
historically speaking

*A quarterly newsletter from THE HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, 1021 Sixth Street, St. Paul NE 68873
Spring, 2002*

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As you can see, changes have come to our newsletter. There may yet be more changes, since our past computer/designers are moving on to better things. This issue is being cobbled together in a hurry by Marion Bahensky and Kim Turpitt. We hope that another editor/designer will turn up for succeeding issues, but we want to get this issue out before the next one is due. Thank you for your patience.

- Included in this issue are two features on which we need your help. The outside page is backed by a ballot for changes in our Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws. Federal experts, who are lending us the money to complete the depot restoration, examined our Articles and By-Laws, which caused us to look up Nebraska statutes. We then found that these changes, approved at various times by the Directors, needed to be approved by the members. We hope that you will approve them, and that you will return the ballot as quickly as possible.
- Two center pages are a first edition of a proposed visitors' guide to the Historical Village. Please read, correct any errors you find, and let us hear any suggestions you may have for improvement. This will also be used by hosts in the Village buildings, so we need it to be accurate. Thanks for your help.
- Also, we wish to call attention to the genealogy resources put on the web by some heroic workers who have done tremendous work in making many Howard County records available effortlessly to genealogy students anywhere in the world. Lenise Cook and her son, James, are responsible for the "roots" page. Several others have worked and continue to work on the cemetery pages. The Historical Society presently has no facilities for helping genealogists, although we know we should. We now have so many other projects to complete that we can't foresee such service very soon, but we will put it on our "wish list." For now, take a look at Page 2 to see the information you can get via the internet. Many of you already know this, but some of you may decide that now is the time to stop being scared of the computer and get on the web. Good luck!

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*Pats on the Back from the President:*

Many thanks to all our donors of artifacts, cash, and encouragement. We are coming to the end of a period of rapid expansion and now it's time to regroup and stabilize our finances and our plans. We have gone from 30 to 300 members in the last few years. We never had to file an income tax return until the last three years. (If income is more than \$25,000 then non-profits have to file.) We had a row of four derelict-looking buildings in the early 90s; now we have a complete block of quite elegant ones. Almost every exhibit has been painted, cleaned, polished, or re-interpreted. We had a sporadic four-page newsletter, which became larger, better, and bolder. At the beginning of this last decade we couldn't even consider publishing a county history, even with the "help" of a professional, profit-making publisher. Now we have published a 540-page, beautiful, professionally designed, award-winning book.

It's hard to believe that we actually had income of over \$25,000. The first year it came from a borrowed \$20,000 needed to move the depot in. After that, it came from you, our friends and fellow history-lovers. This year we will be receiving the \$125,000 grant money for restoration of the depot. By dint of enormous sacrifices on the part of the directors and heroic donations of skill and hours of hard work, we have pinched every penny to get maximum results.

We're not done yet, but then caring people always want to improve their surroundings. Our opening exhibits in the depot will not be as professional as we would like. Our grounds are not yet green and tidy. The shade-giving trees on the west are not yet mature enough to do their job, but they are looking more like real trees every day. We're very proud of our accomplishments. We're also proud that we have friends like you to help. ***MANY THANKS!***

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## http. & www.

By Marion Bahensky

I know there are people out there like me who resisted all this "high tech" stuff, but I finally succumbed to the wonder and ease of email for instant communication. I'm still no web "browser," but I am constantly forced to increase my use of the web for information that I could not get otherwise. A month ago I would not have dreamed that I could get a weather report in Paris instantly, or make a hotel reservation in France so easily. Day by day I learn more and now I am resolved to take advantage of all the genealogical and historical information immediately available from my basement office. Today (April 18) a gentleman from California who was at the Howard County courthouse told me how our "rootsweb" aided his research and also how he was collaborating with Laura Anderson in New Hampshire, via the internet, in their mutual research on Howard County families. The world gets smaller all the time.

Though the "rootsweb" page and its "cemetery" index have their own web addresses, it is possible to access this information through the Historical Society webpage. [See front cover for address.] Here are some of the things you can look up on Lenise and James Cook's webpages:

*Query Page* - Submit a query for your Howard Co. connections and view those posted by others with County interests.

*Surname Page* - Submit and view surnames being researched in Howard County, and contact others researching them.

*Howard Co. Resources and Lookup Volunteers* - Books & records and people willing to help find your ancestors.

*Marriage Indexes* - Soundexed indexes of marriage records - Book 1 (July 1872-Jan. 1885); Book 2 (Aug. 1884-Oct.

1892); Book 3 (Nov. 1892-Jan. 1900); Book 4 (July 1900-June 1914). Write to the County Clerk with indicated page numbers and they can send you the information you want.

Some *biographies* of Nebraska citizens.

*Draft registration lists from WWI.*

*Nebraska State Journal "Immigration Issue" - 5 June 1887 - St. Paul article*

*Nebraska State Gazeteer, Business Directory and Farmers List for 1890-91* (J.M. Wolfe & Co., Publishers, 1890)

*Boelus High School, Classes of 1922-25*

*Who Was Who in Howard County in 1940*

*Howard County Road Map*

*Howard County Cemeteries.* Maps and pictures and some lists of burials. (This is in progress.)

*Howard County Townships.* Maps of past and present townships.

*Howard County features* - Towns, cemeteries, churches, schools, etc. from Geographic Names Site.

**and more.... Thanks to the hard work of many volunteers, who can use your help, too.**

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## Depot Report

Bragging about learning to use email and the internet is all very fine, but current would-be editors still have to learn how to use the computer to put pictures in our newsletter. Therefore, we can only tell you about depot progress. Interior walls have been restored to the original blueprint, insulation added, and wainscoting repaired. Electricity has been added, as well as water. Interior paint comes next. As of April 18, 2002, the fascia and soffits have been repaired and are waiting for paint. Rain gutters will be added soon. Depot owners over the years chopped holes in the floor for pipes and electricity. They looked bad, but an inspection today showed that repairs are neat and adequate. Water was piped into the depot this week. Sewer pipes leading up to Sixth Street are being laid. A heat pump is in place, but duct work is not. Plumbing is yet to be added in the handicapped-accessible restroom. 400 yards of dirt will be dug and hauled in and compacted to form a door-level platform, to be completed with paving bricks from St. Paul's Indian Street. [We are historic to the end -- the platform dirt is coming from the old Burlington railroad berm.] Wells have to be dug yet for the geothermal heat pump. Storm windows have to be added. Wonder of wonders, we will soon have doors that work.

We had to hold off on ceiling fans, the telegrapher's desk, and picture rail for lack of funds, and we are borrowing money to get entrance steps and sidewalks on the north and west sides, as well as pay off the moving loan and pay the contractor. It will be a while yet before we have exhibits of the quality we would like. The weeds which cover most of our landscape are discouraging, but we have come a long way and believe that we have added a charming asset to St. Paul and Howard County. We could not have done it without you! Again, THANKS!

**Welcome to the Howard County Historical Village...** This little collection of pioneer-era buildings contains authentic buildings from early days in Nebraska. It consists of seven buildings on Sixth Street (between Indian & Jay Streets) and a merchant's house at 1005 Sixth Street, (NW of the main site). Only the depot was built outside Howard County. Four of the wooden buildings on the Village site were located at Indian and Fifth Streets from 1965-1991. Untreatable termites then caused the church, school, store, and shop to be moved to their present location. The post office, coalshed, and depot were added from 1997-2001. In 2002, we are completing the site and working on landscaping, as well as continually improving the exhibits. A steel-sided building at Indian and Fifth Streets contains antique agricultural equipment, but is temporarily closed. Museum buildings are sponsored and maintained by the Howard County Historical Society.

**The Farwell Danish Lutheran Church** reflects the rich Danish heritage in Howard County. At one time there were 12 Danish Lutheran churches in Howard County. This church was built in 1898 and moved to the Historical Village in 1967, after the congregation was disbanded in 1963. The original carpenter was Carl W. F. Kyhn. The church was purchased by Henry Rasmussen, popular auctioneer; public donations financed the move. The church originally had a basement, but this site proved too wet for that. The pews presently in the church came from the South Logan church; the altar chairs came from a Grand Island Lutheran church. The organ in the back came from the Nysted Lutheran church. The display counter in the lobby was donated by the Fairdale Methodist church. Flowers on the altar were donated in memory of Einar & Marie Rasmussen. A substantial supply of donated Bibles is stored in the pulpit. Otherwise, this church is exactly as it was when last used. The use of "wainscoting," or "beadboard" is a common feature of early Danish Lutheran churches. The Danes were known for their fine woodwork. A photo portrait of Pastor Christen Jeppesen is evidence of the love and respect early parishioners had for this pastor who served from 1943-1965.

The **St. Libory District 41 School** came from a German settlement seven miles south of St. Paul. The school was closed in 1964 and purchased in 1965 by the City of St. Paul, which established the Historical Village in park space. The school was the first museum building and, from 1965-2002, was used to display all manner of historic artifacts. In 2001, volunteers moved out everything not relating to a one-room school, cleaned and painted the walls and, in 2002, are still in process of restoring country-school necessities. This building is a monument to all of the one-room schools, of which there were once 86 in 24-mile square Howard County. County school district #1 was formed in 1872; the last country school, at Bunker Hill, was closed in 1993. Though alumni of country schools grow fewer, bonds are extraordinarily strong among them. Outdoor play, Christmas programs, and parent parties are some of the most cherished memories. [See *Reminiscences* notebook in bookcase.] The schoolteacher, often little older than the children, was required to keep the school clean and come early to start the heating stove. She had to maintain order and teach children sometimes much bigger than herself, in several grades. Each class was called to the front to recite its lessons. Children carried a tin-pail lunch and walked to school, but laws required that no child should walk more than three miles. Water came from an outside pump. One outdoor toilet served all. .... An exhibit on the **St. Paul Business College** is in progress on the west wall of the main room.

**Bartle's Store** (bearing this sign, though the original Bartle's was much bigger) stood on the northwest end of Main Street just east of the old City/Fire Hall. In early days of the county, this building was Amsler's Feed Store. It later became Callahan's Cream Station, and finally Pat Kelly's tavern. It was donated to the Historical Society by the Zlomke family in 1969. Items donated by Bartle's, and many county families, present a poignant display of early settlers' food and clothing needs, stove/lamp supplies, and reminders of illness and early deaths of children.

The **Blacksmith Shop** originally belonged to an early (1871) settler, Waldo Little, but was purchased for the Village in 1970 and moved from Cushing. The building began as a garage and was elongated by six feet after it was moved to the Village. Equipment from several noted blacksmiths in Elba, St. Libory, and Cushing (Kyhn, Schwenk, Fredricksen) is on display. Henry Fredricksen donated the homemade trip-hammer and Kenneth Simpson donated the very old set of wooden tools. The authentic forge was built by Jim Peirce [sic] and Dave Sprague in 1996 and is used regularly by blacksmith/member Dave Sprague. Notice the license-plate collection of Vigo Kyhn and the barbed wire saved and mounted by Thorvald Jacobsen. Barbed wire was most important to the early settlers, since there was neither rock for walls nor wood for fences to protect their fields and gardens from being overrun by the herds of cattle driven up to graze on the prairie grasses. The reason for the many types of barbed wire is that farmers made their own before manufacturing companies began marketing it. The Village *gates* at the south end of the brick walk were built by Peirce & Sprague from an original design.

The **Cotesfield Post Office** has been restored as an authentic working post office. Postal artifacts from a variety of county post offices are on display, including an extensive collection from the Elba post office. This building was built in 1920, closed in 1994, and moved to the Historical Village in 1997.

The Union Pacific **Depot Transportation Museum** was built and used on the main line in Gibbon in 1908, sold and moved to Shelton in 1975, where it was remodeled and used as an office. It was purchased by the Howard County Historical Society and moved to St. Paul in December, 1998. Volunteers have painted its exterior, replaced its roof with an authentic replica, at a cost of \$25,000, removed all interior plaster and most laths, and reglazed all windows. A Transportation Enhancement grant of \$125,000 from the Dept. of Roads and a \$53,000 loan from Rural Development, USDA, have paid for restoration of the interior to its original blueprint, completed the repair of the exterior, and built the platform and ADA entrance. Exhibits are in progress in the summer of 2002.

The **Gruber House**, at 1005 Sixth Street, just up the hill from the depot, is a fine example of everyday life at the end of an age of grace and style. Built in 1908, the home reflects the charm of the Victorian era, with furnishings and decor reminiscent of the early 1900s. The house was built by St. Paul entrepreneur Frank Gruber, a Bohemian immigrant. It is built from bricks manufactured at his brick factory. Mr. Gruber also operated a hotel, bakery, and restaurant. This house "made the newspaper" when it was built, but it did not compare to St. Paul's large elegant homes, now nearly all gone, on St. Paul's west side. The Historical Society purchased the house in 1992. After renovation was completed in 1996, it provided a perfect backdrop to display some of Howard County's finest treasures -- beautiful furniture, glassware, china, clothing, toys, and musical instruments. One can almost hear the organ playing and smell fresh-baked bread.

The lower level of the **Gruber House** is home to exhibits on *Howard County Veterans*, *Native Americans*, and *Jean Potts* (an award-winning St. Paul author). Artifacts from many of St. Paul's vanished churches are on display in the *Religious Exhibit*. The *Veterans' Museum* has records, uniforms, and memorabilia from Howard County veterans and their wars. Civil War hero Lee Herron's Congressional Medal of Honor is often on display. The *Native American* exhibit displays beadwork, arrowheads, potsherds, and a blanket from Pawnee and Sioux Indians. [Local archeological digs have produced many artifacts; local artists are still using clay from the same source as the Pawnees.] *Jean Potts* (1910-1999), whose family settled in Howard County in 1873, moved to New York City in her twenties and produced fourteen mystery novels, which were published in seven languages. The *Religious Exhibit* includes artifacts from many Howard County churches, but its most beautiful items come from St. Paul's *SS Peter and Paul Catholic church* (1911-1990), especially the *Stations of the Cross*, donated by the Shaughnessy family.

The **WPA outhouse** of the Cotesfield post office was moved to the backyard of the Gruber House in 2002.

The **Union Pacific coalshed/outdoor toilet** was an adjunct to the second St. Paul Union Pacific depot. It was probably sold to an early settler, C.V. Svoboda, about 1916 and moved to his home at the west end of Main Street, where it stood until 2001 when it was donated to the Society by Marian Odabasi. It is used for storage and will not be restored. The west end was a coalshed; the east end held separate toilets for men and women. Repair & paint (to match the depot) will be done as soon as possible.

An **Agricultural Building**, just down the hill on Indian Street, has been closed during restoration of the other buildings. It will be reopened just as soon as it is possible to reorganize the display space. All manner of antique agricultural equipment will be available for viewing. This building, erected in 1974, was financed with donated funds remaining after the 1967 centennial celebration.

Historical Village buildings and grounds are maintained by volunteers, with donations from the public and a \$1/year tax levy from each citizen of Howard County. We hope you will enjoy your visit and come again. You are most welcome to join the Howard County Historical Society. We try to preserve the history of the County in a manner that will educate and inspire interested individuals, to collect and preserve artifacts related to our settlement: social, ethnic, religious, economic, military service, and farming.

A 540-page County history, *Entering Howard County*, can be purchased for \$79.50, including tax, in the Depot. A cotton throw celebrating Howard County's 125th birthday is available also, at \$38.00, plus tax and shipping and handling. (5% state tax; 1% city tax) Membership in the Howard County Historical Society costs \$10 per person per year and offers a quarterly newsletter to all members.

1021 Sixth Street, St. Paul, NE 68873      email: [marion@cornhusker.net](mailto:marion@cornhusker.net)  
For Howard Co. genealogical information, go to Historical Society webpage : [www.cornhusker.net/~mine/hchs.htm](http://www.cornhusker.net/~mine/hchs.htm)

To our members:

April, 2002

Our Articles and By-Laws have been scrutinized by the professionals of Rural Development, US Dept. of Agriculture and they have recommended some improvements in our housekeeping. Please vote yes or no on the following proposed changes and return the ballot in the enclosed self-addressed envelope as soon as possible. Please sign your ballot, so we don't count votes of non-members. These changes have already approved by the Board of Directors but we need your ratification.

**1. AMEND Articles of Incorporation, Article X:**

The general management and control of the affairs and the business of the Corporation shall be vested in and conducted by a Board of Directors which shall consist of not less than five (5) nor more than ten (10) Directors.

Change underscored phrase to: **not less than ten (10) Directors.**  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**2. AMEND By-Laws, Article V: Board of Directors, Section 2, Qualifications, Number, and Tenure:**

Directors shall be participating members of the corporation. The number of Directors on the Board can range from five to ten.  
Change underscored phrase to: The number of Directors on the Board can range from **ten (10) to twenty (20).**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

The Directors named in the Articles of Incorporation shall hold office until immediately following the annual election of Directors to be held in January each year. Directors shall continue to hold office until the conclusion of the annual meeting electing the new officers.

3. Change to: **Directors' terms shall be for two (2) years. The terms of office shall be staggered so that one half (1/2) of the Directors will be elected each year. The Directors' terms of office will begin in January and be for two years, with no limit on the number of terms a Director may serve**  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

4. Add: The officers of the Society and its Board of Directors shall be elected by a majority of votes cast by a ballot mailed to all members in December for return in January. Ballots will be returned in a sealed envelope addressed to the County Clerk and counted by a Committee of non-Directors and non-officers. Ballots postmarked later than ten days before the annual meeting will not be counted. Only ballots verified from a membership list will be counted. The counting committee will report to the Board of Directors in writing and the results announced at the annual meeting. Newly elected officers and Directors will take office at the end of the Annual meeting.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

5. **Article V, Board of Directors, Section 9: Vacancies:** Any vacancy occurring in the Board of Directors and any directorship to be filled by reason of an increase in the number of Directors shall be filled by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. A Director elected to fill a vacancy shall be elected to serve for the balance of the unexpired term of his or her predecessor in office and shall not count toward their own term limits as set forth in these by-laws. Delete underscored phrase: *There are no term limits.*

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

6. Add Section, 10. **Removal of Directors: If a Director is absent without notice for three consecutive meetings, he or she may be asked to resign as a Director if a majority of the Board votes to ask for such resignation.**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

7. **Article VIII. Amendment to the By-Laws, Section 1.** These by-laws may be amended and the said corporation can be liquidated and final distribution of all assets can be made at any regular or adjourned meeting by a two-thirds vote of those voting, provided notice was given at the previous meeting. Or the Articles of Incorporation or ByLaws may be amended at a special meeting called for the purpose, with previous notice and a two-thirds vote in favor. All proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing. **Add: The Articles of Incorporation and the By-Laws cannot be amended by the Board of Directors unless the proposed amendment(s) do not relate to the number of Directors, the composition of the Board, the term of office of the Directors, or the method or way in which Directors are elected or selected. A 2/3 vote of the members voting or a majority of the voting power, whichever is less, is required to amend the Articles of Incorporation or the By-Laws if proposed amendment relates to Directors' numbers, terms of office, or election procedures.** This does not require a vote since it is taken from the Nebraska NonProfit Corporation Act, Article 19, Section 21-19,114. Past revisions of the By-Laws were made in ignorance of this law, so it should be stated in the By-Laws. Please return your ballot as quickly as possible. Thanks.!

HOWARD COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
1021 6th ST  
ST. PAUL, NE 68873

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

John/Abbe Bell 01  
2011 Elliot Circle  
Olympia, WA 98502

Non-profit organization  
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ST. PAUL, NE 68873

1021 Sixth Street  
St. Paul, NE 68873-1607

HOWARD COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**CHAUTAQUA** is coming back to St. Paul this summer after 80 years away!

The tent will go up on July 11 and there will be programs relating to the Lewis & Clark expedition every day and evening until July 16. "First-hand" accounts from Clark, York, Tecumseh, Sacagawea, and also "Dolley Madison" and "John Jacob Astor."

*Other interesting programs planned:*

- 4/28 2 P.M. ROGER WELSCH at the Library.
- 5/26 1-4 P.M. Celebrate annual re-opening of Historical Village..
- 6/2 2 P.M. WILLIAM KLOEFKORN, Nebraska's state poet at the Library.
- 6/9 2 P.M. St. Paul scholars, KEN & ELEANOR CHRISTENSEN w/slides of the L&C Trail & readings from Journals.
- 6/23 2 P.M. Prof. Gary Moulton, UNL, expert on the Lewis & Clark expedition and its visionary enchantment.
- 7/5-7 Grover Cleveland Alexander town-wide celebration. Family fun for all.
- 7/13/-14, 3-5 P.M. CHAUTAUQUA TOUR OF HOMES. Three turn-of-the-century homes & St. Paul's oldest church.
- 7/18-21 Howard County Fair. An ancient tradition continued.
- 9/2 2-5 P.M. Grand Opening of restored "Depot." Celebrate nearly completed transportation museum.
- 10/14 2 P.M. *Great American Train Rides, Vol. I.* 60 Min. video on historic, scenic train rides.
- 11/17 1-5 P.M. Eighth annual *Bake Sale* Main Street, St. Paul. Cakes & cookies sold for a good cause. Smiles free.
- 12/8 3-6 P.M. *Eighth Annual Holiday Tour of Homes* 3-6 P.M. \$10 (Advance tickets \$7.50)

All programs at St. Paul Public Library, 1301 Howard Ave., unless otherwise noted.  
*Howard County Historical Society, 1021 Sixth Street, St. Paul, NE* More info: 308-754-4454

Directors: \*Marion Bahensky, Alice Bartle, \*Carl Christensen, Donna Dobish, Janet Hruza, Carl Huebner, \*Jimmy Jacobsen, Gary Peterson, Marian Potts, Ron Sack, Dave Sprague, Mena Sprague, Kim Turpitt, \*Buzz Welch, Setha Zimbelman  
\*Officers