

NEWSLETTER
RICHARDSON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
1401 CHASE ST. - PO BOX 45
FALLS CITY, NE 68355



Issue #31

Spring 2018

Board of Directors:

Richard Meinzer, Pres.(ameinzer@sentco.net)**	Joann Auxier, Treas., Curator**
Leon Wilhelm, Vice Pres.	Susan Nutzman, Ass't Treas.*
Rita Seeba, Sec'y.	John Seeba*
Richard Zentner, History/Genealogy (zent@sentco.net)	Ann Meinzer (ameinzer@sentco.net)**
June Bowers	Nelle Pfister
Nikki Dunn	Matt Beer**
Dee Pounds	Steve Holland**
JoAnn Koso*	Nancy Demmel*
Jan Deckinger	Other: Bill Rowan, Historian
	Norma Thompson, Records IT
Contact Information: 402-245-4407 or 402-245-3372	*New Aug.'17 **Retiring Aug.'18

Greetings From Your Board President

What a busy and exciting year at the museum! With the illness of our curator, Joann Auxier, we have had to do some reorganizing. Joann did so many wonderful things for the museum of which many people were not even aware, and it was all in volunteering her time. Thanks to Joann and Harold for committing so much of their time in the years past. They are missed!

Joann served as board treasurer, so we had to appoint a new acting treasurer, Susan Nutzman. She is working hard to get everything organized and to learn all about her new job. Thanks, Susan, for accepting the position. Rita Seeba is our new secretary and doing a great job. Thanks, Rita. Thanks to Norma Thompson for updating the inventory and printing lists. She has been a big help getting items recorded from Joann's curator notebook onto the computer and updating it with new arrivals.

We are in the process of building the new Ag Building on the ground across the street. But, we need help with donations NOW to complete this project in 2018. Enclosed in your newsletter you will find the forms to renew your membership and to add a donation to the building fund. We have an anonymous donor who will match funds 2:1 for constructing the building up to \$10,000. Let's all pitch in and make that happen.

The annual meeting will be on Sat., Aug. 18 at 2:00. David Flatt, executive director of the Kegal Windmill Factory Museum at Nebraska City, will present the program. He will speak about Windmills During the World Wars. Please join us for interesting information and refreshments.

The always popular Waffleman will be back on Sun., Sept. 23 from 10-1. All you can eat waffles and sausage for a free-will donation. See you there.

Thanks to all the Board Members and helpers for making our Museum a showcase of Richardson County both past and present. You are appreciated.

Richard Meinzer, Board President

Looking Back: Highlights from the Past Season

Solar Eclipse

Visitors were served hotdogs, chips, and a beverage that day for a donation.

Student Tours

Falls City Public School third and sixth grade classes and the Sacred Heart fourth grade class visited the museum for guided tours this year. We thank their teachers and our guides for this opportunity to share and answer questions from inquisitive children.

In his presentation, Mr. Siebert explained the significance of the blacksmith on Nebraska's State Seal, and his importance in western settlement. He shared this picture of his father, a retired central Nebraska blacksmith, and Junior Strasil, taken when they visited Junior in his Falls City shop several years ago.

Celebrating Nebraska's 150th



Paul Siebert presented his “Echoes of an Era” at the Annual Meeting in August



Hello from Annie M's Catering at the Museum

We are busy in the kitchen making that delicious food you all enjoy. We certainly appreciate the organizations and groups that enjoy dining with us. Please keep calling and making arrangements for your parties.

A special thank you to all the volunteers that keep us going: Ramona Godemann for doing such a great job washing dishes and Elaine Heineman and Rita Seeba for being our waitresses. Barb Parrish is always willing to help when we need it. Most of all, a “big” thank you to my husband, Richard, who keeps the floors clean, runs the front door, helps set the tables and anything else we need. All of that along with being President of our Board of Directors.

If you want to plan a dinner, call Ann at home, 402-245-3372 or at the Museum, 402-245-4407, to make arrangements. Leave a message if no one answers.

Bon Appetite!!
Ann Meinzer

From the Jam Sessions

The main subject for 2017 was the 150th anniversary of statehood. The first issue was the problems to attain statehood with all the time it took to come up with an acceptable constitution and deal with the rejection by Congress. The first attempt was vetoed by Pres. Johnson. It passed in 1867. Then the first governor came up for impeachment.

Although Falls City was founded on the issue of abolishing slavery, the rest of the territory did not place much emphasis on the issue which led to delay for a constitution.

The Nebraska government has been a pain for some people in many other instances. For example, our county was not named for the Nemaha River which has several towns near its banks, but for a territorial governor who left the state before he was in office even a year. Another, Burt Co., was named after a man who died two days after he took the oath of office.

The solar eclipse occurred Aug. 21. We were not permitted to experience the rare sensation of looking at the stars just after lunch due to rainy weather. Well, in 1917, some physicists were chasing around Europe to see a solar eclipse to get evidence supporting the new Einstein theory of relativity. They had their camera ready when they were slapped in jail for suspicion of being spies in the war zone – WWI had just broke out.

A picture of the burned out store at 1600 Stone in Falls City had no date on it. It was determined to be 1926, but later the date was 1929. The story was that this 1929 fire was the fourth for that location. The last two had spread from the building to the north. This final fire was destructive to the shoe store and the offices on the second story. The remaining walls were removed and the corner was rebuilt by Mr. Slocum.

We reviewed a 1931 article in “The Lincoln Sunday Star” about a county pioneer titled “War of 1812 Gave Pioneer Home to Leonard Kinsey, Whose Family Acquired Richardson County Farm Land On Warrant. Owns Bounty Paper Which Brought Parents From East.” Upon checking some of the details, there were some inaccuracies. It was an interesting story of how some people became Nebraskans.

A listing of the Reformers Car Club members was reviewed. Some of the activities they sponsored were discussed. One of the main events was sponsoring car shows at Cobblestone Days and such.

A history of the Mutt & Jeff Drive-In was described.

In the summer of 1931, 18 homing pigeons were released at 4:45 AM to return to their homes in Denver. Well, did they make it home? My notes say that four got back, but how long did it take them? Not noted.

Bill Rowan brings stories that are new to about everyone.

The items people have brought to the museum were shown and discussed.

RCHS appreciates the many contributions made to its museum collections. Thanks for them.

Make the effort to visit the museum and also the informal jam sessions.

Submitted by Richard Zentner, Moderator

A History of Grandview School

The early 1900s saw increased growth of Falls City. The railroad had seen increased business, bringing in more employees. And other local businesses were prospering. This rapid growth put great pressure on the local school system with the schools bursting at the seams. The school board was having to utilize non-school buildings such as the old Falls City News building north of the courthouse and the Zion building for needed classroom space.

Thinking ahead, the school board had acquired land from Edwin Towle on April 9, 1902 for a possible new building at 9th and Lane Streets. They purchased eight lots for \$400.00. This land set unused while the classroom problem got worse until early 1911 when they finally hired the local firm, Bohrer Bros. to construct a new building for \$11,000.00. The board's financial statement for the year ending July 8, 1912 gave the cost for the new building and furniture as \$7,455.97. That same year (1911) the firm built the new News building and the Catholic Church. (They would later build a new Falls City high school, the Tiehen gym, the Richardson County Bank, and the Weaver Hotel. They were especially good at building schools—erecting many in communities all over the area).

Work progressed and the as yet unnamed, new third ward building was expected to be ready by the new school term starting in September, but according to the *News* of Sept. 1, 1911, the new building “will not be ready.” There was a little more work to be done and “the basement has not dried.” The school would finally open to students Jan. 22, 1912, a Tuesday, under the supervision of Miss Grace Saylor, who was transferred from Central School.

There was still a problem: “What to name the new school?” The name “Grandview” was soon decided upon, but why that name? The school sat on a hill and the view from the front overlooked the local creek called by the newspapers and polite society “the Rhine.” The public, however, knew it by a colorful name that referenced the numerous outhouses along its banks. According to some local wits, that would be a “grand view.”

The *News* of Jan. 26, 1912 describes the new building as “modern in every way.”

“The building consists of two main rooms with a large hall running through the center. Each room is equipped with a supply room, the tables, chairs, extension desks, etc., being modern and convenient. The walls are finished in soft tints, with especial reference to the effect on the eyes. An abundance of slate blackboard is supplied, the walls beneath them being finished with cement, with enamel finish, in representation of tile. The floor corners of the rooms have oval finish so that no dirt may escape the janitor's broom in these places. Two lavatories are provided in the basement and one in the upstairs hall. The coat and hat racks, of which there are two, are modern, and are constructed of a framework of wood and heavy wire netting, this being done to facilitate the drying of damp garments, or at least, that is the reason ascribed by the reporter.”

The teachers for that first year were Miss Grace Saylor for kindergarten and first grade, with assistant Miss Maude Davis, and Miss Anna Booth for second and third grades. Saylor, an 1892 graduate of Falls City, would teach in the Falls City system, (Grandview, Harlan, and Central schools), until retiring in 1942. Some other early Grandview teachers of the school's first decade were Joselyn Augustus, Bessie Wilson, Ruth Wilson, Theora Marsh, Grace Hayes, Mabel Greenwald, Ethel Bohrer, Audrey Chase,

Dorothy Piercece, Thelma Robert, Maude Wright, Carmine Rogers, Marjorie McDonald, Helen Lovelace, Amanda Jorn, Claire Fletcher, and Vera Brown.

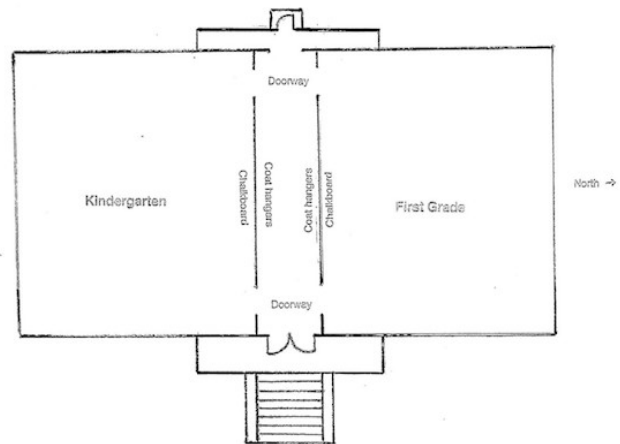
Grandview served the community well, (it had a “Mother’s Club in 1922), until its closing in 1957, replaced by the new South School. After several years of indecision, in March 1971, the school board under President Harold Haroun passed a resolution to sell the building and the playground to the south. In March 1972, the eight lots with the school building and playground were sold for \$3,000.00.

While the Harlan and Central school buildings have been torn down, the Grandview building is still standing over 100 years later, and is now a private residence.

by Bill Rowan



Grandview School photo and diagram courtesy of Butch Haws, a former pupil.



Looking Forward

A Word of Thanks -

Events 2018	Dates	
Jam Sessions	4 th Monday, 7:30 PM	- to Ramona Godemann for serving the museum many years as chief docent, organizing the schedule and making the necessary phone calls to be sure the museum was staffed for visitors. Her big shoes are now filled by JoAnn Koso, procuring the sitters, and Richard and Ann Meinzer making sure the doors are open and closed and filling in as docents when needed. Ramona continues to serve as a docent and event volunteer.
Museum Open for FCHS Alumni	Sat. June 23, 2-4 PM	
Waffleman	4 th Sun, Sept. 23, 10-1	
Board Meeting	4 th Saturday, 9:30 AM	
Annual Meeting	3 rd Sat., Aug. 18 2:00 Program: David Flatt “Windmills in WW II”	

Help Wanted

If you have any desire at all to share your time with us, don't wait for us to find you. Let a board member know you are willing to help, and we'll find something for you to do. - No amount of time is too small! Each year we also have slots to fill on the Board. Call 402-245-4407 or 3372.

New at the Museum

Come, view these new items and the many others not listed:

1932 green wicker baby buggy and rocking chair from the Vollmer family

Crocheted and framed praying Lord that originally hung in the Verdon Congregational Church

Glass-enclosed cabinet from Leon and Madaline Keller Wilhelm

1897 Modern Woodman of America relic inscribed with C.E. Zink, Falls City, found in NM

1916 Francis Bacon Player Piano purchased by Jim Sefried in 1960's from Wishing Well Tavern in Crete, NE. donated by Cory Snethen. This complements Nina Sefried's Victrola in the Fireplace Room. Come listen.

Army uniforms, wedding suit and dress, and military pictures from Guy & Martha Snethen family

Presidential campaign car plates, Falls City Middle and High School yearbooks and memorabilia

A new bookshelf case has been built to hold our directory and atlas collections.

The single copies of significant old newspapers are now in four newly built cases. Thank you, Leon.



Can you identify this 96-year-old recent acquisition?
Contact us at nkthom@sentco.net if you know its purpose.

Memorial Contributions

In Memory of:	Contributors
Myrt Arnold	Bruce & Nancy Demmel, Richard & Ann Meinzer, Nelle Pfister
Dorothy Kerl	Shirley Gormley
Alice Eickhoff	John & Rita Seeba
Sheila Whalen	Richard & Carolyn Zentner
Bill, John, & Jerry Mullins	Phyllis Davis
Martha Snethen	Rita Seeba

We apologize if your memorial is not listed. We've had record keeping changes.

A Century Ago



Photo of damage to a farmstead near Indian Cave in extreme northeast Richardson County after a cyclone passed through Sunday afternoon, May 26, 1918.

Due to impassable roads and downed telephone lines, newspapers were not able to get complete reports. The *Falls City Journal*, Monday, May 27 reported that it started at Bern,KS, entering the county in Speiser township traveling northeasterly occasionally touching ground. Levi Hitchcock's barn, 6 miles NW of Falls City, Fred Finck's orchard, 9 miles further NE, and C.M. Lee's orchard, sheep shed, and fences 5 miles beyond there were destroyed. "Further up on the Missouri river, near Indian cave, three or four houses are reported wrecked...The residences of I.S. Ham was somewhat damaged and all his outbuildings blown away. Charles Erskine and Mr. Woodward are said to have lost their houses and outbuildings and the Jourdan farm was also in the path of the storm. The house of Charles Kuker was demolished and all his sheds, cribs, and barns, and himself and his wife were both injured, and some of his cattle killed."

A week later newspapers reported an appeal for workers to help the farm families with recovery during the busy farming season. The need was beyond what the Red Cross at Barada could provide.

Falls City High School Commencement

From the *Falls City Journal*, May 24, 1918, "The commencement exercises of the class of 1918 took place in the Christian Church Wednesday evening, May 22.....The four chairs in the front row were draped with an American flag and a service flag in honor of William Keeling, Harry Pence, Ira Truesdal, and Ernest Freshe who are of the Coast Artillery, Camp Casey, Washington."

Other members of the class as listed were:

Ankeny, Lloyd	Ernst, Delia	Holt, John	Loucks, Faye	Parrish, Cylene	Wheeler, Helen
Bassett, Helen	Ernst, Melvin	James, Charles	Miller, Margaret	Pollard, Uhmont	Wickham, Albert
Bassett, Henry	Falloon, Ferne	Jones, Ferne	Miner, Dorothy	Tanner, Helen	Will, Myrtle
Branum, Leta	Gatz, William	Kramer, Frank	Mosiman, Ramona	Warner, Bessie	Wiltse, Irving
Bippes, Bertha	Griffin, Glenna	Krueger, Johanna	Nedrow, Wilma	Warner, Grace	Windle, Thelma
Cade, Laura	Harris, Gladys	Krueger, Mary	Nutter, Joe	Weinert, Harold	Wulf, Dora
					Wyatt, Jennings

Other County 1918 Graduates:

Sacred Heart	Humboldt		Bratton Union	Stella
Thurmond Mudd	Faye Boss	George R. Marshall	Lelah Hartzell	Twinkle Gilbert
Ruth Murphy	Amy Cornelius	Chris Raymond		Lestina Koch
Irma Rawley	Mabel Fergus	Oliver Rist	Verdon	Doris Mason
Grace Ricketts	Thelma Fergus	Lydia Schuetz	Cecil Kroh	Bertha Mitchell
Helen Tangney	Veda Kors	Sadie Stalder	Russell Ray	Eva Sinnett
	Gertrude Lionberger	Mac Standerford		Blanche Shubert
				(Wm. Williams -ArmyVol.)

Salem		Dawson		
Elmer Crook	Vera Stewart	Lillian Ames	Laura Wilkinson	Edward Auxier
Willard Griffith	George Sheehan	Marie Bolejack	Earle Wiltse	Ray Auxier
Herman Inks	Clara Werner	Alice Heim	Evan Morris	John Kean
Ruth Lawrence	William Timmerman	Mary Ryan	John O'Grady	



The New Agricultural Building will be constructed on property across the street. Plans are to include more in the facility than just needed warehouse space.



Membership

Enclosed with this newsletter is a Membership/Donation form and an addressed return envelope. Some of you have the previously offered lifetime memberships, some need to continue a current or lapsed membership, and some might be joining us for the first time. If you have questions about your membership status, don't hesitate to ask. We welcome and appreciate your support.

Link to the Richardson County Historical Society Webpage: <https://tinyurl.com/y7jasocv>

The mailing of this newsletter is graciously provided by Falls City Healthcare Community.