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**Marcus Historical  
Center**



**President**

Julie Sand

**Vice President**

Linda Spieler

**Secretary**

Maxine Shea

**Treasurer**

Faith Specht

**Other Board  
Members**

Pat Ducommun

Brian Nelson

Ila O'Brien

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# MARCUS HISTORICAL NEWSLETTER

## Spring 2017

*"The purpose of the Marcus Historical Society shall be to preserve for public benefit and education the heritage of our community."*

### If Walls Could Talk



Speakers were Fran Zembsch, Julie (Davis) Reaman, Ken Ogren, Phyllis Rapagnani, Bonnie (Collins) Means, and Chris Ballard

"If Walls Could Talk" was presented Sunday October 2 (1:30 pm) at Grace United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall. This program commemorated the Barnes Building (currently the Knudson Building) at the NW corner of Cedar and Main. Photos taken inside and outside the building were on display. Stories were provided by some of the former occupants of the building or their descendants.

Fran Zembsch (employee of Knudson's Law Firm) gave a well-researched history of the Barnes Knudson Building. This brick building was completed in 1884 at a cost \$4600. At one time there were three apartments in the building. There have been several dental practices, barber **shops**, a café, and other businesses there. (Too many to mention here) The Post Office was located in the rear ground floor for several years. The Marcus News also occupied space there. The next speaker was Julie (Davis) Reaman who told of her parents (Earl and Jan Davis) accounting/bookkeeping business there. Ken Ogren (retired from Farmer's State) talked

about Farmer's State Bank which was housed in the building before the "new" bank building was built at 106 E.Cedar. Delaney's Grocery Store was located in the north portion of the building. Phyllis Rapanani, great-granddaughter of the owner spoke about this early 20<sup>th</sup> century business. Bonnie (Collins) Means entertained the group with stories about the business she owned in the building "Bonnie's Beauty Shop". Chris Ballard, who has researched the buildings and businesses on Main Street spoke last. Time did not permit her to share all she could have and the Society hopes that she will speak at a future program.

Quoting Marcus News reporter Elaine Rassel: "Taking into account the immense number of businesses and apartments in this building, one could think of this huge building as being a "mini-mall" long before such were known."

Chairs of this event were Linda Wheeler and Ila O'Brien who have been active in presenting past cemetery walks and Chris Ballard who has researched many of the buildings on Main Street.

### **Chamber Coffee October 3, 2016**

The Society hosted the October Marcus Chamber Coffee October 3, from 9:30 to 11:00 p.m. This was the day after the "If These Walls could talk" presentation so extra treats from that event could be used. There was a nice turnout, nearly thirty people.



### **Hometown Christmas**

Marcus Historical Society entered this tree in the annual Hometown Christmas Event December 2016

Decorations include red, white and blue spheres and patriotic garland. The stars are gold and represent local men who died in the service of their country. Frederick (F.I.) Goodburn died during WWI. Casualties from WWII include Dale Barnes, Glenn Collins, Thomas Dalton, James Garvin, Carl Heline, John Keegan, Leland Letsche, Henry Ohlendorf, Leroy Reinert, Eilert Seggerman, John Wankum, and Verle Weicht. Deaths during the 60s included Wilbur Kirchoff, Vietnam, and Air Force Pilot Charles Rosberg who perished in an airplane crash while on temporary duty in England.

## Election of Officers

There were three seats on the Historical Society Board up for election this past fall. Election results were tallied at the regular October meeting. New Board members are Brian Nelson and Ila O'Brien. Maxine Shea was re-elected. These three will serve with Faith Specht, Julie Sand, Linda Spieler, and Pat Ducommun who have another year left to their terms.

At a later date the Board decided among themselves who would serve as officers of the Society in 2017. These officers are Julie Sand, president, Linda Spieler, vice-president, Maxine Shea, secretary, and Faith Specht, treasurer.

## Traditions That Helped Shape the Marcus Area

The Historical Society Building was the site of an interesting and entertaining presentation by Nancy Hier on January 15, 2017 (2:00-4:00 p.m.)



Nancy told of the history of her grandparents in Sweden and in the United States. Her grandmother worked as a cook when she arrived in America. The man she was to marry had gone on to Chicago and worked for the railroad. Eventually he sent for her and they were married. Her grandfather, J. M. Heline, purchased farmland east of town in 1879. Nancy lives in the second house built there in 1885. Nancy shared family stories and her own recollections growing up on this farm. She displayed family heirlooms and memorabilia including treasured items from her grandparents' homeland. She told of differing traditions practiced in different countries and the adaptations made by immigrants here.

Refreshments were served to an enthusiastic crowd of attendees.

Check out the Marcus Historical Society on facebook ! You can find many interesting things about the Marcus Historical Society. You can also check out the webpage at <http://www.marcushistoricalsociety.org>.

The Historical Society welcomes individual and group tours. Contact any board member to arrange a tour.

**To join the Marcus Historical Society, please mail a check or money order with your name/address/email/phone information and mail to: PO BOX 321, Marcus IA 51035.**

**Individual: At least \$10/year (due yearly at fair time - first week of Aug.)**

**Family: At least \$15/year (due yearly at fair time - first week of Aug.)**

**If you wish to give more for your membership, both your donation and membership dues will be greatly appreciated.**