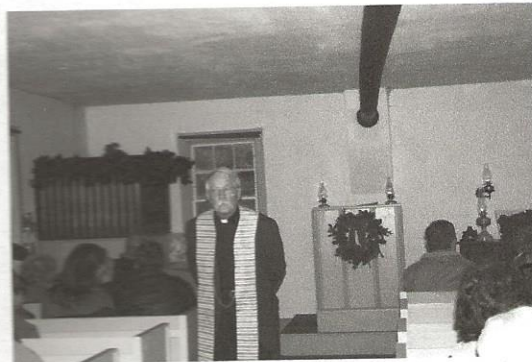




Franklin Historical Society November 2022 Newsletter

Franklin Historical Society's "Old-Fashioned Christmas" Program Saturday December 10th



Santa in the Whelan School Rev. Boesch in the St. Peters Chapel

Christmas Celebration Program

Whelan School Children's program 2 to 2:45 p.m.

St. Peters Chapel Services 3, 4:30 & 6 p.m.

Franklin Town Hall Museum 3 to 6 p.m.

Franklin Family Barn Museum 3 to 6 p.m.

Sheehan-Godsell Cabin 3 to 6 p.m.

For the children's program please contact Maria at 414-427-4423 or Debbie at 818-519-1431 for details if you have any grade school children interested in being part of the program. There is no rehearsal just sign up and have the children there at 1:30 p.m. ideally in any Christmas clothes and they will be instructed what to do mostly singing, Christmas poems and story telling. It will be a lot fun for everyone!

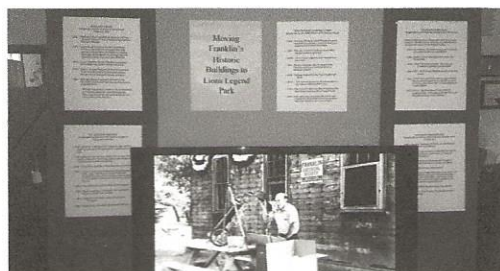
Fall Fest in Franklin

2022 has been a busy year for the Franklin Historical Society's open house programs none more so than our recent October fall fest where we demonstrated what it like living and working in Franklin during the 19th & early 20th centuries. It was a great family event that included a visit from Snow White for picture taking with many children.

The FHS would like to thank the Fairytale Birthday Company for providing Snow White the Apple Princess and all that helped with the program including Rod Sievert, Dale Pforr, Greg Jenks, Judy Gyuro, Barbara Pforr, Debbie Jacobus, Nancy Hamberger, Robin Muirhead, Sue Gawrisch, Sue Sievert, Joan Thompson, Steve Gyuro, Don Anderson, Bob Storm, Ronald Nitz, Scott Mayer, Doug Schmidt, Joyce Houtler, Steve Muhich, Anita Nickerson, Jim Reit, Roger Lange and Jim Luckey. Special thanks to Ken Gawrisch for all his hard work organizing the event.

Here are some pictures.





A Farewell to the Buckhorn Tavern



The Buckhorn Tavern Pumped Gas For Many Years

With the recent closing of the Buckhorn Tavern and planning of future development here is some of its history. For the last 43 years the Buckhorn has been owned and operated by Krzysztof "Chris" Matecki and family.

Unfortunately Chris Matecki has passed on during the sale and closing of the Buckhorn. The Buckhorn was noted for its "Taco Tuesdays" and its great Friday fish fries. What it is most remembered for during the families' time was it was a true traditional corner bar with really good food where everyone could come and enjoy a drink and meal at a very reasonable cost in a friendly environment with friends and neighbors.

The Buckhorn Tavern has a long and colorful history of continuous operations since the 1840's. It got its name about 1899, when Adam Doerr was the owner. He shot a buck from his upstairs window and mounted the antlers in the window.

The Buckhorn Inn was built on the cross roads of two main wagon trails that are today S. 27th St. & Highway 41 and W. Ryan Rd. & Highway 100. The Buckhorn Tavern greeted the weary travelers and provided farmers and other travelers with food, drink and shelter. It took care of their horses as well. People who stopped were a good cross section of the frontier settlers, hard working people. Miners hauling lead ore from Platteville to the smelters in Green Bay stopped for a hot meal and a place to sleep. Farmers from the prairie country around Union Grove stopped on their way to the Hay Market in Milwaukee to rest their horses. Even at the turn of the

century, many a winter day would find a dozen teams lined up in front of the tavern by 8 a.m.

The tavern served also as a Painesville post office that was established in 1868. Painesville was an area between the Town of Franklin and the Town of Oak Creek. The Painesville Chapel & Cemetery are still today immediately west of the Buckhorn on Ryan Rd.

The big day of the week for the post office was the day that Otto Doer and his son Adam drove to the Oakwood post office to pick up the mail. In the mail sacks were the weekly newspapers. While few farmers received many personal letters, most subscribed to a newspaper. On paper day they hitched up teams and drove to the tavern to visit their friends and neighbors at the Buckhorn.

In 1906 Kling Karsten a farmer and family who lived across from Ryan Road to the south purchased the tavern. The Karstens tore down the original building and rebuilt it, using much of the old materials. With its new front and a large dance hall upstairs it became a social center for the community. On weekends, the building shook to the stomping of feet. It was well known for the good food that was served.

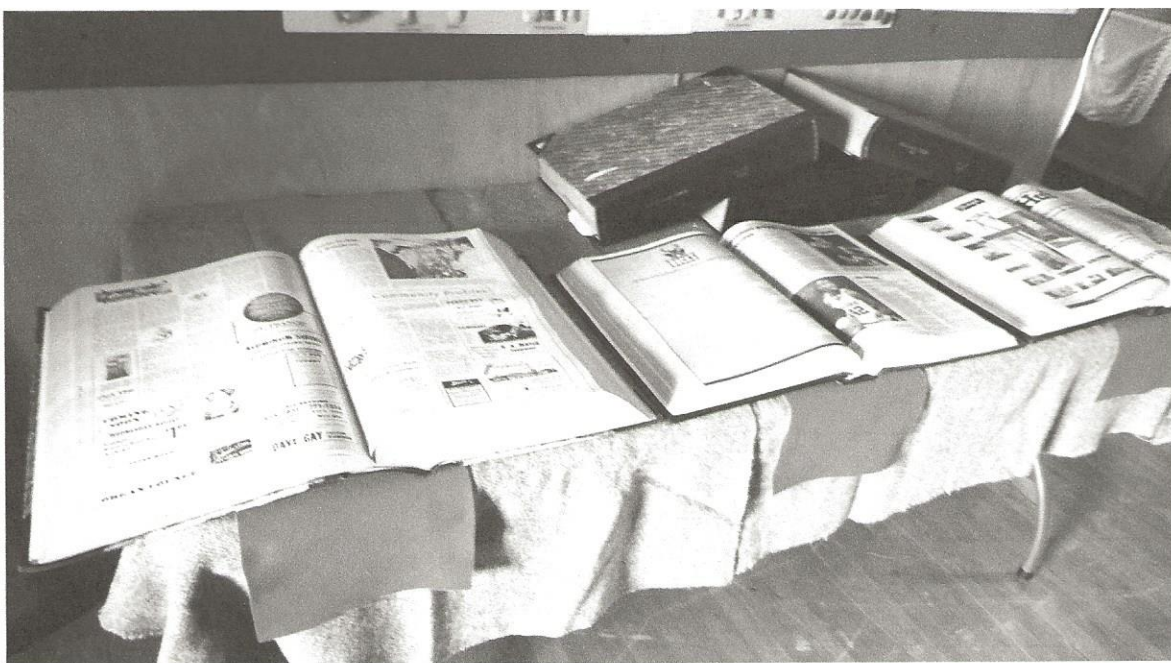
ROADHOUSE KEEPER SLAIN! Bandit Shoots Buck Horn Man in Holdup

On Friday October 29th, 1926 this was Milwaukee Sentinel headline. William Strausser the proprietor was shot and instantly killed at midnight. The bandit scooped up the currency in the cash register and, with almost with a hour's start on officers fled westward in a Ford coupe. It is unknown what happened to the bandit.

During prohibition allegedly Bootleg Beer was brought from Chicago and kept in back of the building. The Buckhorn during that time had a thriving business with a lot of Chicago trade that made it a regular stop on the way up north.

In 1962 Don and Eunice Bierstecker started operating the Buckhorn Tavern. Mrs. Bierstecker was accused of burning down a historic building when she was burning trash near the fence line but some bushes caught fire and spread to the outhouse of the Painesville grounds and destroyed it.

After a number of owners and operators the Buckhorn Tavern was purchased by Matecki family.



Franklin Hales Corners Hub Newspaper

Pictured above is a display of some of the volumes of the Hub Newspaper that served Franklin and Hales Corners from 1964 to 1995. It was a weekly paper that came out on Thursdays. The Hub was one of many newspapers that the Community Newspapers published for local communities telling news, stories and events of their cities.

The Journal/Sentinel has been moving their facilities to Illinois and contacted the Franklin Historical Society offering to donate the entire 78 bound volumes. The offer was accepted and FHS VP Doug Schmidt and myself picked them up and have them organized and stored in our Town Hall museum. Doug worked as a writer and was the sports director of Community Newspapers for many years.

The newspapers bring an absolute treasure of information of not just news but featured stories, sports, events, political, people, death and official notices. Even the ads are interesting!

The Franklin Historical Society will be working with the Hales Corners Historical Society to index all of the important information for both cities where not only historical societies but anyone doing research or those just interested using key words could access the information from their computer's search engine.

This project will demand a lot of hours. We are looking for volunteer help. Please call Jim Luckey at 414-421-6539 if you can help. Thank you.

An Airplane Crash in Franklin in 1944 headed to Russia?

Yes it happened! Late on the afternoon of Sunday, March 26, 1944 U.S. Army Lieutenant Donald N. Leilich lost his life in the crash of a P-39Q fighter.



The crash occurred along S.35th St. just north of Puetz Rd. at Acre Ave. News reports indicated that Lt. Leilich was ferrying the aircraft from Niagara Falls, New York.

The Milwaukee newspapers published eyewitness accounts from nearby residents stating that just before the accident the plane was hidden in the clouds, but the engine could be heard sputtering and it

nose-dived to the ground, burying the engine about three feet in the earth. Although the impact fully destroyed the aircraft, it did not burn.

Lt. Leilich was assigned to the 60th Ferrying Squadron, 3rd Ferry group. Their mission was to deliver aircraft from the manufacturer to modification centers and to operational units. In this case, the P-39Q was en route from the Bell Aircraft Company in Niagara Falls and was making a refueling stop at the Army Air Transport Center base at Billy Mitchell Field.



Lt. Leilich

At this time in the war, many of the P-39s manufactured were being sent to the Soviet Union via Alaska and were painted with Soviet Air Force markings. A frequent transfer point for ferrying these air craft to Alaska was Gore Field at Great Falls, Montana. It is very likely that this was the final destination for Lt. Leilich.

A photograph published in a book about the P-39 adds to this theory. The photo shows P-39Q painted with Soviet markings parked at the Bell factory on March 14, 1944 - 12 days before the Milwaukee area crash. Equally interesting is that the P-39 pictured is marked with 3 digits from the serial number of the P-39Q flown by Lt. Leilich on March 26, 1944.

A name many people in Oak Creek and Franklin would recognize

Elroy Honadel was one of the witnesses of the crash. In a phone conversation with Elroy he explained he was 13 years old on his uncle's farm with a friend on S. 27 St. and there was a sudden snow squall at the time. He heard an airplane motor above the low clouds and the motor's noise suddenly stopped. They did not see the actual crash but went to the site and saw the badly damaged airplane and could tell the pilot was dead.

From the official army mishap report Lt. Leilich arrived over Billy Mitchell Field but with weather problems and after two or more unsuccessful attempts to land he reported he was departing for Chicago.

It was believed that the combination of bad weather and fuel shortage was the primary cause of this accident.

The credit for the information for this story goes to Bill Streicher of the Mitchell Gallery of Flight where he did all the research and published two articles. Also credit goes to FHS member Kathryn Ratenski who helped gather the material.

The Mitchell Gallery is located in the Mitchell Field terminal towards the south end and is opened to the general public daily. Their phone number is 414-747-4503 for more information.

Franklin Farming Families

The John Giese farm at 5207 West Oakwood Road has been in our family for 103 years. Years before the Giese's purchased the farm, a smaller wood frame house stood along Oakwood Road. A second home was moved next to it to create a larger farm house.



When my grandfather worked the farm he grew corn, oats, soybeans, wheat, and hay as well as raising milk cows and then beef cattle, along with pigs, chickens, ducks, geese, pigeons, work horses, and one year even sheep. There always was an abundance of barn cats, and of course, his loyal companion, Buddy, the family pet

and cattle dog. On occasion, when the cattle would break out of the fence, someone would yell, "the cows are out" and every one would run, including

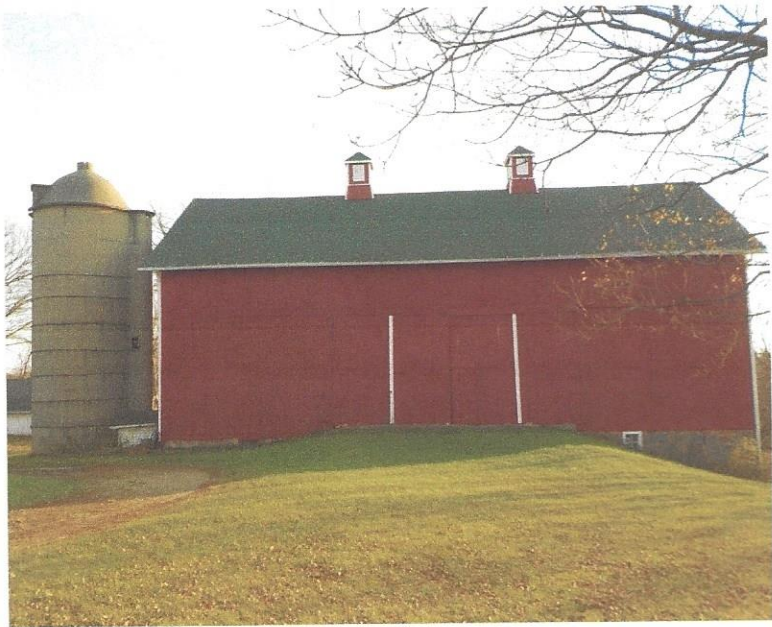
Buddy, to help chase them back into the pasture before they wandered too far away. My grandpa also was a beekeeper and produced his own honey for the family.

Although he owned a tractor since 1946, the same year electricity was put in the house and barn, my grandpa would often use his two faithful work horses, Pat and Dan, to work the fields until the late 1950's.

My grandmother passed away at a young age so my grandfather also raised their four children. There was Earl Giese, one of the first Franklin volunteer firemen, my mother, Evelyn Farchione, and my aunts, Laona Grudzielanek and Mildred Giese.

In 2019 we painted the barn and had a new roof put on. The roofer noticed the footprint of where two cupolas had once been on the roof. We saw an old photo of the barn and knew they had been there at one time and what they looked like. My husband, Steve Gyuro, took on the project of reconstructing the

cupolas to look like the original ones and we had them installed in an attempt to restore the barn to its original look.



CENTURY FARM

Continuous Family Ownership for over



It was also in 2019 that our farm was recognized at the Wisconsin State Fair as one of that year's Centennial Farms, farms that have been in the same family for 100 years. That was a proud occasion for us.

Story by Judy Gyuro
John Giese's Grandaughter

The Franklin Historical Society wishes to thank Dan Mayer for the donation of a beautiful set of chandeliers one of them pictured here. They were in the Bicentennial Room in Franklin High School. The room was created and decorated in the theme of what a room would have looked like in 1776.

It was the pride and joy of Al Block, Rommie Kuscinski and Harry Guzniczak. Senior Citizens met there for lunch and other meetings. It was used from 1976 to about the early 2000's when it became part of the new library in the school. The main appeal was the wains coating walls and the chandeliers which were specially crafted for the room.

Dan had purchased three of the sets after the school's remodeling and donated all three. There will be future planning for displaying them.



Welcome - The Franklin Historical Society has two new members! Kathi Kube recently moved to Franklin and is most interested in our history. She worked for many years as an editor for Kalmbach Publishing and has volunteered to help us with our Hub Newspaper program.

Mike Dubinski joined us as a family membership and he has volunteered to help in many ways including with beautifying our grounds, special events, building restoration, preservation maintenance and cleaning and as a docent.

Thank you both for joining and we are glad to have you!

With Christmas coming up we have two books for sale published by the Franklin Historical Society "From Cabins to Condos" for just \$10 and the "Footprints of Franklin" for \$20 that any longtime Franklin resident would love to have. Just call Jim Luckey at 414-421-6539 or come to our Dec. 10 Christmas program to pick one up.

Please go to our website franklinhistory.net for some great history of Franklin and like us on our face book page.

Jim Luckey
President FHS