

Breckenridge-Wheeler Area Historical Society

June Newsletter

The Society Hosts two school groups



The second graders toured the museum on June 4th and the 8th grade came down to the museum on May 31st for a Civil War encampment activity. The 8th graders fired muskets, learned about social graces, washed clothes, learned about Gratiot Civil War veterans, and played some old fashioned games. It was a delight to have the students come and see our facilities and learn about history in a hands-on way.

The Society is marking its 25th year !!!

In 1994 a committee was formed to pursue the idea of a historical society for Breckenridge. A lot has happened since that committee started. In 1996, the old Pilgrim Holiness Church was purchased at a cost of \$24,000. After a lot of sweat equity in refurbishing the interior, the Plank Road Museum held a grand opening in 1997. Only two years later, the Society became the owners of the Drake Memorial House after Margaret Drake Elliott left the property to the Breckenridge-Wheeler Area Historical Society in her will. Then began a period of reburbingishing on the Drake House and the grounds, cleaning and sorting of items left in the house and eventually a large auction sale where items that would not be used for display were sold. At the conclusion of this monumental task, the Drake Memorial House was opened to the public in 2002.

At the Plank Road Museum, a new handicapped bathroom was added in 2003 and the roof was replaced in 2006. Then began a period where we received many grants for improvements from groups such as the Gerstacker Foundation, the Gratiot County Community Foundation, Rotary International, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Breckenridge Rotary Club. With those proceeds, the museum was insulated, rewired to come up to code, had new lighting installed, we added a research library, added air conditioning to both the museum and the Drake House, and updated the heating system at the museum. The museum was also repainted with a grant from the Gratiot County Community Foundation.

At the present time, both of our buildings are in great shape, the grounds look great and our finances are stable. We have come a long way in 25 years.

Our long term financial plan would include continuing to use fund raisers, such as the car show, the Elvis show, and the plant sale to help fund our day to day operations. Linda Chapin does a great job in organizing these fund raisers.

Donations from Isabella Bank, Breckenridge Insurance Agency, and Wheeler Township are also instrumental in keeping us financially stable. We have a Margaret Drake Elliot Fund in the Gratiot County Community Foundation which will generate income and we are hoping that in our 25th year to raise the necessary \$2,000 to make the Breckenridge-Wheeler Area Historical Society Fund that has been started in the Gratiot County Community Foundation a fully funded account which will also generate interest income that can be used for daily operational money.

All of this could not have been accomplished without a large group of dedicated volunteers both past and present. We have had four presidents over the 25 year period who have helped to guide this organization. Patricia Gillis was the first president and served in many other capacities over the years. Alan Weburg and Bob Smith also have served in that role. David Briggs is the current president and has served in that post for about 12 years total.

This summer, we will be celebrating our 25 year anniversary with an open house on August 11 from 1 – 4 PM. See more details in the BWAHS Schedule.

Plant Sale

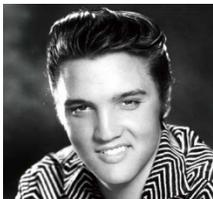
We hosted our yearly Perennial Plant Sale fund raiser on May 16 and 17th. The sale generated about \$600 for our treasury. Angie Curtis, Linda Chapin, Glenda Bloomquist and Dave and Loretta Briggs all worked at this event. A big thank you goes to Loretta Briggs and Angie Curtis for providing a large amount of the sale plants from their gardens.



Upcoming Volunteer Opportunity: Call us at 842-3182 to volunteer

July 4th – Fourth of July Car Show. We will need volunteers to make hot dogs, direct the parking of cars, and whatever else Linda wants you to do. The show runs from 8 – 3. You can volunteer for a shift. You do not need to be there the entire day, if it doesn't fit with your schedule. Come and join us on the 4th!

Elvis is coming, again!!!!!!! On September 21, Elvis impersonator, Jake Slater will be presenting a show at the High School Cafeteria. We will be hosting “Elvis” and serving a dinner that night as a fund raiser. Tickets are \$20/ person and can be purchased from Dave Briggs or Linda Chapin. We hope that this will be great fund raiser for us, so purchase your tickets before the show is sold out. To reserve tickets, call 842-3023 or 842-3483.



Upcoming BWAHS Schedule:

- Now through the month of September – museum and house are open on Mondays from 9 – 12(noon).
 - July 4th – Car Show at Hoffmeyer/JayCee Park (volunteers needed)
 - June 17 – at 7 PM – Ithaca Historical Group to tour our facilities
 - July 17 – BWAHS Board meeting at 10 AM at the Plank Road Museum
 - August 11 – We will be celebrating our 25th anniversary from 1 – 4 PM. The Plank Road Arbor #779 of the Gleaners will host the event at the museum and furnish ice cream. There will be games for children and music for adults. This event will take place after the All-School Reunion at Anschutz. Please mark your calendars and try to attend.
 - September TBA – Annual BWAHS Society meeting and elections. More details will be made available at a later date.
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Let's end this newsletter with a thank you to all of the members that have helped out this year with the spring events

The Plank Road Museum and the Drake Memorial House are looking great and we would welcome visitors on Monday mornings or by appointment.

Sincerely,
David Briggs
BWAHS, President

Visit us at:

Facebook – Breckenridge/Wheeler Area Historical Society

E-mail – breckenridgewheeler@frontier.com

Website – bwahs.org