

A Soggy

Summer 2019

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
FRIENDS OF MCGILVRAY ROAD
PO BOX 2976
LA CROSSE, WI 54602-2976

**Annual Meeting
September 9, 2019
Drugan's Castle Mounds
Supper Club
5:30 pm Social
6:00 pm Meal**

See President's message for more details.

Who's Who in the Friends of McGilvray Road

Board of Directors

Nancy Hill	Mike Howe
D.A. Ferguson	Pat Caffrey
Linda McMullin	Jay Fernholz
Herbert Grimek	Ruth Scholze
Roger Ziegler	John Papenfus
Butch Kleinsmith	

Officers

President - Ruth Scholze
Vice President – Herbert Grimek
Treasurer - Pat Caffrey
Secretary - Nancy Hill
Media - Linda McMullin

Check out our website and connect with us at <http://www.7bridgesrd.org>

Join us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofMcGilvrayRd>

President's Message

Welcome to the summer edition of the Friends of McGilvray Road newsletter. The past several months have been challenging for everyone from the extreme winter weather, and now the excessive heat with very heavy rainfall regularly. The bugs are having a field day as well so plan ahead if you plan to walk the road.

Thanks to the worker bees who have kept-up with the mowing and trail clean-up. We have received approval from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for the proposed replacement of the corroded beams supporting the deck on Bridge 4, and are requesting approval from the State Historic Preservation Office. The proposed repairs would not affect the appearance of the bridge, but would alter the structure directly under the decking. The bridge and trail beyond the bridge would be closed during construction, expected to take several weeks with volunteer labor. Please check the web site for additional updates.

Notecards featuring the historic bridges are for sale through the Holmen community at: Cordell's Standard of Excellence; Rudy's Feed & Seed and the village/township offices. We are featured with the tourism publication *Explore La Crosse* and have brochures scattered throughout the Coulee Region.

The ANNUAL MEETING will be September 9, 2019 at Drugan's Castle Mounds, north of Holmen. Social time begins at 5:30 pm with the meal starting at 6:00 pm.

All are welcome but please RSVP by Wednesday, September 4, 2019, to Ruth at rscholze73@gmail.com or call 608-797-9391. Reservations are needed to determine the space we will reserve, so please RSVP as soon as possible. If you are interested to serve on the board please talk to Ruth Scholze.

Relax, walk the bridges and think about this quote from Mehmet Murat Ildan a Turkish playwright, "When you cross a bridge, you take a break from this world."

Ruth Scholze

President Friends of McGilvray Road

Delays and Needed Repairs



Thank you to the Town of Holland for the use of CAPX 2020/Badger Coulee funds to pay for materials to repair some badly corroded beams on Bridge 4 and replace decking on Bridges 2 and 4.

The Friends of McGilvray Road have also received approval from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for the proposed replacement of the corroded beams supporting the deck on Bridge 4. In addition, we are requesting approval from the State Historic Preservation Office. Please watch the web page and Facebook for updates because

the bridge and trail will be closed beyond Bridge 4 while that bridge is being repaired, and the full trail may be briefly closed for grading work to repair washouts. Ongoing minor trail repair continues due to washouts and high water from all the extra rain these past several months.

Endangered species considerations, in addition to nearly continuous high water, have delayed trail repairs and grading using equipment.

Pictured above: Corroded “stringer” beams on Bridge 4. This level of corrosion is not found on the other bridges.

Water, Water Everywhere

July 28, 2019

Roger Ziegler, a neighbor of the McGilvray Road, who frequently walks the trail and does a lot of the mowing of the trail, reports that it has been quite a soggy summer down there.

About May 10th or so, due to washouts caused by recent flooding and subsequent safety concerns, the WDNR advised no travel past the washout between Bridge 3 and Bridge 4. This advisory continues in effect at this time.

During today’s visit Roger reported very muddy conditions in a long section beyond Br. 4. There is also standing water across several areas of the trail. He was wearing knee boots and said he would not be able to get past the water barrier where the culvert was taken out.

The summer rainy weather has also bred swarms of mosquitos and deer flies to further discourage visitors at this point.

At the time, if you wanted to brave the mud, water and insects, it was recommended that you cover your head with netting, wear ankle boots and liberally apply repellent.



On the positive side, today Roger reported seeing many wild flowers, a flock of blue teal ducks, a large snake, a northern leopard frog, and a swimming otter.



The picture on the front page of this newsletter is of the area where the culvert used to be located between Bridge 3 and 4. The following are pictures of a few low spots along the way. On that day, the Galesville river gauge measured the Black River at 6 feet.



Due to the weather, Roger has not been able to get out mowing very often, so periodically the vegetation on and beside of the trail has been high. He will be out again to work in a few days.

Pat Caffrey has had some success filling in the wash-out between Bridges 3 and 4 so that is somewhat passable at this time. The pond left by the culvert removal is still present. Other maintenance efforts have been hampered by the weather.

Hopefully the dry weather will continue for a while, and the trail will be in much better shape and passable. Now if only the insects will cooperate!!

We continue to be thankful for the great efforts by Roger and Pat in helping to keep the trail a great place to visit.



McGilvray Fishing Memories

In my youth, McGilvray Road was open to auto traffic to the turnaround west of Bridge 6. Until my brother and I were old enough to help with farm work, we often spent our time exploring the “bottoms” below my Grandparent’s farm.

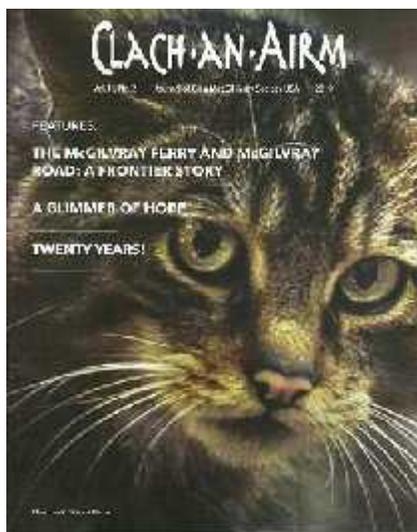
I recall one early summer after the river had been high and receded rapidly we found the Bullheads were biting in the pool under the 4th Bridge. Our Aunt saw our fish and the next day she drove my mother, brother and I as well as her four children to our hot spot.

We had just baited up and probably caught two or three fish when a couple of carloads of teenage boys pulled up. After parking their cars they all climbed on top of the bridge’s arches and dove into that deep pool. Needless to say, fishing action slowed considerably during their diving exhibition, but our family enjoyed the show immensely. It should be noted that after the teens left, my mother and Aunt Carol both cautioned the lot of us to never dive off the bridge!

PS...After the water calmed we did catch enough for a fish fry!

Butch Kleinsmith

CLACH AN AIRM



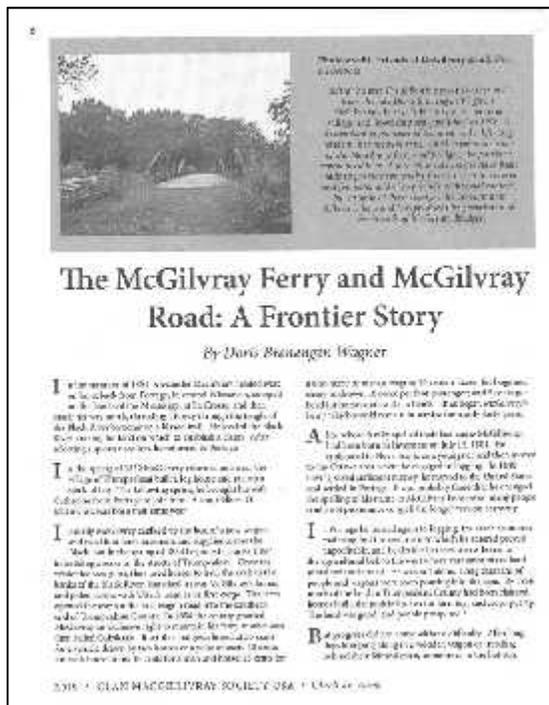
Vol. III, No. 2. Journal of Clan MacGillivray Society, USA 2019

Friends and Bridges and McGilvray are featured in this fine issue.

Tom Cox, Editor, of the “Clach An Airm” Journal of the McGillivray Society, found out about the McGilvray Road and bridges because of our 25th Anniversary celebration with Alex McGilvray of Genoa City, Wisconsin and he and his wife’s attendance. The Wisconsin McGilvray’s

came in full McGilvray tartan dress and Alex played bagpipes on the Bridges. Alex is member of the Clan, and contacted Tom. Tom lives in McCammon, Idaho. Then news travels! The clan’s website is www.mcgillivray.us, in case you wish to follow them.

Tom Cox is Editor-in -Chief, and did a remarkable job featuring McGilvray’s history and also our own efforts with the road and bridges. There are very good quality photos, often in color. The article draws heavily from



Doris Brenengen Wagner’s book The McGillivray Ferry and the McGillivray Road: A Frontier Story.