



National 4-H History Preservation Program

Celebrating 10 Years of Preserving and Sharing National 4-H History

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Hands on 4-H History:

Uncovering Stories from Old 4-H Pictures

By Jim Kahler

They say, "A picture is worth a thousand words." And sometimes an old 4-H photograph and a little online research will uncover a bigger story.

Recently a magazine contacted 4-H USDA seeking some old 4-H photographs to use in a story about the early years of 4-H and FFA. One of the images that I had was of a girl standing with a steer dated 1929. The file name contained her last name – Goecke.

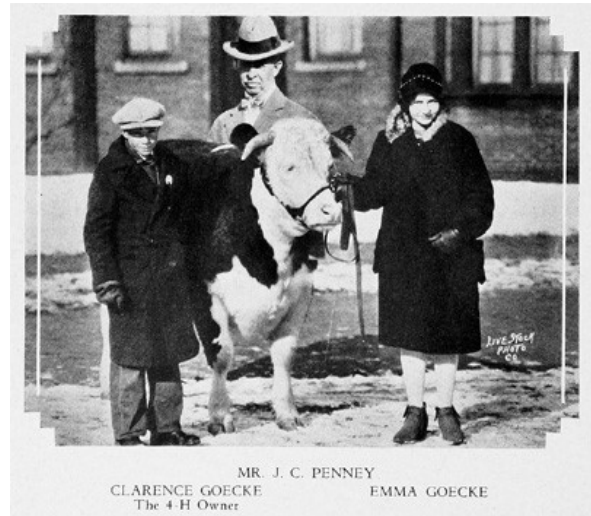


I searched for her last name hoping to find more about her and the photograph. I found newspaper articles and other web sites that provided pieces of her life story.

One newspaper had a copy of the same picture. Her name was Emma Goecke, and the picture was from the International Livestock Exposition in Chicago in 1929. Emma lived in State Center, IA. She and her younger brother Clarence, and later their younger brother, Kenneth, became well known for their

success showing their steers in the 1920s and 1930s. Their father, Fred Goecke, was described as a "prominent farmer" by the Lyon County Reporter. Their mother was Anna Pearl Goecke.

I found Emma mentioned first in the results of the 1925 Iowa State Fair beef show. The Des Moines Register reported that her prizes included calf showing first place, championship and reserve grand championship; championship in Hereford. Another Marshall County 4-H member in that show was Keith Collins of Marshalltown, who would also be a 4-H beef show competitor for several years to come.



Clarence Goecke, the 4-H owner, Mr. J. C. Penney, the buyer and Emma Goecke, the showman of "Dick" the Grand Champion steer.

Clarence and Emma had their greatest success at the International Livestock Exposition in Chicago in 1929. The Lyon County Reporter recounted the story of how Clarence, age 12, who raised the Hereford steer "Dick", and Emma, age 16, who showed it, won the grand championship. They earned \$1,000 in fair premiums. At the show auction, it was purchased for \$7 per pound – a total of \$8,050 for the 1,150 pound steer – by the famous businessman Mr. J. C. Penney. A retrospective story in the Des Moines Register on April 6, 1988, added that Penney took the steer to exhibit in New York as

an example of 4-H achievement. He then had it slaughtered and the meat used to provide Christmas dinner for 1,200 poor families. Penney had their trophy and other show mementoes placed on display at the Marshalltown J. C. Penney store, where it happened that Emma was an employee. Clarence and Emma split their show earnings, which financed their college educations and more.

Fellow Marshall County 4-H member Keith Collins took first in baby beef on foot and carcass, which sold for \$6.75 per pound. The Reporter and Register both noted the unusual success of the Marshall County 4-H youth. "Marshall County is proud of these youngsters and glad they won. Selection of an international grand champion in competition open to the world is fine advertising for Iowa cattle."

The Oelwein Daily Register, November 30, 1929, told of Emma's entry in the 1929 show that was shown in our photograph. Her 14-month-old steer was the brother of the grand champion of the previous year. The article noted that Emma was using some of her previous winnings to pay her college expenses.

Both the Chicago Tribune and Ames Daily Tribune issues of December 3, 1931, contained a "Stock Show Romance" story about Emma. At age 21, she and Keith Collins, age 19, were married during the stock show in the Brevoort Hotel in Chicago. The Ames Tribune article noted that both had graduated high school in 1929 and attended Iowa State College and Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls. Keith had again shown beef at the exposition. The couple had their honeymoon in Chicago.

A grave memorial web site tells part of the adult stories of Emma, Keith and Clarence. Keith and Emma farmed in the Albion area and later moved to La Grange, Illinois. They had a son, Ronald, and a daughter, Janet. Keith died in 1968. In the 1970s Emma lived in Sedalia, CO before she returned to Marshall County Iowa and remarried in 1979. Emma died in 1995. Clarence married Lenore Elliott on June 21, 1936 in Albion. He was a cattle buyer for Rath Packing in Waterloo. They had a son and a daughter. He passed away in 1988.

Hands-on History:

Is there a 4-H History Mystery that you or someone in your 4-H group would like to solve? It might be identifying an old 4-H artifact or photograph or learning more about a person from your local or state 4-H history.

Develop a plan for how you can solve this mystery. What are credible online resources that you can search? Who can you talk to at your county or state 4-H office, historical society or in the community? Put together the clues that you find to solve your 4-H History Mystery – then share what you find with others.

Do you Have Your Historic 4-H Postcards?



You can buy them from the 4-H Mall at <http://bit.ly/4HPostcards>

95 Years Ago in 4-H History:

First National Healthiest 4-H Girl and Boy Selected in 1922

The following story is from the National Compendium of 4-H Promotion and Visibility on the National 4-H History website at http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com/History/4-H_Promotion/

During the summer of 1922, while visiting the Iowa State Fair, Guy Noble, director of the National Committee on Boys' and Girls' Club Work, watched with great interest the state health contest conducted by Josephine Arnquist. He thought this was intriguing and decided to replicate it and expand upon it at National 4-H Congress that December.

At Congress in Chicago the event was made national. State leaders were invited to have their youngsters select the boy and girl from their delegations whom they deemed healthiest. In Chicago, behind some screens in the cattle barn at the International Livestock Exposition, candidates

were thoroughly examined by physicians from the Elizabeth McCormick Memorial Fund, a health foundation.

The idea of presenting a farm boy and farm girl as the "healthiest in the United States" had an appeal that fired journalistic imagination and won headlines across the nation. The names and pictures of the first two winners, Joseph Isaken, of Springfield, Minnesota, and Marguerite Martin, of Shepard, Tennessee, were advertised from one end of the nation to the other. In that first year, 1922, and for years thereafter, the health contest produced more newspaper and magazine space than any other single feature at the 4-H Congress, and in spite of its defects, the contest focused attention on the importance of health to boys and girls as well as the livestock being raised. "Be your own best exhibit," became a familiar club slogan. The contest continued for a number of years.

An accounting on the "Facts about the health champions" from the 1925 4-H Congress shows the thoroughness of the contest.

George Cuskaden, a 14-year-old Indiana farm boy was found to have the highest score, 97.7 percent. Deductions were made for filled teeth and an almost imperceptible tendency toward flat footedness. He had never touched coffee or tea in his life, preferring cocoa or straight milk as a beverage. He eats fruits every day of the year, apples being his mainstay. Since he was a wee tot his hours of sleep have been as regular as the sun, 9:30 p.m. to 5:30 a.m. in winter and 8:30 p.m. to 4:30 a.m. in summer. He helps his father run a 200-acre farm near St. Paul, Indiana. "Regular hours, mother's cooking, meat two or three meals a day, milk and fresh vegetables year-round, plenty of work and plenty of play" are reasons George Cuskaden gives for his remarkable physical condition. With the exception of the flu several years ago, the boy has never been sick in his life. He is five feet, five inches tall and weight is 155 pounds.

Alice Burkhart, chosen as healthiest girl in 1925, tells a very similar story. With more emphasis on the use of cereals for breakfast and a scientific balanced ration concocted by her mother, her diet has been much the same as George's. She is five feet four inches tall and weighs 131 pounds. Her score was 95.7 percent, deductions being made because of a slight cold contracted after arriving in Chicago, and because of slightly faulty teeth and insufficient muscular development in the arms. Alice is living on the farm where she was born and where her mother

is rearing a brood of six children of which Alice is the fifth. She suffered from measles and other children's diseases when she was smaller, but there was no later effect from these ailments. Her hours of rest too have been as regular as George's but she has been allowed more sleep, from 9 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. For exercise, she walks four miles a day to school where she is a junior in high school. She washes dishes, rides horseback, plays basketball and tennis and is a member of the physical training class at high school.

Editor's Note: History does repeat itself. In the story above we learned about one of the first times that health was used to promote the 4-H Program on a national level and in the story below you'll see how it worked again in Contemporary 4-H History. Maybe 4-H'ers you know participated in the more recent program. Had you ever heard about the Healthiest Girl and Healthiest Boy program? Take a look in the archives of your state to learn about it.

Contemporary 4-H History

The "Riding it Forward" Cross Country Tour

The following story is from the National Compendium of 4-H Promotion and Visibility on the National 4-H History website at http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com/History/4-H_Promotion/

This story of endurance and pride is from 2014. It's about how Joe Ostaszewski, a season 14 Biggest Loser TV finalist and former Florida State University football player partnered with National 4-H Council to promote better health and physical fitness and to fight obesity.



4-H'ers meeting Joe on his tour across the country while they all promoted Healthy Living.

Joe says, "the 'Riding It Forward' Cross Country Tour was an opportunity for me to set my life aside, and dedicate myself to something that was bigger

than me. It started out as an idea that kept running through my mind and turned into something that allowed me to connect to the unlimited power known as inspiration. When I reach out to National 4-H Council to participate on the tour, it was because 4-H was the oldest and most established youth organization in America, whose sole purpose was based on the same principle that helped me reclaim my life: The 4-H's: Head, Heart, Hands, Health.

"After several conference calls and many questions on what the tour looked like, the green light was given and the plan was in motion. The plan was to stop in 42 cities and seven major markets across the US and end at the 'Biggest Loser' Ranch, where I took back my health. In these cities, 4-H would schedule programs with local schools, health organizations, parades, health fairs and healthy cooking challenges coast to coast.

"Looking back 55 days, 2,972 miles to the kick off, August 31, 2014, in Chevy Chase, Maryland, at the National 4-H [Council] Headquarters, I was in complete awe, absolute veneration of the 'Riding It Forward' Cross Country Tour benefitting the Wear Your Soul Project and National 4-H Council. Putting all the pieces together, connecting the dots, and reviewing in my head the thousands of lives that were inspired to take the 'Health Pledge' was beyond what I imagined. Children across America signed the Big Red RV stating that they will be 'Change Agents' in their communities, live by example, and help inspire Americans to live active, healthy lives.



"The 'Riding It Forward' message is simple. It is to believe in yourself and live the life you were born to live. We will have to play our part, and living in a healthy, fit, active body allows us to not only chase our dreams, but to also make them reality. What we captured through Riding It Forward is the voice of America's youth, and that voice was loud and clear.

Our youth, the future of America, do not want to be trapped in their unhealthy, unfit, inactive bodies in the freest country in the world. Those one-in-three that suffer with childhood obesity want out, they want to have a healthy start in life, and it's our job to help them, inspire them, teach them. And show them by example that they can take back their health."

65 Years Ago in 4-H History



To mark the 50th anniversary of 4-H, a commemorative three-cent stamp was produced and first offered for sale on January 15, 1952 in Springfield, Ohio. An initial order of 110 million of the stamps was authorized.

It was in Springfield, Ohio that school superintendent A. B. Graham organized one of the first 4-H clubs. At the Springfield ceremony in 1952, Graham was in attendance, along with 14 of the original club members.

The complete history of the official 4-H stamp can now be found on the history preservation website at 4-HHistoryPreservation.com in the National 4-H History section. <http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com/Stamps/>

To make a contribution to the National 4-H History Preservation Program;

please go to <http://4-HHistoryPreservation.com> to see your options, or mail a check payable to **National 4-H Council** to:
National 4-H History Preservation Program
National 4-H Council
PO Box 37560
Baltimore, MD 21275-5375

Please write **4-H History Preservation** on your check.

Letters to the Editor

The 4-H History Preservation Team would like to announce that we welcome letters to the Editor on any subject concerning 4-H History at: Info@4-HHistoryPreservation.com Here's the first one.

Yes, we do get the 4-H History newsletter! I read every word with great interest. It is a splendid publication and I am so very glad you developed the archive and the means to share it around the country in the newsletter. I keep going through my files and pondering what I might share, but have not come up with that item of interest to others...yet.

I do have a very special item that I could share if you think it might be of interest.

When we were about to leave in 1957 [International Farm Youth Exchange - IFYE] for our 10-day trip across the Atlantic on the Julius Caesar (Italian Ocean Liner), Kathleen Flom [National 4-H Foundation International staff] gave me a little book of meditations, "Something to Live By." She encouraged us to have daily shipboard meditations, together in our group of thirteen. We did just that, and I think it provided us not only with inspiration that we needed as we embarked to the unknown;

but it also gave us a sense of belonging and created a bond that we IFYEs still treasure today.

I would be glad to contribute the little book to the Kathleen Flom Memorial Room. There is also a picture of the 13 of us on board the ship that could go with the book. Kathleen Flom's influence on countless young people was not only in practical orientation, but even more in her positive approach to life with "something to live by."
--1957 IFYE to Turkey

Editor: Thank you so much for your kind message. We would love to have the book and a copy of the photo. We will put them both in the memory case in Kathleen's room at the National 4-H Conference Center along with her photo book from her trip to National 4-H Camp, her standard report form and some of her memorabilia that she brought back from overseas while working with the IFYE Program. With your permission, we would also like to use the photograph in the Newsletter and possibly on the website. The only photograph that we have found of IFYEs on or near a ship was so badly torn that we couldn't use it in any of our historical documentation. We'd like to know what year the IFYE program began using air travel instead of ocean liners.

Contact the 4-H History Preservation Team:

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