

HISTORICAL TIDBITS

By Dale Vanderford

The Murdock Historical Society

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In some research it has been learned that the Cass County Fair, not only has been held in several locations in our county, but it is close to 150 years old. Research has shown that the Cass County Agricultural Assn. Was organized August 30, 1856, with H. C Wolph, President, William H. Davis, Secretary, Timothy Gaskill, Treasurer. There were 57 names on the membership. For three to four fairs were held in Rock Bluff. Lagging interest and the Civil War caused a lapse in fair activities for several years, but in 1869, the Association was re-organized with Major Dan H. Wheeler of Plattsmouth as President. Various grounds, including a site west of the Plattsmouth Cemetery, were used for the fairs as the Association owned none of their own. Beginning in 1875, the fairs were held at the "Plattsmouth Driving Park Association", south and east of the south end of Lincoln Avenue in Plattsmouth. The fairs paid premiums on six kinds of graded cattle and all kinds of livestock. There were many exhibits, including a Manufacturer's Exhibit, and Horticultural Products Exhibit.

For a few years, interest dies again. Then in 1921, there was another reorganization, or possibly a new one formed. Luke Wiles was president and Harry Knabe was the first exhibitor. The Association bought the buildings of an old lumberyard in Weeping Water, which required a lot of repair and re roofing. There was a great deal of community cooperation in putting this project together. Fred Carstens came from Avoca with a lot of expert men. John Rauth came from Manley and Henry Ragoss and his sons came from Louisville. These men were joined by men from Nehawka, Elmwood and Murdock. Together these men helped to establish the fairgrounds at Weeping Water. The County Fair became a part of Weeping Water, the town bursting at the seams each year during fair week. The Extension Clubs and 4-H clubs greatly increased the number of competitive entries for judging, and it was felt by many that the fair had outgrown its facilities. Funds were raised and a new location was purchased three miles north of Weeping Water at the intersection of old "50" (144th Street) and Highway 1. It has been successful at this location ever since.

Information submitted by the Murdock Historical Society, 9014 – 310th St Murdock NE 68407. www.murdockmuseum.org The museum is open on Sundays from 1:30 –5, or by appointment by calling 402-867-3331.