



# Tales and Trails Newsletter

From Denton, NE, and surrounding areas...Sponsored by the Denton Community Historical Society

March, 2012

## PROGRAMS---WE HAVE PROGRAMS - MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW

We have a slate of programs all wrapped up for the rest of the year. **Marilyn Giles, Program Chair**, has done a great job of lining up interesting events.

On May 22 we will meet at **6 pm** at the **Community Center in Denton** for a “school picnic” just like the ones you used to attend in your little school. Bring appropriate food. We will have plates etc. Also we will have some school pictures etc to view and so bring any you want to share with others.

June 26 we will meet at the Community Center at **6 pm** to carpool to **Homestead National Monument**. (See article elsewhere in this newsletter)

July 24 **Michael Maas** will talk on the **Civil War and uniforms**. Refreshments

August 28 We will have a **musical group performing**. Refreshments

September 25 we will meet at the **Centerville Cemetery** at **6 pm** to do a tour of the cemetery led by **Joan Wittstruck**. Tailgate refreshments.

Oct 23 we will have an **antique appraisal with Tom Bassett**. More information will be in June newsletter.

Nov 27 Noon potluck with election of officers.

Hope to see you there.



The following article appeared in the The Times Review, Fennimore, Grant, WI, 19 Sep 1894, front page, col. 1:

### Nebraska Land

The state of affairs out in Nebraska this year is very appropriately described in the following lines, which were sent us by Mr. Will Oleson, of St. Paul, Nebraska.

We've reached the land of drouth and heat  
Where nothing grows for us to eat.  
For winds that blow with scorching heat  
Nebraska land is hard to beat.

O, Nebraska land, sweet Nebraska land!  
As on the burning soil we stand  
We look away across the plains  
And wonder why it never rains  
'Till Gabriel doth his trumpet sound  
And says the rain has passed around.

We have no wheat, we have no oats;  
We have no corn to feed our shoats,  
Our chickens are too poor to eat;  
Our pigs are squealing through the street.

The farmer goes into his corn,  
And there he stands and looks forlorn.  
He looks around and gets a shock,  
To find the shoot has missed the stalk.

Our horses are the improved race.  
Starvation stares them in the face.  
We do not live, we only stay.  
We are too poor to get away.

A family poses before their Custer County, Nebraska, sod house in 1886. A “soddie” was one of the few options on the plains, where trees were scarce. (Library of Congress)

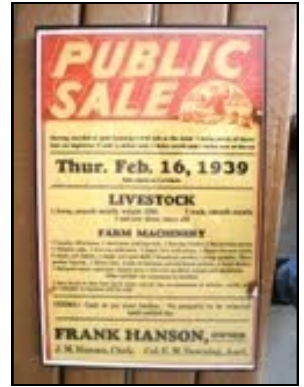


### TREASURES FROM THE PAST

One of our newest members is Allen Snell. Allen parents were Allen Snell Sr. and Lorraine Hanson Snell. The one sale bill is the sale bill of Frank Hanson, Lorraine's father who has decided, it says, "to quit farming". This was in 1939. If you know the history of Nebraska, you will know that the thirty's were very dry years.



The second sale bill is for 281.85 acres of farm land seven miles south of "O" street which is the main east west street in Lincoln. This farm would be in the area of 27th and Rokeby Road. The reason DCHS member, Allen Snell, treasures this artifact from 1948 is that his father, Allen Snell Sr. was the tenant of this farm. Allen Jr. was 13 at the time and remembers the farm well. He now runs a dairy operation east of Denton.



**"Little Gold Dust" Saloon**—a popular meeting place for the men of Lincoln's male subculture.

This photo is looking northeast at Nebraska State Journal building at the northeast corner of Ninth and P streets. To the left of the State Journal building are four other buildings, including the Carr Building, along the north side of P Street on block 34. The University is in the distance. The Sheedy building is to the east of this photo at 932 P Street.



John Haase, Denton NE, bartender on the right at the **"Little Gold Dust Saloon"**

**John Alfred Haase, Denton NE**  
1903—1984

## THE BERRYMAN TAVERN IN DENTON

It sat on the southeast corn of the main intersection in Denton. It was across the street from Gerbig's grocery store and next to the Community Hall which is now the Legion Club. That was the first Berryman tavern and the second was across the street to the north, where the Post Office was located originally. The owners were Howard and Frieda Rapp Berryman. I recently asked their granddaughter Caroline Pillard Helget if she would write a short biography of her grandparents and she not only wrote her own story but had an article written by her grandmother Frieda in her one words. Enjoy.

## THE BERRYMAN FAMILY—Caroline Pillard Helget

Frieda was my grandmother. My mother was Marjorie Berryman. She worked in the bar where she met my father, Irvin Pillard (son of Henry and Mary Honvlez), when he came in to have a drink. They were married November 15, 1952 at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Denton. They bought a house in Lincoln where they lived out their married life. I was born in 1954, my brother Howard was born in 1962. My father passed away in 1999, and my mother passed away in 2010. My parents had three granddaughters, Lindsay and Heather Pillard, and my daughter, Erin Helget.

*Pictures of the Berryman Family on next page...*



## LIFE IN BEER TAVERN—Written by Frieda (Rapp) Berryman

In the year of 1934 Howard Berryman applied for Beer License here in Denton. We started the business on Aug 8, 1934, Howard's birthday. We had off and on sale and we also sold ice cream cones & pints or as much as you wanted. Beatrice Creamery put the ice cream in. We also sold popcorn and hot soups. Had electric soup heater, and cold lunches. Pickled pig feet and sausages. Our music box was on commission, also a slot machine. Finally we bought a music box, and a shuffle board.

The day we opened up we had Free Beer, and Free Movie, same night, had the movies outside in front of the high school building. Leonard of Nehi Bottling Co. sold Country Club Beer. He furnished our tap box and all glasses that evening, as we hadn't got ours yet, finally got 5c and 10c size. Everybody shared blankets on the ground and it seemed that everyone enjoyed watching them. We had large crowds.

We had an outdoor toilet, water had to be pumped and carried. Used to use coal for a long time, many a time the stove wouldn't draw and the chimney got too much soot in it. That sure was a chore cleaning up after that, the last few years had oil piped in, that saved a lot of time.

Harland George was coon hunter and dressed them, so we had many coon heads. Mrs. Alma Sullivan gave an oyster feed one night, furnished all milk and oysters. We even rented dishes to serve soup in. Had celery, also pickles, crackers, chive cheese dip. Frank Sullivan ate first batch before anyone else got any, had to make a second batch.

We tapped Country Club beer. Business wasn't much Sunday, till Lincoln voted it out year of 1935. That brought more trades out here.

All beer was cooled with ice, even the tap box you had to crush ice and fill in around coils. I believe that beer tasted better.

I can remember we had ice house sitting on East side of beer tavern, many a time Ella Mae or Alice would be feeling good, had to go to the ladies rest room and they always bumped their heads on the ice house. Ella Mae would say "guess we tried to move the ice house" Ha.

Had to watch for liquor man that would come and see how things were. Long as no money's on the table it was not gambling.

We were closed once for 7 days for selling to minors. I didn't, Barth did, also Crete was closed too for same offense, same kids.

Howard passed away on Febr 9, 1943. So I took over same year Febr 16, 1943 and sold out Oct 4, 1954 to Ted Haase. He and Pat took over the same night, didn't give me any time to have a farewell leave. But they didn't last long, finally sold place to Parker. Later on it got a fire, so much for the beer place, nothing but ashes.

We had many ups and downs, it was a living. But also many memories and met lots of kind people, listened to all their troubles. It was a life hard to forget, and a hard one to give up.

# The Berryman Family



Howard Berryman  
In front of the first Berryman Tavern



Frieda Berryman  
In front of the first Berryman Tavern



Harold (Bing) Berryman—Center  
In front of second Berryman Tavern  
Jean Wells Sullivan—In black hat  
and Molly (Surname unknown)



Marjorie Berryman Pillard

## THE HOMESTEAD ACT OF 1862

The Denton Community Historical Society will be helping celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Homestead Act when we travel to Beatrice on June 26<sup>th</sup> for a tour. We will meet at the Community Center in Denton and carpool. If you need a ride just call 402-423-6320 and we will see if we can arrange transportation. For those of you unfamiliar with this important piece of legislation, Jim and Jane Michel have found some great newspaper articles from a Wisconsin paper.

The following article was found in The Grant County Herald, Lancaster, Grant, WI, 17 Dec 1872, p. 1, col. 6

### “Provisions of the United States Homestead Laws”

“Any person who is the head of a family, or twenty-one years of age, and is a citizen of the United States, or has declared his intention to become a citizen as required by the naturalization laws, is entitled to the benefit of the homestead law.

“The right of homestead extends to one hundred and sixty acres of *surveyed* minimum lands, or eighty acres of double minimum.

“A party, to obtain title to a homestead under the provisions of this law, must, after selecting the tract of land he desires to enter, *file* at the District Land office an *application* to *enter* upon the land and pay the fees and commission allowed. He must then *occupy* and *cultivate* the land for a period of *five years*. At the expiration of five years, or within two years thereafter, he must make satisfactory proof at the District Land Office of settlement and cultivation, and pay the final commission.

“*Filing* the application will hold the law for six months, within which time the party must occupy and improve the land. In connection with the application the party must make affidavit “That said application is made for the purpose of actual settlement and cultivation; that said entry is made for my own exclusive benefit, and not directly or indirectly for the benefit or use of any other person or persons whomsoever; neither have I perfected or abandoned an entry heretofore made under this act.”

“If the party is actually residing upon the land and for good causes cannot personally appear at the Land Office, this affidavit may be made before the clerk of the court for the county wherein he resides.

“The proof of settlement and cultivation required, is the affidavit of the party, supported by two credible witnesses.

“Upon proof satisfactory to them, and payment of final commission, the land officers will issue a certificate to the party, and make return to the General Land Office. A patent will then be issued and the homestead settler becomes owner of the land in fee.

“Homesteads are not liable for debts contracted before the issuing of the patent.

“A homestead settler forfeits all right to the land, by absence there from for more than six months at one time during the five years, if the fact of such absence is satisfactorily proven to the land officers.

“In case of the death of the homestead settler before perfecting his claim his widow, or, in case of her death, his heirs may continue the settlement and cultivation and, upon making the requisite proof, obtain title. Should both parents die leaving minor children, the homestead is required to be sold for the benefit of the heirs, and the purchaser will receive title from the United States.

“The fees and commission are required to be paid when entry is made, and are as follows:

No.	Price Per Acre	Commission	Survey	Fees	Total Costs
160	\$1.25	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$10.00	\$18.00
80	\$1.25	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$5.00	\$9.00
40	\$1.25	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$5.00	\$7.00
80	\$2.50	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$10.00	\$18.00
40	\$2.50	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$5.00	\$9.00

And for reducing final proof to writing, fifteen cents for each hundred words.

(In California, Nevada, Oregon, Colorado, New Mexico, Washington, Arizona, Idaho, Wyoming and Montana, the *Commissions* are fifty per cent greater. The Fees are the same.)

The following article was found in The Grant County Herald, Lancaster, Grant, WI, 29 Sep 1868, p. 1, col. 6

### **“The Homestead Act**

“The Democratic party were never in favor of the beneficent Homestead law, which enables any poor man to select a quarter section of the best public lands, and by residing on it a short time become the owner in fee simple, without money and without price, except the cost of survey. The Democratic party bitterly opposed the enactment of the Homestead law; but as often as they defeated it, the Republicans in Congress brought it up again and urged its passage. The Republicans finally forced it through Congress in the session of 1860; but a Democrat President vetoed it. The Republicans then waited until Mr. Lincoln was inaugurated, when they passed it again, and the new President cheerfully signed it; and thus it became the law of the land, after a long struggle against the Democratic party.

“Since its enactment tens of thousands of poor men, both native and foreign born, have secured homesteads and are becoming thrifty and independent farmers, each with his 160 acres of land.”

## **MORE BITS AND PIECES FROM THE LANCASTER COUNTY CITIZEN**

### **January 6<sup>th</sup> 1921 - Sprague Spiels**

Attendance at Sunday School was 106;

John Kersten shelled corn Monday

Mrs. Ira Griffeth of Kansas spent Christmas and a few more days visiting her sister Mrs. W.F. Krull and family

Mr. and Mrs. Sam Spellman are the proud parents of a nice baby boy. Mrs. C.O. Hale of Beatrice is staying with her daughter and her little son for the present.

The Live Wire Sunday School class with their teacher, Mrs. Schaffer gave a party in the church basement Friday evening and invited the Ever Ready class and their teacher Rev. Pengelly. The evening was spent playing games. A nice luncheon was served by the Live Wires. Everyone reported a fine time.

Mrs. Edom Sittler and Melvin and Evelyn visited Monday afternoon at the Charles Kurtzer's home.

Mrs. Hannah Pillard gave a program and box social at her school District #117 Dec 23<sup>rd</sup>. They raised \$54.60 from 24 boxes.

### **Emerald Epistles**

Charlie Busboom gave a party in honor of his birthday New Year's Eve which was attended by a large crowd of friends and relative. A nice luncheon was served at midnight and a four piece orchestra entertained the guests and everybody enjoyed a good time. We all wish him many more happy birthdays.

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Borgman entertained at dinner New Years day. Covers were laid for twenty-two. Those present were Mr. and Mrs. Chris Borgman, Mr. and Mrs. Wilber Merrill and son, Boyd, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Pickel Sr. and Dolly, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Pickel Jr., Mrs. J. Jones, and family and Mrs. Louie Sorensen.

### **Rokeby-Sprague-Emerald - Eighty Three Writers**

Eighty three different writers have sent in local news items to be run in the Citizen the past year. The smallest number of local editors that have appeared in the Citizen in any one week was 21. The largest was 41. Three local editors appeared in every one of the 53 issues during the past year. These were Charles and Alice Olmsted of Rokeby, Mrs. Doctor Lamb of Sprague and Hulda Jarms and her father of Emerald. These communities are on the honor roll for 1920. There were other communities that have a faithful editor also. (DCHS Editors Note. These were from all of Lancaster County but the DCHS area ones were Miss Henrietta Becker of Emerald, Miss Catherine Pickel of West O, Esther Mills of Burnham, and Marie Shea of Denton.)

### **January 12, 1921 - Berks Briefs**

Mr. and Mrs. John Juricek and family were visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charley Kotmel Sunday.

A birthday dinner was given at George Buntmeyer's Sunday in honor of George Buntmeyer and Henry Feekin. There were about 30 guests present.

Mr. and Mrs. John Ernest and son John spent Sunday with Mrs. Ernest's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Strelow. (DCHS Editors Note: Believe this should be Ernst.)

### **Rokeby Rattle**

N.S. Charles shelled corn last Thursday and delivered it to the stock yards at Burnham.

Pat Smith bought five tons of alfalfa from H.G. Evers.

### **Emerald Epistles**

Mr. and Mrs. Alva Hoppmann are the happy parents of their first baby boy born last Sunday Jan 9, 1921.

January 20, 1921

## Denton Doings

On Wednesday of last week, the second monthly social night of St. Mary's parish took place at the Shea Hall. The following entertaining program was given to home talent.

- 1-Opening address—Erma Smejkal
- 2-Vocal duet—"Friendless and Sad" -Dorothy Capron and Esther Robinson
- 3-Recitation—"Almost a Man"-Allen Snell
- 4-Piano duet—"By the Fireside"-Mary and Irene Sullivan
- 5-Recitation—"Where Did the Old year Go"-Margaret Amen
- 6-Piano solo—"Sweet Memories"-Mary Sullivan
7. Recitation—"The Wife that Couldn't Be Found"-Frank Sullivan
- 8-Vocal solo—"Yaddi, Kaddi, Kitty Kaddie Koo"-Eva Shea
- 9-Recitation—"Books"-Helen Smejkal
- 10-Vocal duet—"Whispering Hope"-Dorothy and Otis Capron
- 11.-Recitation—"My Dad"-Loretta Sullivan
- 12-Piano duet—"Jingle Bells" Anna Enright and Irene Sullivan
- 13-Piano solo—"Fireman's Dream"-Georgia Kaufman
- 14-Recitaiton—"A Little Girl"-Mabel Enright



The prizes at cards were won by Miss Mary Sullivan and Mr. Louis Smejkal. After cards a box lunch served by the ladies and girls of the parish and drawn for by lot, were served with hot coffee. After an hour of dancing the strains of "Home Sweet Home" from the violin and piano, made all think of their wraps and freezing cars. Those who attended only the second social night, regretted that they did not attend the first and will be more certain that they do not miss the third.

Mr. and Mrs. William Burgess and family, Mr. and Mrs. T. Abbott, Mr. and Mrs. Sorensen and family, Elizabeth Maughan, and Carroll Hudson spent New Years Eve with Mr. and Mrs. Fred Christensen and daughter Clara. The evening was spent in playing cars and games after which a delightful lunch was served.

The Friendship Kensington of the Cobb community met with Mrs. Abbott December 28. The next meeting will be with Mrs. Earl Miller, Jan 10. We want every one to come and start the New Year right.

Gladys Marshall who has been very sick was not able to return to her school.

## Berks Briefs

Mr. Albert Kalkwarf motored to Crete Saturday but seemingly had a little hard luck, as we are informed that he had to get out and put on the chains.

The Farmers Union had a meeting at the Berks school house Saturday afternoon.

## Sprague Spiels

Most everybody is busy putting up ice now. The ice is nice and clear this year, but most of it is only about 6 or 7 inches thick.

Dr. reports five cases of pneumonia this past week.

January 24, 1921

## Rokeby Rattle

The Farmers Elevator Co has purchased the building now occupied by the store. They will remodel and enlarge it so as to be more able to take care of the increasing trade. Mr. Evers will occupy the rooms at the rear of the store until Mrs. Evers is able to take up her household duties.

Roy Steinhausen's moved Monday to their farm near Rokeby.

The pupils of District 43 gave a splendid program Thursday evening. After the program there was a box social which netted the school about \$35 dollars. The boxes sold exceptionally well, averaging over \$2 each.



*May Easter joys blossom all around you!*



## Obituaries . . .

**Richard D. Spellman** age 81 of Denton, passed away Jan 18<sup>th</sup>. Rich and his wife Rita were DCHS members for many years. Among his survivors are his daughter, Karin Peale and Virginia Kersten, his sister, both DCHS members.

**Melvin R. Giles**, age 73 of Denton died Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>. He and his wife Marilyn have been DCHS member for many years. His sister and brother-in-law, Robert and Roberta Spitz are DCHS members.

**Shirley Alder**, age 85 passed away Feb 23 at her home. Shirley and her husband Dale were DCHS members for a number of years. She was the daughter of Paul and Theresa Honvlez Fraas

**Faye E. Hinrichs**, age 84, an Emerald resident passed away March 3<sup>rd</sup>. She was the widow of Otto Hinrichs and is survived by two children and their families.

Word has been received that **Dean Versaw**, a Rokeby graduate, age 83, passed away at Fountain Hills Arizona on Sept 28<sup>th</sup>.

Word has also been received that **Hazel Shrader Weber** died several months ago in Denver. Her sister Bernice Gansemer was a DCHS member for a number of years also.

**Please make these additions to the 2011 Membership Book if you have not already done so.**

Valarie Andersen  
3800 X Street  
Lincoln NE 68506

Don and Gayle Foxhoven  
15700 SW 29th  
Martell NE 68404  
402-794-6010

Todd Mickle  
4517 Stockwell, #8  
Lincoln NE 68506  
402-432-7256

Phyllis Bransroth  
7155 SW 40th  
Lincoln NE 68506  
402-797-3725

Charlene Hobelman  
4800 SW 12  
Lincoln NE 68523  
402-423-3451

Allen Snell  
6831 W Denton Rd.  
Denton NE 68339



Denton Community Historical Society  
PO Box 405  
Denton, NE 68339