

The BRIDGE



*4-H History:
Yesterday, Tomorrow, and Now.*

Vol. 10, No. 1

March, 2021

...and we're back!

Dorothy Emerson used to tell us during her popular public speaking program, “You’ll Be Surprised”, “It’s the pause that refreshes!” Well, we don’t know how “fresh” we are; after all, we are all about old, dusty History; but we did pause, so we are “refreshed” for sure!

But, how to re-begin? Our very first newsletter; issued August, 2010; just seems to have jumped right in! The first article of the first edition was entitled, “Do You Know Where Your 4-H History Records and Artifacts Are?” Not waiting for an answer, the article pushed forward telling the readers where we thought OUR “national” materials were, ending with the suggestion that everyone, local to national, get a handle on theirs as well!

It then admitted that we don’t know where ALL of “our” materials are by offering another article called “We are Searching For...”. It began, “Future issues will include a regular column on items that are needed to complete a section of the website or a collection to be archived. Currently we’re looking for:” and then listed four things the team at that time was interested in: 1. A pamphlet written in 1903 by Dean Thomas Hunt of Ohio State University on Clark County farm youth organization (A.B. Graham’s efforts); 2. USDA Circular 85 (c 1927) by George E. Farrell; 3. Samples of 4-H comic strips entitled “Fletcher the 4-H’er” which appeared in the 1960s and 1970s, by cartoonist Joe Bursch, and 4. a 32 page book entitled When Old Songs Were New, The Story of Our Famous Songs written by Howard Southgate in 1938 and published by National Committee on Boys & Girls Club Work.

A review of our collection tells us that we are still looking for these guys!

Sixty issues later brought us to “the great pause” and now begs the question, “where do we go from here?” Do we even NEED a newsletter? Well, newsletters have been with us for a long time. In fact, the first newsletter (non-4-H, of course) was written thousands of years ago. It was a notice seeking the return of a runaway slave written 3,000 years ago on a

Do You Know Where Your 4-H History Records and Artifacts Are?

A group of former and present National 4-H Staff members organized a team over the past two years as we realized that national 4-H history records were difficult to locate and access. Important documents are scattered among several national repositories and store rooms. To date we have found educational materials, original artwork, documents, photographs, oral histories, films and slide sets/film strips, of national 4-H history in:

- National Archives;
- National Agricultural Library and Special Collections;
- Library of Congress;
- National 4-H Council storerooms;
- IFYE Alumni Association; and
- Many State University and 4-H Centers

History Archives. However, we also felt a huge need to try to make the 4-H history at all levels as accessible as possible to people around the US as well as the World. The past few months we have:

- created a National 4-H History Website <http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com>
- created a National 4-H Collecting Website <http://4-HCollecting.com>;
- digitized deteriorating 4-H history books, magazines, newsletters, reports etc. to share electronically;
- attended national Extension Service related meetings to learn about the interests and current 4-H historical work at county and state levels;
- encouraged state and county 4-H staffs to preserve and share their own histories;

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piece of papyrus from Thebes. Although we hope it was not successful, it must have been because the method of communication continued. In the days of Babylon, merchants made their announcements via clay tablets. The Romans and the citizens of the Tang Dynasty of China received accounts of their current events via handwritten reports. Of course, not many of those reports could be produced, but then, not that many folks could read so it all balanced out in the end!

Reading became a thing once Gutenberg devised the moveable type printing press in the 15th Century. So, HE is the reason all us as kids had to have those alphabet strips taped across the tops of our elementary school desks! And thus, the vicious cycle was started. Readers needed printed stuff and printed stuff needed readers! Therefore, both grew through the 16th and 17th Centuries. In 1704, a weekly publication called The Boston News-Letter began on this continent. This one-page sheet is considered to be the first newsletter printed in the United States.

WE (4-H, that is) got into the act nationally in April, 1923 when the National Committee on Boys and Girls Club Work published its first newsletter (mimeographed circular) entitled The Boys and Girls Club News. As both the interest and the 4-H program grew, this “letter” morphed into the National 4-H News magazine and, still later, the 4-H Leader – the national magazine for 4-H. The last one of those was the 1988 April/May edition. More information about the National 4-H News is included on the National 4-H History Preservation website. Click “National 4-H History” in the left column and then click “National 4-H News”.

So, newsletters work and what works, works; therefore, let’s get to work! We paused, we refreshed, and now we are raring to go; so, “Do You Know Where Your 4-H History Records and Artifacts Are?”

Some information for this article came from: Klinghoffer, Steve, “From Papyrus to E-mail: The History of Newsletter Marketing”, Orange County Attorney Journal, San Diego, CA, Jan 01, 2018

Newsletter Next Steps:

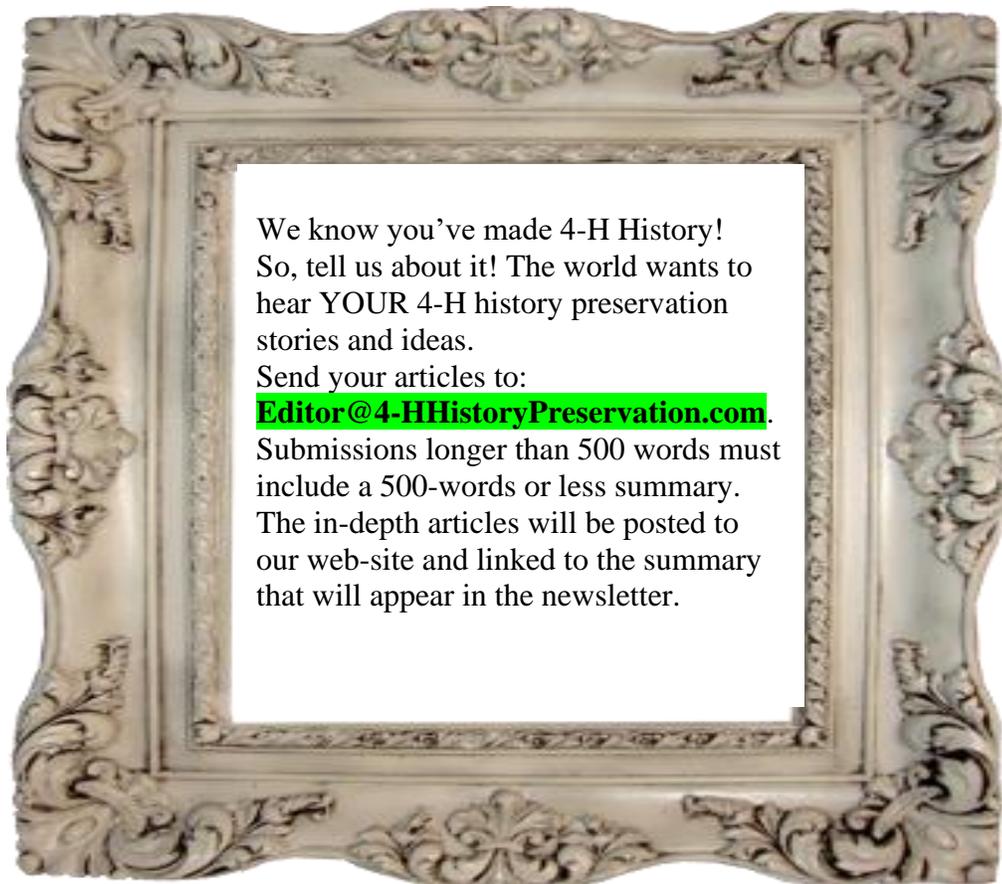
The National 4-H History Preservation Team’s mission is to “Preserve 4-H History, the foundation of our future”. This newsletter is just one of the ways in which we are working to make our mission come to life. Below, and in future editions of The BRIDGE, we will offer items of interest that we believe will help us all continue to achieve our mission.

In this issue:

- Preserving 4-H History Locally.
- Our Masthead Explained

In future issues look forward to:

- 4-H Survives COVID-19; the MEET goes ON!
- Historic 4-H Art dresses up a national library.
- Mapping 4-H Points of Interest!
- ...and MORE!



Preserving 4-H History Locally:

How it came about that the Conyngham Valley Historical Society celebrated National 4-H Week.

By Ron Drum, PA 4-H Member 1967-1977

After driving past the Conyngham Valley Historical Society (CVHS) Museum in Conyngham, Pennsylvania many times, I finally decided to stop and check out their exhibits. I'd grown up in the Drums/Conyngham/Sugarloaf valley so wanted to see what stories about the area they had to tell. I found it to be a fine museum but I just couldn't shake the feeling that something was missing!

Then it hit me, 4-H!! From 1972 to 1991 my family had been involved with a 4-H club that positively impacted the lives of many of the area's youth, part of a 4-H tradition that began in 1928! If the community was to have a history museum, certainly 4-H should be in it!

However, where would I find enough materials to make a 4-H exhibit?

The answer was right in front of me – in my own closets! My mom had kept scrapbooks of our 4-H activities from 1966 – 2013! As 4-H Volunteer Club Leaders, my mom and my dad had numerous artifacts scattered about the house that helped tell the local 4-H story. The items included plaques, a trophy, a banner, 4-H Club charters, even a 4-H Rocket my dad used to promote 4-H at the county fair.



CVHS Museum



Luzerne County 4-H Educator, Meghan Carroll; Ron Drum; and Former SV 4-H Club Leader and CVHS Member, Dorothy Staudenmeier; present the memorabilia to the museum.

So, in July of 2018, I boxed up all the stuff and set out for the CVHS Museum. They were so pleased to receive the items that they decided to hold an open house during National 4-H Week to introduce the new acquisitions to the community.

On October 13, 2018, approximately forty people stopped by the museum to see what all the excitement was about. The attendees included former 4-H'ers, former 4-H Volunteers, even the Luzerne County 4-H Educator, Meghan Carroll.

On July 27, 2019, I stopped by the museum to see the now permanent 4-H exhibit. Tucked in among other items of local historic interest the museum keeps on display, were the precious pieces of my 4-H past, there on full view right inside the front door. Each piece held so many wonderful memories for me. Each piece now creating new memories for the museum's visitors as each piece helps tell the community's 4-H story.

Once again, our SV4-H Club banner was being proudly displayed along with Dad's announcement blackboard, Mom's 4-H Clover cross-stitch and a 4-H "license plate". A few shelves down I found the 4-H

Club Charters, the club's 4-H "piggy-bank", my gavel and an award plaque. Mom's three 4-H Scrap Books rested nearby, and beside it all stood my dad's 4-H Rocket.

Recently, I was speaking to a former 4-H Parent from the club about this exhibit. When I mentioned she was in one of the scrapbooks and, therefore, now in a museum, she said, "Oh! Me in a museum! That makes me feel old!"

“Not old”, I replied, “Important! After all, you made HISTORY!”

Does your community have a history museum? Perhaps you, too, can help them complete their story by giving them your 4-H Memorabilia. You’d be making history by preserving history!



The Meaning of the Masthead

A good masthead graphically tells the reader what to expect should they choose to read that newspaper’s content. Ours is no different, for here we see our newspaper’s purpose: to tell the history of 4-H, as it happened, as it is happening, and even, perhaps, what is yet to happen. History isn’t just the past. We know that what we are doing now, and what we will soon be doing, all will, all too soon, be history too!

On the left of our masthead, we see where learning by doing first connected with our members, through agricultural and home life projects such as raising field corn and canning tomatoes. The three-leaf Clover Emblem, the Boys and Girls Club Charter, and 4-H songs such as “The Ploughing Song” and “Dreaming” remind us of how the Essential Elements were incorporated into 4-H.



Our eyes then follow the bridge across the page to the 4-H we know today, and envision for the future. Here we find our friend, Robot, who became famous representing the 4-H Robotics project, and a computer screen. They both represent the wide expanse of topics through which learning by doing occurs today in 4-H. The Essential Elements are represented here as well by the computer, for on the screen we see a 4-H Club meeting via on-line communication technology.

Citizenship; personal, national, and of the world; are represented by the 4-H Flag and the Earth. They remind us of our responsibilities to ourselves and each other. The Earth also depicts not only how 4-H has impacted the world, with many countries developing 4-H-like programs of their own based on the 4-H Model, but of the 4-H ideal of world peace through understanding accomplished one person at a time via such cultural exchange programs as IFYE, PRYLE and YDP.

Of course, 4-H does not end with today but promises to shine bright far into the future. Here that idea is found in the name “4-H” written in a futuristic font. Lastly, our masthead would not be complete if it didn’t include our beloved 4-H emblem as it is seen today.



The BRIDGE Editorial Board:
Sue Benedetti, Dave Benedetti, Gwen El-Sawi, Tom Tate, Rick Moses, Ron Drum

A yellow scroll-like graphic containing a small image of the 4-H emblem on the left and the text of the editorial board on the right.

The official Newsletter of the National 4-H History Preservation Team