

h e a d l i n e s



# Facelift

Our museum is sporting a fresh new look. After years of growing concerns about both the deterioration and the bland appearance of our museum’s exterior, a major renovation project kicked off this summer.

In mid-July, Top Notch Painting of Freeman transformed the yellow-green exterior that debuted when the building was erected in 1975 to a two-tone pallet. Museum staff designed the new look, selecting “merlot and cream” as the colors, reflecting the colors in

our logo and branding. It took Dave Kaufman and his crew about two weeks – usually partial days because of the heat – to power wash, prime and paint the west and south exterior of the (coincidentally) Kauffman Wing in time for the July 31 chislic festival. The facelift includes new lettering on the front windows. A large stone-and-metal sign in the lawn area west of the



comments about the new welcoming look and the positive first impression it’s making on our guests. That’s exactly what we were hoping for.



museum will replace the large plastic letters that had been mounted on the exterior west wall; that’s coming in fall.

This project is made possible thanks to Freeman Community Foundation, which awarded a \$6,000 grant in June. We’re hearing lots of positive



**Heritage Hall Museum & Archives**

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## The Director's Perspective

What a difference some paint can make! I love our museum's new look. It's just paint, and yet it has changed the way we are perceived and how we perceive ourselves. It feels like a fresh start.

The past few months have felt like a new beginning as well, with so many visitors coming through our doors after being few and far between last year during Covid-19. Through July, we welcomed guests representing 28 different states from coast to coast.

It is so gratifying to see people enjoying our exhibits and to hear their amazement at the extent and quality of our collection. Some of the recent comments left in our comment book include, "Fantastic historical museum. Love seeing history preserved in such an interesting way!" ... "Well worth our trip." ... "So amazing! Everything so organized and clean!" ... "Very impressive and amazing museum." ... "It gets better every year!"

With a new school year here, we're inviting educators to include us in their plans. We have the staff to make school visits extra meaningful. Our curator, Terry, spent many years as a school administrator and knows well the standards that teachers must attain, and our education & communication coordinator, Tim, has a unique view of area history from his years as the local newspaper editor/publisher. If you know of a teacher in the region, say a good word for us. We take seriously our mission to be an educational facility for both young and old.

As you'll notice on the newsletter insert, we continue to have a lot of projects in the works. Many are delayed maintenance sort of projects that, like our new paint, will be very rewarding once complete. If you find any project that resonates particularly with you, please do consider earmarking your donation. While some are more time-sensitive than others, all need to be done. Memberships and donations through October will be counted for 2021; in November we will start taking memberships and donations for the 2022 season.

And speaking of donations, our humble thanks go to our most recent donors listed on the back page, with a special tip-of-the-hat to the businesses listed on the insert. We value all the donations by members both near and far. YOU are the reason we can continue our work to improve this museum as we preserve the many unique artifacts and treasured stories of our greater community.



Marnette D. (Ortman) Hofer  
Executive Director/  
Archivist

## HHM&A programs returning in fall

We are looking forward to resuming programming starting in September. With renovations complete at the Bethel Mennonite Church, we have a clean and refreshed space that is beautiful and flexible for accommodating a wide variety of programs.

However, we are monitoring the Covid-19 variant closely. We want to keep our staff and visitors healthy; please watch for updates.

On Sunday, Sept. 19, starting at 7 p.m., we will visit with Lois Thiessen Preheim of Newton, Kan., who recently wrote "Trailing the Schoolchildren's Blizzard," available in our mercantile.

Her book traces the blizzard of 1888 from Canada to Texas including the story of the five boys who died in East Freeman.

On Sunday, Oct. 10, S.D. Humanities Scholar Phyllis Schrag will speak as Francis Perkins, an American sociologist and workers-rights advocate who was the first woman appointed to the U.S. Cabinet, serving as Secretary of Labor from 1933-1945.



Her one-woman show begins at 3 p.m.

On Saturday evening, Oct. 23, Dr. Nathan Bates, professor of German at University of South Dakota, will be speaking at 7 p.m. Through a German in South Dakota grant from the S.D. Humanities Council, Dr. Bates has been looking at the German language materials and records in our archives, and will share how he plans to integrate these books and documents into the German courses he teaches, benefiting his students as well as HHM&A.

We invite you to join us for any or all of these programs. Admission will be charged; members at a discounted rate.

### Our Mission

is to preserve, educate and foster appreciation for the diverse natural and cultural history of the greater Freeman area, settled largely by Germans from Russia in the 1870s.

**HERITAGE HALL**  
*Museum*  
& ARCHIVES

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Marnette D. (Ortman) Hofer,  
executive director/archivist  
Terry Quam, curator  
Brian Skinner, facilities manager  
Tim L. Waltner, communication/  
education coordinator

## ‘Feathers, fur and scales’

Mounted animal exhibits have been an important part of our museum going back to the time when home was the second floor of the Tieszen Industrial Arts Building on the FJC and Academy campus.

The exhibit took a big step in 1975 when a new building was erected south of the campus and local taxidermist Bernie Preheim donated more than 100 mammals, birds and fish to the collection.

A Freeman community farmer, Preheim was a self-taught taxidermist who gained regional acclaim for his work. In recent years, museum staff has noted the natural deterioration

in the Natural World Exhibit in the Kauffman Wing and the need for refreshing. That, and the decision to expand the exhibit to include “Molly,” the mosasaur that’s remained hidden in our collection of rocks and fossils, spawned a major project for staff.

In recent months, facilities manager Brian Skinner and curator Terry Quam have removed all the mammals, birds and fish from their cases and displays and taken inventory.

The result has been a sorting process that identifies the mounts that can be retained and cleaned in preparation for the new exhibit, which we hope to open this fall.

Quam has undertaken the task of cleaning what she calls her “critters.” She also refers to her project as “feathers, fur and scales.”

“Each type of ‘covering’ is cleaned in a different manner,” she explains. “The fish are simply cleaned with a damp cloth. Birds are cleaned with a cloth lightly sprayed with WD-40 and wiped down, going the same direction as the

feathers. A damp Q-tip is used to clean the eyes, beaks and claws.

“The animals with fur are cleaned with a wide bristle hairbrush and “Showsheen” spray (used for show cattle). Once this is worked into the fur the animals need to dry. A second round of brushing and spray is done. Eyes and claws are cleaned with a damp Q-tip. Once the animal is completely dry a smaller bristle hairbrush is used to make it display-ready,” she explains.

Quam has relied on Vic Ensz and Steve C. “Twix” Waltner, who both have taxidermy experience, for suggestions on this project.

This project is an excellent example of both the value of the contributions from those who’ve gone before us and our responsibility to care for them and to share them with our guests.



Museum staff members Brian Skinner and Tim L. Waltner move a bald eagle to the floor for cleaning.



Curator Terry Quam has spent a lot of “quality time” with her “critters” in recent weeks, taking inventory and refreshing those that are viable to be featured in the new Natural World Exhibit that will also feature our mosasaur.



## Tuesday night ‘fire call’

Members of the Freeman Volunteer Fire Department toured our museum Tuesday night, June 29. The firefighters used part of their regular monthly meeting to walk through our complex including our four historic buildings. But the tour wasn’t just for pleasure. We invited them so if there was an emergency, they’d be familiar with the layout. We ended up in the historic Bethel Church where the firefighters and our full staff had a great discussion about changes we can make. That includes physical improvements – marking emergency exits, for example – and procedures if there is a fire or severe weather. We appreciate their visit and their expertise, insights and suggestions.



# h e a d l i n e s



**Board member David Schrag** was among volunteers that gathered in late July to give the Deckert House a good cleaning as we prepare to repaint and begin putting it all back together. Our plan is to present the home as true as possible to how it would have looked in the late 1800s, when the black kitchen and the grand Russian oven at its center were still the main source for heat and cooking.

**July 31 was a busy day** for us with the South Dakota Chislic Festival next door at the Prairie Arboretum. Executive Director Marnette Hofer teamed a historical presentation with Ian Tuttle of Omaha titled, "From Russia with Love; The History of Chislic."

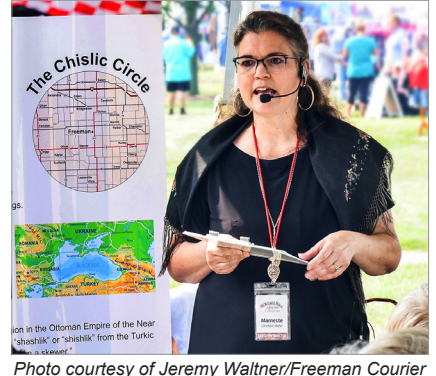


Photo courtesy of Jeremy Waltner/Freeman Courier

## Thank You

### To Our 2021 Heritage Hall Museum & Archives Members

Your support enables us to continue developing our museum.

**May-July 2021**

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- Complete Media - Matt Luke, Sioux Falls
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- Gifts in honor or memory of someone will be acknowledged in November.*

You'll find complete list of our current members online at [www.heritagehallmuseum.com](http://www.heritagehallmuseum.com)

											
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\$30	\$50	\$100	\$250	\$500	\$750	\$1,000	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$75,000+

All members receive annual admission to the museum and archives, our quarterly newsletter and special pricing for museum events.

Shopkeepers: 2 annual patron passes; Conductors: 4 annual patron passes; Bronze: 6 annual patron passes;

Silver & above: Additional passes and personal tours for six guests upon request. Recognition for sponsoring businesses.

*"A generation which ignores history has no past and no future."*  
Robert Heinlein

We value your ongoing support through your memberships, donations and volunteer time. Your contributions enable us to continue and expand our mission of sharing our community's history.

### 2021 Heritage Hall Museum & Archives Membership Form

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Thanks to the businesses who've become members and made donations to support Heritage Hall Museum & Archives thus far this year. They include:

**Broders Trucking • Heritage Pharmacy**

**Special thanks to the businesses who have joined/donated at the \$100 or greater level listed below.**

 <p>Sioux Falls, South Dakota</p>	 <p>Freeman, South Dakota</p>		 <p>Daniel Haggerty Freeman, South Dakota</p>
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# HERITAGE HALL *Museum* & ARCHIVES

## MAJOR PROJECTS

### We Have A Number Of Projects Underway At Your Museum

- Facelift for our main museum building exterior & new welcome sign*
- Renovation of the historic Deckert House*
- Refreshing our Natural World Gallery*
- A new Faith Gallery*
- Revamping the layout of exhibits in the Kauffman Wing*

### We Have Other Projects On Our Wish List\*

#### LIGHTS

- LEDs in Kauffman Wing (\$7,000)
- LEDs (track lighting) for perimeter and dark areas in Unruh-Tieszen Wing (\$5,000)
- LEDs (track lighting) in Welcome Area (\$3,000)

#### HEAT/AC

- Portable air conditioner/heater for special events at any of our historical buildings (\$1,000+)
- New furnaces in Kauffman Wing that will include Faith Gallery/Lobby (\$10,000)

#### WATER

- Extend city water to outside hydrant (north side) (\$3,000)

#### SECURITY

- Retrofit panic doors (\$800 for four doors)
- Security system for Deckert House (\$5,000)
- Security system for Bethel Church (\$4,300)
- Security system for school and Johannesthal (\$6,000)
- Complex perimeter fence (\$10,000)

#### REMODEL FOR

#### WELCOME AREA & MERCANTILE

- Install firewall in Welcome Area/Faith Galley (\$3,000)
- Remove block wall for mercantile/lobby/welcome area expansion (\$1,500)

#### ACCESS

- New sidewalk to Deckert House (\$4,500)
- 8x12 landing for Deckert House (\$1,500)
- Redo concrete (with drainage) in area between overhead doors (\$2,000)
- Gravel lot on east side of Bethel Church with driveway to overhead doors (\$1,000)

#### OUTDOOR IMPROVEMENTS

- Rock around all buildings (\$200)
- Repair and repaint inside and outside of school house (\$500)
- Repaint all other exterior walls of main complex to match the recently painted west/south sides of the building (\$10,000)

\*All proposed costs are based on current estimates

**To learn more about how you can support these projects, visit with Marnette D. (Ortman) Hofer or call 605-925-7545.**

