

Heritage Happenings



Lest We Forget...



It's January and it's cold, chilly. Here are some photos of Manitowoc including one from 1890 with skaters downtown on the Manitowoc River.



January 1870: It's now two months since their first Reception. It's winter in Manitowoc. Wood or coal needs to be collected for their stoves for cooking and for heat in the house. They only need heat on the top floor as there are no classes going on at this time in the downstairs. Already they are missing Sister Gabriella and Sister Hyacinth who are traveling from city to city trying to collect money for a new convent. Already young women are asking to join them. Mary Doyle is now 15 years old and is their first official postulant. Before the end of 1869, four more young women have moved into their upstairs: Rose Stich, age 15 from Manitowoc, Mary Schaefer (Sr. Hilaria) age 14 from Manitowoc, Maria Anna Riordan (Sr. Charitas) age 24 and Helena Gerhardt (Sr. Frances) both from New York. One wonders if they met Sr. Gabriella and Sr. Hyacinth when in New York. Eight women in the limited space upstairs must have been difficult and a real challenge for community living. But simplicity built on faith in a loving God, love of poverty, and self dedication to the service of others are becoming the foundation stones of their lives.



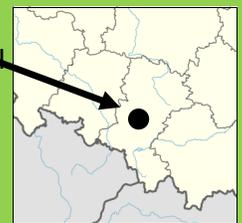
- CONFIDENCE
- COMMITMENT
- VISION
- TRUST

While we recall Sister Gabriella and Sister Hyacintha traveling to the east to collect money for a convent, travel to new places now takes place in the archives via email inquiries. This past month emails were received from 1) Papillon, Nebraska, 2) Radzionków, Poland; 3) Sun Prairie, WI; 4) Buffalo, MN; and Uwe Scharfenecker from Rottenburg am Neckar, Germany. Here are their stories.



1) From Papillion, NE: Bob Kosmicki is doing research on his family. He wants information on Sr. Stanislaus Kosmicki that would help him understand her life better. He knows she was born June 13, 1880, entered the convent June 17, 1896 (age 16), and lived to be over 100 years old. Here she is playing cards with Mother Inez.

2) From **Andrzej Olszewski, Radzionków**, Poland: a town in Silesia in southern Poland.



Andrzej's request was described in the December HH, his wife's relative being Sister Zita Miazga. Follow-up emails clarified two boys who died early age, change in names from Polish to English, information to be gleaned from Find-a-Grave. Then there was a second marriage after Piotr (Peter) died and Franciska (Zita's mother) remarried. She had a son from this marriage which did not last. Her son, John, changed his name back to Miazga. Andrzej was thrilled with the information received and will now make more contacts in this country. Here he is with Iwona, his wife.



Answer to question: These are pocket watches that we used when we didn't wear a wrist watch. A small pocket under our scapular on habit held the watch. Sr. June Smith



More



3) Sun Prairie, WI: Thomas Ligocki writes: I am looking for a Sister who used to be a Principal at St Mary/St Michael Grade School in Clarks Mills, WI. The time frame would have been approximately 1999-2002. I briefly taught 7/8th grade and I cannot remember the Sisters name. I am trying to reconnect with her just to see how she is doing. Please feel free to contact me at my email address. thank you. REPLY: Upon consulting our "Open Missions" binder and locating the Clarks Mills listing, I found Sr. Elaine Turba with a (P) after her name in 2000-2002. This is not usually identified so I thanked the Patron of Archivists and sent off the requested information!! Now to see if Sister Elaine remembers him!!



4) Buffalo, MN by way of Coon Rapids, MN: Timothy P.

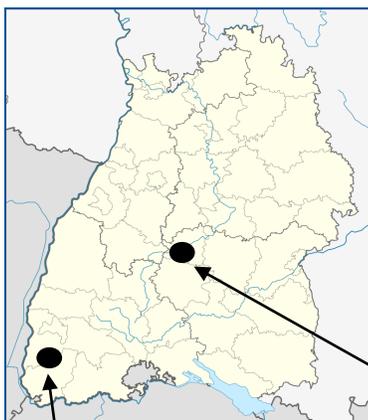
Murray emails asking for information on his great-great-great aunt Sister M. Antonita (Agnes) Green. And asking if the M stands for Mary? YES!

REPLY: First, where is Buffalo, MN? Buffalo is a city, located 42 miles northwest of Minneapolis in Wright County, Minnesota. **Coon Rapids** is a northern suburb of Minneapolis, east of Buffalo. Sometimes searches are difficult. Sister Antonita Green is really Antonia. Her records are very thin but include a birth certificate in German and a brief writeup of her illness before she died. Her birth certificate notes that she was born June 12, 1868 in New Ulm, Minnesota but our records list 1867. Her German birth certificate is written: *geb am 12 June 1868* and translates *born on 12 June 1868*, but our "Big Book" records her birth as June 12, 1867. She entered the convent 5/5/1885 (age 17). Her tombstone lists death as *March 25, 1908, age 40* but her folder says she was 41 when she died. Which would mean she was born in 1868, not 1867, having died three months before her birthday which would have been her 41st birthday. SOLUTION: Need to change Find-A-Grave birthdate to 1868 and possibly other records. This means a trip to the courthouse to find her death certificate! Of her it was said: She had been a housekeeper and spread sunshine wherever she went.

5) Rottenburg am Neckar, Germany: Uwe Scharfenecker inquires: on a research about the Franciscan Sisters of Gieboldehausen I found your new history book: A star of hope shone in the convent sky (2015). I'm very interested in this book. Can you send me a copy?

REPLY: **How did you find us? His Reply:** I'm interested in the history of Franciscan Sister communities since I was 18 years old, after "deciding" not to become a monk in an abbey near my hometown Aalen, but to go on the way to become a priest in our diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart. Since 1990 I'm a priest and since 2009 episcopal vicar for formation in our diocese. Since the time of my theological studies at Tuebingen University I have extended my interest on Franciscan sister communities in Germany, Austria and Switzerland to the communities in the USA. Tuebingen University library has as focal point theology, almost all American books on Franciscan history are there available - a veritable gold-mine. I know from Gieboldehausen by reading the (very small) article on the Franciscan Sisters of Gieboldehausen in the Dizionario degli Istituti di Perfezione and the two books on the history of your congregation "Alverno. The Story of the Franciscan Sisters of Alverno, Wisconsin, 1866-1919" and "Refining his silver". I got the copies which formerly belonged to Sister Donna Marie Kessler - unbelievable! (By the way: the third big theme of my interest are the Norbertine Fathers.

F/U: Sister Donna Marie's book will be sent to him but this is going to be the beginning of a real gift: a German contact who speaks English!!! This was the most exciting email/work I've received that I can think of!! Just amazing.



Freiburg, Germany about 2 hrs. from Rottenburg am Nectar, Germany