

# HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Volume 1, Issue 2

December, 2006

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## LETTER FROM THE CURATOR

Dear Society Members,

Let me introduce myself. My name is Priscilla Geyer and I am the curator of the museum. This is a new venture for me as I have never done this type of work before, but have always been very interested in history.

The past seven months have been quite a learning experience. I have met so many wonderful people and have begun to gain invaluable knowledge of Crawford County history. Even the train depot in which the museum is housed is a treasure.

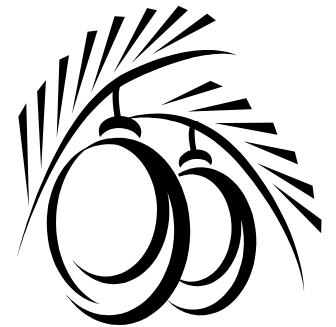
One reason this has been such a fun job is because it is new every day. There is always something different to

do and I never know who will walk through the door. I have met people from all over the country. For instance, a couple from New Orleans came to tour the museum, so I got a first-hand account of the tragedy there. I also got to meet several people who were traveling by motorcycle, raising funds for the families of our troops.

Another pleasant aspect of working at the museum was indulging in one of my favorite hobbies—flower gardening. I was able to enjoy the fresh air while planting the beds and pots.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who assisted me this past

season. I am grateful to the board members and to all who volunteered in any way, for all their hard work, for their patience with me and for answering my endless questions. I would also like to thank the business community for being helpful and gracious to me. I look forward to next spring.



## NEW BOARD MEMBER

We have a new member who was elected to the board during our November meeting. Her name is Majerle Nielson, a seventh-grader who is a native of Grayling. She volunteered occasionally at the museum this summer with her uncle, Billy Nielson (he

volunteers every Wednesday afternoon) and decided that she wanted to be on the board. Majerle explains, "I love history and find the museum very interesting. Because I was born and raised in Grayling, I want to be a part of preserving my

heritage." All of us welcome Majerle into the Historical Society and know that she will surely be an asset. Majerle brings the perspective of youth into focus, enabling us to be aware of the interests of the younger generation.

## TOURS

This has been a great year for tours! We conducted private tours from May to October.

There were several Grayling school tours. Head Start and Mary Nama's 7th grade class visited the museum in May. In September, we had 45 1st and 2nd graders; October brought us high school students from the community service class.

Also, the whole 3rd grade class (135 students) took a tour. They enjoyed the museum so

much and realized its importance that they raised \$200.00. What a glowing example they are for the community! Our hats are off to them.

In June, the Michelson's Men's Club (60 men) took an evening tour of the museum.

In July, the Elderberries, a group of 14, had a very pleasant lunch in the courtyard and afterward, toured the museum.

In August, a group of 30 re-

tired military veterans who traveled to Grayling in their RVs and stayed at Camp Grayling, visited the museum.

The Red Hat Ladies were also here in August. They enjoyed their ice cream social, then took a walk to tour the museum.

And last but not least, the Home Extenders, a women's club from Roscommon, took a tour one October evening.



*The train event for 2007 will be even bigger and better.*

*Plans are underway!!*

## TRAINS

The big event of the year for the Historical Society took place October 7th and 8th. Big Bertha rolled in to the Michigan Central Railroad depot pulling its vintage cars filled with happy riders, waving as they arrived at their destination. Bluewater Excursions conducted the trip which began in Kawkawlin and ended in Grayling. One of our local

artists, Elaine Lucksted, created a wonderful painting of the Santa Fe, a 1928 vintage businessman's car which was to be part of the train this year. Prints are available from the Museum.

The Grayling Color Tour was also a big hit as people got on board for a round trip from

Grayling to Waters and enjoyed the autumn colors.

Later in October, the Algonquin Park, a restored 1954 private luxury railcar, made two trips from West Branch to Grayling.

These events were so much fun and were a remembrance of days gone by.

## MILITARY DISPLAY

When you're in the area, please stop by the Northland Area Federal Credit Union on the I-75 Business Loop in Grayling.

On loan from the museum is part of our military display. It will be at the credit union through the Christmas season.

Included in the display are mannequins dressed in uniform, helmets and hats depicting the various services, large photos of the military at Camp Grayling, and a table filled with war memorabilia dating back to the Civil War.

All the branches of the credit

union are participating in a Christmas display contest. The Grayling branch decided that they wanted to have a military theme to their display.

The feedback from customers is great. The display is being met with rave reviews!



## RIVER DISPLAY

This summer, the Board voted to go ahead with the creation of a display of the Au Sable River since it is such an integral part of the area.

There are four display cases in the lobby which are lined with blue satin material to give the appearance of the river. The cases contain artifacts depicting life on the river beginning with the Native Americans, then the Europeans and trappers, followed by the lumber industry

and ending with the present use of the river including fishing and canoeing.

As work progressed on the display, we held a contest for a mural-type picture of the River to hang on the wall above one of the display cases. Three judges chose an eye-catching photograph.

In one corner on the wall hang photographs of men who built riverboats or were guides.

The Canoe Marathon Race section is in the hallway, complete with photos and information about all racers since its inception in 1947. A bookcase holds race memorabilia including a wooden paddle Ted Engle used in 1948 and a commemorative coin set in a miniature paddle.

The display is complete with the riverboat that Arthur E. Wakeley made in 1918 which is suspended from the ceiling in the lobby.



## CREW ROOM

One of the rooms upstairs has been transformed into what it originally was—sleeping quarters for the railroad crew. Paneling was torn down, carpet pulled up, and the room painted from top to bottom in its original green color. By the way, every depot in the state was painted the same green

color from top to bottom. Even the outside of the buildings were painted in the same color!

The room is sparsely furnished as it was so long ago. There are two metal beds with bedding, a wooden table between them, an oil lamp on the table, a wooden chair in the corner

and a throw rug on the floor. There are also old-fashioned hooks along one wall where the crew would have hung their clothes.

Nostalgia now sleeps in the room.

*Bringing the past  
into the present,  
revealing hidden  
treasures.*

## CHRISTMAS WALK

The season ended for the Historical Society with our participation in the Christmas Walk.

The museum was decorated, cookies were made and punch and hot chocolate were ready for visitors on the evening of Saturday, November 18th. Also on hand was the Algon-

quin Park, the luxury railcar with its beautiful dining car.

Visitors toured the museum, then walked through the railcars. There was a steady flow of people during the three hours of the walk. It was a beautiful, mild autumn evening which made it fun for everyone.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a very healthy and prosperous new year!

Priscilla Geyer  
Curator



**Crawford County  
Historical Society**

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Grayling, MI 49738

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION



Help your museum continue to grow. We need your help today and any donation will be accepted. Memberships are good for one year, May through April. Any dues paid now will be good for the museum year of 2007. We look forward to adding new members.

**DUES:**

\$5.00 Senior Citizen  
\$10.00 Single  
\$25.00 Family  
\$50.00 Supporting Member  
\$100.00 Memorial Plaque (one

or two names inscribed)

Please make checks payable to:

CC Historical Society

P.O. Box 218

Grayling, MI 49738

Our telephone number is:

(989) 348-4461

Our website is:

[grayling-area.com/museum](http://grayling-area.com/museum)

The Historical Society would like to express its gratitude to Cornell Insurance for sponsor-

ing this issue of the newsletter.

