

GOTHENBURG HISTORICAL MUSEUM

"A Window into the Past"

DEC 2020 4th QTR.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Roger Heidebrink, Pres.
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- Brent Block
- Lyle Franzen
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- Dick Schwanz
- Bev Titkemeier
- Chuck Titkemeier

We've Been Closed but We've Been Busy

At the March 9, 2020 meeting of the Board of Director's of the Gothenburg Historical Museum it was deemed for the health and safety of our volunteers and visitors that the museum would be closed until such time that the CDC relaxed restrictions on businesses being open to the public due to the COVID pandemic. After visiting with many volunteers, they indicated they were anxious about working and would rather stay healthy. That being said, the board voted to stay closed for the season and concentrate on making changes to the museum to give it a new look.

Changes began occurring over the winter months. Paid for in part by a Tourism Improvement Grant in the amount of \$10,000, contractors were replacing the ceiling and installing new light fixtures in the basement. Walls and ceilings needed to be primed and painted and showcases and historical items needed a facelift.

The Board of directors of the Sun Theatre, in the midst of their remodeling, wanted Gothenburg to retain as much of its history as possible and in June donated the old ticket

memorabilia to the museum to create a display. That display has recently been completed.

The McVicker Pharmacy sign was given to the museum by the City when they removed it from the Lafayette pavilion. It needed a place to be properly displayed. Roger takes a ride up to the attic to check out the beams to insure that we can securely hang the sign from the ceiling.

Upon inspection it was determined there was a place to attach sturdy bolts to hold this 13.5 foot sign that seems to weigh a ton. It was deemed that Roger should go up as he is President of our board. It's amazing the things the president "gets" to do.

During the painting process, the back stairway got a facelift and new stair treads. The office ceiling was painted which brightened up the computer area. Showcases have been moved and new ones appear.



GOTHENBURG HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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booth along with a showcase and other

Continued on pg. 3

DID YOU KNOW?

Before there was antifreeze for cars, when you visited friends in the winter you would drain the radiator when you got there and when you were ready to go home you would fill it with hot water and return home.

Those were the good ole days.

Farmer's Co-operative Association - est. 1904

The Farmers Co-operative Association was incorporated to commence business as a grain elevator on October 1, 1904. The first books available were from the February 1913 Annual Stockholders meeting.

The Cooperative bought and sold grain, twine, posts and cement. Only farmers or landowners could hold shares in the association. At one time coal freight was 50 cents per ton and up, depending on Union Pacific freight. In 1915 labor costs for hand unloading a 33 ton load of coal was about \$5.00. A 400 sack carload of cement could also be unloaded for about \$5.00. Common labor was about \$2.00 per day.

In 1915 the grasshoppers ate the twine on the shocked grain. The Plymouth Twine Company agreed to deliver insect proof twine for the 1916 season and took back the unsold untreated twine.

A gasoline motor was used to run the elevator equipment until 1920. The elevator's electric light bill was only about 75 cents except for a few winter months until the electric motor was installed.

The Union Pacific Railroad raised their right-of-way lease cost from \$5.00 per year to \$74.00 in 1919. In 1920 the association bought an adding machine. At the request of Union Pacific the elevator was painted yellow as the other buildings on the right-of-way.

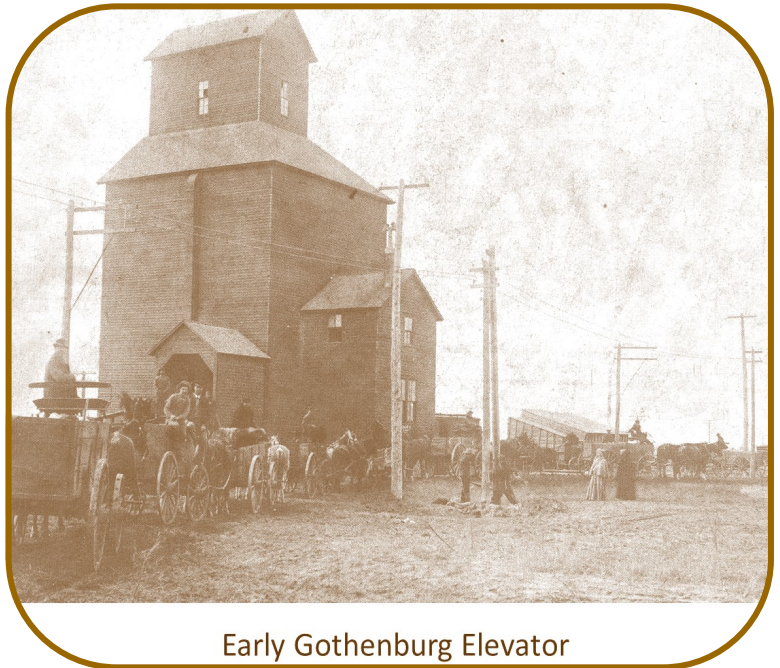
In 1921 they paid a \$50 donation toward a preliminary survey for irrigation ditches on the north and south sides of the river. They also made a dona-

tion to promote the building of a Dawson County Sugar factory.

In 1922 radio service from the Omaha markets was discussed.

In 1930 the Farmers Co-operative Association joined the Farmers West Central Grain Association and the Gothenburg Co-op Oil Company started about this time.

Hard time came in 1931 and day labor was cut to



Early Gothenburg Elevator

30 cents per hour. Many bad debts were charged off. In 1932 they decided to give some coal to the needy instead of money to the Harvest Festival. In 1933, in view of the depression and the fact that the elevator was not making any money, it was moved that monthly employees must be cut. In 1935 business was better and salaries were increased and in 1937 a new 9x34 ft. platform scale was installed. In 1945 the elevator brought in over 51,000 bushels of grain in three months time, staying open nearly 24 hours a day.

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GOTHENBURG COOPERATIVE continued from pg. 2

A terrible fire caused by an electric motor or a spark from a passing train caused over \$100,000 damage to the elevator in 1953. The damage was repaired and at the suggestion by the fire department a water pipe and nozzles were installed in the head house in 1961. A new 63,000 bushel grain storage facility was also built adjacent to the elevator.

In 1963 the Farmers Co-operative Association purchased the Block Grain Company on the north edge of Gothenburg where the Victory Assembly Church is now located.

Here they added a new feed mill which would stand until 1988.

Today it is called Country Partners Cooperative and following a year-end audit for the period ending September 30, 2019 total sales were recorded at \$282 million. Local earnings were approximately \$2.6 million and combined with regional cooperative patronage resulted in the \$6 million of total net income. Country Partners Cooperative is a full-service, diversified Nebraska agricultural cooperative with locations in Albion, Amherst, Anselmo, Arnold, Bartlett, Callaway, Cedar Rapids, Cozad, Eustis, Farnam, Gothenburg, Greeley, Lexington, Loomis, Merna, North Loup, Ord, Primrose, Spalding, Stapleton, Sumner and Westerville.



...We've Been Busy continued from pg. 1

A "Hoosier" kitchen cabinet was renovated and then donated and a new kitchen display was born.

Along came a peg-board and shelf to display utensils, pots, pans, etc. A quilt ladder now displays all the beautiful quilts we've had but were often overlooked by our visitors.



New soffit, fascia and gutters have been installed and paid for in part with the assistance from the Gothenburg Tourism Committee providing a Tourism Improvement Grant in the amount of \$5,000. A new door on the northwest corner of the building was also installed and paid for in part by a donation received from Henry & Patricia Potter.

A special THANK YOU goes to Roger Heidebrink, Charlie & Connie Bihlmaier, Anne Anderson, Dick Larson, Jay Richeson, Cordelia Aden, Marcy Aden, Cecile Ackerman, Kathy Nichols and Pam Slack for providing many hours of volunteer time to continue to make things happen. More needs to be done before we can open so if you'd like to help just let us know and show up every Monday between 1:00-4:00 p.m. beginning January 4, 2021.

I'm sure you just can't wait to see all the improvements and changes. Watch for our opening date in 2021.

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR
from the
GOTHENBURG HISTORICAL BOARD

DID YOU KNOW?

In the “good ole days” a plate lunch was 25 cents, a hamburger was 5 cents, a piece of pie 5 cents, coffee, fountain drinks and bottles of pop were 5 cents, a double-dip ice cream cone was 5 cents a package of gum or a candy bar was 5 cents and candy was 1 cent, hence the term “penny candy”.

GOTHENBURG PONY EXPRESS HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

As stated in the bylaws of the Gothenburg Pony Express Historical Society dba The Gothenburg Historical Museum in **Article III, Section 1** “The annual meeting of the members shall be held in the month of November of each calendar year for the purpose of electing directors and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting. If the election of directors shall not be held on the day designated herein for any annual meeting, the board of directors shall cause the election to be held at a special meeting of the members as soon thereafter as conveniently may be held.”

Due to the COVID pandemic, we have determined that for the health and safety of the members an Annual Meeting of the Gothenburg Historical Museum shall not be held until such time it is safe for such meeting to take place.

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karla Blasé • Denise Brittenham • Jan Gill • Flatwater Bank • Terry & Cathy Healey • Ronald Klein • Dick & Connie Larson • Donna McConnell • Ramona Ollendorf • Blaine Peterson • Jenny Raymond • Tot & Pauline Holmes • Keith & Marcy Aden • Pam Slack • Marcia Welch • Dennis & Sue Kirkpatrick | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gerald & Janet Kranau • Roger & Carol Wahlgren • Robert & Mary Theasmeyer • Mark & Cindy Peyton • Charlie & Connie Bihlmaier • Marvin & Jill Franzen • Kathy Nichols • Chuck & Bev Titkemeier • Elsie Cyriacks • Steve Windrum • Verlin & Charolett Janssen* • Cecile Ackerman* <p>*New 2020 Lifetime Membership</p> |
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UPCOMING ISSUE —Most things have changed in the last 200 years, except cattle branding isn't one of them. Brands represent an opportunity for sentimentality. A brand is a symbol of pride for a family or ranch and is passed down through generations. It's something personal. I need your help for an upcoming issue of the Gothenburg Historical Museum's newsletter. I am looking for designs and stories about your brands. Please contact me at 529-0906 or anneanderson801@gmail.com and share your story.

2020 MEMBERSHIP & BUILDING FUND REPORT

Thank you to the following who joined or renewed their membership for 2020 and contributed to the museum building fund*.

- Bob & Mary Theasmeyer***
- Chuck & Bev Titkemeier***
- Gothenburg Feed Products/Terry & Cathy Healey***
- Verlin & Charolett Janssen***
- ***Cecile Ackerman******
- Keith & Marcy Aden***
- Pam Slack***
- Marcia Welch***
- Dick & Connie Larson***
- Jack & Faye Kniss*
- Gene & Cora Bosch*
- Dick & Jackie Schwanz*
- Robin & Lynnette Stevens*
- Dave & Linda Loostrom*
- Dean Kugler*
- Arlan & Tip Ronnekamp*
- Loren & Mary Koch*
- Eugene & Lettie Morse*
- Glenn Vieselmeyer*
- Roger Heidebrink*
- LaVawn Farnstrom*
- Gary & Anne Anderson*
- Tom & Rhonda Jobman
- Sus Peden
- Sandy Brestel
- Edward & Marilyn Uehling
- First State Bank
- Tim & Cordelia Aden
- Father Wayne Pavela
- Jane Sheets
- Robert Ronnekamp (2020-21 Membership)

***Life-Time Member

**Building Fund Benefactor

*Building Fund Contributor

BOLD/ITALIC INDICATES NEW MEMBER/CONTRIBUTOR

Form of Payment

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Check payable to:

Gothenburg Historical Museum

PO Box 204

Gothenburg, NE 69138

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email Address _____

2021 Membership

Life Time Membership:

- ☐ 10x Building Fund Contributor \$1,000

Building Fund:*

- ☐ Building Fund Benefactor** \$500+
- ☐ Building Fund Contributor* \$100+

*Contribution to the Building Fund includes an annual membership.

Annual Membership:

- ☐ Supporting Membership \$50
- ☐ Contributing or Family Membership \$25
- ☐ Base Membership \$15

CHRISTMAS—*In The Swedish Manner*

Dear to the hearts of the Swedish people are those interesting Christmas Customs of their homeland. Though they may have left the “old country” in their childhood, they have kept alive the traditions and today their children and grandchildren look forward to the holiday season with keen delight.

A typical Swedish community in Nebraska is that of Gothenburg, a town named for Gothenburg in Sweden. And a typical Swedish family is that of Mrs. Frederick Karlson, who came to Gothenburg in 1885 (because her brother, Dr. Vollard Karlson, a prominent doctor in the Platte Valley, had located there) and who later married without changing her name.

When Mrs. Karlson told me of their many special Christmas foods and the holiday customs they observe, I knew the reason why her five children look forward to being home at Christmas.

“In Sweden” said Mrs. Karlson, “the homes were cleaned from top to bottom...not an ordinary cleaning, but a “shiny cleaning.” The maids work for days scouring copper kitchen utensils. Silverware gleamed and glassware glistened. There was butchering to be done and cheese to be made. The last week was devoted to baking...cookies, bread and coffee breads of many kinds. Everything had to be in readiness for the noon of December 24. Then everyone shared in the festivities.

In Sweden the Christmas tree was brought in from the forest on the afternoon before Christmas and decorated, principally with gaily wrapped cookies and fruits. Instead of Santa Claus there is an elusive and mischievous little man (Jultomten) like a gnome or elf, who plays all sorts of pranks on both people and animals when he emerges from his subterranean dwelling around Christmas time. He delivers the gifts to the children; if children are not good this little man will come and take their gifts from them to pass on to children who are good.

Very, very early on Christmas morning everyone went to church. Some walked many miles; others road in beautiful

sleighs. The ringing of the bells on the cold morning air, the homes gleaming with candlelight, are memories which Mrs. Karlson will never forget.

While Mrs. Karlson buys some foods—cheese and rye krisp (knackebrod), for instance—she too makes many kinds of cookies and breads in preparations for the holidays; her home, too, is shiny clean from attic to basement.

In Mrs. Karlson’s home, as in Sweden, Christmas jollity begins with the noonday dinner on December 24. To this meal the Karlsons invite many friends. A candelabrum centers the table which is arranged buffet style. Here is a whole cheese with caraway seeds, potato bologna, a drink (dricka Jniper) which Mrs. Karlson makes, pickled pork and corned beef, breads, potatoes, pickled herring, hard cooked eggs, knackebrod, tiny glasses of wine and many other foods. With the host leading the way, each person takes a plate, goes to the kitchen where a kettle of meat broth is on the stove, dips a slice of rye bread on a fork into the kettle, returns to the table and fills his plate with foods. Once everyone has eaten, the table is cleared and little plates are put out and a huge tray filled with a variety of cookies is passed.

Supper on Christmas eve is a family affair. Mrs. Karlson serves lutfisk, pigs’ feet, pressed meat (sulta), rye breads and most important a cream gravy made with a generous amount of butter and cream. The dessert is a rice pudding,...rice cooked in milk with chopped almonds added and the top decorated with cinnamon. In the pudding is a whole almond; the one who gets this will be married within the year, tradition says.

NOTE: *This story was written by Anna Dee Weaver, date is unknown. Weaver was born September 1895 and died July 1986 at the age of 90 and is buried in Callaway.*