



Spring 2022 Newsletter

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Letter from the President

Spring. Always refreshing to look around and see our natural surroundings spring back to life! Early flowers and blooming trees were beautiful this year with the elongated cool weather and abundant rain, which is proof there is always something out there to bring beauty and color to the most gloomy day! The same is true at the Ankeny Area Historical Society's museums and grounds! In April, we held the Spring Luncheon so many have grown to love. Also, we were fortunate to have Ankeny Centennial High School students help with cleanup of both interior and exterior projects during the senior community service day in May. A group of dedicated AAHS members also continue to diligently work to maintain the beautiful flower beds and general maintenance of the grounds around the buildings.

As well, AAHS members have been out in the public this spring sharing their expertise and knowledge to community groups. Rosemary Hutton Taylor presented about AAHS to the Ankeny Lions Club in April. JoAnn Adamson, Lois O'Donnell, Jeanne Uhl, Dennis Adamson, Rosemary Hutton Taylor, Tom Jones, Dale Hanke, Sid Conkel, and Sue Davidson spoke to the Ankeny Centennial juniors' history classes about growing up in Ankeny during the 1950's and 60's. John Stratton presented about the Des Moines Ordnance Plant to the Ankeny Women's group. So, our expertise about the history of Ankeny continues to have value in the community!

The AAHS Membership committee has been meeting and has actively reached out to current members, inactive members, and numerous Ankeny business and organizations to continue to help grow our membership. It is a pleasure to see how many people have been contacted by this active group, using their connections in the community to grow memberships for our yearly budget and future sustainability! The Collections committee also regularly meets to process new artifacts for the display committee to use in new displays. The Maintenance committee continues to keep the museums functioning properly. New and old signs are being added or updated to reflect the changes visitors will see as they explore the museum. So, busy, yes! But AAHS does have a definite place in the fabric of Ankeny to share knowledge and influence understanding of what Ankeny is... past, present, and future!

Exciting news! We have hired our new office manager, Sandra McClure. Sandra is a former city employee with an extensive background organizing and operating an office setting and keeping track of financials. She will be an excellent addition to AAHS!! Lois O'Donnell will be working with her getting oriented to our organization. As well, Evan Albaugh has been accepted for a Grinnell College internship grant which will allow him to work this summer at AAHS completing numerous projects that will help expand his knowledge of museum behind-the-scene work and benefit us with his ability to complete many tasks that require hands-on help!

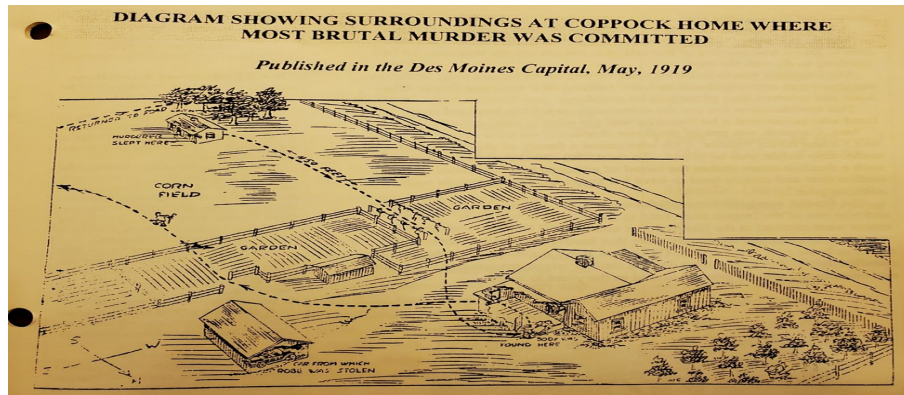
Finally, there will be a change in AAHS's June Open Houses. Normally, summertime means Open Houses every Sunday afternoon. But, being we have such a wonderful relationship with Uptown Ankeny, we are going to pilot having Open Houses Saturday mornings in June from 10:00 to 12:00 to align with the Farmer's Market and other Saturday morning events. There are lots of people in Uptown then, and we will see if it increases our number of visitors during summer Open Houses. Check our website www.ankenyhistorical.org for updates. And, be sure to check out the museum when you're visiting Uptown Ankeny!

Contents

From the Archives	2
Memorial Bricks	3
Memorials/Donations	3
Spring Luncheon	4
Ankeny Centennial	5
Ankeny Concrete Block Co.	6
Board Members & Grants	7

From the Archives

Information for these articles from printed material in the Des Moines Register. Some may remember the “Murder Mystery” at the museum a few years ago that was based on this history of May, 1919.



The murderer of Mrs. F.T. Coppock is believed to have slept in the old house south of the Coppock home. The searching party found the blanket which had been taken from the Coppock garage. Mrs. Coppock's body was found on the kitchen floor with her feet near the door by her son, Marion. Three .22 bullets were fired by the murderer. One passed thru her right arm and the third struck her in the heart, evidently causing instant death. Dotted lines and arrows show the course of the murderer from the time he left the shack until he disappeared after committing the most terrible crime in the history of this part of the county. Blood hounds were used to try and track the criminal but they failed to pick up the scent and after receiving \$50.00 the owner took them back to Des Moines.

The people of Ankeny were shocked last Thursday night and Friday morning to learn of the terrible murder of Mrs. Fred T. Coppock at her home east of Ankeny. Marion had gone over to see Will Randolph, his uncle, plow with a tractor and left home about 8 o'clock. He stayed in the field a short time with Will and then went up to the Ellis Randolph place to visit with Ellis a few minutes, and about 9:30 returned to his home to find his mother laying in the kitchen murdered. The relatives and neighbors were immediately notified as was the Sheriff of Polk County. Search was made for the murderer but to no avail. He made good his escape and had dropped from sight as if the earth had swallowed him up.

On Friday morning, after much discussion, it was decided to call in the blood hounds, which we understand belong to Mr. Murphy of Des Moines. They were brought out shortly before noon Friday and put on the supposed trail of the murderer, and while they made several attempts to follow a trail, they failed utterly to do any good. They might be alright for some things but it seems they are either inefficient or poorly trained. Everything was done that could possibly be done to try to find a clue to who committed this terrible crime but to date there is not the slightest clue.

A suspect, a demented soldier claiming to be from Camp Dodge, was picked up in Baxter Friday while he was acting strangely and does not seem to be able to give a true account of himself, it is not yet known whether he had anything to do with the case. Mr. Coppock was in southern Iowa on one of his lecture tours at the time the crime was committed and he knew nothing of it until late Friday afternoon and returned as soon as he could.. This terrible crime has put the community in a fever heat and should the fiend who committed it be found he will get what is coming to him.

Mrs. Coppock was one of the finest characters we have ever known, she was a home loving mother. One who raised a family of children whom any community might well be proud. To think she is the victim of such a fiendish crime makes the blood of a human boil. It is hard to lose mother dear and doubly hard to have her sweet life taken away in such an awful manner. The funeral was held Sunday afternoon at the Ankeny Methodist Church and was one of the largest ever held in the history of the town. The remains were interred in the family lot at Greenwood Cemetery under the spreading branches of the stately trees that border Four Mile Creek, where the song birds sing and the little chipmunks play upon the fallen logs unmindful that in that grave lies a darling mother whose presence in the home and community will be greatly missed in the years to come.

(Editor's note: the murderer was eventually caught and sent to a facility for many years.)

Updates

Thank you to all the people who have sent memorial gifts and donations recently.

Donations:

**Barb Garland
Larry Noble
Laura Benjamin
Don & Carolyn Zuck
Marilyn Shay
Deetra Buehler
Noel J. Liechty
Tom & Karen Jones
Barb Agan
Margie Law
Rosemary Hutton Taylor
Bob Fontana
Virginia Logli**

**Memorials for Dick Odgaard, Larry Pitts,
Ron Fontana, Ollie Weigel, Enes Logli, Dena
Randolph, and Kenneth Springer:**

**Joann Adamson
JoEllen & Gary Nervig
Jeanee Uhl
Charlene Lamberti
Barbara Reiff
Lois O'Donnell
Shelly M. Steele
Roxanne C. Hughley
Mark Gray Law
Denise Mahon
Debra L. Garner
Myrna Brayton
Barbara Rae Hughes
Dena, Linda & Bill Randolph
Cathy Meimann
Karla Kasper
Zane Smith
Barbara LaMarre
Lynette Springer Morris**

Memorial Brick Project:

Personalized memorial bricks continue to be available via our website! It's a great way to honor your friends and family! If you want to order bricks, simply go to www.ankenyhistorical.org and complete the online order with the wording you wish. Or, stop by the museum to place your order when the office is open. The orders will be batched and ordered after a group has been requested. Be sure to see all the bricks around the Old School Bell when you visit the museum!



Please accept our apology if your name was not included with this issue. Your donation or gift was truly appreciated.

2022 Spring Luncheon



A fun and delicious time was had at the 2022 Spring Luncheon, held on April 2 at the museum. Twenty three ladies enjoyed a wonderful lunch, prepared by volunteers Rosemary Hutton Taylor, Barb Agan, and Margie Law (with kitchen help from JoEllen Nervig, Amy Doll, and Lois O'Donnell and other AAHS members who helped take down the tables and chairs). Flowers were donated by Carmen's Flowers, and the ice cream was from Pickett Fence Creamery. Thanks to all who attended and help support AAHS!



Ankeny Centennial High School Students



Each year, Ankeny Centennial High School has offered several senior students to assist with spring projects at the museum. This year, twelve young men (along with teacher Mr. Richards) came to help with yard work, cleaning, and spring sprucing. Several museum members were present, too. We appreciate everyone's efforts ... and support!



Nine museum members attended junior history classes at Centennial on April 11 to talk about growing up in Ankeny in the 1950's and 1960's. We've been invited to do this for several years, and the students seem to really enjoy discussing the past and the present! Shown are Jeanne Uhl, Dennis Adamson, Lois O'Donnell, Joann Adamson, Rosemary Hutton Taylor, Sid Conkel, Stephen Martinez Mejia (student), Sue Davidson, Dale Hanke, and Tom Jones.



Ankeny Concrete Block Co. Bag

Jim Wilcox of Ames sent this canvas bag to the Ankeny Area Historical Society. It belonged to his father William E. "Bill" Wilcox of Des Moines. Wilcox was a brick and block layer in the area. In the 1970's he was on the crew for the new high school, now know as Northview Middle School, that was hit by the tornado that went through the north side of town.

In the Sunday Edition, March 31, 1968, of the Des Moines Register, it read that Doyle D. and Lyle Jenkins opened Ankeny Concrete Block Co. at 1205 Ordnance Road in Ankeny.

They handled products such as concrete blocks and specialties as well as a line of building accessories.

The Jenkins brothers have approximately 50 years of experience with concrete masonry products.

We were able to find Ankeny Concrete Block Co. in the paper archives as late as 1993.



Check out our website at AnkenyHistorical.org. You can pay for your membership online. As a member, you can view our newsletters, upcoming events, flyers and pictures of Ankeny through the years. Coming up, the 17th annual ice cream social will be held on Sunday, June 26, from 2:00—4:00 pm. Homemade desserts, music, fun ... and ice cream! Bring your friends and family!



We want to acknowledge our appreciation for the support and grants received by:



2022 AAHS Board of Directors

John Stratton
Lois O'Donnell
Rosemary Hutton Taylor
Jim Nervig

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Jeanne Uhl

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JoAnn Adamson	Past-President
Dr. Erick Pruitt	Superintendent
Ron Sampson	Past-President

Upcoming events in 2022

The 17th Annual Ice Cream Social

Sunday, June 26

2:00—4:00 pm

*Please check out our website for upcoming
dates and programs at
ankenystorical.org
and follow us
on Facebook!*

Mission:

*The Ankeny Area Historical Society's mission is to
inspire in our community a sense of meaning and
belonging by sharing the history and culture of the
Ankeny area.*

