

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2024



ANKENY AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 31 Number 2

2024 Officers

JoAnn Adamson, Co-President

Lois O'Donnell, Co-President

Carmine Boal, Vice-President

Rosemary Hutton Taylor,
Secretary

Jim Nervig, Treasurer

2024 Board of Directors

Joey Beech

Sue Davidson

Jason Duke

Bob Fontana

Asa Hutton Jr.

Rob Logan

Norman McCleary

Joe Pitts

Janet Willey

Ex-Officio

Dr. Erick Pruitt

Ron Sampson

John Stratton

Office Manager

Sandy McClure

301 SW Third, PO Box 1111
Ankeny, IA 50021
Phone: 515-965-5795

Email: history@ankenyhistorical.org
www.ankenyhistorical.org

Message from the President

As I was taking a walk on the country road near our home recently, I walked past an old pioneer cemetery, called Enterprise Cemetery. One can see by the picture below that there are no headstones.. It was established in 1913 and was located near the coal mining community of Enterprise. The Enterprise mines were active from 1913 to 1920. At one time the town of Enterprise was larger than the once small town of Ankeny. Through research, an Ankeny genealogy group has gathered records which list fourteen individuals interred at Enterprise Cemetery.



Another pioneer cemetery called Greenwood Friends Cemetery is located on Oralabor Road, south and east of I-35.

(Continued)

A Message From the President—*continued*

It was established in 1853 as shown on the archway at the front of the cemetery. Several Quaker families settled southeast of Ankeny to form the Greenwood community in the 1860s. Their community included a one-room country school and church with a cemetery.

There are some well known names interred there such as Kirkendall and Sexauer. The Kirkendall Brothers estate established the Kirkendall Library in 1959 to provide Ankeny residents access to all literary sources. Matthew Sexauer was a pioneer active in raising and shipping livestock to Chicago.

Several war veterans are buried at Greenwood Friends Cemetery. Each year, the Albaugh-McGovern American Legion Post #42 places the American flag at each stone to thank and honor them for their service. These flags remain on the gravesites from Memorial Day until Armistice Day. The veterans include (10) Civil War, (2) WWI, (22) WWII, (3) Korean, (5) Viet Nam, (1) National Guard and (1) Unknown Soldier's Marker.

Ankeny's oldest resident, Manilla Abuhl Cop-pock is also interred at this cemetery. She passed away in 2005 at 107 years young. We find history all around us!



Yours in history, JoAnn Adamson

Sweet Delights!

Get ready to satisfy your sweet tooth and chill out with us at our upcoming Ice Cream Social on Sunday, August 25 from 2-4pm.

Bring your friends, family, and neighbors for a memorable gathering. It's the perfect opportunity to mingle, make new friends, visit the museum, and bond over everyone's favorite frozen treat and homemade pie.

Don't miss out on this sweet affair! Mark your calendars and join us in August this year!

ICE CREAM Social

2:00 - 4:00PM
SUNDAY, AUGUST 25TH

SCOOP UP SOME FUN!

Music, Fun, and More!

Homemade Pies, Cakes & Brownies

Free Will Donation

301 SW THIRD ST., ANKENY, IA 50023

Ankeny Area Historical Society
Bringing the past to life

Expressing Gratitude to Our Donors!



General Donations:

Jerry & Mindi Rexroat

Paula Williams

Katherine Kendall

David & Patricia Hykes

Donna MacNeir

Anthony Klein

Susan Ballard

Delores Reynolds

Tom & Lois O'Donnell

Kathy Lynn Sells

Linda Logli Randolph

Laura Benjamin

Rotary Club of Ankeny-
Evening Satellite Group

Hyke's Furniture Service

Your donations are truly appreciated. Please accept our apology if your name was not included with this issue.

The museum is grateful for the support of our
newest corporate members:

Rotary Club Ankeny Evening *and* Greenland Homes



Thank You

Tornadoes in Ankeny??

Oh, yes, Ankeny has had more than a few documented tornadoes over the years! A more recent one was in March of 1990 about supertime, when the storm seemed to arrive from the southwest side of town and headed to the northeast. Not too much damage or injuries occurred, but it destroyed around 20 houses and damaged another 16 as well as damaging trees and wires. Maybe you were in town at that time....

The largest tornado most of us old-timers remember is the violent storm of June 18, 1974. This year (2024) is the 50th anniversary of that storm. It had been raining throughout that evening, and storm warnings were given; however, at about 10:15 pm the weather forecaster on TV had given the “all clear.” Folks went to bed thinking the worst was over – not to be the case. About 10:35, the F4 tornado hit Ankeny, coming from the northwest and going to the southeast across town, seemingly following the train tracks (now the High Trestle Trail through the city). It destroyed large parts of houses and schools, and when it hit the southeast side, it took off roofs of houses and buildings (and even took off second stories or flattened some). Trees and live wires were down throughout most of the city. Two people were killed while sleeping, and over 50 folks were injured. The Police and Fire Departments took action, along with the National Guard. Afterwards, you needed a drivers’ license ID to show you lived in Ankeny in order to come and go from the city.



Photo above shows Governor Robert Ray in conversation with Mayor Ollie Weigel.

Both photographs courtesy of the Des Moines Register and Tribune 1974.

(Continued)

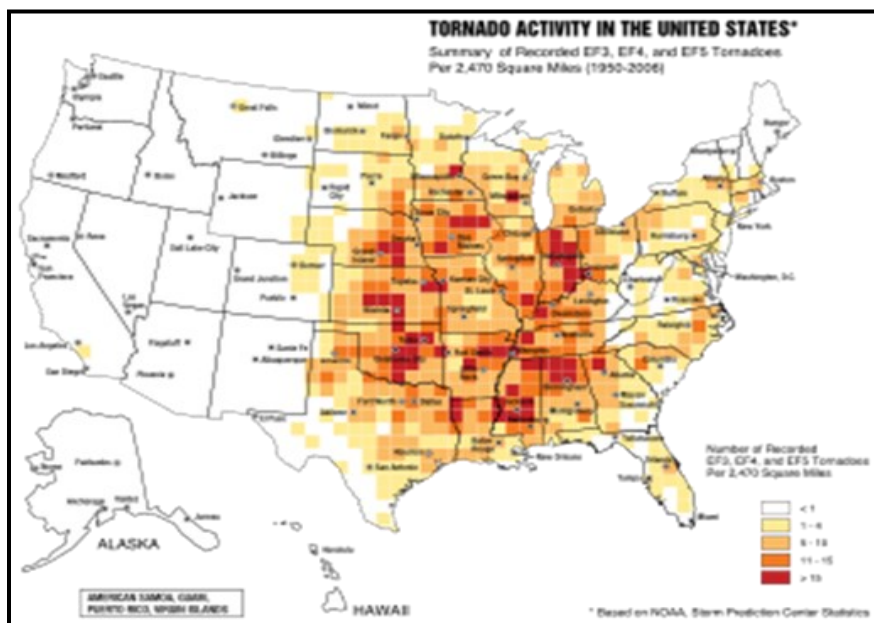
Reconstruction took months and years to complete. The old Central School (where the museum house and barn now stand) was damaged and had to be torn down. This was a storm that no one who lived through it will ever forget. And, all those people have a story to tell, if you ask them.

Each year, Iowa experiences several large storms and/or tornadoes. Many pass through different areas of the state and are of different strengths. Some of them have touched Ankeny over the years. In the 1890's a tornado dropped down west of Ankeny and destroyed a church. The storm followed a southeasterly course, thus by-passing Ankeny to the south. Another tornado struck Ankeny in 1966. Many living in the western part of Ankeny were unaware at the time that a tornado had struck on the east side about 5:00 pm on October 14. It bounced from East 9th Street to East Elementary School, then headed northeasterly in a narrow path.* Other tornadoes have come close to town or have damaged towns nearby (like the Bondurant/Marshalltown/Pella tornado of July 2018). And, we won't forget the Derecho of August 2018 with winds of up to 140 mph that caused so much damage across Iowa. We were pretty lucky to be on the outer edge of that one. (Another derecho in 2021 spawned 43 tornadoes in southern Iowa and the Winterset area.)**



Tornadoes are more frequent than we like to think about. Iowa has had five F5 tornadoes documented. If interested, you can “Google” to find lots of information about them. In the scheme of things, devastating tornadoes are much rarer here than several other areas of the U.S.

Thank goodness for that!



This map indicates activity of tornadoes in the U.S. (Wikipedia, Tornado Alley).

* From - *Ankeny: The First One Hundred Years*, sponsored by the Ankeny Area Historical Society, 1993.

**Des Moines Register, December 2021



Celebrating Rosie the Riveter Day!

The Camp Dodge Chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution celebrated Rosie the Riveter Day at the museum on March 21. The chapter has members from Johnston, Ankeny, and other central Iowa communities.

Shown in photo at right: (L) Susan Ohnysty, Gerry Bauman, Kathy Sells, Janet Blaess, Karla Wright, Karen Knapp-Danielson, Karen Stinson, and Karla Kasper.



Barn Cleaning Day

On March 28, volunteers at the museum pitched in to tidy up the barn in preparation for the busy spring and summer open house season. Without our volunteers, it would not be possible for us to open our doors and share Ankeny's history.

Show in photo at left:
(L) Margaret Law, Sue Davidson, and Jo-Ann Adamson

Thanks to all for your hard work!



Ankeny Fire Department Presentation



Above, Karen Peters, Public Education Coordinator with the Ankeny Fire Department explains what's new at the department.

This year, the museum is recognizing and paying tribute to all members of the Ankeny Fire Department.

On April 7, we were delighted to host guest speaker Karen Peters during the regularly scheduled Open House at the museum.

Karen, Public Education Coordinator with the Ankeny Fire Department, discussed the many changes seen throughout the years at the department.

Discover History at A Night at the Museum

You won't want to miss A Night at the Museum on Tuesday, June 18 from 6-8pm here at the museum. Join us to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Ankeny tornado with a captivating exhibit that features literature, videos, and photographs.

Hear remarkable stories and share your own, as we explore the community's resilience in a public forum. Representatives from Ankeny Police and Fire will tell us about their role that night and afterwards.

And of course, don't forget Wise Guys, who will be here with their famous wood fired pizza! Come share the fun!

18
June
6-8PM

Ankeny Area Historical Society Presents~



**A Night at the
museum**

community
forum
7PM

Join us to commemorate the
50th anniversary...

Share your memories and
view rare photographs in our
new tornado exhibit!



*Free will donations greatly
appreciated!*

Hey kids! Make
a tornado of
your own!

301 SW Third Street
Ankeny, IA



Come Visit Us Soon!

Summer Open Houses
June through August

Every Saturday 10am - Noon

*Summerfest Weekend
Special Hours
Saturday, July 13
Noon - 3pm

Office Hours:
Tuesday/Thursday 10am - 2pm

Tours can be scheduled by
contacting us at:

515-965-5795 or
history@ankenyhistorical.org

