

Brodhagen Siblings Sponsor 108th Shawano County Barn Quilt

Linda Wussow and her brothers Bruce and Jim Brodhagen have sponsored Shawano County's 108th barn quilt. The pattern of a green-headed duck in flight, called "Duck Pond," was chosen because the pond on the farm always had ducks in it when the siblings were growing up there. "The quilt pattern rekindles the memories of when the family raised ducks, chickens and geese on the farm and the sight of the many wild ducks and geese that visited the pond over the years," Bruce said.

The farm, called Brodhagen's LBJ Century Farm at W3938 E. Flambeau Road near Bonduel, was homesteaded in the 1860s. After serving in the Civil War, Ferdinand Brodhagen, a German native, returned to the Lake Poygan area of Wisconsin, only to discover his family had died. After a brief stay in Winnebago County, he settled in Shawano County in the Town of Hartland. He was drawn to the area because of its natural spring and pond which is the start of a creek that feeds into the Shioc River. Over time, he acquired 400 acres of land, including much of the present village of Bonduel. Ferdinand was the 11th settler in the Bonduel area.

Ferdinand remarried and he and his wife raised nine children. Many of their descendants still reside in the Bonduel area. Over the years, the Brodhagen family employed several local farm hands. Sometimes, these farm hands were rewarded with land granted from the Brodhagen farmstead.

From Ferdinand, the farm passed to Ernst, who was one of 12 children. Virtually all of the family was closely linked with the growth and development of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School in Bonduel.

Ernst had three children, Hildegard, Dorothy and Ray. Ray and his wife, Mary Lou, took possession of the farm in June 1949. They had three children, Linda, Bruce and Jim, whose families still enjoy spending time on the farm.

During many of the years, the Brodhagen farm was an operating dairy farm, along with the cropland. The barn on which the quilt is displayed is over 140 years old.

#