

GOTHENBURG HISTORICAL MUSEUM

"A Window into the Past"

OCT. 2016 - 4th QTR.

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VOLUNTEER & MEMBERSHIP APPRECIATION

You are cordially invited to the
10th Annual
2016 Volunteer & Membership
Appreciation
of the
Gothenburg Historical Museum.

Please be our guest for a
special dessert bar & program.

DATE: November 20, 2016

TIME: 2:30—4:00 p.m.

**PLACE: United Methodist Church—
1401 Lake Avenue**

Please RSVP to

Anne Anderson—529-0906 or Roger Heidebrink—529-2196

GOTHENBURG HISTORICAL
MUSEUM

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Anne Anderson

SPECIAL THANK YOU

To all those involved in the Trails West Fest event, we extend a special thank you for making our 10th anniversary very special. What a wonderful time we had showing everyone how things were done in the "Olden Days." Everyone loved the hand-operated corn sheller, making apple cider and homemade butter, washing clothes by hand with a washboard, making rope and riding the ponies. In cooperation with the Pony Express Riders Association and the Pony Express Museum, the Gothenburg Historical Museum marked their 10th anniversary promoting the history of our area.

Information for this article about the Thirty Mile Canal was taken from the July 1928 issue of the Gothenburg Times available on micro-film at the Gothenburg Public Library.

The Story of the **30 Mile Canal**

Where **IRRIGATION** *is Turning a* **LAND OF PROMISE** *Into a* **LAND OF PRODUCTION**

12,000 ATTEND THE DEDICATION

This is a story of a dream come true. No one today can remember when the idea became vigorous enough to be called a dream. Efforts were begun as far back as 1896-97 and at intervals since that time. Late in 1926, a handful of men—farmers, gray-heads mostly, who had many a promising crop fail for the lack of just a little moisture at the critical time, got the notion into their heads that the best way to get a ditch was to go ahead and dig it themselves. The idea proved popular. They held many a meeting, organized, incorporated,



hired a corps of engineers, let contracts and constructed and completed the Thirty Mile Canal, a project costing \$350,000. There was no irrigation district formed and no bonds were issued. There was no indebtedness of any kind. This group of 121 farmer stockholders made their own arrangements, put the undertaking across and paid for it. Fifteen months after the first meeting the project was completed and at a cost of something less than \$25 per acre.

Dedication services were planned for July 13, 1928 and promised to be a gigantic celebration. The Midway Ranch, located about midway of the project east and west and about equally distant from Cozad and Gothenburg, was chosen as the point best situated for the scene of the dedication. The commercial organizations of Gothenburg and Cozad united their efforts to insure that everything was ready for the large gathering. Plans included the erection of a huge platform, capable of seating the 121 stockholders, the officials, speakers and bands. The hillside east of the ranch house would form

a natural amphitheater.

A special train on the Union Pacific carried a large delegation of Omaha business men to the dedication. The Omaha World Herald quoted the Omaha Chamber of Commerce leader "The building of this canal, which has been paid for in cash by these enterprising farmers and business men, is one of the most outstanding and praiseworthy accomplishments in irrigation that has ever been undertaken. It is perhaps the only irrigation project in the country which has been financed entirely by the farmers themselves." Men of national prominence, as well as officials of the Union Pacific and Burlington railroads were invited to speak. Upon their arrival they were met by a reception committee, taken on a tour to inspect the canal from the head-gates through the valley to the Midway Ranch, where a barbecue was held.

People from all over Nebraska, as well outside the state, along with more from the immediate vicinity, showed their interest. Some 12,000 men, women and children gathered at the Midway Ranch for the dedication of the canal. Arrangements for parking were excellent as 3,413 cars

were counted as they entered the grounds. Serving lunch to the big



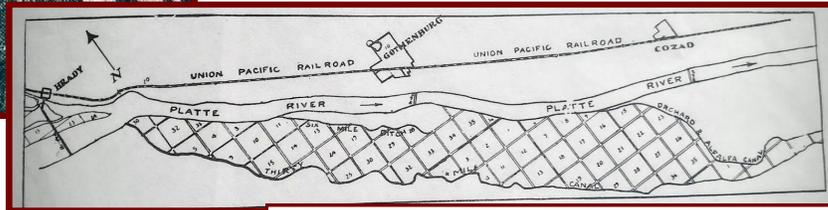
gathering was quite an undertaking as well. Serving began at 11 a.m. and went until nearly 2 p.m. Everyone enjoyed ham sandwiches, red hots (hot dogs), cookies, pickles, coffee and ice cream. Music for the day was provided by the Kearney Band, the Union Pacific Shop Band from North Platte and the combined Gothenburg and Cozad High School bands.

Loud speakers carried the voices perfectly a hundred yards from the microphone on the platform. Local representatives included H. L. Williams (left) speaking for Gothenburg and Charles Allen (right) for Cozad. Congressman Robert Simmons recounted the hardships of pioneers, who blazed the way in the Platte valley and the stockholders of the thirty mile ditch, who had the courage and wisdom to carry the project to completion without asking for federal aid. The



completion of the Thirty Mile Canal increases the total of irrigated acreage in Dawson County to about 120,000 acres, second only to Scottsbluff county.

Col. J. B. Henderson, owner of the Midway Ranch, received much thanks for his hospitality and courtesies extended at his ranch home. Today the ranch home remains much as it was "back in the day" and is owned by his granddaughters, Judy Eggleston and Anne Smith.



The Thirty Mile Canal begins about 10 miles west of Gothenburg and flows southeast a distance of 33 miles; waste waters return to the Platte River 10 miles east of Cozad.



Winner of the table-top quilt given away during the Trails West Fest event was Michael Stopford of Kearney. He is originally from England and his wife is from Sweden. Both are affiliated with UNK and enjoyed their visit in Gothenburg,

INCOME/EXPENSE UPDATE

Thank you to all who have contributed to the museum with your time and dollars. Just a quick update on where most of our income is received and the major expenses we pay. A complete Income/Expense Report will be presented in the Annual Report. This is as of October 31, 2016:

INCOME:

Building Fund Donations---	\$8,250.00*
Membership Income-----	\$570.00
Donations-----	\$1,437.00
Sales Income-----	\$376.30

EXPENSES:

Annual Bank Loan/Int-----	\$3,013.59
Insurance-----	\$1,787.00
Utilities & Telephone-----	\$3,412.24
Office/Postage/Newsletter--	\$1,336.50

Your support is needed and appreciated.

*Anyone contributing \$100+ is a member and your contribution is noted in the Building Fund Donations. This money, as well as our other income, is used to make the loan payment, pay our insurance, utilities, as well as maintain the building and allow us to pay our bills.

THANK YOU!

We appreciate our members and our many volunteers

2016 MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

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 3rd quarter newsletter.

- Tot & Pauline Holmes***
- Marcy Wahlgren ***
- Gothenburg State Bank***
- Leonard France**
- Gothenburg Feed Products**
- Terry & Cathy Healey**
- 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*
- Loren & Mary Koch*
- Tom & Rhonda Jobman*
- Verlin & Charolett Janssen*
- 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
- Gary & Donna Glendy
- Rosemary Alberts
- Arlan & Tip Ronnekamp*
- Jan Gill**
- Stone Hearth Estates*
- Doug & Nan Ostendorf*
- Jack & Mary Ostergard***

***Life-Time Member
 **Building Fund Benefactor
 *Building Fund Contributor

A SPECIAL THANK YOU!

To Jack & Mary Ostergard for their very generous donation, enabling us to make a substantial payment on our building loan.

We sincerely appreciate your generosity.

Board of Directors

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------|---|-------------|
| Life 10x Building Fund Contributor | \$1,000+*** | Supporting Membership | \$50 |
| Building Fund Benefactor..... | \$500+** | Contributing/Family Membership | \$25 |
| Building Fund Contributor..... | \$100+* | Base Membership | \$15 |

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

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!! SEND US YOUR RENEWAL TODAY!!