

The Kaleva Historical Society Newsletter

May, 2019

[Http://www.kalevami.com](http://www.kalevami.com)

Greetings from the Kaleva Historical Society

Letter from the President —

Dear members of the Kaleva Historical Society,

This year is the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Kaleva Historical Society!

In a letter to the Michigan Historical Commission dated August 14, 1969, Eva Densmore, president, quotes article two of the articles of incorporation summarizing the purpose of the museum:

To perpetuate the memory and spirit of the men and women whose sacrifices and unselfish service to their fellow men and the community nourished the development of the Village of Kaleva and the surrounding area.

To encourage historical research into the earliest records of Kaleva, and to encourage the publication of records of individual service and matters of historic interest.

To secure and hallow historic spots by erecting monuments thereon, and to cherish and preserve the history of Kaleva as achieved and established by the original settlers and founders.

To collect and suitably store and preserve data, material and objects having historical significance so that they shall be best available for public inspection and instruction and for the benefit of the community.

If you have visited the Bottle House Museum during its 50 year history I think you would find that the intent of the founders has been realized. More than 500 visitors each summer come into the museum and find the displays and items of such interest that they spend quite a bit of time there.



Photo above shows Aura Street looking toward the business district!

Many more stop by to photograph the artistic display of bottles that make up the exterior of the home. We are proud that we have been able to sustain the original founders vision. Please watch for further news about our 50th year celebration

Sincerely,

Cindy Asiala, President; Deanna Drazee, vice president; Ruth Asiala, secretary; Sandra Asiala, treasurer; Laura Dorn, Doreen Yonkman, Dennis Risser, trustees.

Bottle House Museum Hours:

Memorial Day — Labor Day

Sat & Sun : Noon—4pm

September — October

Saturday only : Noon— 4pm

Depot Museum:

Memorial Day — Labor Day

Saturday only : Noon— 4pm

How did the Kaleva Historical Society begin?

The following was found in the archives: "Since 1969 when the Kaleva Historical Society was chartered, great strides have been made in reaching their goals. ..For eleven years (its) the museum was ensconced in two rooms of the community building (formerly the Dorn School). Because more and more articles were donated by interested people, conditions became overcrowded, thus making the Society aware of the urgent need for a new building...."

The article goes on to tell how in 1979 the board found out the John J. Mäkinen Bottle House was up for sale. A community fund-raising drive was begun and the house was purchased the next year. There are 92 persons listed as charter members, a veritable who's who of Finnish descent. We know of only two, Virginia Beldo and Ken Kuuttila, who are still with us.

We are fortunate in that the house constructed of 60,000 bottles draws people to Kaleva and to the museum. We are also grateful for dedicated past board members like Lempi Ahlskog, Harold and Velma Bigelow, M.A. and Doris Gustafson, Matt Hakala, Robert Grant, Martha Lehto, Jack Luhtanen, Doreen Harju, Liivi Wiittala, and Brian Smith. We also thank the many community members that saw the need for the Kaleva Historical Society and supported the purchase of the Bottle House. Finally, we thank the current members who faithfully contribute each year so the famous Bottle House Museum is able to continue to carry out the purpose for which it was started 50 years ago. We hope you can stop by during this 50th year celebration!!

Kaleva Historical Society Milestones:

KHS established at former Dorn school 1969



KHS purchases Mäkinen Bottle House 1980



Kaleva Depot Restored 1998



Log Cabin Music Theater established. 2000



Centennial Sculpture Walkway established 2000



Kaleva Beautification Team established 2010



Mäkinen Tackle Room established 2008



New village entrance signs 2013



Authentic Finnish Sauna built 2018



