

## Plan to attend the Annual Colony Picnic

As usual, this year's Penn Colony Picnic, our 96th consecutive outing, will be held on two days, **Saturday and Sunday, August 5th and 6th**. All of the activities will take place at the restored Henry Heim House and the adjacent museum/community building, affording those we've missed the last couple of years the opportunity to tour the facilities which now house many artifacts of days gone by. We think you will be impressed.

**Saturday's activities** will involve volunteers gathering at the museum at 10 a.m. to set up displays, visit with relatives, and ready the museum/community building for Sunday's picnic. Lunch will be available on site. The Colony Board of Directors will meet there at 1 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend. The afternoon will provide ample time for renewing old acquaintances and viewing the museum displays.

**Saturday evening** at 6 p.m., the newly traditional watermelon feed will take place on the lawn in front of the Henry Heim House. This will be a *community affair*—bring a guest or invite a friend. There are always friendly faces offering welcoming sticky handshakes available to greet them.

**Sunday morning**, the traditional worship and memorial services will be held at the museum at 11 a.m. The museum will open at 9:30 for socializing before the service, with coffee and rolls on the museum porch. The bounteous, catered picnic meal will be served at 12:30. The catered meal includes cake, and anyone who wishes may bring a favorite dessert to share. The afternoon will provide plenty of opportunities to catch up on family history, old and recent. Reservations for the picnic dinner, at \$10 a plate (\$5 for children 12 and under), can be made using the coupon printed elsewhere in the newsletter.

We'd love to see you! Let's keep the tradition going—please make a special effort to come!

**Saturday evening  
6 p.m.  
August 5**



**Watermelon  
Feed**

**This event is for the  
Dawson Community  
Bring guests!  
Invite friends!**

## Twenty years of progress! *Pennsylvania Colony Historical Society of Nebraska* by Daniel T. Pleiss, President

 Penn Colony started with the migration of 13 families from Pennsylvania to Nebraska over 140 years ago. Through the years, the families and their descendants have continued to meet, with the annual picnic continuing a tradition begun in 1914. To preserve the history of these families, the Pennsylvania Colony Historical Society of Nebraska was officially incorporated on August 1, 1997, as a Nebraska non-profit corporation. Below is a record of events occurring during the last 20 years.

- The Bob Williamson family wrote and published two books— *The Sweet Spring Still Flows*, a history of the Penn Colony, and *Fun in the Kitchen*, a cookbook. Proceeds from the sale of the publications were donated to the Penn Colony, providing financial seed to the Colony.
- Eighty members from across the country joined together in a migration to the home area of our ancestors in Blooming Grove, Pennsylvania, in 1998.
- During a search for a location for a museum, Lloyd and Donna Epley offered to sell a four-acre site of historical significance to the Colony, which includes the home of Henry and Regina Heim. (A major portion of the loan was later donated by the Epleys.)
- In 2005, an “adopt a room” project to remodel the 1870s farmhouse and return it to an early 20th century décor was funded by members. Joe and Michelle Heim led the project.
- The need for a larger facility became apparent, and with donations

of members, and a grant/loan agreement with the USDA Rural Development agency, a museum/community building was completed in 2014.

- In 2015, the Samuel F. Heim Memorial Prairie showcasing native plants was started.
- In 2015, a shipping container was purchased to provide additional storage space.
- Restoration of the barn was begun in 2016. *(Continued on page 4)*



### Darkness at noon!

In our spring issue, we touted our museum as a premier spot to watch the impending total eclipse of the sun on August 21. Dawson will be directly on line in the path of the eclipse, caused when the moon passes in front of the sun. The partial eclipse will begin at 11:38 a.m. and reach total eclipse at 1:04 p.m., lasting 2 minutes and 37 seconds. Viewers *must* bring special dark glasses to avoid permanent damage to their eyes while viewing the eclipse. **Ordinary sun glasses will not do!** Bottled water will be available. Lawn chairs would be a good idea.

On-site parking may be limited, and camping will *not* be permitted. See page 6 for lodging facilities available in Richardson County. Early booking is recommended.

—kmh

**THE COLONY PENN****EDITOR**

Keith Heim

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rvnkh4@gmail.com**DESIGN/PRODUCTION**

Shirley Heim Pierce

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**PENNSYLVANIA COLONY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF  
NEBRASKA**

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mheim1021@gmail.com

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402-855-4225—r\_mogle@bbwi.net

**WEBSITE**

www.penncolonynebraska.org

**MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES**Life \$1000; Patron \$50; Sustaining \$25;  
Family \$15; Individual \$10**To join or renew, send check to:**

Charol Pleiss

14721 Laurel Plaza, Omaha, NE 68116

charol@pleiss.omhcoxmail.com

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provider and employer.****Charol and Dan Pleiss**

## President's Letter

April showers bring May flowers. Water is the necessity of life. Nice sayings, but when it comes when it is not expected, it is not nice.

Over the winter, somehow, the heat was shut off in the Henry Heim House—may have lost power during a cold spell. At the same time, there were some problems with the well. You guessed it; when the well was repaired and the water flowed there were problems. There was water damage to the wainscoting on the walls in the bathroom.

Joe Heim and I tore off all of the wainscoting and started the clean-up process. Joe and I have checked on the house several times and it looks like things are drying out pretty good. Will let it dry out some more before replacing the wainscoting.

When the rural water hook-up is completed, there will be no water service in the house—this latest water problem was the second one and there is no need to tempt fate for a third time. The museum/community building has all of the necessary “facilities.” The bathroom will be restored—just will not be functional. The estimated repair costs are between \$2,500 and \$3,000.

As I outlined in a separate article/letter, the Penn Colony has several ambitious plans. The water damage repair was not one of them. This problem will put a dent in the other restoration project budgets. As a reminder, please keep the Penn Colony in your charitable gifting plans.

On a brighter note, remember the 2017 Total Solar Eclipse. The Penn Colony site will be open for your solar viewing. Our location is a prime site for this event.

Thanks to all for your support.

—Dan Pleiss

## DONATIONS

The following funds have been received since the last issue of the newsletter was published. Donations received after May 30, 2017, will be reported in the next newsletter. If you would prefer your donation to be listed anonymously or be unpublished, please indicate your preference.

Thanks to all who contribute in any way to support the Pennsylvania Colony.

**Donations:**

Brian & Claudia Robertson, \$350, in memory of  
Carolee Heim

Brian & Claudia Robertson, \$50, in memory of  
Pauline Iliff

Doug & Judy Heim, \$250, in loving memory of  
Lloyd Heim on his 100th birthday

Ron Blevins, \$75, in memory of Emily Blevins

Louise O'Donnell, \$25, in honor of Jacqueline  
Stratton O'Donnell, age 93

Margaret Kruesi, \$75, in memory of Genevieve  
Ulmer Young, who provided a place for  
Margaret to stay when her mother Gretchen  
was in the nursing home in Humboldt

Greater Horizons, \$50, matching Wayne Young's  
donation to the Penn Colony

Bank of America, \$500, volunteer grant for  
volunteer hours of Shirley Pierce

Anonymous, \$50, for the barn restoration fund  
Heim Cemetery Association, \$2,000

Bob & Mary Bohlken, \$75

John Hickey, \$100

Shirley Pierce, \$500

**Note regarding donations:** We strive for accuracy as we compile our list of donors. If you note an error or omission, please bring it to our attention. Send comments or corrections to Charol Pleiss, 14721 Laurel Plaza, Omaha, NE 68116.

## MEMBERSHIPS

These are the memberships in the Pennsylvania Colony Historical Society that were received since the last newsletter. Memberships received after May 30, 2017, will be published at a later date.

**Patron Members:** Doug Brown and Gail  
Korell, Phyllis Luebs, Brian and Claudia  
Robertson

**Sustaining Members:** Ronald Blevins,  
Janice Whitney

**Family Members:** Neil and Margaret  
Thacker

## Thanks!

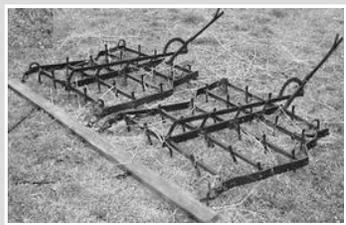
Virgin prairie needs to be burned off each spring, but this can be very dangerous if it gets out of hand, perhaps caused by a shift in the wind direction.

As they did a year ago, members of the Dawson Fire Department came out March 17 with their equipment to insure the safety of the burning of the Samuel F. Heim Prairie east of the museum. We very much appreciate their help.

Thanks also to Joe Heim, who brought the matches.

## Runaways, a constant danger

by John M. Heim



Paul Heim's harrow might have looked like this

A runaway is a horseman's worst nightmare. Horses get scared and run. My dad (Ron Heim) used to say that he and his father (Paul W. Heim) didn't like horses and were glad to switch over to tractors.

Grandpa Paul was badly hurt in a couple of runaways. There was a runaway with a loaded wagon coming back from town, and he was hurt when it wrecked at the cemetery. He also was seriously hurt when the horses ran away, dragging him under the sharp spikes of a harrow. He spent some time at the VA hospital in Lincoln.

They didn't like their first tractor much either. It was a 1929 Fordson and Dad said that they would just get going on some job and it would blow a head gasket, but it was better than using horses!

Dad was called back to the farm from the University of Nebraska in 1942. His dad had bought a B John Deere tractor (the same one we now use to pull the Penn Colony float at the county fair), and Ron began farming. They mounted a buck saw on the front and paid off the tractor by cutting and selling firewood. My brother Paul says he never got on that tractor that he didn't think about Grandpa under that same harrow with a team. One of my dad's favorite expressions when he was asked, "How are you doing?" was "If I was any better, I'd be a runaway." Everybody would laugh and I'd say, "Huh?"

## Mystery solved/unsolved

In last summer's issue of *The Colony Penn* we carried six photos sent to us by Barbara Ely Fullmer of local houses taken many years ago. We asked readers to identify them. Samuel and Elizabeth Heim's house (#5) was easily identified, and a reader confidently identified #7 as that of Ida Heim's residence, which still stands across the street from the schoolhouse. However, one of Ida's grandsons expressed doubts about that finding, and your editor recently compared the photo with the house on site. A number of the features in the photo did not match Ida's house, so we can be sure the photo is of another house, which most likely is no longer in existence.

## Dawson hits nationwide headlines

Well, not really—we made the syndicated funny papers.

Along about 1940, Robert Ripley's "Believe It Or Not" cartoon featured the Dawson's local druggist: "E. A. Kemist is a chemist in Dawson, Nebraska." Ripley's "oddmments" were widely read from coast to coast, and "Believe it or not" made its way into the language.—**kmh**

## Late breaking news!!

The Penn Colony Historical Society was recently awarded \$2,000 leveraged with \$3784 from the Historical Society to connect the Henry Heim House to the Richardson Rural Water District for potable water. The Historical Society also received \$5,100 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, leveraged with \$9,500 from the Historical Society, to renovate the original barn on the community museum site.

The Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program provides funding in eligible rural areas for community service facilities. Funding for clean and reliable drinking water systems is provided through the Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program.

These badly needed and welcome grants don't just happen. They are the result of the hard work of our president, Dan Pleiss, who spends long hours of his "spare" time researching grants that are available, and writing and submitting them. Often, extensive travel and personal expense on his part are involved. Many thanks, Dan, and a kudo too to his unpaid secretary, Charol! —**kmh**

[Grant information provided by *The Humboldt Standard*.]

## Resplendently turned out

The postcard photo of the Dawson Concert Band (right), which dates from about 1915, was sent to us recently by cousins Mark and Lorraine Roller of far off Montoursville, Pennsylvania. Note the spiffy new uniforms!

Unfortunately, we are able to positively identify only two of the members: Grocer John G. Smith beams proudly from the left end of the back row, and clarinetist Emerson Heim looks on solemnly from the other end of that row. Possibly the third man from the left of the back row is Reuben Ulmer, and third from the right may be Walter (or Norman) Ulmer.

Photos of the band have appeared previously in *The Colony Penn*, issues 12, 18, 19, and 46. Let us know if you can supply other identities.

—**kmh**



## The death of Samuel F. Heim by Keith M. Heim

*Samuel F. Heim, 1859-1946, was the second son of Jacob G. and Regina Gross Heim. He emigrated from Pennsylvania with the family in 1874. For another biographical article, see The Colony Penn, #50, April 2015.*

My grandfather, Samuel F. Heim, was a remarkable man. If I could resurrect one person from the past to talk with, probably Abraham Lincoln would top the list, but grandpa would be near the top. I grew up only about a hundred yards from his home and talked to him almost daily, but I could wish for more.

As I recall, my grandpa had a cyst, not sure where, and went to see Dr. Harlan Heim in Humboldt and had it removed. Harlan wanted him to stay overnight in the hospital, but to old people of that generation hospitals meant death, and he refused to stay. He was a strong-willed man, and he finally persuaded Harlan to let him go home on the promise that he would go right to bed. He was 86 years old.

Instead of going to bed as promised, he went out and cut down 11 walnut trees that same afternoon! That's my recollection, but that's a lot of trees for anybody, and he didn't have a chain saw! He stayed out in the cold all afternoon and worked hard when he was supposed to be in bed. As a result, he had a relapse and went to bed.



**Samuel F. & Elizabeth Heim  
50th Wedding Anniversary  
February 14, 1939**

Years ago, someone had broken the window by his bed, and he had fixed it by sewing buttons together on each side of the pane at the point of impact to hold the pieces of glass in place—often done in those days. But this let the cold in, and he caught pneumonia and had to be taken back to Humboldt to the hospital. He was there more than a week, as I recall, and finally died the morning of January 8, 1946. I remember my dad telling me that as I came down the stairs to breakfast. Harlan said he died because he suddenly developed a distaste for tobacco, possibly because of the medication. He had chewed since he was 11. His heart depended on the stimulation, and he died of heart failure. I used to think he would outlive me—he was active and spry right up to the final illness, and his mind was sharp as a tack. A remarkable man!

My dad's account of his death, which appears on page 130 of *Westward Bound*, does not mention the walnut trees, and I suspect that my account of grandpa's death came from Aunt Adah James, who lived with him at the time.

## A Pox on the Hex

Our article in the last issue on the restoration of the old barn evoked a suggestion that we decorate it with an original hex sign designed by the winner of a competition to be held among our members. Hex signs, which adorn many barns built by German pioneers in Pennsylvania, notably the Amish, are both interesting and attractive. It seemed like a good idea until someone questioned whether our Dunkard ancestors in Pennsylvania and here in Nebraska used them. Although Norman Ulmer's barn had some sort of a design painted on it, it is questionable whether it was actually a hex sign, (which characteristically had six points, hence the corruption of the German word for six, "sechs,") and none of our older members can remember seeing one anywhere.

We contacted our cousin at Blooming Grove, Rev. Larry Waltz, president of the Blooming Grove Historical Society, who replied, "I have no understanding that the Lycoming Dunkards ever placed hex signs on barns. In addition, I suspect that they refused flamboyancy here, given their modest understanding of Christian lifestyle and worship decorum. Further, they were not Anabaptists, like Mennonites and Amish; they were Pietists in the same track as Moravians, to name one cohort."

So, since hex signs, not to be confused with the current "barn quilt" fad, however quaint and eye-catching, are not authentic as relating to the Penn Colony, we have decided to forego them.

Rev. Waltz graciously appended a copy of an extensive, scholarly essay he has written on the Dunkards which will appear in this year's *Journal of The Blooming Grove Historical Society*. This publication is always filled with interesting information on Blooming Grove and our Pennsylvania ancestors and cousins. It comes with a membership in that Society. (Write to Blooming Grove Historical Society, P.O. Box 105, Cogan Station, PA 17728.) We share a common heritage, and they deserve our support!

—kmh

## Twenty years *(Continued from page 1)*

The following projects are underway, or planned for the future:

- Restoration of the second floor of the Henry Heim House
- Hook-up to the Richardson County Rural water system
- Completion of the interior of the barn
- Repairs due to a water leak in the Henry Heim House

A major project to be considered is an addition to the community/museum building to allow for larger group meetings and the display of more artifacts.

The generous support of many has allowed the Penn Colony to progress to where we are today. We are now serving not only the Penn Colony "family," but the Dawson Community! We need funds for our projects, and there are many ways you can help. Cash is still a favored method. Alternatives are securities, retirement assets, and life insurance proceeds. More sophisticated methods are the various charitable gift trusts and annuities. There are income tax benefits and limitations to the various types of charitable gifts. As you contemplate such charitable giving, please consult with your tax professional regarding the related income tax issues. If I can be of any assistance in this process, please contact me. See page 2 for contact information.



## Water hookup completed

Due to high nitrate levels, water available for drinking at the museum was deemed unsafe. Accordingly, the museum is now supplied with fresh, pure water via a hookup with the rural water district. A pipe was laid across the fields from the road on the north side of the property, and water is purchased through payment of a monthly fee. One-time installation costs amounted to \$4,500. A cool, pure drink of water at the museum on a hot day will be welcome, as will a donation toward covering the costs!

# Colony cameo

## Glenn O. Hayward A lifetime of service

Glenn Hayward, whose lineage dates back through the Eckard, Kerr, Burr, Gross, and Kiess families, was born on a farm near Humboldt on October 21, 1928. He attended country school through the eighth grade and rode a bike three miles daily to high school in Humboldt, where he graduated in 1946.

Hayward's agricultural background stood him in good stead in his studies at the University of Nebraska, where he graduated from the Ag Campus with a teaching certificate in 1950. He taught vocational agriculture at Lewiston, Nebraska, before being called to active duty with the Marine Corps.

On July 20, 1952, he married Dalphyne June Koskan and shortly thereafter, they moved to Holbrook, Nebraska, where he taught Vocational Ag and June taught Home Economics. After a year, they moved back to the family farm at Humboldt, later moving to his mother's farm, the Burr farm, northwest of Dawson, where they continue to reside.

In 1962, he accepted the position of farm manager for the Home State Bank in Humboldt, returning to full-time farming in 1968. He has also served as a county assessor and is an active member of the Richardson County Ag Society. He is a founding member of the Humboldt Community Foundation and has served in a number of positions at Faith Lutheran Church.

The Haywards, who recently celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary, are the parents of four children: Jerry (Susan) Hayward of Baltimore, Dennis (Kathryn) Hayward of Raymond, Nebraska, Glenda (David) Hedlund of St. James, Minnesota, and Lorrie (Mark) Novak, who live on the Belden homestead near Dawson. They have seven grandchildren.

In recognition of a lifetime of service to the community, Glenn was crowned King of the annual Richardson County Fair at Humboldt last September.

## Memorial service honors Genevieve

We were all saddened by the passing of Genevieve Ulmer Young, 94, last November 15. Hers was a long life of service to family and community, and a memorial service is planned for the community museum Friday evening, August 4, (the evening before the picnic) from 4 to 8 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. A number of her family and friends who were unable to attend the funeral because of the short notice will have an opportunity to visit with the family and remember Genevieve. All are welcome!

## A follow-up story

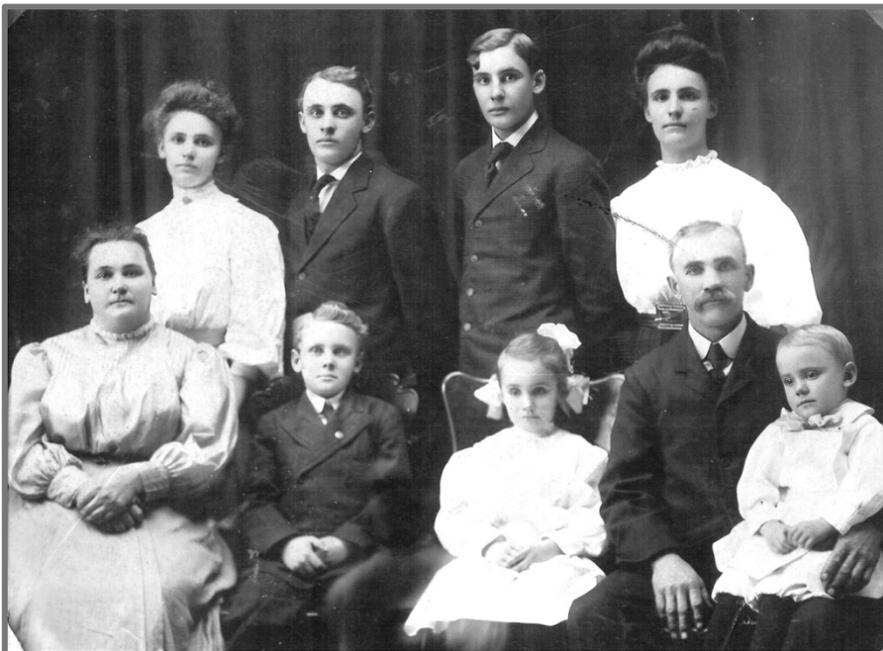
In the April 2017 issue we continued our stories of the military experiences of family members, reporting the deaths of two of our cousins in the European theater.

The families left behind are also a part of this history. S/Sgt. Donald C. Belden [Joseph G. Heim family], who died January 4, 1944, after a bombing raid on a German city, left behind his wife and small daughter. His wife, Ruth Jean Hendricks (now Schulze) was also from Dawson. She is currently living in Falls City, and will be celebrating her 100th birthday in November! Daughter Martha Carmichael lives in Colorado.

Older cousins will remember Ruth Jean's mother, Gladys Buser Hendricks, who was a good musician. She passed this talent on to Ruth Jean and her sisters Eula, Dorothy, and Betty, who often sang as a quartet.



Ruth Jean (Hendricks),  
S/Sgt. Donald C. Belden,  
and daughter Martha.



## HENRY HEIM FAMILY

Old photos capture moments of family history for their descendants. This photo, taken about 1905, evokes the pride and happiness of a bygone era.

Front: Regina D. (1865), Harlan S. (1897), Jessie Florence (1900), Henry W. (1860), John C. (1904).

Back: Martha Alma (1889), Charles A. (1888), Paul Wesley (1892), Lotta Malinda (1886)

The Penn Colony Museum/Henry Heim House was home to this family (their birthdates are shown).

The family, their descendants, and others who have lived in the home are frequently mentioned in this newsletter. Paul is mentioned in the "Runaways" story, page 3. The home and grounds that make up the Penn Colony Museum is the site for our annual reunion and picnic

**Photo credits:** Page 1: Shirley Pierce (flag). Page 2: Linda Knudsen (Pleisses). Page 3: Mark & Lorraine Roller (band). Page 4: Keith Heim. Page 5: Martha Carmichael (Belden); Claudia Robertson (Heim family). Page 6: Ruth Brown.



## FYI — Lodging facilities in Richardson County

### MOTELS:

**VISION INN**  
N. Harlan Street  
Falls City, NE  
(402) 245-2459

**CHECK-IN MOTEL**  
N. Hwy 73  
Falls City, NE  
(402) 245-2433

### BED & BREAKFAST:

**GANDY HOUSE**  
715 5th Street  
Humboldt, NE  
(402) 862-3278

### HOTEL:

**GRAND WEAVER HOTEL**  
1800 Stone St.  
Falls City, NE 68355  
(402) 245-2448

[penncolonynebraska.org](http://penncolonynebraska.org)

*Lodging information (right)  
provided by the Richardson  
County Visitors Committee.*

### CAMPING:

**STANTON LAKE**  
West 25th Street  
Falls City, NE  
(402) 245-2851

**KIRKMAN COVE**  
(Nemaha NRD park permit  
required)  
Humboldt, NE  
(402) 335-3325

**HUMBOLDT CITY LAKE  
PARK**  
Humboldt, NE  
(402) 862-2171

**INDIAN CAVE STATE  
PARK/VERDON LAKE**  
65296 720 Rd.  
Shubert, NE 68437  
(402) 883-2575

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## Eighty years ago — Pennsylvania Colony Picnic — 1937

