

## Pipestone County Historical Society



Pipestone County Museum  
113 South Hiawatha Avenue  
Pipestone, MN 56164

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Pipestone, MN 56164  
Permit #002

Pipestone County Museum  
[pipctymu@iw.net](mailto:pipctymu@iw.net)  
507-825-2563  
[pipestoneminnesota.com/museum](http://pipestoneminnesota.com/museum)

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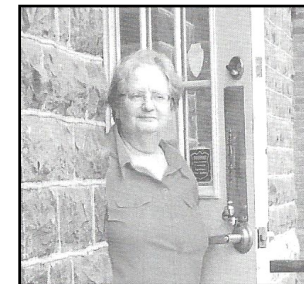


# Prairie Traveler



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## In Memory of Elizabeth McCabe

In honor and appreciation of her  
**25+ years of service to**  
the Pipestone County Historical Society

*We will miss you*

*Memorials for Betty will go toward the purchase of microfilm rolls  
for newspaper research—as research was one of her passions.*

Check us out on the web!

[Pipestoneminnesota.com/museum](http://Pipestoneminnesota.com/museum)

Shop at the

### Museum Store



*proceeds support the  
Museum  
& Its programs!*

**Members Receive  
10% Off!**

Looking for a very unique  
gift? Most of the images in  
the Museum's Photographic  
Collection can be repro-  
duced for private use.



*New Postcards available at the  
Museum Gift Shop!  
.....\$1.00*

- *Pipestone's Old City  
Hall circa 1896*
- *Corner of Olive (Main)  
and Hiawatha circa  
1900*

*Also available: Masonic  
Lodge Room,\* and assorted  
historic Pipestone buildings.*

*\*see page 6*



## Community Collection: Hats



The Museum is sharing a portion of its hat collection in the Community Collection case through June. This is just a small portion as- with military hats included- there are over 200 in the Museum's collection.

Early in the 20th Century, it was well-mannered, courteous and respectful to wear a hat when in public. Around mid-century hats fell out of fashion to an extent but remained in the hearts and minds of many women. Included in the display are both men and women's hats of different materials and styles. The display will be up through June 2019.

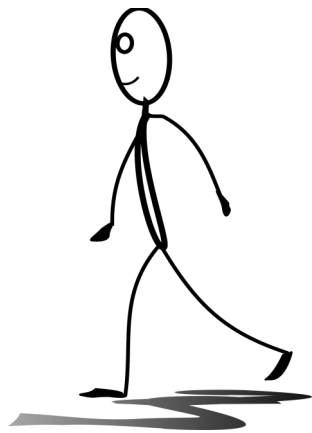
# Museum Programming on the Move!

By Kathy Fritz

Hi, from Kathy Fritz at the Pipestone County Museum. I've been at the Museum now for about five months. Currently, I'm working on educational programing to take the Museum out to the public. Every month I give a presentation at Good Sam and Ridgeview. Topics I have covered so far have been; The Great Starvation Experiment in Minnesota, WWII Rationing and Recycling, Women in the Workforce During WWII, and WWII POWs in the Workforce in Minnesota. I choose these topics because they were not covered in my high school education. My thought was if I didn't know about these topics, maybe others didn't either. I found many interesting facts, which I did not know prior to my research. I'm always fascinated by the discussions we have after the presentations with the residents sharing their memories. I hope to continue finding new topics that will intrigue and hopefully inspire people to further their education about the subject. I would love to expand this program and take my presentations to classrooms and youth groups to share my research with the youth of our communities.

Take a walking tour this summer! The Pipestone County Museum is offering guided walking tours on the second Saturday of the month; June 8, July 13, and August 10. In the morning enjoy a tour of the Historic Downtown District. Learn about the National Register District and the early history of the community. In the afternoon stroll through Old Woodlawn Cemetery. Learn about WWI veterans, early pioneers, and the symbolism on the grave stones. Enjoy a day outside with your family and friends.

The morning session starts at the Pipestone County Museum at 10 am. Meet at Old Woodlawn Cemetery at 2 pm for the afternoon session. Both tours last about an hour. The fee is \$3 per participant per tour and kids 12 and under are free. Make sure to wear comfortable shoes. Call the Pipestone County Museum for more information: (507) 825-2563. Visit our website at <http://pipestoneminnesota.com/museum/> to learn more. We look forward to seeing you!



Don't forget to visit the District #3 Schoolhouse at Moore Park this summer. It is open for class on Thursdays from Memorial Day to Labor Day from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. From crafts to math games to reading books, teacher Diane Hansen will be ready with fun activities for young elementary children, accompanied by an adult. Free to the public!

District #3, also known as the Farmer School, was originally located four and a half miles west of Pipestone near Highway 30. It was built around 1880 and closed its doors in the 1960s. It was moved to the Pipestone County Fairgrounds and in 1984 to its current location at Moore Park, and has been maintained by the Pipestone County Historical Society.

## Remember...



Save Your  
Ink Cartridges

PCHS is able to redeem them  
for office supplies !

## GoodSearch

For the *Pipestone County Historical Society* at  
[www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com)

Use this search engine for Pipestone County  
Historical Society. With just a few participants  
we have raised over \$381 to date!  
**We need your involvement!**

In 2017 PCHS Good Search supporters raised  
\$40.46. Go to your on-line retailer through  
the Good Shop site and they will donate a  
percentage of your total to PCHS—  
no strings attached!

## GoodSearch

Check us out on  
Facebook!



Pipestone County  
Historical Society



# United Way



## Pipestone County Historical Society Membership & Donation Form

### Annual Membership Categories

- \_\_\_ Friend \$15-\$24
- \_\_\_ Household \$25-\$49
- \_\_\_ Supporting \$50-\$99
- \_\_\_ Century \$100-\$249
- \_\_\_ Patron \$250-499
- \_\_\_ Benefactor \$500 & Up

Donation: \_\_\_\_\_ (please fill in amount)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Benefits include ...

Free Admission to Exhibit Galleries & Research Archives, 10% discount at Gift Shop, Subscription to the Prairie Traveler newsletter, Discounts on Research, Copies & Photo Reprints and Free Queries in the newsletter.



## Dining Room Gallery Opens

The new Dining Room Gallery space is open to the public! The Dining Room was an addition to the Ferris Grand Block, built in the 1930s. Its entire west wall abuts the Museum's (Old City Hall) east wall. In 2018 a doorway was constructed between the space with Gallery III in the Museum, adding exhibit space to the Museum's regular tour. Over the winter work was done to spruce up the space, including repairs to a past leak on the ceiling and painting of the ceiling and the walls. Past PCHS Board President Maurice Bickford donated his expertise to find a skeleton key to lock the folding doors that connect the Dining Room with the rest of the Masonic Hall. Tours of the Lodge room will be separate from a regular Museum tour. As part of the transformation from Dining Room to Exhibit Space, three large windows will be receiving blackout roller shades, similar to the ones in Gallery II. PCHS put out the call for donations in the Winter newsletter and is need of one more patron to support the project in the amount of \$250 (cost of one roller shade.) As it is, the new exhibit space is now open and features a display of objects from the Museum's music collection, including several musical instruments, written music and other accoutrements. More displays will be added, featuring other objects currently in Museum storage.

### Visit the

### Pipestone County Historical Society's Redesigned Website!

[www.pipestoneminnesota.com/museum](http://www.pipestoneminnesota.com/museum)

With new databases, indexes and links to expanded newsletter articles!

**giveMN.org**  
Ignite Generosity ■ Grow Giving

The Pipestone County Historical Society now has a presence on the Give MN website for easy on-line donations.

Go to [givemn.org](http://givemn.org) and search for Pipestone. PCHS is the first to come up- look for the Museum Logo!

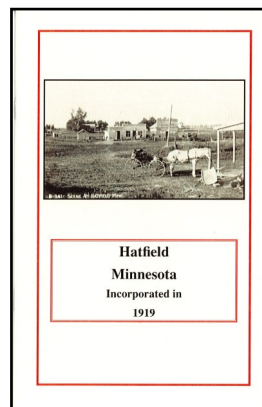


### Pipestone County Historical Society is now on...

- Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice.
- Support the Pipestone County Historical Society by starting your shopping at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)



### > IN THE GIFT SHOP <



#### Hatfield, Minnesota

Brand new publication from the Pipestone County Historical Society. This softcover booklet is 26 pages featuring the history of Hatfield including plat map, photographs and early information on the town, railroads, school district, businesses and service groups.....\$5.00

## A Peek into the Museum's Collection

By Noah Burris



Merle Dibble's bomber jacket. Pipestone County Museum: 2008.028.0001

There are many cool items that can be found in the Pipestone County Museum's collection. While some are out on display there are plenty stored away that the public can't currently see. One such piece is a World War II American bomber jacket.

The Type A-2 leather flight jacket or bomber jacket was the standard issued and worn jacket by Air Corps airmen in World War II. The crewmen would often give their bombers creative nicknames and have the name and a picture painted on the nose of the plane. Some names of bombers included *My Achin' Back*, *Leadfoot*, *Pistol Packin Mama*, *Pistol Pack'n Papa*, and *Hitler's Headaches*. The pictures were usually pin-up girls or cartoon characters and both the name and picture added a unique element to each crew's bomber. Crew members often extended that creativity to their jackets and would get them embroidered or painted with things such as the aircraft nickname, picture, and bombs to represent the number of their missions. The jackets continue to be highly collectible and can tell a story just by looking at the artwork.

The jacket in the museum's collection belonged to Captain Merle Dibble of Pipestone. He enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps in November of 1942, at the age of eighteen. He was a part of the 486<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group 832<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Squadron and was a pilot of a B-17. He flew with 9 other men, as the bombers would have a crew of 10

including the Pilot, Co-Pilot, Navigator, Bombardier, Engineer/Top Turret Gunner, Radio Operator/Gunner, Ball Turret Gunner, Right Waist Gunner, Left Waist Gunner, and Tail Gunner. Dibble led a crew on a number of missions and flew on a total of 30 in the Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central Europe. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in 1945. His jacket has painted on the back a picture of the B-17 he flew, its name, *Leading Lady*, and a bomb for each of the 30 missions flown. After he was discharged Merle Dibble went to college and then returned to and lived in Pipestone until his death in 1998. The jacket was donated to the Museum in 2008 by his wife, Geneva Dibble and is a great part of the World War II collection.



Front Row: unknown, Jerry Brickman, Les Hansman, Robert Macintosh, Jim Fennessy. Back Row: John Piver, Joe Matish, Rex Tolliver, Merle Dibble, Floyd Serrels.



# Projects Continue at Historic St. Paul Episcopal Church

By Chuck Draper



The stained glass window in the south wall of the hall at historic St. Paul Episcopal church now shines brightly on visitors.

A major project by Historic Pipestone has transformed the space. The hall had a suspended ceiling that was in bad repair and sagging. Plaster was falling from above, weighing on tiles, even breaking several.

At the same time, the dropped ceiling hid the large stained glass window high in the stone wall on the south side of the hall. When the church was completed in 1894, the window was in the west wall of the sanctuary. When the hall was added to the west side of the church in the 1923, the window was removed and relocated in the south wall of the added hall.

But now it's 2019. Conditions were bad and HPI members knew they had to do something. They had already completed several projects to rehabilitate the historic stone church – tuckpointing, new heating and air conditioning, sewer replacement, new eavestroughs and drainage, side-walks, etc.

Now the group bit off its biggest single

project yet. Re-doing the hall. The ceiling was in danger of falling in, plaster was crumbling, insulation was virtually non-existent, the stained glass window was hidden from the inside and could not be reached for repair. The project finally decided upon was to remove the suspended ceiling and plaster from the original ceiling and exterior walls. The original ceiling and walls were then insulated and sheetrock installed. Electricians re-did wiring. Finally, fresh paint brought everything together.

The result is a warm and welcoming space, topped by the high, original ceiling, graced by the stained glass window. New lighting is provided by hanging lamps from the now closed Catholic church in Jasper, a donation of the Jasper city council.

The next phase is repair of the window. Later this spring, the window will be removed and taken to Sue Parsley's studio. She has examined the window and announced it repairable.

Project funding has come from various sources – a grant/loan program of the city of Pipestone, HPI past fund-raising, the United Way, and generous private donations. HPI sent solicitation letters to many people and is thankful for many donations received, without which the project could not be completed. Many of the donors are active members of the Pipestone County Historical Society.

Other projects, however, remain to be completed. Some of the items are to correct basement drainage and other improvements there, new flooring and kitchen updates. Persons who wish to donate can send contributions to Box 277-HPI, Pipestone.

## Household Continued

Neala Thomsen– Spirit Lake, IA  
David Rambow– Wisconsin Dells, WI  
Carol Jensen Scanny– Palm Desert, CA  
Harold & Shirley Miller– Jasper  
Mary Kofoed– Cold Spring, MN  
Kyle Kuphal– Pipestone  
\*Ardell Wolff– Pipestone

## Friend

\*Mary Ann Duffus– McLean, VA  
\*Carol Johnson– Pipestone  
Paul Kelley– Media, PA  
Barb Benz– Pipestone  
\*Mick Meyers– Pipestone  
Richard Thompson– Lancaster, CA

## Friend Continued

Anna Duncan– Flandreau, SD  
Mark Williams– Troy, MI  
Valerie Chester– Pipestone  
Cheryl Lange McLaughlin– Denver, CO

## Friend Continued

Judy Polaschek– Hatfield  
Gordon Huebner– Pipestone  
Leslie Volkir– Omaha, NE  
Deanna Prellwitz– Minneota, MN  
\*Merlin Westfield– Pipestone

**Donations** *PCHS relies on the generosity of our members not only to meet the general budget but especially to accomplish special projects. Thank you.*  
*January– March*

**RegularDontions:** Kathleen McKeon Cameron; Valeria Christensen; Steve & Barb Morgan; Chuck & Dorie Sendelbach; Harlan Nepp; Dave & Marlyce Logan; Benjamin Denton; Verne Long  
**Building Fund:** Stella Lingen (for roller shades); **Masonic Building:** Judy Oldemeyer; **Endowment:** Donna Mickelson

# Life Members

Andrew & Sally Smith– Pipestone  
LaVerle Stevens– Huron, SD  
Janice & Duane Stratton– New Prague, MN  
Doug Theel– Pipestone  
Mary VanDyke– Colorado Springs, CO  
Pat Weets & Roger Madetzke– Pipestone  
Ron Willey– Pipestone  
Jim & Stephanie Cummings– Deerwood, MN  
Carol Corporon– Sioux City, IA  
Donald Roscoe– Kasota, MN  
Sally Sturdevant– Hendersonville, NC  
Hart Nelson– Seattle, WA  
Joni Petersen– Pipestone  
Rosie McGinty– Holland  
Bonnie Jerde– Reva, SD  
Carla Heyl– St. Paul, MN  
Chris Hummel– Jasper  
Sharon Hanson– Hendricks, MN  
Chad Thompson– Anchorage, AK  
Joan Steitz– Branford, CT  
Nancy Hoskins– Sioux Falls, SD  
Pat Gillin Schuster– Edina, MN  
Mary Lohmann McElroy– Burnsville, MN  
Harold Totman– Pipestone  
Kevin Hunstad– Jasper  
Kimberly Ernst– Northfield, MN

Mavis Remund– Pipestone  
Richard Colvin– Rhoadesville, VA  
Bette Acomb– Waunakee, WI  
Irmtraut Engmann– Inman, SC  
Valeria Christensen– Minneapolis, MN  
Stephanie Hall– Cedar Rapids, IA  
Norman Pahl– Tyler, MN  
Debra Duggan Pennington– Pipestone  
Gay Drury Murphy– Hermosa, SD  
Virgil Houtkooper– Hull, IA  
Dave Buffington– Perham, MN  
Walter Benjamin– Wayzata, MN  
Brendon Beyers– Manhattan, MT  
Dennis & Diane Hansen– Pipestone  
Pat LaRock– Keizer, OR  
Theresa Mahoney– Petaluma, CA  
Steve Perkins– Sun Lakes, AZ  
Nadine Sturdevant– Brandon, SD  
Allen & Estella Vis– Edgerton  
Mark & Tammy Steuven– Pipestone  
Lois Hansen– Pipestone  
Herman Meinders– Oklahoma City, OK  
Jennifer Cronin– Pipestone  
Sandra Beckering– Edgerton  
Chuck & Lorraine Draper– Pipestone  
Eileen Johnson– Pipestone  
Jim Keyes– Dalavan, WI

New & Renewing Annual Members

Patron

Jay & Vi DeGroot– Edgerton

Century

Loren Weatherly– Sacramento, CA  
Chuck & Dorie Sendelbach– Pipestone  
Myron & Nancy Koets– Pipestone  
Maynard & Darlene Winsel– Pipestone  
Betty Johnson– Pipestone  
Tim & Susie Otto– Pipestone  
Beverly Sogn– Sioux Falls, SD  
Sarah Fjellanger– Savage, MN  
Richard Wilson– Phoenix, AZ

Supporting

Pat & Carla Barkley– Wilmington, DE  
Janice North– Mankato, MN  
Madge Hanson– Minneapolis, MN  
JoLynn Nangle– Pipestone  
Thomas Darveaux– Pipestone  
Barbara Strommer– Lakeville, MN  
Eileen Runia– Pipestone  
Dave & AnnaBelle Gilmore– Pipestone

Household

Monica & John Sullivan– Holland  
Larry & Barb Rieck– Pipestone

Life Members

Don & Carol Backer– Pipestone  
D.S. & Karin Beckering– Edgerton  
Lucie Belau– Pipestone  
Maurice Bickford– Pipestone  
Carrell Bradley– Portland, OR  
Rick Brown– LaCrescent, MN  
Christine Burch– Ruthton  
Kathleen McKeon Cameron– Mendocino, CA  
David Christensen– Richfield, MN  
Dr. Larry & Barb Christensen– Pipestone  
Ken & Tammy Christensen–Pipestone  
Sheri Cox– Pipestone  
Mary McKeon Crockenberg– Healdsburg, CA  
Marsine Cunningham– Litchfield, MN  
Leslie Earhart– Pipestone  
Mark Erickson– Winthrop, MN  
Patrick Foley– Harbor, OR  
Marge Gromer– Woodbury, MN  
Lorraine Halbersma– Pipestone  
Phyllis Heesch– Morrison, CO  
Curt Hess– Pipestone  
Barb Heyl– Pipestone  
Mary Lou Hicks– Pipestone  
Jan Hintermeister– Santa Clara, CA  
Leona Huebner– Pipestone  
Bruce & Barbara Jensen– Plymouth, MN

Heather Johnson– Swanville, MN  
Beverlee Kennedy– Pipestone  
Nyla Kraft– Pipestone  
Verne Long– Pipestone  
Rosemarie Loose– Pipestone  
Gene McCallum– Denton, TX  
Brenda McDaniel– Pipestone  
Greta McDaniel– Pipestone  
Bruce Michels– Seattle, WA  
Donna Mickelson– Pipestone  
Bill & Judy Morgan– Sartell, MN  
Mike & Fay Morgan– Pipestone  
Robert & Diane Morgan– Sioux Falls, SD  
Steve & Barb Morgan– Wentworth, SD  
Todd & Sally Morgan– Pipestone  
James & Nancy O’Neill– Pipestone  
Susan Parsley– Pipestone  
Dorothy Pence– Hot Springs, SD  
James Priestester– Pipestone  
Pearl Pritchett– Pipestone  
Sandra Pike Raichel– Clayton, NC  
Ron & Carolyn Rasmussen– Pipestone  
Delores Runge– Pipestone  
Cindy Sash– Pipestone  
Steve & Kim Schulze– Pipestone  
Jerry & Gail Simmons– Sioux Falls, SD

In Memory of Elisabeth Hicks Barker  
by Mary Lou Hicks

In Memory of Alto Vorce  
by Hart Nelsen

In Memory of Richard Lingen  
by Stella Lingen

In Memory of William August Natzke  
by Bonnie Jerde

In Memory of Dorthea Monica Fiest Natzke  
by Bonnie Jerde

In Memory of Earl Gruis  
by Maynard Winsel

In Memory of Pat Beyers  
by Cyndi Gjernhart & the Estate of Pat Beyers

Memorials

January– March 2019

Memorials are a special way of remembering a friend or loved one with your gift to PCHS. This gift is given in their memory and a letter is sent to the family of the deceased noting your gift- but never its size. Memorials of \$100 or more will be registered on plaques in the Museum’s lobby. Let us know the person to be memorialized, the amount of the memorial and who to send the memorial letter to along with their mailing address.

Do We Have Your Contact Information?

Do we have your correct contact information? This question has come up quite a lot this winter as snow, wind and ice have caused us to cancel and postpone events. For example, postponing the Annual Meeting not once but twice! The Pipestone County Museum posts changes to planned events on our facebook page: [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) (search Pipestone County Historical Society.) Often, event press releases can be found in the Pipestone County Star newspaper and also the Jasper Journal and the Edgerton Enterprise, and also on KLOH/KISD Radio.

Do we have your email address? Understanding that many of our members do not have email, we still strive to be able to contact as many as possible when plans change.

Shoot us an email at [pipctymu@iw.net](mailto:pipctymu@iw.net) to make sure that we have yours!

New Digital Newsletter

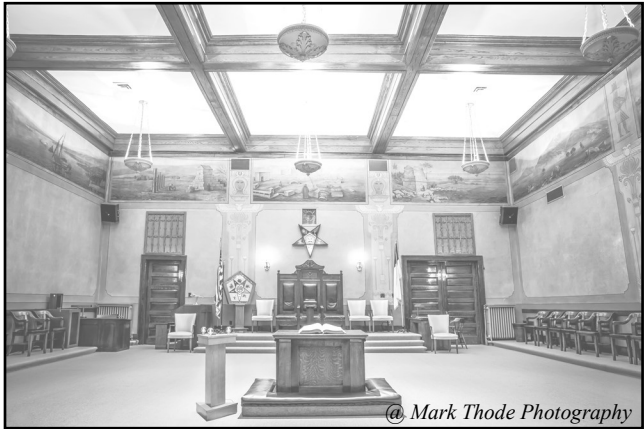
We enjoy connecting with you through our quarterly newsletter *The Prairie Traveler*. This printed newsletter is mailed to the membership four times a year. Through this publication we are able to keep you informed on the big things that are happening at PCHS and to share some of the fun and interesting stories we come across.

But we would like to keep you even more closely informed on the interesting things we find about the history of Pipestone County, its people, places and objects, as well as what is going on with PCHS’s five historic properties.

We have sent a few of these digital missives out via your email address and plan to continue on a more regular schedule. If you did not receive the digital news via email recently that featured Geraldine Pedersen’s life-time achievement award, and news of the recent ice blizzard, Shoot us an email at [pipctymu@iw.net](mailto:pipctymu@iw.net) to make sure that we have yours!



## Ferris Grand Block/ Masonic Lodge



The Masonic Lodge room in the Ferris Grand Block.  
Available as a postcard at the Museum's Gift Shop.

Recently PCHS hosted a Southwest Minnesota Masonic group that met at the Masonic Lodge. Forty master masons from all over Minnesota were able to enjoy the beautiful Pipestone Masonic Lodge. It was during this event that it was determined some of the plumbing had aged out and a leak was found on the first floor theater ceiling. Plumbers were called in and the problem was fixed.

During an incredible rain-storm in March, the Ferris Grand Block suffered six inches of standing water in the basement, determined to be caused by a sump-pump failure, as well as a leak in the roof of the "L" which serves as the PPAC lobby. The leak materialized in the men's restroom and repairs to the ceiling have been completed.

The front façade of this dominant downtown building also continues to face some moisture issues, a clear illustration of

the issues old buildings can have. But there is no replacing this beautiful historic building. PCHS takes responsibility of its stewardship seriously and will be pursuing structural grants in order to find out what steps can be taken (and in what order to take them) to ensure its longevity.

### 2019 Brown Bag Lunch Schedule

Third Thursday of the Month April– October

April 18: Phil Berg, Sheep Production

May 16: Chuck Sendelbach, Harmon Park

June 20: Morey VanHoeke, Weather

July 18: Vince Green, Wind Industry

August 15: TBA

September 19: TBA

October 17: TBA

Meets at Noon at the Museum



PCHS is looking for high school annuals from Ruthton, Jasper and Edgerton High Schools along with the following years from Pipestone High School: 1981, 1984, 1985, 1988, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 2002– to the present: For the Museum Collection.



Patrons have requested the following Pipestone High School annuals for sale in the Gift Shop: 1940, 1953, 1958, 1963, 1969, 1979. Contact the Museum if you have one you would like to donate for resale.



Patrons have requested the following Pipestone County history books for sale in the Gift Shop: 1898 or 1914 Atlases; 1984 Pipestone County History book; Edgerton Centennial book. Also looking for a Historic Museum Ornament for resale.

### 2019 PCHS Board Members

Bob Buffington– President, Curt Hess– Vice President, Judy Oldemeyer– Secretary, Steve Schulz– Treasurer. Paul Everett, Mary Schroer, Linsey Prunty, Chuck Ness, Deb Fitzgerald

### Pipestone County Museum Staff

Susan Hoskins– Executive Director, Trava Olivier– Museum Aide, Noah Burris– Museum Aide, Kathy Fritz, Museum Aide

## Close Bros. Land Contracts Significant to Genealogists

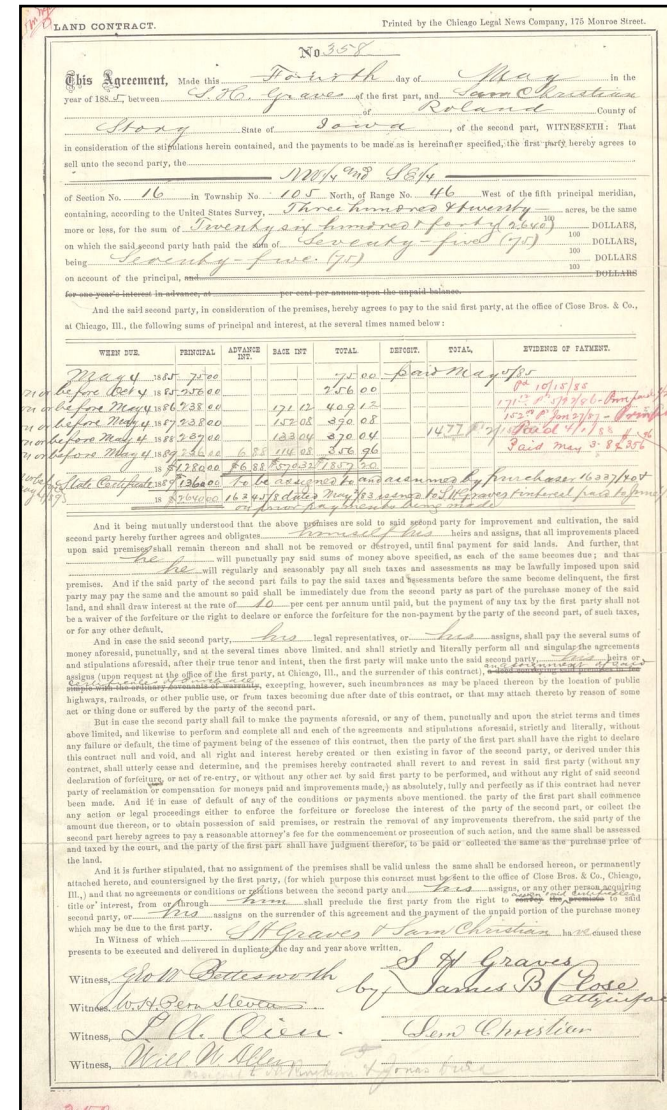
By Trava Olivier

Some of you may remember reading about the Close Brothers Land Contracts in earlier volumes of this newsletter. In the past we discussed the Pipestone County Historical Society's efforts to archive the roughly 1,300 original contracts in our holdings in a manner that makes them accessible to both staff and public. Why? Because the amount of information contained in them can be a valuable tool for a family genealogist who comes through our doors and learns that their ancestor was an original settler of Pipestone County!

One of the first things these contracts provide is a legal description of the land being purchased. In 1785 the United States Government created a Public Land Survey Law to establish a method of locating and describing land. By extrapolating the legal description a person can locate the piece of land on a present-day plat map and obtain driving directions to the parcel; meaning today's researcher can actually view the land their ancestor once toiled!

Other information on the contracts includes the date the contract was entered into, as well as dates payments on the contract were made; pinpointing a specific moment and presumably range of years one's ancestors were living at that location. You can also find the address of the purchaser at the time of the contract's creation providing another location to search for information on your relative prior to his/her arrival in Pipestone County.

The contracts also provide the original purchase price, amount of the down payment, and a detailed record of payment made over the life of the contract. Using that information a researcher could use an inflation calculator to translate those sums to modern day to develop a grasp of the financial commitment being established. In some



Close Brothers Land Contract with Sam Christian of Story County Iowa, dated 1885: purchasing 320 acres in Eden Township, Pipestone County for \$2640.00.

cases contracts were cancelled for nonpayment which is noted and also lets a genealogist understand that something caused a deviation from the original plan their ancestor held. In still other instances, contracts were reassigned; a process where the original purchaser found another individual(s) to take over the land and its contract and fulfill payment to the Close Brothers; again showing a turn from the original plan upon entering into the contract.

The Close Bros. contracts held in the archives of the Pipestone County Museum have been digitally scanned for staff and public usage thus preserving the fragile state of the 120+ year old documents. Each contract is also in a database by the surname of the family purchasing the land. When a genealogist comes to us, we search the family name database and if we have a Close Brothers contract by that name we can quickly locate it for computer viewing and even print it for the researcher. If you have ever dabbled in genealogy then you will be able to understand the uniqueness the Close Brothers Land Contracts collection provides to the researchers who utilize the archives of the Pipestone County Historical Society.