

# IMPRINTS

ON THE SANDS OF MARQUETTE COUNTY



## Preacher Johannes Strieter: Portal to the Past of Marquette County and Beyond



Pastor John Strieter was a 30 year old preacher when he came to Marquette County with his wife Elizabeth in 1859 and travelled over 6,000 miles a year with his horse serving Budsins, Germania, Neshkoro and other emerging congregations. This photo was taken in the 1860's.

was supposed to give a funeral address in the house before church, and since I had to drive 14 miles or so, I headed out early. Several times I had to stop and rub the ice off around my horse's mouth so that it could breathe."

The Wisconsin travelling Pastor concedes in his autobiography that, "How often I stood behind my table and thought, 'It's time for you to go and tell your people, 'I can't go on like this anymore,' but I never actually did so; I just kept on toughing it out." The verse "Comfort me once again with your help and let your joyful Spirit uphold me!" (Psalm 51:12) often gave him strength.

Many of those who attended recognized local names and discovered information about ancestors who hosted Pastor Strieter in their homes or belonged to his congregations. Of his 1859 life in Budsins, the Pastor wrote, "I never preached less than four and never more than nine times a week and almost always traveled about 6000 miles a year with my horse. When I preached at Buchholz's, I would take off at 7 in the morning, preach, then drive ten miles to Warnke's."

On Saturday, September 17, the Marquette County Historical Society hosted Pastor Nathaniel Bieber of Wausau who has studied and translated the autobiography of one of the first Lutheran Pastors in Marquette County who served Budsins, Germania, Westfield, Neshkoro, Berlin and several other locations beginning in 1859. The presentation was well attended and well received.

Pastor Bieber, who serves two parishes outside of Wausau, has made visits to Marquette County while doing his research on Pastor Strieter. His translation of the 1904 autobiography can be found on his blog <https://redbrickparsonage.wordpress.com>. Just like so many other early settler diaries, the document Pastor Bieber has translated is a wealth of information about life in the new state of Wisconsin, the importance of church to early settlers, and church history here in Marquette County.

Bieber's fascinating presentation was filled with Strieter's true stories of life in the wilderness being settled by European immigrants. In Michigan, Strieter recalls that he went with a missionary to visit a sick woman. "Back in the sugar maple woods a little old woman who was almost 100 years old had taken ill. They brought her home to her wigwam. There she lay on a bulrush mat with an old squaw attending to her. Next to her lay a dead bird, green, with long legs; I believe we called it a waterhen. She kept setting the bird here and there and stroking it. The missionary told me later that it was her guardian spirit that would supposedly bring her to the Indian heaven.....Everyone chooses his own guardian spirit, like that woman chose the bird. When she was buried, I went to find her grave. There a split piece of wood was embedded in the ground at the head, and her bird was painted in green on top of it."

He had encounters with a bear, a harrowing and death-defying experience in a run-away wagon, and in Wisconsin, winters so cold, "I would preach the second time and then drive another nine miles or so home. At first I took along something to eat, but it didn't work, for in the winter it was frozen and in the summer it was as dry as bark. So I gave it up and ate just like my horse, at 7 in the morning and 7 in the evening," and "A man had died, and I



Pastor Nathaniel Bieber serves two Lutheran country parishes outside of Wausau, Wisconsin and has translated the autobiography of Pastor Johannes Strieter, an early travelling preacher in Marquette County, spoke at the museum in September.

## Two new exhibits are completed at MCHS

If you haven't stopped by recently, be sure to do so to take in two great new exhibits at MCHS. The first one is in the Cochrane/Nelson house and features Mary Jean Thalacker's vintage Marquette County quilt collection. Mary Jean's son Jim worked closely with volunteers and board members of MCHS to design and install a custom display for what will be a changing display of quilts, all with Marquette County history attached to them. The Thalacker family donated money for the rack materials. This collection is probably one of the best local vintage quilt collections in the state and MCHS is proud to be able to have it be part of the museum's exhibits.



The next new exhibit was designed and assembled by Ed Thalacker. It tells the story of hunting and fishing in Marquette County. Rich with photos and artifacts. Ed is still looking for more items from Marquette County to display. From a Westfield Conservation Club pheasant feeding box to a 1948 whitetail deer rack,

this exhibit will be fun for everyone who has their own memories of hunting or fishing in Marquette County.

Remember, the book **Abundant Harvest; the hunting and fishing legacy of Marquette County** is available for \$20 at MCHS, the Marquette County Tribune office, B&B Candy Store and Reader's Realm Bookstore in Montello. It's filled with facts, stories and lore, all about Marquette County. All proceeds from the sale of the book go to MCHS. It makes a great Christmas present.



If you love history, you'll love the new mobile app that tells the early settler story and more of Marquette County. You don't have to have a smart phone to enjoy loads of fascinating information because you can view it all on your computer by going to <http://muirboyhoodhome.toursphere.com>. If you have a smart phone with a QR reader, just swipe your phone over the code in the information below and it will take you to the app.

## Marquette County John Muir Nature and History Route



Home

[muirboyhoodhome.toursphere.com](http://muirboyhoodhome.toursphere.com)



**The clearest way into the Universe is  
through a forest wilderness.**

*...John Muir*

**Find yourself on the John Muir  
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**Spend an hour or a week  
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landscapes he would have seen. Learn  
how early settlers like the Muirs lived  
their lives and formed community.**

**How it works:**

- ♦ Access the Marquette  
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here or on any of the 22 signs posted  
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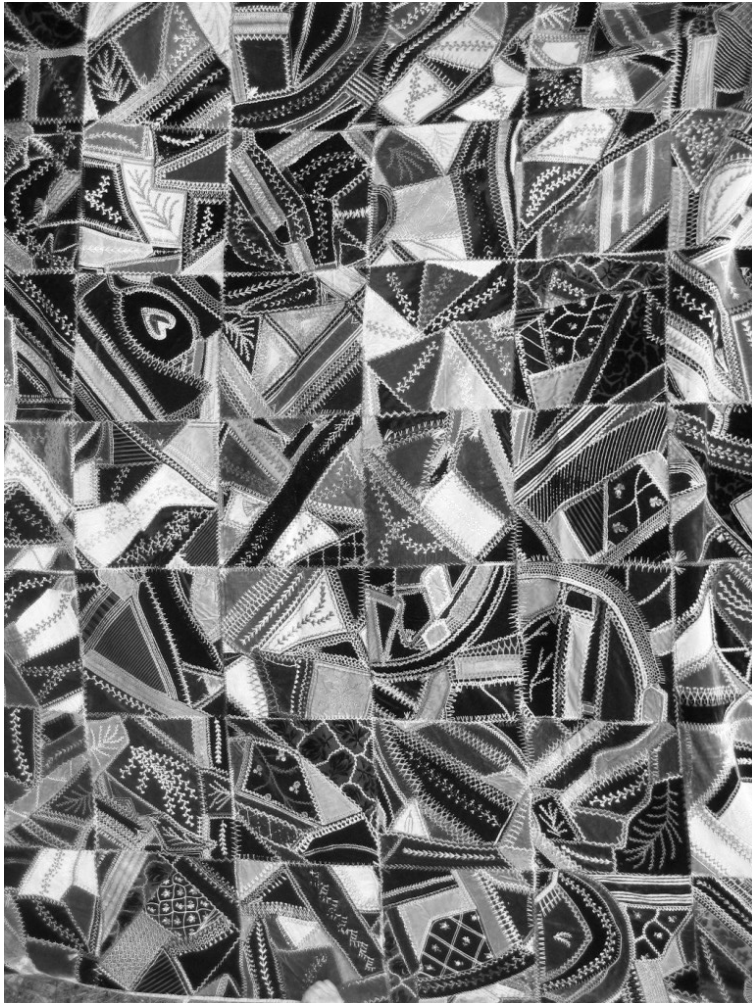
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- ♦ Print out worksheets, family fun  
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if you wish, before visiting the sites.
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One of the many quilts in Mary Jean Thalacker's collection now on display at MCHS with different quilts being hung over time. Always something new to look at!



Velvet Crazy Quilt made between 1880-1890 in Millbury, Massachusetts. It was brought to Wisconsin in 1893 by Clara Young Wells, Welden, Lowe, and Ellen Young, and Clara's daughter Mary who was 9 years old. They had all traveled from Montello to Millbury by train to collect an inheritance from Clara and Ellen's Aunt Anna Lovell. This quilt was part of the inheritance. Clara and Ellen's mother, Eliza Walcott Young had died here in the "wilds of Wisconsin" and Anna had taken the young women Ellen and Clara to Massachusetts for formal schooling. Clara was Mary Jean Steinhilber Thalacker's great grandmother. The Lovells owned a general store in Millbury. It advertised: Dealer in boots, shoes, hats, caps, and Yankee notions. Quilts like this were originally made by wealthier people as material was very expensive. Later, other women picked up the crazy quilt fad and adapted it to wool and cotton.

**October 15....mark  
your calendar for the  
dedication of the new  
addition to the  
museum from 1 to 3.**

## Find us on Facebook

Be sure to LIKE us on Facebook and enjoy the changing posts about history in Marquette County. You can add comments about your own experiences or information about each post.

## Pick us as your Amazon Smile Charity

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P.O. Box 172 Westfield, Wisconsin  
53964

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[mcgwin@frontier.com](mailto:mcgwin@frontier.com)

web site: [www.marqcohistorical.org](http://www.marqcohistorical.org)

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Below is a photo of William Kinney taken inside his saloon in the 1930s, according to a note on the back of the photo. The building is on the south side of Liberty Street in Packwaukee.

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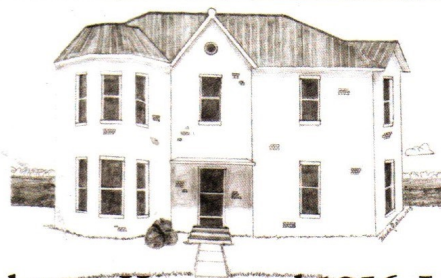
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