



Dodge County Historical Society

1643 N. Nye Ave. / P.O. Box 766 / Fremont, NE / 68025 / 402.721.4515
www.maymuseum.com

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Saturday, July 9, 1-4 p.m.



Sue Reyzlik is organizing a storytelling event at the May Museum on Saturday, July 9 in conjunction with John C. Fremont Days. On Friday, July 8th, people can ride the free trolley and hear stories about the houses along Nye Avenue, known as Millionaire Row. The picture Sue is holding shows Westfield Acres, the house of Frank Fowler.

“Musings at the May Museum” will be a new activity option for those attending John C. Fremont Days in July. Prepared for its debut last year, the event got cancelled because of rain.

The idea of Sue Reyzlik, the event will be held outside on the Museum grounds on Saturday, July 9 from 1-4 p.m. “We got rained out last year, but I still think it’s a good idea,” Sue said.

The idea is a storytelling event where participants share their Fremont stories. Sharing knowledge about past events doesn’t mean they occurred a long time ago. “The past is yesterday,” Sue said.

Musings, continued on p. 2

Director's Column

Jeff Kappeler



Our new season here at the Museum has been a rather pleasant one. We have had some very enjoyable visitors. We also have been able to help some of them in quests concerning their family histories. Researchers often underestimate how much might be available to them here at the Museum and in the area.

These visitors often wish to search out grave sites, former homes of their family members and also business places connected with their histories. A couple from Arizona was recently here to do just those things. As is often the case, their time allotted was insufficient. They told us they will return.

Other pleasant news has reached us. We have been notified that we have been chosen to be in the top three of the "Omaha Choice Awards" for 2022. It is very exciting that we have unknown supporters in the area, and we appreciate this great vote of confidence. Positive input is a great source of encouragement.

Calendar of Events

Monday, June 13, July 11, 7 p.m.
ENGs meeting

Thursday, June 16, 7 p.m.
Quarterly Meeting
Dodge County Historical Society

Friday, July 8-Sunday, July 10
John C. Fremont Days
Museum open 1-4 p.m. on July 8, 9
Storytelling Event 1-4 p.m. on July 9

Memorials & Gifts

In Memory of Jean Thony Alexis
Bob & Michele Missel

In Memory of Alice McElhose
PEO Chapter AJ

In Memory of Wendell Brunner
Terry & Janice Nosal

In Memory of Alex Meyer
Marlys Meyer

In Memory of Mark Klevemann
Jim & Patty Manhart
Alice A. Nott

Musings, continued from p. 1

New J.C. Fremont Days Event

"People might not know what they know. What seems like something obscure to them may be meaningful to others. This is preservation of Fremont's history," Sue said.

And this includes photographs. So bringing photographs is also encouraged, along with the possibility of donating them (or high quality reprints) to the Museum.

Jeff Kappeler, Museum director, reports he has fewer pictures from the decades beginning with the 1950s and older. He added that he also is looking for pictures of Dodge County country schools.

"I'm just thinking here, but I bet there are pictures of Fremont out there that would be wonderful to see because they document different places and times," Sue said.

Bringing photographs and other materials, of course, is optional. Sue envisions just sharing stories about Fremont as the key to bring people together. There will be no designated times for participants to share their stories. Visitors will just stop, engage in conversation, and move on to another storyteller.

Anyone interested in learning more about this event, or who had agreed to participate last year, should contact Sue at 402-690-4926. She reminds everyone, "We all have a story!"

The May Museum also will be open to visitors from 1-4 p.m. on Friday, July 8 and Saturday, July 9.

Upstairs Floors Get Refinished



Nate Parr, owner of Even Parr Flooring, removes old carpet padding from the upstairs hallway floor.

Before the Museum opened for the season the end of April, a long anticipated project was completed.

Floors were refinished in the upstairs hallway and small blue room (maid's room).

Jeff Kappeler, May Museum director, said he and the Board of Directors for the Dodge County Historical Society began talking last winter about the hallway carpeting.

Estimating that the carpet had been installed at least 25-30 years ago, Jeff said it was dirty and needed to be cleaned.

After all those years of being walked on, even the carpet pad was in bad shape. The carpet had “waves” and Jeff said he was concerned that people could trip.

After cleaning and stretching, Jeff said the carpet still would be old. So, the carpet was pulled back and revealed a beautiful oak floor.

Under the carpet in the blue room, Jeff knew there was asbestos tile from the 1950s. The Western Theological Seminary (part of Midland Lutheran College) owned the now-Museum building from 1920 to 1967.

During the 1950s, most of the wooden floors were tiled. The asbestos tile was easier for the custodian to clean.

The blue room was the last to still have the tile. Jeff said after 50 some years, “it was time to get rid of it.”

As long as the hallway floor was going to be refinished it was decided to also refinish the blue room floor.

Nate Parr, who owns Even Parr Flooring, began working on the floors in mid-March. Within a couple of weeks the work was completed.

“We knew Nate would do an excellent job because he also did the floors in the kitchen and butler’s pantry,” Jeff said.

Before Nate began his work, lots of dust was anticipated. So plastic was hung in the upstairs’ doorways and furniture pieces were covered with sheets.

Because temperatures outside were cool, doors and windows at the Museum remained closed.

Jeff said under the asbestos tile in the blue room was a black tar-like adhesive, which was difficult to remove and had a strong odor.

A final step for Nate was applying polyurethane for three consecutive days. That resulted in another strong odor and Nate advised that nobody be in the Museum on those days.

Reflecting about the odors, hanging plastic and dealing with dust, Jeff talks about the beautiful results that were well worth the temporary inconvenience.

Wedding Gifts Included China Pieces

In earlier years when a couple became engaged, they selected a china pattern. Place settings and serving pieces became gift choices for those attending the wedding.

(Below): The small dining room features the table set with Haviland china in the Old Carnation pattern. Louis M. Keene from Fremont married Canadian Jennie Hall in 1875 and the pieces on display are from their wedding china.

Louis was a well-known businessman in Fremont and was co-owner of L.D. Richards & L.M. Keene Company, a local real estate agency. He also became president of Fremont National Bank.

The close-up photo below shows curved bone dishes and square butter pats.



(Above): The white china pieces with gold scalloped edges are also Haviland in the Silver Wedding pattern. This was the 1921 wedding china of Charles A. Keene and Hazel Rice.

Also pictured are Bethlehem Star crystal goblets, circa 1920, that also were popular wedding gifts.



(Above): Charles R. May is a cousin of Louis May. Charles and his wife, Elizabeth, were married in the 1920s and had Spode china in the Mayflower pattern. The center of the blue and white plate has red flowers. Spode china was popular in the 1930s and 40s.

Charles worked at Stephens National Bank in Fremont.