

KALEVA HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Dear Kaleva Historical Society members,

This year I have asked members of the board to share a few words about their experience in the Historical Society. As far as my perspective as president, 2023 was another successful year. The highlight was getting new windows installed at the Bottle House. They were custom made by North View, a father and



son company from nearby. The old windows were painted shut, so we never could have fresh air circulating in the museum. The new ones are easy to open, energy efficient and are purposely designed to look like the old ones. We were also able to check the electrical system and made sure all wiring and connections are safe. The funds to pay for these improvements come from an anonymous donor, as we could not do projects like that from regular dues and donations. However, we do count on you, the members, to contribute to the regular expenses of maintaining the museum and other activities of the Historical Society, the Depot Museum, the Log Cabin theater and the Kaleva Beautification Team. Thank you for your continued support. President, Cynthia Asiala

Margaret Johnson-I am one of many members of the KHS. We do a lot at the Bottle House Museum to keep it running smoothly.

We just finished some cleaning and putting away Christmas decorations. I especially enjoy Halloween and Christmas. We decorate for both holidays quite extensively. We enjoy having kids and families come through giving them a glimpse of the museum artifacts. Christmas was fun and interesting: Santa was there one Saturday, Taste of Finland with all Finnish foods, drew in many people. I also enjoy working with Pam Bagley setting up displays and decorating.

Mike Bagley,
archivist-This winter I've been doing the inventory at the Bottle House Museum, starting in the basement and working my way to the main floor. Some of items I've come across put into perspective the hard life and pleasures the early settlers experienced! Keep in mind Kaleva's history started in 1900. I came across an iron powered by gasoline. The women liked them better because they heated up and cooled off faster than ones heated on the stove. Another interesting item is a wind-powered generator, connected to a car battery. It is four feet high and mounted to the house roof, it powered all the house lights in 1923! There are all kinds of lumbering tools from a dynamite shovel to a peavey pole. The latter used for breaking up log jams in the river.



In the kitchen I found a tool called a "beater" made from a tree root with tentacles on the end. It was powered by moving it back and forth with your palms! In the tackle room I found a map with all the hot fishing spots in our area in 1921! In the section honoring

our military men and women I read an article about an 18 year Kaleva man who was killed in World War II. He jumped on a disabled tank and manning the machine gun he held off the Germans so a wounded soldier was saved. On a lighter note I came across an old moonshine jug with a label that read: "the order of the temple of the expanding mind." Not knowing the story behind it I'd guess some old boys at deer camp made it up! Next time you visit the Bottle House look for more of these artifacts, you might even meet Mike there!

Pam Bagley-The Bottle House Museum is a pure diamond in our town of Kaleva. It's full of a rich history of the Finnish culture and the people that lived here. For the 2023 season I started putting together displays to tell the story of Kaleva and to give a glimpse of the Finnish history and traditions we still celebrate today. For example we brought an old sled up from the basement and decorated it for the winter season. There was also a display of the winter solstice cemetery lighting.

My favorite room in the Bottle House is the kitchen. It's bright and cozy and has vintage 1950's vibes. It's also full of dishes and unique utensils. For example we have a drawer full of antique cookie cutters. I will use those and several cookbooks for a display this season. Another display will be of unusual tools and other interesting items from the basement. It will be a puzzle of "odd, unusual tools/what is this used for?" display. The 2024 season will be here soon and I'm looking forward to creating fun and informative displays about Kaleva, the people, and the Bottle House.

Rebecca Kendall-Christmas at the Bottle House is one of my favorite times of the year. Just to be at this amazing museum, built out of 60,000 bottles



by John Makinen from his bottling factory is mind blowing! At Christmas volunteers decorate the museum in the Finnish tradition. We hang the beautiful Finnish heaven, decorate the tree, put antique gifts under the tree, and set up other seasonal displays. We play Christmas music to fill the air and the hearts of all ages. In fact, it is such a magical time that even Joulupukki (Santa Claus) comes to visit. He hands out candy with a small gift to all the children and reminds them to be kind to everyone. He never leaves without a deep belly, "ho, ho, ho" and a cup of hot cocoa in one hand and a cookie in the other. So, when you are in Kaleva, please stop by the museum- we would love to have you. Hyvaa Joulua!

2023 Luminaries.

For the past twenty-five years the historical society



has sponsored the lighting of the cemetery on December 21, the Winter Solstice. This is a custom that happens in Finland on Christmas Eve, as families go to the cemetery to honor their loved ones who have passed on. When it was decided to carry on this custom in 1998, the board decided that the longest night of the year would be an appropriate night to schedule it. This year more than 50 volunteers placed over 1000 candles on the graves in the Kaleva cemetery. The local girls' basketball team helped, people from near and far, many new this year showed up to help. It is truly an amazing sight to see these luminaries light up the rows of graves. After a short remembrance service by Pastor Zach Nelson, many enjoyed a soup supper at the Lutheran Church. The luminaries show up even better as darkness deepens. They usually burn about four hours, some longer. My sincere hope is that everyone has a chance to see this beautiful sight.

Kaleva's Log Cabin Theater-2024 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of concerts at the Log Cabin Theater. The cabin is over 120 years old and was donated by the Asiala family and moved to its present location by the Service Learning Class of Brethren High School. The students took the logs apart, repaired those that were rotting, put them back together, and replaced the roof with hand cut cedar shakes. A stage was added when the students heard that a Finnish custom was to hold concerts and plays near an old barn or some such structure. The past 25 years the Log Cabin has served as a venue for concerts the Fridays in August. Businesses and individuals from the town support these concerts. Look for the schedule and 2023 sponsors in this publication. Cindy Asiala



2024 Log Cabin Theater

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| Friday, August 2 | Cats in the Basement
(Craig Stroup's band) |
| Friday, August 9 | Mary Sue and Mark Schrock |
| Friday, August 16 | Ruth and Max Bloomquist |
| Friday, August 23 | Feral Cats (Phil Coryell) |
| Friday, August 30 | Nick Veine & Company |

2023 Log Cabin Sponsors:

Laura and Kay Asiala- in memory of Richard, Michael, Charles, John T. and Dennis Asiala, Sandra Kinglsey, Blue Water Transportation, Environmental Services, Kaleva Telephone, Terwilliger Funeral Home, Kaleva Tavern, Finan Services, Melvin and Beverly Fennell, Ken and Ellen Kuuttilla, Fruit Haven Farms-in memory of Pete and Lorraine Lutz, Kaleva Barber Shop, Mark Quinn, Larry's Grocery & Party Store, Countryside Restaurant, Kaleva Country Flowers



The Depot Railroad Museum is open 12-4 on Saturday from Memorial weekend until Labor Day. The artifacts and grounds are taken care of by Robert Ramirez.

Sponsors of Depot Museum:

Cherryland Electric, Northern Michigan Dragway, Terwilliger Funeral Home, Kaleva Telephone Company, Fruit Haven Farms, in memory of Pete and Lorraine Lutz, Filer Credit Union.



The Kaleva Art Gallery held it's annual St. Urho's Bake Sale on St. Urho's Day, March 16, 2024. This successful fundraiser has been held for many years and gives customers a chance to purchase Finnish bread (nissua), grasshopper cookies (grasshopper's optional!) and other goodies often colored in purple and green. Visitors also get to view the 18 foot, 500 pound metal grasshopper on the Centennial Walkway which the Brethren Service Learning class crafted with artist Andy Priest from Wellston. They named it "Farmers' Nightmare" and the plaque tells the legend of St. Urho chasing the grasshoppers out of Finland so they didn't eat the grape crop. As we know it is a made-up story but Finnish people celebrate it with glee, maybe to "one up" the Irish.

