



The Window

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BROOKINGS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Museum plans season opening for Memorial Day weekend

The Brookings County Museum will hold its grand opening days on Memorial Day weekend, Saturday, May 28 through Monday, May 30. Throughout the season, the museum will be open seven days a week through Labor Day weekend.

Museum hours are 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. daily. Admission is free, but free-will offerings for museum growth and maintenance are accepted and always welcomed.

This year marks the 53rd year of the museum at its Volga site in what is now Doc and Roma Peeke Park.

It is hoped a new addition to the 1884 James Hauxhurst House will be ready by opening date. Plans are to add a small kitchen to the rooms in the home of the first county clerk to the Brookings County Commission.

The kitchen will be filled with cooking and serving items, many of which are part of the recent gift to the museum from the Harlan F. Olson family (see story inside).

Volunteer greeters and guides are always needed. If you would like to volunteer as a museum greeter and guide during the summer season, please call Darla Strande in Brookings at 605-692-8179. ☒

History in Print

Volga Tribune, July 4, 1968

County Museum bldg. plans move forward, contracts are signed

John Bergh, Volga, president of the Brookings County Historical Society, has signed building contracts for the Brookings County Museum to be built on the City Park grounds in Volga for \$30,000.

General contractors for the 40 by 84-foot building are Rud Construction Company and Al Anundson Construction, both of Volga. Sub-contractors are Bill's Electric and Pete Mast Plumbing.



In a rare pre-season opening on March 25, the Brookings County Museum in Volga welcomed members of the Granite Threshermen's Association, Granite, Iowa. The bus-load of threshermen and women made the Volga stop after a morning tour of a manufacturing plant and lunch in Madison. The group of nearly 60 then spent about two hours touring the museum. Pictured at right are two Granite Threshermen hamming it up at the museum's dairy display. Granite, Iowa is just south and east of Sioux Falls.

Brookingscountymuseum.org

Where history comes alive online.

Thank You, Allegra

The Brookings County Museum is once again a recipient of a grant distributed by Allegra of Brookings to non-profit groups, associations or charitable organizations in Brookings County.

The \$250 grant, along with others, have helped the museum expand its quarterly newsletter, *The Window*.

The Allegra "FootPrint Fund" awards marketing and print services on an annual basis, for which the museum and newsletter readers are greatly appreciative.

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Howard and Gladys Lee Music Room

The Brookings County Museum's music room has officially been named the Howard and Gladys Lee Music Room.

Music has always been a part of their lives. They first met at a rehearsal for a Christmas pageant at Waldorf College where they were staff members.

After graduating from Volga High School and South Dakota State University in 1941, Howard taught high school social studies and served as band director at Wessington High School. He joined the Navy in late 1942 and in March of 1943 became communications officer aboard the USS Boise.

During WW II, that light cruiser saw action in operations in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters.

After the war Lee attended graduate school at the University of Iowa and was a member of its concert and marching bands. He also directed an Iowa City church choir and the community's YMCA chorus.

In 1949 he became a faculty member at Waldorf College in Forest City, Iowa, teaching commercial subjects and

directing the college band. While there he met and later married Waldorf staff member Gladys Egertson in 1950 at Petersburg, Minn. Shortly thereafter the couple moved to Volga where Lee was engaged in banking.

He became very active in the Volga community in a variety of organizations. He was a member of the Brookings Kiwanis club for 52 years. He served as director of choirs and instrumental ensembles for the Volga First Lutheran Church, was director of Volga's Community Chorus and played in the Brookings Community Band. Gladys was the Volga First Lutheran Church organist for 25 years

Lee, who died April 4 at 102, served as a board member and as treasurer of the County Historical Society/Museum for more than four decades and was closely associated with the funding and construction of the museum's first building in what is now Doc and Roma Peeke Park.

The late Howard, and Gladys, 96, have been active members of the historical society and of the museum for more than 60 years. ❀



Gladys and the late Howard Lee have been honored by the Brookings County Museum with the naming of its Music Room in recognition for their years of service to Volga and to the museum.

Just a Friendly Game of Poker Back in 1927

Play poker for real money in Brookings in the 1920s, and you might end up in jail if you don't keep your big flappin' mouth shut during your leisurely afternoon stroll through the pool halls and barber shops.

Big brother may be listening.

With not much else to enforce in a quiet burg where liquor was illegal and the WTCU wasn't, officers often prowled the neighborhoods late at night peeking under kitchen window blinds at suspected homes, looking for the games that might be underway on flowered oilcloth-covered tables by the town's chain smoking ne'er-do-wells.

Those were times when gambling would most surely send a person to rack, ruin and possibly damnation, unlike today when gambling isn't nearly the big deal it once was.

The times have certainly changed.

Back in mid-February 1927, an innocuous, friendly game of dime poker was almost a major crime in town, ranking right up there with stealing coal chunks from the railroad or spitting on the sidewalk.

The same week in 1927 that the poker raid in south Brookings took place, the really big news in town was the successful trip to Pierre by the county commissioners

to convince state bureaucrats to gravel sixteen miles of road between Brookings and White.

The commissioners didn't get home in time for the Boy Scout Court of Honor that also celebrated Boy Scout Week.

And down there at the dark end of South Sixth Avenue, some fellow who had never been a Boy Scout and didn't even own a car to drive up to White, was hosting a friendly poker soiree in his drafty house.

A stool pigeon spilled the beans, however, and the town's law enforcement kicked into high gear.

Police Officer John Crosser and compatriots Otis Ridout and Jim Brooks, accompanied by City Attorney Herbert Cheever because this was such a big case, waited for darkness and then headed south.

There on the south end of Sixth Avenue, the home's window shades were drawn down tight. Shadows on the kitchen shade from the other side indicated some kind of card game in progress, so Crosser high-stepped over a snowbank and tried the back door. He turned the cold brass handle slowly and quietly.

It was locked.

He knocked gently. Someone from inside asked who was there.

Crosser responded with the simple word "IN." It was the prearranged password, and within seconds, the door lock clicked smartly and the law went into action.

The Register described it from there: "Crosser, closely followed by the others, rushed in, but they had not counted on the steps that led from the tiny vestibule to the room where the game was in progress. "Crosser stumbled over the steps momentarily, but both he and Ridout say they saw money on the table. Before they reached the table, however, the money had disappeared."

On the advice of Attorney Cheever they confiscated the cards that were still on the table and arrested twelve men.

The card sharks were Orza Goodroad, Olaf Nelson, Orville Ward, Carl Lakeman, Ben Cleveland, Elmer Hanson, Wesley Morris, Raymond Gill, Ruben Kukuk, K. Kukuk, Harley McCord and Bud Pittenger. In court the next day, the men pleaded not guilty and were placed under \$25 bond.

Next day, with Justice Sam Kabrud presiding, the men insisted they had not been playing poker. But each was dealt a small fine by the judge. ❀

History in Print

Brookings Register January 19, 1922

Dynamite blast near Volga awakens Brookings, too

Brookings citizens were rudely awakened last Friday morning by the rumble of an explosion and the rattling of windows and trembling of the ground that could not be explained until news was received from Volga.

That being 400 pounds of dynamite had exploded in a field on the J. A. Thorson farm one and three-quarter miles southwest of Volga where it was being stored by the men who were graveling the state highway between Volga and Arlington.

The blast blew a large hole in the ground, but no one was injured.



Who could resist this little horse?

This irresistible hobby horse from about the 1930s era was donated this spring by Roberta Wagner of Brookings.



Providing leadership to the museum this year is Shirley Deerthardt of Aurora, seated center. She succeeds Phil Wagner, left, of Brookings, who had provided society leadership for the last four years before accepting the vice-presidential position. Re-elected to a fifth year of service as treasurer is Darla Strande of Brookings, center, and Bob Buchheim, right, of Volga, will serve as secretary. Re-elected to three-year terms on the museum's governing board were Chuck Cecil and Janet Gritzner, Brookings; Don Kleinjan and Dennis Hanson, Volga.

History in Print

Brookings Register, January 19, 1922

Snappy State College team routs Sioux Falls cagers

With an exhibition of team work that excelled anything ever seen on the Armory floor, the State College basketball team completely overwhelmed the team from Columbia College of Sioux Falls in a snappy game that resulted in a score of 47 to 4.

Brookings Register, July 27, 1922

Brookings has only one passenger train daily

Orders were sent out last Saturday by the Chicago, Northwestern railway annulling trains No. 516 and No 517 through Brookings on account of coal shortage.

The strike of the railway shop men which has left the train equipment badly in need of repair is also thought to be a principal cause.

As a result, Brookings now has only one passenger train on east-west service daily.

1893 living costs helped keep the wolf away

Brookings County residents once spent more keeping the wolf from the door than they did keeping the county attorney before the bar.

In the April 1893 report on county expenses, the costs were \$117 in wolf bounties and \$66.66 for the county attorney.

So just what was the cost of living here in 1893?

Well, county commissioners approved \$6 toward a month's house rent for one family down on its luck.

They bought meat for a poor family for \$1.50. Destitute Ole Severson used a county \$10 bill to buy clothing for himself and his wife. The county bought a coffin for the deceased Oquist child for \$6. Arne Peterson got a \$75 county gift of an artificial limb. Rent for school and public lands was six cents an acre. The county dog tax was \$1 a year.

County commissioners got \$5 a meeting and were paid mileage for count business of four cents.

Brookings County had seven individuals in what was called the Yankton asylum for the insane. Residents paid \$16 a month for "maintenance" of each "inmate," as they were called.

Commissioners didn't just come to town and tie their teams to the hitching post. Meetings were marathons, some lasting several days.

And the county paid \$1.50 in April to a livery barn for keeping the commissioners' teams.

The first courthouse wasn't insulated. To stifle the April chill, the county paid \$8.25 for firewood and \$9.55 for coal. In September, commissioners accepted a \$10.10 per ton bid for 25 tons of coal.

The courthouse had a few center-hung electric lights, but they were weak as poor farm soup. Commissioners paid A. H. Wintermute \$3.60 for kerosene for courthouse lamps to

augment the dim lighting. The Brookings Electric Light Company electric bill was \$5.

In earlier years, the Register of Deeds had the county plum, keeping the fees collected.

Commissioners soon halted the Register of Deeds' good fortune. By the 1890s, the \$107 a month paid to the Superintendent of Schools was one of the lucrative county jobs.

The sheriff didn't get a salary, but submitted bills for his fees. He made a darn good living compared to most, like the courthouse janitor Kate Colby.

In April she scrubbed mud, manure and tobacco from the courtroom floor. She spiffed up the hallway and the stairs, too. Her pay for all that and more was just \$4.

In April 1893 the commissioners bought a used bathtub for the poor farm, buying it for \$5 from the City of Brookings.

The tub was city surplus property, but that leaves many unanswered questions. When the power plant was privately owned, hot water was a generator by-product for a bathing house located in the plant where the old City Hall is now situated.

H. Porter built a 24x24-foot barn at the poor farm for \$374.70.

The county paid a man \$6 to set out \$15.75 worth of saplings on the courthouse grounds.

F. A. Pond sought retribution after his horse fell through the rotted planks of a Sioux River bridge and either died from the fall or drowned.

But townships built and maintained the bridges with a little seed money for material from the county. Commissioners rejected Pond's bill for \$200, which equaled the quarterly salary of County Attorney Philo Hall.

And that's a sampling of Brookings County's economic times in 1893. ❁

Generous gifts from the Harlan F. Olson family

A generous gift of more than 50 artifacts for museum display has been given to the Brookings County Museum.

Most of the items donated by the Harlan F. Olson Family will be used to stock the kitchen area in the museum's 1894 James Hauxhurst House that is being refurbished, according to Shirley Deethardt of Aurora, museum president.

"We are grateful for the items gathered by Harlan Olson during his lifetime," she said. "Many shelves planned for the kitchen area can now be filled with the various pots, pans, plates and other Olson family artifacts that will be appropriate for a kitchen in the 1890s."

Olson was born in the Lake Norden and Lake Poinsett area in 1939 and died in March of 2016. He was a self-educated archeologist and Lake Poinsett area historian.

In addition to the kitchen items from the Olson family, the museum was also given a very rare pair of all wood roller skates, an

early cream can, a buggy jack and several antique children's toys.

The donated items had been on display in the Lake Poinsett Visitor Center/Museum that was part of the entry building to the Game, Fish and Parks (GF&P) Department campgrounds on the south side of the lake near the Olson property.

Olson, a retired banker living on a farm adjacent to Lake Poinsett, was widely noted for his extensive collection of Native American artifacts including Clovis, Catlinite and other stones fashioned into spear points, hammers, mauls and arrowheads, most of which Olson found as he hiked in the Lake Poinsett area. His discoveries represented about 12,000 years that Native Americans hunted, fished and camped in that glacially-formed landscape.

His stone tool and weapons collections comprised most of the state's museum area. A small section was also devoted to other artifacts related to the period of white settlement in the area.

When the GF&P remodeled the museum, it elected to devote all of the space to Olson's wonderful collection of Native American stoneware.

The Olson family invited representatives of the Brookings County Museum to go through the pioneer settlement portion of Olson's collection. This was done by board members Phil Wagner, Darla Strande and Chuck Cecil, all of Brookings. They worked with Olson's daughter, Mrs. Lori Hopkins of Battle Creek, MI. to transfer selected artifacts to the county museum.

Now the GF&P plans to expand Harlan's very extensive collection of Native American artifacts and add to the geologic and geographic history of the Lake Poinsett area.

Harlan and his wife Carol were members of the Brookings County Historical Society/Museum and in 2008 he was the guest speaker at the museum's annual meeting, showing and telling the story of the settlement of the Lake Poinsett area through the centuries. ❁

Olson's discoveries represented 12,000 years that Native Americans hunted, fished and camped in the glacially-formed landscape.

The late Harlan Olson was best known for his extensive collection of Native American stone implements, many of which he found on his frequent tours of the area around Lake Poinsett. Before his death, Harlan brought his collection to the Brookings County Historical Society's annual meeting and responded to questions about stone finds and acquisitions. But Harlan was also a collector of pioneer artifacts, many of which will be on display at the museum for the first time this season. His stone implement collection, incidentally, can be seen at the Lake Poinsett Game, Fish and Parks Campground Visitor Center/Museum on the south side of Lake Poinsett.

Among the many Harlan Olson artifacts previously displayed at the Lake Poinsett State Park Museum include a rare all-wooden pair of roller skates, top right, and delightful toy table settings.



Your Virtual Tour Is Waiting
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Museum receives rare Van Brunt five-row seeder

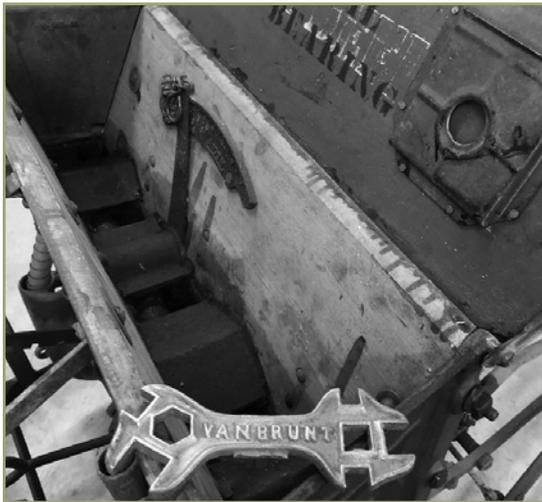
The Brookings County Museum has received a gift of a rare John Deere Van Brunt horse-drawn five row disc planter used in the Bruce area more than 100 years ago. The horse-drawn machine was donated by Lee and Marialene Lundie.

For its age, the gift is in remarkable condition and will be featured on opening day, Sunday, May 29, in the complex's Horsedrawn Museum.

George and Daniel Van Brunt developed an adjustable seeder in the 1860s that addressed the problem of broadcasting seed, much of which was then consumed by birds. They sold their machine to John Deere in 1911.

The Lundie seeder's wooden seed box is like new and still has the brass marker for measurements for oats, barley, wheat and peas. In the box is an original, special wrench used to adjust width of rows. Also, the planter has round metal attachments that hung from S-hooks and trailed behind the dropped seed to spread dirt over them once the seed dropped from each of the five cylinder seeders.

One other special use for the seeder was to plant winter wheat seeds between six corn rows so that two crops could be growing in the field at the same time. 🌾



The special tool above was part of the century-old horse-drawn Van Brunt seeder now a part of the county museum's collection. Also shown is the measuring device to calculate seed distribution of various crops. The metal sleeve at top right held the original operating manual.

AT RIGHT: Museum Board Member Marv Hope spends his spare time refurbishing this rare John Deere Van Brunt horse-drawn five-disc seeder.



Summertime Fun at Lake Campbell's Hagensick's Park

Editor's Note: The following was researched and written by the late John Beatty and appeared in his "Sharings" series, all of which have been donated to the museum by his daughter and son-in-law Jo and Larry Kallemeyn of Spearfish, S.D.

During and following the period when we were running the story concerning the history of Midway Park, which was started in 1927, we received many, many requests to tell about another recreational area, Hagensick's Park, located just east of the bridge at the south end of Lake Campbell.

We've done some reading and interviewing and find that this park, which provided entertainment for so many folks in the area, had a more humble beginning, and a longer life than its later competitor, Midway Park just east of Volga on the Big Sioux River.

One of our segments of the story mentioned the possibility that there was a helicopter at the park for the grand opening Fourth of July celebration in 1927, and that the Ford Tri-Motor airplane rides cost \$5, even for kids.

Wayne Waltz, who attended the celebration, tells us that it wasn't a helicopter, it was an Autogyro. Not being familiar with the term, we looked it up in our encyclopedia and found that: "The lifting surfaces of the Autogyro are not fixed wings but large rotor blades that revolve in a horizontal plane. Like the conventional airplane, the Autogyro has a nose section containing an engine and a propeller which are used to give the craft its forward impetus. Unlike the rotor of the helicopter, that of the Autogyro is not power driven. It is the action of the air stream against the blades which causes them to rotate. Once the rotor is turning, the Autogyro can maintain flight at very low forward speeds. Thus it can land and take off very steeply and hence can be flown in and out of very small fields, even with obstructions around the borders."

Wayne also reported that the Tri-Motor gave rides for kids at only 50 cents apiece and adults at about \$1.50.

And now on with Hagensick's Park, an area that has provided many, many fond memories for us and many thousands of others who were teenagers so long ago.

Back in the early years of this century the area which eventually was to become a well-planned and managed recreation



This photo of Hagensick's roller rink shows the size of the popular amusement park feature attraction at Lake Campbell. The rink was razed several years ago and today, a nice restaurant has been built on its location.

area for several generations was described as "just a big sandbar with no trees."

The first refreshment stand was a small bunk wagon on wheels, pulled by horses. The side opened up and let down for a counter. An old man, Mr. Spattel, sold gum, candy and other items from the contraption.

The property at that time had never been filed on and E.E. McKnight took it up as a claim. It was he that started building the cement block building which is still standing on the property.

In 1917, before the building was completed, he ran out of money and William "Bill" Hagensick bought the property, finished the building and put in an electric light plant. Mr. Hagensick had previously owned and operated a meat market and general store in Nunda.

This period, during the first World War was particularly difficult for people with German names or background. Some have described their situation as being similar to that of the American Japanese during World War II. Bill and his family were instructed by the Federal Government that they "should not leave the immediate area of the lake."

Bill began planting the cottonwood trees which are still growing in the area east of the original building. At the time he wasn't sure whether they would grow in the sandy soil of the area. As the trees grew, he planted grass and developed a nice picnic ground and park.

The Hagensick home was located just to the west of the bridge where he owned the land up to the point where the road turned west.

An ice house was built on the lake shore, just west of the concrete building which by now housed a cafe. The building,

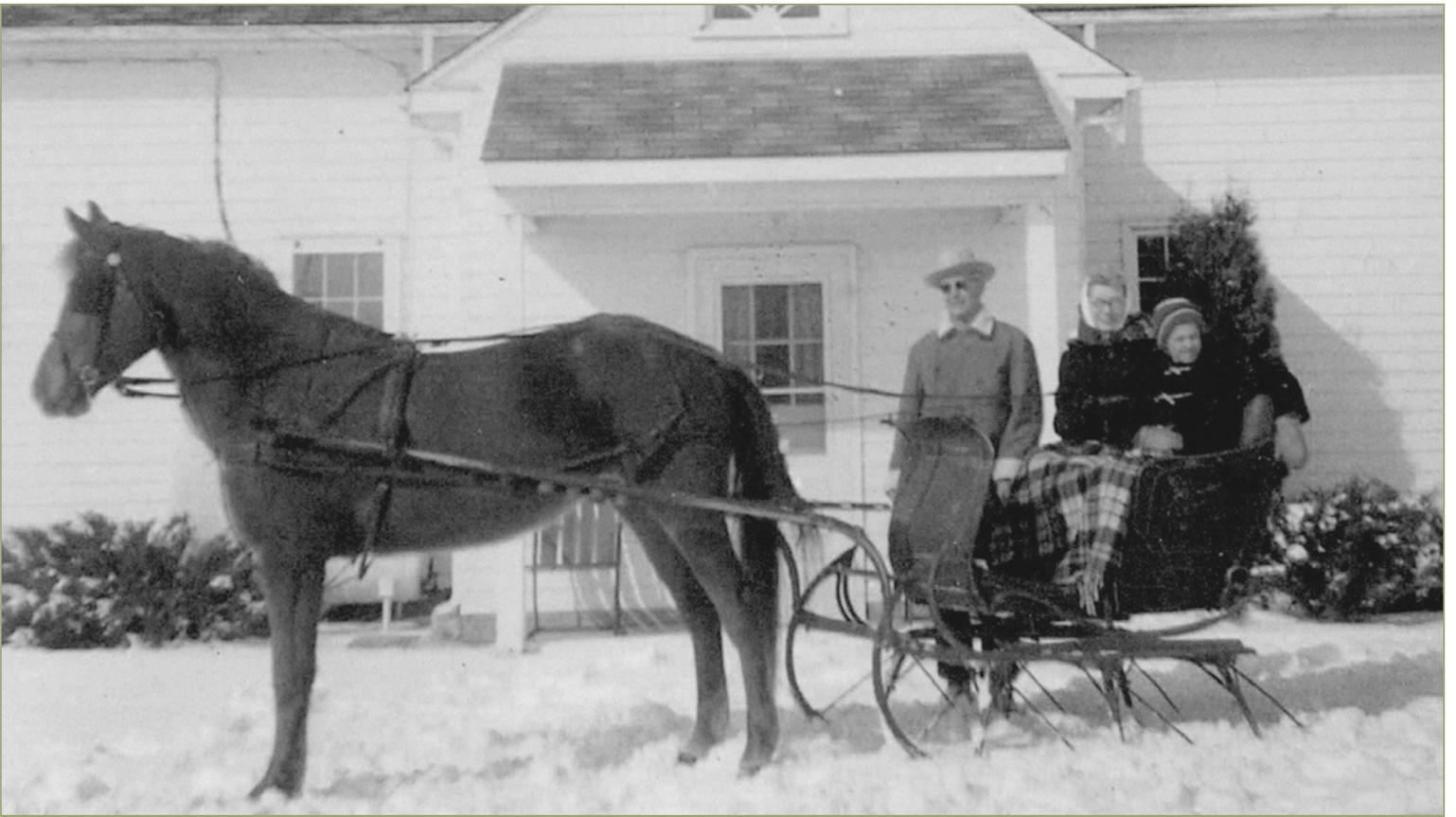
which had been a garage, and the ice pit below were lined with straw before cutting began. He had a homemade power saw which was used to cut the ice into rectangular chunks, dragged onto a homemade conveyor device and stored in the makeshift building.

Another venture which made money for him was potato production on the land just north of the house west of the bridge.

Since roller skating was at that time one of the most popular year-round activities throughout much of the nation, Bill decided to build a roller rink. With this in mind he did quite a bit of traveling; visiting rinks of all types as he went, looking for new ideas. When he built the building which is still standing, but barely, he attached it to the cafe and provided an area for dancing between the cafe building and the roller rink proper. Music was provided by a Nickelodeon and sometimes by a small dance band.

He also built a two-story bath and boat house along the shore of the lake, just to the east of the front of the cafe. He had boats for rent in the east part of the building and bathing suits for rent in the west part. In between he had a room housing a washing machine which attempted to keep up with the demand. The swimming beach, complete with dock and diving platform out a ways into the lake, was always popular, especially on weekends. The top floor of the building was available for picnics on rainy days.

One Sunday a heavy thunderstorm and lightning caused a fire that burned the building in short order. A smaller, one-story building was built in its place and continued to offer the same rental services for boats and swimming suits. This building also had a lift to convey the boats out to the lake. ❀



Previous owners of the "one horse open sleigh" on display in the Horse Drawn Museum, Vernon and Marian Rude and son Vernon, Jr., prepare for an afternoon of "dashing through the snow" at their stable still located at 11th and North Main in Brookings. The Vernon Rude sleigh was donated to the museum in 2018 by Conor Rude of Brookings.

History Comes Alive at the Brookings County Museum
 Join us and become a member today!

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