

Forty-five years after a group of forward looking citizens established the Marble Rock Historical Society, the organization is going strong with new exhibits, exciting events and plans for the future.

The event-filled year of 2017 started with a Cemetery Walk at Hillside Cemetery in association with Memorial Day. Thirty-four families were highlighted in a booklet with pictures and interesting glimpses into their lives. The walk was well received with 175 booklets picked up.

Marvin and Rana Wilson shared their extensive collection of Vintage Kitchen Gadgets for our June event. They set up a well-organized display in the Pioneer Kitchen and handed out a booklet of recipes from local women.

In July we were fortunate to have Dave Krull, Todd Shriever and Brad Williams host a military event. Visitors were impressed with Dave's WWII knowledge, Todd's Gulf War memorabilia and Brad's Civil War display. The Historical Society also has an extensive collection of uniforms, artifacts and personal stories of military events.

The long awaited Grand Opening of the Beelar Cabin coincided with Marble Rock Fun Days in August. The final work inside included building a stairway, strengthening the upstairs floor and bringing in period furnishings. The exterior foundation was covered with faux limestone partially paid for with a \$250 grant from Omnitel (the only grant applied for and received for the restoration). A 20-minute video presentation detailing all the work involved in restoring the 1852 cabin built by Jacob Beelar (the founder of Marble Rock) was available for viewing. All the positive comments from local and state-wide visitors made the years of work worthwhile. Close to 200 people toured the cabin the first weekend so we continued to open the doors every Sunday through September.



Interior of Beelar Cabin



Dooren Mallo washing clothes

To coincide with the cabin, the September event was a Pioneer Activities Day. The board members and helpers, wearing period clothing, demonstrated and invited visitors to participate in quill pen writing, spinning, sewing, butter churning, washing clothes with a washboard, children's games, apple cider pressing and cooking over a fire. A special thanks goes to Ted Pitzenberger for bringing in a smaller version of our apple press to use. The Wilsons again provided a handout about Pioneer Cooking. The perfect fall day helped everyone enjoy the activities and the samples of apple cider, stew, cornbread and butter.

We stretched out our year by having a Prairie Christmas Event in December. In coordination with other local organizations, a Live Nativity in the newly finished log gazebo in Memorial Park was observed followed by the lighting of the Memorial Tree. Then the Beelar Cabin filled with people anxious to see the decorations and join in singing Christmas carols with the pump organ, tuba and recorder. Hot drinks and cookies along with handmade tree ornaments were given to all who participated in the memorable evening.



Prairie Christmas Sing-Along



RRMR third-graders in front of the Beelar Cabin

Besides all the special events we again hosted the RRM 3rd graders and realized we need more time with them next year to share all we have. Two \$350 scholarships were awarded to RRM seniors, Nicole Kiefer and Elizabeth Schweitzer.

Two board members, Carma Hillman and Bonnie Schriever, resigned after many years of involvement which we thank them for. Four new members, Marvin & Rana Wilson, Mary Brinkman and Rosemary Tobin joined the board and brought new ideas, energy and enthusiasm. Another addition was the use of Facebook to advertise our events as well as inform followers of interesting local, state and national history.

All the events this year yielded an attendance of approximately 650 people – second only to the year RAGBRAI came through Marble Rock. We're planning new events for 2018 as well as making Pioneer Activities Day and the Prairie Christmas Sing-Along annual events.

President – Diane Black / Secretary – Lynn Wedeking / Treasurer - Beverly Fisher / Investments – Terry Ott
Board of Directors – Mary Brinkman, Pam Clough, Max Handley, Rosemary Tobin, Marvin & Rana Wilson

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