

Historic Times

Summer History Club • Week of July 27, 2020 • Issue: 09



Name: Susan the Sleuth

Hobby: History Investigation

Loves: Learning about what life was like many years ago

Favorite Club:

History Club! The History Club kids are awesome!!

Something I'd like to Learn:

What kids did for fun many years ago? What their favorite snacks were? What kind of clothes they wore? Did they have vacations? *(Maybe I could start by asking my grandparents about when they were kids?!?)*

Little Brother: Thomas



Find the CASH REGISTERS

We have hidden cash registers on the pages of this newsletter.

How many can you find? *(Answer on page 9)*



TOPIC OF THE WEEK: Store & Saloon

Hello History Club Members!

We finally made it to the final issue of the Historic Times, and the last week in July 2020! Next week it's August, and soon school is going to be starting, at least in some form. I'm looking forward to going back to see my friends and favorite teachers. I've missed them!

I can say for sure that I've learned a lot over the summer about Centennial Village and local history. I've learned where the railroad stations are, the barber shops, schools, churches, and statues. The next time my family goes to Centennial Village, they told me I get to be the tour guide since I've studied the history of the buildings!

So far the opening of the Dacotah Prairie Museum has been going well and they're planning on adding more hours. Starting August 4th it will be open Tuesday through Friday from 1 to 5 pm, and in September they'll probably add even more. I'm so excited, it's one of my favorite places to go. Just remember, no matter where you go or what festival you might be in...or what store you're at....keep a distance between you and the other people and be sure to wear a mask! Thomas, my little brother, didn't want to wear one until Mom found one with....yes, you guessed it....Samurai guys on it! —Susie the Sleuth

Thank you for reading our history club newsletters. We hope you've enjoyed them! Keep sending in photos! This week is a special challenge!

IMAGINE: In all of the different towns we've learned about in Brown County, both the regular towns and the ghost towns, we've learned about different buildings or businesses. This week we will talk about two common businesses that were started in early towns. The first would be a store of some kind, and another would be a saloon. *(In case you never heard about one before, a saloon was a place that mostly men would go to get a drink of some kind, maybe something to eat and to find out information about what was happening. Sometimes they played cards or gambled. Usually, it wasn't a place for kids or ladies to go, but there were a few exceptions.)* As for the stores, what kinds of things do you think they had for sale? How might early prairie stores be different than today's stores? What things might still be the same? What is a dry goods store? Read about it on page 7!

2020: A Year We All Will Remember



You are living in historical times! Someday, someone may ask you what it was like...

Just like the people who lived 100 years ago during the big Spanish Flu outbreak, we will remember this last year for a very long time, even if some of us are pretty young. We've experienced school at home, not being able to find common things in stores, people worrying about getting sick, keeping a distance and wearing masks. These are all things we might not have seen in our lifetimes before 2020.

Hopefully some good things came out of it...like seeing your parents trying to help you with homework and sometimes even they had trou-

ble! (It can be a challenge and they'll remember that too!) We might have eaten at home more, had time to do things as a family and had time to relax while not running to five different places after school or at night. You can make your own list.

You might consider keeping a journal or a diary so you can look back and remember these times. Someday, someone younger than you may ask what it was like to be a kid in 2020! You will be an expert on that topic!

Take some pictures with your phone

or camera, make a scrapbook, write down some of the things that scared you, or some of the things that made you laugh and other memories.

Hopefully, some things you've learned through these newsletters will make it on the pages! That's the fun in learning about history, you can share stories with others.

This week's challenge is going to be a big one, so be sure to look at the challenge paper and send in your photos to:

dacotahprairiemuseum@gmail.com.

Then be watching our Facebook page as we share them.



Snack Idea:



Most people don't think twice about eating an orange, or banana, let alone a kiwi fruit, mango or coconut. Just about the time Aberdeen was started, a young lady by the name of Laura Ingalls lived in a small town of Desmet, Dakota Territory. She was invited to a Christmas party and one of the gifts she was given was an orange. **It was the only orange she had that year!**

It was so special that she only ate a small section and then took it home and shared it with her family. Can you imagine?

We are very lucky to have a wide variety of fruits to eat! (Fresh fruit can be shipped to stores more easily and quickly these days.)



INGREDIENTS: Mix together a bowl of "special" fruit, the kind that doesn't normally grow around here. Ideas: Oranges, Pineapple, Kiwi, Peaches, Bananas, etc.

Enjoy! Imagine having to wait a whole year for such a treat!



SHARE PHOTOS!



SHOW US WHAT YOU ARE LEARNING!

We'd love to hear from you!

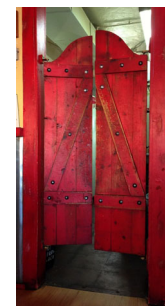
Are you enjoying History Club?

Send pictures of your history club adventures to our email address:

dacotahprairiemuseum@gmail.com

(NOTE: Photos may be posted on our web page or social media pages.)

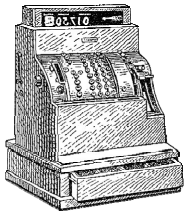
KIDS: Make sure to have your parents help & permission to send emails.



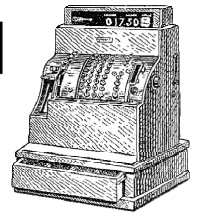
How do you walk through those swinging doors without getting hit?



Very carefully...



DRYGOODS STORE/SALOON



M B O V H O L B C C H A I R S
V A N V X Y N V R A M I B F L
F V U T C X U E G G N I K T B
B M A T E R I A L L O D E O E
S I S W C O U N T E R F Y Y W
J B D R I E D F O O D C D S H
P I P X I T X X T I N S C T I
T Q J I L B P H N J Z M B A S
B A R T E N D E R R G N E B K
P U I F A D M D T R F A E L E
T O O L S B A R R E L S R E Y
Q S H E L V E S O S H O E S J
W F B O X E S B O T T L E A B
D S P I T T O O N Z X C K G K
S M I R R O R S A L F L Q R H

dried food

counter

shoes

chair

table

bartender

candy

shelves

tins

toys

spittoon

material

boxes

tools

beer

mirrors

bottle

barrels

whiskey



CHECK YOUR ANSWERS on page 9





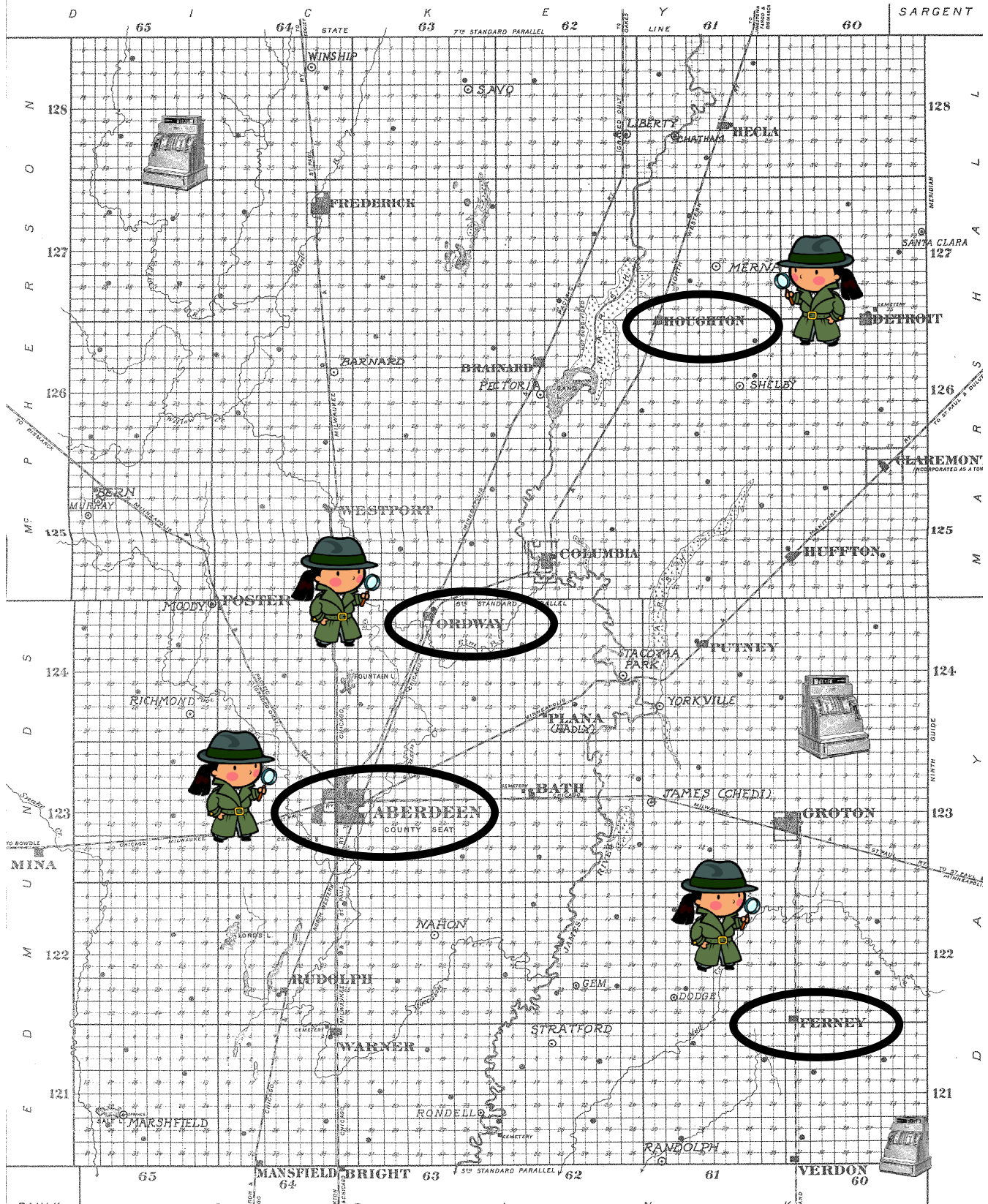
INVESTIGATE: Look at this really awesome old map of Brown County! I've marked the towns we are learning about this week: Ferney, Houghton & Ordway. I've also marked Aberdeen, where Centennial Village is located at the Brown County Fairgrounds. —Susan the Sleuth

BROWN CO.

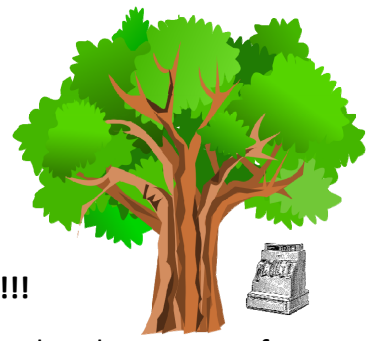
SOUTH DAKOTA.

BY W.P. BUTLER, MAP PUBLISHER, ABERDEEN, S.D.

- POST OFFICES
- CORPORATE LIMITS
- PLATTED TOWNS
- SCHOOLS (LIST NOT COMPLETE)



A BIG Challenge!



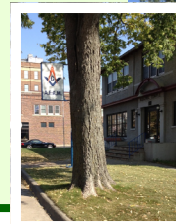
As mentioned earlier, this week's challenge is going to be big...and we mean BIG!!!

When Aberdeen was started back in 1881, the railroad came into town officially in July. There were a few people living here before that, in sod houses and tents. But one thing wasn't here...TREES! When you look out a window, when you drive around in a car, or when you ride your bike...you can be sure that every tree you see in town was planted after that date.

Many people have asked, what or where is the biggest tree in Aberdeen? This week, with your help, we're going to try to find it. Susan the Sleuth has already done some research and found three trees that are pretty big...but they may not be the biggest! They are:

#1 The tree in front of the **Masonic Hall, South Main Street & 5th Avenue...**

Susan found a picture of it right after it was planted in 1899!
There's only one original tree left.
When she and Thomas measured around the trunk, the circumference was about **104 inches**. That's big!



#2 This tree is on the **corner of South Washington Street & 3rd Avenue SE...**

It's even bigger around at **134 inches**! One of Thomas's friends, Brody, is standing next to it so you can see how big it is... or how small he is. (The tree has had a few more years to grow!)

#3 The biggest tree they found is on the **corner of North Main and 15th Avenue**. It is **145 inches** around! It would take at least 4 kids to put their arms around it!



Is that the biggest tree? Susan isn't sure, so she's asking for your help.

This Week's Challenge (& Scavenger Hunt):

Can you find a bigger tree? One that's more than 145 inches around the trunk?
If you can, take a picture of you with the tape measure and send it to the
Dacotah Prairie Museum along with it's location (or address).

Remember, though, to do this with your parents and don't go in someone's yard without their permission.
Trees on the boulevard (between the sidewalk and street) are ok because they're considered public.





A Visit to Centennial Village: Dacotah Prairie Dry Goods Store & Saloon

If you have been to History Camp over the last 20 plus years, you have been in the Saloon at Centennial Village. You've seen the tables, the bar area, and the refrigerators that keep the beverages and your sack lunches cold. You've played games inside, dipped candles, and written letters with a dip pen or a quill.

Back in the times when the towns were starting on the frontier, a saloon was a very different place.

THE SALOON: The founders of the Village wanted to be sure to have a saloon so they found a building on the south side of Leola in the fall of 1981 and moved it to Aberdeen. They wanted the Village saloon to be a place where all would be welcome, during the Brown County Fair or other times. It's a big, open building and if it's raining outside...a great place to continue camp.

Back in 1881....children did not go into the saloon, (now called a bar). It was a place for men to go to meet up and share stories, perhaps play cards or shoot some pool. Some even had a dart board. It was a place to drink, to gamble, to eat and sometimes, to get in trouble. Certain people would drink too much and then made some very poor choices. They would get in fights and the owner would either throw them outside to finish it in the street or call the police or sheriff and they would take the men to jail to "sleep it off". (Remember the story of the ghost town James.)

There have been times, during Brown County's history, that towns have voted to stop selling liquor...it was called going "dry" and Aberdeen and Groton did vote for that several times during the 1880's and 1890's. Then, in the 1920's the entire United States went "dry" under prohibition, but that didn't solve the problems they thought it would...of drinking too much, men not taking care of their families and people getting very sick from drinking bad alcohol. When some of the area towns stopped selling whiskey and beer, other towns like James would, and people would travel there and buy what they wanted.



Above: Saloon at Centennial Village

Below: Dry Goods Store at Centennial Village



We like to think of this building as more of a family place. But during the fair you still have to be 21 years old to buy the "hard" drinks. (They do sell water and pop for people who don't drink alcohol.) All of the money made during the fair goes towards keeping the Village open and operating the rest of the year, including repairing the buildings.

A Visit to Centennial Village: Store & Saloon (continued)

Dacotah Prairie Dry Goods Store:

Many people come in this exhibit and call it a General Store, but technically, it's a dry goods store. What's the difference? In a dry goods store you won't find anything liquid...they only sell things that are dry. No milk or cream, no soda pop or molasses, But you will find dried beans, peas, peanuts, candy, coffee grounds, material for clothing, shoes, equipment, things for your kitchen....bowls, pots and pans. The shelves are crowded (as you can see in the picture), because each store owner wanted to have the biggest selection so you would decide to shop there.



Photos Above, Left & Below:
Dacotah Prairie Dry Goods Store, Centennial Village



The building was the former Aberdeen Township Hall built in 1898. It was moved from the vicinity of the 1000 block of Sixth Avenue SW to the Brown County Fairgrounds in 1973 and later to Centennial Village in 1981. It was sponsored by the Brown County Historical Society and the Dacotah Prairie Museum and still is today.

Each year during the Fair, staff come out and open the doors so people can walk in and take a closer look at the artifacts (you can't touch, however). Sometimes, they also bring out old fashioned candy and have it for sale, usually on Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 1 pm until 6 pm. If you happen to be out any of those days during the Fair (but not Summer Fest), stop in and say hello and take a look at all the different things you can buy.

Below: General Store Exhibit at Dacotah Prairie Museum, 1970s



Family Road Trip Ideas: Ferney & Houghton, SD



FERNEY was platted on October 30, 1886, the same year as Verdon. Like Verdon, Ferney was named after a town in France in memory of the home of a railroad official's wife. The post office, which has always been in the general store, was commissioned on August 10, 1887 after the trains started running.

Ferney grew a bit slower than its neighbor to the south, but by the turn of the century had a bank, two barber shops, a dray line, a poolroom, a blacksmith shop, two contracting firms, a harness dealer, a hotel, a livery stable, a lumberyard, a meat market, a real estate office, a restaurant and two saloons.

Ferney was also known as a "liquor town" – the last place along with the town of James that closed during prohibition, and the first to open. When surrounding towns voted dry by local option, Ferney saloons did a thriving business. Because of this, the Ferney jail (which was still standing in 1980) was a busy place in the sum-



Top Photo: Postcard Photo of Ferney Main Street, ca. 1916
Above: Ferney, SD Birds Eye View

mer months when the transient harvest crews grew rowdy. The locals, however, stabilized this prairie town which has remained over the years.

By 1910 the population of Ferney was 200, but by 1915 it had dropped to 150. The 22 businesses of 1910 dropped to 13 in less than 10 years. By 1940 the bank was closed and only nine businesses were listed. Ferney decreased in size early, but in the 1980's it's population had stabilized at around 75. Two of the original four elevators still stood.

Family Road Trip Ideas: Ferney, Houghton (continued)

HOUGHTON was platted in 1886 when the Chicago and Northwestern rail line was built north. The post office was commissioned on October 25th of that year. However, before this, others had started a town one mile north of the site; Cyrus Spurr had brought blacksmith equipment from Minnesota and had started a shop in 1881. He had also built a creamery. This site was near a stage stop where an office-home had been built for the stage manager. At night a lantern hung on a tall pole to guide travelers. These early buildings were soon moved to the platted town, and Spurr opened the first general store and post office.



In 1889, when townships were established in Brown County, Houghton's Main Street became the dividing line between Lansing and Shelby.

Before long the town had a depot, hotel, drugstore, lumberyard, bank and doctor's office. In the 1920's there were nineteen businesses listed. Two churches were built as well as a large frame school.

In it's heyday, Houghton had some well known visitors and residents. **Ernie Pyle**, the famous reporter and author, visited relatives living one mile east of town. **Teddy Roosevelt** came by a special train, which was parked on a specially built siding, to hunt ducks at Sand Lake. **South Dakota Governor Ralph Herseth** lived a few miles west of town. The small Main Street park is named for him. **Stephanie Herseth Sandlin, former U.S. Representative for South Dakota** also grew up in this area.

Houghton's demise was hastened by the ease of modern travel, hard times and fire which destroyed buildings. By 1950 the population was down to 153 and in 1980 there were still two churches and four businesses listed.

(Unfortunately the museum's photo archive does not include photos of Houghton. Does anyone's family have photos they would like to donate?)



Photo: Ralph E. Herseth,
South Dakota Governor from
Jan. 1959 to Jan. 1961

From Page 3
Word Search Answer Key

M B O V H O L B C C H A I R S
V A N V X Y N V R A M I B L
F V U T C X U E G G N I K T B
B M A T F E R I A L O D E O F
S I S W C O U N T E R Y M
H J B O R I E D F O O D C D S
P I P X I T X X T I N S C T I
T O J I L B P H N J Z M B A S
B A R T F E N D E R R G N E B K
P U I F A D M D T R F A E L E
T O O L S I R A R E I S R E
Q S H E I V E S O S H O E S J
W F B O X E S B O T I L E A B
D S P I T T O O N Z X C K G K
S M I R R O R S A L F L O R H

SEARCH FOR Cash Registers PAGE 1
ANSWER: There are 19 hidden cash registers.

Thanks for Joining Our History Club!

Have a wonderful rest of the summer! —Your Friends at Dacotah Prairie Museum



Brown County Ghost Town of the Week

“Ordway”

Established: 1881

“Hmm...
Where did
it go?”



ORDWAY was founded in the summer of 1881 at the end of the Chicago Northwestern Railroad line. Named for territorial governor, Nehemiah G. Ordway, it was an early farm center with high hopes of being selected as the capital of Dakota Territory and home to the Methodist University.

The population increased rapidly, and soon this boom town boasted a general store, two hotels, a lumberyard, a lawyer, a physician and a druggist. Later, two grain elevators and a blacksmith shop were added. It's newspaper, The Ordway Times, was the first newspaper officially designated to print county records and procedures, notices of claims, proof of claims and sale of claims.

By 1883, the train line was extended to Columbia, robbing Ordway of its economic advantage. Bismarck had been named the territorial capital, and the Methodist University had been established in Mitchell. Although the town declined rapidly, impressions of this area were recorded in the writings of **Hamlin Garland**, whose father operated Ordway's general store and farmed near the town site.

Today, there are a few farms around the area, and one house is located along Brown County 14 at the town site, but it is better known as the location of Aberdeen's water treatment plant which is located just a little south of where the town once was.



Top Photo: Hamlin Garland House, Near Ordway, ca. 1915

Middle: Ordway Railroad Depot Building

Bottom: Ordway School, ca. 1910

Left: Ordway Elevators (Depot in Distance), ca. 1910

What is a Ghost Town?

No, it's not a town with ghosts!

A ghost town is a town that has had all (or almost all) of the people leave and move away.

It may or may not have buildings left.



Name _____

