

What is your story? Committee wants to know

Written by Gothenburg Times
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What is your story? Why did your family come to Nebraska and why did they settle in this area?

Those are questions that the Smithsonian Leadership Committee want answered.

In honor of the Smithsonian Museum on Main Street traveling exhibit "Journey Stories" that will be at the 100th Meridian Museum Aug. 30-Oct. 6, the exhibit committee is asking for area community members to submit their stories for sharing.

The stories will be compiled and kept at the museum and may also be assembled into a book for purchase.

To submit stories, notebooks are available in all the libraries in Dawson County. Community members can add their stories in typewritten or handwritten form. It can be a short journal entry or longer family history.

Photos add to any biography, so people are encouraged to submit pictures along with the written document.

The committee is asking for photos to have captions, if possible, to identify the people, location and dates. There is a simple permission use form to fill out so the committee has the right to display the notebooks.

Stories can also be sent through email to telse@esu10.org .

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Some suggestions when submitting a story are to include full names whenever possible including any nicknames used. Dates are interesting and help to set the story time frame.

Exact locations of a homestead or business are important for readers to “remember when.” Specific personal notes give stories a special touch and details such as fashion of that day or prices of the time add color to the story.

So many family stories get handed down from generation to generation through story telling but often do not get written down for preservation. Now is the time to get those histories in writing. Talk to grandpa, uncle and great-grandma. Find out why they came to settle in the Platte Valley and then share those stories.

Did your family come west in a pioneer covered wagon and got this far when it broke down, so they settled or started a business in the area? Did your family come on a train or work with the railroad? Why did you stay in this area and do you expect your family to continue to live in the Platte Valley?

The Smithsonian traveling exhibit depicts the lives of Americans and the stories of their lives and will be in seven towns in Nebraska. Cozad is including the celebration of 150 years that President Abraham Lincoln signed a bill enacting the Union Pacific Railroad to reach the 100th Meridian.

The 100th Meridian Museum of Cozad will house the Smithsonian display as well as many exhibits with the railroad theme. Many activities are planned for the six-week period.

Contact Marilyn Peterson at 308-784-3794 or Trudy Else at telse@esu10.org for more information about the Smithsonian exhibit and the Journey Story notebooks.