



The Pony Express

The Big Creek Historical Society

Flash Back - 35 Years Ago - November 1976

70 Year Old Elevator Burns in Polk City



Smoke and flames could be seen for miles around at Saturday's fire that destroyed the Polk City Grain Elevator. Firemen from six communities, Madrid, Grimes, Saylor Township, Johnston, Slater and Ankeny joined Polk City firemen in battling the blaze that caused an estimated \$75,000 damage.

An old International 'M' tractor, attached to two wagons was sitting in the 70 year old building, and this vehicle was the cause of the fire. Bill

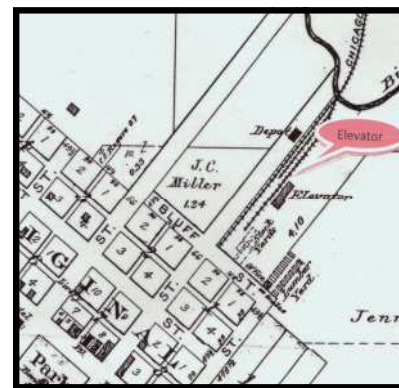
Ristay, an employee at the elevator was in the process of moving the tractor and wagons when the fire broke out. Ristay reported he was opening the elevator for the day and was moving the tractor and wagons out of the elevator so corn could be brought in. He tried to start the tractor but the engine backfired and burst into flames. The gas leaked down the line to the battery and exploded, spreading the fire to the nearby grain. In a matter of minutes, the entire 45-foot structure was engulfed in flames. The elevator contained corn, beans and oats totaling 20,000 bushels of grain. Getting water to battle the blaze posed a problem for the firefighters. The Polk City water tower held only 50,000 gallons and that was rapidly used up. Water trucks drove to Ankeny six times to refill

and finally ended up siphoning water from Big Creek Lake.

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Excerpts printed from the November 18, 1976 Big Creek News

The grain elevator was located on Second St. north of Bluff St. The elevator was positioned along the railroad spur line from Polk City Junction. The location of the railroad and elevator was approximately adjacent to the S.E. corner of today's water treatment lagoon.



BCHS Goal Achieved

The original restoration plan of 'city hall' involved the installation of an elevator for full access to the second floor. State Historical Society personnel advised us that an elevator would jeopardize any chances of receiving a preservation grant from the state. The alternative we agreed upon was to have the capability to broadcast Miller Hall activities live to the first floor for those who could not or chose not to go to the second floor. Thanks to Rich Taylor we now have that capability. Rich has installed the equipment/technology to stream activities to the TV located on the first floor. A nice feature for our museum. Thanks Rich!

InformationMuseum Schedule for 2011

The museum will be open from 1-3 p.m. on these dates. Programming will be announced at a later date.

April 10th **May 8th (Mothers Day)**

June 12th **July 10th**

August 14th **September 11th**

October 9th **November 14th**

Plan to check out the museum this year.

We Need You!

We have a new one act play that is ready for rehearsal:

The Spirits of Polk City. One male and four females are needed. We are completing the finishing touch's on an early radio show production: "The Death of a Mayor". A mystery based on the book 'Murder' by Roxana Currie. One female and five males are needed. We, also, will need people to perform the sound effects. These are reading parts not memorized. We will have a lot of fun performing these on our stage. Contact Tom Cox 965-3828 to get involved. Thanks

Museum Activity

It has been a busy winter. Several organizations have utilized Miller Hall for their activities.

Nov. During the Lighting of the Square Celebration the NP West Elementary bands performed on the Cox Stage. The performance can be viewed on our web site.

Dec. The monthly Chamber of Commerce luncheon was held in Miller Hall. The Big Creek

Players presented 'The Hysterical Society.' This was the first performance by the 'Players' on their home stage.

Feb. NP Music Teacher's Recital enjoyed a full house for their annual fund raiser.

Mar. NP Speech students utilized Miller Hall to showcase their talents.

We encourage groups to use the museum. Contact us if you have a need for a 'great place'.

Town Square Plaque

Our group had a plaque made and placed by the bandstand noting the founders of Polk City and Bandstand information. A nice addition

About the Big Creek Historical Society

This publication is published by the Big Creek Historical Society located in the historic city hall building at 112 3rd Street in Polk City .

The museum is open to the public on the 2nd Sunday of each month from 1-3 PM. Arrangements may be made for tours of the museum by contacting the Big Creek Historical Society.

Organization meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of each month. April through October at 6:30 PM. November through March at 1:30 PM — Public Welcome

You can contact the Big Creek Historical Society at their web site

www.polkcityhistory.org or call Rose Hutton-Taylor -984-6653 or Tom Cox -965-3828