

# historically speaking

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 304 / St. Paul, Nebraska / 68873

Fall Issue 1998

*People keep St. Libory's history alive.*

By Ron W. Sack

Clara (Wissing) Schwenk has always been proud of her hometown of St. Libory. And she has good reason to be: her grandfather, William Buddecke, helped found the town and the Catholic Church.

In 1876 pioneers from southern Illinois founded a town which they called St. Libory in honor of the patron of their ancestral home diocese of Paderborn, Westphalen, Germany.

These immigrants came to America under the special protection of St. Liborius. They settled in St. Clair County in Southern Illinois, where they founded a parish likewise called St. Libory. After having spent about thirty years in Illinois, a few of these people decided to move west into the unsettled and unproven territory of Nebraska. As a result of the move, William Buddecke, along with Henry Cordes, Joseph Guntmeir, John Dingwerth, Conrad Evers and Joseph



Strehle established a German Catholic colony of St. Libory, located ten miles north of Grand Island in the Spring of 1876. The pioneers realized they could not prosper without religion. Therefore they purchased 10 acres of land from the Union Pacific Railroad at \$4 an acre. The first church was built of wood in 1878. That church burnt down in 1900. Another was built soon after (shown

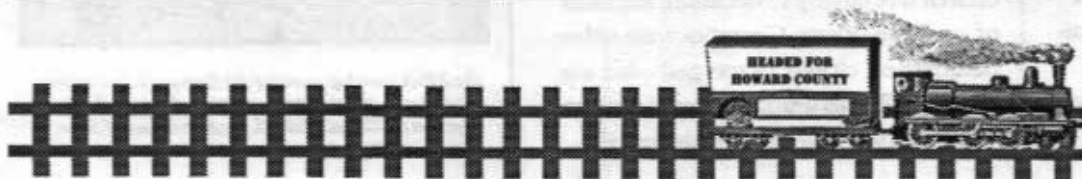
*Corpus Christi celebration in 1943 at the St. Libory Catholic Church in St. Libory, Nebraska. The church in the background is the second Catholic church building in St. Libory. It was demolished in the 1950s to make way for the present brick church. Photo courtesy of Clara and Albert Schwenk. Map below shows St. Libory, Illinois.*



in picture above). It stood until the parish outgrew it, and in 1952 plans were presented to build the present brick church.

What gives people like Clara Schwenk pride is the fact that the parish and the community continue to grow and flourish. True, landmarks like the Catholic School and Leschinsky's General Store are gone, but the people are what keep this tight community going.

Inside this newsletter you will find more about St. Libory's history. More about their giving. And more about their community."



Society makes Howard County a better place to live.



Dedication day, May 31, 1954. Photo courtesy of Albert and Clara Schwenk.

*St. Libory represents what the pioneers stood for: work, dedication, and generosity.*

By Ron W. Sack

Great things happened under the leadership of Father Andrew Augustyn. In 1952, the parish was informed at Midnight Mass on Christmas that a new church would be built on the site of the present parish hall. The first substantial pledges were offered from Frank Assendrop, Gerhard and Anna Wissing, and Paul Ziller. The new church was dedicated in 1954 and was debt-free in 1957. This meant that in a period of just four years the 90 families in the parish had built and furnished a \$100,000 church and paid for it completely.

---

“This is proof of what can be done, with God’s help and a united effort. There is no doubt that every family made heavy sacrifices in order to see this church become a reality.”

— Bishop Paschang

---

At mass on New Year’s Day 1959, it was announced that a new rectory would be built. It was completed and dedicated on September 25, 1960 with 30 neighboring priests present. Soon after that, in typical St. Libory fashion, the rectory was debt free. Showing again that St. Liborians are a giving community.

As the years have progressed, many other Catholic communities have lost their church due largely to declining numbers of available priests. Churches were either demolished, closed, or merged — but not St. Libory’s. This unincorporated town still survives. 1997 saw the completion of a

new parish hall. And still in St. Libory fashion, it was paid off in less than two years.



The 1940s were big years for the Corpus Christi celebrations. Shown above is the procession of the youth who attended the Catholic School. Photo courtesy of Albert and Clara Schwenk.



### Photos of the St. Libory Catholic Church complex.

Top photo: Interior of the old St. Libory Catholic Church, circa 1910. Photo courtesy of Albert and Clara Schwenk

Upper left photo: Father Charles Kaufman outside the second church building, circa 1940s. Photo courtesy of Bryon Bushman

Upper right photo: Father Charles Kaufman outside the rectory (which would later become the convent) and the Catholic School. Photo courtesy of Bryon Bushman

Lower left: Aerial view of the St. Libory Cemetery, Parish Hall (base west of the current Church), first wooden school (still standing as of 2008), wooden auxiliary rectory (moved to Grand Island), brick three-story school building (built in 1913 and demolished in the 1990s), and the wooden Catholic Church building. Circa 1940s. Photo courtesy of Albert and Clara Schwenk

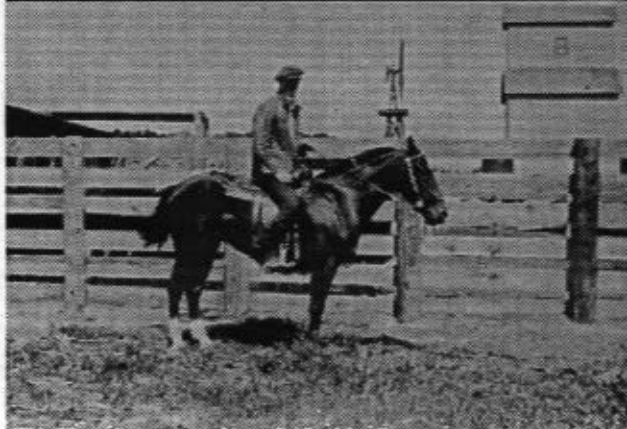
# historically speaking



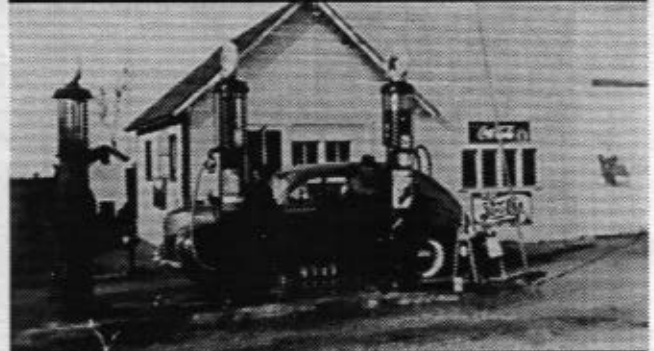
Left photo: Exterior of the Illinois House Hotel (still standing). For many years it was home to the Evers family. Photo courtesy of Bryon Buhrman, circa 1890s.



Right photo: Interior of Hans Leschinsky's Store. Courtesy of Dave and Dee Leschinsky, circa 1920s.



Left photo: Union Pacific Stockyards and Union Grain Elevator in St. Libory, J.H. Buhrman is the man on the horse. Photo courtesy of Bryon Buhrman, circa 1910s.



Right photo: John Buhrman's Gas Station along what is now highway 282. Courtesy of Bryon Buhrman, circa early 1940s.



Left photo: Exterior of J.C. Buhrman's Garage and Farmers' Creamery. This garage building is still standing (with a new brick front). Currently owned by family member Larry Buhrman. Photo courtesy of Bryon Buhrman, circa 1920s.



Right photo: Rare photo of a rail car crew at the Union Pacific Depot in St. Libory. Courtesy of Bryon Buhrman, circa late 1880s.



Left photo: Exterior of the Union Pacific Depot and coal shed. Union Pacific demolished the coal shed, but the depot still stands and is a storage shed at the Union Grain Elevator. Photo courtesy of Albert and Clara Schwanck, circa 1900s.



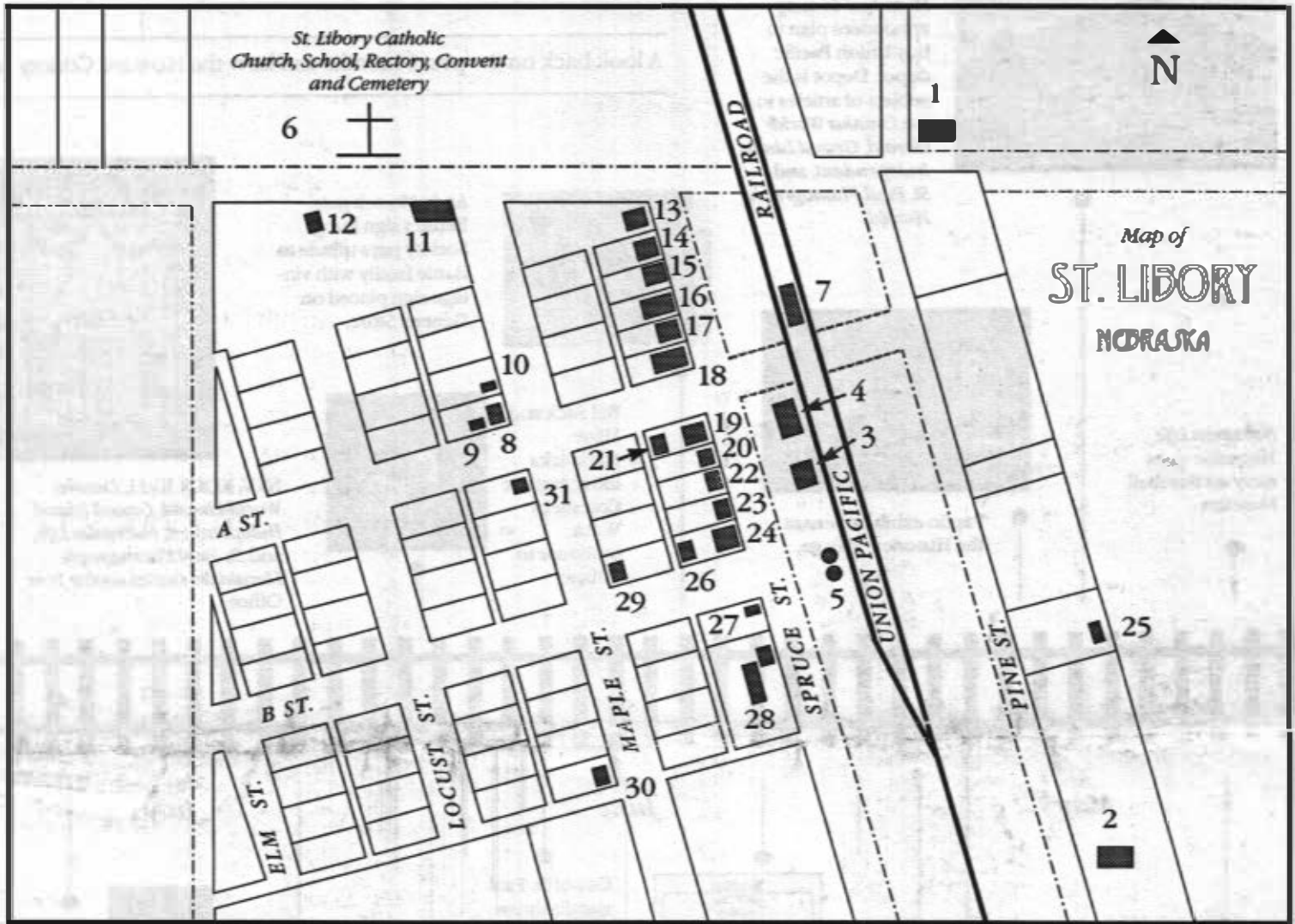
Photo above: The old St. Libory Laundry and Butcher Shop. This is the building the St. Libory Concert Band also practiced in. Remarkably, this building still stands and is located on the farm owned by Lorraine Wisting, nee Schwanck of St. Libory. Photo courtesy of Lorraine Wisting, circa 1998.

Sources for St. Libory Catholic Church courtesy of the Nebraska Catholic Register.

## Thanks St. Libory!

The Howard County Historical Society is extremely grateful to the following people who took the time to help preserve and share their history:

- Bryon Buhrman
- Omaha
- Dave and Dee Leschinsky
- Colorado
- Albert and Clara Schwanck
- St. Libory
- Lorraine Wisting
- St. Libory



*St. Libory...through the years. A listing of businesses and churches.*

*Compiled by Albert and Clara Sawwink and Lonnie Wissing. Map recreated from a 1912 atlas.*

- 1. **Blanks House Hotel.** More commonly known as the Ever's house. (Still standing, see photo)
- 2. **St. Libory Baptist Church and later the St. Libory Creamery.** (It has since then been remodeled and is currently the home of Marie Asseltop.)
- 3. **Union Pacific Stockyards.** (See photo)
- 4. **Union Grain Elevator.** (Still in operation)
- 5. **Gubman Oil Tanks.**
- 6. **Site of the St. Libory Catholic Church, wooden school, brick school house, rectory, convent and cemetery.** Today, the brick church, wooden school house, brick rectory, new parish hall and cemetery stand on this site. (See photos)
- 7. **Union Pacific Depot, coal shed and outhouses.** Today, all that remains is a the depot. It has been moved to the south and west of this site in St. Libory (Urban Grain, see photo)
- 8. **Florman Richmond Hotel.** (Still standing and today it is the Berne Volld home.)

- 9. **Frank Grayak and Louie Dressman Barber Shop.** (Status unknown)
- 10. **Richmond Hotel Laundry and St. Libory Concert Band Building.** (Still standing and on the former ~~Union~~ Farm northwest of St. Libory. (Still standing, see photo))
- 11. **Livery Stable.**
- 12. **O'Malloran's Creamery.**
- 13. **O'Malloran's General Store.** Also was owned by Frank Miller and John Degard, Lloyd and Anna O'Malloran owned it for many years. Upstairs was where the people of St. Libory voted during elections. It included a dance hall upstairs. People could also rent space upstairs for special occasions. (Demolished)
- 14. **Telephone Office.** (O'Malloran's Home) Lillian Windolf also operated the telephone switchboard out of this house. (Still standing)
- 15. **St. Libory State Bank.** This brick building later became Con Gubman's Tavern. (Demolished)
- 16. **Barber Shop and Pool Hall.** The

- pool hall was owned by Joe Turk. Henry Cordes ran the barber shop. Joe Gubman owned the bar. It was later rented to Union Grain for food storage. (Demolished)
- 17. **General Store.** Joe Gubman built this for Jim and Agnes Osgood. John Osgood purchased it and ran the store. Other owners were Frank Miller, and Harry and Lucille Vank. (Still standing, owned by Larry Gubman.)
- 18. **Garage and mechanical Implement.** Owners over the years were Theodore Cordes (first owner), Joe Gubman, Mel Mauser, Clyde and Larry Gubman. (Still standing, see photo)
- 19. **Leschinsky Store.** Ludwig Leschinsky had the store in 1904 in 1909 it was purchased by Hans. It was first operated as Kaufman Mercantile Co. J.J. Klinge and Leschinsky ran it as half a bar and half a store. (Demolished, see photo)
- 20. **Garage Shop.** (Still standing and is the current tavern)
- 21. **Walter Leschinsky Implement Shop.** Newcomer also ran this business first. The forge which is at the Historical Society's

- Backsmith Shop came from this shop.
- 22. **U.S. Post Office.** Owners Francis Holter, Gertrud Macke, Mik Nelson. (Still standing)
- 23. **Union Grain Storage Building.** Built in 1955-56. (Still standing)
- 24. **Francis Burke Garage.** (Still standing)
- 25. **Joe Turk Gas Station.** (Still standing and at the former home of Lizzie Sidel. Its original location was #24)
- 26. **Current location of the Union Pacific Depot.** (Still standing, see photo)
- 27. **Elsie Hummel's Home.** Another location for the St. Libory switchboard. (Still standing)
- 28. **St. Libory Lumberyard.** Other owners: Mel Alden and W.W. Hartman. Other names of this business: Hartman Lumber, Spitz-Smith Lumber. (Still standing)
- 29. **St. Libory firehouse.**
- 30. **Joe Sauercher's Blacksmith Shop.**
- 31. **Scharfer/East Pool Hall.**

# On the ri

A look back on the past 6 months and how the Howard County Historical Society



Historical Society announces plan to buy Union Pacific depot. Depot is the subject of articles in the *Omaha World-Herald*, *Grand Island Independent*, and *St. Paul Phonograph-Herald*.

Nebraska Life Magazine does story on Baseball Museum.



Paplin exhibit opens at the Historical Village.



Andy Mostek gets Bartle's sign hung. Society pays tribute to Bartle family with vintage sign placed on General Store.

Bill Sack and Mike Markovicka move historic Cotesfield W.P.A. outhouse to Village.



NTV, KOLN 10/11, *Omaha World-Herald*, *Grand Island Independent*, *Nebraska Life*, and *St. Paul Phonograph-Herald* do stories on the Post Office.



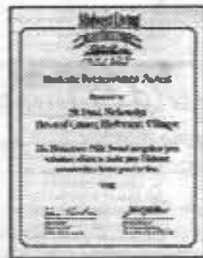
## May



Rodenick Burkhardt/Adam Christensen and Co. complete brick walkway to Village. F.F.A., community volunteers, businesses and City lead support.

Dr. Levitov and Nebraska Humanities Council present program entitled "Nebraska Mystery Writers."

## June



Howard County Historical Society receives preservation award for the Cotesfield Post Office from *Midwest Living*.

Farwell Lutheran Church painting is completed by Patty and Nick Sok.

City of St. Paul installs three on-site water hydrants to Village.

Gary and Bonnie Clayton, along with the help of the City of St. Paul, Howard-Greeley R.P.F.D., Jorgensen Electric S.E. Smith and Sons, and other family and friends, install three street lamps.



## July



Sonderup Trust S.P.H.S. class of 1957, and Scheer family light up Village as the power is turned on for the first time.

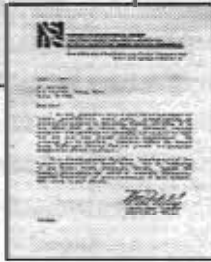
Elsternier family spruces up the Village with a tree and 12 geranium plants.



# Light track!

Society is making Howard County and St. Paul a better place to live.

Office  
ns to over  
visitors in its  
ut  
kend.  
y sign:n  
k is needed

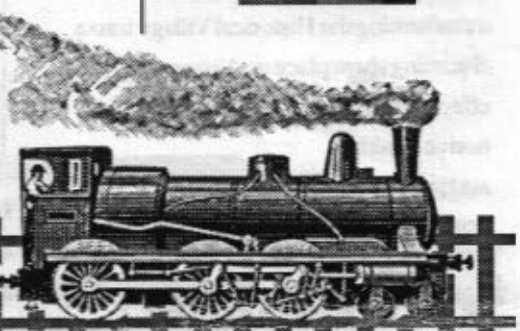
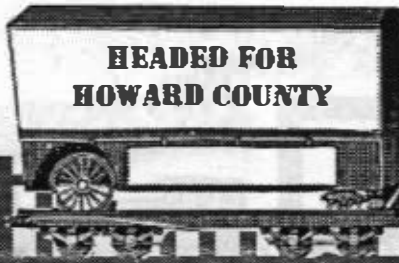


Preservation efforts  
for Post Office and  
Depot applauded by  
State and National  
officials

Over 100 people share a day of history at the Farwell Church's 100th anniversary celebration. H.E. Elstermier and Shirley Johnson provide history. Edna Petersen and Lewis and Irene Klanecky create an exhibit. The generosity of Henry and Doris Rasmussen is remembered.



Jean Potts exhibit is completed. Potts becomes the first woman to be honored with an exhibit by the Historical Society.



## August

HCIS hosts Tower  
Loup Muzzleloaders.



Tom Allan from the  
Omaha World Herald  
does story on the  
Farwell Church's 100th  
Anniversary.

Veteran's group  
continues  
research on  
records; starts  
research on Civil  
War Vet.



## September

# 259

Membership  
reaches an  
all-time high  
of 259.

Over \$700 is  
raised on Sawyer  
Brown raffle for  
the Depot.

Society enhances col-  
lections with many  
donations of artifacts  
including the original  
Sts. Peter and Paul  
Catholic Church's  
baptismal font.

## October



Alice Bartle heads up  
group which  
volunteers their  
summer afternoons  
by tending the  
Village and baking  
treats for over 1,500  
visitors and guests.

Foundation work  
begins on depot.

le is the  
use the  
placed  
e stone

Howard-Greeley  
R.P.P.D. and Andy  
Mostek help Roderick  
Burkhardt install  
carriage stone donated  
by Dr. Maury and  
Maedean Mathews.

Sooner or later,  
we'll get there;  
and hopefully it  
will be sooner.

By President Marion Bahensky

In 1998, many of our dreams are coming true. Other people may have dreams of winning the lottery, losing 30 pounds, or similar, but my dreams very often have to do with transforming the Historical Village into a charming showplace and improving the effectiveness, economic health, and public support of the

research and inventory is not only an impressive Ron Sack exhibit but is inspiring some scholarly research and new-found respect for this native daughter. We have a very effective Board, and some wonderfully talented, hardworking, and dedicated volunteers.

Moving, repairing and restoring the Union Pacific Depot from Shelton will be the biggest task we have ever set ourselves, but we are convinced that this is the most appropriate and attractive way to complete our Historical Village. We love the idea of having a building so similar and attractive to



some repairs that have been needed for many years. The Gruber House roof and basement moisture are longstanding problems, as is the rotten wood in the school bell-fry. We have to buy the depot now since it is the only one suitable available. It will cost much less than a new building which would be a jarring note on our little "Main Street."

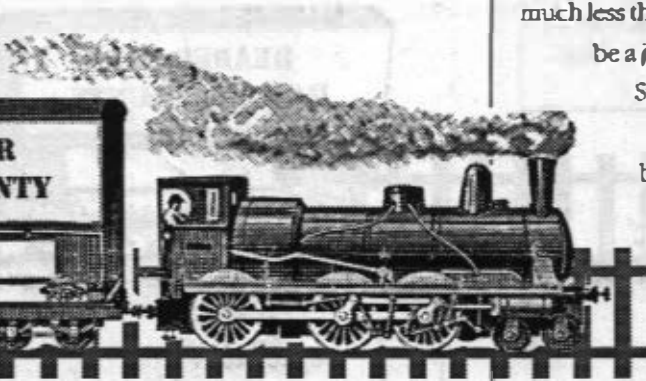
Since I am co-signer on our bank loan of possibly \$25,000, I have to believe that we can handle all the moving, repairs, and debt. Any and all help you can give us will benefit not just the Society but all of

Howard County and the many descendants of original settlers who visit the Historical Village in increasing numbers, year round, and from many states. Please help us preserve your history.

Society: This year we went along way toward achieving both of these goals.

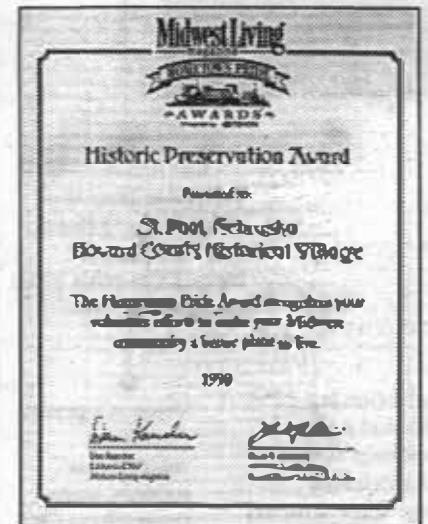
The appearance of the Historical Village has taken a tremendous leap forward. The brick walk, lampposts, post office, and trim on the other buildings at last give an idea for our vision for the future. We have done a lot of maintenance on the old buildings that should help them last another hundred years. We have some very professional exhibits and are raising our standards all the time. A photo inventory is nearly completed. We have over one million bytes on our computer records.

We have presented some very interesting and attractive programs. The Centennial Celebration of the Farwell Lutheran Church was heartwarming and gave a real meaning to our preservation efforts. The Jean Post



St. Paul's depot. The size, original yellow color, and design of the depot are very appealing. And last, we can complete the overall design for the grounds.

As you have heard, we are raising your dues. We believe that this increase is deserved because we are offering so much more for our members and our community, and improving our quality. We are tackling





## Dannebrog group gets national endorsement.

People do make a difference. Each of our communities in Howard County possess qualities which make it unique. Dannebrog is no exception. Over the past 10 years, this little village has transformed itself into Nebraska's Danish Capital. Progressive and caring people made this happen.

Dannebrog and Howard County are based on history. Rich history. No other county in the state can lay claim to features such as 11 Danish Lutheran Churches, one incredible folk school, and thousands of Danish immigrants. Dannebrog is a big part of this story.

Recently, one key building on Dannebrog's main street is fighting for its life: City Hall. City Hall supporters in favor of saving this building have a solid case — much of which is outlined in the following paragraphs. Whether you agree with this group or not, you have to admire their determination. People, such as this group, sometimes have to take the unpopular and uncomfortable stand for promoting something they believe in. And because they take a stand, Dannebrog and our county are richer for it.

Robert Nieweg, Program Associate for the National Trust For Historic Preservation sent a letter of support. In this letter he states many key reasons for the building to be preserved:

"Although we have not yet visited Dannebrog, we have reviewed information provided by the Nebraska State Preservation Office, Nebraska Preservation Network, and — most importantly — by Dannebrog citizens interested in saving City Hall. It is evident that the historic City Hall is a central element in Dannebrog's traditional village center and an important component of the Village's municipal and social history. According to the Howard County Historical Society, City Hall is part of what makes Dannebrog unique, and a part of what brings busloads of tourists to enjoy Dannebrog's cultural

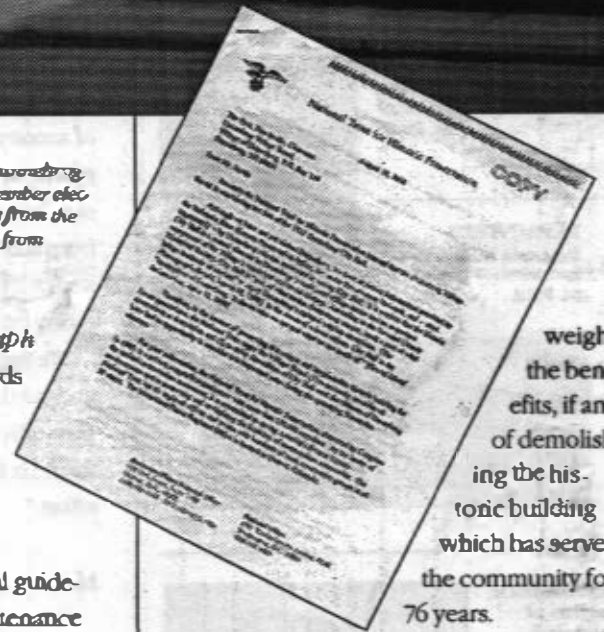


Photographed above is the City Hall in Dannebrog. Its fate will be decided by voters in a November election. To the right is a letter of support sent from the National Trust For Historic Preservation from Washington, D.C.

tourism attractions. (*The Photograph Herald*, March 18, 1998) In the words of a local citizen, City Hall is the 'center piece of Dannebrog. It shows who we are and what we are made of' (*Grand Island Independent*, April 12, 1998)•

The letter goes on to give several guidelines on the building's safety, maintenance and operation. Nieweg concludes by saying, "In the National Trust's view, the safe condition of the building, the strong public interest in saving City Hall, and the private offer to adopt the historic structure, all argue persuasively for preservation of City Hall.

Preservationists are sometimes accused of opposing demolition of any and all old buildings. In fact, few, if any preservationists have that attitude. Instead, most preservationists believe that demolition should not be approved until enough is known to judge whether what is being gained is greater than what is being lost. In the National Trust's view, and the 92 people electors who have signed the initiative petition, the benefits of adapting the historic City Hall for a new use that serves the community would far out-



weigh the benefits, if any, of demolishing the historic building which has served the community for 76 years.

Across the country, historic buildings have been adopted by local citizens and groups and adapted by them for new uses that benefit their communities. The public concern voiced by the residents regarding the fate of Dannebrog's City Hall indicates that Village residents — like the citizens of Dannebrog in 1922 who donated 160 days of labor to build City Hall — are ready to play an important role in preserving their historic City Hall. On behalf of the National Trust For Historic Preservation, I urge the Village Board to do its upmost to preserve the City Hall. (Signature) Robert Nieweg"

Letter shown above courtesy of Carl Christensen, Dannebrog

## Transitions.

St. Paul's Howard Avenue and portions of rural Howard County have never looked better. Here's a look at preservation in action over the past six months.



**REPAINTED:**  
Brehm Drug  
Building  
St. Paul

**REPAINTED:**  
Ghadwick Building  
St. Paul Hardware  
St. Paul



**REPAINTED:**  
Svoboda Building  
Svoboda's Pharmacy  
St. Paul



**REPAINTED:**  
Knights of  
Columbus  
Building  
Svoboda's Beauty  
Shop,  
Frederick's  
and the  
former  
Vanderhe  
Services  
offices.



**SAVED:**  
Paplin  
Rectory at  
Paplin

One of Howard County's largest examples of an "Arts and Crafts" style bungalow. Unfortunately it was not wanted on its original location, but it was saved and moved to a very picturesque location in Howard County along the Middle Loup River near Dannebrog. Well Done!

## Maxine and Joe Coufal say "Thank you."

Maxine and Joe Coufal wish to extend a "BIG" thank you to everyone who helped make it possible for the Cotesfield Post Office building to become part of the Howard County Historical Village.

Project coordinators Ron Sack and Marion Bahensky stopped Joe from "putting a match" to the building and on August 9, 1997, the post office had a new address: St. Paul, NE 68873.

Thanks to everyone who gave donations of money, hours of labor, food for workers, materials for restoration, equipment for moving, postal items (many of which are from the original post office), and best of all, for attending the Grand Opening ceremony on July 11, 1998.

We were very honored to raise the flag and cut the ribbon to officially open the post office for the public to view. A quote from Liz King, "It was a true community effort."

Maxine and Joe Coufal

## Editor's note:

The Cotesfield Post Office remains one of our better documented buildings. Recently, Maxine and Joe Coufal acquired papers from the U.S. Postal Department from Washington D.C. These papers chart the growth of the post office, plot all locations of the post office, and list all of the postmasters.

These papers will be kept on file in the Historical Society's archives, and a duplicate set will be made available for public viewing at the post office.

## historically speaking

### PUBLISHER:

Howard County Historical Society

Including the towns and settlements of  
Cotesfield, Cotesfield, Cotesfield,  
Dannebrog, Elba, Farwell, Paplin,  
St. Libory, St. Paul, and Vesper.

### EDITOR:

Ron W. Sack

### CIRCULATION:

300+

### MAILING ADDRESS:

P.O. Box 304, St. Paul, NE 68873

### WEBSITE ADDRESS:

<http://162.127.101/~spndoc/HCS.html>

### MEMBERSHIP:

\$10 per person

Marion Sprague, membership chair

844 20th Ave., St. Paul, Nebraska, 68873-3518

### 1998 BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Marion Bahensky

Hendrick Burkhardt

Janet Hurst

Elizabeth King

Terry King

Diana Markvick

Ben Sack

Dave Sprague

Marion Sprague

Galea Trimbach

### OFFICERS:

President: Marion Bahensky

Vice President: Dave Sprague

Secretary: Lorena McDowell

Treasurer: Janet Fernon

Your support is important to us.  
The HCS is a non-profit organization.

## Need help with Depot.

If you are interested in donating time, money or services to help restore a beautiful Union Pacific Depot, please contact Marion Bahensky at 308-754-4454.

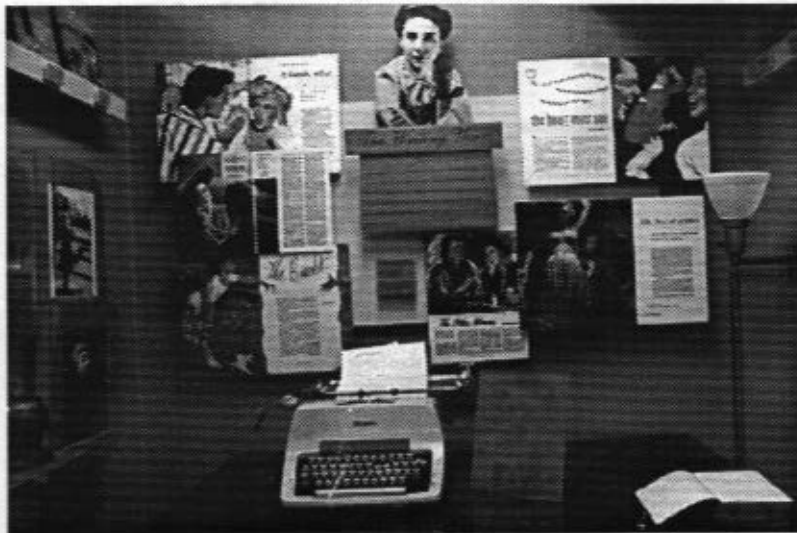
## Jean Potts exhibit dedication set for Sunday, October 18.

Sunday, October 18 at 1:30 p.m. marks the date the Howard County Historical Society will dedicate a new exhibit honoring the internationally acclaimed mystery writer Jean Potts.

Potts, in her 80s and living in New York City, has published 15 novels and nearly 40 stories. Over one year in planning, preparation, interviewing, and fundraising went into this exhibit. It is also the first time the Historical Society is honoring a woman with an exhibit.

"I admire what the Howard County Historical Society is doing in honoring Jean Potts," stated Dr. Betty Levitov, Professor of Literature at Doane College. "Jean Potts never received much attention in St. Paul, or Nebraska for that matter. Then, in steps the Historical Society and now she is remembered properly," added Levitov. "This exhibit and research are national-caliber and deserving of the Nebraska Humanities Council's praise," concluded Levitov. "Without the vision of this group, a valuable piece of history might have been lost forever."

The exhibit dedication coincides with the Gruber Grandstand Gala. Live music and refreshments will be provided for everyone.



Included in the exhibit are Ms. Potts' writing desk, typewriter, pencil sharpener, floor lamp, framed Picasso print, and all of her 15 novels. Also included are a collection of her thirty-seven short stories, family photographs, awards and contracts. The Jean Potts Archives covers over 400 items.



The Historical Society has also received notice of an unpublished 300-page manuscript of Potts'. Friends of Potts' will be bringing the original manuscript back to St. Paul to be housed in the archives. This manuscript deals with the life of a rural Nebraska schoolteacher in a small town. Many of Potts' family and friends are included in this story.



Cokesfield Post Office in the 1940s. L to R: Stanley Tucker, Anna Soudet, Herb Allvillsten and Paul Markussen.

## New artifacts.

It has been a busy summer for Marion Bakensky. Marion has the honor of recording all of our newly donated artifacts. Here is a look at a few of the more interesting artifacts the Historical Society received in the past three months:

**Blacksmith/Hardware:**  
Joyce Strong - two hooks, one a beautifully-detailed decorative hook and the other was made by a blacksmith. Both came from her family's Howard County farm.

**Government:**  
Elsie Leschinsky - early 1900 photograph of Nebraska State Senators (pictured is Senator J.H. Buhrman of St. Libory). Photograph of the Cokesfield Post Office (shown at left) circa 1940s.

Joe and Maxine Coufal - original post office boxes, standing counter, and cash box used in the Cokesfield Post Office circa 1920.

**Domestic:**  
Leona Jepson Day and Janice Jepson Oliver - wedding dress, slip, and veil worn by their mother, Josie Larsen, who married Tony

Jepson in 1911  
**Photography:**  
Don and Mary Lou Christensen - 1918 St. Paul main street and 1914 Middle Loup River Bridge photos.

**Religion:**  
Pauline Sack estate - original baptismal font from Sts. Peter and Paul's Catholic Church (made in 1908 by the Dapravo Company from Italy and New York.)

Ethel Madsen - hymnal used in the Farwell Lutheran Church.

Thanks for preserving our history!

# Membership dues increase for 1999.

By Mena and Dave Sprague

Ten years ago, the dues for the Historical Society membership were \$2.50 per year. We doubled them to \$5 in 1991. Now we are again increasing them – to \$10 per person. Our expenses are greater because we have raised our standards. We are working towards more professional care of our material, we are doing better exhibits, and we are creating a showplace of the Historical Village. We have added one new building (a postoffice) and will add another (a depot) in October.

The Society made its first building purchase with the Gruber House in 1992. The building

now houses a very fine domestic exhibit on the main floor, and the Baseball Museum, Jean Potts exhibit, and records of Howard County Veterans (with some memorabilia) on the lower level. We are adding an excellent photo collection. Because the Gruber House is climate controlled, we can finally take proper care of most of the paper artifacts we have. The depot will also be suitable for display and storage of fragile materials.

Our very old buildings require a lot of maintenance. We have painted three of them this year, but two others need paint badly. Belfry leaks are delaying our plan to restore the school to a schoolhouse. Buildings always require constant attention, even new ones. Imagine your homeowner problems multiplied by six. And then consider we are attempting to get a master plan for the grounds, so that they will be attractive and maintainable. Are you convinced that we will put your extra \$5 to good use?

We borrowed money to buy the Gruber House, which cost \$12,000. The depot is costing \$10,000 and will cost at least \$15,000 to move from Shelton to here. Tack on another \$5,000 for the foundation, but what kind of a building can you begin to build for \$30,000? We saw some of the old beams from St. Paul's Union Pacific Depot at Placke's melon stand. They were built to last. We expect to move the depot to St. Paul in October – the first date the mover could give us. We are planning one fundraiser after another to pay off the money we will have to borrow to pay for the move and foundation. Meanwhile, consider that most Historical Societies charge \$15-25 for an annual dues. We are still a bargain.

Membership dues are \$10 per person and are due now for the 1999 year. Please send them to me (Mena Sprague) at the address listed inside this newsletter. Your support means a great deal to us! Thank you.



HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 304  
ST. PAUL, NEBRASKA 68873

Non-profit organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Permit No. 23  
ST. PAUL, NE 68873