

# GOTHENBURG HISTORICAL MUSEUM

## "A Window into the Past"

JULY 2016 - 3RD QTR.

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### GOTHENBURG HISTORICAL MUSEUM

1420 Avenue F  
PO Box 204

Gothenburg, NE 69138

Telephone: 308-537-4212

[www.gothenburghistory.org](http://www.gothenburghistory.org)

Email: [gothenburghistory@outlook.com](mailto:gothenburghistory@outlook.com)

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

**Anne Anderson**



**You are Invited to the  
GOTHENBURG  
HISTORICAL MUSEUM  
10th ANNIVERSARY  
OPEN HOUSE**

**Activities in Ehmen Park, at the Pony Express  
Station and the Museum begin at 11:30 a.m.  
with a Cowboy Church service and  
continue until 4:00 p.m.**

**Food, games and activities for young and old.**

## 2016 STATISTICS.....

At the end of July 2016 we have hosted **1,794 visitors** to the museum from 48 different states and 74 foreign countries.. This compares to 1,527 at this same date in 2015. Our volunteer hours

recorded in 2016: the board total 119 hrs.; greeters 802.75 hrs. and other volunteers 676.25 hrs. If you would like to become a volunteer at the museum, you may contact us by email (address is at the left

of this page) or give a call to Roger at 529-2196 or Anne at 529-0906. A special thank you to our greeter coordinators again this year— Connie Larson and Carol Van-Overbeke.

# REMEMBER WHEN.....

*Do you have a special memory of "I remember when..." that you want to share? Let me know and I will add it to the list in the next newsletter. Contact me at 529-0906 or send me an email at anneanderson801@gmail.com*

## THANK YOU!

*A special thank you to Sus Peden for the set of 7 embroidered tea towels she donated to the museum gift shop. They are beautiful and we appreciate her generosity.*

- Everyone came to town on Saturday nights; friends sat in cars and visited after doing their shopping. Stores stayed open until people went home, sometimes it was 11 or 12 o'clock.
- There was a Noon whistle as well as a 10 p.m. whistle to remind all kids they needed to be home.
- Brown-McDonalds and JC Penney's (both clothing stores) were located between the two banks.
- If you needed your shoes shined for Sunday church you would stop into the Star Shoe Service owned by Everett Johnson to have them polished to a shine for ten cents.
- Everyone enjoyed a stop at the "Popcorn Stand". It was a chance to buy some fresh popcorn and penny candy.
- A real treat on a Saturday night was an ice cream sundae made at the soda fountain at Potter's Pharmacy or Myer's Drugstore.
- There were parking lots on either side of the Safeway Grocery Store now Peterson's Grocery. Jensen's Market was located where a portion of Five Star Flooring is today.
- The creamery and egg station was located a half block east of Lake Avenue on 9th Street. Mother always took her eggs to town and used the money to buy her groceries for the week.
- Monday was wash day and Tuesday was for ironing.
- Telephones hung on the wall and many people had party lines where you could listen in on others.

## The FAMOUS HUGO PLAYERS

Summer entertainment isn't like it used to be. In days gone by, people were treated to a special kind of entertainment when they had the privilege of watch the Hugo Players in action.

The Hugo Players originated out of Gothenburg. Chester and Fern Hugo, from Gothenburg and Chester's brother Harry, who later settled in Kearney, started a traveling tent show.

The troupe was started in the early 1920's and lasted about ten years. The Hugos were in their late teens and early twenties during their years as Hugo Players. They traveled around with a tent

and folding seats that could hold around two hundred people. They usually stayed in town about a week and then packed up their tent and traveled to another town. Tickets for the show cost around fifty cents to a dollar.

The three Hugos played the main parts in the plays and they chose local people from the audience for the minor parts. The show not only consisted of plays, but also little comical acts. They played instruments such as

the tuba, trombone, accordion, cornet and banjo.

The Hugo Players show became the victim of radio as many vaudeville shows did. People were getting radios and television was just coming in. Entertainment was changing. This very special type of entertainment was enjoyed by many in the by-gone years.





# THE COMING OF THE ALFALFA DEHYDRATION INDUSTRY

We need to start at the beginning of the industry as we know it. Alfalfa was a plant that very few Mid-west farmers had heard about during the depression when it was brought from California. The demand for this highly nutritional livestock feed sparked the creation of a new industry in the late 1940's following WW II.

The basic idea was that alfalfa could be cut fresh in the field and then

industry a major employer. Workers would come for the season from many of the southern states. Some working on the cutters and some in the bagging and loading operations. Elmer and Alma Banks came to work for the mills and decided to stay. Alma was the cook for the transient mill workers. There were five plants in Gothenburg and a total of approximately twenty-two in the county.

Today there are only six in the State of Nebraska with two being in Cozad and one in Gothenburg. In the early days Gothenburg had

National Alfalfa; G & M Mann Hay—owned and operated beginning in 1949 by George & Milton Mann; Gothenburg Alfalfa Products—begun by George Kisevalter, a great-uncle to Harvey Sutton, Sr. who would eventually go on to run the mill; Consolidated Blenders (the largest dehy in the Mid-west) and Millcarr Dehydrating & Milling Company which would become Gothenburg Feed Products owned by William

Healey. Healey and his family located in Gothenburg in 1938. Bill was employed by Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District that was building the Hydro-electric & Irrigation Project in the Platte Valley. In 1946, Bill resigned from the power district and went into the sun-cured alfalfa business as manager of the Millcarr Dehydrating & Milling Company. Eventually in 1957, after purchasing the assets of the Millcarr, Gothenburg Feed Products was incorporated and it became a Healey family affair, now owned and operated by Terry Healey and his son Chris. In 1972 a new plant was completed which was more energy efficient and touted as one of the most modern in the county. This industry continues to be a market for the area alfalfa growers, a source of employment for many people and a great contributor to the economy of this area. Alfalfa meal and pellets continue to be shipped nationally throughout the U.S.

Many hated the green hay dust but the aroma of the hay mills meant I was home when coming back from college.

Information and pictures contributed by Terry Healey and Gothenburg Feed Products and Patty (Sutton) Cordell.



transported to the dryer, or dehydrator, where all moisture could be removed in order to preserve valuable nutrients. Once the hay was fed into one end of the drum, fuel was used to heat the drum to a very high temperature, thus evaporating the moisture rapidly. Once dehydrated it was ground up in a hammer mill or processed into pellets and bagged for the end user.

The demand for alfalfa pellets proved to be so strong the dehydrators had to operate 24 hours a day during the growing season in order to supply the market.

During its "hay"-day Dawson County would have 70,000 acres of alfalfa and was the major producing area of dehydrated alfalfa in the United States. Each plant would have between 40-50 employees making this



# 2016 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Thank you to the following individuals and businesses who have joined or renewed their membership and contributed to the museum building fund to date. Those in bold are new since the April newsletter.

- Tot & Pauline Holmes\*\*\*
- Leonard France\*\*
- Dick & Connie Larson\*
- Pam Slack\*
- Bev & Chuck Titkemeier\*
- Denise Brittenham\*
- Gary & Anne Anderson\*
- Bob & Mary Theasmeyer\*
- Norm & Colleen Geiken\*
- Jim & Janice Gonzales
- Robin & Lynnette Stevens
- **Dick & Jackie Schwanz\***
- **Gothenburg Feed Products\*\***
- **Terry & Cathy Healey\*\***
- **Loren & Mary Koch\***
- **Tom & Rhonda Jobman\***
- **Marcy Wahlgren\*\*\***
- **Verlin & Charolett Janssen\***
- **Gothenburg State Bank\*\*\***
- **Don & Marcia Welch\***
- **Dennis Kirkpatrick\***
- **Sue Kirkpatrick\***
- **Mike & Deb Bacon\***
- **Gene & Cora Bosch\***
- **Henry & Patricia Potter\***
- **Cheryl Alberts Erwin\***
- **Milan & Barb Franzen\***
- **David R. Janssen\***
- **Gene & Velma Schriver\***
- **Roger Heidebrink\***
- **Larry & Kathy Nichols**
- **Cathy Simon**
- **Romaine & Joan Aden**
- **Regis & Eddie Fruit**
- **Charlie & Connie Bihlmaier**
- **Tim & Cordelia Aden**
- **Barry McDiarmid**
- **Lyle & Arlene Franzen**
- **Dick & Connie Ostergard**
- **Robert Ronnekamp**
- **Jane Sheets**

\*\*\*Life-Time Member

\*\*Building Fund Benefactor

\*Building Fund Contributor

Thank you to our newest  
Life-Time Member:  
**MARCY WAHLGREN**

## MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

**Life 10x Building Fund Contributor ..... \$1,000+\*\*\***

**Building Fund Benefactor..... \$500+\*\***

**Building Fund Contributor.....\$100+\***

\*Contribution to the Building Fund+ includes  
an annual membership.

**Supporting Membership .....\$50**

**Contributing/Family Membership .....\$25**

**Base Membership .....\$15**

**SEND US YOUR RENEWAL TODAY!!**