Upcoming Attractions -

The Franklin School Trophy Collection:
An Interview with Donors Don and Bev Nugent

by Joshua Uecker

When you think of the Smith-Zimmermann museum, I'm sure most of you first think about its role in preserving local history. However, not all preservation is done at the museum. When the Franklin Consolidated School High School graduated its last class in 1966, its alumni took up the task of preserving the school's memory. The most obvious way this was done was in the form of the Franklin monument erected along SD-19 in 1994 following the demolition of the school building in 1991. However, the alumni also preserved the school's memory by taking in the trophies from the high school. After many years of storage and later restoration, the trophies from the Franklin High School were recently donated to the museum by Don and Bev Nugent. The Nugents were nice enough to sit down with me to talk about the Franklin school and how they, along with the other Franklin alumni, preserved the memory of their old school.

Josh Uecker: First off, I would like to thank you for taking some time out of your day to talk to me. We'll just kind of jump right into it. First of all, Mr. Nugent, what years did you attend the Franklin school?

Don Nugent: Well, in grade school, I suppose it was '36 and I graduated in '48 from Franklin High School.

Josh Uecker: Are there any specific memories about the Franklin school you'd like to share? I haven't gotten through most of the trophies. Were you on any of the teams that got trophies that have been donated to the museum?

Don Nugent: Well, let's see... well, I guess I was involved in some of the tournaments and some of the trophies. I guess the one I remember was 1946. That was a pretty good team that year. And I remember we played Howard in the Districts and the Howard boys, they were so sure they were gonna beat Franklin they were out walking up and down the street and instead of doing that, our coach took us up to his grandma and grandpa's place and we just sat around and rested. We come back that night and Howard figured they had it in the bag. Of course, it wasn't very big scoring in them years but we ended up beating Howard by 15 points. So that was interesting. There's been a lot of good Franklin teams that come out of there. Well, you can find that in our history book.

Josh Uecker: Now were you still living in the area when you learned that the Franklin school was closing down?

Don Nugent: Yeah, I've lived there all my life.

Josh Uecker: How did you feel when you heard that the school was closing down?

Don Nugent: We didn't like that...

Bev Nugent: But it had to be done.

Josh Uecker: How exactly did the alumni of the Franklin School come into possession of these trophies?
BN: When they were ready to tear the school down, they called us and said "Do you want the trophies? Come and get them." They were going to go down with the school. So we got a bunch together — I’m not alumni, you know — so we got a bunch of people together and we got them all boxed up and they ended up in our garage. And when we did the history book, we got pictures of all of them.

JU: I noticed while I was going through all the items that you also wound up with the original blueprints of the Franklin School. Is that something else where they just kind of told you [to take it if you wanted it]?

BN: Lyle must have found that in the school. Some of the stuff was found back in the office area way back in a closet. Lyle Acheson had that. He brought that to us.

JU: That was something I thought was very unusual to find in a school. I wanted to make sure I found out about that.

BN: Lyle and Barb or Mildred had it and they brought it back because we had all the other.

JU: Again, going through the items, I found some artifacts from the 2005 Franklin alumni reunion. When did the Franklin alumni get together and form this alumni group?

DN: Well, golly, we’ve been having reunions for...

BN: In the 60s.

DN: I think the first one we had was in the 70s. But now we have them every three years.

BN: We used to have them every five years but then they got to thinking that the people were getting older.

DN: So now we have them every three years.

JU: Are a lot of the old Franklin alumni still in the area or do you have people coming in from all over the region to meet up again?

DN: Yeah, they travel a lot of miles, some of these people. But, there’s a lot of them that are still local. But we have pretty good turnouts at our reunions.

JU: When exactly did you start working on restoring these trophies and getting ready for them to be donated?

BN: We had them in our basement last winter, so the summer before... when Joe McAllister moved into the assisted living down by Sunshine. They were stored in his barn and so Donny and I and Sharol and George Bargmann and our son and grandson [Dan and Andrew], we retrieved them and brought them to our place. And Sharol and I washed them with Awesome and got them cleaned up.

JU: Were there any trophies that were especially difficult to restore? I remember when I was talking with Sue [Larsen], she mentioned that you had to replace some of the plaques on them.

BN: Yeah, we did.

JU: Did the Franklin alumni donate money to do that or was that just something that you two did for them?

BN: We’ve got the checkbook. We keep money from year to year because we’ve also got to maintain the monument down there.

JU: I didn’t realize the alumni maintained that as well.

BN: Ike Wengert does the mowing because he’s got the rest of the school. But if there’s some repairs— East River went in and trimmed the trees for us and stuff like that. No, we run out of the checkbook.

JU: You brought in a lot of really helpful additional information. How long have you been collecting information from the Franklin school for that sort of thing?

BN: I just took it out of the history book. I took all the pictures of the trophies when we were doing the history book and I just tied it back.

JU: Who then helped with all the stuff for the Franklin History Book?

BN: There’d be times when we’d have five people in the basement. It was a community project.

DN: Yeah, we did that all in our basement.

BN: We had tables from one end of the basement to the other.

DN: That was before computers. We did it all with typewriters...

BN: Or by hand.

DN: We did that in, oh what was that, ’94.

JU: What exactly was the motivation to donate all this material to the Smith-Zimmermann museum?

BN: We wanted a place where they could be taken care of... besides my basement. Years back, Joe McCallister talked to somebody and it was going to go to some museum. We thought they were there. He talked to Tunheim or somebody and we found out they were in his barn. And everybody we’ve talked to who knows we’ve got them up here are very happy about it, that they’re taken care of.

JU: Actually, Tuesday when I was up here helping with the discussion group there were a couple people that came in and wanted to know if the Franklin items were out already. I told them we were kind of in the process of getting it ready but there are people already, a couple months after the donation was made, who are interested in seeing the trophies.

BN: We made 350 of those history books and we’ve got eleven left. The charge on those to print them was $71.25 and we sold them for that until one of his friends donated a lot and we’re letting them...
(continued from page 2)

go for $40 now. Just about everybody that’s got them uses them a lot. And then that other book, the Franklin Update book, we started that the next reunion after the history book was sold. That’s done every reunion.

JU: So this Franklin history thing is still a very ongoing project?

DN: Yeah.

BN: We couldn’t do it without Sharol and George Bargmann. They’re the other two that really work on it. We’ve got a committee.

JU: Anything else you’d like to add about the Franklin school?

BN: Clinton Black was one of the graduates—I think he graduated in ‘54—he’s the one that came back and built the monument from the bricks from the school and they saved the big Franklin name and the cornerstone. And then a friend from Mitchell, he took the picture that I took and then he made another out of granite and put on the monument.

And that’s what the monument is. We put a time capsule in it. Who knows how it’s gonna turn out? We had a bunch of stuff in there. It’s too bad all those other schools don’t do the same thing.

JU: If that’s all you have, I appreciate you being willing to come in and talk about it a little bit.

The Franklin School project is one that is near and dear to not only the Nugents but many of the other alumni of the Franklin School. These alumni have a long history with the Franklin school (in fact, Mrs. Nugent later told me that her husband’s mother—Ruth Sundberg Nugent—was a member of the Franklin school’s first graduating class) and have undertaken what is most assuredly a labor of love to keep the memory of their school alive and on the map. We at the Smith-Zimmermann museum greatly appreciate their commitment to preserving local history and their willingness to share the history of Franklin with us in the form of this donation of school sports trophies.

Coordinator’s Report

Cynthia Mallery

I have been the Museum Coordinator for the last seven months, and I’m finding that this place is very addictive. I love the busyness of the museum, and every day brings new adventures. The numerous projects and events, and the many visitors make it a lively place with continuous activity.

The work on the items within the textile room is progressing at a good pace. One of the projects that I have been working on is organizing the many hats, stockings, gloves, shoes, and scarves. I am amazed at the variety and the age of so many of the pieces. I have found that some of these items date as far back as the 1860’s. Several are yet to be numbered and properly documented to be made a part of our collection. Because of items such as these, we have to buy many new specialized boxes that are acid free to keep the items safe from any further deterioration. What I thought might be a year-long project is now looking more like a two-year project.

The more I dig through the museum’s collections, the more wonderful and remarkable historical artifacts I uncover. I am so proud of Lake County and the rich history that it has. I often times find myself bragging to anyone who is willing to listen to me about our great museum and the vast number of artifacts that are housed within its walls.

Another wonderful thing about our museum is the number of events that we host both monthly and yearly. In addition to the many school events, we have the discussion group that meets the first Tuesday of each month. These participants share their memories of past events. Maxine Swanson has also revived the Brown Bagger program. These brown baggers have been very popular, and we are thrilled to have so many folks coming to each one. Maxine has done a great job at finding guest speakers. I know that she has a number of wonderful speakers lined up for this year. We are hopeful that more and more people will attend as the news spreads about these programs.

One of our biggest annual programs has been the Christmas at the Museum. This past December we had thirty trees that were decorated by various businesses and non-profits within Lake County. This was our best Holiday Tree Display year thus far.

It has been a busy year with some big and small changes at the museum. Sadly, one of our biggest losses was saying goodbye to Torrie—who I replaced. Now, with the start of a new year, I am looking forward to another year filled with high hopes and great expectations for what lies ahead for all of us at the Smith-Zimmermann Museum.

Stop by and pay us a visit.
President’s Message
Sue Larsen

“Happy Holidays!” This theme was evident at the Smith-Zimmermann Museum on December 16. We are excited to report that there were approximately 180 visitors who enjoyed the singing by Richard Wolf, riding in the Labahn Family Train, viewing the thirty beautifully decorated holiday trees, and visiting with Santa. I am so glad that Jerry and I brought one of his sleighs. Many people had their picture taken sitting in the sleigh, and Santa sat in it and listened to the children’s wish lists. There was also a large selection of delicious goodies to sample.

In December, the Catholic Daughters held their Holiday party at the museum, and the Kiwanis Club had their December meeting there. We very much appreciated Boy Scout Troop #5 for hauling the trees to the museum from the basement of Ed Hansen’s building. Ed graciously allowed us to store the holiday trees there last year. Thanks, Ed.

We have been very busy at the museum since I wrote my message for the October newsletter. The obituary project is continuing. By the end of January, we should have the website updated for the years 1990 through 2001 and 2011 and 2012. This is a time consuming process, but very worthwhile. We could not handle this project without the many volunteers who are involved in various aspects of it.

A lot of time has also been spent accessioning collection items. Cyndi has been sorting through items that have been stored away in boxes. These have been inventoried and repacked in acid free boxes and tissues. She has discovered many interesting items.

The Lake County Historical Society had a successful annual meeting this past October. The program was presented by Dave Huebner from Bushnell, South Dakota. He gave interesting information about Native American trade beads. Dave also brought his collection of trade beads to be viewed as part of the presentation.

Maxine Swanson has revived the Brown Bagger programs at the museum. We had three great programs in the fall and we look forward to several more in the spring. Thanks, Maxine, for organizing these presentations that are held at the museum.

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, I have been going through many old papers to add to the obituary collection. News of this has spread and several folks have brought in more old papers for us to go through. These papers have also been a good source of topics for the discussion group. In the December 10, 1940, newspaper, I found an unusual obituary. It was for a dog named Boots. I read the obit at the discussion group and Pete Struwe was the only one who remembered him. If you have any additional information about Boots, please call the museum.

I cannot end this message without thanking Pat Keating and the staff the DSU Physical Plant for all the assistance that they give us at the museum. As you probably know, parking – or lack of – is an issue at the museum. For the annual meeting and the December Holiday Event, the Physical Plant staff barricaded the visitor parking and several additional spaces to assure that space was available in front of the museum. We also had ice-free sidewalks on Dec. 16 thanks to the Physical Plant staff.

In closing, I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year that continues throughout 2013.
Add visiting the Smith-Zimmermann Museum to your list of New Year’s Resolutions.
“Dacotah” and the Tin Lizzy

Dale Nighbert

The “Dacotah” motion picture may be long lost and perhaps forgotten to the ages, but the Ford Model T truck that was used in its filming continues to live on.

In the spring of 1929, the students and faculty at Eastern State Normal School in Madison produced a full-length, 6-reel, historical movie titled “Dacotah.” The plot revolved around a typical pioneer family as they began their new life settling in Dakota Territory in 1869. As the silent movie progressed, they experienced the hardships that many of the early pioneers suffered – “grasshoppers’ plagues, prairie fires, droughts, pestilences, and starvation.”

A good portion of the movie was filmed in a pasture on the western shores of Lake Herman. Other shots were filmed at Lake Madison, the Vermillion Hills, the Missouri River, and the Flan dreau Indian School. The movie was produced by a specialized firm called Sly Fox Studios from Minneapolis. A professional director from Hollywood, CA, was hired as well. Close to 300 people – students, Lake County residents, and Native Americans – made up the cast and crew.

The Lake County Sentinel reported that during one day of filming, more than 200 autos, bringing hundreds of curious spectators, were counted on the lot. However, one vehicle stood out more than others – a 1919 Ford Model T one ton truck owned by Walter Marquart.

Marquart, a Madison resident, used his “Tin Lizzy” in his construction and concrete business. During the three weeks of filming, he lent his truck to the film crew for moving sets, shooting scenes, and other uses. The movie itself no longer exists due to its films deterioration, but old photos (donated by Ed Marquart and Florence Newcomb Larson) show the truck being put to good use doing the necessary behind-the-scenes work.

In one photo, the truck stood in for a yoke of oxen that had been purchased and broken for the film. The director and cameraman are seen standing in the truck’s bed filming the front view of the actors in a covered wagon. Since music was needed to accompany each scene, it was necessary to load a small piano onto the truck and move it from place to place.

The movie opened to an enthusiastic crowd of 400 people at Madison’s Little Lyric Theater October 18, 1929, on “Eastern Day” - the school’s annual homecoming. It was reported that, thanks to continuous viewings, over 7,000 people saw the movie the first two days. Others were turned away because of the limited seating. It was then shown at theaters around South Dakota and across the nation. It was estimated that at least 150,000 viewed the movie.

Though not a money maker, the production did have the distinction of being the first complete professional movie picture filmed in South Dakota and the first all-college motion picture made in the United States.

After the movie was completed, life returned to normal for the Tin Lizzy. Marquart continued to use the truck in his business – building bridges, roads, sidewalks and other construction projects. Evidence of his concrete work can still be found throughout Lake County today.

When Marquart retired, he and his wife Mary moved to a farm in Minnesota. The truck went with them. One of his grandsons, David Marquart, has fond memories visiting the farm as a kid in the 1950s. He remembers it was great fun for grandpa to start up the “T” by cranking the hand crank, getting in the cab and taking off down the road to do some kind of chore. David recalls that it was great times for a kid growing up and learning about motors and how to start and drive a “T.”

After Walter’s death in 1959, the truck remained stored on the Minnesota farm for several years. His son, Les Marquart, eventually moved it back to Madison, and his son, David, took possession of it in 1977.

The Ford Model T truck was then moved to David’s Idaho home where it has since been restored as accurately as possible. It now looks the way it did when his granddad purchased it and used it in the making of the historic 1929 movie “Dacotah.”

Note:

Pictures of David Marquart’s restoration project can be found on the internet at: http://idahomodeltt.shutterstock.com/pictures#albumId=21.
Parking Meters
Dale Nighbert

July 1947: Americans wait for more news about an Unidentified Flying Object that crashed landed near Roswell, NM. In Madison, residents prepare to welcome something alien to its own business district – parking meters.

Once upon a time, back in the 1940's, Madison officials worked to find solutions to its Main Street parking problem. Hundreds of visitors and patrons came to town from the surrounding area each Saturday to do their shopping. However, many of them could not find parking spaces near the stores. Opening up parking in the center of Egan Avenue eased the problem to some extent. Another suggestion was to encourage businessmen and their employees to leave their cars at home on Saturdays or park at least one block off Egan Avenue.

In 1947, after much discussion, city officials believed that a parking meter system would provide “more stalls for more cars – more often,” thus eliminating the old system of “parking for the day.” It was hoped that this would reduce the walking distance to and from the cars for shoppers carrying bundles.

The Madison Chamber of Commerce agreed and issued a bulletin stating “It is our desire to make Madison a more pleasant place for you to do your shopping. We believe the installation of parking meters will go a long way toward bringing this about.”

So, on Monday, July 28, 1947, 200 newly installed parking meters went into operation for a one-year trial. Center parking on Egan Avenue came to an end. The two-hour meters, manufactured by the Duncan Meter Corporation, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, required a one-cent deposit for 12 minutes and a nickel for one hour of parking.

After depositing the coins, motorists needed to turn the meter's handle to put the timing device in operation. The devices were equipped with a visible pointer that showed the time remaining and a red flag that indicated the expiration of time.

As reported in the Madison Daily Leader, all went well for the most part that first day. At 9 a.m., pennies and nickels began clinking into the newly installed meters. Unfortunately, an unnamed farmer received the first violation tag at 9:15 – just minutes after the new regulation started. He thought “the coin was to be deposited at the end of the parking period.” Chief of Police R.J. Harris reported that comments varied from favorable to “When are you going to plant grass on Egan Avenue?”

In 1948, after the one year trial, the city commission declared a “parking meter holiday.” The meter heads were removed for 60 days. However, at the end of that period, the commission decided to resume their use. Mayor Albert Parker said he had been asked by many merchants to restore the meters because of complaints by customers that they could not reach Egan Avenue stores. Farmers had to carry their egg crates long distances to the groceries.

By 1949, parking meters were extended to the side streets which increased the total number to 370. The money collected was divided equally between the city of Madison and the Duncan Corporation. A newspaper article reported that the meters had registered over $23,000 in nickels and pennies since they were first installed. Of this amount, $1,200 had been used for maintenance and $11,000 had been turned over to the city treasury and used for street repairs. A similar amount was paid to Duncan’s to help pay for the original cost of the machines that were bought at a purchase price of $26,000. Once the cost of meters was paid, the total receipts went to the city.

And so, for the next 25 plus years, in order to avoid getting a ticket, downtown shoppers needed to insert pennies, nickels, and later dimes into the meters in order to park.

In 1976, almost 29 years after they were first installed, downtown parking once again became a major topic of debate due to what many believed was a serious shortage of spaces. Several fingers were pointed at merchants and their employees who reportedly parked on Egan Avenue and would just “feed the meters.” This allowed them to park throughout the day.

To alleviate the problem, the City Commissioners approved an ordinance in which the meters would be policed more often including Thursday evenings when stores were open until 9 p.m. Also, several of the meters on the streets adjacent to Egan Avenue were removed.

Two years later, after 31 years of parking meters in downtown Madison, the era came to a close when the city approved an ordinance that removed all meters. One newspaper article reported that many people were delighted that the pesky things were gone, but the residents were also reminded that they were originally put there for a purpose – to keep parking spaces open for its shoppers.
Automatic Machine Removes slugs, Counts Meter Change

Madison Daily Leader
January 11, 1961

Pennies, nickels, dimes and an odd assortment of tokens, washers, and foreign coins find their way into a square wooden box in city hall each week.

The collection is change from the parking meters in the city. The new meter man for the police department Leland Leitzke empties change from the parking meters into a two wheeled carrier each Monday morning.

The coins are next deposited in a wood box to await sorting. At first glance the box seems to contain only pennies and nickels, but a closer examination reveals a variety of slugs mixed in with them.

Washers, old tokens, and foreign coins are not legal tender for the machines. Anyone found putting slugs in a meter is subject to prosecution for a misdemeanor and must appear in Police Court.

The coins are first poured into a sorting machine which sorts them according to denomination. The slugs are sorted out and the coins are then put into a coin counter.

Coin rolls are fitted into the machine which automatically count out the correct number for each coin.

The machine is reset for each type of coin. The money is then deposited at the bank.

The average weekly parking meter income is over $200.

October’s LCHS Annual Meeting:

Four new members were elected to fill the open positions on the Lake County Historical Society’s Board of Directors. Those serving on the Board for 2012-2013 are back: Deb Gerdes, Bonnie Olson, Joshua Uecker, Roger Orton, and Winston Genzlinger. Front: Sue Larsen, Karen Feige, Nancy Sabbe, Lori Norby, and Rosie Brashier. Not pictured is Shelly Doblar.

Three local residents were honored at this year’s Annual Meeting for their contributions to the Lake County Historical Society. Joshua Uecker was recognized for organizing the Museum’s archives and other volunteer work. Dale Nighbert was recognized for his contributions to the Board of Directors the past six years and for his work as newsletter editor. And, Deb Pauley and the DSU Production Center were honored for their assistance with the Museum’s 50th Anniversary program and for their help with the Heritage Herald newsletter.

Lake County History books. We recently sold four books. There are still more people on our list wishing for a history book. If you know of someone who no longer needs theirs, donate it to the museum.

More Volunteers. Thank you to everyone who faithfully volunteer each week. We can always use more people for the many projects at the museum. Please contact Cynthia for details.

Funds to be able to purchase more boxes, tissue paper, and printer ink cartridges.

Funds for supplies and equipment as we transfer close to 100 old cassette tapes to digital files. These tapes are interviews of some of our older residents done by university students for the South Dakota oral history project in 1986. The late Herb Blakely, a history instructor at Dakota State and board member of the Lake County Society, supervised the project. Due to the deterioration of the tapes, we need to transfer the voice data to CDs. Some of the tapes are already breaking.

Newer artificial Christmas trees to help replace some of our older trees.

Newer card tables to be used at museum events. Many of our older tables are literally on their last legs.

Do you have any early day pictures of Lake County? If so, would you be willing to share them for future issues of the Heritage Herald? Please bring them to the museum. We can scan them for you and place the copies in our files.
My Prairie Museum – Part 2

Rosemary Hyland

The Journey of
My Little White Wash House:

In 1936, when I was 9 years old, I moved with my family to a farm two miles south of Rutland. Dad moved a darling, little house measuring 10’ by 12’ with three windows on to the property. This became our “Wash House.” We did all our laundry there, and Mom would do some canning there during the hot summer months. I helped Mom wash clothes – even overalls – on an old washtub.

I remember an old wooden washing machine. We had to leave water in it all the time. If not, the wood would shrink and then of course all the water would run out. What work carrying the water, heating it, and then throwing it all out when finished! What fun my children had when they were little, visiting their grandparents, and playing in the little white Wash House.

It soon became a part of my Prairie Museum. I painted it and it looks very nice, made curtains for the windows, and set it up just like Mom had it. I had lots of fun searching flea markets and rummage sales to fill the building. I filled it with several unique things such as a sink, stove, “clothes dryer”, washtub and tub, clothespin bags, quilts, a wooden ironing board, copper boiler, a round wooden washing machine, etc.

As my collection of antiques and vintage items grew, I needed more room to display them. Madison had a bad flood in 1993 and was selling damaged homes. I purchased a small three-room house for $100.00 and had it moved to my backyard. The house was in good condition, and all I really had to do was remove the old carpet and do some general cleaning.

The fun began when I could start to “set up” the house. I started with the bedroom. An old iron adult bed had been purchased at an antique store in Pipestone. This bed is made up with old quilts and vintage linens.

A lucky find at a local rummage sale was an iron baby bed! The crib has a display of baby bedding and vintage baby clothing. In this area, I have an old leather potty chair, a wooden rocking horse, and a "Taylor Tot" like I used for my daughter some 60 plus years ago.

In this same room, I have a family heirloom – my mother-in-law’s bowl and water pitcher. It is in perfect condition. I made curtains for the windows by using old “feed sacks.” Many old hats, quilts, brush and mirror sets, purses, and other personal items are also displayed. A unique “Evening in Paris” perfume set that I found at a rummage sale sits on the old dresser.

At the end of the kitchen hallway, I have set up a washroom. Included in this display is a clothes rack filled with old linens. There’s also a collection of wash day items such as old irons, soaps, bleaches, and sprinkling bottles. An old sink, wooden wringer, and wooden ironing board complete this area. I was lucky to find a homemade sheet made of old feed sacks at a rummage sale. I hung it up as a back drop in this area.

Off to the side of the washroom, I set up a small school room. I hung up old posters from my teaching days. Included in this room are many old school books, a desk, chairs, etc.

On the way back into the kitchen I have a collection of vintage toys and games. They remind me of the things my children liked to play with – paper dolls, tops, coloring books, dolls and doll clothes, board games, pin ball games, pots and pans, etc.
The biggest and most useful room is the kitchen. I have an old kitchen cabinet filled with gadgets that the women of that era needed or wanted – wooden cheese boxes, a cod fish box, wooden matchbox holders, spoons, spice cans, bowls, canisters, etc.

As I survey the room, I see my collections of aprons, spice cans, egg beaters, potato mashers, and rolling pins. I have an old sink with a water pump. The room still has more to offer including two stoves – one a little black stove that would have kept the family warm when huddled around on a cold wintery night. The other is a kerosene kitchen stove that was used to cook up some wonderful family meals! In one corner of the kitchen, I have my old kitchen cabinet displayed with old dishes, etc. The baby high chair that I used for all my children is filled with old baby dishes and bottles.

Other collections and displays in my Flood House are old jars, flour sifters, cookie cutters, pots and pans, tin bread boxes, pie safes, and pot holders. A big wood box sits next to the sink. The treasure is the old wooden rocker that belonged to my parents.

In the corner of my family room in my home, I have the biggest treasure of all . . . my mother’s old kitchen cabinet! After she passed away and we were cleaning out her house, I spied this old broken down piece of furniture in her basement. I brought it home where it set in my garage for several years. I decided to have it repaired. It had been painted a pale yellow, so I had it striped and then varnished. It turned out to be a beautiful masterpiece! Displays of old different odds and ends fill it up.

Just this past spring I found a cupboard made out of old doors. It seems to fit into my décor. I filled it with books, quilts and coffee pots. Along its side are an old metal butter churn, bread pans, and a washboard draped with a quilt.

How wonderful are the memories of the olden days! Walking through my Prairie Kitchen, Wash House, and Flood House brings me great pleasure. I enjoy my visits to my Country Museum knowing that going back to the very modern touches of my home is just a few steps away.

Other Items Here and There – the Granary, the Garage, the House . . .

I even have a display and a few things stored in the old granary. I have a collection of items used with horses. Also, draped across a wall are other farm related items – a fly net, yoke, roping, and some pictures of how the farmers used these items. Pictures of harvesting are also in place and a woodbox sets below the display. Over the years I have collected a few old rakes of various sizes and styles. A few old tools can also be found there.

Other items on display can be found in the old garage. I found some old tables and cupboards at sales. I set them up with the odds and ends that I had left over – old cameras, jars, teapots, juice pitchers, rolling pins, canisters, vases and planters, clay pots, vintage glasses, and old mixers. Several old watering cans are lined up. Also in the display are a couple of old treadle sewing machines and an old family trunk that made the journey to America. I have several wooden ironing boards and the shell of an old floor radio, too.

A Note from our Readers

The last issue of the Heritage Herald had an article that gave a brief history of the Dakota State University chimes. We recently received an email from Elise Wiese that adds more to the story. She also provides clarification for the date when the chimes were repaired. It reads:

What an interesting article I read in The Heritage Herald about the DSU Chimes! I coasted way up almost to the end to read: “In the late 1990’s, due to mechanical problems, the chimes became silent. In 2003, a local community group, the Kingman Club, initiated a fundraiser called “Chime Out for DSU” and began raising funds for their repair. The chimes were later restored.”

Well, your mention of the Kingman Club sent me sleuthing back in my bank records to find the exact date this was done. The kids and I had been searching for just the RIGHT spot for Willmar’s memorial after his death on February 12, 1999, and that seemed the ideal place since Willmar devoted much of his life to music.

So on May 5, 2000, I wrote a check to the Kingman Club in the amount of $550, as a memorial to Willmar, to fix the chimes at DSU. That amount did indeed fix the chimes and it wasn’t long before they were back in operation and chiming once again. I felt a joy each time I stepped outside at the proper time to hear them again.

I am sorry to hear they have quit working again and hope they may soon be restored once again. What a nice reminder to read about them again.

Thank you,

Elsie Wiese

Thanks for your email, Elsie. The Lake County Historical Society appreciates comments from our readers. If anyone has any add-ons to our stories or memories that they want to add to our newsletter, please send them to us. We’d like to hear from you.
Tidbits from the First Tuesday Talk Group

The First Tuesday Talks Group meets the first Tuesday of each month at Smith-Zimmermann Museum at 1:00. The group’s discussions may not always be historically accurate, but it’s interesting listening to the old timers as they stroll down “Memory Lane.” Feel free to join them or sit in and listen.

- The Woodmancy apartment building once stood just to the east of West Center Baptist Church. The structure was torn down in 1981, and the location is now a parking lot for the church. The architecture of three-story building was very interesting. George Lee remembers delivering milk to apartment residents. If you have any information, stories, or pictures of the building, please contact the museum.

- Hugh and Bernadette Carr owned and operated Carr’s Grocery Store, located on the corner of Union Avenue and NW 2nd St., from 1935-1973. Two cats – Pat and Mitsey – were permanent fixtures at the store. Gene Carr remembers that one was a beautiful white Angora. The cats, who acted like they owned the place, never left the area of the grocery store. Carr’s Grocery definitely did not have a problem with mice!

- There was once a theater in Madison called the Berlin Theater. It was on the east side of the 200 block of South Egan Avenue. The name of the theater was painted on the south side of the building along with an advertisement for Spearmint Gum. After the beginning of World War II, the wording was painted over.

- Discussion group members remember that in the late 1940’s or early 1950’s a black Labrador would walk to the Smoke House. Chick Kurth would wrap up a six pack of beer in sacks and the dog would carry it home. This dog would also pick up meat at the locker and take it home. The dog’s owner was not identified. (Note: This tidbit might fall in “Ripley’s Believe it or Not” category.)

- The group has also been discussing articles from old newspapers. A May 7, 1938, item was a warning to children by Chief of Police R.J. Harris. When asked if anyone had additional information about this, Bill Klopf remembered that he and Dick Halverson got in trouble for shooting a robin. A neighbor lady was upset and reported them to the police.

- A discussion of fire stations and notable fires in Lake County generated this memory about the day the General Beadle Campus School burned January 19, 1963. Pete Struwe, recalls the concern about getting the safe containing student records out of the burning building. Dick Olsbo brought a wrecker truck. The truck was tied to a tree to make it more stable. The safe was winched out of the building saving the records. The fact that the safe had wheels made the process easier. Soon after the safe was removed, the floor under it collapsed into the basement. Pete, who was an eighth grade teacher at the Campus School, remembers losing his brand new shoes (a pair of loafers) in the process of getting the safe out of the building. Others who helped were: Robert Ormseth, who was the Principal and Athletic Director; Milo Natwick, an instructor at the college, and Dan Barker, who was a teacher and Boys’ Basketball Coach at the school. Pete also remembers that the Berther girls brought coffee and cookies to those who were helping during the fire.
Brown Bag Speakers Series

Maxine Swanson

They're baaaack! Yes, the museum’s long-inactive Brown Bag Speakers Series was revived last summer when Ted LaFleur, foreman of Madison’s Parks Department, kicked off the series by revealing “Madison’s Best Kept Secret—the Gerry Maloney Nature Area,” which is located just two blocks north of the museum. LaFleur related the history of the nature area and described the wonders that await visitors.

The theme for the remaining Brown-Baggers is “Writing Family Memoirs.”

In early October Dr. Loren Murfield discussed his book, Humble Homesteaders, the memoir of a couple farming near Nunda. Dr. Murfield asked the attendees several thought-provoking questions—What is your legacy? What story did you receive? What impact will you leave?

On October 25 Alice Lange presented “Growing up Kapsner,” an account of her life with her family in rural North Dakota. Lange has also written about her early life in more detail in a book of the same name.

Gale Pifer was the featured speaker for the November 8 program. Pifer’s program was entitled “I Don’t Look Good Naked Anymore,” and also centered on the theme of the Series “Writing Family Memoirs.” This program was an interesting and helpful aid for those wishing to write their own family memoirs. Pifer, a long-time feature writer for the Madison Daily Leader as well as the leader of a local dance band, also regaled the audience with humorous anecdotes from his past.

“Never fear—Green is here---to help you write your memoirs.” Humorist, storyteller, author Plain Jane Green of Clark, SD presented a memoir writing program entitled: “Let’s Write Those Stories,” on Nov. 15. Plain Jane enlightened, edified, and enriched the audience with some fun storytelling and memoir writing tips. Plain Jane passed out paper and pencils and helped the audience start the memoir writing process. Plain Jane Green is part of the Speaker’s Bureau for the SD Humanities Council, which helped sponsor this program.

The Series will continue in 2013 when John Nelson, Nancy Sabbe, Jim Swanson, and Chrys Daniel will present programs to encourage and aid others in writing their memoirs.

Each brown-bagger event takes place at noon and gives the audience an opportunity to eat a sack lunch during the presentation. The museum provides coffee and punch.

Fourth Annual Christmas at the Museum

Once again Smith Zimmermann Museum was in the Christmas spirit when 30 groups and organizations displayed their decorated holiday trees. Sunday, December 16, was a special day when the LaBahn Holiday Train paid a visit and gave rides around town. Jerry and Sue Larsen added a touch of an old-time Christmas when they brought their sleigh and displayed it on the front yard of the museum. Special guest was Santa Claus. Close to 200 attended the Sunday festivities, and many others visited the museum during the month.
LCHS Heritage Herald

The Heritage Herald is published quarterly by members & friends of the Lake County Historical Society and the DSU Production Center. The Society has been established to collect, document, preserve, secure, research, exhibit, and interpret objects of cultural, developmental, and historical value of the Lake County area from the mid-1800s to the present.

If you have questions or comments, please contact our Museum. The LCHS’s Board of Directors meets at 5:15 the first Tuesday of each month at the Smith-Zimmermann Heritage Museum, located on the campus of Dakota State University. Welcome Visitors!!

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