



Dodge County Historical Society

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www.maymuseum.com

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WWII Heroes Are Friends



Observing birthdays is always a time to celebrate. (Front left): Wes Howe celebrated his 100th birthday on Jan. 20. Wes owned Fremont Body and Frame at 2nd & D in Fremont from 1965-1997.

(Front right): Bob Kroenke celebrated his 95th birthday on May 15. Bob taught industrial arts and driver’s education classes during a 35-year teaching career. He was at Fremont High School from 1956-73 and 1976-89.

(Back left): Joyce Winfield wrote “Forever Heroes: A Collection of World War II Stories from Nebraska Veterans” that was published in 2017.

(Back right): Dale Milligan will celebrate his 98th birthday on Aug. 30. He lived in Colorado and worked in sales from the late 1950s to 1987. After retirement, Dale moved to Fremont.



Jim Peterson celebrated his 99th birthday on March 9. He worked as office manager for the Fremont Department of Utilities for 34 years. He retired in 1985. Jim smiled when he said, “I’ve been retired longer than I worked.” Jim and Phyllis were married on Dec. 23, 1995.

by Jeff Kappeler

Recently, Joyce Winfield sent me the delightful photograph (upper left) taken on her May birthday. Her guests included three of the four remaining World War II veterans featured in her book “Forever Heroes: A Collection of World War II Stories from Nebraska Veterans.” Joyce interviewed 21 veterans for her book.

Veterans, continued on p. 2

Director's Column

Jeff Kappeler



A few weeks ago the front door bell rang rather late in the day. On my way to the door, I was puzzling over who could possibly be ringing that late. It was two young boys who were barefooted and wearing no shirts. They were wondering if they could go into the garden, which they liked “because it is so peaceful.” I quickly assured them they could go to the garden any time they wished.

Their next question was how they could tour the museum. I suggested Saturday might be a good time and added they should probably wear shoes. One said, “Oh, I will bring a shirt. I should have thought of that.” I smiled thinking, “No, you should not have thought of that. You should be running around barefooted, shirtless and being a child.”

We continued to have a brief conversation and it was obvious that they were very polite and respectful. I was rather down in spirit at this time and this sweet little encounter put a big smile on my face and in my heart. I am still smiling.

Saturday came and so did my young visitors. They also brought a friend, a cousin and two adult family members. They explained that they had attended Day in the Past and wanted to visit the museum again.

So, thank you to all who volunteer for Day in the Past and help make this event such a meaningful experience. You do touch young lives in a very positive way. We never know when this investment will come back to greet us.

Memorials & Gifts

In Memory of Paul Marsh
Jim & Patty Manhart

In Memory of Iris Doksansky
Cathy Driver

Veterans, continued from p. 1

The front page of the newsletter has featured the historical society board members so readers can get to know them better. I commandeered the space for this issue to feature Joyce, who has served as our newsletter editor since 2014. As a volunteer, I feel Joyce needs a bit of recognition also.

Both Joyce and I were journalism students of the late Marilyn Peterson when we attended Midland Lutheran College. Joyce, a native of Osceola, Nebraska, taught in Minnesota after earning her doctorate. Joyce and Doug returned to Fremont in 1997 when Joyce accepted a teaching position at Midland. Jesse, their toy poodle, is a family member.

by Joyce Winfield

‘Forever Heroes’ Update

In January 2016, I began interviewing the 21 World War II veterans for the year-long project that documented their stories. This book was one of the most challenging, emotional and satisfying things I have ever done.

When I was interviewing the veterans, all but one were in their 90s. I was solely focused on their military service years during WWII from 1941-45.

They were young men and women — some not even 20 years old — when they either enlisted or were drafted after the bombing of Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. I met these veterans 70+ years later in 2016. It was after “Forever Heroes” was published that I realized how little I knew about them beyond the war years.

After publication of “Forever Heroes” and no book deadlines, Doug and I have continued to keep in touch with the veterans, whom I now refer to as “my veterans.” Their stories have changed from memories of World War II to much more normal things in life — spending time with family, having coffee with buddies, chatting with neighbors.

With all the joy that my veterans have brought to my life, there also has been sorrow: 17 of the 21 veterans have died. I cherish their memories and continue to look forward to making new memories with Wes, Jim, Dale and Bob.

All my veterans started as Forever Heroes and now they are Forever Friends. I urge everyone to always take time to thank veterans for their service.

Cake, Toppers and More at Reception

“Wedding Bells: Customs and Attire Through the Decades” is the current exhibit at the Museum. This page in the Spring issue featured pictures of a wedding dress and wedding suit. The Summer issue included pictures of wedding china, glasses and silverware. This issue is focusing on the wedding reception.

(Below): This three-tier cake displayed in the kitchen was made from a picture found in an old cookbook. To keep the cake “fresh” for the duration of this exhibit, the layers are styrofoam and they are frosted with royal icing.

A tinsmith in the Amana Colonies made the cake tins and Jeff said they are probably at least 75 years old.



(Above right): These cake toppers represent a variety of eras. The tall one in back center dates from about 1968. Back left: This is from the late 1950s. Front left: Late 1940s. Front right: This is from 1926. The couple (about 1920) on the glass cake stand is made of bisque and the bride and groom are wearing a gown and suit handmade from crepe paper.



(Below): Reception items shown include a large rattan basket handcrafted about 1925. The roses are made from crepe paper. The napkins (from 1920s+) are hand decorated and also made from crepe paper. The punch cups (circa 1920) are hand blown with hand-applied handles. Bethlehem Star is the pattern. The sterling silver punch ladle was given as a wedding gift in 1903.

