



THE HERITAGE JOURNAL

Dell Rapids Society for Historic Preservation Fall 2025 Newsletter

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Greetings!

In conjunction with the Dell Rapids Chamber of Commerce, the Dell Rapids Museum had a ribbon cutting and rededication ceremony on May 30, 2025. The event included the ribbon cutting ceremony, as well as a few remarks from Board President, Rhonda Schildhauer. Schildhauer thanked the many contractors and volunteers for their work on the museum updates, including a renovated kitchen, new lighting, improved basement access, and wall repairs. Schildhauer also gave special thanks to the Board of Directors for their ideas, time and energy spent on the museum over the last two years. After the ribbon cutting, those in attendance went inside the museum for hors d'oeuvres and drinks. Local musician, Jeff Schwebach (Cartwright Brothers), thoroughly entertained the crowd with music and stories of growing up in Dell Rapids. The ribbon cutting attendees stayed throughout the entire evening with many complimenting board members on the improvements as well as the food and entertainment provided for the evening.

Mailing Address: PO Box 143
Dell Rapids SD 57022

Location: 407 E 4th St., Dell Rapids, SD

Phone: (605)428-4821

Website: dellrapidsmuseum.org

Email: dellrapidsmuseum@goldenwest.net

Board Meetings: Noon, 2nd Tuesday of
each month, Dell Rapids Museum

Summer Hours (mid-May to mid-Sept):
Open Tues-Fri 1-4/Sat 10-2
or by appointment by calling Rhonda @
(605)351-3831 or Kim @ (307)699-4755

So far 2025 has been memorable; we can't wait to see what autumn and winter have in store for the museum!



Forgotten Treasure Found!

When cleaning out the office for last spring's remodel, Brenda Risty discovered a cache of cassettes and CDs buried in a desk drawer. Linsey Duffy took them home and tracked down a CD/cassette player to find out what was on them. Lo and behold, they contained interviews with early Dell Rapids settlers, made mainly in the 1970s when the subjects were in their final years. What an amazing glimpse into the past—sledding the iced street from the top of Beto's Hill (7th and Clark) to Orleans Ave. and, if everyone leaned at just the right time, turning the corner and coasting to the depot on 3rd St.; living on the prairie before there were roads or trees and hearing the train whistle in town 5 miles away; paying a dime to see sideshows at the very first Cootie Days; driving the plow behind a team of horses at age 8; ironing sheets in the Dieson's dining room for Red Cross WWI shipments—priceless, colorful details almost lost to history.



To bring these recordings to our patrons, Voices of the Past cards and audio boxes have been added throughout the museum. The cards have stories from the interviews and the boxes (created by Darren Duffy) have push buttons to play snippets from the actual recordings.

The most rewarding moment of this whole discovery was when family members of an interviewed pioneer came into the museum and found out that they could hear their grandfather's voice again. A true treasure indeed!

Interview subjects include: Anna M. Keefer Bowen--1903-1994, Anne Maher Dieson—1894-1984, Harry Dieson—1887-1979, Ida Bricker (Mrs. Leo) Hansen—1893-1981, Gladys Clarabelle Ingalls Hines—1897-1982, Alvin Lyng—1903-2008 (wife Mary included in some questions), Dave Nelson—1894-1979, Walter Nelson—b. 1892, Pearl Dallison Olson, Marius Sorensen—b. 1889



Remember the Saturday morning commercials for Rock'em Sock'em Robots? Thank you, Dick Lorenz, for this fun addition to our collection.

A huge thanks to the following donors and their families for sharing their Dell Rapids' memorabilia and historic items with us this year. Your contributions keep our exhibits fresh and history alive!

Dan & Cathy Richardson
Jeannine Hoffman
Mary Burbank
Adrian Krogstad
Mary Hanson
Dick & Mary Lorenz
Mary Bangasser
Ron Weillbig
Nancy Brehm
Ann Forsch Timmons
Allen Brown
Deb O'Brien

/re vamp/: to give new and improved structure and appearance



The Museum was closed from October to May (with the exception of a few special events like Downtown Trick or Treat and the Christmas in the Dells Festival), but that did not mean it wasn't a busy place! Under the leadership of Joe Bower from Bower Construction and help from Dells Electric and Adam Jones Plumbing, we completed a full kitchen remodel! The Board looks forward to the Museum being more available to the

public both during our open season as well as "off-season" by making it an option for the community to rent the space. Our inviting rental agreement recognizes the unique and valuable nature of our building and its collection.

A copy of the rental agreement can be picked up at the Museum, or by calling Kim at (307)699-4755. Keep us in mind as you schedule special events!

The museum welcomed its first formal rental when the Dell Rapids St. Mary's Class of 1975 held their class reunion in June!



The Museum couldn't thrive without your help—thanks to these donors for giving us an extra financial boost this year:

Evelyn Huntimer	Darlene Schnieders
Connie Hove	Ada Jorgensen IMO Allan Daugaard
Dan Ahlers	Mike and Jeannine Park
Jack and Alice Majeres	Dan and Bette Huss
Lewis Drug	Dennis and Joyce Holles
Steve and Virginia McFarland	Paul and Karen Van Buren
Lions Club	Greg and Jeanne Ammon
Schwebach Realty	Fred Dieken
Schwebach Insurance Agency	Dan Weinacht
First National Bank	Dennis and Linda
Modern Woodman	Daugaard
Mary Chilton DAR Foundation	Delores Shefte
Dell Rapids Lumber	Merry Ann Sauls
BX	Scott and Wendy Nelson
Rasmussen Properties	Matt and Tracey Herber
Dells Electric	Minnehaha Funeral Home
Lisa Scott IMO Merle Alberts & Denny Van Dam	Mark and Jennifer Kahler
Dells Auto	Tom and Connie Early
Harrington Chiropractic	Kevin and Darla Stordahl
Kahler-Brende Funeral Home	Robert Everist
American Legion Post 65	Doug and Christie Hainje
Midwest Fresh Logistics	Carol Foster
Darlene Schnieders	Terry Culhane
Ada Jorgensen IMO Allan Daugaard	Dale Nighbert
Mike and Jeannine Park	Ray Pederson
	Alan and Patti Nickles

THE END OF AN ERA— THANK YOU, IRENE!

For 25 years, Irene Strong was the creative spirit behind the Museum's wonderful window displays, historic exhibits, and memorable Christmas Festival (including everyone's favorite—Christmas Tea). She is stepping back this year for a well-deserved rest and we wish her much happiness and success in her next endeavors! Irene, you are welcome back anytime!



MUSEUM 2025 CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

Saturday, December 6th will be filled with family-friendly activities like children's crafts, a visit from Santa, and a vintage photo backdrop for taking family holiday selfies. We are consolidating raffle prizes into fewer but bigger packages this year, thus keeping our beautiful historical displays open for viewing. Be sure to check out the Velotric E-bike being raffled, silent auction items, themed raffle packages, and special holiday items in the gift store.

On Sunday, December 7th from 4-6 p.m. the celebration shifts to a grown-up event. Enjoy delectable appetizers and refreshments while listening to popular local musician, Todd Casilli. When asked what kind of show he does, Todd replied, "Playing Live Music with a 'No Suck Guarantee.'" With a setlist full of crowd-pleasing classics, unexpected gems, and sing-along anthems, he brings the party with him! The night will end with drawings for our raffle items and the closing of silent auction bids.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS! UPCOMING MUSEUM EVENTS:

- Sunday, September 7, 2:00 p.m.—Author Candace Van Dam will present a talk entitled "Women Tamed the Frontier"—free to the public
- Friday, October 31—Downtown Trick-or-Treat Night for kids followed by GypsyWitch Paranormal reading and presentation for adults at 8:00 (keep an eye on Facebook for ticket information)
- Saturday and Sunday, December 6-7—Christmas in the Dells and Museum Christmas Festival

MEMBERSHIP 2026

We appreciate your annual donation through membership renewal, memorials, and gifts. Your donations support museum events and programs, help us preserve historic objects, and assist us in curating new exhibits throughout the year.

Dues for individual memberships are \$15.00 per person and \$25.00 per family.
Senior Citizens (60+) are \$10.00.

Future newsletters and event announcements will be sent to the e-mail address you provide. If you need a physical copy of the newsletter to be mailed to you, please indicate that on your membership form. Also, you can check out our Facebook page for up-to-date information.

Memberships paid after November 1st are valid through December 2026!

To join or renew membership, mail completed form and payment to:

Dell Rapids Museum – PO Box 143, Dell Rapids SD 57022.

Date _____

Name/s _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email* _____

New Renewing Gift

Senior (60+) \$10 Individual \$15 Family \$25

****Please include your email to receive future newsletters.***

Memberships received after November 1, 2025 are valid until December 31, 2026.