



Markesan Historical Society Gazette

January/February/March 2016



The Grand River Valley Museum will open its doors for the season on Saturday, May 7th. Consider volunteering to staff the museum for a Saturday afternoon. You will enjoy the time spent with visitors touring the facility.

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The January meeting was spent viewing photos of the 24th Annual Heritage Day last September. With the 25th anniversary of Heritage Day coming up this fall, ideas are being formulated for exhibits to display various collections from the museum archives.

Looking back to the very first Heritage Day, the article that appeared in the August 8, 1991 issue of the Markesan Herald stated:

"The Markesan Historical Society has planned an open house of their museum on East John Street for Saturday and Sunday, August 10 and 11. Hours will be 10:00 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturday and 1:00 to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

Admission is free.

Visitors will be welcomed by members dressed in historical clothing who will be stationed at various exhibits to answer any questions.

After being directed to the old-time photo display, visitors will be directed down a hall to the sewing room and summer kitchen. After viewing the bedroom set-up next, people will be able to look at the many display cases.

From there, the Utley Depot can be visited and also the farm and commercial display down a hall and up a ramp.

A special highlight of the open house will be the demonstration of an old-fashioned forge.

Tables and benches will be set up next to the depot where people can sit and relax while sipping refreshments. A tent, donated by the Markesan Lions, will be set up outside for those wishing to enjoy refreshments alfresco."

The late Leona Weber wrote in her column of the same newspaper :

"We are finally starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel at the Markesan Historical Society.

The museum is far from being complete but we want the public to see what we have been doing."

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Can you recall other items of interest that occurred in Markesan 25 years ago?

Headlines in the local newspaper proclaimed a couple had increased the city's population by three!

Richard and Robin Schweder became the parents of triplets--

Mackensie, Courtney and Landon were born on June 24th, joining brother, four-year old Kyle.

The couple said they lived in a two-bedroom house which would "do for now" and also traded in their car and purchased a van.

The Markesan State Bank celebrated its 100th anniversary.

Members of the Markesan Police Department raided a local property on Sunday, July 26th, destroying more than 300 marijuana plants that had grown from three to nine feet tall.

David and Deborah Bugni purchased the former Stetson Inn on Highway 44, renaming it The Markesan Inn.

The February meeting night was windy and cold, so it was that quite a few members stayed in the cozy warmth of their homes. Shirley Parker brought an old newspaper to the meeting. Interesting news items were discussed. It will be noted that a wealth of information can be gleaned from newspapers.

Genealogists and historians benefit greatly from these publications.

March Meeting

Show and Tell was the program for March. An old advertisement from the Markesan Super Market was shown, with prices that can only be dreamed of today. Wooden bullets, used by the Nazis at the end of WW II, were displayed, a well-loved Steiff bear and accompanying story was heard, and a silk worm and silk artifact from China was shown.

A member who is an Oneida Indian, shared some pieces of ornate bead work from her heritage.

First Lady decorative plates and a chocolate pot, a slag dish and a hospital identification baby bracelet were other items included for the evening's showing.

Karl Stewart, well-known author and Markesan Historical Society member, will be the speaker for the **April 13th meeting at the Markesan City Hall beginning at 7 p.m.** Karl will tell of his adventures during a recent trip to Africa.

An **Appraisal Fair** is planned for **Saturday, June 25th at the museum.** John DeNamur and colleagues will be available to appraise items. Cost will be \$3 for one item or \$5 for two items. Tell your friends and neighbors about this exciting event. Exact time to be announced.

New lights have been installed in the main museum and veterans' corridor. This has made a vast improvement in all aspects.

Meetings

The Historical Society meets the second Wednesday of the month in the Barn at the Grand River Valley Museum, 214 E. John St. for the summer months at 7 p.m. The Society meets at the Markesan City Hall, 150 S. Bridge St. during the winter months.

Museum Hours

The Grand River Valley Museum is open on Saturdays from 1 to 4 p.m. May through September. The Museum is also open by appointment.

Help support your local Historical Society by paying your dues. You are thanked, and appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP

\$5/yr. individual

\$100/ lifetime individual or husband & wife

Valentines

The museum has a nice assortment of old-fashioned Valentines. A display of these cards is being considered for the 2016 season. Gayle Schultz has found interesting facts about these cards. Valentine greetings have been popular since the Middle Ages, a time when prospective lovers said or sang their romantic verses.

Written verses began appearing after 1400.

Paper valentines originated in the 1500s in Europe.

By the 16th century, written valentines were commonplace and by the 17th century, it was a widespread tradition in England and Western countries for friends and sweethearts to exchange gifts and notes on February 14.

Popular styles of American cards were the "Daguerreotype," and the "Mirror Valentine."

During the Victorian era and its printing advances, Valentine cards became even more popular and the penny post made it easier to mail written valentines.

Honeycombed tissue, paper puffs, colored inks, lace, and embossed paper were used to create cards.

"Vinegar valentines" were cards of a not too nice nature; some being caustic while others were comical, poking fun of spinsters and school teachers.

Mechanical valentines and pop-outs were popular cards with moveable parts.

Some cards were rather racy, of which we do not have!

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