



# The Heritage

www.goesselmuseum.com

Spring 2021

## Art Show Features Klassen Woodcarving and Quilting

by Fern Bartel

The museum's 5th Annual Art Show will feature woodcarvings by Clarence Klassen, along with quilted items created by his wife, Martha.

Clarence Klassen grew up on a small farm four miles south of Goessel, KS, where he enjoyed watching wild birds and animals. In 2012, he took a three-day wood carving class that got him started. Frequently he is asked how long it takes to make a carving. His answer, "I don't know because I do other things between the start and the finish." He estimates the time to be 20-30 hours.

Clarence draws patterns from looking at bird books or pictures, then transfers and cuts them with a hand saw. He does "power carving" with an electric dremel tool along with other common wood-working tools. Small birds are usually made from wood he buys at local lumber yards; bass wood is best because of the straight grain. Most of his carved birds are made life-size. But some animals are much harder to do life-size, so they are scaled way down.

The Art Show will exhibit 26 birds, plus a wolf, moose, buffalo, a polar bear and more, all carved and painted by Clarence. Clarence carves for his own enjoyment and hopes you will enjoy seeing them!



Clarence Klassen's wood-carved birds

Art Show, continued on page 4

### Upcoming Events:

#### March, 2021

Spring hours begin:  
Noon—4 pm  
Tuesday—Saturday

#### Heritage Dinner

to be determined

#### 5th Annual Art Show

Spring and Summer 2021  
wood carvings by  
Clarence Klassen  
and  
quilting by Martha Klassen

#### 14th Annual

#### Car and Truck Show

Saturday, June 19, 2021  
10 am —3 pm  
(same day as Goessel  
city-wide garage sales)

#### Country Threshing Days

tentatively planned for  
August 6-8, 2021

#### Second Monday Family History & Genealogy Group

currently not meeting  
due to COVID-19

### Low German Saying:

*Ekj sie nijch Nieshearich oba ekj mach aules jeare weete.*  
I am not (nosey) curious, I am just eager to know everything.

### Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum Board Members:

John Janzen, President; John Koehn, Vice-President; Anne Harvey, Secretary; Aileen Esau\*, Treasurer; Fern Bartel\*, Museum Director; Roger Bartel, Sandy Duerksen, Bruce Funk, Myron Goertzen, Pat Penner, Nelson Voth, Connie Wiens, James Wiens. \*non-voting members

## Ditt unt Daut (this and that) by Fern Bartel, Museum Director

2020 brought many changes, and the museum board was no exception. Steve Banman concluded his service on the museum board. He was first appointed to fill an unexpired two-year term in 2010 and served as President from 2013 through 2020. At the annual meeting, the board presented him with a thank-you gift created by Quail Creek Copper. Steve plans to continue volunteering at the museum.

Two other board members, Don and Ladene Herrick, have ended their terms on the board and are stepping into other roles at the museum. Ladene will continue documenting the museum's artifacts in the Past Perfect program. Don will help with jobs around the museum.

We as a museum board and I as the museum director very much appreciate these three wonderful and dedicated volunteers and wish to say a very big "Thank you!"

The museum welcomes Sandy Duerksen, Pat Penner, and Bruce Funk, who were elected to the board at the annual meeting in January.

The museum's 2020 Art Show, displaying Marie and Martha Voth's wheat marquetry, was featured in KPTS Channel 8's program "Positively Kansas," that aired in January. The museum's segment is about 16 minutes into the video. You can enjoy the episode by going to [www.goesselmuseum.com](http://www.goesselmuseum.com) and, on the Home page, click on the green button that says "Youtube."



This red helicopter brought museum visitors from Oklahoma! The family on board was able to land right beside the museum.

### Become a Museum Member!

It's easy to become a member. Choose a membership level below, fill out the form, and return it with your check payable to MHAM to: Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum, P.O. Box 231, Goessel, KS 67053.

**Individual \$20    Couple \$40    Family \$50** (Includes children and grandchildren age 18 and younger)

Annual memberships run from Jan. 1 - Dec. 31.

Benefits of annual membership

- Unlimited free visits to the museum
- 10% discount on museum store purchases
- One guest pass (two guest passes for couple and family memberships. Not valid for Country Threshing Days)

Life memberships \$500 / person

- Membership fee is added to museum endowment fund
- Unlimited free visits to museum
- 15% discount on museum store purchases
- Five guest passes per year (Not valid for Country Threshing Days)
- No annual membership renewal

I would like an annual membership \_\_\_ Individual \$20    \_\_\_ Couple \$40    \_\_\_ Family \$50

I would like a life membership \_\_\_ \$500 / person    Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City / State / Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send future newsletters to my email address: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Love Affair with the “Miagropa”

by Bruce Funk, Museum Board Member

The miagropa, or “rendering kettle” in English, has long been of interest to me...partly due to the fact that I am a foodie [and] was a professional chef/cook for a time in the late ‘70s-early ‘80s. My love of food and the preparation of it goes back to the 1960s, when I would watch my mother prepare the family dinner and then I would offer to do that, which my mother wisely allowed.

My earliest memories of a miagropa in action was in the ‘60s, going over to my Uncle Rudy and Aunt Luella Schmidt’s to butcher hogs. I remember a big cast iron kettle that all the pork fat and scraps were thrown into and rendered...[what] I do remember well was cracklings and runny eggs with home-made bread for breakfast...yummy!

The first “spark that started the flame” happened much later in my life...when I went to a community barbeque that Hesston conducted. I happened upon where the pork ‘n beans were being made. A man, as I recall named Brenneman, was in charge of the bean-making. He heated up this huge cast iron kettle and threw in a bunch of bacon and onions, then gallons and gallons of pork ‘n beans. I was instantly fascinated and hooked on this cooking method; as I recall the beans were some of the best I ever had. It was then and there I decided to pursue buying my own kettle, which I now knew as a miagropa.

Another happenstance that further “fanned the flame” was attending Bethel College Fall Fest. I saw two miagropas in action in the “Borscht Buggy,” making gallons and gallons of soup for feeding the masses of people. Later in the day, there was a demonstration of the “traditional use” of the miagropa...where I watched as a huge pile of pork fat and scraps was reduced to cracklings and lard...it was fascinating for me!

Shortly after that I came across a sale bill for Willard Dirksen that had a 30-gallon rendering

kettle and skirt listed. I made up my mind I was going to buy it, which I did. I happily hauled it home, now starting to dream on how I could keep alive the “miagropa tradition.”

The idea that came to me was to make chili in my miagropa for that same Fall Fest event that I had witnessed the lard/crackling and borscht-making at. Since I had already been in the restaurant business, I was familiar with large quantity cooking and had developed my own nine-gallon chili recipe, which I doubled my first year at the Taste of Newton event. I was sold out in 45 minutes and knew I had a winner. I went on to have a very successful booth for many more years there, at



**Bruce Funk (l) and his brother Rod dish up chili from a miagropa.**

one point borrowing the big miagropa from

Alden Schroeder of Goessel, that was used at the Fall Fest, to make close to fifty gallons of chili.

I realized that I wasn’t being completely authentic in my use of miagropa, but I was also a realist. What was I to do with the pails and pails of lard and mounds of cracklings, not to mention the problem of starting a hedge wood fire to heat my miagropa on concrete? Chili seemed to be a viable alternative and, as I was in the propane business, a burner from an old water heater and an LP bottle was a much better alternative to building a fire with wood.

Now, as the years have gone by, and nature has taken its toll on my back and strength, the use of my miagropa has ceased. I have put it on permanent loan to the Mennonite museum in Goessel...but it wouldn’t take much urging for me to enlist some “strong backs” to haul it out of retirement to fire up a batch of chili...or even a rendering of cracklings and lard. I feel I have done my part in keeping its presence alive...and I groan every time I drive by a house where they have a miagropa in the front yard filled with dirt and flowers...use a toilet for that! Ha!

[Edited for length]



Mennonite Heritage and Agricultural Museum  
200 N Poplar  
P.O. Box 231  
Goessel, KS 67053

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

(620) 367- 8200

goesselmuseum@gmail.com

www.goesselmuseum.com



Museum Hours:

March, April, October,  
& November:

Tues - Sat: 12 pm - 4 pm  
Closed Sundays & Mondays

Open by appointment only in  
January & February

May - September:  
Tues - Sat: 10 am - 5 pm

*The Heritage*

Written by:

Fern Bartel, Director

Editorial Staff:

Museum Board Members

## **Art Show, continued from page 1**

When Clarence and Martha moved to Colorado in 1986, Martha became friends with individuals who quilted. Since she had enjoyed sewing since the age of eight, Martha figured she would enjoy this also. After buying a book on quilting, she hand-quilted several pieces. But she discovered this took too long, leading her to buy a quilting machine in 1993. She has enjoyed exploring the capabilities of this machine a lot.

Martha has lovingly made quilts for family members and friends, including four T-shirt quilts for their grandchildren. She is always looking for new patterns.

Recently, Martha has been making many quilt tops for the MCC Center in North Newton. The challenge of working within the confines of the materials available from them very much appeals to her creative spirit. Last year, in 2020, she made 200 quilt tops for the MCC Center!

Martha's display will include quilts, of course, as well as smaller pieces.



**Quiltings and carvings by  
Martha and Clarence Klassen**