

***GERMAN AMERICAN MUSEUM, LIBRARY AND FAMILY HISTORY CENTER
ST. LUCAS HISTORICAL SOCIETY***



*PRESERVING THE PAST
CELEBRATING THE PRESENT
EMBRACING THE FUTURE*



**Newsletter # 2
Spring 2016**

MESSAGE FROM THE SOCIETY BOARD

Welcome to the second newsletter of the German American Museum, Library and Family History Center of the St. Lucas Historical Society. We hope that you will find this publication interesting and informative. Any suggestions or comments are encouraged. Submissions of family histories, photos, local historical information, and articles or artifacts that would be of interest to our readers are welcome. Please share the newsletter with others. Additional copies are available at the German American Museum and at other local museums.

The German-American Museum has become an archival repository for historical artifacts, books, recorded oral interviews and photos. These collections provide an awareness of the history and cultural heritage brought by our ancestors from abroad. Their preservation ensures that future generations will be informed about and can appreciate the legacy left by their ancestors.

Visit the Museum on any Wednesday morning, enjoy a cup of coffee, visit with friends and neighbors, and take time to view the exhibits and collections. While you are viewing the latest acquisitions and improvements, consider volunteering your time or expertise. The continued development and sustainment of the Museum, Library and Family History Center and the publication of the newsletter require the support of many persons. Your support can be in the form of a donation of time, talent or treasure.

Many thanks for your interest and support.

Clair K. Blong, President



German American Museum, Library & Family History Center, March 2016

MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

The Museum provides a variety of resources for learning about the 165-year ethnic heritage of our community. Our vast collection of documents, written and recorded accounts of family history, library books, ancestral artifacts and photographs are being integrated with exhibits throughout the building. These materials and thought provoking displays provide an understanding of why immigrants left their native Germanic countries and settled in the Old Mission area of North East Iowa. They represent the key factors that influenced the early development of our community and set the background for later growth. These key factors exemplified the importance of religion, teachers and families in shaping the values of the community. The settlers stressed the important role of education, continued advancement in agriculture and industry and service to our country when called.

Our collections continue to grow because of these thoughtful donations made by many local families. Our challenge is to catalog and archive this rapidly growing collection.

Recent Donations

Item Donated	Donated By
Antique German military smoking pipe from 1870's	Ruth Singer
Captain Miller photo from Saving Private Ryan, signed by Tom Hanks	Dorothy Roth
Three new pine display cases to display Leo Franzen wooden artifacts	Clair Blong
Wooden book case for St. Luke's School books	Clair Blong
Subagency Indian School dining ware fragments from early 1840's	John & Ben Kuennen
Metal and wood potato shovel from early 1900's	Daniel Smith
Der Grosse Kampf zwisden Christus und Satan, 1890, 2 Volumes	Debra Burke
German Bishop Martin historical materials	Carl & Rosemary Most
Handmade iron candle holders made by Emmy Hauer	Jim Schneberger
Large wooden butcher block	Helen Pinter
Large cast iron caldron used for butchering hogs and chickens	Merle Blong
Painting supplies and crown molding for kitchen	Clotiel Kuennen & Donna Hauer
Steel kitchen storage racks	Clair Blong
Kitchen curtains, rods, and paints	Joyce Moss
Priest's sick call box from 1890's	Ken and Kathy Ehler
Four antique framed religious pictures from the early 20th century	Ken and Kathy Ehler

Recent Genealogy Acquisitions

- Holthaus Family History and Genealogy Materials. Idaho Booklet, 2003, 5 pages with 3 pages of photos. Genealogy Booklet, 2003, 18 pages. Genealogy hand written listings, undated, 14 pages.
- Urban Dietzenbach, My Family History. Cresco, Iowa: 1998, 49 pages.
- "Ditzenbach Family Members Reunited," The Union. West Union, Iowa: 1984, 2 pages.
- St. Luke's High School Class of 1941, Reunion Booklet, 1981, 14 pages.
- Stephen L. Zbornik, Percy D. Cannell, Joseph B Shumway. The Zbornik Family: The Descendants of Mathias and Rosalia Kopet Zbornik. Grantsville, Utah: Heritage Link Genealogical Services, 2007. 238 pages.
- Johannah Huinker Holthaus Ehler. *Ehler Beckman Family History*. Undated. 29 pages.
- John Henry Meyer*. Undated. 13 pages.
- Bernard and Johannah Ehler*. Undated. 9 pages.

German History

- Tobias Picard. *Frankfurt Am Main: in Fruhen Farbdias 1936 bis 1943*. Erfurt: Sutton Verlag GmbH, 2011. A brief history of the City of Frankfurt from the time of the Romans to the present by the Frankfurt Institut fur Stadtgeschichte. 120 pages with many color photographs.
- Frank L. Borchard. *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971. Examines German myths from Antiquity in Middle Ages and Renaissance literature. 356 pages.
- Regina Jais. *Legendary Germany Oberammergeau and Bayreuth*. New York: The Dial Press, 1930. This volume provides an excellent overview of legends of Cologne, Bonn, Mainz, Heidelberg, Baden-Baden, the Schwarzwald, Munich, Oberammergeau, Nuremberg and Rothenberg. 208 pages with 39 illustrations.

- Peter Ross Range. *The Year that Made Hitler: 1924*. New York: Little Brown and Company, 2016. A gripping account of the year when Hitler was tried for treason, sentenced to prison, wrote *Mein Kampf*, and became a political figure of national and international importance. 316 pages with many black and white photos.
- Peter Schneider. *Berlin Now: The City after the Wall*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014. An overview of Berlin since 1989. 326 pages. Very timely for anyone traveling to Berlin.

Military History

- James Bradley. *Flags of Our Fathers*. New York: Bantam Books, 2000. The gripping life stories of the six Marines who raised the American flag on Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima on February 23, 1945. It was after this epic battle the statement “Uncommon valor was a common virtue” was made. 375 pages with many photos. Your heart and soul will be shaken to the core reading about the staggering sacrifices these Marines made for us.

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT INTERVIEWS

Families often know who their family historians are. It doesn't matter whether or not these family members think of themselves as storytellers. Some may be hesitant to be interviewed, but everyone has a piece of the history of the St. Lucas community and culture and has a story to contribute.

Family Name	Family Members Interviewed	Year
Baumler	Theresa (Franzen) Baumler (Mrs. Ray)	2004
Bodensteiner	Florence (Lusson) Bodensteiner (Mrs. Clem)	2006
Bodensteiner	Rose (Rausch) Bodensteiner (Interviewed by Lorraine Bodensteiner Kuennen)	1979
Boeding	Hermina (Rausch) Boeding (Mrs. Arnold)	2006
Cremer	Leonard and Odilea (Lechtenberg) Cremer	2007
Croatt/Rausch	James and Verena (Rausch) Croatt	2004
Drilling	Mechtildis (Kuennen) Drilling (Mrs. Urban)	2006
Finn	Mary (Kuennen) Finn (Mrs. Earl) (called Kinny)	2004
Hackman	Hugo Hackman, husband of Mildred (Weiling)	2006
Hageman	Elizabeth (Kuennen) Hageman (Mrs. Ignatius)	2007
Hageman	Irma (Wurzer) Hageman (Mrs. Florian)	2004
Johnson	Gertrude (Steffes) Johnson	2006
Kreiner	Agnes (Mrs. Clarence) Soukup of the Chris and Cecilia (Kruse) family	2008
Kreiner	Alice, (Mrs. Glen) Klimish and Alvina (Mrs. Jerome) Imoehl of the Joe and Julia (Kuennen) Kriener family	2008
Kreiner	Linus of the Peter and Mary (Kuennen) Kriener family	2008
Kruse	Lucille (Hackman) Kruse (Mrs. Arthur)	2008
Kuehner	Sister Rose Catherine Kuehner (Mary) of the Nick and Catherine (Hackman) Kuehner family	2005
Luzum/Schmitt	Arnold and Irma (Schmitt) Luzum	2008
Meinert	Meinert family	2004
Mihm	Mark Mihm, husband of Marge (Hauer)	2008
Ott	Dale Ott, husband of Helen (Einck)	2004
Perry	Veronica (Verna) Perry Wells (Mrs. Glen)	2006
Schaufenbuel	Marie (Stammeyer) Schaufenbuel (Mrs. William)	2007
Smith	Margaret Josepha (Mihm) Smith (Mrs. Milton)	2004
Stammeyer	Lee Stammeyer	2015
Winter/Schmitt	Nicky and Germaine (Schmitt) Winter	2006/2008

It is important that the oral interviews in our community continue. If you or someone you know is interested in being interviewed, contact Rosemary Kuennen Most at 507-289-1505 (home) or 507-273-9989 (cell).

IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Saving the Museum's Historic Windows

The museum building has over 50 large double-hung windows and storm windows that have provided over 100 years of outstanding service. After all these years, many of the historic windows are weathered and damaged and in critical need of repair and restoration. These historic windows are among the most important elements of a building and preserving the original architecture and design elements is crucial. Properly cared for they can last indefinitely.



The restoration process involves removing the window sashes and storm windows, using a steam bath to remove paint, sanding, glazing, curing, and priming them with oil paint followed by a final coat of oil paint. They are then reinstalled in their frames. The window frames are treated in similar fashion at the building site. The windows are reinstalled with new balance ropes, weather stripping, and zinc guides to ensure a tight fit and a fully operational double-hung sash window system.

We have completed the restoration of one double-hung window and storm window set. The photos show the condition of a window in need of repair and the window (set) that has been restored. The estimated cost per window set is very expensive and would require considerable help with funding. In the meantime, we have prioritized work on 10 windows that are in desperate need of repair. Any assistance would be greatly appreciated.



Chairlift Installed in Main Stairway



This critical project was completed in August 2015 with the generous support of the Knights of Columbus, Clotiel Kuennen, the Schaufenbuel Family, Clair Blong and Glenn Blong. The total cost of this project was \$8,500.

This much needed improvement allows accessibility to the upper floor exhibits and the dining room for elderly and handicapped visitors.

Clotiel Kuennen Taking the First Ride On the Chairlift



Upgrading the Museum Electrical System

New electrical lighting and plugins were installed throughout the attic to make it a functional space for Museum storage. Lighting and plugins were also installed in the boiler room, and two Museum rooms. Heavy upgrades were completed in the kitchen for big appliances and food warmers. Hanging lights were installed to provide adequate lighting for the Monsignor Reicks and Leo Franzen collections.

These critical lighting improvements are nearly completed, but much still remains to be done to upgrade the older electrical outlets and install additional lighting capacity in each of the Museum rooms. To date the cost for this project has been \$1,500. It is expected that an additional \$1,500 to \$2,000 is needed to complete the necessary upgrades.

Blacksmith Shop Painted Historic Colors

Several volunteers braved the hot and humid summer weather and applied a high quality oil-based primer and spray painted the entire exterior in the original rust-red color. Special thanks to Lee Stammeyer for providing oversight and a hearty thank you to Dennis Kuennen, Kerry Langreck and Dan Kuennen for their outstanding professional workmanship. When the painting was finished, Dennis, Kerry and Dan had no paint on their clothing, while the clothing of an unnamed amateur was heavily covered with blotches of wet paint.

The shop windows and frames were restored by the Amish and then painted with the primer. Paint costs up to date total about \$1,000. This portion of the expenses was covered by a donor. A final coat still needs to be applied to the window frames.

Upgrading the Kitchen

On several Wednesdays in the past two months a team consisting of Joyce Moss, Sue Bartels, Jeanette Ditzenbach, Dan Kuennen, Dan Smith, Clair Blong and Brad Wurzer began the daunting task of upgrading the kitchen. For many years it has provided an essential service when events required dining facilities. Although the kitchen was still functional, it was in need of major repairs and upgrading.



Dan Kuennen painting kitchen ceiling

The workers began by tearing down the collapsing wall and ceiling plaster. The storage cabinets, aging furniture and equipment, and excess dishes were moved to storage. Dan Smith repaired the huge hole in the ceiling while the rest of the team scrubbed the floor, walls and windows. Brad Wurzer provided his professional expertise and time to update the electrical wiring and fixtures.

The walls and ceiling are freshly painted. The room has been organized and rearranged to maximize the use of light and space and new curtains added. Joyce, Sue and Jeanette had the pleasure of organizing all the dishes on the new steel storage racks.

This upgrade makes the kitchen more attractive and functionally more efficient. This is a welcome capability when hosting family gatherings, reunions, receptions and celebrations.

SPECIAL INTEREST

German Language as It Relates to the Village of St. Lucas, Iowa

Carl H. Most, Rochester MN

When I first visited the village of St. Lucas fifty years ago, many of the residents could communicate in the German language. People in the bars, restaurants, grocery stores or hardware stores, were heard speaking German even if only in limited parts of their conversations. It was evident that they had grown up with the language and perhaps had attended the St. Luke's Roman Catholic school when instruction was only in the German language. Over time, English has replaced the German language and the town is now totally English-speaking.

When Rosemary (Kuennen) Most recorded interviews with elderly persons who had grown up in St. Lucas, a number of interviewees could recite prayers in German and knew the names of German foods from their childhood. They had fond memories of the days when German was the only language in the home and on the farm.

People in the area spoke either High German or Low German. Sometimes each party of a married couple came from a home where one of the forms was spoken. So in many families one parent spoke High German and the other spoke Low German. The children would hear the difference in the home.

To clarify, High German (Hochdeutsch) is spoken in the southern regions of the German-speaking lands in Europe; Low German (Plattdeutsch) is the language of Northern Germany along the Baltic Sea (Ostsee) and along the North Sea (Nordsee) and also in the low countries, for example, the Netherlands. The official language of German government and business is High German or Hochdeutsch.

On a trip to Northern Germany we stayed with relatives in the village of Lastrup in the region of Oldenburg where Kuennen ancestors lived. The Low German or Platt is the language of everyday speech, i.e. in shops and on the street. This region lies near the Dutch border and television schedules listed in newspapers list both German and Dutch programs. The relatives told us that they normally watch Dutch newscasts and that the monarch of the Netherlands speaks their Platt language. For these people, Low German and Dutch are mutually understandable. In business settings or in government dealings, they speak standard High German.

Many born and raised in St. Lucas and the surrounding areas still have traces of German in their speech patterns. The most apparent is the use of *d* or *t* in English words with *th*. For example, in the English word "north," the final consonant is frequently pronounced with a *d* or *t* sound because the English *th* sound is not found in German. Other examples might be *that*, *this*, *those*, *with*, *through*, etc.

Standard German has a formal (*Sie*) and an informal (*du/ihr*) form of address. The informal is used when talking with family members, good friends, pets, or in prayers when addressing God or Jesus. In all other instances, the formal form of address is used. However, in St. Lucas, the formal form of address fell away and only the informal remained. This simplified the grammar and seemed to work well.

When I first came to St. Lucas, Father Francis Schuh was the pastor of St. Luke's Church. His sermons were in English but he could speak fluent German. At our wedding he sat next to my parents, both immigrants from Germany, and they conversed in German. It's been said that the bishop of Dubuque instructed Father Schuh that the language of the church should be English, which was believed to be a reaction to World War II. Many of the people interviewed by Rosemary recalled going to Confession in German because they felt more comfortable using the German language.

Occasionally I spoke German with people in Nubby's Tavern. One gentleman, Mattie Jakobs, whose parents came from Luxemburg, still spoke fluent German and said he spoke the language most of his life. Another man who spoke German was Father Vollmecke. He grew up on a farm in the area and when he later studied for the priesthood, his command of the German language as quite good.

Members of the Reicks family from the St. Lucas area traveled to the area of Germany where their ancestors came from in the 19th century. One family member in the group was Father Leander Reicks. During this visit, a video was taken showing Father Reicks celebrating Holy Mass in the German language in the family's home church in Germany.

The majority of the immigrants who came to the area were from Luxemburg, Belgium, Austria-Hungary, Switzerland and Germany. Areas of Germany and Austria-Hungary extended much further east prior to World War II. After the war, areas were ceded to Poland and Russia so that immigrants arrived from the areas that were German-speaking but today are no longer part of Germany. Prussia, East Prussia, Danzig, Pomerania and Silesia are among these regions.

In general, German was the language spoken by the families in the St. Lucas area until it began fading out in the 1940's. As people moved to surrounding areas with more ethnic diversity, the use of the German language declined. However, the German culture lives on in the customs and way of life which their ancestors brought over and passed on to their descendants. The church has been a vital aspect of this. The impressive architecture of the building, the fine stained glass windows; the church interior as well as the religious heritage transmitted through song, ritual and Holy Mass, have shaped the culture of the village. Even today many congregations know the words of the hymns "Grosser Gott" (Holy God) and "Stille Nacht" (Silent Night) that are sung at Christmas. This "Tischgebet," or prayer at mealtime, may be recognized by some of our readers.

Komm, O Jesus, sie unser gast, (*Come, O Jesus and be our guest,*)

Und segne, was Du uns bescheret hast, (*And bless what you have bestowed upon us.*)

Gesegnete Mahlzeit! (*Blessed meal!*)

Guten Appetit, (*Bon Appetit,*)

Amen. (*Amen.*)

THE NEUTRAL ZONE, THE SUBAGENCY AND EMMA BIG BEAR

Terry Landsgaard, West Union IA

In the 1800's, Europe was flooded with all sorts of posters produced by American land brokers advertising "cheap" land in America, especially in the American West. Horace Greeley's quote: "Go West young man" was a reality. The problem was, there were people already living on this land - the Native American Indians.

So, what could be done? Get rid of the Native Americans! From the beginning of American colonization, the colonists attempted to get rid of the Native Americans by any means possible. There were some pleasant encounters, but soon the Native Americans realized they were getting the "short end" of the deal. They were considered savages - and expendable. Once the United States was formed, the government was intent on getting control of the lands the Native Americans possessed. Sets of treaties were written and signed (an estimated 368 treaties). These treaties forced the Native Americans to be moved from their desirable ancestral lands to less desirable lands further to the West. I asked a member of Meskwaki tribe whose language is Algonquian where the tribe originated and he said "Maryland." Today, their settlement is in east central Iowa. These treaties were created to move the Native Americans west of the Mississippi River and to the Western plains. In Northeastern Iowa, the Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) occupied land for 8 years until they were moved to Minnesota and finally to Nebraska and Oklahoma.

The first treaty of 1825 established a "neutral line" which ran from the mouth of the Upper Iowa River to the Des Moines River in central Iowa. This imaginary line separated the Sioux to the north and the Sauk to the south. It was hoped that this situation would prevent intertribal warfare, but the fighting continued. The treaty of 1830 created a dividing zone that was more than a simple line. This became known as the Neutral Zone/Ground. But the treaty of 1832 gave the land to the Winnebago in exchange for their land in Wisconsin near the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers. To further protect the tribes from each other, the government built Fort Atkinson on the "Neutral Line" in what now is Winneshiek County.

However, the Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) didn't want to leave their ancestral ground and burial sites. Another treaty was written in 1837 to force the Ho-Chunk to leave Wisconsin and move to the Neutral Zone/Ground of Northeastern Iowa west of the Mississippi River. The tribes were mercilessly moved by the government.

Previously, there had been an Indian school near the mouth of the Yellow River, but in 1840, the school was moved to a place 3 miles southeast of Fort Atkinson and $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the Turkey River. The Subagency was made up of 14 buildings and 5 fields for teaching agriculture to the Native American men and boys. The girls were taught sewing and domestic skills. All of the students had classes in English, music and religion. At one point there were 249 students at the school.



Site of the Indian Subagency School in the 1840s

It was soon realized that hunting and fishing were preferred over agriculture. To the Native American, garden skills were women's work. The Subagency was used as a distribution center for the promised monthly annuity from the government that was part of the conditions of the treaty of 1837. Blankets, pipes, sewing supplies, livestock, guns, various other materials and cash were part of the monthly allotment. There were 13 villages of Ho-Chunk in the Neutral Zone/Ground. Alcohol was forbidden in the Neutral Zone/Ground but there were several "Dens of Sin" just outside of the boundaries. One of these Dens of Sin was located where the town of Luana exists today. The Subagency lasted from 1840 until 1848, when the Ho-Chunk were moved to Long Prairie, Minnesota. Fort Atkinson was closed shortly after the Ho-Chunk were relocated.

"Where was the Subagency located and can we see it today?" All the buildings of the Subagency were razed shortly after the Ho-Chunk left the area. The 5 agricultural fields were taken over by immigrants that moved into the area after Iowa became a state in 1846. The actual Subagency was located on the John Kuennen farm on 105th Street, north of St. Lucas. Bits and pieces of pottery, pipe stems and similar items can be found in the fields of the farm. After the Ho-Chunk were removed from the area to Minnesota, the land associated with the Subagency and school was purchased by Richard M. Carson. Mr. Carson owned the land until his death on May 22, 1863. His body was buried on the farm in a small wooded area. The exact location of the grave is unknown, but a broken tombstone still exists. The first Kuennen to own the farm was Nicholas Kuennen, John's grandfather. The farm then passed to Clem Kuennen and finally to John Kuennen.

Not all of the Ho-Chunk tribe left the area. There are families in the area that claim to be descendants of the Ho-Chunk tribe. The biggest Ho-Chunk presence was Emma Big Bear, who was the last Native American in northeast Iowa to live by traditional tribal means.



Emma Big Bear On Left

Emma Big Bear was a frequent visitor and summer resident of the Turkey River Valley. She was often seen on the lawn of the Smallest Church weaving baskets from Black Ash that she would later sell. It is known that Emma Big Bear and the Ho-Chunk stayed in the area during the summers and also at the High Banks, northeast of Eldorado, Iowa until the 1920's. I personally can remember the Ho-Chunk camping at Musser's Mill until the mid-1950's. Many towns claim the presence of Emma Big Bear, including the towns of Marquette and McGregor.

A life-size bronze statue of Emma Big Bear was installed at the Mississippi River Sculpture Park in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin in June 2011.

LEE STAMMEYER – A MAN OF MANY TALENTS

As we celebrate Lee Stammeyer's 95th birthday, it is fitting to acknowledge some of his many contributions to the Society and the German American Museum, Library and Family History Center over the past years. Lee, truly a man of many talents, in his quiet, unassuming manner, has made significant contributions without ever seeking recognition or praise.

Founding Member

Lee was crucial in the founding of the Society and establishing the German American Museum. Lee was among a small group who donated their personal funds to purchase the school building in the winter of 2003. These were uncertain times and many were skeptical about the idea of a Museum in the area that would be dedicated to preserving our local heritage. Lee quietly urged us to move beyond talk into action.



Lee Stammeyer

Military Service and History

Lee's love and respect for his country led him to serve in the Merchant Marine, an auxiliary service of the U.S. Navy in World War II. In those dark and uncertain months after Pearl Harbor, Lee was assigned to convoy supply ships that crossed the perilous waters of the Pacific and Indian Oceans to support the Allied forces in North Africa. His convoy sailings took him to the Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean in support of landings in Italy in 1943, and then to the Normandy landings in France in June of 1944. Lee realized the tenuous and fragile nature of human life when convoy ships were torpedoed and sank, and many crew members lost their lives. His love of fellow service comrades shows in his dedication to the American Legion and to preserving their memories in the military section of the Museum. Lee quietly gathered the uniforms and other artifacts in the military room in honor of military service men and women.

Military Service Book

Yes, Lee is an author. He compiled the large volume that contains the service record of every sailor, soldier and airman from this community. In addition, he has compiled the names of every person who served in the Civil War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Cold War, the Vietnam War and the Persian Gulf War. These compilations are an invaluable contribution to the history of the community and are the most sought after volumes in our collections.

Cabinet Maker

Without much discussion or prompting, Lee soon began designing, building and installing 16 high quality oak display cases in the Museum. These cabinets are the centerpieces for our displays and exhibits and are frequently admired as much as the exhibits. Lee's motto when presented with a challenging task is "Just do it." He not only did it, but he did it with excellence. Because Lee is a master carpenter and woodworker and has a conviction to doing work of the highest quality, the cabinets were built with exceptional design and workmanship.

Recording Artist

Lee is passionate about saving the cultural and religious heritage of our community. He has made CD recordings of the Rosary and many traditional Catholic prayers. He has recorded his singing of over 20 American songs. Most recently Lee recorded traditional German prayers and songs. This is a memorable tribute to the preservation of our heritage and an invaluable contribution to the German American Museum, Library and Family History Center.

Community Businessmen and Tradesman

Over the long winter months Lee began work on his latest publication. He compiled a booklet that lists all the businesses and tradesmen in the community in 1950 and in 2015. This comprehensive listing defines St. Lucas as a very self-sufficient, self-reliant community. As Lee says, there was always someone who could make or fix anything. Today the listing shows how many of those skills and tradesmen come from neighboring towns and areas, clearly spotlighting this interdependence.

Business Skills

Lee's depth and breadth of business experiences are a godsend to the Society and Museum. No matter what problem or challenge we encounter, Lee has a clear-headed proposal or viable options to consider. Whether it is for window restoration, heating and air conditioning, roofing, plumbing or electrical work, he has the knowledge, experience and has done research to provide solid advice.

Museum Director

Lee has served as the Museum Director for over a decade. He frequently visits the museum to check on various aspects of maintaining the building and the status of current projects, identifies any problems, offers solutions and consistently challenges us to do our best. Lee seeks out reputable and useful information and visits other museums to get ideas. He recommends continuous improvements, such as exit signs, exhibit signage, electricity usage, kitchen improvements, use of space and clarity of exhibit themes. Lee's dedication, insight, and persistence have had an enormous impact on the development and growth since the museum was established in 2003.

Extensive Oral Interview

In September 2015, Lee sat for a two-hour interview with Rosemary Kuennen Most. In the interview Lee shared his thoughts and memories of life growing up in the area, his family, education, seminary training and his strong faith. He talked about his radio training in Chicago, his harrowing service in the Merchant Marine Service, his carpentry and electrical work experiences, his passion for family history, woodworking and community service. This recorded history of Lee's life is available for listening on a CD in the Family History Center.

Friend and Colleague

Lee is an expert and a leader, an historian, and a rare friend and colleague of everyone. He shares and gives service to the community in multiple ways. Much like Joseph in the Bible and his amazing coat of many colors, Lee is a man of many talents and has generously shared these multifaceted talents and skills with the community for many years.

We are indeed blessed to have Lee as a vital part of our community and a devoted supporter of the museum in our efforts to preserve our history. We are blessed to have him on our team and in our midst on a daily basis.

God bless Lee and his family.

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES.

In the past year we hosted several key events at the Museum, including those highlighted here.

Kuennen Family Reunion

The John H. Kuennen family reunion was held on Sunday, July 5, 2015 at St. Luke Church in St. Lucas. The celebration began with the 10:30 a.m. Mass. Father Nick March was the celebrant, assisted by descendants of John H. and Theresa (Martin) Kuennen. Michael Kuennen, a great-grandson, served as the lector. John H. Kuennen (1867-1961) sang in the church choir for 48 years so it was fitting that the hymns sung at the Mass were from his lifetime. The Communion hymn was sung in German. The Kuennen family came from Lastrup, Germany in 1850. After living in Pennsylvania and Indiana, Gerhard H. Kuennen and his sons bought land and settled west of St. Lucas in 1954.

Memories of John H. and Theresa Kuennen were shared by grandchildren; Genevieve Costigan, Denis Kuennen, Shirley Maher, Helen Pinter, and Rose Mary Most. Michael Kuennen read an article telling about the baseball skills of the three

Kuennen brothers (Leo, Conrad and Herman) who played for the St. Lucas Pirates from 1928-1946. Another grandson, Paul Kuennen of Lawler, talked about how agriculture played an important role in the lives of the Kuennen families. He and others had refurbished 14 antique tractors that were on display in the parking lot.

Prizes were given to the oldest and to the youngest in attendance. The youngest was great-great-granddaughter, three month-old Mirabelle, daughter of Aaron and Emily (Burrows) Gimba of Portland, OR. The oldest person was Evelyn (Sis Croatt) Wurzer of Waucoma.

Guests visited the German American Museum, Library and Family History Center. Many families had attended grade or high school in the building. They viewed the military exhibit upstairs and expressed appreciation for our war veterans. The Veteran's Memorial located at the intersection downtown across from the post office includes names of relatives who died serving our country. One grandson, James Kruse, son of Neal and Melania Kruse, died in Vietnam in 1969 and a cousin, Father Aloysius Schmitt, died at Pearl Harbor in 1941.

Reicks Family Reunion



Between 1924 and 1952, the 14 children of Victor and Mary Reicks attended St. Luke's School in St. Lucas, Iowa. Before the Great Depression and for the next 20 years, the children walked 1.5 miles from their farmhouse to the school in St. Lucas. They walked through all kinds of weather, on the road and through fields, joining up with relatives and neighbors who were also walking to school. The youngest child Roy, started school in 1947.

On a hot summer day in August, 2015 a group of 40 children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of Victor and Mary Reicks retraced the walk to school taken 60 to 90 years earlier. They started at the Century Farm where Victor and Mary's grandson, Merle Reicks lives and walked to the school (now the Museum) in St. Lucas.

The family gathered in St. Lucas where they visited the German American Museum, browsed the displays and exhibits while reacquainting with family members and viewing family ancestry information.

Many visited the cemetery where Bible passages were read at the graves of their forefathers and mothers. Stories were shared at the gravesites by Alex Reicks, Marian (Reicks) Swehla, Harry Reicks and Roy Reicks. Those remembered were Monsignor Leander Reicks (d 2007, 90 yrs.) and several children who died young.



In the afternoon, the family met with cousins and aunts at the home of Marian (Reicks) Retterath. Marian and her sister Elsie demonstrated how to make kolaches, the traditional Czech pastry. Marian has been making kolaches for many years and has perfected the process to make some of the best kolaches in the area.

Schaufenbuel Family Gathering

Members of the Ben Schaufenbuel family gathered at the Museum on Sunday, June 21, 2015. They were in the area to attend a reunion of the descendants of their maternal grandparents, Ben and Rose Bodenstener. Since many traveled from distant areas, they took advantage of the opportunity for the family to get together at the museum. They celebrated recent birthdays and anniversaries and shared a catered meal in the dining room. Visiting the museum was very special because their maternal and fraternal ancestors are part of the history and heritage of the area. Many of their ancestors had gone to school in the building. Viewing the artifacts, exhibits, photos and family history collections, made it clear that the museum is a very fitting place for families to gather. It is a place where one can research family history and explore the museum for things that connect them to their unique ancestry.



OKTOBERFEST 2015



The Oktoberfest of the St. Lucas Historical Society was celebrated on September 27, 2015. This event was sponsored by the ladies of the National Catholic Society of Foresters in cooperation with St. Luke Catholic parish and the St. Lucas Historical Society. The buffet opened after Mass at 11:00 and served until 1:00 PM. An estimated 130 meals were served as well as many take-out dinners.

Virginia Manderfield was the liaison to the Society of Catholic Foresters, an organization that has generously matched a portion of the funds for the Historical Society and the German American Museum.

Many people from St Lucas and the surrounding areas participated in this event.

Virginia Manderfield and Clair Blong were the lead organizers. Others on the team included Kurt "Norske" Anfinson, the lead chef who prepared the food for the meal. Norske is a well-known chef in this area and prepares food for a variety of events. Under his guidance, team members helped prepare the meal that consisted of an egg-bake casserole, cheesy potatoes, pork sausage, kolaches, and mixed fruit salad. Fresh homemade cinnamon rolls baked by Joyce Drilling, Audrey Drilling, Darlene Schwamman, Rita Kuehner and Irene Franzen were also served.

Mel and Jeanette (Hlubek) Dietzenbach, John and Jann Kuehner prepared the pork sausage in the kitchen of the White House Supper Club. On Saturday, others prepared the potato dishes according to Norske's recipe and instructions, and fruit was cleaned and cut for the morning. Virginia, Clair, Bette Kuennen and Carl Most set the tables Saturday evening and set up the heating trays.



Others who generously donated their time to prepare and serve the meal included Joe and Shirley (Manderfield) Abdo, Sue Bartels, Andy Blong, Denny Boyer, Clotiel Kuennen, Daniel Kuennen, Louis and Bette Kuennen, Joyce Hauer Moss, Rosemary Most, D. J. Orthaus, Dick and Phyllis Orthaus.

The annual Oktoberfest brought together friends and relatives from the community and guests from distant towns. This was a great opportunity to share a delicious and hearty meal with others.



The German American Museum was open for visitors from 12:00 until 4:00. Many of the visitors were pleasantly surprised at the new displays and for the opportunity to listen to the recorded oral interviews on CDs. The newly installed chairlift was quickly put to use in assisting some of the elderly in getting to the upper floor exhibits and the dining room.

CHRISTMAS REFLECTIONS, DECEMBER 20, 2015 OPEN HOUSE, DECEMBER 27, 2015

The annual Christmas Reflections celebration was held at the Museum on Sunday, December 20, 2015. Attendees came from St. Lucas and the immediate vicinity and some visitors from greater distances. Several historical societies were represented, i.e., Spillville and Protivin. The genealogy section and the military exhibits had the greatest number of visitors.



A team of school alumni decorated for the event. Joyce (Hauer) Moss, Audrey Drilling, Jeanette Ditzzenbach and Sue Bartels led the team. Others assisting were Dan Kuennen, Mary Lee (Stammeyer) Johns, Dan Smith, Ken Smith, Dick Orthaus and Phyllis Orthaus.



VISITORS AND RESEARCHERS



Clotiel Kuennen viewing documents

The museum had a large number of visitors and researchers stop by during the past year to research their ancestors. They spent many hours viewing documents, family history accounts, exhibits, and listening to oral history interviews on CDs. They were interested in variety of topics relating to their family genealogy and in the history of St. Lucas and the local area. They appreciated the fine displays and exhibits throughout the building.



Kuennen family



Danny Neuzil of Ft. Atkinson



Visitors studying genealogy maps



Military service uniforms and books



Father Al Schmitt exhibit

VOLUNTEER EFFORTS THE LIFEblood OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Most folks are preservationists at heart. Some farmers are saving historic barns and old tools that their fathers and grandfathers built or used. In a few decades the remaining large barns and old tools will be rare indeed. Others are sorting through old photos, old household items and handmade furniture. Please consider donating or putting items that you may have on loan to the German American Museum for everyone to see and appreciate and for future generations to understand what life was like 50, a 100, or even 150 years ago.

The lifeblood of preservation is its supporters, volunteers and members. We would like you to consider how you can participate in some way to strengthen and celebrate historical and cultural preservation in the area. We hope to establish a morning on Wednesday or Saturday for volunteers to assist with various tasks at the museum. The work can be challenging, but hanging out and bonding with friends and people with similar interests always makes it a fun time.

Last June some of the Schaufenbuel sisters visited the museum and in three hours cleaned the entire Museum building, helped hang pictures, straightened the kitchen, dining room and rooms on the first floor, and helped with other minor maintenance tasks. Not only was it gratifying for the "Merry Maids" to be able to help out, they enjoyed looking at various photos and exhibits and had fun sharing memories and time being together.

Please consider volunteering once a month to be a Museum tour guide, help with some aspect of Museum upkeep, or help to organize and document incoming materials and artifacts. Serving as a volunteer at the Museum is a great opportunity for students or anyone needing volunteer hours. Your time will not only benefit a good cause but will be an interesting learning experience.

Contact Virginia Manderfield (563-778-2710) or Clair Blong (719-237-1763) for more details.

SOCIETY BOARD MEMBERS

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Thank you for your interest in our newsletter. Special thanks to the several contributors for this issue, and to Joyce Schaufenbuel for organizing and editing this publication.

Thank you for your kind consideration of a free-will donation to help cover the costs of publishing and mailing the newsletter. If you or any of your friends are interested in receiving future issues, please provide your email address.

Please reply to:

St. Lucas Historical Society
212 East Main Street
P.O. Box 295
St. Lucas, IA 52166



German American Museum, Library & Family History Center, October 2015