



Special Newsletter June, 2016

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402-296-4770

website: www.casscountynemuseum.org/

2016 Board of Directors OFFICERS

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Jon Oliver, Weeping Water

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*The Board usually meets the fourth Tuesday
of the month at 7:00 pm.*

CASS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOUNDATION

Douglas Duey, Chairman

Pat Meisinger, Secretary

Leigh Jean Koinzan, Treasurer

Dave Pankonin, Board Member

Bruce Wiles, Board Member

MUSEUM STAFF

Margo Prentiss, Curator

Linda Duncan, Registrar

From the President's Desk.....

After a very wet spring the weather is now warm and sunny, giving the farmers an opportunity to get their soybean planting wrapped up. This weather also allows the company that we've contracted with to begin the restoration work on the Cook log cabin. This project involves removing and replacing some of the daubing, that is the mortar, between the logs on the cabin. Some of it is badly deteriorated. The Cook cabin was built near Mynard, Nebraska, in 1868 by Joseph Cook. The logs used were hauled from the Missouri River and are from Cottonwood Trees. By 1868, Nebraska was for the most part still open prairie land with trees found only along streams and rivers. Cottonwood and the stately Burr Oak, along with smaller willow trees were what was typically found at that time.

Native Americans relied on the Burr Oak Tree for a variety of things and occasionally they were used as "signal trees". These are now historically important and there are very few remaining because they would need to be in the 200-300 year old category. Native Americans made them by bending a limb on a sapling horizontally and holding it down with leather straps and a stake or heavy rock so that the limb would continue to grow in this horizontal fixed position. The "signal trees" are believed to have been trail markers, providing direction to hunting grounds or water sources. They may also have been used to signify gathering places or spiritual ceremonial grounds.

I have a Burr Oak Signal Tree growing in front of my house in Plattsmouth. It has been frequently photographed and a few years back a group of historians from Minnesota, Nebraska and Canada examined it and later that year gathered acorns from the tree so that it could be further propagated. My tree is probably 300 years old and is beginning to show it. Upper branches did not leaf out this spring and although I had the tree injected a couple of weeks ago I doubt that it will survive many years longer. When I sit on my front porch in the shade of that great old tree, I often think that if it could only talk it would have so much to tell. It may tell of a young Native American that tied one of its limbs back over its trunk so the tree could be a trail marker, perhaps marking the way towards the Platte River. It might recall the Lewis and Clark Journey of Discovery. It could recall that the country suffered terrible troubles during the Civil War and during the same period in history the bustling activity of the steamboats at landing points like Plattsmouth, Rock Bluffs and Kenosha. It would tell of the horrible drought of the 1930s, of two World Wars, as well as the Korean and Vietnam wars and current conflicts. It has sheltered my home since it was constructed in 1886 and has been home to hundreds of squirrel and bird nests over its lifetime I'll miss this old tree when its days are over.

--Douglas V. Duey, President

Mission Statement: *The Cass County Historical Society shall collect, preserve, and study materials to document, interpret and present the history of Cass County Nebraska to the public.*

Temporary Exhibits

Throughout the year, we rotate exhibits in our Davis Conference Room and highlight different aspects of our Collection and County History.

"Celebrating 80 Years:

History of Cass County Historical Society"

May 3 - July 31, 2016

May 20, 2016: the Historical Society turned 80!

"Remembering Beautiful Merritt Beach"

June 21 - August 28, 2016

A selection of photographs telling the history of Merritt Beach from its opening in the 1930s until the closing in 1989.

The museum welcomed 93 Third Graders from Plattsmouth Elementary during May!

This is a photo of Mrs. Campin's class enjoying their visit on May 17.



Blue Star Museum

We have registered as a "Blue Star Museum" which means we will offer free admission to active military personnel and their families during the summer. The program runs from Memorial Day, May 30, to Labor Day, September 5th. To learn more about Blue Star Museums and see a list of other Nebraska museums that are participating, go to:

<http://www.arts.gov/national/blue-star-museums>

Special Event In July:

Rock Bluffs School

Open House

Sunday, July 17, 2016

2:00 to 4:00 pm

Grant Updates

We were awarded a grant of \$8,450 from Cass County Tourism for restoration of our Cook Log Cabin!

We have raised \$5,195 toward the other half. If you would like to donate to the fund, please send your check to Cass County Historical Society and note on the check that it is for the "Cabin Fund".

We also received a grant from the Plattsmouth Community Foundation for a touch-screen computer that can be used by visitors to view the oral histories we have recorded with long time residents of the county.

Wish List:

Volunteers to work on Weekends from 12:00 to 4:00

Volunteers to work on Tuesdays from 12:00 to 4:00.

Supplies: Paper cups, napkins, paper towels, toilet tissue, coffee, cream, sugar, liquid hand soap.

We are also raising funds for restoration of the Burlington Northern Caboose. So far, \$1,200 has been donated to the second phase of the project which includes scraping, repairing damaged areas and painting the exterior. If you would like to donate to the caboose project, please note on your check that it is for the "Caboose fund".

Your support is very much appreciated!

Cornerstone Club....Memberships....Donations....Memorials

Received between April 1 and June 1, 2016. Donors live in Nebraska unless otherwise noted.

CORNERSTONE CLUB

Sandstone

Murray State Bank

Joyce E. McCoulla, VP

MEMBERSHIPS

Benefactor

Eleanor S. York
and Barbara York Baker, TX

Century

William & Sandra Allgeier
Kathleen A. Bestor, CA, new
Bernice H.T. Fahlberg
Mel Luetchens
Elizabeth Miller, FL
Diana Duey Strokan

Promoter

David & Lori Pankonin
Vince & Melladee Perry, MO

Booster

Anne Begley
Thomas W. Carneal, MO
Eldonna Forrest
Doris Landon
Rick Yoder & Lissa Nelson
Del & Diana Puls

Members:

Is the date highlighted on your address label? If so, your membership is due. Please fill out the form on the back and mail or deliver to the museum. Those receiving the electronic newsletter will receive a notice by e-mail when their membership is due

Our fiscal year ends June 30.

Your renewal before that date will help us end the year on a positive note. Thank you!

MEMBERSHIPS, continued

Friend

James & Stephanie Ball
Kenneth & Laura Beckman
Jerry & Margaret Ann Blackwell
Suzanne Carlson, new
Don Jacobson, IA
Mary Beth Kriskey
Tony LaHoda
Bernie Meeske, new
Mary Lou Reed, MO
Patsy Sawyer

DONATIONS

Special Donations

Joy Haswell

Donation to Operating Fund

in memory of

Norm Henry

Paul & Nancy McManis

Paper Supplies and Soap

Marcia Beck and Family
Marcia Hostetter
H.Margo Prentiss

Genealogy Donations

Curtis Gomes, NY
Mary Lou Reed, MO
William P. Smith, MD

Speakers Available

If you belong to an organization and are planning programs for the Fall, keep in mind that our Curator and some of our Board Members are available to give programs.

Also, our Conference Room is available if you would like to hold a meeting here. It would be best to call and reserve the date a few months in advance. A donation to the Historical Society would be appreciated for use of the space. To book a program or reserve the Conference room, call
402-296-4770

DONATIONS

Caboose Restoration Fund

Midlands Community Foundation
Kenneth & Margaret Zarybnicky

MEMORIALS

In memory of

Joey Elworth

James & Stephanie Ball

Peter Halmes

James E. Case
Dean & Marilyn Meisinger
Fred & Pat Meisinger

Norm Henry

Dave & Sharon Lybarger
Dean & Marilyn Meisinger
Fred & Pat Meisinger
Gene & Evelyn Meier
H.Margo Prentiss

Robert Moore

H.Margo Prentiss

Wilma Puls

Nick Halmes

Thyra Ryan

Frank & Nora Eyster
June Ann Wagner

Betty Halmes Schanbacher

Dean & Marilyn Meisinger

Albert Wetenkamp

James & Stephanie Ball

**We have returned to
Summer Hours, open Tuesday
through Sunday, 12:00 to 4:00.
(Please note: we will be closed
Sunday, July 3 for the
Independence Day Holiday)**

Cass County Historical Society, organized in 1936, is dedicated to a mission of telling the history of Cass County since 1854, the year the county was opened for settlement. The Society's first permanent displays were housed in two rooms on the third floor of the Cass County Courthouse. In 1960, the present museum was opened at 646 Main Street in Plattsmouth.

Approximately one third of the museum's budget comes from the County. The rest of the financial support is from Memberships, Donations, Gift Shop Sales, Memorials and Grants.

To renew your membership or to become a member for the first time, please fill out the form at right and return to the museum.

MUSEUM HOURS

April through October:

Tuesday through Sunday: 12:00 to 4:00 pm
Closed Mondays and major holidays.

November through March:

Tuesday through Saturday: 12:00 to 4:00 pm
Closed Sundays, Mondays and major holidays.

Admission: \$2.50 for adults; children under 12 free.

FREE for Museum Members

Donations accepted.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:

Individuals and Families:

- _____ **Patron (\$1,000 and up)**
- _____ **Benefactor (\$500 and up)**
- _____ **Investor (\$250)**
- _____ **Century (\$100)**
- _____ **Promoter (\$50)**
- _____ **Booster (\$30)**
- _____ **Friend (\$15)**

Businesses (Cornerstone Club)

- _____ **Marble (\$1,001 and up)**
- _____ **Granite (\$501-1,000)**
- _____ **Limestone (\$251-500)**
- _____ **Sandstone (\$100-250)**

Name _____

Address _____

City, State _____

Zip _____

Phone # and e-mail _____