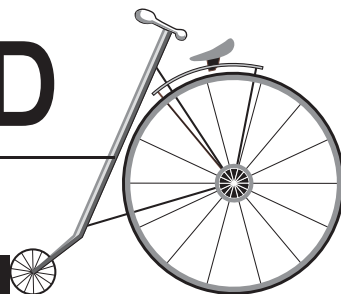


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The Interlakes Speedway

Gale Pifer

Note: The following is an excerpt from my book being written about the Lake County race track. The entire book, consisting of the entire 47 year history of the track and over 300 photographs, should be printed by mid-summer, 2012.

Elt's Drive-In, located at the intersection of SD-34 and Washington Avenue in Madison, was a popular hangout in the 1950's. Throngs of teenagers gathered to sip Cokes and eat hamburgers. The jukebox played almost continuously with the latest in rock and roll songs.

During the day, farmers and community members gathered for breakfast and lunch. The place was jammed during coffee time. Presiding over this noisy, happy crowd was Elton (Elt) Ristesund, a slightly built bundle of energy, whose quick wit and friendly manner made him a friend to just about everybody.

Elt was a fixture around the drive-in, except on Sunday nights when he'd turn in his apron for a pair of white pants and a tee shirt. Then he was a racer. Elt and four friends decided, like so many young men in the early 50's, to build a race car, and he was elected to be the driver of No. 101.

Almost any town of any size had a race track. Weekly races were held in Yankton, Watertown, Mitchell, Huron, Pipestone, and Luverne. Two tracks were also operating in Sioux Falls – the Soo Speedway and a recently opened Huset's Speedway, both east of the city.

During the summer of 1959, Madison area drivers started talking about establishing a race track in their town. Brothers Doug and

Dick Hansen and Marlo and Don Jones approached Ristesund about the idea. He told them that Madison just wouldn't work because it was too close to Sioux Falls. But, they persisted and asked if he'd attend a meeting to discuss the possibility of forming an association owned and operated track in Madison.

A meeting was held with a lawyer who explained how to set up an association that could build and operate a speedway. Incorporation papers were drawn up, and Ristesund reluctantly was chosen to become president and to head up the fund drive for the new Interlakes Racing Association.

Shares were sold at \$10 each with drivers not only from the Madison area but also many of those who owned shares in the Sioux Falls Stock Car Association became members of the new racing group. Money was raised and a search began for a site. The best location considered was one mile off SD-19 and three miles south of the city. It, like Huset's, had a hill that could be used to build seating. An agreement was made for long term rental on the land, and dirt work was begun to carve out a three-eighths mile, high-banked race track.

The new race track would be known as Interlakes Speedway. Soo Speedway's owner agreed to sell the bleachers, lights, and concession stand at the now closed track. Soon the seat planks and other equipment were trucked to Madison. An old water tower at Hartford was cut up, and its metal strips became part of the crash wall along the front stretch. Work bees were held throughout the

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spring and early summer and soon the new race track was ready.

The first race was held on July 22, 1960. "We had lots of people come out for that first race, but we lacked a good field of race cars," Ristesund said. "But we were racing at Madison." "At the beginning, races were held on Friday nights, with most of the racers also running at Huset's Speedway near Brandon on Sunday nights.

Following that first race, the Madison Daily Leader reported that a capacity crowd watched the races which were marked by about half a dozen accidents, including one by Douglas Dooley, Madison. He suffered a broken arm when his car (No. 62) collided with another car.

The following week, the newspaper reported that more than 3,000 people attended, and the "races were run on a dust free track." The purse was listed as \$214.

"It was a struggle that first year," Ristesund remembered. "After the first race, the drivers heard we had a nice track and had a good crowd, so by the second week we had lots of cars, but a much smaller crowd. It went like that for the remainder of the year. One night we'd have lots of race cars and a poor crowd. The next week we'd have a big crowd, but not so many race cars."

For the next several years, racing at Madison became something of a Saturday night ritual for many families. Although the track had its ups and downs and closed twice for short times, it eventually became very successful. All of the top stock car drivers from throughout the area ran at the little speed plant south of Madison. Most drivers considered the Madison track one of the fastest dirt ovals in the entire Midwest. Lake County track champions included such racing stars as Jim Matthews of Mitchell, Bob Lukes of Sioux Falls, and Chuck McGillivray of Junius. McGillivray claimed the Lake County track championship 13 times

to become the track's most winning driver.

The track prospered for 47 years. The 2007 season began on an upbeat note. It was announced early in the year that when racing resumed the modified stock cars would return to the track for the first time in a great many years. The wingless sprint cars were also to be featured. A race between ministers at local churches drew a record crowd. Fans and racers alike believed that their beloved speedway had once again reversed financial problems which had dogged the facility for years.

But, during a race car swap meet in Sioux Falls the following winter, rumors suddenly started to spread – the track would be sold. The rumors were true, and on February 29, 2008, the track was auctioned off. The purchaser was the promoter of nearby Hartford Speedway, Lyle Howey III, a former sprint car champion himself. Many in the racing community sighed in relief. At least a racer had brought the track, and surely it



For 47 years, the Lake County Speedway races become something of a Saturday night tradition for many families.

would remain open. It wasn't to be. As quick as he purchased the race track, it was resold again to a nearby farmer who wanted the land to graze cattle.

Racing had ended at the Lake County speedway. The final laps were run. The old speed plant had existed for 47 years. There would be no 50th anniversary. But in the minds and hearts of a great many people, the little high-banked 3/8th mile track would always be the "best little track in the area."

Wishes Granted – Thanks

LCHS is very grateful for the following donations:

- Two artificial Christmas trees were recently donated.
- Thanks to donors for the numerous phonebooks, pictures, and high school annuals. We would love more.
- We would like to thank the volunteers who have recently started lending their time and talents to help with various projects. Please call if you would like to get involved.
- Thanks to Ed Hansen and Tim Begeman for letting us store all of our totes containing holiday decorations and trees in the basement of their main street building.
- Jim and Adeline Stearns donated a new U.S. Flag.



Chuck McGillivray of Junius claimed the Lake Country track championship 13 times to become the track's most winning driver.

Congratulations and Thanks Unlimited Possibilities

Unlimited Possibilities, DSU's student ran advertising agency, was recently awarded a gold ADDY and Best of Class awards at the 43rd South Dakota Advertising Federation's (SDAF) annual ADDY award show.

DSU digital arts and design students, Megan Pifer and Lacey Roth, along with UP's faculty advisor and professor of digital arts and design, Linn Nelson, were awarded for their work on the Smith-Zimmermann Museum's 50th Anniversary publication material. The agency is a student organization under the College of Arts and Sciences at Dakota State.

The Lake County Historical Society sends its congratulations and thanks to Unlimited Possibilities for their help in making the 50th Anniversary a success.



Dakota State junior students Megan Pifer, Lacey Roth and Professor Linn Nelson at the 2012 SDAF ADDY awards in Sioux Falls, S.D.

MEET A FEW OF OUR VOLUNTEERS



The Museum's basement underwent a major sorting and cleaning to make room for the new shelving that was recently donated by Scott Pederson. Pictured are Jerry Larsen and Joshua Uecker. Other volunteers who worked on the project were Bonnie Olson, Sue Larsen, and Cyndi Mallery. Joshua is also volunteering his time organizing the museum's archives.



Don McNeil often spends Thursday afternoon volunteering at the museum. Don is shown here looking over the Citizen's Savings Bank that was donated by Galen Crosby prior to accessioning it. The bank is dated 1897.



Several volunteers have been cutting and clipping the newspaper obituaries that were donated to the museum by the Ellsworth (formerly the Hallenbeck) Funeral Home. Before they are available to genealogists and others researchers, the next project will be to organize them by year and alphabetize them. Pictured are Ruth Spencer, Glennys McCool, Diana Olson, Betty Wilbur and Betty Beyer.



President's Message

Sue Larsen

As I write this I can hear many birds singing outside, so I guess spring is really here. It really seems too good to be true, and I wonder if we will get a taste of winter in April.

Several projects have been progressing well at the Smith-Zimmermann Museum. We have several ladies who faithfully come every week to assist with the obituary project. They are cutting the obits and putting them in envelopes that are labeled with the year and the beginning letter of the surname. This is a great time saver for the next step of the process which is checking to see if there is a listing for the person on our website. The listing or additional information for the listing is then put on the computer. When the listings for a whole year are finished, they are sent to Chris Olson who puts them on the website.

We are also very fortunate to have Joshua Uecker volunteering at the museum. He has been helping with many tasks, and his help is much appreciated.

Volunteers have been working in the basement to prepare for the installation of metal shelving that was donated by Scott Pederson. This has evolved into a much needed spring cleaning of the basement.

The Tuesday Talks Discussion Group continues to go well. Some of the members went south for the winter months so attendance has been down. We have added two new members, Galen Crosby and Pete Struwe. The discussion group meetings are always interesting. A topic is usually chosen in advance, but we never know what direction the actual discussion will go!

For the past two years, Dick Wiedenman has been donating items to the museum collection. Last summer he mentioned that he had many boxes of books that he would like us to look through. Dick indicated that we probably wouldn't want to add all of them to the collection. He suggested that we try to sell the ones that we didn't want to keep. Well, the many boxes turned out to be over sixty-five (I lost count). We have been sorting and adding some treasures to our collection. With Torrie's help, we started an eBay account and have sold well over \$2,500.00 worth of books and pamphlets since the middle of June. This money is being used to purchase conservation materials that are used to care for the collection. Thanks, Dick, for being so generous.

Prior to the Smith-Zimmermann 50th Anniversary celebration last October, a Dakota State University student group, Unlimited Possibilities, created the posters and other publication material that we used for the event. The items they created for the museum were entered in the 43rd South Dakota Advertising Federations ADDY award show. They received a gold ADDY and Best of Class awards with their entry. This DSU entry will now compete in the eighth district competition. Congratulations go to Megan Pifer, Lacy Roth, and Linn Nelson who is faculty adviser and professor of digital arts and design. The museum really benefits from the promotional materials created by Unlimited Possibilities. The title and new logo on the front page of this newsletter are just a few of their creations.

In my message in the January newsletter, I encouraged LCHS members to visit the museum and encourage others to visit also. We had an increase in visitors during January, February and March. Keep spreading the word. You are doing a great job! I hope to see you at the museum soon.

Wish List -

- Lake County History Book : We still have a list of folks who would love to have a copy of this book.
- Torrie would like to borrow and scan sports pictures of Lake County. If you have some that you would be willing to share, please call 256-5308
- We need to replace the ceiling fans at the museum. Donations toward this project would be welcomed.
- Large Digital-Photo Frame to be used for displaying digitized documents especially photographs.
- Early Photos of Lake County towns. We have an abundance of Madison photos but not so much for the surrounding communities. After this request in the last newsletter, we had some photos come in, but we could use more.
- We would like to have a display of 4-H items in August. Please contact Torrie if you have items such as trophies, ribbons, pictures, records books, and exhibit items. It would be nice to have items ranging from the past up to more recent.

Lake County Historical Society Website

Chris Olson

The website for the Lake County Historical Society and the Smith-Zimmerman museum - <http://www.smith-zimmermann.dsu.edu/> - has undergone drastic changes over the last year. The redesign was done in order to give the site a more modern look and make updating the menus, pages, and the cemetery records more efficient. The pages within the site contain a vast collection of history and photos that date back to those first settlers who arrived here, and maintaining and enhancing the website will help to make that historical information available to anyone with a connection to the Internet.

The more pages and content that are added to a website, the harder it becomes to maintain. Whenever a new page was added to the old site, a hyperlink to that page would have to be added to every individual page in the site. To have the new link appear in the same location on each page, over 150 pages would have to be opened, have the link inserted, saved, and closed. The redesign reduced the number of pages by approximately 90 down to about 60, and the menus are generated from files that allow the links to be shown uniformly across the top and the right side of the page. If a menu link needs to be added, it can now be done by opening and modifying one file instead of over 150.

The area of the website that first intrigued me was the list of cemetery records. Having lived in Lake County all of my life and having both sides of my family settle this area well over a hundred years ago, I saw many familiar names. This included relatives I knew and some with names I had heard of who had passed away many years before my time. In reading the history of the cemetery records when I first visited the website, I learned that the listing of those who were buried in Lake County was originally

due to the efforts of the Lake County Genealogical Society in 1982.

The following text is on the Cemeteries page of the website to describe how the cemetery records were first compiled: "The Lake County Genealogical Society saw the need to identify and preserve grave records in Lake County. Some 12,000 graves were recorded in 17 cemeteries that are maintained and used, three which have been abandoned, and four other burial sites. The Lake County Genealogical Society was born in the mind of Gladys Tratabas, business teacher at Dakota State College. In October, 1982 a small group met for an organizational meeting. The following summer the task of listing graves was begun. Members, along with several interested friends, visited each cemetery, recorded data on the headstones, dou-



This Ginder headstone at Graceland cemetery is one example of many unique grave markers in Lake County.

The website for the Lake County Historical Society and the Smith-Zimmerman museum - has undergone drastic changes over the last year.

<http://www.smith-zimmermann.dsu.edu/>

ble checked this information with records in the county courthouse and church records where available. This information was alphabetized and typed. Members of the Society who made this endeavor possible are Ruby Kuchenbecker (Mrs. Leonard), president, Beverly Hunter (Mrs. Merrill) vice-president, Mary Hagen (Mrs. Selmer), secretary-treasurer, Marlene Boer (Mrs. Eugene), Celeste Harrington, Carol Storrs (Mrs. Leo), Evelyn Johnson (Mrs. James), Darwin Algra, Marge Wood (Mrs. How-

ard), Janet Reynolds (Mrs. Burnel)." In the past several years, Sue Larsen and Bonnie Olson have continued to add to and refine the cemetery records.

In the past, the cemetery records were listed in tables on individual pages. The two largest cemeteries - Graceland and St. Thomas - also had a page for each letter of the alphabet,

and all records that had last names beginning with that letter were listed. That resulted in over 60 web pages dedicated to displaying the burial records. To create or modify records, the correct web page had to be opened, a row had to be found or inserted in the table, and the record or new information had to be typed in the row. Adding or editing cemetery records on the appropriate pages while maintaining alphabetical order by last name was a time-consuming task.

To modernize and organize the cemetery records, all of the entries from the 24 cemeteries previously listed on over 60 pages were combined into a single database. There are only 3 web

pages now that are used to display the cemetery records. The pages display whatever data the user is trying to view by using database queries to retrieve records that match what the user is looking for. The records can be displayed alphabetically by last name for each of the 24 cemeteries like before, but users can also search by part of or all of the first or last names. Searches by name will also tell the user which cemetery the person is buried in.

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The database currently contains 13,875 cemetery records, dating far enough back to include six people who were buried prior to 1870 when the area was sparsely populated. Age and gender have been added to each record wherever possible. As my time permits, I would like to further break out additional data for the names to provide more information on children, parents, spouses, and military service. I hope to enhance the searching capabilities and add sorting functionality to list names as they were born, married, died, etc. We hope to link the more recent deaths with online obituaries and pictures. It is our desire to continue and improve the database so it can be used for many years to come to view information about the residents of Lake County who came before us.

Another feature that was added to the website is the ability to track visitors. Since visitor statistics were added in December of 2011, there

have been over 6,500 pages viewed. People who view the site often find it through a search engine by looking for a person's name. There have been visitors from all over the United States, with the heaviest concentration coming from South Dakota, Minnesota, and Iowa. The site is averaging over 170 unique visitors per week, with about 140 of those as first time visits and about 30 returning visits from those who have previously viewed the website.

As with any website that is continuously enhanced and updated, the website for the Lake County Historical Society and the Smith-Zimmerman museum remains a work in progress. Besides adding sorting and searching capabilities to the cemetery records, there are other features I hope to incorporate on the different pages in the site.

This list includes but is not limited to: creating a contact form instead of just a link to the email address, online obituaries with pictures, the ability for users to subscribe to email updates, the histories of Franklin and Orland, and an archive of past news-

letters. It is my hope that we can continue to preserve the history of Lake County by having the Smith-Zimmerman museum for those who are able to visit in the physical world, and the website for those who can visit via the Internet.



This headstone of the Gibson family marks the grave of one of the 6,673 records that we currently have for the Graceland cemetery.

From Our Readers

We appreciate receiving letters from our readers. Lawrence Molumby, who lives in Washington, D.C., recently sent a letter to Sue Larsen, President of the Lake County Historical Society. He shared more information regarding the Opera House story that was in the last edition of the Heritage Herald. He also sent genealogical information of his ancestors. He writes:

"Ms. Larsen, first, I am enclosing my 2012 membership dues.

Second, I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed the latest issue of the Heritage Herald, especially the photo of the Opera House. My grandmother Bee Goodroad, graduated from Madison High at a ceremony in the Opera House in 1905. Two days later, she and her classmates performed "The Merchant of Venice" there.

Third, I want to tell you about several family history articles that I am sending to add to your genealogical collection. I was delighted to read that Terry Kukuk had sent you his excellent work on Lewis and Adaline Goodroad's farm. I, too, am a Goodroad descendant and have worked extensively with Terry, especially on the earlier generations of Goodroads.

You already have a copy of the Molumby Family History about my grandfather who homesteaded in Summit Township in 1880 and lived in Madison until he was killed in an automobile accident in 1915.

In a separate package, I am sending

- 1 First Families of New France about the early ancestors of Lewis and Adaline Goodroad,
- 2 Montreal Pioneers, also about early ancestors of the Goodroads,
- 3 John D. Davis and our Scotch-Irish Ancestors. He was the father of Jennie May Davis, who married F.L. Goodroad and lived most of her life in Madison. They, in turn, were the parents of my grandmother Bee Goodroad who married Floyd Cole. Bee and Floyd were the parents of my mother Dorothy Cole who married Lawrence Molumby and gave birth to me in Madison in 1932.
- 4 A History of the Warner, Bryan and Cole Families. The first two chapters trace the Irish ancestry of three women who married pioneer farmers in Lake County: John B. Cole, James H. Cole and William Boyd. The third chapter is all about my beloved grandparents Bee and Floyd of whom I have very happy memories.

Hope you will find this of interest."

Thanks Mr. Molumby for your letter. Smith-Zimmermann has a collection of family histories on file that have been donated to the museum. If anyone has any family research that they would like to add, please drop it off. We will gladly place it in our collection. If you are working on your family's genealogy, call the museum. Maybe we have some information in our files that can help you out.

From Smith-Zimmermann's Archives

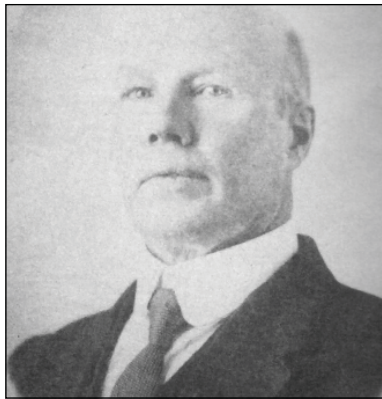
The James Trow Papers

Joshua Uecker

Before getting into the nitty-gritty of the hidden treasures in the archives of the Smith-Zimmerman museum, I figure I should quickly introduce myself. I am a graduate student working on my Masters' thesis in history at Kansas State University. Currently, the project is in a bit of limbo, so while I'm waiting on my advisor to get information to me, I figured I might as well do something productive. I heard that the Lake County Historical Society needed someone to work on their archives, and one short phone call later I was able to start working through some of the archives of donated materials that the museum houses.

The museum archives are full of a variety of interesting materials with historical ties well beyond Lake County. However, for this first article, I figured I should keep it a little closer to home and talk about the Trow Papers. In 1981, Waldo Trow donated the papers of James Albert Trow to the Smith-Zimmerman Museum. James Albert Trow was the first mayor of Madison, South Dakota. His papers provide a lot of interesting information about the early days of Madison and Lake County. James Trow was an avid writer, writing quite a bit for newspapers (mostly in his later days living in Montana) and even a little bit of poetry. However, his 1914 booklet "Historical Sketch of Lake County" provides interesting first-hand historical information about Lake County from one of its earliest political leaders. Published by the Madison Sentinel, this short work highlights much of Lake County's history from its earliest days up until it was published in 1914. The booklet not only gives a full accounting of the region's history, with a lot of detail given about the entire process gone through to create Lake County, but also contains photos of the original settlers to the region.

Trow was a tireless supporter of Lake County. In 1888, James Trow spoke before the Territorial Board of Agriculture and his entire speech was a glowing endorsement of Lake County, saying it was the bedrock of South Dakota's future. In his opinion, its agricultural and industrial development were second to none, and Trow said Lake County's future, and by extension Dakota Territory's future, was very bright.



J.A. Trow was one of the earliest Lake County residents when he moved here in 1878. A man of many talents, Trow is remembered as a teacher, politician, and historian.

James Trow was not just a locally-oriented politician. He was also active with national politics, providing support for the Roosevelt-Taft campaign in South Dakota. He was such an active member of the South Dakota campaign that he received a personal letter from the Roosevelt-Taft campaign manager thanking him for all the efforts he put forth in the election process. Campaign manager E.G. Kennedy was so pleased with all the work Trow and the Republicans in Lake County did that he held up their efforts to other county Republican groups throughout the state, saying that they showed what the groups could do even without a lot of resources backing them. Judging by the letters Kennedy sent him, the Roosevelt-Taft campaign did not

succeed in achieving their goals in South Dakota, but the campaign was still very pleased with the work they did to help.

The Trow papers are a very interesting hidden treasure in the Smith-Zimmerman Museum. Not only do they provide a fascinating historical insight into Lake County, but Trow's own life and connections involved him in important state and national political discussions. However, these highlights things are not all that can be found in the Trow papers. They also give an insight into James Trow's family, and include a series of letters written well after he left the Madison area that informed the rest of his family about the last days of his wife Eva's life. Written by Waldo Trow, they give a surprising amount of detail about her death and some of Waldo's comments about his mother are quite touching. Also included are a lot of Trow's business papers from his days in Montana and South Dakota as an insurance salesman. While there is very little actual information with all the insurance certificates, what makes them especially interesting is that they show just how many insurance companies from all over the country (as well as one based in the Netherlands) Trow represented while working in Madison and later Polson, Montana. All these companies had him as their go-to representative and it's hard to imagine that back in the early days of Madison just one man represented so many insurance companies when today, out of necessity the staffs of such companies are very diverse.

The Trow papers are just the beginning when it comes to the treasure trove of interesting information housed in the Smith-Zimmerman museum. Hopefully, in the months to come, I will be finding more unique and interesting historical artifacts and discussing them here.

An Airplane Crash at Lake Herman

Dale Nighbert

I enjoy browsing through old files, books, newspapers, etc. as I research and write stories for the Lake County Historical Society's newsletter – the Heritage Herald. But sometimes a good story comes from trying to answer a simple question.

An older brother asked me a while back if I ever came across information about a military airplane crash in the 1940s at Lake Herman. His memory was sketchy, but he seemed to remember a childhood event about a man driving into the farmyard and telling Dad about a plane that had crashed near the lake. My brother said they were living at the farm just west of the golf course's club house at the time, just north of the lake. He recalled that Dad got into the guy's pickup, and they drove off to the site.

I told my brother that I remembered reading about a local pilot named Runchey who crashed a plane into the lake, but that happened in the 1930s, and it wasn't a military plane.

I decided to find out if there was a crash like he thought he remembered. The best place to begin looking would be the microfilm copies of the newspapers, so I headed to the Madison library.

The main question was to decide what year to begin my search. My mother once said that they moved into the farm at the lake in 1947 – before I was born. So, beginning a search at that year would be the best place to start. However, it would take forever and a day just to scan through the newspapers for 1947.

I wondered if the newspaper had an "end of the year review." Sometimes the editors would wrap up a year with a lengthy article about the top news stories. I scrolled the microfilm to the end of December, and sure enough, there it was – a reference indicating that a plane had crashed in May.

By now my adrenalin was beginning to roll – something a miner might feel when he first discovers gold. I scrolled the microfilm back to the month of May, and eureka! The big, bold headlines and an article in the Saturday, May 10, 1947, paper caught my eye.

Pilot Escapes in Plane Crash Here

Army Trainer Wrecked Near Lake Herman

Pilot Parachutes to Safety When Fuel Runs Out

An Army pilot is in Community hospital today with injuries received when he parachuted from an advanced training plane which crashed near Lake Herman late Friday.

The pilot, 1st Lt. Kenneth R. Rowley of the Sioux City, Iowa, air base, was returning to Sioux City from Des Moines, Iowa, on a routine training flight when his plane ran out of gasoline. He reported that high winds had blown him off course.

With his fuel gone and a crash apparently inevitable, the pilot said that he bailed out over Lake Herman. As he left the cockpit, he was struck in the stomach by the plane's tail, but landed safely in a field on the east side of the lake.

The plane crashed through trees at the northeast end of the lake, struck a bank beside the road, tore up barbed wire fences and broke into hundreds of pieces as it bounced across the field.

Wreckage of the plane was strewn across fields owned by Albert Schultz and Emil Anderson, and some pieces were found on the road which skirts the lake.



This AT-6d aircraft was the type of plane that crashed near Lake Herman in 1947

Unidentified fishermen and Boy Scouts are reported to have heard the crash and rushed to the scene. They began searching the wreckage for bodies, but found none. They were joined by several Madison residents and farmers who had heard the crash.

The pilot reports that he wandered about awhile and finally was picked up by an unidentified motorist who took him to Madison. The driver and pilot discovered Patrolman Gordon Stanford of the Madison police department and asked for directions to the hospital.

Stanford jumped into the car and directed them to the Community hospital. Authorities at the hospital reported at noon today that the pilot's condition is satisfactory, but that further hospitalization will be necessary. Sioux City air base officials called the Madison hospital this morning and informed local doctors that army personnel are on their way to Madison.

A crowd gathered at the crash scene early today, and many souvenir hunters carried away parts of the wrecked aircraft. Some took tools with them to aid in removal of parts. The plane's wheels were among the first parts to disappear.

Emil Anderson, whose fences were torn up by the plane, reports hearing the crash at about 10:30 P.M. Friday.

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He rushed to the scene and found parts scattered over the field.

What remained of the plane's fuselage ripped through the fence dividing the Anderson and Albert Schultz property and came to rest in Schultz's field.

Engine, wings, and gas tank were scattered over a wide area with smaller pieces of the plane covering the fields and road.

There was no fire following the crash probably because of the absence of fuel.

"Hmmm, interesting," I thought as I printed out the article. I wanted to know more so I contacted the Sioux City Public Library who was able to locate a short article in the Saturday, Sioux City Journal describing the incident. Their story reported that 1st Lt. Rowley was recovering from the shock and injuries that stemmed from his 5,000 foot parachute jump. Salvage vehicles and Army personnel from the Sioux City air base had been dispatched to Madison to take control.

The Madison Daily Leader reported the following Monday that upon arrival Army officers expressed

"considerable concern" over the removal of airplane parts from the wreckage by souvenir hunters. They criticized local authorities for failing to post a guard. County and city officials explained that Madison police had called the Sioux City air base to report the crash and asked if guards should be posted. The officer with whom police talked to reported that the army was chiefly concerned about the pilot and that posting a

The Madison Daily Leader is on microfilm at both the Public Library and DSU's Karl Mundt Library. Other once-published, older Lake County newspapers such as the Lake County Sentinel, Ramona Times, Wentworth Enterprise, and the Winfred Dispatch are also on microfilm at the Mundt Library. More local newspapers such as the Lake County Leader, Madison Outlook, Wentworth Bond and Winfred Witness are on file at the South Dakota State Historical Society's archives.

guard would not be necessary.

Joe Habeger, a 91-year-old Madison resident, was a pilot instructor in Texas for the Army Air Corps during World War II. Habeger, who later retired as a full Colonel from the U.S. Air Force, wasn't living in the area when the military plane crashed, but he does remember hearing about it.

Bill Klopff, a member of the Frist Tuesday's Talk group, recalls going

to the crash site as a youngster with his father. He remembers a gathering of onlookers that had assembled at the scene watching army personnel sort, clean-up, and load debris for transport. He also remembers hearing radio announcements asking people who may have taken souvenirs to turn them in to the local authorities.

Newspaper accounts later reported that the pilot's parachute, the wheels of the aircraft, and other items were recovered. It seems that the older we get, the more we sometimes question our

recollection or accuracy of past events. Despite the fact that the airplane crash happened sixty-five years ago, my brother's memory of the occurrence was correct. As I researched this topic, another question popped into my mind. Since my father was probably one of the "onlookers that had assembled at the scene," I wonder what he could add to this story if he were around today.

Coordinator's Message

Torrie Ewoldt

"Three years. I have now been the coordinator for the museum for a little over 3 years. I was thinking over the past weekend (while we were camping in 80 degrees weather - in MARCH!!!) about what we have accomplished in that amount of time.

We purchased the Past Perfect Museum Software program that allows us to organize and track all of our artifacts. We have had over one thousand elementary students walk through our doors. We have organized a successful discussion group that continues to grow in numbers and topics. We have a large number of new volunteers helping us with ongoing projects. We have started to think about storage and space and our making plans for the future. We have started to get our name more recognized in the Madison area by speaking at local luncheons, nursing homes, community programs. We have achieved more in the past three years than I ever thought possible...

I encourage all of you to stop in this spring and see what is being done at the museum. We have new items on display. A DSU Art course taught by Angela Behrends has a 2-Dimensional Post Card Project out for your viewing. We also have 48 photographs on loan from Ed Monson. These are turn of the century photos of eastern South Dakota towns.

Please feel free to spend an afternoon with us sometime soon..."

It is spring cleaning time!

Do you have household items that you no longer need or want, but you don't want to have a rummage sale?

Please consider donating items to the Smith-Zimmermann Museum's ongoing fund raiser at Four Seasons Flea Market.

Please call the museum at 256-5308 if you have items to donate.

Childhood Pastimes

In the not too distant past, before the advent of the electronic games that many people play today, there were the games and activities that we played with little adult supervision and no batteries. Rosemary Rensch Nelson, who grew up in the Ramona area, recalls her childhood days of the 1930s and 40s. As she takes a trip down memory lane, she reminds us of some of the games and pastimes that were once part of our growing up years.

How We Played (in Ramona)

Rosemary Nelson

There were lots of kids around when I was growing up in Ramona. Our family had nine kids and both families across the street had eight or more. We lived about a block and a half east of town on a hill just south of Main Street. Many of those downtown kids often came to our neighborhood to play.

One of the things I remember is playing in the hay in the barn. Sometimes we'd climb the ladder in the back of the barn and jump into the hay. Other times we'd go hand over hand on the rope-like wire that spanned the barn from side to side. I often got "chicken" thinking there might still be a pitch fork hidden in the hay.

In the evenings, we played kick-the-can in the trees that grew around the house. The darker it got, the harder it was to find someone. It was like tag.

We had an old tool shed on our place that had an overhang roof attached, and we would slide off on the shingles. There wasn't much of a drop off to the ground below. One day while I was goofing off at the peak on the side of the roof, I over balanced and fell. On the way down there was a fence. My panties got caught on the post, and I landed on my bottom on the ground. It hurt, but I was laughing with tears in my

eyes. No broken bones – but the panties were torn.

We played games like "Who's got the Button?" where the "it" person would go around pretending to drop the button in everyone's hand, but only one got it. Then someone had to guess who had it.

We played telephone wire. The first person would whisper a sentence to the next in line, each one would pass it on, and then the last one would repeat what he'd been told. They never matched and made for lots of laughs.

"Spin the Bottle" was on the list, but I can't remember what happened when the bottle pointed at a person. Kiss someone?

"Anti I Over" was played with a ball and was often played over the roof of the house.

When we played "Captain May I," the captain would tell someone in line to take (say) four steps, and if the person forgot to say "Captain, May I" he got sent back to start.

Dad had a huge granary built on the farm that was sectioned off for corn and small grains. Sometimes we played in the proso bin and did not give a thought to getting smothered. Proso was a round seed and not prickly like wheat or oats.

We used to have bike races. I'd be pretty proud because I then could beat the boys.

In winter, there was ice skating. At one time in my youth, I fell in love with Sonia Henie and the Ice Capades. I filled a scrapbook with articles and pictures of her. Dad took me to the Ice Capades in Sioux Falls at least once. But no one around Ramona seemed to be ice skating. Finally I saved enough baby-sitting money to buy a pair of white shoe skates – the best pair in the Montgomery Ward

catalogue. Before I even got to use them my dad borrowed them and went skating in our slough. He had small feet for a man, and I had wide feet.

The first time I actually skated I was alone and did not fall even once. It wasn't long though when other kids joined in. I loved it. We never had a skating rink – just the sloughs in the pastures.

There was also roller skating. Our school picnic in the spring was always at Lake Campbell. They had a roller skating rink and that was always fun. For some reason I was always better on ice than on roller skates.



In the 1950s, these Ramona youths take a break from playing to pose for the photographer. Pictured are Duane Poppen, Graydon Rensch, Marilyn Thompson, Marlys Thompson and Morrie Poppen. Picture courtesy of Dee Lembecke

Sometimes my folks would take us on a picnic to the small lakes close by. We'd run and jump and play in the water. Dad usually napped and sometimes Mom fished. We kids would go home sunburned and tired.

We played basketball for a while when I was in high school. We girls played half-court unlike today. The only team I remember playing against was Rutland in their court.

When I was about 12, my dad took me to the town dances. My mother

(continued on page 11)

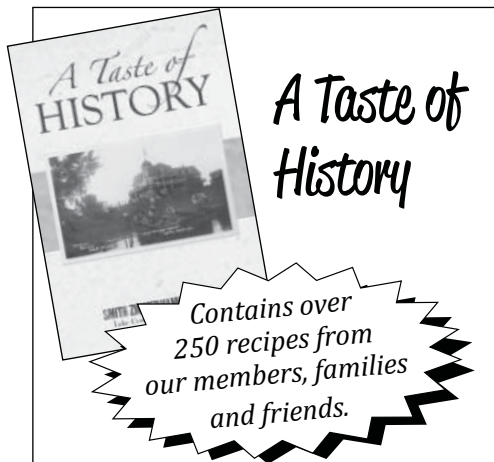
(continued from page 10)

wouldn't go, and dad loved to dance. I fell in love with ballroom dancing and miss it now. I find it hard to believe it's not so popular today.

Sometimes at recess we'd play softball – probably like 7 up, not the regular game. Other outside games that we played were “Ring around the Rosy” and “Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush.” We always had swings, and we would go as high as the swing would take us. I always wished we could swing all the way over.

For in-room school parties we often played musical chairs. Everyone started with a chair, and one chair was eliminated after each turn. Someone would wind up not getting a chair, and that one was always a scramble! Another similar game that we played in the room was “Fruit Basket Upset.”

The games and activities that we played in our youth have changed in past years, and many of them appear to be lost in time. They occupied a huge part of our growing up years, and their memories will stay with us forever.



The cookbook sells for **\$15.00.**

Please include \$3.00 for shipping and 6% sales tax.

For more information please contact the museum at 256-5308 or smith.zimmermann@dsu.edu.

Cookbooks can be bought at the Museum, Four Seasons, or Heritage Cafe in Ramona.

From our Filing Cabinets

The Rise and Fall of Chester Park

The filing cabinets at Smith-Zimmermann Museum contain a number of interesting stories relating to Lake County history. Several of them were once printed in other publications. These stories, some written on now yellowing paper with print that is beginning to fade, wait to be rediscovered and shared. One story written some years back by the late Martin Gienapp describes Chester Park – a once-popular recreational site located on the southeast shores of Lake Madison. Here is Martin's story:

Chester Park . . . as I Recall

Martin Gienapp

In the early 1900s, when Madison Lake was dry, some residents in the community of Chester and the surrounding area visualized building cabins and boat houses when the lake filled up again. So they got together and bought about six acres of the shore line located between the Colton Park and what was then Smith's Park owned by George Smith.

Each person that put money into the venture was given a key to the gate that led into the fenced area that was named Chester Park. Each stockholder was permitted to build a cabin or a boat-house.

Many of them built themselves a boat house where they could store their fishing boats. Others built themselves a cabin so that they could live out there all summer while the husbands drove back and forth from their businesses in town. The interest in the park was so great that they opened it to the public. It soon became a popular picnic place.

When young boys get together, they think of baseball. It was soon realized that there was enough young men in the community to organize a baseball team. They developed a baseball field between the county road and the road leading into Smith's Park. They were soon playing

games with the surrounding towns. It became quite an attraction on Sunday afternoons.

Fred Hurt, who had a grocery store in Chester, saw a need for a place for people to get refreshments. So he built a place where he sold pop, candy, popcorn, and other snacks.

The men of the park saw the need for a bath house so the people who wanted to swim could have a place to change clothes.

Clell Patton, whose father owned the general store in Chester, bought a launch. He made it a business to give people rides on the lake. He usually took people to the Chautauqua grounds. On days when there were special celebrations, many people would leave their cars at Chester Park and ride the launch to the Chautauqua grounds. Patton would then give them a ride back. I am not sure if it was his launch that suffered the accident on that fatal 4th of July when nine people drowned.

In the 1930s, during the Great Depression, Madison Lake dried up again. Many owners of the park could not pay their taxes. So Harm Johnson, who then owned Smith's Park, paid the taxes, assumed the acreage, and developed it into a trailer park.

The Chester Park, a well-liked resort at Lake Madison, is now a part of Lake County's history. If anyone has any photos taken at the park, or other information, please contact Smith-Zimmermann Museum.

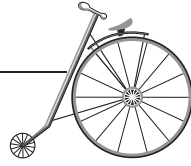


No Known pictures of Chester Park exist. Above is an undated picture of its neighbor – Smith Park

We're on the Web: <http://www.smith-zimmermann.dsu.edu/>

THE HERITAGE HERALD

LAKE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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LAKE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LCHS HERITAGE HERALD

The Heritage Herald is published quarterly by members of the Lake County Historical Society and the DSU Production Center. The Society has been established to collect, document, preserve, secure, research, exhibit, and interpret objects of cultural, developmental, and historical value of the Lake County area from the mid-1800s to the present.

If you have questions or comments, please contact our Museum. The LCHS's Board of Directors meets at 5:15 the first Tuesday of each month at the Smith-Zimmermann Heritage Museum, located on the campus of Dakota State University. Welcome Visitors!!

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