



THE VILLAGE VOICE

Marion County Historical Society

Spring 2014

From The President

Historical Village Goals for 2014

By Janet Ritchie

With each New Year we try to look forward and set goals for what we will accomplish, sometimes we meet our goals and sometimes we have to reassess and modify them. The Historical Village goals for 2014 are simply, Organize, Organize, Organize. We are running out of space! In 2013 we began a rehabilitation project in the Annex. We are making progress, but it will continue into 2014 and maybe even beyond. Hopefully when this work is completed, we will have additional space to display our ever growing collection.

Our Curator, Kathleen Smith, with the assistance of Ruby Dursky has made great progress in organizing the supply room and have begun the daunting task of updating collection labels and organizing museum displays and library collections, but, it will “take a Village” to complete this work.

Building maintenance is an ongoing project. Just to name a few things in 2013, Dan Carlson and Ken Six worked diligently to protect the School house windows from further deterioration, and worked on the weather stripping in the Chapel. Roger Brooks repaired the woods stoves in the Chapel, General Store and School.

We have begun planning for our events in 2014 and we think there are some pretty exciting changes on the horizon. Look for new activities coming to Civil War days and new opportunities for fundraising during the Festival of Trees.

It will be another busy year, but I am completely confident we can rise to the challenges that may lie ahead. Of course none of this would be possible without each and every member of this Society that so generously gives of their time and resources and I continue to be humbled by the generous spirit of our membership. The hours of time, the mountains of cookies, cakes and delicious treats that seem to magically appear at every event astounds me.

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT



In This Issue.....

Goals for 2014.....	Page 1
Meetings and Programs.....	Page 2
Curator’s Corner.....	Page 3
The Bookshelf.....	Page 4
Crime Beat.....	Page 5
Recipes from the Historical Kitchen.....	Page 6
Tidbits.....	Page 6
Administration.....	Page 7

Meetings and Programs

By Helen Boertje

The Marion County Historical Society meets on the third Monday of each month from March through November at 7:30p.m. at the Methodist Activity Center in Knoxville. Meetings consist of a general business meeting, program and social time with delicious treats provided by members. Meetings are open to the public and all are invited and encouraged to attend.

Programs for the first three meetings of 2014 have been scheduled, the details are listed below. If you have any ideas or thoughts for upcoming programs, I would enjoy discussing it with you! For the March 17th Show 'n Tell program we are asking all members and guests to bring a story, photograph, or any other item that relates to Marion County to share with the group. What fun!!

We are trying something new this year to encourage member participation and provide members with more "hands-on" opportunities to be a part of the Village experience. We will be having work day events at the Village throughout the summer to give members a chance to share their vast talents helping with Village projects. Stay tuned for more details on the workday schedule for 2014.

March 17th

Show 'n Tell

April 21st

*Tulip Queen
And Her Court*

May 19th

*History of the
VA
Elaine
Brewster*

June 16th

*Field trip to
Nelson Farms*



Iowa State Flag Day Saturday, March 29, 2014

The City of Knoxville will observe Iowa State Flag Day on Saturday, March 29th with a host of activities centered around the square, library and the Dixie Cornell Gebhardt house. Come out and enjoy the fun from 10:00-2:00 on the 29th. A flag raising ceremony will be held at the Gebhardt house at 11:00am.

The Iowa State Flag, designed by lifelong Knoxville resident, Dixie Cornell Gebhardt was adopted as the official state flag on March 29, 1921.

Food Fun Games Activities Pie Auction

Curator's Corner

By Kathleen Smith

As of December 31, 2013, 705 visitors signed the museum register. Our number of visitors is in excess of that number as this does not count the attendees at our Valley Chapel weddings and services, private tours of specific buildings that do not include the museum, attendance at pancake feeds, and those visitors who choose not to sign the register. Our two special days are important for visitors. We also find that some weekends are not very busy and sometimes there is more call for tours during the week.

The Marion County Historical Society has catalogued fifty (50) items/collections in 2013. We have a good variety of donated items from books, including those for our "Local Author Shelf," tools, photos, furniture, yearbooks, D. Rodger's bicycle, and genealogical information for our files. We have already started receiving donations for 2014. If you accept items, please remember to fill out the donor sheet in the binder on the desk. If you are not sure that the item is needed or desired, please check the list in the front of the donor binder or call me (641-204-9143).

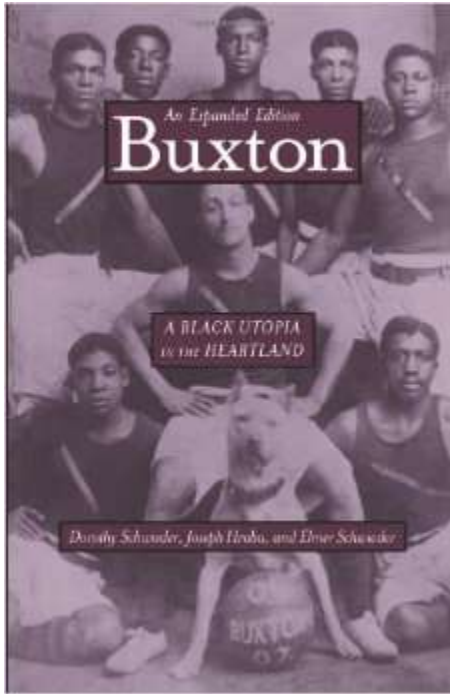
Our "Local Author Shelf" is expanding. If you happen to locate any book written by a Marion County author, check with me to see if it is one we need. I am interested in Kathy Bacus' books as we do not have any of those. Our local author books can be read while you are at the museum. As of now we have no plans to "check them out." Work also continues on the files and the obituary books. Thanks to all who have helped.



SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Are you interested in a way to honor a family member or friend who has shown an interest in Marion County history? The museum has showcase sponsorships available for \$1,000. All are North side showcases: one end case, two corner cases, and two large cases (1/2 case) for a total of seven opportunities for sponsorships. The sponsorship includes a small plaque mounted to the case frame naming the honoree. Let us know if you are interested.

The Bookshelf



*Buxton: A Black Utopia in the Heartland
An Expanded Edition*

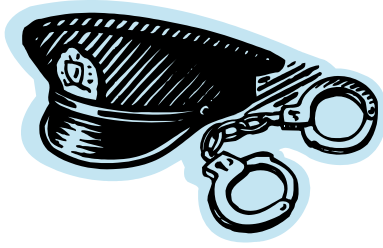
By: Dorothy Schweider, Joseph Hraba, Elmer
Schweider.

Available at Next Chapter Bookstore or
Amazon.com

From 1900 until the early 1920s, an unusual community existed in America's heartland-Buxton, Iowa. Originally established by the Consolidation Coal Company, Buxton was the largest unincorporated coal mining community in Iowa. What made Buxton unique, however, is the fact that the majority of its 5,000 residents were African Americans—a highly unusual racial composition for a state which was over 90 percent white. At a time when both southern and northern blacks were disadvantaged and oppressed, blacks in Buxton enjoyed true racial integration—steady employment, above-average wages, decent housing, and minimal discrimination. For such reasons, Buxton was commonly known as “the black man's utopia in Iowa.”

Containing documentary evidence—including newspapers, census records, photographs, and state mining reports—along with interviews of 75 former residents, *Buxton: Work and Racial Equality in a Coal Mining Community* (originally published in 1987 and winner of the 1988 Benjamin Shambaugh Award) explored the Buxton experience from a variety of perspectives. The authors—an American historian, a family sociologist, and a race relations sociologist—provided a truly interdisciplinary history of one Iowa's most unique communities.

Now, eighty years after the town's demise and fifteen years after *Buxton's* original publication, the history of this Iowa town remains a compelling story that continues to capture people's imaginations. In *Buxton: A Black Utopia in the Heartland*, the authors offer further reflections upon their original study and the many former Buxton residents who shared their memories. In the new essay, “A Buxton Perspective,” issues such as social class and the town's continuing legacy are addressed. The voices captured in *Buxton*, although recorded over twenty years ago, still resonate with exuberance, affection, and poignancy; this expanded edition will bring their amazing stories back to the forefront of Iowa and American history.



CRIME BEAT...

By Marla Suter

I thought it would be interesting to include a Crime Beat section in the newsletter so we could all reflect with a sense of nostalgia on those kinder, gentler times that we believe existed in days gone by. So, I began looking for stories in the *Early Crimes of Marion County* binder put together by Janet Ritchie and stored in the Museum library. This is an extensive collection (and very heavy book) spanning from 1867-1922.

After spending several hours reading through the newspaper articles I came to the conclusion that those kinder, gentler times may in fact be the time we are living in today and not those days gone by! Tales of murder, rape, murder-suicide and all manner of dastardly deeds leapt from the pages in graphic and gruesome detail.

I did find one story interesting from the perspective that if it had happened in current day, it may not have made the news so I am reprinting it here. If you get the chance, and have a strong stomach, you will have to spend some time in the Museum Library this summer and thumb through *Early Crimes of Marion County*.

THOUGHT THE CORPSE SPOKE

Hair-Raising Episode Connected With Howard Rowland's Death.

January 22, 1920

Sheriff Cronkhite and City Marshal Gordon Moore, relate a real creepy and ghostly story in connection with their visit to the Lon Baty home immediately following the killing of the late Howard Rowland.

After the killing, Mrs. Baty, Mrs. Rowland and the latter's children went to the home of a neighbor, leaving the corpse of Rowland on the floor. From the neighbor's house the officers were called. They stopped and talked with Mrs. Howard Rowland while on their way to the scene of the killing and were assured that there was no one at the Baty house and that the corpse was lying on the floor.

As the sheriff and marshal approached the Baty residence, in the woods at the edge of a dark deep ravine, they remarked to each other that it "looked ghostly" at the best—a fitting place for a tragedy.

A moment later they were at the door and the sheriff had some little difficulty in opening the door. While he was fumbling the fastenings both men plainly heard "someone" or "something" in the house exclaim: "come in; walk right on in!"

Seph looked at Gordon and Gordon stared at Seph, but they were officers of the law, supposed to be brave men, and dared not refuse the invitation, no odds if it came from man, devil or ghost.

On making entrance, the first object in view was the corpse of Rowland, lying with head toward the door, perfectly dead, and no living thing in sight. However, the officers did not have time to discuss the matter of the uncanny invitation to "come in" until they heard a rustling of feet and feathers and, looking up, saw the "ghostly" object—a large green parrot in a cage directly above the corpse.

Those were all the words the bird said, but both officers say that they would not have been at all surprised to have heard the creature say: "Didn't we have a hell of a time?" or "Wasn't that a big thunderstorm a while ago?"

Recipes From the Historical Kitchen

CHOCOLATE PUDDING

Ingredients:

Yolks of 3 eggs, 1 scant cup sugar, 13 tablespoons rolled crackers, 6 tablespoons grated chocolate, 1 quart boiling milk in which the chocolate has been dissolved.

Sauce:

1 cup sugar, 2 tablespoons flour, 2 tablespoons butter, mixed with a little cold water, pour on a pint of boiling water and cook until thick, flavor.

Mrs. F. P. Woodruff -- Knoxville, Iowa

A favorite recipe from *The Hostess Cookbook*, Written by Iowa Women, 1923
Besse Toulouse Sprague, Women's and Children's Hospital Association.

Tidbits

THANK YOU JOAN HALL!!!

Many thanks to Joan Hall who has served as Treasurer for many years. Due to health issues, she has stepped down and Marla Suter was appointed to fill in for the remainder of Joan's term. Joan will continue with the Society as a member of the Board of Directors.

Dreaming of Movies
in the Park with
Popcorn? There is a
rumor that it may
return this summer!!
Stay tuned for more
info!

Keep up with Historical Village happenings by following us on our web site www.marioncountyhistory.com and on Facebook at Marion County Historical Society

Six new Lifetime Members in 2013

Linda Brooks
Roger Brooks
Doran Davies
Carla Huebler
Marla Suter
Arlyn Perkey

Will your name be on the list in 2014?

Lifetime membership is \$125
Thank you for your support!!

Board of Directors for 2014

President: Janet Ritchie
Vice President: Helen Boertje
Secretary: Bev Jones
Treasurer: Marla Suter
Curator: Kathleen Smith
Director: Dan Carlson
Director: Ken Six
Director: Dave Ritchie
Director: Roger Brooks
Director: Ruby Dursky
Director: Joan Hall
Director: Terry Fenoglio
Director: Carla Huebler
Director: Craig Agan

2014 Upcoming Events

SAVE THE DATE

May 24th & 25th – Civil War Days

Aug 6th – 9th – Nationals

Nov 22nd & 23rd Festival of Trees

Membership includes free admission to the Village which normally costs \$5.00 for adults and \$2.00 for students. Pre-school age children are free. Like what we do but can't be active? Your monetary contributions are also valued for support. Those joining after June 1, 2014 need not renew for 2015.

Membership form below may be mailed to:
Marion County Historical Society
P.O. Box 21, Knoxville, IA 50138

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please check the appropriate line:

\$15 for Individual Membership

\$30 for Family Membership

\$125 for Lifetime Individual Membership

My contribution for financial Support

For office use only

Date Paid: _____

Membership Year: _____

Membership Card Issued: _____

Membership List Updated: _____

Marion County Historical Society
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