
**Marcus Historical
Center**



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**MARCUS HISTORICAL
NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2019**

***"THE PURPOSE OF THE MARCUS HISTORICAL
SOCIETY SHALL BE TO PRESERVE FOR PUBLIC
BENEFIT AND EDUCATION THE HERITAGE OF OUR
COMMUNITY"***

Hometown Christmas 2018

The Marcus Historical Society participated in the Hometown Christmas celebration by decorating a Christmas tree with angels with the names of our deceased members. The decorated wooden angels, silver and white balls, white lights, and silver garland made a beautiful tree.



We have a smaller tree displayed at our building using the memorial angels with a white crocheted angel on the top. This angel was made and donated by Doloris Tapper of Marcus. Rollie Hanson of Spencer donated the tree.



**John Snapp awarded Iowa's top
historic preservation honors**

John Snapp, who spoke at the Society last November on railroads in Iowa and particularly about Cherokee County railroading, recently received the top award granted by The State Historical Society of Iowa and the nonprofit group Preservation Iowa. He was named the Martha Hayes Preservationist of the Year.

John graduated from Immaculate Conception High School in Cherokee in 1967. He spent some time attending Iowa State University and the University of Iowa. He worked 40 years in railroading for the Illinois Central – Chicago, Central and Pacific and Canadian National Railroads. His jobs during this time included station man, clerk, relief agent, brakeman, switchman, conductor, Area Manager, Trainmaster, Manager of Grain Equipment, and Director of Freight Equipment. John retired to Cherokee. (his previous 23 years were spent at Waterloo)



His retirement has found him very busy volunteering in community affairs including Depot Renovation, Inc. and Cherokee Area Archives. He was

appointed to the Cherokee Historic Preservation Commission, serves as an officer and also assists with grant writing and photography.

John spoke about "The Importance of Railroads in Iowa" at the Historical Society Building on Sunday, November 4 at 2:00 p.m. There was an excellent line-up of photographs which he projected onto a screen. His presentation was well attended and very well received.

Elaine Rassel of the Marcus News gave a report of the program in the Nov. 15, 2018 issue. Some of the highlights of her article include a timeline beginning in 1851, the year the Illinois Central charter was issued. In 1853 the Dubuque and Pacific Railroads were chartered by the Iowa Legislature to build to the Pacific Ocean. 1855: Illinois Central tracks completed to Dunlieth (East Dubuque). 1856: work begins in Iowa. Reaches Dyersville in 1857 but construction work is halted by the panic of 1857. 1859: The Dubuque and Pacific reorganize and reschedule construction. 1860: Dubuque and Pacific reaches Jesup (IA) but is reorganized as the Dubuque and Sioux City Railroad due to financial problems. 1861: Dubuque and Sioux City rails reach Waterloo and then Cedar Falls. Work halts because of the Civil war. 1867: Illinois Central leases the Dubuque and Sioux City railroad. John Blair is brought in to oversee final construction. 1868: Railroad bridge over the Mississippi is begun with the first train crossing the bridge in 1869. Also in 1869 track laying crews which started at Sioux City reach Marcus in the fall. Tracks reach Hazard (now known as Meriden) by December. Work halts for winter. Work begins on the first Marcus wood frame depot. 1870: Marcus depot completed. On July 8, 1870 track laying crews meet midway between Alta and Storm Lake and the line is completed. 1887: Cherokee and Dakota Railroad organized to build 96 mile line from Cherokee to Sioux Falls and 61 mile line from Cherokee to Onawa. 1917: Original wood frame depot at Marcus replaced with a new brick depot. 1971: Passenger service on the Iowa Division of the Illinois Central discontinued with the last run of No. 12 on May 1.

Where did the money come from? Because railroads could not be built out of the public treasury by appropriations the government found another plan. Public lands to the amount of every other section on each side of a right of way for a specific number of miles would be granted to any corporation that would build and maintain said rail line.

The railroad made Marcus accessible to farmers in search of land, (purchased from the railroad or other sources), storekeepers to support the farmers and other residents, and provided a means to ship grain and livestock. This names just a few benefits.

Second Grade Visitors

On May 31st we had 20 second grade children along with their teachers, Mrs. Kris Irwin and Melissa Utesch, and their helper, Cheyenne Olson, come to visit the Historical Building. They were very interested in all of the displays and asked a lot of good questions. Dr. Joynt's car is always a highlight, and it was a treat to have them visit.



Open During the Marcus Fair

Come visit us during the Marcus Fair! Our building will be open Friday, August 9 from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Saturday, August 10, hours will be 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. with time out for the parade. Sunday hours will be noon until 4:00 p.m.

We are willing to host visitors at other times all year round if you contact us.

Program being planned!

On Sunday, September 20 at 1:00 p.m. Ray Scott of Arlington Wisconsin plans to be at the center to speak about "The Edmonds of Marcus". The Edmonds family were the builders of two landmark Marcus homes which are still in use today.

Mr. Scott plans to attend the Marcus Fair and would be interested in hearing or seeing anything to do with his ancestors, the Edmonds.

There are four positions open for the Marcus Historical Board. Please check 4 and return your ballot by Sept. 16.

_____ Pat Ducommun

_____ Faith Specht

_____ Phyllis Rapanani

_____ Julie Sand

_____ Write-in _____

_____ Write-in _____

To join the Marcus Historical Society, please mail a check or money order with your name/address/email/phone information and mail to:

PO BOX 321, Marcus IA 51035.

Individual: At least \$10/year (due yearly at fair time - first week of Aug.)

Family: At least \$15/year (due yearly at fair time - first week of Aug.)

If you wish to give more for your membership, both your donation and membership dues will be greatly appreciated.