

GOTHENBURG HISTORICAL MUSEUM

NOVEMBER 2025

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Mission Statement:

*The mission of the
Historical Museum is:*

- to manage donated and
loaned items in a responsible
manner,
- to encourage and provide
opportunities for genealogy
research,
- to enhance the quality of life
for the people of Gothen-
burg by preserving our histo-
ry and heritage.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Anne Anderson

Contact info: 308-529-0906 or
anneanderson801@gmail.com

If walls could talk the stories they'd tell.

In the mid-1880's businesses were coming and the town of Gothenburg was beginning to grow. Changes came and business names came and went as well. I'm digging into the history of three historic buildings and will give you just a snippet of their past in this newsletter. You can look forward to more in the future.

In 1882 the only thing found on the site of Gothenburg was a sheep pasture being used by I.M. Abercrombie who had a sheep ranch west of what would become Gothenburg. There were no buildings or houses of any kind. The nearest settler was Olof Bergstrom living in a dugout on the quarter north of where the lake would be created in 1889-1891.

The first building in Gothenburg was built by Jonas Adling, early in the spring of 1883. Its location was on the corner of 8th Street and "A" Street (which would become Lake Avenue). Adling and an associate, C. A. Morell, had a large stock of hardware, tinware, etc. along with dry goods, groceries, boots, and shoes.

In 1927 O. H. Cotton opened a Hudson-Essex car dealership in this location. Eventually it would become home to

the Continental Oil Conoco service station.



In 1944 "Dutch" Haley announced the move of Haley Chevrolet Company following the purchase of the Continental Oil Co. building. Following considerable remodeling, Mr. Haley planned to have a completely up-to-date sales and service agency, a complete body department and provisions for a large Chevrolet parts department as well as Allis-Chalmers service department.

After 15 years in business Haley sold the business to Les Craig who was no

stranger to the auto business working as a mechanic up to becoming an owner.

Later years the location would become Wheeler's Farm Store, Country General and Orscheln's Feed & Farm Store.



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**1420 AVENUE F, PO BOX 204
GOTHENBURG, NE 69138
308.537.4212**

www.gothenburghistory.com

Email: gothenburghistory@outlook.com



If walls could talk the stories they'd tell.

While it was owned by Country General it expanded to the north in what was once the Gothenburg Times newspaper office. **And now for the rest of the story.**

It is now home to The **Sanders Furniture Store** owned by Chad and Miriam Sanders. They arrived in Gothenburg in 2006 and opened their first store in the building currently home to the Gothenburg Chamber of Commerce at 10th & Lake Avenue. In 2008 they purchased the former Orscheln store and

began renovations putting in new walls, flooring, lighting, etc.

It is a fabulous furniture store stocked with anything you might want in furniture, bedding and décor. They serve clientele in a large area of mid-Nebraska and beyond.



The Erb Furniture Company, under the ownership of George W. Erb was first advertised in 1887 in the Gothenburg Independent selling a complete line of goods including furniture, carpets, wallpaper and framing. Undertaking was listed as a specialty. In 1892, having outgrown the limits of his old quarters,

he engaged in erecting a new two-story brick block building, 25 x 80 feet, on the old site where he began business. The front glass windows would give him an opportunity to display his goods. In the rear an elevator was placed to connect with the upper floor. George's son Ed took over his father's business in 1920, and a two-story brick addition was made at the rear of the store, the second floor being fitted up as a mortuary.

In 1926 one of the biggest business deals was reported

when Axel F. Sholund took over the Erb Furniture Company from Ed Erb. He would continue the business as Sholund Furniture Company.

Nineteen years later in 1945 Walter Jobman purchased the furniture business from Mr. Sholund and operated it out of "The House With 10 Gables" that was once located just south of the Presbyterian Church.

In 1945 Paul Kniss, who had been an authorized dealer for the Gambles Stores in Gothenburg since 1934, announced he had taken the lease of the former Sholund Building and would be hosting a grand opening.

In 1961 Paul's son Jack joined the business and in 1968 became the sole owner. The large Gambles ghost sign can be



seen on the exterior north wall. Jack eventually built his new store, Kniss Furniture, on 9th & Avenue D.

The building has had many names and occupants over the years: Players,



The Pepper Grinder, The Brick Wall, Duke & Annie's, Rickertsen

Technology and Syndicated Publishers. **And now for the rest of the story.**

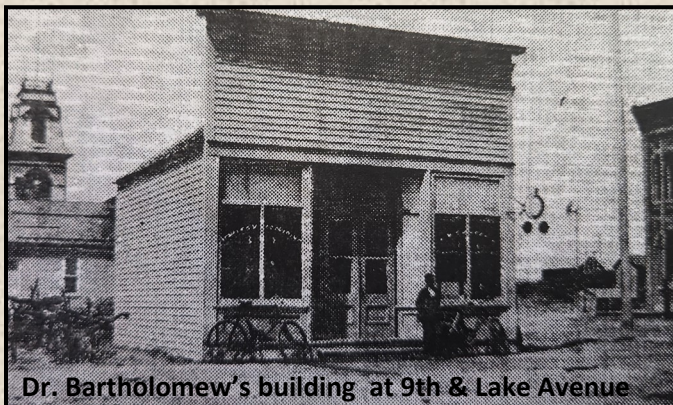


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STORIES—"Gathering Place," owned by Ashley and Jimmie Mann, offers a place to relax and enjoy that special beverage in a relaxing atmosphere. Ashley had already established a reputation for great beverages and atmosphere in another location and was looking to expand. They purchased the building in 2023 and did major remodeling of the space. The new Stories was finally ready and opened in 2024. Attractively decorated with books and antiques, this is a great place to meet friends or just relax with a book and a good cup of coffee.



In 1895 Dr. W. J. Bartholomew came from Madrid, NE opening a store in the Kittridge Block. He eventually moved into a storefront on the corner of 9th and "A" Street (later known as Lake Avenue). By 1908 Dr. Bartholomew needed a larger building. He had his building picked up and moved onto 9th Street just to the north while a new cement store building was being erected on



Dr. Bartholomew's building at 9th & Lake Avenue

the lot. By December 31, 1908, Bartholomew had moved his entire stock into his "strictly" modern business building. George F. Anderson, owner of a local lumberyard, bought the old building and moved it to use for storage.

Bartholomew's daughter Vera assisted him in the pharmacy following graduation from the Omaha School of Pharmacy, and, as taken from the 1908 edition of the *Gothenburg*



dependent, "was well fitted for her chosen profession, which was opening very largely of late to women, for the reason that they are far more accurate and careful as to detail, than men." Dr. Bartholomew added a one-story addition to the rear of his building, and it was occupied by the Gothenburg Real Estate Agency.

A business change came about in April 1911 when Bird Potter, who for several years was employed in Hinkley's Drug Store, acquired a controlling interest in Bartholomew's drug business and would change the name to Potter Drug Company.

The south portion of the building was home to the new Lake Theatre opened in 1922. The theater was in business for eight years before becoming a Safeway Grocery Store. Above the theater was the Lake Hotel, which would have many owners over the years and eventually turned into small 2 and 3 room apartments..

Dr. Milton Moore and a dentist Dr. L. A. Chamberlin set up their offices upstairs in the Bartholomew building in 1909. Dr. Moore later moved to California in 1927. Dr. B. W. Pyle began his clinic and hospital above Potter's Drug Co. in 1929. His hospital remained there until 1949 when he built a new clinic on the southwest corner of 9th

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and Avenue D and he closed his hospital with the new Gothenburg Memorial Hospital opening in 1950.

In 1934 Potter's Pharmacy installed the newest thing in ice cream. The new modern, automatic ice cream maker could turn out ice cream of smooth fine texture and rich goodness. Only natural sweet cream, fresh eggs and sugar were used, and the new cream was named "Potter's Super Cream." The soda fountain was always popular hangout for the young crowd and now everyone, young and old were keen on the ice cream.

In 1937 Paul Potter graduated from Creighton Pharmacy School in Omaha and returned and assumed ownership of Potter's Drug Company. In 1963 Gothenburg celebrated and congratulated Paul Potter on the complete modernization and expansion of the store. The 50' x 100' floor space was filled with items to fill your every need. Through the years it had the reputation as one of the top drug stores in the state.

In 1978 John Gallagher, a long-time associate of Mr. Potters and a graduate of the University of Nebraska Pharmacy College, would take over the business and change the name to Gallagher Pharmacy. Mr. Gallagher retired and the building was used briefly as a discount store known as Den-Mart.

The story would be incomplete if we didn't include the mural which

graces the north side of the building. The "Rainbow Ponies" mural dates back to 1982 when GHS art

teacher, Cindy Cronn and her students, along with artist in residence, Robin Smith, designed the mural and proceeded to paint the iconic rainbow of horses that are enjoyed by all



and used for promotion by the city and tourism. Over the years it lost its luster and has been repainted twice. Its importance to the community was evident when a 2023 fundraising campaign "Save the Ponies" received enough donations to renew it.

In 2000 Brian and Sheryl Miller purchased the building and proceeded to remodel it

into offices for their business Gateway Realty. The upper floor was remodeled into their private downtown residence. With the 5,000 sq. ft. of space they also created four additional suites for leasing to other businesses.

And now for the rest of the story.



Koby and Carrie Rickertsen established Rickertsen Technology in 2013 in Gothenburg. In 2016 they purchased the former Gateway Realty building and relocated their technology business. When they obtained their real estate licenses in 2017 they became RE/MAX realtors. In 2023 they became agents for **Nebraska Realty and Iron Horse Land Company**. There are additional businesses in this beautifully renovated historic building.

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM-2026

The Gothenburg Historical Museum is 100 percent volunteer. We rely on 49 volunteer greeters during the summer season, as well as some who help do office work, along with others who maintain the buildings and grounds. Our 12-member board meets monthly and carries a lot of the heavy load. Your contributions make that much easier.

We consider our volunteers and others who have given their time and donations as *"Friends of the Museum."* A very special **THANK YOU** to those who contributed to the museum following our last newsletter. We appreciate you.

Also a very Special Thank You to those who contributed during the **GIVE BIG GOTHENBURG** campaign. Your generosity is overwhelming.

- Richeson Inc.
- Steve Windrum
- Gary & Deb Mroczek
- Robin & Lynnette Stevens
- Flatwater Bank Employees
- Arlan & Tip Ronnekamp
- Craig & Mary Finke
- Jeff & Christy Jobman
- Denise Brittenham
- Dave & Linda Loostrom
- Gothenburg Realty
- Jenny Raymond
- Glenn Vieselmeyer
- Robert Ronnekamp
- Tom & Janet Boyd
- Sue Ostergard
- Elsie Cyriacks

YOU ARE INVITED

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GOTHENBURG HISTORICAL MUSEUM

MEMBERS, GUESTS AND VOLUNTEERS ARE INVITED TO

JOIN US ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2025, 2:00 p.m.

at the GOTHENBURG UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

This is our opportunity to thank our members and the many volunteers who have worked so hard this past year.

Join us for refreshments, fun and an entertaining program presented by

Roger Heidebrink—"We're Gothenburg- But Why??"

THANK YOU!

- To those who helped inventory and sort storage items: Dick Larson, Mark Peyton, Kendra Fecht, Connie Bihlmaier, Anne Anderson, Roger Kennicutt, Roger Heidebrink and Lori Artz.
- To the painters who finished painting the St. John's Lutheran Church: Bruce & Joyce Clark, Terri Nordin and Teresa and Todd Whitney.
- To Chad Kolbo, Jeremy Hendricks and Dustin Ehlers from Central NE Public Power & Irrigation for doing the heavy lifting to place the buffalo statue at the museum.
- **To our 2025 Volunteer Greeters:**
 - ◆ Cordelia Aden
 - ◆ Joan Aden
 - ◆ Keith & Marcy Aden
 - ◆ Anne Anderson
 - ◆ Connie Bihlmaier
 - ◆ Jan Blecha
 - ◆ Marianne Boyd
 - ◆ Bryan Brede
 - ◆ Jay Buddenberg
 - ◆ Bruce Clark
 - ◆ Colleen Clark
 - ◆ Dennis & Mary Lou Clark
 - ◆ Patty Cordell
 - ◆ Connie Dalrymple
 - ◆ Chris Demoret
 - ◆ Kendra Fecht
 - ◆ Sue Finke
 - ◆ Nancy Fisher
 - ◆ Arlene Franzen
- ◆ Colleen Geiken
- ◆ Jan Gill
- ◆ Carol Gronewold
- ◆ Roger Heidebrink
- ◆ Pat Jobman
- ◆ Rhonda Jobman
- ◆ Steve Johnson
- ◆ Joyce Hudson
- ◆ Roger Kennicutt
- ◆ Elaine Keiser
- ◆ Syd & Joleen Kite
- ◆ Darlene Kratzenstein
- ◆ Dick Larson
- ◆ Donna McConnell
- ◆ Tony Mroz
- ◆ Sue Ostergard
- ◆ Mark & Cindy Peyton
- ◆ Bob Ronnekamp
- ◆ Karen Sawyer
- ◆ Cathy Simon
- ◆ Ira Suhr
- ◆ Roger Tederman
- ◆ Bev Tharp
- ◆ Carol Van-Overbeke
- ◆ Dennis White
- ◆ Deb Weidman

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE GOTHENBURG HISTORICAL MUSEUM

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

Friday, Dec. 12

9 a.m. to Noon—1420 Avenue F
Join us for coffee And cinnamon rolls.

Form of Payment

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Check payable to:

Gothenburg Historical Museum

PO Box 204

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email Address** _____

****I WISH TO RECEIVE MY NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL**
YES NO

"FRIEND OF THE MUSEUM-2026"

- ☐ Life Time 10x Building Fund Contributor \$1,000+
- ☐ Building Fund Benefactor..... \$500+
- ☐ Building Fund Contributor.....\$100+
- _____
- ☐ Supporting..... \$50
- ☐ Contributing or Family\$25
- ☐ Individual\$15
- ☐ Other\$_____