



The Window

Official Newsletter of the Brookings County Historical Society



You're a Grand Old Flag

A precious and historic, hand-sewn, 137-year-old American flag that has been missing for more than thirty years at the Brookings County Museum in Volga, has been found.

The 18 by 13 feet flag was hand-made in 1882 by Mrs. A. H. Kinyon, Mrs. Ben Roddle and Mrs. William Roddle in Wilton, MN. They later brought it to Bruce, Dakota Territory.

Even when folded in the triangular, military style fold, the flag is huge. Its triangular folded base is 44 inches and the equal sides are 30 inches.

The flag, with its carefully stitched 36 stars, was brought to Bruce by Mrs. Kinyon in 1884, five years before South Dakota became a state.

Each of the 36 stars is five and one-half inches from one star point to the point opposite. The stars are applied on a blue cloth by the process known as appliqué.



Continued inside

annual MEETING

Incumbent officers and board members of the Brookings County Historical Society/Brookings County Museum were re-elected at the board's annual meeting in the museum Oct. 12.

Phil Wagner of Brookings was re-elected president and Jerry Leslie of Volga vice-president. Bob Buchheim of Volga was re-elected to a one-year term as secretary and Darla Strande, Brookings, was re-elected to her second year as treasurer.

The three-year terms of six board members were also extended for another three-year period by unanimous vote. Re-elected were Marv Hope of Volga, Darla Strande of Brookings, Dorothy Husher of Volga, Phil Wagner of Brookings, Lyle Strande and Cindy Jacobson of Volga.

The board of directors have set winter work projects that include the continued refurbishing of the first floor of the James Hauxhurst house to as close to its 1884 condition as possible. Board members Floyd Havrevold and Larry Ust will head up the sub-committee for this project.

Marvin Hope will chair the subcommittee assigned to re-evaluate the placement of present and new displays in the Vintage Farm Equipment Building.

Darla Strande and Shirley Deethardt will review the placement of stand-alone museum items and display cases in the main museum in an effort to re-align the placement of various items in that building, and to recommend new items for display in the museum's inventory. Included in this effort is the hope to find a donor for a large custom-built case dedicated to the display of women's wear through the decades.

Grand Flag

Continued from front

The edge of each star is finely stitched with six stitches to the inch and an unusual double row of stitches.

Why the women applied just 36 stars on the flag is unknown. Nevada was the 36th state admitted in 1864, but by 1882 when they made the flag, Nebraska and Colorado had also been added to the union. Perhaps just 36 stars were used for artistic balance.

Except for a few rips and tears, the flag is in remarkably good condition, but too large and too fragile to be hung in the museum.

Bruce was founded in 1881 as the town of Lee. But in 1883 the name was changed to Bruce.

After the flag makers moved to Bruce, they intended that the heavy flag be flown only on special occasions. But on one especially windy special day in 1884, Mrs. Kinyon had the flag lowered.

She felt the rigorous Dakota wind would damage it, and she was probably right. From that day forward it has never again been flown on a flag pole.

It was carried in the Bruce Centennial parade in 1981 surrounded by and held by former Girls Staters, each holding a section of the flag as they marched.

It was later donated to the Brookings County Museum.

The old flag, which even when folded is nearly as big as a card table, was difficult for the museum to display, so until funds were available for a proper container, it was placed in storage.

The flag remained in storage over the years, the location of its niche forgotten as new board members were elected, and eventually it was considered misplaced, only to be located again this summer. ❀

Interactive TV Brings History to Life

Thanks to the technical and financial support of Brookings businesspersons Al Rogers and Ginger Thomson, the Brookings County Museum will soon have operational its long-awaited website and touch screen television.

The touch screen television combination will make it possible for visitors, by touching key words and icons displayed on the TV screen, to bring up information and photographs about the museum's many displays.

Visitors will also be able to view digital programs on historical subjects such as harnessing or plowing with horses or how to make rope or spin wool.

The arrival of Valley Fibercom's headquarters in Volga, and its underground wiring of the community, was another positive factor in moving the interactive TV idea.

Of course, the website will also be available to persons everywhere having an interest in the history of Brookings County and the museum.

While field trips are always encouraged by the museum, area educators will also be able to virtually bring the museum into their classroom with the new

interactive website. Ms. Thomson, owner of Website Spice in Brookings, is creating the programming.

Al Rogers assisted the museum in working through the technical aspects of such an undertaking, according to Phil Wagner, museum president. Rogers teamed with museum board member Chuck Cecil in determining needs and areas of visitor interest.

The interactive TV will have links to various sources of historic information that can be easily requested by anyone visiting the museum or accessing the website on their computer.

When this becomes operational, the Brookings County museum will be one of a handful of county and city museums in South Dakota to have this exciting new history tool, Wagner said.

Both Rogers and Thomson have provided financial assistance to fund the project. Rogers is the former co-owner of Central Business Supply who is now engaged in real estate development in Brookings. Thomson has long and extensive on-air radio and television experience and teaches mass communication at SDSU. Costs to the museum will be minimal, thanks to Thomson and Rogers. ❀



Museum honors volunteers

Nearly 80 museum volunteers and county and Volga city officials attended the Volunteer Appreciation Banquet at the Volga Community Center on September 18. Museum President Phil Wagner expressed the Museum Board of Directors' sincere appreciation for the important help the Volga City Council and the County Commissioners provide. He also praised the dedicated volunteers for their service to the museum throughout the summer. Volunteer coordinator and Board member Cindy Jacobson was also recognized. Wagner also reviewed new programs museum volunteers will be developing in the coming months to be launched during the 2020 museum season. Volunteer Russell Strande won the door prize.

Two Hole Corn Sheller

Before he died May 6, 2019, Clint D. Nelson of Estelline asked his family to give his historic and beloved refurbished antique corn sheller to the Brookings County Museum.

That old sheller, probably 100-years old, meant a lot to Clint.

Its original owner was Harry Martinson of Volga, the town in which Nelson was born in 1939 in Volga to Clarence and Lela (Martinson) Nelson, who farmed near Arlington. It was later owned by Clint's brother, Richard, of Arlington.

After he received the machine, Clint spent hours refurbishing the old machine that's capable of shelling two ears of corn at a time. He returned it to working condition, and also added the power of an old International one and one-half horse power gas motor known as a "hit and miss" because of its unique sound.

Once the sheller was working, Clint enjoyed operating it and showing others, especially young people, how it worked.

While the museum has several old corn shellers, Nelson's is the only operable sheller and the only "two holer" in the museum's collection. The fact that is operational makes it an even more interesting and educational display.

Museum officials plan to fire up Nelson's "hit and miss" motor and demonstrate early corn shelling for museum visitors, especially during special museum events and at Volga's annual Old Timer's Day.

Nelson married Beulah Kjellsen in 1977. She died in 2005 and he moved to Estelline and married Donna Linneman. ❀



Early this summer museum volunteers journeyed to the Donna and the late Clint Nelson's home in Estelline to load up Clint Nelson's gift of his antique corn sheller to the Brookings County Museum. At left is Donna Linneman Nelson of Estelline, and museum board members/volunteers Floyd Havrevold and Marvin Hope of Volga, and Phil Wagner of Brookings.



Dennis Johnson of Brookings, right, has donated his impressive collection of Brookings County #6-designated South Dakota license plates to the Brookings County Museum. South Dakota started distributing county-designated plates in 1925, assigning Brookings County the number six based on population at the time. Johnson collected all of those plates up to the present, 84 license plates in all. Johnson and museum president Phil Wagner display the first designated plate. Two of the plates are actually of paper, printed during the final years of WWII because of the need for metal in the war effort. The paper certificates were to be displayed on the windshield of the vehicle. Additionally, Johnson has also donated his very rare collection of the logos, mostly in metal, that were attached to cars by automobile dealers in Brookings.



Two teams of model horses have recently been donated to the museum by Marcus Wiese of Volga. The harnesses worn by the horses were hand-made by Wiese's uncle, George Stahl of Fergus Falls, Minn. He also crafted the wagons, each of which is detailed right down to the braking systems. It is expected the two teams and wagons, a four-hitch and a six-hitch, will be displayed in the Trygve Trooien Horse-drawn Museum.



The South Dakota Horse Council has designated the Tryve Trooien Horse-Drawn Museum as the site of its South Dakota Horseperson Hall of Fame. The last inductee was Mike Olson of White. The Horse-Drawn museum, the only museum in the state dedicated to the subject, is one of six buildings in the Brookings County Museum complex in Volga's City Park.

Tax Tip

Gifts to the Brookings County Historical Society are welcome (Federal 501 (c) (3) exemption number is 23-7018164). The Brookings County Museum is a part of the Historical Society and falls under the umbrella of society projects and the same exemption number.

New Display Cases Showcase Local Artifacts



TOP

This new display case is ready to be moved into the Brookings County museum's main building on October 2. Assisting with the move are from left, Russell Strande of Brookings, Marvin Hope of Volga, and at the front of the case, Jerry Leslie, also of Volga. Hope and Leslie are museum governing Board Members.

CENTER

Scott Blase of Volga provided invaluable assistance recently in unloading the five museum display cases each weighing over 500 pounds.

BOTTOM

Volunteers from the Miner County Museum in Howard loaded up the last of the old store counter cases once common in the Brookings County Museum. The museum was happy to see the old case continue to serve history.

Generous gifts helped make possible the addition of five new display cases in the Brookings County Museum this fall.

Major benefactor was Harold Christianson of Volga.

One of the new cases will be added to the displays in the museum's Vintage Farm Equipment Building, and another is scheduled for the Trygve Troien Horse Drawn Museum.

The other three will be added for more displays in the main museum.

The museum still has hopes of adding one more very large, custom-made case to display women's clothing.

The five modern cases, each weighing more than 500 pounds and each with a price tag of nearly \$1,000 when taxes and transportation are added in, arrived by semi-truck Sept. 30.

A crew of museum volunteers where there to meet the truck from Bridgeton, Mo. Donating efforts to the three hour job were Floyd Havrevold, Marvin Hope, Jerry Leslie and Dennis Hanson, all of Volga, and Russell Strande and Chuck Cecil of Brookings.

The unloading and transporting of the cases to various museum buildings was made much, much easier because of the generous donation of time and forklift by Scott Blase.

Without Scott's help, the job would have been extremely difficult, said Museum Board Member Chuck Cecil, who has for 20 years been in unofficial charge of the museum's display case improvement project.

The new cases match those already in the museum, and their arrival marks the end of a two-decade project to increase and improve display space in the museum.

Several times over the last 20 years the museum has purchased similar cases so that now there are 20 at the museum.

Those 20 cases hold glass shelving that if placed end to end would comprise a glass shelf 880 feet long. The Brookings County Museum is probably one of the best-appointed county museums in the state in this regard, Cecil said.

The last of the old glass counters that were common in early-day stores that had been in the museum for its first fifty years will now be removed from the museum inventory.

This final old case has been donated by the museum to the Miner County Museum in Howard.

The next needed display case for the museum will probably not arrive by semi-truck. A custom made, large women's wear case is on the museum's "needs" list. It would be used exclusively to display women's clothing styles through the late 1800s and early 1900s.

This case will be a walk-in type for easy access to display items. It will be lighted with mannequins dressed in the attire of days of yore.

There is an opportunity to name the case after someone willing to donate the funds needed for its construction in the main museum. Cecil estimates the cost of this permanent display case in the museum ranges from \$6,000 to \$8,000, including the special lighting.

He said the donated funds to construct such a case could be a memorial to a loved one or a family, in addition to other naming options.

If interested, please contact a museum board member. All donations to the museum are tax deductible. ☒



Parading Around

The Brookings County Museum's float in this summer's Old Timer's Day parade in Volga was this 1944 Case wagon, a gift to the museum from the late Trygve Trooien's estate. Aboard the museum's 1944 Case DC3 tractor is Marv Hope of Volga. The tractor was also a part of the Trooien estate. A buyer purchased it and later donated it to the museum. An estimated 1,000 people toured the museum during the annual Volga event in early June.



Museum Improvements

Having a Brookings County Board member who is an expert craftsman is the perfect combination. Retired SDSU engineering graduate and now wood craft hobbyist Richard Berreth of rural White made this beautiful cabinet in which the museum stores its cleaning supplies and other items. It replaces the old WW II-era metal cabinets the museum had used for that purpose for at least 50 years. Thank you Richard.

Museum Volunteers

A dedicated group of volunteer workers helped keep the Brookings County Museum well staffed this summer to assist the several thousand museum visitors who toured the five-building complex in Volga's City Park.

Volunteers were Clyde Ulvestad, Carol Holm, Janet Perlet, Cal Higgins, Tom Elverud, Andrea Sapp, Charles Sapp, Harold Beukelman, Betty Beukelman, Rod King, Don Derald.

Bill Van Beek, Arden Stensgaard, Darla Stensgaard, Keith Van Duyn, Shirley VanDuyn, Susan VanderWal.

Marilyn Kleinjan, Barb Meyer, Patsy Johnson, Betty Ruth Mennis, Bev Nelson, Marcene Severson, Russell Strande, Lloyd Strande.

Duane Oines, Irene Oines, Andy Molengraaf, Henrietta Molengraaf, Deb Moss, Larry Moss, Cheryl Havrevold, Floyd Havrevold, Allan Husher, Dorothy Husher.

Kathy Hanson, Dennis Hanson, Shirley Deethardt, Phil Wagner, Cindy Jacobson, Don Kleinjan, Chuck Cecil, Harold Christianson, Lyle Strande, Darla Strande, Marvin Hope, Larry Ust, Jerry Leslie, Bob Buchheim. ❁

In Kind Donors

In-kind donors to the Brookings County Museum help in a variety of ways, lending their expertise, equipment, talents and help for projects at the museum. Thank you to the following businesses, organizations and individuals for their interest and valuable assistance in so many ways. ❁

Ag First	Norma Linn
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Knapp Electric - Mike Steffenson	Volga City Council & staff
Harlan Larken	Volga Tribune
Lee Larsen	Website Spice, Ginger Thomson
Grace Linn	

A Wall of Hats Highlight Brookings Businesses

When donning your embossed baseball cap for the day, you probably don't realize you are a part of hat history.

Logo caps became popular in the early 1960s when screen-printed and later embroidered caps replaced the hat styles of the pre-WW II era.

In the 1930s, 1940s and even into the 1950s, men either wore old dress hats to work, or donned what were called flat hats, stocking caps or flannel, billed caps with earmuffs with under-the-chin moorings.

After WW II, the baseball cap became popular, and businesses soon learned they could be used for promotional purposes.

The caps had a practical and functional design and were inexpensive and ideal for outdoor work in the heat and wind. They soon even became stylish and popular everyday attire for women.

John Deere Company is credited with creating the first printed caps for its customers, and before long the idea caught on and caps were being handed out by agricultural equipment dealers and seed and farm supply companies.

The museum this past summer decided a display of such caps would be appropriate and asked for cap donations. More than 50 Brookings County-related caps were donated. The display has room about 50 such caps, so the museum display will be changed from time-to-time. 🌻



In this 1930s wolf hunt in the Oakwood Lakes area, hunters are wearing a variety of hats and caps popular in the day. If such a hunt were to occur today, chances are most of the hunters would be wearing embroidered baseball style caps. And chances are, they would end the day minus a wolf to throw over someone's shoulder.



The Museum display features embroidered baseball caps representing 50 Brookings County businesses.



Learning can be fun

Each Spring, school children in the area make their chosen field trip a visit to the Brookings County Museum. This year Sioux Valley fourth graders spent May 29 viewing and learning at the museum. Shown above, the tour takes them through the Vintage Farm Equipment Building. Note that each student is carrying a sheet of paper with directions for a scavenger hunt featuring museum items and questions about Brookings County's historical past. Many used the Vintage Farm Equipment building floor as a desk as they responded to questions about this refurbished John Deere 1940 B tractor.

Are you smarter than a fourth grader?

1. When was the rural school built?
2. What is a depot cart?
3. How many ice boxes are there in the museum?



1. Rural School was built in 1880; 2. A depot cart was used to unload small freight and passenger suitcases from a rail car on to the depot cart which was then hand-pulled to the depot; 3. There are three ice boxes in the museum.

Summer
Guests

Among the many groups and organizations that toured the Brookings County Museum this summer were members of Brookings PEO Chapter BA. Last summer the museum was toured by members of a sister Brookings PEO Chapter, BP.

Note: The helmeted gentleman in the last row is not a member of Chapter BA, but a museum mannequin dressed in a World War I soldier's uniform.



History Comes Alive at the Brookings County Museum

Join us and become a member today!

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