

Heritage Happenings Archives Office

October 2021

Lest We Forget...



Did you know: Mother Odelia had a sister!!! Researching Mother Odelia's obituary on Find-A-Grave, at the bottom were two words "READ MORE..." what an invitation...so I clicked on "Read More" and up popped an article titled: "FIRST MOTHER GENERAL of the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity" . The second para-



graph read: "Early manifesting a desire to embrace the religious life, she was placed by her mother, at the age of fifteen (1862), in charge of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, who then conducted a boarding school for young ladies at Munster, Ohio...." This confirmed how she originally joined this order. At age 16 (1863) she could become a novice and by 1866 would be a professed Sister. The last paragraph read: "A surviving sister of Mother Mary Odelia (better known by this name of Miss Rosa Vahl) is Mrs. Minnie Kreutzmann, ... of this city." This was the first knowledge that she had a sister!!! Sarah, archivist for the Precious Blood Sisters, contacted the Dayton Historical/Genealogy Center for more information. Minnie Kreutzmann was identified as Minnie Vahl, married to Bernard Kreutzmann. A death certificate indicated Minnie was born August 1, 1850 in Dayton but other sources state 1851/1852. Parents were identified as Martin Vahl and Margaret Summers, both born in France. Now to see if the boat passenger list between 1847 and 1850 can be found. More searching...



Paintings and Artist Rise to New Life

On July 1, Andrew Corrao brought in this painting he purchased at an estate sale.

In looking up the artist, he discovered another painting by Sr. Davidica , her bust of the Assumption, and wanted to



check it out as a Murillo original. It was not. In looking at early art of women, he was convinced they did not get warranted recognition for their works. Therefore, he was here to see her other

paintings with the goal in mind of doing a Wikipedia page featuring her artistic pieces. At present at least 45 pieces of her paintings including china work have

been identified. He is quite eager to do this work of recognition and is presently working to complete the article. Here is another of two

paintings by Sister Davidica that can be found in St. Luke's church in Plains, WI.



If Rooms Could Talk...

Recently, this letter was found dated August 10, 1962 to Sister Charlotte at St. John the Baptist in Plymouth, WI:

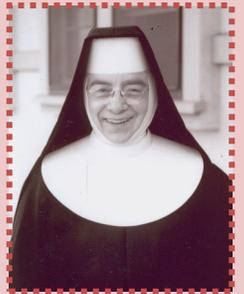
"Dear Sister, I am sorry that I didn't get the mirror at Holy Family Convent taken care of as yet. We have not been in Manitowoc all summer, but plan on being there on Sat. Aug. 18, to meet Sr. Marianna at her mothers home. I will be able to visit on Sat. I will bring a mirror along on that day and if it fits the door O. K., I will install it right away. This will be a donation from Hoffer Glass Co., and myself. Sorry for the delay. Sincerely, Leonard Scheinola." A note with

the letter indicated St. Mary's Chapel....and here is the mirror.....inside door where vestments hang...full length...so priests can check out their "look."





September 12 was the anniversary of Mother Agna Beller's death anniversary...but on turning the page of the Necrology writeups, there was no historical writeup on her. Searching her files led to more interesting history than I had anticipated.



Mother Agna (Rosalia Matilda Beller) was born March 13, 1895 in Iglo, Austria-Hungary. Records we had stated *her father, John, took his oldest son, John, and left their homeland for America in search of better living conditions. They made their way to Gogebic County in Michigan. At the age of six, Rose, together with her mother, Julia, and two older brothers, Joseph (age 8 1/2) and August followed them and settled in Ironwood.* She had a younger sister, Born June 11, 1905 eventually joined our community.

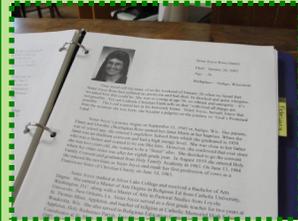
With all the online sources for genealogy searching, new information gleaned told us much more about this family. *John Beller was the son of John and Anna Kovalcik Beller of Austria. Julia, his wife, was the daughter of Michael and Mary Antal Serva, from Iglo. John and Julia married about 1876. They had nine children, eight of whom survived...John Antony (1878-1970), Rose (1879-1951), Julia (1882-1967), Catharina (1884 who died early), Anna (1887—1964), Joseph Steven (1892—1975) August Frank (1893—1956), Rose (Mother Agna—1895—1969) and Jennie (Sister Rita Ann) (1905—1967).* The 1930 census records stated that the family immigrated in 1898 but Rose said she was six when she came which would have been 1901. I suspect John and his son, John Jr. were the 1898 immigrants. Julia would have stayed home with the rest of the children. Rose would have only been 3 years old. Jennie was born in Ironwood so we know every one was here by 1905. Her Mom thus immigrated in 1901 with the other 6 children. *More information identified that John Sr. worked as a watchman for the C&NW railroad. He died from a bowel obstruction August 7, 1920, age 65. Julia lived another 20 years dying January 18, 1940 from cancer of the gall bladder. She was 80 years old.*



Here is another interesting tidbit! How did Rose come to our community? Rose met Sr. Justin at St. Ambrose school and loved her dearly. She wanted to become a religious like her. A Slovak religious community was about to open in Pennsylvania so Rose and her friend decided to enter there. When such news reached the ear of Sister Inez who was principal and superior at St. Ambrose, she asked Rose why she was not joining them. Rose answered: *"My mother thought I would have to have a large dowry to join you, and we would not have that."* Sister dispelled all her fears informing her that she would not need a penny. She could come just as she was...and she did! She entered 9/29/1911 at age 16. Her younger sister, Jennifer, entered 6/17/1924 at age 19. Here is the only picture we have of the two of them.

Eulogies - Vital to Our History

Mother Agna is not the only Sister who has died and does not have a writeup of her history in the eulogy books. For many years Sr. Roselani kept these up and then the Wake Reflection by Sr. Louise and then Sr. Natalie were added. But many reflections have not been typed up as yet. Individual folders do contain a small writeup about a



Sister but these Sisters who have been part of our past...whose shoulders we have stood upon...haver not been recognized yet. They are fascinating to get to know and then the reading of the Necrology becomes more interesting as we hear a Sister's name and now know who she was. So our archives office would gladly welcome anyone who might have some time and typing skills to add a eulogy for these missing Sisters. Help bring them back to life!!! and into our lives that they may be remembered and not forgotten. Please see Sister Caritas if you are interested. Bless you!!