

HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Vol. 2, Issue 4

April, 2008

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LETTER FROM A WEBMASTER

Hello Newsletter Readers,

My name is Ken Wright and this is my 34th year in Grayling Township. I have provided the host site and web pages for the Historical Society since 2003.

In 2006, the website began to be greatly expanded when Priscilla Geyer became Curator and provided a monthly newsletter as well as suggestions for additional items and features of the web pages. The current monthly newsletter and all previous ones are available on the website (grayling-area.com/museum).

As a genealogy researcher

working with my cousin, Dave Gustner (also a local resident), we learned that one of our relatives, Asa Rose, came to Grayling with his family in 1881. This stimulated my curiosity to learn more of the history of this area. Work on the website now takes on a very personal significance.

Numerous folks have provided photographs and information on "Old Grayling and Crawford County", much of which has gone on the website. Photos from the Museum archives are displayed as well.

Crawford County has a rich and fascinating history, centered on the old railroad Depot and surrounding Grayling area.

My desire is to provide the website with photos, audio and video to encourage more folks to visit this area and the Museum.

Our new "Museum Tour" page is receiving a lot of visitors. Be sure to check out all the photos and videos posted there. I hope to see many of you at the Museum this year.



TIDBITS

"Chief Shoppenagons walks straighter than ever. He caught four beavers last week which netted him nearly twenty-five dollars."

Crawford Avalanche 2/16/1882

"Dr. Insley's auto has come to grief and gone to the hospital for repairs. He says it is all right for an auto but is a dismal failure as a stump puller."

Crawford Avalanche 10/17/1907

"The first grist ever ground in Crawford County was on Friday, April 28, 1882 at Palmer's mill in Grayling. The grain -oats, wheat and rye, was raised by Jacob Kneth of Grove Township and brought to mill by him."

Crawford Avalanche 5/4/1882

"Anyone desiring the services of a taxidermist should call upon Mr. F.B. Rose of this village, as he is an expert

in the art of stuffing birds and animals.

Crawford Avalanche 9/8/1881

"At a special meeting on Tuesday night, it was finally decided that a beautiful two-story schoolhouse shall grace the village of Grayling by the middle of next summer, to cost in the neighborhood of \$3,000 and will probably be located on the Courthouse block.

Crawford Avalanche 9/29/1881

LOVE LETTERS

August 8, 1925 (In Camp at West Branch)

"Dearest, We are now in West Branch for tonight and tomorrow. Sunday is going to be a long day for me. We had some time today. It rained almost all day. It started last night about 5 o'clock and did not let up until 4 o'clock today. So you can see how nice a time we had. Dear, the saying that 'War is hell and peace is worse' is right.

I have taken about 10 pictures on this trip so far. Gosh, for the first time since we left Flint, we had a real decent meal. I ate so much that I was almost sick. Sweetheart, I am lonesome for you tonight and have been since I left you. Our top sergeant is just raising the devil.

Well sweetheart, next Wednesday night will see us in Grayling. Excuse my writing but the boys keep hitting my arm.

Please have a letter waiting for me when I hit Grayling, will you? From your N.G. beau, Corp. Carl. Goodbye Sweetheart."

August 9, 1925 (In Camp at West Branch)

"Dearest, It has been extra good weather today but that will not be tomorrow. We have got to hike 18 miles in the morning. So you see that life is not so good. Well, we will soon be in Grayling now. I will be glad when it is all over for this year. Then I can get back to stay with you again. Dear, you do not know how lonesome it gets without you.

What are you doing today sweetheart? I am just laying around and taking it easy. We have still got about 45 miles to go in three days. Well, I will start again now. I just had to take charge of a squad for a few minutes. We are having quite a few visitors today. It seems kind of strange

not to be on the march today.

One of our men just found a little grass snake in his bunk. He slept on it all night. Say Marjorie, where will we go when I get back to you? When I get back we can have a nice long talk by ourselves and I can tell you all about my trip. With love from Carl."

August 10, 1925 (In Camp at Lake St. Helen)

"Dearest, I am just waiting for chow. We had a good march today. Tomorrow, we will go 21 miles. Last night, we had to bury a horse. This is our first horse to lose. It was good weather today for once.

I am expecting to get hurt soon because so many have gotten hurt the last 2 days. Well dear, I must close on account of Mess. Goodbye sweetheart. With love from Carl."

To be continued . . .



*Thank you John, for
your service to your
country and to its
land.*

HATS OFF TO. . . JOHN SELESKY!

John served in the Army Air Corps for eighteen months. He was discharged in October 1943. During a night time training flight at the Roswell Army base, one of the engines quit working and the plane crashed into the New Mexican desert. Unfortunately, John lost an eye and spent six months in the hospital.

In the mid 1940s, John became the Deputy Sheriff under Sheriff Bill Golnick. John recalls one incident, "One day, Clarence Roberts, a conservation officer with whom I worked

closely, and I were driving by the Hanson Game Refuge. There, on the shoulder of the road was a guy sitting with a deer he had shot, that had a ten or twelve point rack. We confiscated the buck and gave the meat to the poor. I put in a bid and had the head mounted."

In 1947, John became the Post Commander of American Legion Post #106 in Grayling.

John and Virginia and their family moved to Rose City in 1950 when Minnie sold the store.

John then worked for the Department of Natural Resources as a pilot for forest fire detection for thirty years. He operated from the airport in Mio, patrolling eight counties, including Crawford, where he refueled in Grayling.

John has been retired for twenty-five years, continuing to live in Rose City.

I found another jewel hidden in the treasure box. Hats off to you, John!!!

HISTORY'S NUGGETS

In 1839, Douglas Houghton, Michigan's first geologist, recommended that the areas of the state which had not yet been surveyed should be divided into counties to assist him in making his surveys and maps.

Crawford County was unorganized and therefore, through the years, was attached to Cheboygan, Antrim and Kalkaska counties. The attachments, made by state law, were for municipal and tax purposes.

In March 1879, Crawford County was duly organized and

divided into the following townships: Grayling, Center Plains, Frederic, Maple Forest and South Branch.

The village of Pere Cheney in Center Plains township became a temporary county seat for 4 months with no construction of a county building.

A special election was held and on July 12, 1879, Grayling became the county seat by a majority of 152 votes. In December, a county building was erected, pictured at the top right, at the present location of

305 Michigan Avenue. Unfortunately, there was a fire in February, 1901 and the edifice burned to the ground.

Mrs. Emily Connell, who lived in the northern section of Grayling Township, was reported to have been insane for some time. For nearly 2 weeks, Emily visited the village, demanding assistance from the Superintendents of the Poor, which was refused. Her husband worked on the railroad at Lewiston, willing and able to support her.

To be continued . . .



CATALOGING

Entering data from the original handwritten inventory sheets into the computer is finished. There are approximately 3,400 artifacts in the Museum complex, including more than 1,000 photos.

Now comes the task of comparing items listed on the sheets with the artifacts themselves, identifying locations and securing missing catalog numbers to items.

This is a daunting endeavor but will provide the Society with the proper and needed organization for knowledge of all items housed in the Museum.

Help is needed with this project and if you would like to volunteer, please call 989-348-4461 or email us at cchm@voyager.net. Your assistance, however little or much, will be greatly appreciated.

As I neared the end of typing the data, I was struck by the altruistic attitude of those who loaned or donated items to the Museum. With unselfish hearts, I saw that the donors were willing to give up something they valued to share it for the good of the community. Their generosity is keeping the history of Crawford County alive. To them, we can be thankful.

*Our appreciation goes
to the dedicated
volunteers who began
the inventory process
in 1986.*

SPONSOR



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Homemade baked goods

**6301 M-72 West
Grayling, MI 49738**

**989-344-0710
Paul & Val Wilson**

Monday-Saturday
6 a.m.- 8 p.m.

Sunday
6 a.m.- 2 p.m.

The Crawford County Historical Society would like to sincerely thank Westside Diner 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:

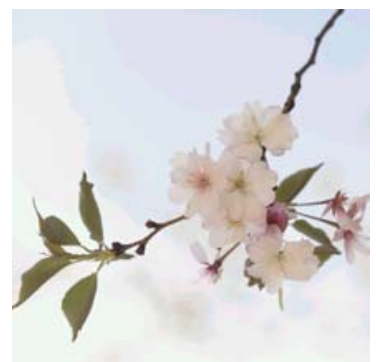
(989) 348-4461

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](#)