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July 2022

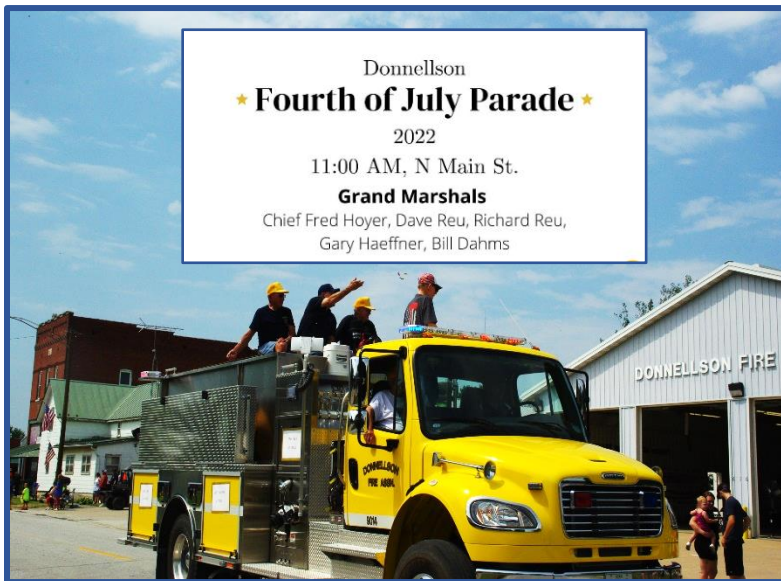
Issue #191

## WEEK OF JULY 4<sup>th</sup>

### DONNELLSON – 5K RUN & WALK, PARADE, AND COUNTY FAIR



STEPHEN SILLER  
TUNNEL TO TOWERS FOUNDATION  
LET US DO GOOD



## **Library Happenings**

Library Happenings are written and submitted by Sunny Robbins, Director of the Donnellson Public Library, unless otherwise noted.

### **Preschool Story Hour!**

In July, we read books for our Preschool Story Hour about the county fair, rabbits, and trains. We painted and colored pictures of animals. We introduced a bubble machine which the kids love! Join us for Preschool Story Hour on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 am all year long.



### **Summer Reading Program**

We continued through “Cody Unplugged” by Betsy Duffey during our Summer Reading Hour on Wednesday mornings. On the last story hour of the month, we had snow cones to celebrate the end of the Summer Reading Program.

Art camp was the most popular. They made aliens by writing their names in cursive, hand-print lilies, and helped decorate main street for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade.

Another popular one was mystery camp. We had the kids solve puzzles, do an obstacle course, and work their way through a few escape rooms.

Jr Actors camp made three 5-minute videos where children in our community wrote, directed, made costumes, acted, filmed, edited, and watched our skits!

We had a few regulars for the Lego camp. They enjoyed the challenge to build and socialize.

Surprisingly, our movie retreat activities were less popular. We watched new movies like Bad Guys, Turning Red, and Sing 2.

Jr Chef’s camp was delicious. We learned to make simple recipes that require items that could be purchased here in town. We learned how to use the oven safely and how to use a kitchen knife. We made mini pizzas, Ritz cracker chicken, cake mix cookies, and tortilla pinwheels.

I cannot shout-out loud enough to show my gratitude for the High school volunteers this summer! Abby, Bethany, Audrey, Larissa, Lilly, Allie, and Maren were amazing! Combined they volunteered over 100 hours to plan, prepare, run these programs. Thank you for sharing your time and talents! A big “Thanks!” to the Friends of the Donnellson Library for getting each volunteer an appreciation gift card to Caseys!



Prizes: Our kids stepped up to the plate full of reading this summer! Twenty-five kids, 1 teen, and 3 adults worked hard to fill out reading logs and enter our drawing. Thanks to the following businesses for the donation of our Summer Reading prizes:

- Dollar General - many coloring books
- Burger King - 5 free hamburgers
- Wendy's - 4 kids meals and 2 \$20.00 gift cards
- Green Acres - \$20 gift certificate and a pool pass
- Harvestville Farms - 2 bags of cookies and 2 small cheese pizzas
- Halls Ice cream - 10 medium ice cream cones
- Caseys - 5 \$20.00 gift cards

Special Events: Absolute Science came to do events on bubbles and set up butterfly tents in June. In July, Sheltered Reality came on July 13<sup>th</sup> and shared positivity through music. Iowa University bring their Insect Zoo came on July 20<sup>th</sup>.



### Senior Crafternoon

For July's craft, we made cute little Gnomes! We are grateful to Victoria Matlock and Montrose Health Center for making this activity possible.



### The Donnellson Book Core

The group discussed and enjoyed *And Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie for their meeting in July. They liked that it had a solid ending. Many wanted to read another Agatha Christie book after reading this book. If you read this book, be sure to read the epilogue.

The book for August 15<sup>th</sup> is “The Girls in the Stilt House” by Kelly Mustian. Here is what Goodreads has to say:

**Ada promised herself she would never go back to the Trace, to her hard life on the swamp and her harsh father. But now, after running away to Baton Rouge and briefly knowing a different kind of life, she finds herself with nowhere to go but back home. And she knows there will be a price to pay with her father.**

**Matilda, daughter of a sharecropper, is from the other side of the Trace. Doing what she can to protect her family from the whims and demands of some particularly callous locals is an ongoing struggle. She forms a plan to go north, to pack up the secrets she's holding about her life in the South and hang them on the line for all to see in Ohio.**

**As the two girls are drawn deeper into a dangerous world of bootleggers and moral corruption, they must come to terms with the complexities of their tenuous bond and a hidden past that links them in ways that could cost them their lives.**

### **Writers' Bloc**

The July meeting was held July 17 in the Donnellson Library Local and Family History Department. Attending were Jan Blankenburg, Marty Miller, and Aaron and Diane Kruse.

Marty just returned from another California trip and wrote an article about the experience she had while visiting with her family. This experience was not with the flight rules and regulations described in her April experience, but with how she had to deal with several Covid cases while around family, the early return of neighbors, and a return flight delay. After arriving home, a positive testing was discovered several days later. She entitled the article “My Life with Covid” and decided Covid does not care about plans.

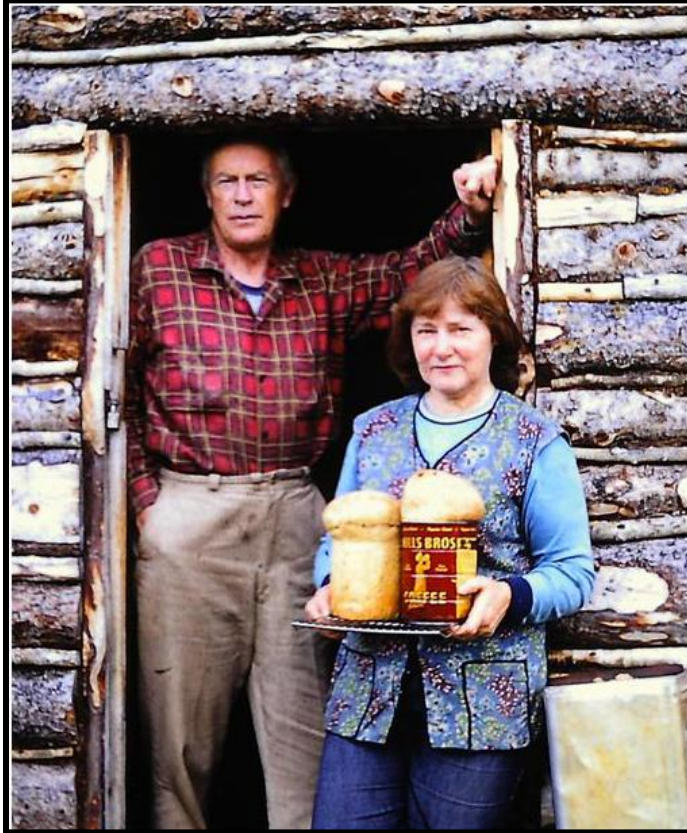
Jan gave an update on her new book project since her granddaughter Nima, who is combining her poetry and prose visited for an entire week, and both worked diligently to rework the first draft. With the new strategies, Jan mentioned a title change may be in order. The present title is *Where the Heart Lingers*.

Jan also mentioned how it is possible to convert a short story to a poem. Years ago, she attended a writers' group in Keokuk and mentioned how one participant always shared real life stories and didn't know if they would ever go anywhere. Jan suggested changing the short story into poetry. Jan said she would like to have the opportunity to try and asked for several of his short stories. At the next meeting her poetry when compared to the short story proved it could be done – to the amusement of all concerned.

Our Writers' Bloc group meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday from 1-3 pm in the Local and Family History room. We invite you to share or just come listen to others as they present what they have written. Our July meeting will be August 17 from 1-3 pm in the Local and Family History Room.~ **Written and submitted by Diane Kruse**



## Richard L Proenneke Museum



**Terry & Vic Gill at their Bonanza Hills Camp**



**Grizzly (Brown Bear) Richard referred them as "Brownies"**

### **From Richard's letter to brother "Jake" dated July 25, 1971 [While visiting Terry & Vic Gill at Bonanza Hills prospecting for gold]**

I guess there is no one luckier than I at getting close to brown bears. I really had a close one down there and with a big bear too.

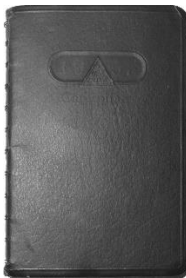
One Sunday morning I was up early and took a look around for Terrys big pet bull moose. We saw his fresh tracks in the road every morning. I climbed a point overlooking the bottom and watched. No moose so I crossed the creek below. I saw nothing and about breakfast time I headed for camp taking a short cut down the creek bottom. I passed a clump of cow parsnip that had been freshly eaten. I have never known moose to eat it but I thought of the moose especially when I heard the brush rustle to the right. I looked for a glimpse of him and what I saw scared me. A big brownie and coming head on in a lope. I started to yell and wave my arms for I hadn't packed the rifle that morning. On he came and I figured that this was my turn to get mauled pretty good. I was backing away and fell just as he came into the clear around the brush. I was kicking at his nose with both feet and yelling bloody murder. Then he stopped, turned and ran. Took the same trail I had come in on and climbed the same trail up the point. He didn't look back and I was encouraging him to go all that I could. I think what saved my skin was a light breeze up the creek.

He didn't get my scent until he came around the brush down wind. Probably he had me pegged for another game animal and meat on the table. I had packed the .06 down figuring Terry and Vic could use a caribou otherwise I would have taken the 357. Terry had said this spring that they would welcome some meat but sorta' chickened out when I got a bull spotted. Because he had seen it and told me, I guess he figured he was putting the poor guy on the spot.

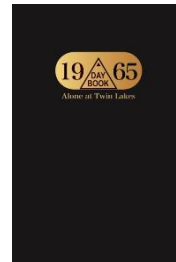
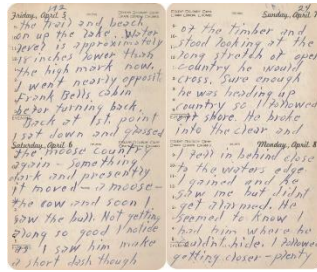
That same morning, I bumped into their bull moose at 20 feet - packing the Exakta and I was ready when he came to his feet broad side. I hope I got him good.

The Richard L Proenneke Museum is now listed on "Atlas Obscura". A gentleman by the name of Rolando Garcia visited the Museum in June of this year, and contacted us about writing an article for "Atlas Obscura" as a place for people looking for those out-of-the-way places to visit. Mr. Garcia submitted his article, and "Atlas Obscura" accepted it. Below is the link that will take you to the site and article. Check it out!

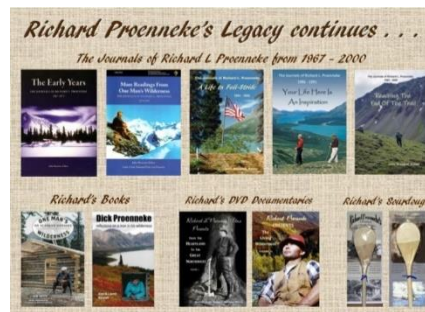
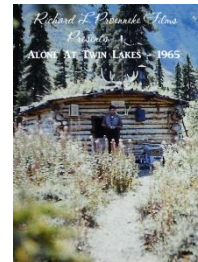
<https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/richard-proenneke-museum>



The original 1957 Caterpillar Daybook & two pages from the Journal



New Journal and DVD Documentary "Alone At Twin Lakes -1965"



*The complete set of the Journals of Richard L Proenneke and the book "One Man's Wilderness;" the "Reflections on a man in his wilderness; DVD Documentaries, "From The Heartland To The Great Northwest" and "The Living Wilderness;" The Homeland and Kodiak Sourdough Starter Spoons are all available at the Donnellson Library or at our website: richardproenneke.com*  
 Are you a Richard Proenneke fan? Would you like to learn more about this incredible man who grew up in our backyard? Consider joining us and lending a helping hand. Drop me a line at: Brie Anderson, Richard Proenneke Museum Curator: [brie@richardproenneke.com](mailto:brie@richardproenneke.com) or contact the new Library Director Sunny Robbins: [director@donnellson.lib.ia.us](mailto:director@donnellson.lib.ia.us)

## **July Suggested Reading – *The Sixties***

This month's Suggested Reading is written as a topic-by-topic remembrance, organized in year-by-year blocks, of the turbulent 1960s. Each topic is listed with its page number to make the task of locating the subject easy. Each topic is covered briefly – 200 pages for 10 years of topics – and a very complete index makes research even easier.

The authors selected those political/economic events and cultural changes in each year which they deemed significant in the history of the United States and the world as a whole. As an example, 1960 includes 'the African year', 'the birth control pill', and the growth of television as a mass media for information and influence'. Glancing farther into the novel the reader finds sections on the miniskirt, multiple revolutionary movements, the Vietnam War and protests, the Beatles, and the birth of gay pride.

The authors of this selection are Markus Hattstein and Christoph Marx. Hattstein studied philosophy, Islamic studies, Catholic theology and comparative religion. He works as a freelance writer. Marx studied history, politics, and literature with a particular interest in political history.

For anyone with an interest in the history of the world and especially the U.S., this is a book worth reading. ~**Written and submitted by Aaron Kruse**



## **Local & Family History Department**

~ Although July was not as busy as June for the Local and Family History, volunteers still handled genealogy requests, received phone calls for research requests, received donations, and assisted with several genealogy internet research requests. Obituaries continued to be alphabetized and made ready to be filed in the appropriate binders and files. Joyce Francis and Jean Kruse continued to support filing of Lee County, contiguous counties, and local Illinois and Missouri obituaries. Pat Morrison as well visited and always makes an additional contribution for our obituary records.

~ Although the Department handles many projects, the display case plays an important role each month. The July display was entitled American Stagecoach: A Partial History of the Vehicle. Several items were again added from the Latta collection which again added a special touch.

The scrapbook given to the department shows the items he cut and carved over the years and displayed at the Des Moines County Fair in Burlington, IA. His autograph is noted on the items



as well as the date of he finished his creation. The Ed Latta scrapbook is available for review. Photographs of the display are shown at the end of the newsletter.

## **Donations Received**

### **Kenny Tull:**

To help enhance the display Kenny researched and found information on a stagecoach stop in Warren located in the NW corner of Section 12 in Van Buren Township. It was in the home of John Herron and also an inn and a post office. The Herron family were some of the first settlers in Lee County. Mr. Herron arrived in Keokuk in 1839 and moved to Van Buren Township in 1841 and started the first blacksmith shop in the area. The place stayed in the Herron Family until the late 1970's when Charles Buford purchased the property. A photograph of the Herron home taken on March 9, 2017, is in the display as one of three stagecoach stops in Lee County. Kenny took the photograph before it was torn down.

### **Genealogy Queries**

**Kara Handrich Bender and her mother Marilyn Handrich Bender:** Visited the Local and Family History Department to obtain information on the Handrich, Krehbiel, and Dieffenbach Families. All three file names were reviewed, and many pages were copied for their genealogy records. They both were pleased with the family tree of Jacob and Marie Handrich. Kara who resides in Missouri plans to return later to spend more time reviewing files since they were on a tight schedule.

**Mike Schmidt:** Mike called and requested information on the Mormons since his family has a history of family members being connected to that religion. Four binders were marked for his review to research when he has time available.

**Christina Fairchild:** Christina called from Angels Camp, CA and requested information on St. Peters' Church and family names of Voss and Ebert.

**Wendy Borgeson:** Wendy resides in Missouri and plans to make a trip to Donnellson at a later date. She is interested in family names associated with Brooks and Kincaid. Also, the family business called the King Brooks Bakery.

### **Rural Schools**

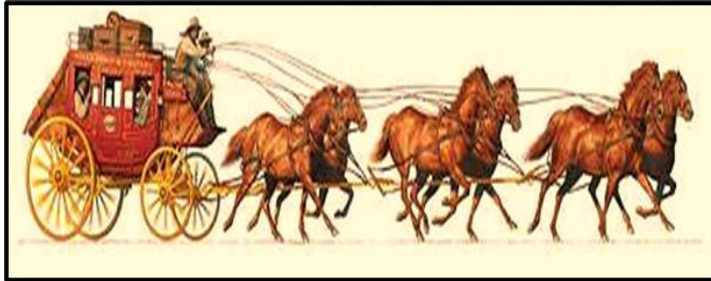
**Joel Garretson:** A meeting was held with Joel Garretson, the owner of the Pilot Grove #6 schoolhouse. The schoolhouse was moved from the Holtkamp family farm in Lee County to the East Grove Farms and Winery in Henry County in October 2021. Since the schoolhouse is part of the Lee County history, a request was made to visit the schoolhouse and obtain photographs of the soon-to-be preserved building.

**John Stuekerjuergen:** Since the Pilot Grove schoolhouse has such an interesting history, Mr. William Sherman of the Rural School Association requested the Register of Al H. Stuekerjuergen for the Pilot Grove #6 school be loaned to the University of Iowa (UNI) Museum for copies as a permanent research document. Diane contacted John regarding the request. The document has 308 pages and in addition to a copy for UNI, copies will be given to Joel Garretson and Diane Kruse since both are concerned with the Pilot Grove schoolhouse.



## July Display

Below is the story and partial history of the American Stagecoach as well as photos from the July display with special additions from the Ed Latta wood carving collection



### **Partial History of the American Stagecoach**

The Concord Stagecoach was built like a basket on leather straps that swung from side to side, weighed more than a ton, and cost somewhere between \$1500 and \$1800. Concord had a seat in front, in back, and one in the middle seating nine when full and leaving little leg room, but passengers were also allowed to ride on top. The creators of the Concord were J. S. Abbot and Lewis Downing who were so careful with their products that not one stagecoach ever left the factory without their inspection. The Abbot Downing Company was a huge factory in Concord, New Hampshire that took up six acres and produced forty other types of coaches and wagons. It operated under the supervision of one or another of the Abbot or Downing family members from 1827 to 1899.

One of the most famous stagecoach owners and operators was Ben Holladay who traveled in a personalized stagecoach with gold scrollwork and matching dapple-gray horses. Holladay owned the Overland Mail & Express Company, which he bought from the Pony Express in 1862. Holladay had a contract with the United States Post Office that paid \$365,000 a year and the Overland transported humans, packages, and mail over a 3000-mile area. There were more than 15,000 employees in the Overland Company and 110 Concord Stagecoaches. Holladay sold his stagecoach company to Wells Fargo in 1866 in order to invest in the railroads.

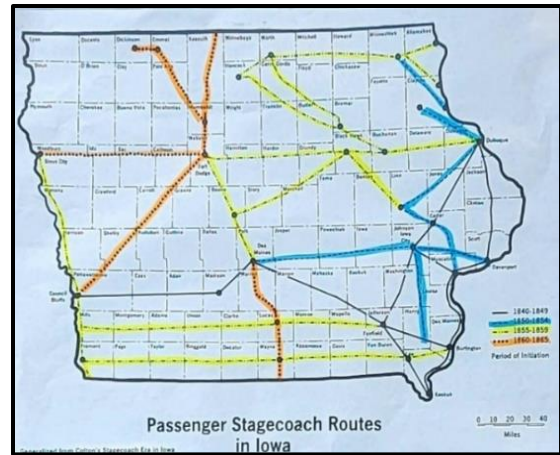
Ben Holladay may have made a wise financial decision when he sold the Overland stage line as railroads soon became the primary method of transporting both humans and cargo, but trains were still confined to their tracks, and it was the introduction of the automobile that finally brought an end to the use of stagecoaches in the early 1900s. Information taken from an on-line article in Time-Life.

Iowa played a big role in the stagecoach transportation era with several standard routes from 1840 through 1865. (As shown in the below diagram of passenger stagecoach routes in Iowa.)

Below are some photographs from the July display courtesy of Carole Landes Elston.



**Hand carved centerpiece by Mr. Ed Latta for the July display. A replica of a four-horse stagecoach**



**Passenger stagecoach routes in Iowa from 1840's-1860's**



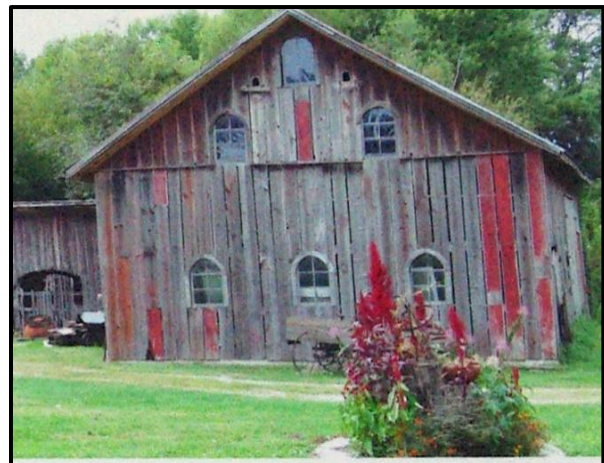
**Butterfield Overland Mail: The world's longest stagecoach route. Pony Express was an offshoot of this stagecoach line.**



**Stagecoach Mary was the second woman in the United States (and the first African American woman) to serve in the role of a stagecoach contractor to carry mail.**



**The Christian Herschler Stagecoach stop and winery still in existence in Franklin, IA. The winery was founded in 1840.**



**Barn attached to the stagecoach stop to change horses**