

Item of Historical Interest:

COMMUNICANTENTAFEL - CHURCH PEW AUCTION BOARD

This is the Auction Board formerly used in this parish in auctioning off the COMMUNICANT CHURCH PEWS. The auction took place on a Sunday in January each year. The father of the family was expected to pay pew rent, or premium besides paying for each child who had made his First Communion. Hence the title COMMUNICANTENTAFEL or COMMUNICANTS BOARD.

The auction usually took place in the parish hall or school as it was back in those days, and was conducted by one of the parishioners who had a strong voice. As each space was sold, a black pin was inserted in the corresponding place. The choice pews were the ones in the rear and they went first in the auction and drew the highest prices. This custom of auctioning off pews continued in Munjor into the 1950s.

Here is how the auction was announced in those days:

In the Munjor and Schoenchen Dialect:

“HEIT WERN DIE COMMUNICANTE KERICHSTUHL VERSTRICHE.”

In High German:

“HEUTE WERDEN COMMUNICANT KIRCHENSTUHLE VERAUKTIONIERT (ODER VERSTEIGERT).”

(Translation: courtesy of Fr. Alvin Werth, ofmcap)

This BOARD represents the FLOOR PLAN or SEATING ARRANGEMENT of the church before the fire of February 5th, 1932. The knobs represent the pillars of the church at that time. You will notice that there were three aisles and four banks of pews; two banks against the outside walls with a capacity of four persons per pew and two banks in the center with a capacity of six persons per pew. Today there are just two banks of pews with the main aisle in the center and the side aisles near the walls. At that time the congregation was much larger and there were 32 rows of pews whereas today we have just 22 rows of pews. At that time before the fire, the choir had rounded corners, when the church was rebuilt the corners of the choir were made square.