

DONNELLSON PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWSLETTER
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March 2021

Issue #175



Daffodils

By William Wordsworth

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not be but gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed' and gazed' but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye

Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

Library Happenings

“Libraries are community treasure chests, loaded with a wealth of information available to everyone equally, and the key to that treasure chest is the library card. I have found the most valuable thing in my wallet is my library card.” ~ First Lady Laura Bush

Library Happenings are written and submitted by Brenda Knox, Director of the Donnellson Library, unless otherwise noted.

A former patron wrote the nicest note to us and enclosed a generous donation of \$1,000 to our library this month. Brian Humes of Lincoln, Nebraska wrote: *“I haven’t lived in Donnellson for over forty years. However, I still fondly remember using the library when it was above the bank, and then next to the State Farm agency. I also remember helpful librarians who guided me through the classics and instilled in me a love of reading. This love is a big part of me and continues to grow. Literally I would not be who I am without your library. I hope you find this check useful.”*

What a nice tribute to those who were here in this position before me, and a stunning footnote to our Local & Family History Department exhibit by Diane Kruse spotlighting the history of the Donnellson Public Library this month! Thanks so much, Brian.

We also had books adopted by Carol Tull this month. Carol is one of our best book adopters. We received a memorial check from Carm Fett to adopt a book in memory of Bettye Boley. Thanks so much for your support, Carm and Carol!

As Vaccine Access Increases, the Library is a Safer Place!

Last year, I wrote about the Spanish Influenza pandemic, and how it affected Iowa in 1918-19, and the parallels to the pandemic we are experiencing now. We have come through a difficult year, but as more and more people have access to the vaccines for coronavirus, our library will continue to ease restrictions. Users of the Activity Room are still limited to 12 people at this time.

We are planning outdoor activities for the Summer Reading Program that will be fun for kids ages 2 and up. Teen Book Club will resume soon, and we will have several group programs, including The Blank Park Zoo, Mad Science Bubble Fun, a rock band called Sheltered Reality, and the ISU Extension Department’s Insect Zoo. These programs will be held at the Railroad Park Shelter House. Watch for an updated schedule and brochure later in April.



During the Summer months, we will also be hosting the **OUTDOOR BOOK CORPS!** This will be a twice-weekly program for kids in our front yard, here at the library. We will have a story time, movement activities and a craft activity to take home. We are planning to have the programs on Tuesday for the youngest kids, ages 2-6 at 10:00 a.m., and on Wednesday for school-aged kids ages 6-12 at 10:00 a.m. All participants will need to bring a backpack with the following supplies: a towel to sit on, a bottle of water, and a hat to keep the sun off. If your parents allow it, you may bring insect repellent or sunscreen. Parents will need to bring kids back to the library during open hours to browse for their books, so that we can keep numbers down in the building to maintain social distance following the program. As usual, we will have ways to keep track of all books read and regular drawings for prizes. If we offer snacks, we will need to know if your child has any food allergies, and we will need contact information for parents or guardians. Watch for registration forms late in April!

The Donnellson Book Core

Our book for March was entitled *The Mothers* by Britt Bennett. It was the “ALL IOWA READS” selection for 2020, although many members found it to be an odd choice, as the Iowa angle was not really represented in the book. However, members found the characters to be very diverse and the life situations depicted in the story, (a teen romance, a secret and cover-up, mistakes and choices, and lifelong friendships,) to be a compelling story.

The book for April is *The Taster* by V.S. Alexander. Here is what GOODREADS has to say about this book:

Amid the turbulence of World War II, a young German woman finds a precarious haven closer to the source of danger than she ever imagined--one that will propel her through the extremes of privilege and terror under Hitler's dictatorship . . .

In early 1943, Magda Ritter's parents send her to relatives in Bavaria, hoping to keep her safe from the Allied bombs strafing Berlin. Young German women are expected to do their duty--working for the Reich or marrying to produce strong, healthy children. After an interview with the civil service, Magda is assigned to the Berghof, Hitler's mountain retreat. Only after weeks of training does she learn her assignment: she will be one of several young women tasting the Fuhrer's food, offering herself in sacrifice to keep him from being poisoned.

Perched high in the Bavarian Alps, the Berghof seems worlds away from the realities of battle. Though terrified at first, Magda gradually becomes used to her dangerous occupation--though she knows better than to voice her misgivings about the war. But her love for a conspirator within the SS, and her growing awareness of the Reich's atrocities, draw Magda into a plot that will test her wits and loyalty in a quest for safety, freedom, and ultimately, vengeance.

Vividly written and ambitious in scope, *The Taster* examines the harrowing moral dilemmas of war in an emotional story filled with acts of extraordinary courage.

The discussion will take place at 7:00, Monday April 19 in the Activity Room.

New Website on the Way for Library

The State Library of Iowa has received a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act to offer re-formatted, modernized websites to each library in Iowa. As we learn how to add to the site, we are learning skills in programs called Concrete 5 and Canva. The sites will “go live” later this summer and should be much easier to navigate.

Writers' Bloc

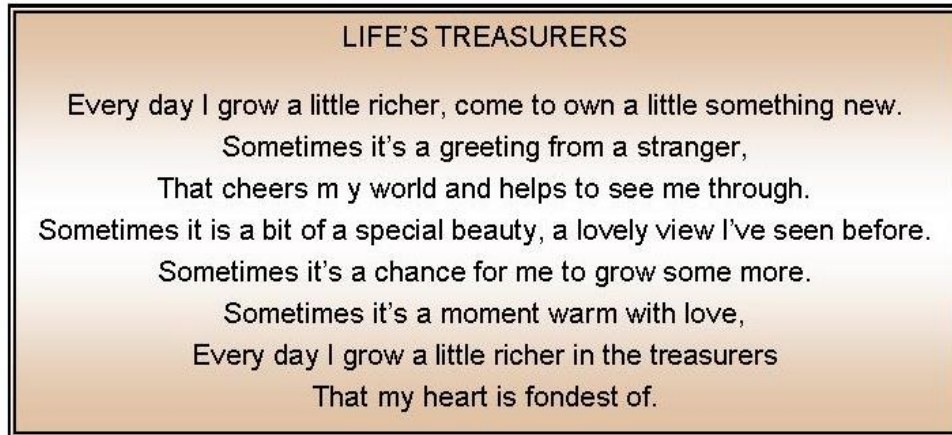


The Writers' Bloc met March 17 from 1:00-3:00 P.M. in the library Local & Family History Department. Present were Jan Blankenburg, Marty Miller, and Aaron and Diane Kruse.

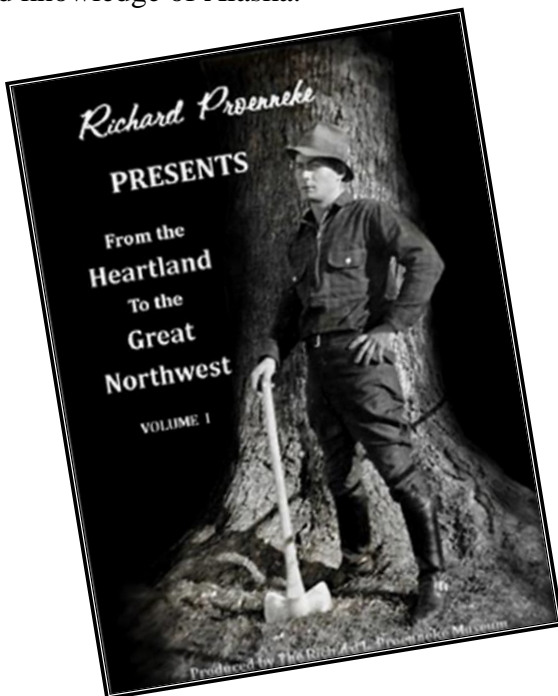
The Bloc stopped meeting due to concerns about the COVID pandemic. Local members decided in February 2021 to reunite on March 17. A common theme was the lack of writing done during the timeframe the Bloc did not meet. Jan and Marty read a few short pieces and shared their ideas once again but most of the meeting was taken up with discussion of the past year's difficulties getting in the right state of mind to pen their thoughts. Diane mentioned she continued compiling and contributing articles for the library newsletter each month and Aaron mentioned he wrote a book review for the newsletter of one of the books he read each month. A topic suggested for the next meeting was to describe a house or houses we grew up in over the years.

Members of the Writers' Bloc look forward to meeting new members so if you are an aspiring writer please join us. The next meeting of the Bloc will be April 21 from 1:00-3:00 P.M. ~
Written and submitted by Diane Kruse

Richard L Proenneke Museum



Richard Proenneke was born and raised in Primrose, Lee County, IA, and ties his Journals to us through the people he knew here and the lives he touched on his many trips back sharing his film and knowledge of Alaska.



A few years ago, some neighbor loaned me the Dick Proenneke DVD and then last month I saw a book online and ordered it. Since then, I have watched as many online videos I could find.

I live in Idaho, not a place like Twin Lakes but I am 20 air-miles from the largest wilderness in the lower 48, with pine, white and red fir all around me, and I take my domestic water off my roof, cut my firewood and until my 75-year-old knees got too sore, hiked the mountain country and big river trails. All this made me especially interested in Dick's life. I was only a rough carpenter but have built most of my outbuildings from scrap wood and I loved all the building description.

I lived in one city of 34,000 for 2 months but the rest of the time, including growing up on an island in Puget Sound, Washington, I was out in the modified sticks. Dick talked of his trip up the Al-Can. My parents, a cousin, a dog, and me drove the Al-Can in 1962 where I ate ice cream cones with the ice cream made from canned milk. We drove to Tok Junction and on to Anchorage, ending in Seward, where my dad, the cousin and I boarded the boat I had christened when I was 12. We traveled to Port San Juan in Prince William Sound and then Cordova, and at the end of a lucrative commercial salmon seining season, my much older brother, the skipper, and I traveled to Friday Harbor, Washington by way of the Alaska and Canada Inside Passage. With the animals I have seen including a female brown bear a hundred yards from me, Dall sheep seen on the mountainsides, and moose both on the Al-Can and in my area in Idaho, I had an attachment to Dick.

And I helped a neighbor build his log house having done all the peeling with a draw knife and a spud. And when my parents moved north from California to Washington in '54, my parents and I built a log house with vertical rather than horizontal walls. My dad built some amazing, Dick-style door handles but as he got more "civilized" he replaced them with conventional. What a waste. These experiences, though not as exciting as Dick's, sure gave me a love for his life.

Patrick Threewith
Kooskia, Idaho

COMING SOON! TWO NEW DVD RICHARD PROENNEKE DOCUMENTARIES!

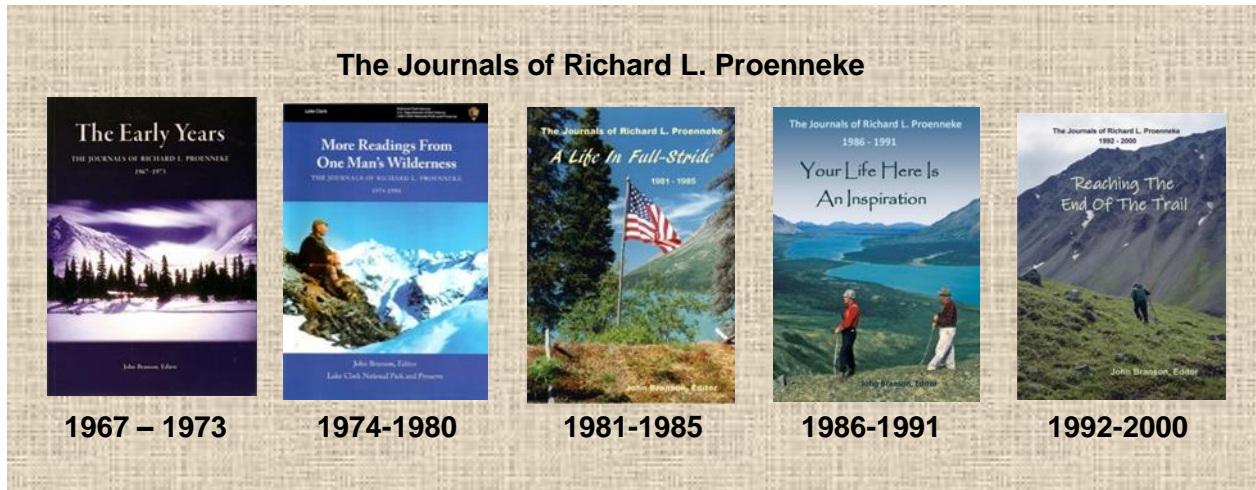
Documentary Volume I - "From The Heartland To the Great Northwest"

This Documentary represents Richard Proenneke's beginning into the art of film making from the very first attempts in the late 1930's at his home in Primrose, Iowa and his move to the Wilkinson Ranch in Heppner, Oregon in early 1940; the disruption of WW II and his entry into the US Navy; to Portland Oregon and his preparation to make the move to Alaska. The release is estimated for late spring/early summer. For more information and to pre-register please contact brie@richardproenneke.com

Documentary Volume II - "The Living Wilderness"

In this Documentary Richard, now living on Kodiak Island, AK, continues to document his life through film, recording his experiences at Kodiak, Sawmill Lake and Cape Chiniak. He would meet "Spike" and Hope Carrithers, Sam Keith, Babe Alsworth, Terry and Vic Gill. Entering a

new path, Richard sets out on a new course at Twin Lakes, from the challenges of winter survival to salvaging a crashed plane. The release is estimated for late spring/early summer. For more information and to pre-register please contact brie@richardproenneke.com



LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Richard Proenneke Museum is looking for a volunteer to help with the wide variety of functions related to the Richard Proenneke Museum with flexible volunteer hours.

We are needing someone with the following knowledge/experience and should have basic computer skills in the following:

Microsoft Windows 10, Microsoft Word, 2010, Microsoft Excel 2010

Microsoft Office Publisher 2007 or higher would be helpful.

If you are interested in volunteering and being a part of a wonderful and unique experience,

A March Suggested Reading

The selection this month is *Almost Pioneers* by Laura Gibson Smith, edited by John J. Fry.

Laura Smith wrote this selection as a memoir during the 3 years (1913-16) they lived on a 320-acre homestead near Chugwater, Wyoming in the extreme southeast corner of the state. She was born in central Iowa in the 1890s, as was her husband Earle. Earle was a schoolteacher and principal, and Laura's background was as a homemaker. Neither had the skills one might associate with homesteading, and their adventure (as Laura named it) was an intense on-the-job learning experience.

From the rich black soil and lush greenery of central Iowa, Earle went to Wyoming ahead of his wife to locate a homestead. Homesteading in those days required filing on the claim and living there a minimum of seven months each year for three years. During that time, it was required of the homesteaders they plow at least 40 acres and raise a house of some sort. The Smiths, like so many who came from Iowa, found a semi-dry area of rolling hills, buffalo grass (dense, brown, with seeds on the grass which fattened livestock well but made for a monotonous landscape), no

trees, and little available water. Laura details the trials the couple went through on a daily basis as they tried to 'prove up' and claim their land. These included such things as livestock which delighted in jumping fences, deer and rabbits which completely ate what little garden they could grow, a 10-mile round trip just to pick up the mail, and a great abundance of rattlesnakes.

Writing in an easy, folksy style with a great sense of humor, Laura introduces much in her stories which is not commonly known about the homesteading experience in Wyoming or the lifestyle of the early 1900s. The editor, John Fry, annotates the pages with footnotes explaining customs, outdated verbiage, and history of the area. All-in-all, this is an interesting and entertaining read for anyone with an interest in the Old West. ~ **Written and submitted by Aaron Kruse**

Local & Family History Department

“History is a kind of introduction to more interesting people than we can possibly meet in our restricted lives; let us not neglect the opportunity.” ~ Dexter Perkins

~ During the month of March volunteers continued to increase their hours to keep the informational files expanding. Roberta Krehbiel continues to clip obituaries and sort through her many treasures of memorabilia to eventually pass on to the Local & Family History Department. Mary Davis continued to paste and sort obituaries from local Illinois, Missouri, and Van Buren County. Jean Kruse filed obits for contiguous counties and local Illinois and finished the entire alphabet of names pasted to date. Joyce Francis helped with Lee County obituaries by filing them in the appropriate binders while Sharon Meierotto brought the card file up to date. Thank you, ladies, for your assistance in helping bring the information up to date for the month of March.

~ The long-needed project to rearrange the Lee County, contiguous counties, local Illinois, and Missouri records, as well as genealogy references, continued to be a work in progress during the month. The new arrangement will make it easier for our patrons to readily locate their information. New record locations will be appropriately marked with many records being transferred to larger binders to facilitate addition of more information clipped from newspapers or donated by patrons.

~ The shelving project approved by the Donnellson Library Board installed has added the extra space needed to expand our holdings for contiguous counties as well as local Illinois and Missouri obituaries and other items which could not be displayed due to the lack of space. Information regarding all cemeteries pertaining to these obits, as well as the older obits previously filed, will be contained in black binders along the top of the file cabinets. Other areas of expansion house antique postcards, some high school annuals, and soon to be added photo albums of local families and other interesting areas of Donnellson.

~The Lee County, Iowa Grave Registrations from the Adjutant General's Officer are now on file on one of the newly installed shelves mentioned above. The large seven-volume set copied by permission of the Keokuk Library contains pertinent information for one's research of family members. The form entitled Individual Burial Record contains the DOB/DOD, burial place and cemetery and has space for any additional remarks regarding the grave site, family members, etc. If a family member is a Veteran pertinent military information is also recorded.

~ Work continued to update the list of donated family albums. The Local and Family History Department has three shelves of family history albums for patrons' use for family research. To date, the department count is 100 albums. The family albums are filed in alphabetical order in the rear of the room on the lower shelves. If you have a family album you would like to donate, we will be happy to accept your copy or make a copy and return the original to you.

~ Diane Kruse contacted Mr. John and Nancy Doherty to personally thank them for sending the Richard Doherty family history, which will be placed in a binder, logged in, and placed on the shelves with other family histories. The Doherty's also sent John's Donnellson High School baseball uniform for the years 1939-40 and his Iowa Wesleyan letter sweater for our history collection.

~ Jon Burghoffer acquired local Boy Scout records from Bill Young, and both agreed this historical compilation of the scouts should be donated to the history department. The records date back to the 1920's and list all the sponsors and members of the Boy Scouts over the years. Since the present sponsor is the American Legion, the Boy Scout file and the American Legion binder are filed in the area dedicated to Donnellson.

~ Jane Krebill continued to consult and work with the BNSF to acquire grant funds to do a major upgrade of the Donnellson Depot.

Remember When?

Below is a photo of a small-town storefront of 1910. The photo came from *Remember When?*, December 1972 on loan to the Local & Family History Department by Jane Krebill.

The photo was taken at the site of what was Fritzjunker Feed Store in St. Paul, Iowa. At the time of this photo there were two grocery stores in St. Paul and the other was Hesse's Grocery Store, owned by Joseph Hesse. From left to right in the photo are two daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Hesse, Mrs. Louis (Emma) Kruse of Houghton and Sister Oranda Hesse of Arlington Heights, Illinois, Mr. Joseph Hesse and his wife. In front of them are two younger members of the family Marie and Frank.



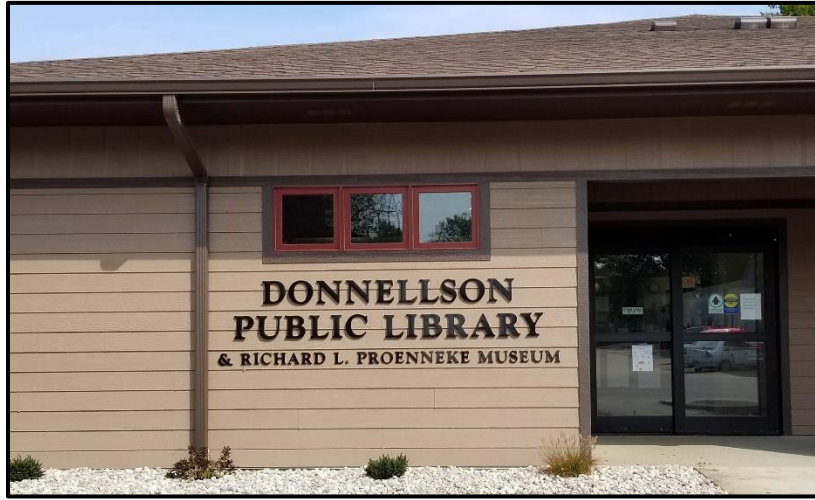
Local and Family History Department March Display

The March history display covered the history of the Donnellson Library including images and memorabilia for all the places it occupied since 1935. However, what most people do not know was that long before the Donnellson Community Library became fully accredited, Barbara Frank, a summer librarian began loaning books from the Donnellson School Library. This was in the early 1920's; she work out of a small "tin" building which was behind the Telephone Central office located in the Farm Bureau parking lot on Main Street. Little did she realize her small operation would evolve into a beloved and thriving public space in the heart of the Donnellson community.

Below are photographs taken by Carole Landes Elston from the display:



You will see the library at its beginning in a doctor's waiting room on Elm Street, its time sharing the storefront of a feed store, the time it was stationed above a bank, to the purchase and expansion of the newspaper office. And now, because the library grew, we are fortunate to be located at our present address at 411 Main Street. The coverage of the library will also include the history of the Genealogy (now Local & Family History) Department founded by Erma DeRosear in 1986.



~ Newsletter Editor, Diane P. Kruse, Retirees4Now@aol.com

