 169

Middleton, Wisconsin

OUR MISSION: TO PRESERVE AND PUBLICIZE THE HISTORY OF THE MIDDLETON AREA.

Here Comes the Parade

TIMES-TRIBUNE
THURSDAY, SEPT. 7, 1961
Page 12



Photos of a kiddie parade held in Pheasant Branch to celebrate recent road improvements to Branch Street.

See page 4 for the final installment of

"The Mysteries of Pheasant Branch"
by Anita Taylor Doering



HELP WANTED

Be A Part of History

Volunteer with the Middleton Area Historical Society! MAHS needs your talent and love of history to keep the Rowley House Museum thriving. Interested volunteers will be trained on how to be welcoming hosts of our museum. No prior experience is necessary, we'll give you the tools and information you need.

A volunteer training session will be held on Saturday, April 8th from 10 to 11:30 am, at the Rowley House, located at 7410 Hubbard Avenue. Volunteer shifts are Tuesdays and Saturdays between April and October.


Please RSVP to middletonhistory@gmail.com; if questions please call Kristi Warriner at 608-509-8338.

★ATTENTION★

The [Rowley House Museum](#), 7410 Hubbard Avenue, is again opening for the season and as usual will be open on Tuesdays and Saturdays. However, Saturday hours have changed. Opening day is Saturday, April 15th and the new Saturday hours will be 10:00 am - 1:00 pm. Tuesday hours will remain 1:00 - 4:00 pm.

The [Museum at the Depot](#), 1811 Parmenter Street, is open during tourism hours.

Please plan on visiting us soon.



The Middleton Area Historical Society wishes to express its sympathy to the families of the following members who died during 2016. Many friends honored the commitment of these people to Middleton history with generous donations to MAHS.

*Vera Bauman
Helen J. Black
Mary Jane Dahman
Kathleen Sweeney
Theodore Shannon*

2016 BUSINESS SUPPORTERS OF THE MIDDLETON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Bloom Bakery
 Copps, now Pick n Save
 Cresa
 Hubbard Avenue Diner
 Middleton Chamber of Commerce
 Middleton Power Center (business member)
 Middleton Review
 Middleton Times (business member)
 New Horizon Band
 Printing Place (business member)
 Scott's Bakery
 Springs Windows
 Stamm House
 Willy Street Cooperative

THE MAHS ALSO WISHES TO THANK THE FOLLOWING VOLUNTEERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT DURING 2016.

Megan & Olivia Andrews	Dorothy Hawkins
Dave Baltes	Mary Hilgendorf
Jim Benes	Mike Lutz
Cathy Bethke	Jan Martin
Gurdip Brar	Peggy Marxen
Jessica Contreras	Molly McDermott
Jean DeVore	Margaret Strass
Alice Drake	Nancy Stratman
Kari & Jack Eggert	Cody Van Haren
Ruth Green	

Thanks also to the many individual members who brought pies and other home-baked goodies to the Pie and Ice Cream Social. If we failed to include your name, please know that we very much appreciate your support.

2016 ARTIFACT AND ARCHIVES DONATIONS

During 2016 MAHS received several interesting archival and artifact donations. Those of special interest include an account ledger dating from the 1940s from the Missouri Tavern on Highway 12 donated by **David Ballweg**. The Missouri Tavern, to which much local lore is attached, was built by Albert & Mae Mefford in 1940, as their home as well as a convenience store, bar, and filling station. It was known as the Missouri Tavern because Al, who was from St. Louis, was known as "Missouri Al." After Al died in 1964 Mae went on to operate the tavern alone, continuing to do so until age 101.



Missouri Tavern

Joanne Kelly donated several promotional items from Middleton businesses. Her offerings included a mug from Dunn's Import Auto Service, which has been located at 6516 University Avenue for almost 40 years. In keeping with their specialization on foreign cars and mopeds, the Dunn mug was made in England. Joanne also donated a red plastic stir stick from Chalet St. Moritz. This restaurant off Airport Road was opened in 1973 by Karen and Helen Hofmann of New Glarus and by Paul and Helen Graedel of rural Middleton. Chalet St. Moritz featured French-Swiss

cuisine and one restaurant-reviewer credited it-along with the legendary Ovens of Brittany-with helping to lift the Madison area out of culinary cellar. Chalet St. Moritz was followed by Morels, which closed in 2009. Ultimately the fire department burned the building as a training exercise in order to make way for a housing development.



Chalet St. Moritz

Nancy Reiter Miller, who has donated many artifacts in the past, brought an autograph book with entries dating from 1887 to 1888. It was owned by Teona Goth, and it contains the signatures and good wishes from many well-known Middletonians.

James Esser, now living in Fitchburg, gave the MAHS flags and a meeting bell of Middleton American Legion Post 275. The Middleton post was organized in 1928. Their meeting bell was dedicated to the memory of William Shuman, the last living member of the Angus R. McDonald GAR Post in Mazomanie.

Donations from **Carol and David Bleifield** included an old pickle jar and a set of toy metal soldiers acquired by David as a boy in Morris, Illinois, during the 1950s. Sometimes referred to as "dime store soldiers" because they were sold at dime stores, these 3-inch soldiers were manufactured by the Barclay and Manoil companies. They portray World War I and World War II soldiers in various interesting and unusual poses, and they are sure to be a hit with our museum visitors. Several pieces have no maker's mark and are yet to be identified.



Set of 1950s toy metal soldiers. Sometimes referred to as "dime store soldiers" because they were sold at dime stores.

OUR COLLECTIONS WISH LIST

The retrofitting of the Carriage House will give MAHS more room to store collections, as well as the ability to keep them under proper environmental conditions. It will also allow us to solicit new items consistent with our collecting policy that authentically document Middleton's story—something we have not been able to do because of lack of space. Here are a few items we would particularly like.

Scout uniforms. While packing several Scoutmaster uniforms in anticipation of the move to the preservation storage, it was noticed that no Scout uniforms for boys (or Girl Scouts, for that matter) are included in the collections. We would very much like to acquire children's uniforms, of any vintage, with a Middleton connection. We would especially welcome a pinewood derby car as the pinewood derby was an important activity for the Middleton Cubs.

Winter hats, gloves, coats, and boots for men, women, and children, of any vintage, with a Middleton connection. Handknit clothing is especially welcome, but ready-made is also wanted. We would love photographs of people wearing these items if you have them.

Canning equipment, jelly jars, and Kerr brand canning jars. Research for a recent exhibit at the Senior Center revealed that while we have many Ball jars, some quite old, MAHS needs Kerr brand jars, jelly jars of any vintage, and canning equipment.

Ashtrays, both items that promoted Middleton businesses and those with a Middleton connection that are purely decorative (even in a tacky sort of way).

Rag Rug Runner. We need a vintage, homemade rag rug, about four feet long, to use by our kitchen stove.

Please contact us by email (cmattern@wisc.edu) if you would like to arrange for a home appraisal and pickup of donations.

From the President

Thanks to all the hard work from numerous MAHS Members, especially Duane Van Haren, Sandy Lewis, Cathy Bethke, Mel Krc, Ruth Bachmeier, Donna Parks, Carolyn Mattern, Jan Martin (& her spouse), the Carriage House renovation is complete! The project moved along faster than many of us expected and we will soon be ready for our annual opening day of April 15. The project involved the addition of insulation and drywall to all of the walls, installing a furnace and air conditioning, remodeling and insulating the three doors, and then painting the upstairs white and the downstairs (with Sandy's expertise) a simulated wood-grained paneling effect.

Some heavy duty shelving was purchased and installed on the Carriage House second floor in February. We now have increased capacity for safely housing the many artifacts in our collection that are not presently on display. For example, we have a lot of historic clothing that we will now be able to store in the proper environment for long-term safe-keeping.

We are now in the process of returning the many artifacts that were in temporary storage to their proper location in the Carriage House. We are also relocating some items from Rowley House to the improved storage space on the second floor of the Carriage House. The facility really looks great ... we hope you will plan to stop by this spring or summer.

Our opening of Rowley House is just around the corner ... in mid-April. Therefore, April 1 will be our annual cleaning day at Rowley House and everyone is invited to bring you dust rags, brooms, etc. and join in the fun.

We really need your help to keep our Rowley House Museum open this year! On April 8 we will host an orientation session at Rowley House to acquaint volunteers with docent activities at the museum during our open season. I really hope you will consider donating a few hours this year. It is a great way to give back to our community and a great way to learn more about Middleton's history. I look forward to seeing you on April 8, but if you can't make that day please contact Donna Parks (836-8956, 770-3638 or email her at: parksplace@charter.net) and schedule some time for volunteering in 2017.

Have a Historic Year...

Jeff Martin

Just a little reminder.....

Rowley House opening Saturday, April 15!

New Saturday Hours 10:00 - 1:00

THE MYSTERIES OF PHEASANT BRANCH-part 5

by Anita Taylor Doering



Photograph courtesy of Frayne Boyce Born

The End of Pheasant Branch as a Community

This hand-tinted aerial photograph was taken sometime in the 1940s when the Fullers owned and named their business the Stamm House on Century Avenue. Oddly, this photograph is named “Ulcer’s Glutch” (not Gulch) and was taken by Calberne Aerial. Looking southwest, the Stamm House is featured on the left while the Koepke/Ziegler farm (Palmer-Gault House) is anchored on the far right, now the site of the Pheasant Run Apartment complex.

It seems to capture the neighborhood-like atmosphere of the time before the road was widened and straightened. Jerry Schara described it well, “In the 1940s and 50s, Pheasant Branch was a quiet, off the beaten path, little community. There was Cornwell’s grocery store, the Stamm House and Mickey’s Tavern, the Rendezvous Restaurant, a school, the Branch Locker plant and a number of houses. The location of the railroad south of the Branch had drawn business and people to that area. Even the road travel shifted to the south. We were basically a bedroom community before that term was coined. The people who lived there worked in Middleton or Madison.”

Residences

The first house, built around 1845 by M. K. McCord in Section 2, also served as a tavern called the Eight Mile House (8 miles from Madison). This was likely near the intersection of the old Hwy 12, Airport Road and Century Avenue, northwest of Pheasant Branch. McCord and Cody were business partners in the Branch as well. Two early Pheasant Branch homes are still standing along Century Avenue. The Palmer-Gault House at 6707 Century Avenue, an 1869 renovation of a home built on this site in 1847 by Issac Palmer, is one of the oldest continuously occupied residential sites in Middleton. It served as a farm house and the Pheasant Run apartment complex occupies the site where the barn and outbuildings had been.

The George & Anna Ziegler family lived here from 1914-1948 and



The Palmer-Gault House - Photo courtesy of the author, 2011

their daughter Nell (Ziegler) Bowar attended the Pheasant Branch Schoolhouse across the street. She remembers that the milk truck would bring kids into Pheasant Branch from the area farms and drop them off at the Ziegler house before school started at 9 a.m.

During this time, the house still served as a farmhouse for a 90 acre farm that extended south from Century Avenue to the Pheasant Branch Creek and west. The driveway ended in a cul-de-sac. Fruit trees grew where the Pheasant Run Apartments are now. The family grew crops (corn mainly), had milk cows, and horses. A garden, machine shed, pig barn, garage, and barn also occupied land west of the house. The children would pick strawberries in the early summer for the truck farmers and earned a little money.

The house had electricity but not in the barn and no running water while Nell was growing up. The pump was in the kitchen but the drinking water was drawn from the windmill using a ladle and pail. No one worried about sharing utensils back then. The kids were responsible for weeding the garden and harvesting the produce.

In the fall came threshing time. The threshing crews would come and fill the silos with food for the animals for winter. The kids would ride on horse and buggy delivering refreshments to the workers in the field. The women prepared breakfast in the morning, dinner at noon, lunch in the afternoon, then supper – all without any refrigeration! Women tried to out-do each other with meals as the threshing crew moved from farm to farm. The kids would be sent to the tavern (now the Stamm House) for a bucket of beer which was 10 or 25 cents.

In 1948 George and Anna moved into Middleton and rented the house out to their son Marv. He put indoor plumbing in the house. Later the farmland was sold for development after 1954, but the house remains.

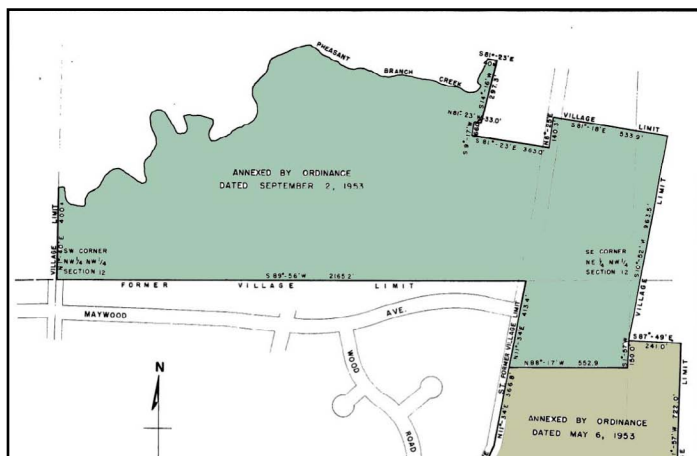
The Wolf House, built by John Wolf in the 1850s, is located at 6408 Century Avenue and although at least four additions were made over the years, the original part still remains underneath. This house is just east of the boundary of the Village of Pheasant Branch plat. Part of the modest stone house is still visible under the stucco veneer as it juts out on the west side. Sadly because of the additions the house is not eligible for historic site or landmark status.



The Wolf House, -Photos courtesy of Lori Ann Isabella, 2017

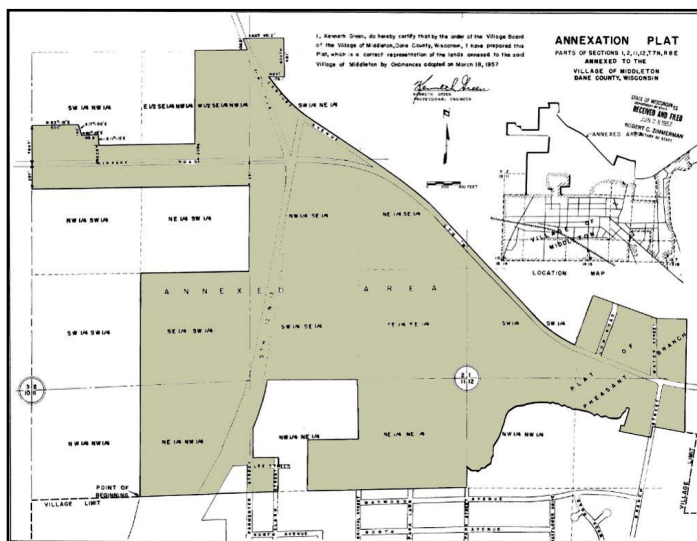
Annexation

In September 1953, the land south of Pheasant Branch Creek and parts of lands to the east were annexed to the Village of Middleton. This is the area where Sak's Woods (or more historically named Coolidge's Woods) was located. This area began to be prepared for residential development. A 1963 development plan for the Saks Woods neighborhood indicated that all the neighborhood streets were finally in place at that date, with the area being served by the Middleton water and sanitary sewerage systems. Jeanie Sakrison Velarde contributed a solid history of the 48-acre area based on a memoir of her father, Robert Sakrison, that appeared in the September 2015 issue of the Middleton Area Historical Society Newsletter and will not be repeated here.



Office of the Secretary of State, Wisconsin, Municipal Records, Annexation and Plat, May 6, 1953 (filed Dec. 23, 1953)

In March 1957, the plat of Pheasant Branch plus other land north and west were added to the Village of Middleton.



Office of the Secretary of State, Wisconsin, Municipal Records, Annexation and Plat, January 28, 1957 (filed June 28, 1957)

Improvements

Five houses, the building that housed Don's Radio & TV and the locker plant on Branch Street were razed about 1958/59 in preparation for the road improvements.

However, the Village Board did not approve the work until the spring in 1961. The low bid, submitted by Northwestern Construction Company for \$79,910, was approved in April 1961.

Branch Street was paved that spring and summer with sidewalks and concrete curb and gutter, and a big block party ensued Sept. 4, 1961, with ribbon cutting at 2pm, a kiddie parade with prizes that followed and later a street dance from 9pm-1am featuring the "Goofy Four" band. The Pheasant Branch Merchants Association, which included Mickey's Tavern, Meyer's Store, The Rendezvous, American Heating Company and Paar Landscaping were sponsors of the celebration.

Parade winners included Kathleen Murphy, Dell Potter,

Yolanda Kuenzi, Debbie Dye, Teresa Duschak, Joan Bowers, Laurie Hollfelder, Kathy and Mary Wermuth, Luanne Hollfelder, (no first name given) Hildebrandt, Jackie Hefty, Mark Hegler, Dale Colby, Ned Venden, Mike Endres, Christian Basil.

Frayne Boyce Born remembers, "We had one heck of a street dance when Branch Street was paved. They brought in a flat bed and made it a stage. We had music and Wimpy and Helen Kuenzi sang. I still remember Wimpy yodeling. It was one heck of a party."

"The Branch" was now fully assimilated into Middleton. Street lighting, water, sanitary sewer, etc., was all controlled by the Village (and soon City) of Middleton. The Pheasant Branch School was consolidated in 1950 and students were sent to the Middleton schools. Century Avenue became a more major artery, especially as traffic was rerouted that way during road construction in the commercial district of Middleton.

Branch Street Officially Reopened



WALLY CUTS THE RIBBON . . . Wally Bauman, chairman of the Village Street Committee, cuts the ribbon at the re-opening of Branch Street, Monday, September 4th.

Looking on left to right are Ed Murphy, president of the Chamber of Commerce, Jim Brown, parade judge, Mrs. Walter Schara, parade judge, Forrie Bakken, Northwestern Construction Co., Cliff Voss, president of Branch Street Merchants, Wally Bauman, Don Domini, parade judge, Joe Parisi, Sam Parisi Co., and Chief of Police, Harold Wille.

If You Grew Up In Middleton Do You Remember...?

by Jeanie Velarde



Left to right:

Richard Douse, a Gitksan Indian, Jack Cecil, a Nisha Indian, Albert Canadian, a Slav-e Indian, Barry and Vincent Clifford, Gitksan Indians from British Columbia, started learning how to play musical instruments in April of 1964, and in May, went on playing for charity in an attempt to foster better Indian-non-Indian relations. With their \$25,000 worth of instruments, stage lights, sets and equipment, are rapidly becoming North America's most popular group, acclaimed by young and old alike, being able to play Rock 'N' Roll, Rhythm and Blues, Folk, Western and even Religious types of music, and it is all soft and sweet in a Chieftones' Beat. YES, THEIR HAIR IS THEIR OWN.

The New Smooth and Different Sound Are The Chieftones

- Who didn't love the Chieftones....I can remember my sister going out there to the Bunny Hop every weekend!
- Loved the Chieftones and the Bunny Hop. I learned to "appreciate" beer there and the Larsons always looked out for us.
- Awesome band!
- They played the Good Neighbor Fest a few times.
- I was a member of their fan club, and going to the summer picnic. Loved them and their music too.
- Went to the Bunny Hop several times for their Sunday matinee with my mom and sisters. Also saw them out of state, and babysat for a family that

had them to dinner a few times so was able to get to know them.

- I remember my sister showing me all their autographs she had gotten in her autograph book. She was very proud of them.
- They used to stay at the Midtown Motel and they were really nice guys.
- Miss them. I was a fan club member and remember them taking us out to dinner many times.
- I brought them home for Thanksgiving dinner. Mom was not happy.

Editors Note:

The Bunny Hop was located 2 miles west of Middleton on Highway 14.

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Mail to:

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7410 Hubbard Avenue
Middleton, Wisconsin 53562-3118

For those who itemize their taxes:
The Middleton Area Historical Society is a
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To update your contact information or to receive this newsletter
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