

HISTORICAL MUSEUM

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February, 2008

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LETTER FROM A VOLUNTEER

Hello Neighbors,

My name is Al Johnston and I was born near Saginaw. My military service consisted of duty in the Army Corps of Engineers during 1958/59. My wife, Val, and I were married for 45 years. We have two daughters and six grandchildren. I am involved in the Kiwanis Club, the Masonic Lodge and the Gideons in which we distribute Bibles to motels and hotels.

When Val and I moved to Grayling in 1995, one evening after a Kiwanis meeting, Marie Akers (Secretary and Treasurer of the Society at

the time), asked us to work at the Museum. So, I have been a volunteer for thirteen years.

Val also worked at the Museum for many years but, during the last few years, she became busy with other activities. Both of us were very impressed with the Museum compared with other small town museums.

I have always been interested in history and hope others are too. I think by touring the Museum, both children and adults can better see how it was in the "old days."

I find children like the fire trucks, the trapper's cabin and the caboose. The men are interested in fishing, hunting, lumbering, military mementos, paddling, winter sports, etc. The ladies are interested in the entire train station and all the exhibits.

In working at the Museum, we were amazed that visitors from all over the world came in but that many local residents had never visited the Museum. We should do all we can to encourage local residents to visit and support the Museum.



TIDBITS

"As Conductor Richard's train was pulling into Vanderbilt Monday afternoon, the forward brakeman, Eugene Lamb of Grayling, started back from the engine and, in some way, fell between the tender and the first car, and the entire train of thirteen cars passed over him, mangling his body in a terrible manner, every limb being dismembered, the skull crushed, and the trunk nearly cut in twain.

The remains were carefully taken up, and brought by the night train to Hanson and Braden's undertaking rooms, and prepared for burial.

The deceased was an honest, industrious man, quiet and unobtrusive in demeanor, and one who won and kept many friends. He leaves a wife and four children, who have the sympathy of the entire community."

"Geo. McCullough, Tonsorial Artist, Grayling, Mich.

Shaving and Hair Cutting done in the latest styles and to the satisfaction of all. Shop near corner of Michigan Avenue and Railroad Street."

Crawford Avalanche

December 26, 1889

LOVE LETTERS

I can't help it. I just cannot resist reading a love letter. However, these letters have Grayling history in them which I would like to share with you.

Carl Tischler wrote Marjorie Wright (the girl to the left) 47 letters from June 22, 1925 to May 25, 1926.

The couple was from Flint; Marjorie was 16 and Carl was about 19. He had enlisted in the National Guard. On July 24th, Carl was promoted to Corporal, receiving his two stripes.

In August, he instructed Marjorie to send her letters to him at this address:

Corporal Carl Tischler, Battery C 119th Field Artillery, Camp Hanson, Grayling, Michigan

The letterhead and envelopes he used to write Marjorie are embossed with: Hanson State Military Reservation.

Carl was at Camp Grayling for 9 days. I will first share an August 13th news article that was included in one of his letters which explains how he got there.

Priscilla

"119th Artillery Welcomed by Thousands at Grayling

March of Units from Lansing and Vicinity, First of a Kind in Recent History, Declared Success by Commanders

The 119th Field Artillery, made up of Batteries from Lansing, Grand Ledge, St. Johns, Flint and Charlotte, ended Wednesday night at Camp Grayling, the first practice march in the history of any of the present Michigan national guard units. The 40 officers and 492 enlisted men of the artillery regiment rode into camp Wednesday night fresh from their 72-mile march from Sterling, Mich. where they detrained less than a week ago.

Col. Joseph H. Lewis of Lansing, in command of the artillery regiment, declared the march a success, and Brig. Gen. Wilson, the camp commander, announced that the innovation would be extended to other guard units next year as part of their field training.

Col. Lewis and his staff were met by the 182nd field artillery band and escorted down Covell Road to the 119th artillery camp. At the foot of Hann hill were Brig. Gen. Wilson and his staff, and along the line of march were thousands of soldiers and civilians who came from miles around to witness the artillery's arrival.

The Batteries marched past the camp commander and his staff to the south end of camp where they pitched pup tents and ate mess, prepared in rolling kitchens which came to camp in advance of the rest of the unit."

To be continued . . .

HATS OFF TO. . . PAULINE DAWSON

One of Pauline's fond remembrances is the midnight train. She and Devere would go to the Depot to drop their mail into the postal box near it. The couple liked to wait and watch for the train, pulled by a steam engine, which would arrive at the station at midnight to pick up the mail.

After Devere passed away in the 1990s, Pauline began to volunteer at the Museum. She says, "The Museum was open every day during the week then. Three girlfriends and I volun-

teered on Tuesdays. We worked all day; we took our lunch and stayed for the day. There was Helen Feldhauser, Martha Austin and Katie Nave (who has since passed away).

Katie and Martha always had a little vegetable garden in front of the farm building. They also took care of the flowers. The two had worked in the hospital, so they liked to keep the medical room upstairs spic and span.

Helen was very interested in

taking care of the fire hall. I stayed in the lobby and collected money from people as they came in since I worked with money all those years in the store. The 7 years I volunteered at the Museum were a real enjoyment to me."

Photos of Dawsons and the stamp machine are displayed in the Museum.

Pauline, you are truly a jewel in the treasure box. Hats off to you!!

We extend our deep appreciation to the ladies for their service to the County's heritage.



HISTORY'S NUGGETS

When the Jackson, Lansing & Saginaw Railroad Company laid track in Grayling in 1872, it also built a freight depot facing Norway Street.

The building was 24 feet by 60 feet. Some boards were 2 feet wide by 20 feet long; others were a foot square. Square nails were used to fashion the structure and wooden dowels were used to fasten the mortised boards. It had a loading platform approximately 100 feet long.

In spring of 1965, less than

carload lots of freight were being handled at the Grayling station, so the New York Central Railroad Company had no further use for the building. Bids were requested for its removal.

Earl Broadbent removed the lumber for his own use. One of the boards was dated 1865 and had several initials on it. That was the year JL&S bought part of the Amboy, Lansing & Traverse Bay Railroad Company (AL&TB). It was jokingly referred to as the "Awfully

FREIGHT DEPOTS

Long & Terribly Bumpy."

Broadbent found an 1888 freight bill for a barrel of sugar, a case of dry goods, a heating stove and 2 bales of batts purchased by Salling, Hanson Co.

In 1882, a new freight depot was built by Michigan Central Railroad Company. The building was 30 by 70 feet with a spacious and well-furnished office. It also had the convenience of platforms for handling the freight. This second freight depot was a separate building



NEW CHAIR

Due to an abundance of responsibilities, Kay Cosgray has resigned her position as Chair of the Historical Society. As she says, "My plate is too full to be able to continue as Chair."

Besides holding down a fulltime job, Kay serves on a number of other Boards and is the Chair of the Crawford County Economic Development Partnership. She is last year's Athena award winner.

Although she is no longer Chair of the Society, Kay remains a Board member and will be in charge of the October train event. We appreciate all the hard work and accomplishments that Kay has brought to the Museum and we wish her success in all her undertakings.

During this month's meeting, the Board voted in Steve Doyle as the new Chair, a man who

has always been an invaluable asset to the Society.

Steve is the former Zoning Administrator for the City of Grayling and Sexton for Elmwood Cemetery in Grayling. Now retired, he is in an ideal position to serve as Chair.

We welcome Steve into his new post and believe he will lead us on into an even brighter future for the Museum and Society.

*Congratulations,
Steve, on your new
position on the
Board!*

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(989) 348-7710

The Crawford County Historical Society would like to sincerely thank JJ's Motor Mall for sponsoring this month's newsletter.

**Crawford County
Historical Society**

97 E. Michigan Avenue
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. 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 email address is:

cchm@voyager.net



Please consider helping us defray the cost of the newsletter by receiving it via email. Simply drop us a line at the address to the left. Thank you.

Your questions, comments and ideas are welcome.

MUSEUM HOME PAGE