

NEWSLETTER
RICHARDSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
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Fall 2020

Board of Directors 2020-2021:

Richard Meinzer, President	Rita Seeba, Secretary
Leon Wilhelm, Vice President	Susan Nutzman, Treasurer
John Seeba	Austin Duerfeldt
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June Bowers	Nikki Dunn
Matt Beer	Susan Sipple
Norma Thompson, Records/ IT	JoAnn Koso
Jan Deckinger	Terry Stradtman
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August, 2020

Thoughts from your President

This has been a year of different & unusual situations. The museum was unable to open regular visiting hours in Mar. due to the Covid -19 virus. Therefore, we are open by appointment only. The phone numbers are listed on the front door to call for help. The Board of Directors meetings have been postponed, held over the phone, or information sent by mail.

The Board has decided to NOT conduct the Annual meeting this 2020 year in Aug. Board members will continue as in 2019-2020 & no new members will be elected. President Richard Meinzer will remain as President again for the 2020-2021 year.

Our annual fundraiser of the Waffleman will be unable to be held this year. So we will certainly need all the help you can give in memberships & donations. Hopefully things will improve in the new year. We will face each situation as it comes. Your Board is willing to work together to get us through these trying times.

A special "THANK YOU" to Norma Thompson, Joan Zoeller, & Jan Deckinger for cleaning & rearranging new exhibits & refurbishing the old. Thank you, ladies.

Thank you to John Seeba for taking care of the lawns & snow removal. Richard Meinzer, Matt Beer, & Leon Wilhelm were also a big help. Thanks, guys.

Thanks to Rita Seeba, our secretary, & Susan Nutzman, our treasurer, for keeping our records & finances in order. When we are unable to meet in regular meeting sessions, they still have the monthly accounting to complete.

Work is continuing on the two AG buildings. Arranging items brought in from the country to rearranging smaller items between the two buildings are only a few of the many happenings while the museum is closed. Come in, wear your mask, & see the exciting things happening at the museum.

We are sorry to announce that Annie M has closed her catering at the museum due to health problems. We enjoyed serving many organizations & parties. Job well done Ann, Rita & Richard. Thanks.

Please remember that as Americans, we are at our best when we face adversity together. Take care of yourselves & each other as we all look forward to a brighter day ahead.

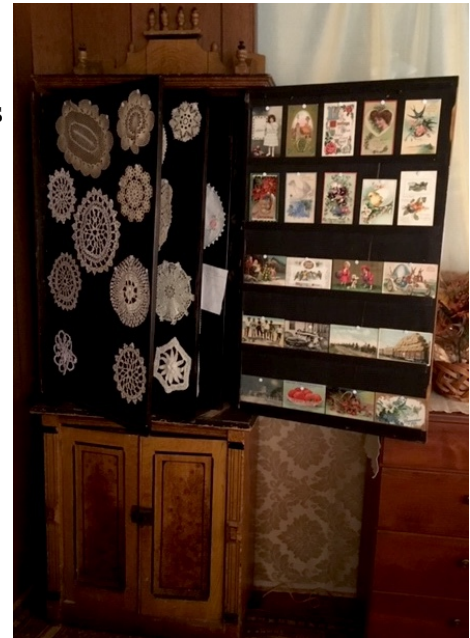
Your President,
Richard Meinzer

What's Changed at the Museum

As you know, this is the year of the woman. One hundred years ago, after many years of rallies, parades, strikes and sacrifices the Women Suffrage Movement was finally acknowledged and women received their right to vote. In honor of one family of very talented women, the museum has a display of the Cleaver sisters. Around artist Alice Cleaver's black dress we have hung some newly discovered family photos and artifacts. Nearby in a display case are the books from the herbarium of their mother, Rosa Barker Cleaver, who was a botany student. She left over 400 analyzed and mounted specimens of the wild flowers of Richardson County. In the banquet room Norma has updated the display of the many paintings done by local artists. To add to our John Falter display is a collection of his Saturday Evening Post Covers donated by Elizabeth Gatz. A new display on loan is Carl Yoesel's toy collection from the early nineteen hundreds. In the small blue room new dishes and pictures have been added.

The museum has many wedding dresses throughout. Upstairs in the parlor we have featured some of them with the photos and wedding stories. One big project was hanging family pictures, paintings and our collection of wonderful "hair" pictures. Richard Meinzer is a picture hanger par excellence. The mannequins and furniture has been rearranged to show a bit more of what life was like in bygone eras. Near Elma Grace Hanika Cook's sewing machine are sewing and pictures of handiwork. In the bedrooms are pillow cases, towels, linens and period clothing displayed on the shelves and in the bureau drawers. Some of the quilts and pillow coverings have changed.

The upstairs kitchen and the maid's room have received some updating. The kitchen got some new dishes and pictures. In the maid's room was this very unusual paneled cupboard. No one seemed to know its original use, so we displayed the museum's collection of doilies and old postcards in it. The doilies were tatted, crocheted and knitted with other patterns to copy. If you can identify its original purpose, please do so.>>>



One of the biggest projects in the basement was the twenties era kitchen renovation. Members of the board added new great lighting that showed the sad shape it had become. Besides a thorough cleaning, the appliances were rearranged with the laundry equipment assigned to a new place and the kitchen furnishings placed in better order to make it a functioning workplace. There are new kitchen curtains and a matching tablecloth. The kitchen and the laundry room are divided by a display of our many aprons used by the housewife in an earlier time. Some dolls and children's toys have been added to these rooms. Also on the lower level is a large collection of yearbooks from many area high schools and colleges. Even the toy shelf has been reworked.

Norma has been cleaning out and organizing the store rooms. When she makes a discovery and checks it out on the computer list, we try to find an appropriate place to display it. Bill Rowan did a wonderful

job of cataloguing all the early artifacts; that makes Norma's job a lot easier. She is also making labels for many artifacts so the tour guides will not have to answer all the questions from the museum's guests. It will be possible for anyone to take a self guided tour.

We have very much enjoyed this opportunity to come out of isolation and hopefully make some worthwhile changes in the museum while it was closed to the public.

Submitted by Jan Deckinger and Joan Zoeller

This being the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II:

First, May 8, 1945 victory in Europe after the Russian troops poured into Berlin as the final effort.

And, second as Emperor Hirohito, ordered to, gave up but only after a second nuclear bomb was dropped on Japan Sept. 2, 1945.

The final effort had several setbacks. One toward the end when the Nazi forces were built up with what was about their last fighters. Even though the Allies were dominant in central Europe, the Nazis brought up an army which was bolstered by lowering the requirements for draftees. They attacked the area in Belgium which became known as the Battle of the Bulge. It was the winter of 1944, and disastrous especially to the US forces who were totally surprised by the attack. This resulted in the highest casualty loss of an operation of the war, not counting D-day. The Allies came back to win, destroying the German forces, but many months were yet to be endured before the last battles came.

The Russians were pushing in from the east and when they got to Berlin, Hitler committed suicide, and the Germans unconditionally surrendered.

In the Pacific, the Japanese were well entrenched and after great losses, the Allies gained some headway. No wonder they weren't deterred from attacking the US. It took major bombings to bring them down.

So, the soldiers came home.

But, what did they do when they got here?

Industry shifted to commercial production.

People on the coasts could become fishermen. Some farmers needed help. Business men could take on limited employees. Locally, there were quite a few farmers who could return to farming in one form or another and there was a large railroad worker employment on the train crews and at the roundhouse. But, soon the steam engines would be replaced with diesel-electric engines which would reduce need for employees.

The G.I. Bill of Rights (the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944) allowed vets several benefits:

low interest home loans,

low interest loans to buy a business/a farm, and

dedicated payments for tuition and board for education. A huge help for vets who wanted to continue their education.

Of course, the "baby boom" eventually came. In a few years the school class enrollments increased.

So, the country came to a "new normal."

We are in a very serious situation now with the covid-19 plague throughout the nation, even the world.

Very discouraging. Just hope for the best. Another new normal?

Submitted by Richard Zentner



Some Recent Acquisitions

-This large school bell from District #54 donated by the Kottich family has been placed in the Rural School corner being created in the AG Warehouse Building.

-A Salem High School desk has been donated by Nan Ankrom in memory of her Dad, Terry Wickham.

- Don & Lloya Fritz brought us many items belonging to his parents, Leonald & Mildred Grush Fritz. Among these are old Plat Atlases , a picture of the 1967 Falls City City Council, and World War II memorabilia including a German pistol. Mildred will be remembered as a very active volunteer and Board Member.

- Did you know that the first major league baseball player from Nebraska, Charlie Abbey, (1866-1926) was born in Falls City and is buried in Steele Cemetery? John E. & Chris Martin compiled a biographical binder about him and created a very nice clear locked display box for showing replicas of his two Washington Senators caps and an original tobacco card.



- Marlin Peck gave us a horse-drawn road grader which is visible outside the AG II Building.

- Jim Johnson gave a five-shovel walking cultivator to us.

- Keith Thomas found a set of harness for a team and brought it to the museum.

- A Wooden fish trap used in the Missouri River came from the Jim & Shirley Jones farmstead.

- The long awaited Charles "Chick" Windle horse-drawn equipment is now on display in the new AG II Building. Implements include a dump rake, side delivery rake, tumble bug, dirt scoop, single row planter, check row planter, wagon tongue and axles. He farmed with horses south of Salem until retiring at age 85 and moving into Falls City where he died at age 104 in December, 2005.



Behind the antique hose cart are many objects collected by long time fireman, Alvin (Junior) Strasil that have been donated by his family.



Unique horse-drawn check row planter from the Windle collection.

- Harry Burchard of Pioneer, CA, great-grandson of Dr. C.T. Burchard, and his wife sent us the first RCHS secretary's book that his great-aunt, Helen Burchard Phillips, had kept for years. It is so very full of information about the RCHS and its programs since the first organizational meeting Feb. 27, 1940 through 1953. Many county stories are recorded in its pages. A contact from the Community Medical Center regarding its centennial last year prompted the family to send this back to us.
- Packed away upstairs we found a bright painting of farm buildings signed W Burchard 33. William Burchard was the cartoonist on the 1920 Falls City High Yearbook. staff. Must be the same man. He was the son of the grocer across the street from the current HS, and nephew of Dr. Burchard.
- An antique clock, lanterns, and two paintings once owned by Maggie Gentry of Salem.
- With the upcoming election, it is interesting that we found the old ballot bags used by each county precinct and city wards. They've been hung by Richard in the AG Warehouse (AG I) Building.

The list above is not totally inclusive, but know that we appreciate every donation.

County 1920 Graduates:

Falls City			Sacred Heart	Salem
Auxier, Mabel Birdsley, Pryce Casey, Irma Daeschner, Margaret Gehling, Marie Gerhardt, Walter Griffin, Thelma Hahn, Lela Harkins, Bernice Henderson, Harold Hiatt, Garnett Hillyard, Nellie	Hinton, Grace Hoy, Stacy Hughes, Glenn Jenkins, Esther Keim, Paul Knight, Frances Kottman, Beatrice Lovelace, Gladys Massey, Clyde Massey, Verna Metzgar, Margaret Morton, Evelyn	Nedrow, Myrtle Neitzel, Mildred Pribbeno, Elsie Reed, Grace Van Dervoort, Pauline Weinert, Lawrence Weinert, Luella Werner, Clara Wiltse, Gertrude Winkler, Dora Hahn, Lloyd also in class	Coupe, Mary David, Louise Goodman, Helen Tangney, Marie Westkirk, Maude Wirth, Ruth Dawson Ames, Marion Auxier, Mabel Heim, Earnest T. Heim, Edna Riley, Dan C.	Corn, Ruth Kennedy, Fannie Bratton Union Avery, Jesse Dehart, Ernest Harshbarger, Otis Mathews, Faye Mathews, Irl Mathews, Merle McNeely, Blanche

Verdon	Humboldt		Stella
Bowers, Ralph Crook, Erma Hart, Ada (Landolt) Knickerbocker, Vera Poole, Julian Veal, Lois Watkins, Edith Watkins, Ernest	Avery, Gladys Carsh, Eva Cornelius, Carol Davis, Fred Dorland, Edward L. Fankhauser, Helen Fraser, William Germain, Amette Gould, Lloyd Gunzenhauser, Marie Hackett, Breese Hanna, Anna	Holechek, Georgianna Imhoff, Mae Kors, Mabel McCoy, Lloyd McKee, James D. Norton, Delphine Petrahek, Elsie Pugh, Florence Sanfort, Adelaide Schmidt, Elsie Scott, Helen Stalder, Lela	Hoppe, Georgia Rose Wagner, Earl Lambert, Wilma Irene Weatherfield, Elby Weatherfield, Mattie Gilbert, Don Ross Edwards, Laura Mason, Carrie Mae

The County's German Newspapers (Deutsche Zeitungen)

Richardson County through its history has had two German newspapers, though largely unknown today. The former town of Arago had one, as did Falls City.

Arago was a German colony established in 1858. About August 1867 Edward Sachse was the publisher of the four-page Southern Nebraskian. He reasoned that because it was a German community, it should have a German paper. Accordingly, he started a second paper, Der Westliche Pionier (The Western Pioneer). Subscriptions for that paper, like the Nebraskian, were \$2 a year. Printed almost entirely in German, it was touted as “a voice for literature, politics, farming, etc.” This pioneer German paper was gone by November 1868 when Dr. William M. Daily took over as editor of the Nebraskian.

It was almost fifty years later (1908) before another German paper was established in the county. This second one was in Falls City. Essentially, it catered to the descendents of Arago's German settlers, who left for Falls City when the steamboat trade upon which Arago depended, was replaced by the railroads.

The Falls City Tribune of Oct. 2, 1908 reported that “Falls City to have a new paper in a month” – the Nebraska State Citizens Gazette, or in German – Staatsburger-Zeitung. Its editor was German native Louis H. Rohmeyer, who published the Auburn paper Der Westlicher Beobachter, (The Western Observer). Rohmeyer had been impressed by the German parade held in Falls City two weeks earlier, with its large crowds. The Staatsburger Zeitung first came out the last week of October and the Falls City News reported that it was “being kindly received by the German element.” This paper had its main office in Auburn where it was printed at the office of the Auburn Post, but it had a branch office in Falls City.

In 1912 Rohmeyer sold his Auburn paper and bought the well-established Nebraska Staats-Zeitung in Nebraska City which had been published by long-time editor, and native German, Jacob Beutler. He combined that paper with Falls City's Staatsburger-Zeitung under the Nebraska City paper's title. In 1915 he sold the combined paper to Valentine J. Peters of Omaha who was building a German paper “empire” by buying up the small German papers in the area. That empire would soon collapse.

With the increased patriotic fervor before World War I, anything German became suspicious and the German newspapers, including Falls City's, quietly went out of business. German couldn't be spoken on the street, the language was taken out of schools, and if a person had a German surname, he better have an American flag outside his home or business.

Today, there are no known copies of either of these two historical German papers. However, it is possible that one may someday turn up in someone's attic in a long-forgotten trunk.

Bill Rowan

Memorial Contributions

In Memory/Honor of:	By:	Tri-State Corners Genealogical Society
Dixie Mullins Trusty	Phyllis Mullins Davis	- 1st Thursday - 7:30 PM - at the Museum This group provides family genealogy and historical research in Southeast Nebraska by answering questions received through mail, phone, and e-mail. Its members work closely with the museum and area libraries to answer queries sent to them. We continually learn about new sources for solving family mysteries. Guests are always welcome.
Mildred Fritz	Don & Lloya Fritz	
Jim Wickham	Don & Norma Thompson	
Jim Wickham	From Family Memorial Money	
Howard Auxier	Richard & Ann Meinzer	
Jerry Clark	Shirley Gormley	
John Thomas	Shirley Gormley	
Marge Dettmann	Paul Weinert	
Tom White	Rick & Susan Nutzman, Richard & Ann Meinzer	
Doris Erickson	Richard & Ann Meinzer, Don & Norma Thompson	

Onto Our Shelves

Leon added some much needed shelving to the back storage rooms. Extra copies of historical books, atlases, school yearbooks, and directories are now visible and accessible. Boxes of school records are no longer on the floor. We also continue to add more reading and research material to the hallway book shelves.

Docents: We certainly hope that you will help us again when the Museum re-opens. You are missed. We also need new recruits. We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Doris Erickson who volunteered her time.

The museum has many, many pictures of people, things, and events from the county's past. New artifacts appear almost weekly. All these need to be sorted and placed. Volunteers have started, but we have a long way to go. We would appreciate any help you can offer. It really is quite interesting to see and make new discoveries.



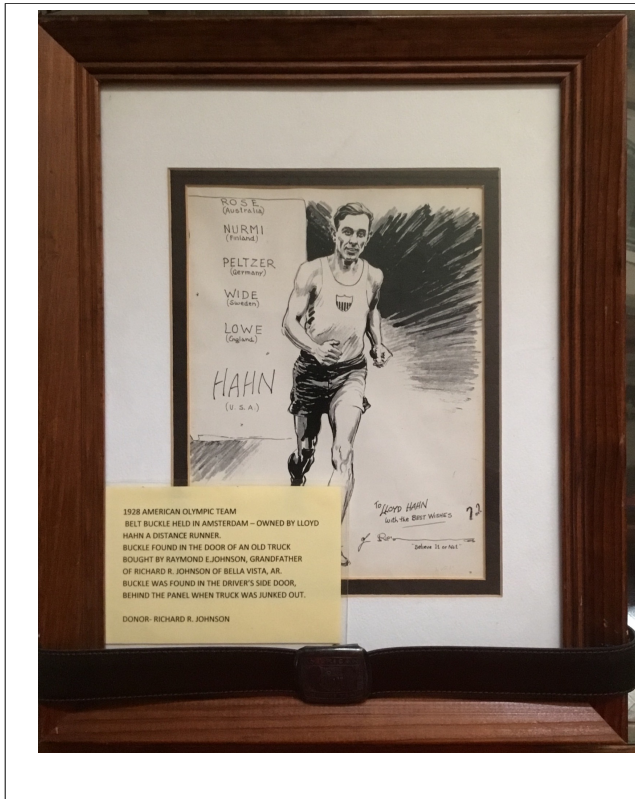
Pictured are three of the dozen scrapbooks and journals from the Rosa Barker Cleaver herbarium. She was the mother of the Cleaver Sisters: Florence, Nellie, and Alice.

Enclosed is the membership/renewal form. Your support through memorials, donations and membership is always welcome and appreciated.

**Enjoy, Have a Great Day, And Smile
Away!**

BULK RATE
 U. S. Postage
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 Falls City, NE 68355

Richardson County Historical Society
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Olympic runner, Lloyd Hahn, listed in 2005 as sixth in a list of top 100 Nebraska athletes, was a member of the FCHS Class of 1920. His 1928 Amsterdam Olympics buckle is in the museum with a framed Ripley's sketch of him. It was found behind a door panel in an old pickup being junked.



Support for mailing this newsletter graciously provided by Falls City Care Center.