

HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Volume 1, Issue 8

June, 2007

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LETTER FROM A BOARD MEMBER

Dear Historical Society Patrons,

It seems unlikely that I am a board member of the Crawford County Historical Society. As a student, I avoided history classes. Remembering time periods and dates did not seem important to me.

Today, I get excited when I see the original telegrams that a local soldier's family received, telling them that their son was a prisoner of war during World War II. Later notice was received by the family, informing them of the prison camp in which their son was held and subsequent notice of his release. We can only imagine the

family's constant fear. The telegrams are just a few of the items amongst the many historical items to see.

Imagine what it would be like if Elmer Fenton, Bob Ruddy and our current curator, Priscilla Geyer, did not take the lead in preserving Crawford County's heritage! What would it be like if thousands of volunteer hours were not given and thousands of items were not donated or loaned?

As citizens, our next step is to replace the roof on the depot and, within the next couple of years, replace the roofs on all the museum buildings. Please consider making a donation to help

save our heritage by sending a check payable to CC Historical Society.

If you have any questions, please call me at (989)348-2656 or you can contact any Board of Directors member. Thank you.

Steve Doyle

Editor's Note: Steve is the Zoning Administrator for the City of Grayling and the Sexton for Elmwood Cemetery in Grayling.



THE COURTYARD

The Crawford County Historical Society would like to thank Charlie Fick. He sent two of his crewmen to mow the lawn and trim the grass so that our courtyard would look good for our opening day. And it did!

Not only did the men take care of the yard but they mowed the grass all along Norway Street. We also thank the men for their labor and fine job.

However, we still need a volunteer or volunteers to

cut the grass weekly. We have a hand mower or, if you have a riding mower, we would greatly appreciate your help.

If you are interested in solving this dilemma, please call us at 348-4461. Thank you.

HISTORIC HOMES TOUR



We will be hosting a Historical Homes Tour of some of the famous houses along Peninsular. The tour will take place on August 4th from 1 to 4 p.m. as a fundraiser for the museum.

The price is \$10.00; all proceeds will go to the museum. Upon registering, participants will be given a map and tickets to enter the homes. Tickets go on sale July 15th.

Two of the homes are the Hanson house and the home owned by Nels Peter Olson.

Details of the homes will be described in the next newsletter.

HATS OFF TO . . . KATHRYN GARBE!

Memories of long ago are a comfort for the soul, like a hand that soothes the brow.

Kathryn Marie Skingley was born on January 9, 1925 in Mancelona, Michigan. Her parents are Harold Theodore and Henrietta Marie Skingley.

Kathryn's paternal grandparents are John Robert and Bertha Skingley who came from England. Her maternal grandparents are Henry and Lydia Stephan.

Henry Stephan came to Grayling in 1880 with his family from LeHarve, France when he was 11 years old. Henry was friends with Chief Shoppenagon and his nephew. Once when the three were by a creek, it was the first time that Henry saw a beaver slap the water with its tail. He laughed so hard that Henry fell into the creek. The Chief gave him the Indian name "Amick" which means beaver.

Chief Shoppenagon took the two boys on a canoe trip from the Au Sable River to Kalkaska. They harvested rice from the wild rice fields at Lake Margrethe. The Chief taught the boys to build a birch bark canoe, cutting their own trees.

Harold, Kathryn's father, was born in 1895 in Owasso, Michigan and Henrietta was born in 1900 in Grayling. Henrietta was a teacher at the Stephan school. She was also a seamstress; Kathryn and her sisters were always dressed fashionably. However, Henrietta was raised to wear long skirts and as Kathryn says, "She had conniption fits when her girls wanted to wear slacks."

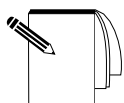
Kathryn's family moved to Grayling in 1927 and lived in the house on the corner of Lake and Maple Streets. Rasmus Hanson had built the house for one of his daughters when she got married. Kathryn

attended Feldhauser school. Mary Wakeley was the teacher; there were 8 students—Kathryn and her sisters Mary and Dorothy, and 5 cousins. The mothers took turns taking the children to and from school.

The mothers also made hot lunches. There was a big furnace in the basement with a three foot square register. When they had soup for lunch, it was made in a large iron kettle which was placed on the register. The delicious smell of the soup wafted upstairs to the students. The children took potatoes to school and set them on the ring inside the furnace to bake; they were ready just in time for lunch.

To be continued in the next newsletter.

SCHOOL TOUR



On June 6th, three classes of the 3rd grade class took a tour of the museum. The 66 enthusiastic students saw everything we have to offer,

including the mannequins. Some students thought they were real and were convinced they saw them move.

Other children were puzzled at

how tiny the one-room schoolhouse is. We could hear a pin drop when volunteer Bill Bush told the students that the Polar Express is coming to town.

HISTORY'S NUGGETS

SKINGLEY HOUSE

Bertha came from a family of means in England who married John Robert Skingley, the family's butler, on August 6, 1882 in London. Bertha was born in Sheffield on June 11, 1862 and J.R. was born on March 9, 1857. They had 7 children who were all named after monarchs of England. Their names are John Raymond, Walter (who died of whooping cough at the age of 2 years), William Alexander, George Edwin, Elizabeth (named after Queen Elizabeth I), Harold Theodore and Albert Arthur. Before the Skingleys left England in 1890, they had John and George.

J.R. and Bertha came into the U.S. through Canada and took a train west until they were just north of Kansas. They then

traveled south by horse and wagon and settled in Tonganoxie, Kansas. Michigan had opened up to homesteaders, so the couple and their several children left Kansas by horse and wagon. The family arrived in Dimondale, Michigan, just south of Lansing, where they remained through the winter. They then went to Owasso. J.R. was an accountant; he also wrote legal documents because of his ability to write in copperplate—a graceful style of handwriting patterned after copperplate etchings.

Later, J.R. became a finishing carpenter. He worked in a casket factory where he lined the caskets. When he saved enough money, the family

traveled by train to Roscomon, then went to Pere Cheyenne which was the county seat at the time.

In 1898, the Skingleys bought farmland in Beaver Creek Township which is part of Crawford County. The family lived in a stone and cement chicken coop that was on the property until they built their home in 1901. During this time, Bertha went to England with her young son to visit her family. Bertha was required to have a note from her husband saying that he gave her permission to travel with their son to England and back.

To be continued. . .



UGLY TIE CONTEST

We are participating with 7 businesses in the Ugly Tie Contest which is being held in Grayling till June 16th. This is a fun activity to help raise funds for 8 non-profit civic groups in the area.

Each establishment has ties hanging in its windows. You can vote for the ugliest tie by dropping a dollar in the envelope provided and writing the number of the tie on the outside of the envelope.

The person that submitted the tie receiving the most votes wins a \$100 gift certificate. There will also be winners from each of the 8 participants. All monies obtained at the Museum will go to the Animal Shelter.

Extending a helping hand for a worthy cause brings its own reward.

SPONSOR



The Crawford County Historical Society would like to express its appreciation to Riverland for sponsoring this month's newsletter.



**Crawford County
Historical Society**

97 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, 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:

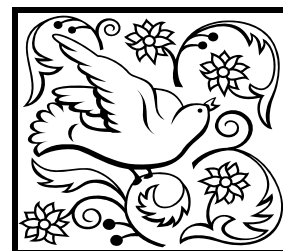
(989) 348-4461

Our website is:

grayling-area.com/museum

Our e-mail address is:

cchm@voyager.net



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