

Historical Society Of Pottawattamie County

Member Journal

December 2014

A Council Bluffs Christmas

Volunteers were all set to return the materials from the Society's *History Out of the Vault* program November 2nd to the archives when president Mariel Wagner said, "Not so fast!" The exhibit was so well attended she decided to repeat it next month, adding a holiday twist as well.

Saturday, December 13, the updated display will bring a touch of Christmas and Council Bluffs memories to a special exhibit from 12:30-3:30 at The Center, 714 South Main Street. Displays will highlight the city through the 20th Century including Christmas postcards, before and after urban renewal photos, the glory days of parks including Manawa and Fairmount, the first MASH unit (Mobile Hospital #1) which was mustered in Council Bluffs, the city's radio firsts (KOIL, Sweet 98, Iowa's first FM), local school histories, and a continuous "Then and Now" video. Bring your camera to get a picture with Mrs. Claus. Dr. Richard Warner and Ryan Roenfeld will be on hand to sign their new local history book, *Images of America: Council Bluffs* which will make an excellent Christmas gift for anyone on your list who ever lived in Council Bluffs. There will also be a bake sale and other local books and gifts available for purchase. The event is free and open to the public. You can find more information about the event at www.HistoricalSocietyEvents.com.



(Top) Undated photo of Beno's at Christmas. (Lower) Guests examine the displays at "History Out of the Vault" November 2.

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Try a Nontraditional Christmas at the "Squirrel Cage"

A rotary cell jail isn't a typical site for a warm, fuzzy Christmas, so why not dispense with tradition entirely and go for something really different? That's what one will find Saturday, December 20, at *Zombie Claus 2014* from 10 am until 3 pm at the Society's "Squirrel Cage" Jail museum, 226 Pearl Street.

The event is presented in cooperation with the Zombie Research Society Omaha Chapter, and *Scream in the Dark SFX*. There will be opportunity for caroling with unusual Christmas tunes and photos with *Zombie Claus*. Admission is a five dollar donation for the roof repair.

The Pacific City Saga

In the mid-1850s the residents of Mills County anxiously awaited the arrival of rail service, which would surely bring growth and development to the area. In 1857, the Council Bluffs & St. Joseph Railway (CB&StJo) was proposed to run south to St. Joseph via the flood plain and therefore miss Glenwood. A capital stock of one million dollars was proposed and Articles of Incorporation were filed in the Pottawattamie County recorder's office on May 18, 1858. Hearing of the proposed line, residents of Plattville Township speculated as to be its final location and set about establishing a town where the Burlington & Missouri River (B&MR) was most likely to join the CB&StJo line.

In 1857 they incorporated, formed the Pacific City Town Company, and founded a town, which they named Pacific City. Anticipating the railroads, they purchased 480 acres (extending 1.25 miles east and west and .5 miles north and south) just east of the bluffs at today's I-29 Glenwood exit. That same year Edward Gilliland purchased a fine quarter section of land along Joy Street of the newly platted town at its northern boundary and built a two-story home, farm buildings and fences on his 160-acre farmland. Mr. Gilliland was the father of Mrs. Emma Louie, who solicited the funds to build Jennie Edmundson Memorial Hospital from her friend J.D. Edmundson; she managed the hospital for almost forty years.

For several years Pacific City was very active with a new school, bank, newspaper, dry goods stores, brickyard, lumber yard, grain mill, churches and everything that belonged to a growing country town. Right-of-way surveys were completed, grading initiated and ties brought in from Council Bluffs. Before work could be done the Civil War broke out and work was placed on "hold."

Anticipating that Pacific City would be the junction point of the B&MR a large depot was constructed along the right-of-way of the CB&StJo. Upon completion the depot was decorated and there were visiting dignitaries, speeches, plenty of refreshments, fiddling, and dancing for the enjoyment of the large crowd which had assembled that day.

In 1866, one year following the conclusion of the Civil War, work on the Burlington & Missouri River Railway

was resumed at Ottumwa, Iowa. The CB&StJo was competed southward to St. Joseph on December 30, 1867 with operations between Council Bluffs and St. Joseph starting in July 1868. The B&MR arrived some two miles south of Pacific City on December 4, 1869 where it junctioned with the CB&StJo and utilized the latter's trackage to access Council Bluffs. The last spike of the B&MR's mainline across Iowa was driven December 15, 1869 at a point 23 miles east of Plattsmouth — also known as Sharpsburg and Bethlehem, Iowa.

As a result a new railroad town, Pacific Junction, was established at the junction of the two railways and it proceeded to prosper while the town of Pacific City, with its unused spacious depot, faded from existence. All that marks the site of Pacific City today is a gas station and small restaurant at the Glenwood exit of I-29.

With railroad service having reached Pacific Junction, the town sites of Malvern (formerly Milton), Hastings, and Emerson (formerly Harmony) were platted by the railroad's local land agent in an effort to sell the land the railroad had acquired through land grants.

All that marks the site of Pacific City today is a gas station and small restaurant at the Glenwood exit of I-29.

The CB&StJo reached Kansas City in the fall of 1869 and became known as the Kansas City, St. Jo & Council Bluffs Railway. After financial problems it was acquired by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, known as the CB&Q or simply The Q. The CB&Q later acquired the B&MR as well.

The B&MR mainline is in heavy use today with freight traffic as part of the BNSF railroad; it is also the route of Amtrak's California Zephyr. The old CB&StJo route is remains active as well.

(Story by James L. Knott. Dr. Knott has served on the board of directors of the Historical Society of Pottawattamie County and is author of "Gateway to the West: A History of Council Bluffs, Iowa.")

New Clinic Brought Council Bluffs to Forefront of Health Care

For many years Dr. Donald Macrae, Jr., nurtured a dream of gathering together a group of Council Bluffs physicians, “each with a love of a particular branch of medicine, to associate themselves” so they could collectively determine the optimum diagnosis and treatment of patients. His goal went even a step further than that; this state-of-the-art medicine must be delivered in an affordable fashion, even if that meant without charge to some. “There are two classes of people that must be able to easily receive an examination,” explained Dr. Macrae. “One is the rich man. The other is the pauper. Our plan is to give service within the means of the ordinary fellows, who after all are the backbone of our country.”

The clinic was to be grand, incorporating the latest designs. The newspaper hailed the new facility as the very best, noting professional health care to be more important than ever “in these times of personal strife and business endeavor, when a minimum of thought is given to one’s physical well being and a maximum to the fulfillment of his ambitions.”

It was not to be a “selfish, closed clinic” but rather open to any legitimate physician in Council Bluffs. Dr. Macrae was particularly interested in assembling a network of various specialists in the building, with a cooperative arrangement where any physician could call upon any one of the specialists to examine the case without any additional charge “other than that made by the original physician to whom the patient has gone for advice.”

The Council Bluffs Clinic opened October 1, 1923. A newspaper article



With the exception of the 1920s vintage auto in front, the Council Bluffs Clinic Building appears much the same today as it did 90 years ago.

a year later hailed it as one of the three great clinics of the United States, “and surpassed by none.” A particular source of pride was the medical library, which in addition to ancient and modern books on medicine, also contained “a motion picture apparatus.” The radium department and on-site laboratory were likewise hailed as significant features of the clinic.

The building itself was a source of civic pride. Elmer H. Doolittle was so impressed by the reception room he commissioned a collector to secure two original artworks from France to

grace the mantels on the east and west sides.

For the next 45 years the building continued to serve as a bustling clinic. It was sold in 1968 to Dr. R.W. Sanders for use as his orthodontic office and headquarters to Dentic Laboratories which he also owned. Dr. Sanders sold the building to Walter Anderson in 1972. The building is his home today to Smith Davis & Abel insurance.

(Story by Richard Warner. Dr. Warner is editor of the Society's "Member Journal.")



Architects of the Council Bluffs Clinic incorporated in their exterior design some features seen in the building adjacent to create a uniform image and feel for that block.

Billy Caldwell – Chief Sauganash

“Following Chief Sauganash” is a Kickstarter campaign launched by Susan Kelsey of Lake Forest, Illinois and Mary Lou McGinn of Council Bluffs, Iowa. The purpose of the campaign, with a goal of \$3500, is to create a monument of granite engraved with the story of Billy Caldwell and the Potawatomi in Council Bluffs, and the installation of the monument in St. Joseph Cemetery on March 17, 2015- his 235th birthday. The goal has actually been reached, but more contributions are still welcome for signage.

Billy Caldwell (aka Chief Sauganash) played a critical role in the history of early America. The Caldwell and Sauganash names are highly visible in Chicago: the Sauganash neighborhood, the Billy Caldwell Golf Course, Billy Caldwell Avenue, Sauganash Park, and the monument placed at the Old Treaty Elm in Sauganash – all located in the area of the forest preserve that was the reservation. The first hotel in Chicago was the Sauganash Inn, named in his honor. He died in Council Bluffs in 1841 where today his name is unknown.

“Merchant, Soldier, Broker, Chief – A Corrected Obituary of Captain Billy Caldwell”, an article by James Clifton, professor at the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay which appeared in the August, 1978 issue of the Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, begins:

“Captain Billy Caldwell (1780-1841), officer in the British Indian Department, merchant in Amherstburg, Upper Canada, and clerk of the Kinzie-Forsyth company in Chicago, died of cholera at his home in Council Bluffs, Indian Territory, on September 27, 1841. He was sixty-one.....”

Several biographers have portrayed Caldwell in different ways; some are well documented regarding specific events.

Billy Caldwell was born on March 17, 1780 on Brant’s Settlement- a refugee camp outside Old Fort Niagara, Canada. His mother was a Mohawk woman, daughter of Rising Sun. His father was William Caldwell, an Irish colonel in the British army. His father left soon after Billy was born. For the first seven years of his life, Billy lived with his mother in Mohawk Village Six Nations, Canada.

In 1783, his father married for the third time and moved to Amherstburg, Ontario, near Detroit, where he

established his new family. When Billy was seven years old, they brought him to live with them in Amherstburg. He was educated by the Jesuits and became fluent in French and English. He also spoke several Indian languages. (He was later to use his language skills in serving as translator for Native American organizer, Tecumseh.)

Serving in the War of 1812, he was appointed captain in the British Indian Department. Captain Billy Caldwell was the name by which he preferred to be known for the rest of his life.

In 1797 he moved to the United States and entered the Indian trade along the Lake Michigan borderland, particularly around (present-day) Chicago, where he lived most of his adult years. Here he became a leader of the Potawatomi, Ojibwa and Odawa Three Fires Council.

U.S. officials, respecting his British war record and his language skills, invited Captain Caldwell to negotiate in Chicago for the Potawatomi/ Ojibwa/ Odawa for the sale of their Illinois, Indiana and Lower Michigan village sites. According to Charles Babbitt’s “Early History of Pottawattamie County”, in the 1833 Treaty of Chicago, all of the tribal lands west of Lake Michigan - five million acres – were ceded in exchange for a reservation of equal size further west and \$100,000. Captain Caldwell insisted that the Potawatomi be paid in coin rather than currency, which served them well when the currency became obsolete.

He sold most of the 1600 acres he was given by the government for his services and, in 1836, he left Chicago with his wife Masaqua LeGrand, a woman of Potawatomi and French descent whom he married in 1834 (his first two wives died in childbirth) and led around 1500 Potawatomi Indians to Council Bluffs through Platte River, Missouri. Originally, they were supposed to remain in Missouri, but they were not able to do so following the Louisiana Purchase. They arrived in western Iowa in 1837 and settled in what is now Council Bluffs along Indian Creek on North Broadway. (Some accounts give 2500 as the number coming to southwest Iowa, breaking up into five camps with no more than around 500 in Council Bluffs at any one time.) They called their new home Caldwell’s Village. Billy Caldwell’s home was at Traders’ Point, a few miles south, where his office was located. The

government went back on their promise to build a mill, so he and the Potawatomi built their own mill on Mosquito Creek.

In the spring of 1838, Jesuit missionaries from St. Louis, Pierre-Jean DeSmet, S.J and Felix Verrydt, S.J., and two lay brothersestablished the St. Joseph Indian Mission at Caldwell's Village in an abandoned fort, or blockhouse, near (now) East Pierce and Union Streets. The church and school served the population from 1838 through 1841.

On September 28, 1841, Billy Caldwell – Chief Sauganash died of cholera. (His children all preceded him in death, and his wife did not long survive him – Clifton) He was buried in the cemetery behind the mission. In 1857 the hill was cut down, the blockhouse was demolished, and those buried behind the mission were reinterred at the “old Catholic cemetery”, the graves identified only by a wooden sign marked “Indians”.

At an early age Billy Caldwell struggled with identity, wishing to be recognized as British, Indian and white; finally emerging as one of the leaders of the surrounding Native American communities and an important figure in the early history of Council Bluffs.

The granite monument engraved with a brief synopsis of the story of Billy Caldwell/Chief Sauganash and the Potawatomi will be produced and installed at St. Joseph Cemetery, with the assistance of John O'Connor, president of J.F. Bloom Monument Co. and manager of St. Joseph Cemetery.

The project has been endorsed by Preserve Council Bluffs, the Historical Society of Pottawattamie County, and Council Bluffs mayor, Matt Walsh. Memorial wording is in the process of being approved by the American Indian Center of Chicago.

The organizers believe that it is important for funding to come from small donations by many people. To make a donation, search Sauganash Kickstarter and follow the first link, “Following Chief Sauganash”. Pledges are made through Amazon.com. Any amount in excess of the \$3500 will be related to the project, i.e. landscaping, promotional materials.

Note- There are no known photographs of Billy Caldwell/ Chief Sauganash. There is a sketch, based on one of his half-brother, and an internet search will show a man in a full-feather Indian headdress. These are not our subject- the Potawatomi wore only a single feather, sometimes two – if any.

(Contributed by Mary Lou McGinn. Ms. McGinn is a Historical Society member and coauthor of "A Living History of Council Bluffs.")

Election of Officers and Board Members

The Historical Society of Pottawattamie County has four positions coming open. The nominating committee has selected candidates for those positions. Members will receive a ballot by first class mail. Election results will be announced at the Society's annual meeting, January 18, 2015 at Uncle Buck's Restaurant (inside Bass Pro Shop) in Council Bluffs. The new board member and officers will be sworn in at that time.

Below is some brief biographical information about the candidates who are new to the Society.

For a position on the board of directors:

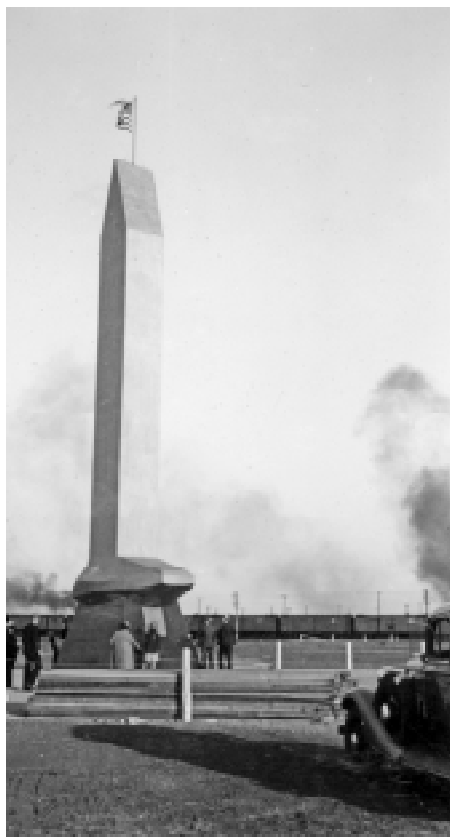
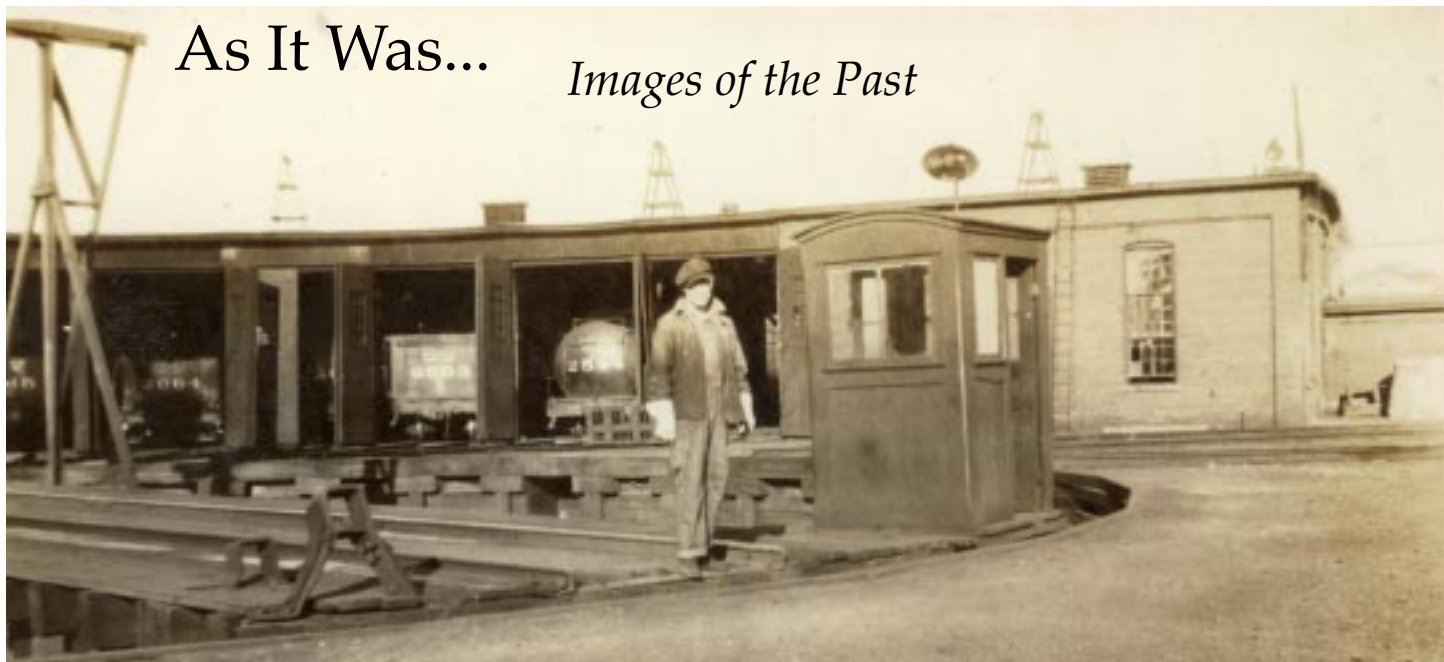
Christina Frans- I was born and raised here in the Omaha area, and spent over 10 years working in broadcast media before turning my attention to nonprofit work. I currently work for the Muscular Dystrophy Association of Nebraska and Western Iowa. In my spare time, I have an interest in photography, specifically abandoned properties and old cemeteries. I feel that there is a certain beauty that people tend to not see in things that were once grand and left to ruin. I dislike that Omaha has torn down most of its rich history, like Jobber's Canyon and other historical sites for new developments and love the fact that Council Bluffs has embraces and preserves their history and strives to keep it intact and available for the public to learn what our area was once like.

Jon Barnes- I was born and raised in Pottawattamie County and graduated from Lewis Central. I am employed by Pottawattamie County as a Deputy Sheriff and I currently work the midnight shift. My family has resided in the Council Bluffs area since the early 1960s and my father and his five siblings are all graduates of St. Albert school. My grandfather, the late Jake Barnes, was the VP of Alter Scrap Company and was instrumental in bringing riverboat gambling to the area. My mother worked as a nurse at Mercy Hospital for nearly twenty years and my father is retired from the UPRR where he was a conductor for nearly four decades. I have been interested in the history of the county for several years. I have been researching the past deputies in the county and have uncovered several interesting facts and documents. I am interested in the history of Lake Manawa as well.

For the position of secretary:

Rose Warner- I am a 5th generation Council Bluffs native. I graduated from Creighton University in 2012 with a B.A. in History, and I worked for three years in the Creighton Archives. Currently I am studying pre-health at UNO and am an active Durham Museum Volunteer and member of the New Horizon Presbyterian Church Congregation & Bell Choir. In addition to knowledge and experience in artifact care and preservation on a shoe-string budget, I also have a fair amount of time and an infinite amount of enthusiasm to dedicate to the position!

As It Was... *Images of the Past*



Historical Society of Pottawattamie County

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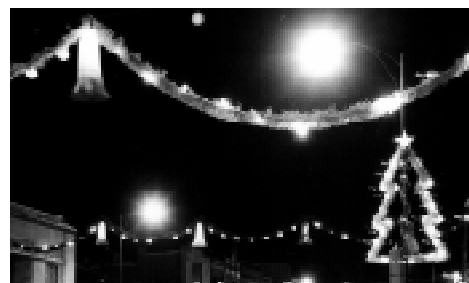
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Inside...

It will be "A Council Bluffs Christmas" December 13 at The Center. Good memories and a chance to get your picture with Mrs. Claus. Details on page 1.



So what happens if you build a town in anticipation of a railroad and the railroads merge two miles south instead? It's not a good thing. Read about Pacific City, Iowa on page 2.

Dr. Macrae had boundless ambition. He formed and found ways to fund Mobile Hospital #1 in WWI, created a medical college in Council Bluffs, and built a clinic in town whose quality was "surpassed by none" in the United States. If you grew up here you may well have visited the Council Bluffs Clinic. Learn more about its creation on page 3.