

Confluence

Dear Madam, A Confederate Letter



In this article we read the lament a father expresses to a nurse, Miss Sallie S. Beard, who tended to his dying son, a Confederate soldier. We have a collection of numerous letters and documents. Some have to do with genealogies, some with everyday things, some from WWII and other wars, some dating in the 17th & 18th centuries. None are more vivid or poignant as those from the Civil War period (1861-1865). We share a unique one with you in this issue. It was sent by Dr. C.W. Andrews to Mr. W.H. Chesbrough Sr. in 1931. Mr. Chesbrough was a Civil War veteran and very active in the Grand Army of the Republic L.H.D. Crane post here in Beloit. In Dr. Andrew's letter he says that the letter may be kept at the offices of the G.A.R. or donated to the Beloit Historical Society. The father of the Confederate soldier is N. Lefler and he is from Concord, North Carolina. The letter is dated June 8th, 1864.

Miss Sallie S. Beard

Dear Madam,

I seat myself this morning to address you a few lines in answer to your very kind and interesting but much lamented letter dated the 21st (ult) which I received on last night. Dear Madam I am under great obligations to you for the kind treatment you showed to my wounded son, and the great satisfaction I received through you giving me a statement of his wounds and the condition you found him in. Dear Madam I never shall be able to repay you for the great kindness you showed to him in his suffering condition the only compensation I can make to you at this time. I beg of you to accept my heart felt acknowledgment for your kind assistance towards him. I have not words to acknowledge the great indebtedness to you for the lock of my son's hair stained with his own blood, which I received in your letter through your kindness.

Dear Madam the loss of my son was a heavy bereavement to me. He was the fourth and last son I had killed in this war in less than twelve months.

Dear Madam I have one request to make you, will you be so kind as to state to me what effect he had with him when you first saw him and how he was clad if he had on a new uniform or if he had on any uniform, also please let me know if you ever heard him speak anything in your presence or if you heard any body else say that heard him speak, if so please give me their name.

Dear Madam I could ask you a great many more questions but I fear I am trespassing on your patience. I will only say to you that he left behind him three motherless children an old sorrowing mother and an only sister, to mourn his loss.

Enclosed please find stamp to prepay letter sent back, this leave us all well hoping it will find you enjoying the same blessing.

I will now close hoping to hear from you soon in return I remain your unknown but sincere and humble friend until death.

*N. Lefler
Cabarrus County
Concord, N.C.*

Not all the letters have such emotional content but all are interesting and do bring to life a moment from the past. That's a good thing a study of History can do for you and that is something we enjoy doing for you.

Beloit Historical Society

Founded 1910

Officers

President Cathy Piazza
Vice President Sue Drevdahl
Treasurer Maggie Janke
Secretary William Bolgrien

Board of Directors

Nancy Alseth David Collins
Deb DeHart Nora Gard
Martin Kades Terry Karow
Steve Kinkade Ron Klein
Craig Mellem

Lincoln Center Staff:

Executive Director Paul Kerr
Facilities Manager Dwight Alton

Newsletter edited by Jen Scott
Contributors: Paul Kerr, Ann
Martin, and Nora Gard.

Dates of Next Board Meetings:

June 18, 2009, 4 p.m.

The Newsletter, *Confluence*, is published quarterly for the membership of the Beloit Historical Society to inform readers of Society activities as well as educate them on the history of Beloit. The Beloit Historical Society manages two sites, Lincoln Center Museum with main offices at 845 Hackett St. and Hanchett-Bartlett Homestead, 2149 St. Lawrence Ave. For further information please call (608) 365-7835 or e-mail us at Pkerr@beloithistoricalsociety.com. Or see our new website which can be found on the web at beloithistoricalsociety.com.

***What is the oldest
Social Service
organization in Beloit?***

Answer on next page

From the Luebke Family Memorial Library

We have emphasized in the last few issues how the Society is a repository of Beloit History. We shared information from the files, from the collection of photographs and artifacts, and now, we share with you something interesting from the Luebke Family Memorial Library. That is its collection of family Bibles. We selected a few to discuss.

First there is the Smiley Family Bible worth mentioning because it's 175 years old and in great condition. Besides the label on the front cover indicating it belonged to Thomas Smiley there isn't any accompanying personal information within its pages.

That is not the case with Grace Isabelle Grinnell's Bible. Grace has written on the inside of her Bible and scribbled notes throughout the beginning and ending sections. Loose notes are stuck between pages and the inside of the back flap of the book is written on extensively. What is most endearing is what Grace wrote in the inside front flap of the book dated March 15 1895: "*I do hereby solemnly declare that mama did solemnly promise that the first baby I found on the street I could bring home and keep. Yours truly Grace Isabelle Grinnell.*" Grace even went to the trouble of having her entry witnessed and signed by her friend Mary E. Ingleby. A bit of the attorney in Grace.

Samuel Goodwin, noted early Beloit businessman, received a Bible from the YMCA as a Christmas present, December 25, 1882. We also have Samuel's family Bible in the library. It is huge with his name in gold lettering on the front cover.

Then there's the interesting Night Scenes in the Bible presented to Mr. & Mrs. Pardon Haynes Merrill for their golden wedding anniversary dated October 27, 1865. Pardon Haynes was the patriarch of the distinguished Merrill family in Beloit. They were involved in many business enterprises notably the Merrill & Houston Iron Works precursor of the Beloit Iron Works.

Finally, we take a look at the family Bible of Mr. & Mrs. Alexander D. Culbert (pictured right). There is a brief history of these two typed on a short piece of paper and pasted to the inside front cover. From it we learn that the Culberts settled in Beloit in 1839; that they were charter members of the First Presbyterian Church; that they lived on Race Street (now St. Paul) until moving to Sacramento, California in 1860. The Bible was donated to the Historical Society by Mrs. Throne, July of 1931.

And that's a brief look at the family Bibles on hand here at the Beloit Historical Society.



Beloit Mothers—A Tribute



Ethel Rosman

Wife of the founding partner of Rosman Uehling Kinzer; charter member of Treble Clef; generous supporter of civic & church activities and Mother of one.

Mardella Shipp

(1940-1991) Established

the Beloit Inner City Council of Substance Abuse. Active supporter of numerous community organizations. Mother of three.



Martha Luebke

(1921-1995) Active in church and community. Owner of antique business; board member of the Beloit Historical Society and mother of six.

Marjorie VanGelder

(1913-2000) Aviator,

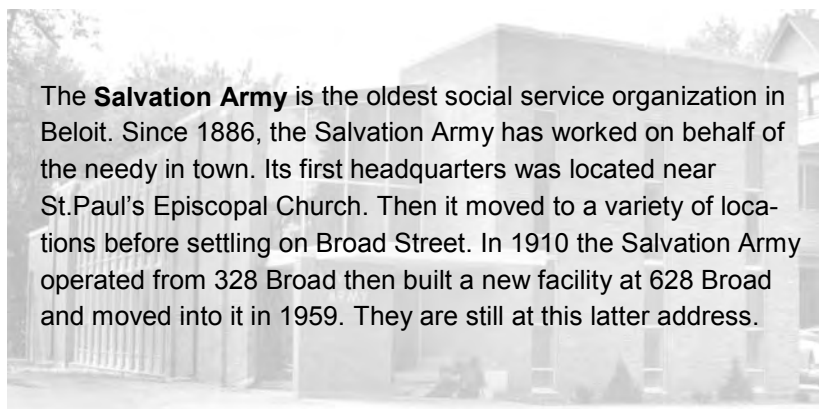
teacher, business woman, Beloit promoter, author, manager and mother of eight.



Yee She Gok Wong

(1894-1979) Tragically widowed after coming from China to join her husband, she raised a family of seven.

This is a token selection of Beloit Mothers in our collection. We invite you to send us your mother's photo and biography to include in our collection of Beloit Mothers as well.



The **Salvation Army** is the oldest social service organization in Beloit. Since 1886, the Salvation Army has worked on behalf of the needy in town. Its first headquarters was located near St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Then it moved to a variety of locations before settling on Broad Street. In 1910 the Salvation Army operated from 328 Broad then built a new facility at 628 Broad and moved into it in 1959. They are still at this latter address.

Up Coming Events

Further details on these events will be made public in the newspapers and on our web site. Visit us at www.beloithistoricalsociety.com.

The **May School Tours** start up 6 May and run through the month. Almost 400 third graders will tour our historic Hanchett-Bartlett Homestead. The **Sports Hall of Fame** event is scheduled for the 5th of June and, as always, will be held at Lincoln Center. The **Gala Auction** is set for October with location and other details to follow in the next issue of *Confluence*. We are very fortunate this year to have Nancy Alseth, the newest Board member, to assume controls of this most lucrative fund raiser of the Society. There will be more to say about the celebration of **A.P. Warner's historic flight of 1909**, here in Beloit, in this newsletter as well as other media in the coming months but mark your calendars for 4 November when the Society will open its doors to all of you for a plane-hanging ceremony. We'll be getting on loan a model reproduction of the Curtis Pusher that A.P. flew at the Morgan Farm 4 November 1909.

Past Events

The **Quilting Classes** taught by Bobbie Fiske in February and March were well attended and the Society made a modest profit. In February we held the Annual **Evening at Lincoln Center** with John Eastberg presenting a wonderful program about the lost homes of Milwaukee's Grand Avenue. A well-attended affair which attracted 65 people. The second of April we held the **Volunteer Brunch**, the Society's yearly thank you to the volunteers. This year Clark Kidder gave us all a poignant and educational program about the Orphan Train on which his grandmother arrived in Wisconsin. The Brunch was sponsored by generous donors to whom we give sincere thanks. Lastly was our **Annual Dinner** which drew the largest crowd to Lincoln Center to hear a colorful presentation by Linda Bachand who played memorable songs from the duo Lerner & Loewe. Our President, Cathy Piazza, gave a brief report mentioning that our financial situation was stable and that the new President, who will assume command in July, is Craig Mellem. The event was attended by eighty members.

1910-2010: 100 Years Campaign—1,000 Members and \$10,000!

Assist us in reaching our centennial membership goal of 1,000. Only 400 new members needed!

New members during this centennial appeal will receive a free book – Pioneer Beloit, Sparks of the Flaming Wheel or History of the Beloit Fire Department.

Membership Rates

	Individual	Family
One year	\$20	\$25
Two Years	\$35	\$45
Three Years	\$50	\$65

Membership benefits include:

- Discounts at historical sites
- Discounts at Beloit Historical Society events
- Quarterly newsletter

Assist us in reaching our centennial donor membership goal of \$10,000.

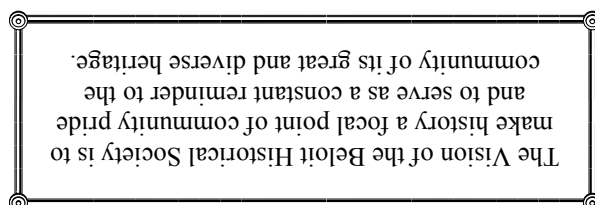
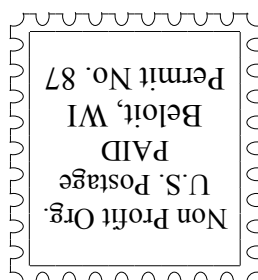
All contributors making a \$100 donation or more will have their names put on a Beloit Historical Society centennial recognition plaque.

(Membership donors will receive a 1 year family membership with discounts to centennial events.)

Donor Levels

Benefactor	\$1,000
Patron	\$500
Sustaining	\$250
Supporting	\$100

The Society is a repository of the riches of Beloit history and also an organization rich in the people who support it, who make it work and have done so for nearly a century.
– Paul Kerr, Director



Visit our web site at
beloithistoricalsociety.com

Address Service Requested

Confluence
Beloit Historical Society
845 Hackett St.
Beloit WI 53511