

HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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LETTER FROM A BOARD MEMBER

Dear Society Patrons,

My name is Bill Greene and I was born in Grayling a long, long time ago in the little white house across from Borchers and next to what is now Bob and Fay Bovee's residence. I'm still waiting for the bronze plaque to be installed, marking this historic site! I was baptized in the old Danish Lutheran Church on Ionia Street and can remember all the services being performed in Danish.

My grandparents, John and Marie Cook, came to Grayling from Denmark in 1899 with my mother, Margarethe, who was four years old.

My grandfather built the greenhouses on the property where Borchers Canoe Rental and Bed & Breakfast is now located. There are pictures of this large operation at the Museum. My

grandfather had a flourishing business for many years, supplying fresh flowers to the area. Then the depression hit and the family moved to Detroit to survive.

My Dad worked for Michigan Central Railroad as a conductor on the Bay City to Mackinaw run; Grayling was home base. I have memories of train trips to Grayling as a young boy when we came to stay at the farm owned by my Uncle Pete and Aunt Christina Madsen. Their farm occupied the area where the Clough subdivision is; the old farmhouse still stands on North Down River Road.

When I was older and traveled to Grayling on the train, I actually walked to Lake Margrethe to the Danish Landing after arriving at the depot. Back then, the roads to the lake were mostly two tracks

and the current Danish Landing Road did not exist!

I enjoy volunteering at the Museum and serving on the board because of my family's history in the area. I think it is a good thing for our community that we have preserved the area's history for future generations. My girls and now my grandchildren and nieces and nephews enjoy coming to Grayling to experience the history of our family.

I hope that everyone who lives here will come and experience our museum for themselves to see what Grayling is all about. If I'm there when you visit, I'll show you some family photos!



RACE DISPLAY

As many of you know, the Au Sable Canoe Marathon race begins July 28th. It is always an exciting event.

The Museum has a great display of the race which

includes a complete list of all winners and a large picture of the first race in 1947. There is also a complete photographic list of all 3 or more time winners as well as women who have contributed

to the race. We have much memorabilia and beautiful prints by Terry Dickinson in the display. So stop by and enjoy our display; it's a great way to learn about the race.

HISTORIC HOMES TOUR

The Historical Society will host a tour of 4 famous houses along Peninsular which will take place on August 4th from 1 to 4 p.m. as a fundraiser for the Museum.



Participants will be given a passport at the Museum to enter the homes. It will contain a photo, description and address of each home. Passports are \$10 and go on sale July 18th.

Rasmus Hanson built his Victorian home around 1892 which retains the ornate wood-working, 3 carved fireplaces with Roman tile, hand-painted murals depicting scenes of the Danish countryside, turret and

widow's walk.

Original wood flooring can be seen in the carriage house with 4 windowed stalls for horses. Upstairs is a 15 foot long woodworker's bench where carpenters built windows and doors for the main house and other houses along Peninsular.

Upon entering the home that Nels Peter Olson built in 1894, one is taken to the turn of the century. A beautiful oak staircase graces the foyer while the eye is drawn to an ornate brass oil lantern chandelier.

The dining room floor is a cherry, oak and maple parkay. The walls display 1906 Danish murals by Waldemar Jensen

who also painted murals in other homes along Peninsular.

The house that Mr. Roffee and Mr. Siegel built in 1896 includes a foyer with small pillars that lead into the parlor. The bathroom has a claw foot, hand-painted tub and a walnut vanity circa 1920.

Marius Hanson (not related to Rasmus) built his home in 1903. Earl and Clara Dawson bought the home in 1934. There is a large living room and sitting room separated by an archway as well as a formal dining room. The ceilings retain the cove molding. An original long, winding staircase leads to 4 bedrooms upstairs, completing the structural style of the day.

HATS OFF TO . . . KATHRYN GARBE!

Kathryn got her first job in Gaylord as a maid when she was 14. She earned \$50 for the summer. She says, "I was rich!"

After 2 years of college, Kathryn joined the Cadet Nurse Corps during World War II. The government paid women to earn a nursing degree. Their room and board was also paid for and they received \$15 monthly.

Their summer uniforms

were gray and white striped seer-sucker outfits. Their duty uniforms were blue with white aprons, kerchiefs and a cap. Two ribbons were given for the cap to show completion of the course. Kathryn's uniform and photo are displayed in the Museum Annex.

Kathryn's employment included working in Detroit as a secretary in the distribution center at Warner Bros. and as a payroll clerk for 137 men. There were no calculators, so she did all the figuring in her head.

She returned to Grayling in 1979.

Kathryn teaches a quilting class at Michelson Memorial Church. The class project is making quilts for the sheriff's department, the nursing home and the Shriners. As she says, "When children are transported to the burn center, each child gets a quilt for comfort and security."

What a great jewel in the treasure box. Hats off to you, Kathryn!

ANTLER RIDGE

Raymond Goodwin, a playwright/actor from Rosebush, will perform a one man, one act play on August 4th at 11:30 a.m. in the courtyard of the Museum.

The play, entitled "Antler Ridge", is approximately 35 minutes in length. An excerpt, "For thirty years there has not been a deer seen in or around the tiny village of Antler

Ridge, Michigan. Then one day. . . But was it a deer or someone's wishful thinking?" Come by and learn the answer. Admission is free, although donations for the Museum will be accepted.

*Selfless service to
others receives a
reward that
remains always.*



HISTORY'S NUGGETS

The Skingley farmhouse was located on the corner of Merrio and Fletcher Roads. It had 13 rooms, including a milk room off the kitchen and an attached woodshed. In summer, the Saturday baths were taken in the milk room and in the winter, a tub was used by the kitchen stove. The stairway was between the dining room and living room. At the third step was a door. Kathryn remembers that she and the other children used the first two steps as a stage when playing. The extra parlor was used as a music room. The farmhouse had running water and carbide and kerosene lamps but no bathrooms. Of course, Elizabeth had her own bedroom (with a fireplace) and 2

SKINGLEY HOUSE

or 3 boys shared a bedroom. No one was allowed upstairs unless invited. Kathryn remembers an 18 inch hook that was mounted on a wall which Bertha used to make taffy for Christmas. The house was built in the East-lake style and cost less than \$3,000 to build.

In 1936, Arthur was fixing the water tank in the attic by using a blow torch. Water was pumped into the tank by a gasoline-filled engine which replaced the windmill. There was an explosion that set Arthur and the house on fire. He died of burns 3 days later. As Arthur came down the stairs while on fire, he yelled to Bertha to get the children out of the house. Bertha died

3 weeks later from a diabetic coma. There was a large stove in the basement that burned coal and wood. Arthur's fire was so hot that it burned the stove. Bertha owned a collection of China head dolls that were 3 feet tall. They had leather bodies but the head, arms and legs were made of bisque. There was a secret rock that could be pulled out of the fireplace which was in the master bedroom. Bertha hid her jewels in it, including the garnet broach that she always wore. Bertha's father or grandfather was a jeweler who worked for the royal family. Unfortunately, Bertha's treasures were lost in the fire.

To be continued in the next issue.



TRAIN TICKETS

Tickets for the Color Tour train excursion are now on sale!! They can be purchased at the Museum, Au Sable Gifts and the Grayling Chamber of Commerce. Credit card purchases can be made at the Chamber. The cost is \$20 per

adult and \$15 for children ages 5 to 16. Children under 5 are free provided they sit on a person's lap.

The train leaves Grayling for the round trip at 1:30 and returns approximately 3:30 p.m.

Passengers need to be at the boarding site at 1:15 p.m. Seating is limited, so purchase your tickets early.

The trip is October 6th, just in time to see the beautiful fall colors of northern Michigan.

ALL ABOARD!!

*Relive history and
experience the thrill
of the train.*

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The Crawford County Historical Society would like to sincerely thank Cornell Insurance Agency for sponsoring this month's newsletter.

**Crawford County
Historical Society**

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P.O. Box 218
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

Our e-mail address is:

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