

History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

Vol. 34 No. 1

January-February 2004

SERVING:

- Andover
- Anoka
- Bethel
- Blaine
- Burns
- Centerville
- Circle Pines
- Columbia Heights
- Columbus
- Coon Rapids
- East Bethel
- Fridley
- Ham Lake
- Hilltop
- Lexington
- Lino Lakes
- Linwood
- Oak Grove
- Ramsey
- St. Francis
- Spring Lake Park

February is Black History Month

Henry Hill, Jr. moved to Anoka in 1957 from Baton Rouge, Louisiana. His father opened a dry cleaning business, Quality Dry Cleaners and Launderers, in Anoka. Henry was 13 years old and was soon attending Anoka High School. He was athletic, active in many high school sports, participating in football, cross-country, basketball, and wrestling. However it was track and field where he excelled.



Henry lettered in track all three of his high school years, and during his senior year he was co-captain of the track team.

“He would always take the time to say hi and was friendly to everyone,” said Ron Huston. “He was a popular and well-liked student.” Ron’s statements are backed up by the fact that Henry was elected senior class president, the first Black student to hold that office.

Dennis Berg went to school two years with Henry and said Henry was one of the few students Dennis remembers from junior high. “Henry was a magnet,” Dennis said. “Everyone wanted to be around him. If he sat down at an empty table, it didn’t take long until the table was full.” Dennis called Henry a “natural leader” and commented on how neat, well groomed, polite, and well spoken Henry always was. “Henry had goals for himself and he didn’t let anything get in the way of him attaining those goals.”

Henry was the only child of Henry and Albertha Hill. Henry Sr. passed away in 1964.

After graduating from Anoka High School in 1962, Henry went to Mankato State College to major in business administration. He continued to participate in track and field, where he was recognized as an outstanding athlete. Following his college graduation, Henry was accepted in the Army Officers Candidate School at Fort Polk, Louisiana, and commissioned a second lieutenant.

On June 10, 1968, Henry married Rita. She was attending Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Six days later Henry was on his way to Vietnam as a platoon leader with the 1st Infantry Division.

The platoon Henry was leading was in Quang Ngai, South Vietnam on August 23, 1968, when, in hostile action, Henry received multiple fragmentation wounds. The message from the adjutant general’s office read:

The Secretary of the Army expresses deepest regret that First Lieutenant Henry Hill, Jr., died in Vietnam Aug. 23 as a result of wounds received on combat operations when engaged with hostile forces in a fire fight.

That message was given to Henry’s mother two hours before her second wedding.

Henry’s body was brought back to Anoka and a visitation held at the Anoka Methodist Church on August 30th. Following the service, his remains were taken to Franklin, Louisiana, for interment near his father. Henry was in Vietnam just 66 days.

“This country lost a lot when Henry was killed,” said Dennis Berg. “I often wonder what Henry could have done. Henry rose above issues of color or class. He could have done so much for civil rights. With Henry, you saw the man, not the color of his skin.”



Henry Hill, Jr. at a track meet for Anoka High School, 1962.

History Center News is published by the Anoka County Historical Society six times yearly as a member benefit.

Anoka County History Center & Library

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History Center Hours:

Tuesday 10-8

Wednesday-Friday 10-5

Saturday 10-4

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The Anoka County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions to ACHS are tax-deductible within the allowable limits of the law.

From the Director's Desk... From the President...

By Bonnie McDonald

In each newsletter we feature the story of a special artifact in the Historical Society's collection. It may be a favorite from an exhibit or something that has not yet been displayed. This month, we bring you the story of a wooden sled. However, it is also important to tell you about how we care for the sled and other artifacts behind the scenes.

Donald Hoglund donated a sled to ACHS in October of 1976 in memory of his parents. It was the year of America's Bicentennial and many people were focused on preserving local and national history. Museum assistant Pat Schwappach accepted the sled into the collection, along with 300 other artifacts that year. The sled's history was documented on an accession sheet upon its arrival, then given an accession number and put in storage or on display. To the best of their ability, ACHS board and staff members have carefully stored and handled items in our collection, like the Hoglund sled, since the first artifact was accepted in 1936.

In February of 2001, ACHS' project curator Marilyn Anderson began inputting these records into our computer cataloguing system. Cataloguing each item in the artifact collection is essential for its preservation, efficient retrieval, and for ACHS to provide proper insurance coverage. Marilyn must retrieve each artifact, locate its accession number, and create a new computer record noting its donor, history, condition, and location. She includes a digital photograph in the record, which will help ACHS retrieve the artifact in the event of a theft. Finally, the artifact is carefully packed using archival materials.

Some 13,000 artifacts have been catalogued so far, representing about 30% of ACHS' collection. Each artifact takes an average of 15 minutes to process, for a running project total of about 3,250 hours. Besides cataloguing artifacts previously acquired, Marilyn has created records for 3,474 new artifacts donated since her project began.

The cataloguing project, also known as the *Veterans' and Service Organizations' Fellowship*, is one of our highest priorities and we turned to our members in December with a letter asking for your financial support of this effort. Generous donations from the Anoka and Coon Rapids American Legions, Columbia Heights V.F.W, and the Anoka Kiwanis have kept this project going for the past two years. I would like to thank all of you who have made donations to continue this project in 2004.

By Paul Pierce, III

I would like to promote our newest membership benefit and encourage the members to attend our "History Round Tables."

The November Thanksgiving discussion ranged from educational and informational, to fun, and even silly. We spoke at length about the realities of those original "Puritans" at Plymouth Rock and how limited their supplies and choices were then. Small taken-for-granted luxuries like sugar make a big difference in whether cranberries are edible or not.

Did you know George Washington was not only our first president, but also the first president to call for a national day of Thanksgiving? Were you aware that Native Americans were not included in Thanksgiving lore in the mid 1800's because so many hard feelings persisted from the conflicts of the early settlement years? The return of the Native American role in our celebrations came with the rise of the nostalgic "Noble Savage" image of the Indians in generations of Americans after the Indian conflicts were over.

Talk of the many different ways families made dressing (or stuffing) and where those recipes originated, turned the discussion to other unique foods. Among them was "Turduckin," a duck tucked into the body cavity of a turkey and cooked together to create a different flavor.

Some of our members may remember when Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed legislation finally making Thanksgiving a permanent national holiday. Before that legislation, it was necessary for the President to call for a day of Thanksgiving each year. Part of the bill was crafted to boost the economy by moving the date back a week to allow for more marketing and sales time for Christmas retailers. Some states rebelled by proclaiming a day of Thanksgiving on the old date instead, and eventually the date was restored nationwide. That is just a small sample of the fine time we had at this first get-together.

Mark your calendars for our next scheduled meeting. When we meet again, it will be a lunch meeting on January 14th from noon to 1 p.m. Our topic will be *FINDING JOHN SMITH AND OTHER IMPOSSIBLE RESEARCH QUESTIONS*. This will be a lot of fun, as we hope everyone will share stories of how they found some bit of history in an unusual place.

On February 18th we will have breakfast and our topic will be *BABY IT'S COLD OUTSIDE!* Bring your breakfast and stories about the blizzards and cold you remember from your past.

Sleds and Sledding

Did you have a “Flexible Flyer” sled? These wooden sleds with steel runners flexed to give the sleds far greater steering ability than anything before them. The first patent for the Flexible Flyer was taken out in 1887 by Samuel Leeds Allen. He was looking for something to keep his farm equipment manufacturing business busier in the winter months and to diversify his product line. His new idea for a child's sled was his most successful.

Flexible Flyers were made by the Roadmaster Company of Olney, Illinois. The company no longer exists, but original Flexible Flyers can still be found by searching on the internet and bought if you are willing to pay the price.

Another kind of sled was the Flexible Flyer Saucer. This sled is still being made and now sells for about \$25.00. These round metal sleds raced down hills at breakneck speeds while their riders hung on to a pair of rope handles on the sides.



Brakes and steering are not included in the saucer's design!

Another evolution of the sled brought plastic sleds of all kinds to the slopes. Some were hard molded plastic in a sled or saucer shape. Other plastic sleds were simple sheets of plastic, with a rope handle to give it rudimentary steering capability when the front of the plastic sheet was pulled up over the riders' feet. Plastic sleds were inexpensive, very fast going down hill, and easy to carry back up.

The same cannot be said of the sled in the ACHS collection!

This heavy wooden sled with metal runners was used to carry wood and was meant for work rather than play.

The sled is probably home-made, using simple plank construction. The narrow bands of metal on each runner would make the sled easier to pull through snow.

There are two bands of metal on each runner, one on the top and one on the bottom. The metal meets

at the center front of each runner and is held on by small nails. The sled is 41 inches long from tip to tip on the runners. It is 17 inches wide and 7

inches deep. Made of planking nearly one inch thick, this sled is no lightweight! It was built sturdy enough to haul heavy loads of wood.

It was donated in memory of Erick Otto Hoglund and his wife, Emma Blanche Hoglund. Their son, Donald, donated the sled in their memory in 1976. Don lives in Lino Lakes.



The sled, along with other winter fun items, can be seen in a case in the ACHS lobby. Stop in to see what is on display in the lobby and the Exhibit Hall.

Exhibits are always changing and only frequent visitors see every exhibit! Be sure to check them often!

Special Membership Meeting

January 15, 7:00 p.m., at the History Center

Your vote is needed!

What?

Your Anoka County Historical Society Board of Directors has called a special meeting of the membership on January 15th for the sole purpose of adopting proposed new bylaws, which were approved at the December Board of Directors meeting. We completed a collaborative and thorough process (spending many, many volunteers hours) to recommend this new and improved set of bylaws to govern ACHS.

Why revise the bylaws?

Why does the board feel that the *old* isn't good enough anymore? Bylaws of any organization need to be updated regularly and changed to meet the needs of changing goals, technology, or use. The last update to the ACHS bylaws was completed in 1996, so we do have a "history" of regular review to reflect the changing needs and vision of our organization. It is now time to look once again at the by-laws to be sure they govern the actions of ACHS in the best possible way to meet our mission.

As our members are aware, ACHS has achieved many positive changes since 1996: a fine new building, professional executive management, administrative policies, larger staff, expanded hours, and an increased budget to go with our new operating responsibilities (a branch of the public library). As such, we are now a different organization. Therefore, what does that mean in terms of bylaws "needs"? Your board identified four goals (which our bylaws should reflect) in answering this question.

1. We are essentially a publicly funded non-profit. While other recreational and educational nonprofits derive significant revenue from dues, we do not. The majority of our funding (80% of operating budget) comes via the public tax rolls.
2. We have an obligation for fiscal and fiduciary responsibility in serving the **entire** county.
3. We now have systems in place for accountabilities and direction (i.e. governing policies, and the professional administration to implement them). There is no longer a need at the board level for hands-on management nor individual agendas.
4. Our bylaws should be membership-driven, and drafted to serve outreach via a more democratic forum with increased member access to the board. Member access means board seats at leadership levels, too, not just involvement as patrons and volunteers.

How will ACHS meet these goals?

Instead of a nominating committee searching for candidates, all members will seek and welcome many candidates for the available seats. Our long tradition of welcoming floor nominations isn't necessarily encouraging to last-minute candidates and the new bylaws will reflect this change. *The names of all qualified board candidates will be placed on a ballot that will be mailed to voting members.* These ballots must be returned to ACHS by a predetermined deadline, and the *winning candidates will be announced -- not voted upon -- at our annual meeting in March.* In this manner, all members may exercise their vote, even if unable to attend the meeting.

What are the proposed changes?

The new board-approved bylaws expand the current nine positions to a range of from nine to a maximum of 15, and define three types of board seats:

Board Seats

1. Three board seats form a leadership triangle: a vice president, president, and past president. Each of these serves a term of one year. The vice president is the only elected position, and after a one-year term flows immediately into president, and then to past president. The membership will elect a VP annually. Placing the leadership of ACHS in a rolling cluster of three will provide for continuing institutional memory, and distribute the responsibilities for visibility and promotion of ACHS among more individuals.

2. Seven board seats (each with a three year term) represent the seven Anoka County commissioner districts and may each elect a representative.

3. Five board seats (each with a three-year term) are designated “at-large” to encourage involvement by persons with special skills and/or where more than one candidate from a commissioner district is qualified.

In 2004, we will elect board seats representing geographic districts 1 and 2 (the others will be phased in over the next two years), and two of the at-large seats. The secretary and treasurer will be chosen from and by the seated board members. The vice president will be elected by the general membership in 2005, when the current term expires.

The highlights are listed here, but a complete copy of these bylaws is available on our website at www.ac-hs.org, or call 763/421-0600 to request a paper copy. A copy of the proposed bylaws is also available in the reading area at the History Center.

We do want and need **your** involvement! Please call me, the current vice president, directly and let me know if I can answer questions and/or place your name on the ballot! There is room for **everyone** to be involved!

Barb Scottston
Vice President, ACHS
763/422-0010

2004 ACHS Board Meeting Schedule

All ACHS board meetings are open to the public and are held in the Anoka County History Center and Library meeting room.

January	8	7:00 p.m.	July	8
February	12	7:00 p.m.	August	12
March	11	7:00 p.m.	September	9
April	8		October	14
May	13		November	11
June	10		December	9

Times for meetings after the March elections will be set by the incoming board. Please watch your newsletter for these times or call the History Center at 763/421-0600.

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

DONATIONS

Jan Anderson
Clinton Caswell
Richard Caswell
Shirley Christenson
Sue Dilcher
Judy Hanna
Joyce Hollinder
Erling Johnson
Morris Johnson
LeOra Kroger
Barbara McDonald
Bonnie McDonald
Lillian and John Meyer
Beth Mullinax
Irene Parsons
Bill Prugh
Jean Seaborg
Don Smith
Irene Sundberg
James Wennerlund

WEAVER TRIBUTE ENDOWMENT

DONATIONS

Elizabeth Krauss

ARTIFACT DONORS

Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce
Jim Boos
Marlys Burman
City of Anoka
City of Anoka Park Dept.
City of Blaine
Alton Drury
Donna “Bobbie” Farrier
Marilyn Hamm
Marie Harsh
Judy Hayden
Anne Hubley
Rhoda Mead
Colleen Neary
Eleanore Pemberton
Ray Steinke
Erik Skogquist

Welcome New Members!

OCTOBER 16 – DECEMBER 19, 2003

Sheila Beutler (Anoka)
Dorothy Butler (Anoka)
Phyllis Dargis (Anoka) (rejoined)
Betty Erickson (Anoka)
Edward and Margaret Faherty (Oak Grove)
Eileen Fredrickson (Ham Lake)
Brian Glenn (Anoka)
Judy Hayden (Coon Rapids)
Ginny Jorgenson (Coon Rapids)
Beth and David Kelleher (Coon Rapids)
Dorothy Linse (Fridley)
Jack and Rozanne Ross (Cambridge)
Jean and Don Stauffer (Coon Rapids)
Irene Sundberg (Anoka)
Nancy and Dick Swanson (Ramsey)

A very special thank you goes to the Anoka Kiwanis for their donation toward the Veterans' and Service Organizations' Fellowship. More thanks for the in-kind donations to offset new artifact shelving costs from Tri-State Surplus of Big Lake and American Converters of Fridley

Let there be LESS light!

Those who have replaced drapes or had the upholstery in their cars fade in the sunlight know how much damage light can do. The Anoka County Historical Society is pleased to announce the success of a grant to help control the amount of light in the Anoka County History Center and Library.

This grant will provide a filtering film over all windows affecting areas where artifacts are stored or displayed. This film will block approximately 65% of visible light and 99.9% of the very damaging UV light. The History Center has 33 windows in the Exhibit Hall alone, with another entire wall of windows in the research library. These windows, and those in other storage and display areas, will all be treated with the UV blocking film in the spring of 2004.

A second phase provided for in the grant will allow ACHS to hire a museum lighting designer to help improve the quality and amount of light in all areas of the History Center. As future funding permits, changes will be made in the existing lighting based on the designer's recommendation to improve exhibit quality and artifact preservation.

This project is financed in part with funds provided by the State of Minnesota through the Minnesota Historical Society's Grants-in-Aid Program. The grant is administered by the Minnesota Historical Society and provides ACHS with matching money for this project. The value of this grant, including the ACHS match, is \$4,635.

Please call your local legislators to let them know how much you value this grant and what the Grants-in Aid Program has done to preserve Anoka County's history.

The Newest Ornament on the County Tree

The City of Blaine presented the 2003 ornament for the County holiday tree on December 2. The ornament is a miniature water tower made in the style of the tower in Blaine's Aquatore Park near the intersection of Hwy 65 and 610. This Blaine water tower is one of only two built using this "mushroom" design. Blaine's tower is the taller of the two. City officials also donated a copy of the history of the water tower for the ACHS Archives.

The ornament was designed by Pat Krueger, a resident of Blaine and a member of the Blaine Arts Council. Members of the Blaine City Council and department heads attended the presentation and were among the first to see the *How We Celebrate* photo display for the holidays.

This exhibit of photographs from many different years highlights the ways people in Anoka County have celebrated the holiday season. A photo of Mayor Tom Ryan's family in 2002 and one of Commissioner Margaret Langfeld taken with her children by the tree in 1970 were their favorites. Thanks to the City of Blaine for supporting ACHS in this special project to celebrate and preserve history.



Announcements and News

◆Do you know of a woman who served in the military? We are gathering their stories for Women in History Month (March). If you or a woman you know served in the military at any time in the past, please call Vickie at the History Center.

◆Coon Rapids Snowflake Days begins on February 6 and runs through the 15th. There are many fun activities planned to help you enjoy our coldest month!

◆Thanks for the donation of clean, white cotton sheets! We still need more, so if you have sheets to donate, please call the History Center.

Volunteer Opportunities

by Maria King

Are you looking for a meaningful New Year's Resolution? Something that really will enrich your life? Enhance your skills? Increase your social circle? Improve your community?

New volunteers are being sought for a number of projects. Some are needed to work on a team with experienced volunteers to achieve specific goals such as the photo project or filing manuscripts. Other projects have pieces a volunteer could take over and achieve individually, such as organizing the box of ACHS memorabilia, or the videotaping of our collections. Some require you to work here at the History Center, which is really a cool place to hang out anyway! Other projects allow you to take work home and chip away at it whenever you can, such as data input, or oral history transcripts. A few projects take you out into the county to take photographs or meet with school groups.

The manuscripts have been put on hold for a while because of more pressing projects, but they need attention right after the holidays. The group that gathers to fold and mail our newsletters would welcome a few more willing hands, too. We need a patient, conscientious photographer to videotape our collection on a Monday in January. Our "Photo History Mystery" days have been a success, but help is needed setting them up and writing down the information that results. The census project, the Around the County Committee, and the photo scanners would all welcome new helpers.

Whether you have a lot of time or only an hour a week, we need you, and we can give you a meaningful job to make you feel good about yourself. Just call the History Center at 763-421-0600, or leave a message for Maria, and I'll get back to you.

Featured Volunteer...Mai Berg

by Maria King

This month's Volunteer is Mai Berg. Mai grew up in the small town of Mentor in the northwest part Minnesota. She moved to Anoka, but then moved to the west coast. Mai returned about a year ago, and found her way to the History Center.

As a bibliophile, or great lover of books, she was initially interested in volunteer work in our library. Then we matched her with a slightly different project, and in her quiet, unassuming way, she dug in and made it hers.

Mai's project is the 1900 census indexing. Many people have worked on the project, but it has so many parts that someone was needed to oversee and coordinate it. First, each name and household had to be copied by hand from the microfilm of the original document. After checking for accuracy, each was typed into the computer in the appropriate field so that the name, town, or household number can be retrieved. The process is a tedious one and the need for painstaking accuracy is clear. At this writing, over 7,000 names have been entered, that's about half finished.



Mai will be leaving us now until after tax season is over as she's also an experienced accountant. Retired from her regular job, Mai works for a CPA from January through April. We'll miss her because she is a capable and conscientious volunteer, and such a fascinating woman! Ever a voracious reader, her love of books has caused her to explore a wide variety of topics from homeopathic remedies to modern literature. She can sew her own clothes, make traditional Norwegian "fattigmand," negotiate the public transportation system, discuss religion, politics and art, and comfort your cough with a blend of vinegar and honey. There's never a dull moment when Mai's around!

Coming Events

January 14, 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. HiSTORY Lunch Round Table

Anoka County History Center and Library. Come share your personal stories or things you've learned researching history. This informal round table discussion ranges in topics on a monthly basis. January's topic will be *FINDING JOHN SMITH AND OTHER IMPOSSIBLE RESEARCH QUESTIONS*. Bring your lunch and your own stories or "stumper questions" to share. We'll provide the beverages, but we aren't promising to find *every* John Smith or Ole Olson you've lost!

January 15, 7:00 p.m. Special Membership Meeting

Anoka County History Center and Library. All members are encouraged to attend this special meeting called for the purpose of adopting revised by-laws for ACHS. The new bylaws are available on our web site or in the Reading Room at the History Center. The web site address is: www.ac-hs.org

January 17, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Photo History Mystery Day

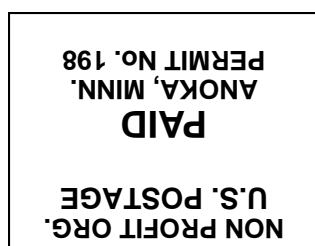
Anoka County History Center and Library. We need your help to identify County history that has gone unrecorded! Take a look at photographs that need identification to see if you know any of these people or events. We'll have volunteers on hand to help record the information and provide light refreshments. This has proven to be a lot of fun, so join us to help record history.

February 18, 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. HiSTORY Breakfast Round Table

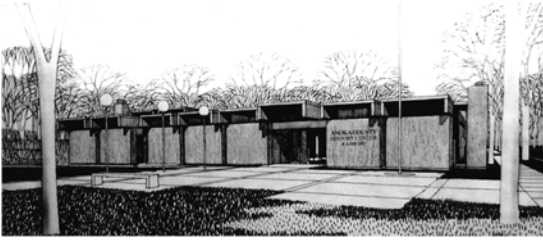
Anoka County History Center and Library. This informal round table discussion ranges in topics on a monthly basis. February's topic will be *BABY, IT'S COLD OUTSIDE!!—or How deep was the snow when you were a kid?* Bring your breakfast and your own stories about our infamous Minnesota winters. We'll turn up the heat a few degrees in the History Center that morning and put on the coffee!

March 13, Time TBA ACHS Annual Meeting

Bethel City Hall, Bethel. Save the date for this important meeting. Elections will be held for the ACHS Board and a great program is being planned. Watch for a special mailing with more details coming in February.



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Bound for Bethel

“All Aboard!” We can imagine the conductor calling excited passengers to the train as it made its first stop at the Bethel depot on July 4, 1899. The arrival of the Great Northern Railway in Bethel was highly anticipated as grading for the new rail spur began in 1898. While the tracks were being laid, a depot, section house, stockyards, and a bunk house were built near the line. The Great Northern’s townsite agent, A. A. White, laid out the village’s new streets and named them for early settlers (Cooper, Wyatt) and a Spanish American War admiral (Dewey.) Bethel’s post office and businesses relocated to be close to the rail line and a building boom followed the railroad’s arrival as residents speculated on the prosperous times to come.



M.W.A. Hall, ca. 1910.

In the summer of 1899, the Tucker Brothers built the first store in Bethel with lumber they hauled from Stacy. John Starkey started a meat market in winter that year and residents secretly enjoyed libations at the “blind pig” operated in a building next to the depot on Main Street. (The term “blind pig” was a veiled reference to an establishment that sold liquor.) The women of Bethel soon drove the proprietor out of the business. The building eventually was rebuilt and enlarged to become the Starkey Hotel in 1902. Later, this hotel got the name “Honeymoon Flats” because of all the newly married couples who started out living in one of its apartments.

Telephone service became available to the people of Bethel in 1901 when the Northwestern Bell and Tri-State Long Distance Telephone Company extended their lines to the town. Telephones must have been ringing

around the county when Bethel incorporated as a village in 1901. Residents opted to keep the town’s biblical name, chosen by James Cooper when Bethel Township had organized in 1858.

Bethel’s building bonanza continued throughout the first decades of the 20th century. Fowler and Strong’s general store, Lemuel Robinson’s hardware store, the Jim Strong Hotel, the Virginia Hotel, and the village fire barn and jail were all built in 1902. In 1904, the State Bank of Bethel building was constructed of red brick on the corner of Main and Dewey Streets. And, one of Bethel’s many organizations, the Modern Woodmen of America (M.W.A.), built their meeting hall on the west end of Main Street in 1910.

At that time, the M.W.A. Hall was a place to show movies once a week accompanied by a live piano player since the movies were silent. When “talkies” came, the silent movies lost their appeal and their showing was discontinued in the late 1920’s by their sponsor, Bethel’s Commercial Club.

The Commercial Club may have also provided the Hall’s stage backdrop, a 10’ x 20’ canvas banner, painted with business advertisements. No amount of research has provided a date for the banner, but it appears to be from the earliest years of the 1900’s. (For more information about Bethel’s banner, see page 3 of the May/June 2003 issue of the *History Center News*.)

In 1934, the village of Bethel bought the Hall and it continued to be the gathering place for dances, programs, shows, meetings and other community events. The Village Hall became Bethel’s City Hall and Community Center when Bethel incorporated in 1974.

We invite you to step back into Bethel’s history by attending this year’s ACHS Annual Meeting being held in the historic Bethel Community Center on Saturday, March 13th, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. ACHS will be featuring the stage curtain as a backdrop for our entertainment provided by the MinneHaHa Players. Enjoy a country pie social while you marvel at the Hall’s beautiful pressed tin walls and wooden floors. See the Annual Meeting insert for more information and return the registration form on page 7 to reserve your place!



Bethel City Hall, 2000.

Research compiled from the Proper Spirit Club’s *History of Bethel Village, Anoka County, Minnesota*. Bethel, Minnesota: Herald Press, 1942.

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From the President...

By Paul Pierce, III

Most people think of history as a textbook subject or as newspaper accounts of noteworthy events. I would like to remind everyone that these sources are only the observations of one person with their own perspective on the event; the significance and meaning *they* have attached to them.

History is sometimes considered similar to mathematics with singular, precise dates, the importance of those events widely accepted, and as facts unquestionable. There is much more to history than that! When people witness an event, there are many different views of what happened, how it happened, and especially the interpretation of what it meant.

Looking at many views is the basis of history and understanding it. I would encourage you to think of the people around you as valuable sources of history. Especially people you see as you go about your everyday routine. From them you can learn a lot of valuable knowledge about your community and how to live your own life. They can provide invaluable lessons based on experience. Many things in life are cyclical and, because the cycles can take a long time to repeat themselves, most people become convinced that the same rules and conditions will continue forever. Those who have "been around the block" know this is not true.

People who choose never to learn about or listen to the problems, the solutions, the regrets, and the rewarding choices of the past miss the wisdom and advice of those who have lived through and survived the past. Those who choose to ignore history are left to suffer the same perils and problems as those who suffered them before. There are many people around you everyday who have many significant experiences to share. The best part is that we can have fun visiting with these people to share their experiences.

Through our Agriculture Grant from the County of Anoka, we are taping histories about farm life in Anoka County. We are also gathering stories of those who lived through the turbulent years of Vietnam in another project, but our efforts are limited by time. We need help getting more people to give us their "living history" on tape. We will train volunteers to conduct oral interviews to help gather this special history. We also need to know if you know of someone we "must" get an interview with. It is well worth the time you'll invest in taking or giving an interview. Either way, you'll get to know someone and have a better appreciation for all those "ordinary" people that surround you everyday.

From the Director's Desk

By Bonnie McDonald

Winter is a wonderful time to huddle indoors and finish those projects that have lay in wait over the last year. Many of us take time to knit that long-overdue baby blanket, build that bookshelf for the den, or pen letters to good friends far away. Staff members at the Historical Society are no exception. However, our personal projects focus on the subject area we enjoy dearly: history! For example, ACHS Library Assistant Diane Buganski is treadle sewing a "deep mourning" dress, based on patterns and photographs from the Civil War-era, to use in reenactments. ACHS Program Manager Vickie Wendel is writing a history of the 2nd Minnesota Light Artillery Battery and the people who served in this Civil War unit. (Look for Vickie's article about this unit in the Minnesota Historical Society's *Minnesota History* magazine later this fall.) As for me, I am completing my master's thesis on the preservation of early-1960s World's Fair sites in the United States. Our staff's interests represent a wide variety of historical topics and we love to share the fruits of our research.

In talking with several of our members, we learned that *you* also enjoy sharing your research findings and personal stories with us. That is why we have created the *HiSTORY* roundtable discussion series—to provide a forum to share stories and ideas and to ask for research advice. The *HiSTORY* roundtable series alternates each month between mornings and afternoons to provide an opportunity for everyone to attend. A special topic is selected each month for discussion and we are happy to schedule topics suggested by roundtable attendees. Please join us for the next *HiSTORY* roundtable discussion at the Anoka County History Center & Library on Wednesday, March 17th, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. In honor of Women's History Month, come and share stories of the ordinary, yet extraordinary, women who have helped to shape your life. Refer to the *Coming Events* section on page 5 of this newsletter if you would like more information or contact us at (763) 421-0600.

Special Birthdays in 2004

St. Genevieve's Church, Centerville-150 years
Bank of Bethel building, Bethel-100 years
Colonial Hall, Anoka-100 years
Sandburg School Building, Anoka-100 years
Anoka County Historical Society-70 years

*Do you know of others?
Please let ACHS know!*

The Story of an Artifact

In your Easter Bonnet, With all the frills upon it...

Hats get attention! From songs composed about them, to shops devoted to custom designing them, to collecting them, hats cross all generations and genders. No one knows when the first human put on a hat or why, but best guesses are those early cave dwellers. They most likely began wearing hats for warmth or shade, but it probably didn't take long until hats became a fashion statement, a sign of status, and a way to make one's self attractive to the opposite sex.

Easter bonnets have always been popular, especially after Irving Berlin's song, *Easter Parade*, made its debut in the movie of the same title in 1948. In honor of Easter bonnets everywhere, a selection of hats from the ACHS collection are highlighted.

The "bobbed" hair styles of the 1920's made the cloche hat *the* hat of the decade. These hats were so close fitting that women needed to worry about sizing and what a change in their hair style meant to their hat size! Brims were small, rolled, or even missing altogether! But not everyone was wearing a cloche. After the movie, *The*



A cloche of the 1920's from Anoka Township (Coon Rapids).

Three Musketeers, in 1921, cavalier hats were popular, as were Dutch caps, berets, and sailor hats.

By the 1930's, the spotlight was on the crown of the hat and crowns went wild. They were square, ridged, tall, puffy, or combinations of all these styles. A change came in how much of the forehead was exposed--1930's hats tended to frame the face rather than cover it.



This 1930's hat is from Fridley.

The difficult years of the 1940's saw hats defy the hard realities of day to day

life. Hats were smaller, with shallow crowns and worn at jaunty angles that tried to laugh away hard times. The most popular were saucer shaped "doll" or "toy" hats heaped with flowers, fruit, and feathers. Veils were back in style, reaching many lengths but most popular were those that stopped at the nose, eyes, or chin.

Veils stayed popular in the 1950's, adding a little mystery and romance to hats. Hats grew a little larger to accommodate the bouffant hairdos. Some of the favorite styles were "pork pies", berets, turbans, and "halos". Bonnets and kerchiefs were also popular.



Imagine sporting this flower bedecked number from Anoka in the 1940's!

Hairstyles of the 60's challenged hat designers to create a hat big enough to go over the beehive hair style or small enough to perch on top of it. Those hair styles were also signaling an end to the era of the hat—the hair itself was so styled that it took over from the hat and many began to go "hatless."

Look around in 2004,—you'll still see hats, so the "hatless" era is not the thing for everyone! Many of today's hats reflect styles of bygone years, so any one of these hats might just be back in the height of fashion this Easter!



A romantic straw hat for a child of the 1950's from Anoka.



A veil with a few leaves and a bow were all that made up this 1960's hat from Blaine.

Up To Date

Announcements and News

◆ Just a reminder that the March ACHS Board of Directors meeting is at 6:00 p.m. at the History Center. Board meetings are open to the public and every is welcome to attend.

◆ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) has opened a new family history center in New Brighton, Minnesota. This new family center is the fifth in the Twin Cities area. The other family history centers are located in Anoka, Burnsville, Minneapolis, and Oakdale. A family history center open house will be held Saturday, March 6, 9 am–noon, at 100 Silver Lake Road, New Brighton. There will be displays on family history in general, including how to get started, and available resources. (651) 407-4111

◆ We are still in need of clean, white cotton sheets! Thanks to those who have brought in sheets—they are already in use in our storage area, but we still need more!

◆ We are still looking for people to talk about their activities in connection with the war in Vietnam! If you protested, supported, fought, or participated in the war movement/effort in ANY WAY, we want to talk to you! If you have a friend who participated in some way, please tell us who they are. We want to cover all sides of this divisive conflict and we need your help finding people who lived through this difficult time in our recent past.

◆ Want to help with a special event? On September 11, 2004, we will be holding a harvest feast and barn dance to celebrate our county's agricultural history. If you are interested in helping, please contact Bonnie at (763) 421-0600 x104

Volunteer Opportunities...by Maria King

Do you enjoy the view through the lens of a camera? Do you like to play detective, and search for clues? Do you enjoy taking ownership of a project and seeing it through to completion? I'm sure I could find a job for you here at the History Center.

◆ On March 2, there will be a work party, at which volunteers will cut, paste, and copy the newspaper articles that have been selected for our manuscript files. I have invited the junior and senior high school volunteers from various schools around the county, in the hopes that they might enjoy meeting other young people who share their interest in history. I think it will be both fun and productive.

◆ Volunteers are being sought to photograph samples of the agricultural architecture throughout the county. This is part of a larger project studying Anoka's agricultural history.

◆ Two more volunteers are needed for our "Photo History Mystery Day" on April 17th.

◆ On-going projects also require volunteer help to scan photos, type captions, file manuscripts and type oral histories.

Whether you have a lot of time to give, or only a little, I'm sure I can find a meaningful volunteer project that will enrich you personally, and enrich your community. Contact me at (763)421-0600.

Featured Volunteer—By Maria King

In my enthusiasm to encourage new volunteers, I may have neglected one whose service to this organization is legendary. I have not featured Lucille Elrite as "Volunteer of the Month" simply because she could be featured **every** month! The end of the year calculation of volunteer hours always finds Lucille way out in front. She has been our top volunteer every year for many years!! In my own defense, it's hard to remember Lucille is a volunteer. We tend to think of her as staff.

Lucille approaches her work here very much as if it were her job. She's never late, and rarely asks for time off. I am even concerned that she sometimes misses social and family things because she is working here. Her dedication is apparent when, every Tuesday and Thursday, she can be found here answering the myriad of questions that come in from patrons. Like a good employee, Lucille is capable and conscientious. She has cultivated a variety of skills and research strategies that never cease to amaze me. Her knowledge of our library is unequalled, and her ability to navigate its many nooks and crannies is impressive to say the least. So, when a patron writes or e-mails a question, we just set it aside knowing the Lucille will be in to take care of it. Once on the trail of someone's elusive ancestor, Lucille becomes like a dog with a bone, and simply will not put it down until she's successful or has exhausted every possible resource.

Those of us who work the front desk are especially grateful for Lucille's talent and charm in dealing with the public. Her cheerful disposition and her eager helpfulness cause patrons to have a pleasant and successful visit. That same willingness to help, at whatever task is asked of her, has caused Lucille to be both respected and treasured by the rest of the staff. She is equally comfortable folding newsletters, searching the census, answering the phone, copying obituaries, or making coffee for meetings.

Lucille has more than earned an exceptional level of trust and we treasure her dearly!



An Update from your Vice President and Nominating Committee Chair...by Barb Sottston

Thanks to all members who attended the special meeting on January 8th. It was a great opportunity for information-sharing and question-answering! Our counsel from the Anoka County Attorney's office, Mr. Dan Klint, was present and asked for some additional time to "tweak" the language of our bylaws so they will be up-to-date under current Minnesota non-profit law. He will also concurrently prepare the required amendments to our Articles of Incorporation and file them with the Secretary

of State. Thus, no formal action was taken at the meeting and approval of the bylaws was tabled.

We will now elect directors at our March 13th annual meeting under the old by-laws, as they are still our current bylaws. Two director seats are up for election: Director D and Treasurer. Also, only those members present at the meeting will be entitled to vote. (You must show up at this meeting to vote instead of voting via a mail ballot for *all* members as is proposed in the new bylaws.)

As in the past, we will invite floor nominations (no "filing" deadline as suggested in the proposed bylaws.) In order for all candidates to receive equal access in presenting themselves to the voting members, we will hand out biographical introductions at the

annual meeting. Since it may be perceived as an advantage to introduce only some candidates in the newsletter, all bios will be held until the annual meeting.

As chair of the nominating process, I again invite all members to bring forward names of qualified candidates – maybe yourself? - and contact me directly at 763/422-0010.

A big thank-you to all who have done so already! We want ample preparation time for staff to get the "scoop" on you printed and ready for distribution to the voters at the meeting.

Coming Events

March 13, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

ACHS Annual Meeting

Bethel Community Center, Bethel. Dessert and coffee will be served starting at 1:00. The business meeting and board elections will begin at 1:30. Entertainment is provided by the MinneHaHa Players presenting the "History of Minnesota in Five Acts" play. The Bethel banner that originally hung behind the stage in the City Hall donated to ACHS, will be displayed for the event. See the flyer inside this newsletter for more details and use the registration form on page 7.

March 17, 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

HiSTORY Lunch Roundtable

Anoka County History Center and Library. In honor of National Women's History Month, we will be sharing stories of REAL WOMEN—those ordinary women who have made an impression on our lives. That means Martha Washington is not an option! This informal roundtable discussion ranges in topics on a monthly basis. Bring your lunch and your own stories of "Real Women" in your life. If you write them down, they can be added to our archives. We'll provide the beverages and no promises to explain the feminine mind! Or male mind, for that matter!

March 18, 7:00 p.m.

The Grand Excursion of 1854

Anoka City Hall Council Chambers. Come hear John Anfinson of the National Park Service talk about the Grand Excursion of 1854 that set the stage for investment and tourism in the new, untamed lands of the "northwest." Some 1,200 people came on a flotilla of riverboats to celebrate the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad connecting the east coast to the Mississippi River. It will be a sneak peak at the history planned to be celebrated in communities all along the Mississippi River this summer.

April 14, 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

HiSTORY Breakfast Round Table

Anoka County History Center and Library. This informal round table discussion ranges in topics on a monthly basis. April's topic will be *WHAT SAYS SPRING TO YOU?—or How long before the snow is gone?!* Bring your lunch and your own stories about our infamous Minnesota "theatre of seasons."

April 17, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Photo History Mystery Day

Anoka County History Center and Library. We need your help to identify County history that has gone unrecorded! Take a look at some of the photographs that need identification to see if you know any of these people or events. We'll have volunteers on hand to help record the information and provide light refreshments. This has proven to be a lot of fun, so join us to help record history.

April 24, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Volunteer Recognition Day

If you volunteered in 2003, watch for your invitation to this special day set aside just for you! Look for your invitation to arrive in the mail during the first part of April. If you volunteered and do not receive an invitation, please call Maria at the History Center at 763-421-0600.

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

DONATIONS

Alliant Tech Systems Employee
Match Program
LaVerne Anderson
Kevin and Patti Bellows
Tom Bernhagen
Joseph and Orlaina Boshea
Marlys Burman
Lee Carlson
Clinton Caswell
Columbus Township
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Janet Wilcox
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Ken Wuest

WEAVER TRIBUTE ENDOWMENT

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Michael and Wendie Lapham
Joan Taubert

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Anoka American Legion Auxiliary

Welcome New Members!

DECEMBER 20, 2003—FEBRUARY 15, 2004

Denise Brown (Anoka)
Mildred Butler (Dayton)
Carl Hoffstedt (Golden Valley)
Stephen Krenz (Anoka)
Melvin Larson (St. Francis)
Mark and Bonnie Peterson (Shoreview)
Joyce Puffer (Dayton)
Greg Smith (Big Lake)

Benton County Historical Society
Shirley Christenson
Margo Cotton
Alton Drury
John Freeburg
Maria King
Lulu Lage
Orval Leistico
R. W. McArdle
Bonnie McDonald
Paul Pierce
Donald Smith
Barb Thurston
Bart Ward

I Love to Read History

“I Love to Read History” is a new program designed by ACHS to run concurrently with “I Love to Read” month in February.

Children in the fifth grade at Rice Lake Elementary School in Lino Lakes are the first to participate. The object is to turn kids on to reading historical fiction and non-fiction history books. Successful participants will receive free student memberships and a free tour of the exhibit hall. Those who achieve the highest level, by reading 1000 pages or more, will have the opportunity to discuss their favorite historical characters on KBOB 106 FM radio. In this way, we hope to recognize scholarship and the love of history in the students, and share their enthusiasm with the communities of Anoka County.

A Special Thank You

A very heartfelt and special thank you to everyone who answered our year-end appeal! Board members gave over \$1,000 towards special projects and 51 members gave over \$3,000 to help the cataloguing project. Our members have been so very generous! Your gifts will help us continue to provide the best possible history services for the public despite budget cuts and cost increases. We couldn't function without people such as you!

Thank you!

Please take a moment to send us some feedback. Return this form to us by March 13th, or bring it with you to the Annual Meeting.

What do you value most about your ACHS membership? (Please number in order of importance)

- _____ Programs I can attend for both enjoyment and education
- _____ Opportunities to actively volunteer
- _____ Newsletters and educational publications
- _____ Events for members-only
- _____ Access to library research
- _____ Free admission to the museum and events
- _____ Membership supports the preservation of history, even if I do not actively participate
- _____ ACHS preserves my personal family history

Other comments about improving AHCS to strengthen our membership? Use additional sheets if necessary.

We want to make ACHS the best, and appreciate your help!

✂ _____ ✂ _____ ✂ _____ ✂ _____ ✂ _____ ✂ _____ ✂ _____ ✂ _____ ✂ _____

2004 ACHS Annual Meeting Reservation Form

Attendee(s) Name: _____

Address: _____

City/ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Tickets--\$10 members/ \$12 non-members

Member tickets: _____ Non-member tickets: _____

Ticket subtotal: \$ _____

Additional donation: \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Reserve your seat by returning this form and your payment **by March 11, 2003** to:

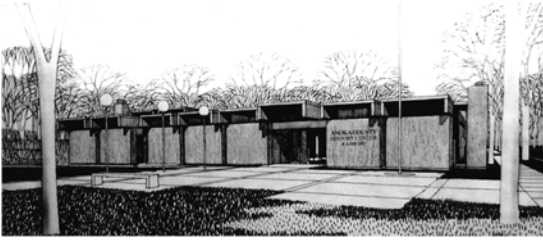
Anoka County Historical Society
2135 Third Avenue North
Anoka, MN 55303

Your ticket(s) will be waiting for you at the registration table the day of the event

Please return the membership survey on the opposite side of this page to help ACHS assess our membership program!

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History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

Vol. 34 No. 3

May-June 2004

Spring Lake Park

So much history, it spans three counties!

The city of Spring Lake Park has an intriguing past spanning three counties and including a series of rather fluid borders. Its earliest beginnings were as a part of Manomin County, formed in 1857, when the borders for Anoka, Hennepin, and Ramsey counties were laid out. Derived from the Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) word for “wild rice,” Manomin County encompassed present-day Fridley, Columbia Heights, Hilltop, and Spring Lake Park. With such limited land area and population, it quickly became too costly to provide county services, so Manomin County was annexed to Anoka County in 1870. The area that was Manomin County thus became Fridley Township and the settlements within its boundaries organized and incorporated as individual communities as the years went on.

Bronson-Erickson, Inc., a development company, was largely responsible for the start of Spring Lake Park as its own community. Credited with platting 75% of Spring Lake Park, Bronson-Erickson, Inc., bought up tax-forfeited land and small farms that came up for sale. They marketed the lots, which were selling for \$15 to \$35 an acre and could be bought on a \$50 down payment and payments of \$6 a month at 6% interest. Their “tract office” was located at the junction of Highways 10 and 65. Other developers were to follow, such as Stanley Dahlmeier, who had the largest single development in the community, called Dahlmeier Acres, consisting of 22 homes.

Folklore says that the Bronson-Erickson developers chose the name “Spring Lake Park” because they saw water bubbling up in the lake and attributed it to an underground spring. This tale goes on that they later found out the “spring” was nothing more than a broken water main. That story is a little hard to believe as there were no water mains in Spring Lake Park in 1936 when the neighborhood was given its name.

Being a “neighborhood,” Spring Lake Park did not have defined municipal boundaries. However, a 1948 map shows the community extending at least a block north of the northern shore of Laddie Lake, several blocks west of the lake, as far east as Edgewood Drive, and south to the bank of Rice Creek. Spring Lake Park as a neighborhood crossed the county line between Anoka and Ramsey counties and also included parts of what is today Blaine and Mounds View.

As a neighborhood, the residents worked together to see Laddie Lake cleaned, roads graded, speed limits imposed on Highway 10 (40 mph), fire protection, community groups and more. They were, in fact, building their community. The first

two attempts for this neighborhood to incorporate never made it to a vote because of several issues; chief among these were arguments about the location of the fire station and the fact that there were too few residents to provide services for such a large area. After the boundaries of the area were reduced in size, the vote to incorporate passed 154 to 73 in 1953. Residents of Spring Lake Park officially became their own village with firmly established boundaries that did not reach as far as the 1948 map, but they did extend over the county line between Anoka and Ramsey counties.

(Continued on page 3)



Felix Daniels and his team helped maintain the roads in the Spring Lake Park community of Fridley Township, ca. 1932.

SERVING:

Andover
Anoka
Bethel
Blaine
Burns
Centerville
Circle Pines
Columbia Heights
Columbus
Coon Rapids
East Bethel
Fridley
Ham Lake
Hilltop
Lexington
Lino Lakes
Linwood
Oak Grove
Ramsey
St. Francis
Spring Lake Park

History Center News is published by the Anoka County Historical Society six times yearly as a member benefit.

Anoka County History Center & Library

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Fax (763) 323-0218

E-mail: achs@ac-hs.org

www.ac-hs.org

History Center Hours:

Tuesday 10-8

Wednesday-Friday 10-5

Saturday 10-4

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The Anoka County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions to ACHS are tax-deductible within the allowable limits of the law.

From the President...

By Paul Pierce, III

As I think back over the activities at the Historical Society in the last two months and what will be happening in the coming months, several things stand out.

Something that is becoming easier is being in front of the camera for the taping of the ACHS cable show each month. For May, we chose to look at Memorial Day.

Memorial Day is a very old holiday, starting as Decoration Day just after the Civil War. It is a time to honor all the people and the sacrifices they made because they answered the "Call to Duty." Many of us don't realize how common it was to see people with missing limbs and debilitating injuries in the decades following the Civil War. Several of the surviving buildings built after that war have distinctive features that were included to help accommodate those veterans. One feature you may have seen and used are the wide stairways with short, deep steps and big landings. The width was for the crutches and canes they needed and the short steps were for stiff and injured legs that could no longer bend or lift so high. The large landings were at regular intervals for resting and for passing those going in the opposite direction. A good example is the Minnesota State Capitol building, started in 1898 when Civil War veterans' groups held a great deal of political power.

I want to thank all of you who attended our annual meeting this year. Most of all, I want to thank the citizens of Bethel and praise their meeting hall and its decorative tin interior. Our event planners found the perfect match for the Bethel stage curtain with the MinneHa-Ha Players. Thanks, also, to the ACHS Board of Directors for the door prizes and to all the volunteers who prepared the hall and served the desserts. (Those pies were wonderful—and big!)

Our April HiSTORY Breakfast Roundtable was the best-attended yet with a lot of reminiscing about Easters past, daffodils, floods, clotheslines, robins, getting live chicks in the mail, and much more. Our May HiSTORY Roundtable will be a lunch for those who don't like to get up early and the topic will be Backyard Archeology—or what's the oddest thing you've found while digging in the flower garden? Bring it along if you can and we'll have a show and tell while we all enjoy the stories.

From the Director's Desk...

By Bonnie McDonald

Over a lifetime, how many countless hours do we spend waiting in lobbies? I know that on more than one occasion, I have found myself listening to the elevator version of an Elton John tune while reading a 9-year-old copy of *Better Homes & Gardens*. If the medical field had a name for it, I believe it would be called Lobby Boredom Syndrome (L.B.S.). Well, here at the History Center & Library, we fight L.B.S. with a passion!

When you enter our lobby, you'll find interesting and engaging exhibits created to give you a taste of Anoka County's rich history.

In March and April, our lobby exhibit commemorated and celebrated Anoka County women who have served in our armed forces. This lobby exhibit was so popular, and so many stories of our residents' mothers, aunts, and daughters were shared, that we are planning a large-scale version for the military gallery to open in coming years.

Archaeology and historic preservation will be the focus of the lobby exhibits in May to celebrate Minnesota Archaeology Week (May 1-9) and Preservation Week (May 5-12). Visit the History Center & Library to see our archaeological stratification model of history's many layers from prehistory to the recent past. We will also host the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota's 2004 *10 Most Endangered Historic Properties* display.

Looking forward to a wedding or an anniversary in June? In June and July, our lobby exhibit will look back at weddings and nuptial necessities throughout history. Come and see the kneeling pillow featured on page 4, as well as a wedding dress, tuxedo, cake decorations, and more. No invitation is required, but you may be asked to join in on a round of the Funky Chicken!

You'll see other lobby exhibits from the Historical Society around the county, as well. If you visit the Crooked Lake Library in May at 11440 Crooked Lake Boulevard in Coon Rapids, you'll see a display about Decoration Day and its evolution to Memorial Day created by our library assistant, Diane Buganski. In June, volunteer coordinator Maria King, will install an exhibit at Crooked Lake Library entitled "Hats Off to History." Make sure to check out these exhibits as you check out your favorite books.

Finally, on behalf of the Anoka County Historical Society, I would like to thank our veterans for their willingness to give of themselves to protect our freedom. As you sit down to enjoy your Memorial Day family picnic and your parents or grandparents start talking about the war years, please turn on your tape recorder. Their stories are invaluable!

Spring Lake Park

(Continued from Page 1)

It is believed that Spring Lake Park is the only single community in Minnesota to be in two separate counties. A portion of Spring Lake Park's eastern boundary is in Ramsey County and about 100 residents of the community vote and pay taxes in Ramsey County. The major motive in this unique situation of dual-county status was the fire station.



The Spring Lake Park community had organized its fire protection after a series of bad fires in the fall of 1943. To raise money for fire equipment, the volunteer fire department formed a nonprofit organization and sold memberships at the cost of \$10 and collected yearly dues of \$2. They bought a used pumper and a bulk oil tanker truck, which they converted into a tanker for water. This equipment was kept at the homes of the volunteer firemen until the station was completed.

the One of the early tract homes in Spring Lake Park, ca. 1940's.

Soon, the Spring Lake Park fire station was built on corner of Highway 10 and Spring Lake Road—within the community of Spring Lake Park, but located in Ramsey

County. This was not an issue until incorporation boundaries began to be discussed and Spring Lake Park residents were reluctant to give up the fire service they had worked hard to organize and the corresponding fire insurance rates. A compromise was reached to allow Spring Lake Park to cross into two counties, thus keeping its fire protection.

Spring Lake Park is a notable community in Anoka County for many reasons; one of the most notable of these reasons is its unique water towers. In 1974, Spring Lake Park decided to paint its water towers in stars and stripes of red, white and blue, in honor of the upcoming American Bicentennial. Thomas Schumann, president of the Apex Contracting Company, was hired to give the towers their patriotic image. When he finished the painting job, he decided to make a declaration of love to his estranged wife and placed her name in five-foot high letters on the red, white and blue tower. Spring Lake Park, for at least a few days, was known as "Norma."

Those uniquely painted water towers have become landmarks in Spring Lake Park and the city continues to celebrate them in its annual summer festival, Tower Days. This year, Tower Days will be celebrated from June 10-13. Everyone is invited to join Spring Lake Park's residents in celebrating one of Anoka County's unique communities and its interesting history.

Information for this article was drawn from the book, *History of Spring Lake Park, Past and Present* written by the SLP Bicentennial Committee in 1976.



Spring Lake Park's patriotic water tower on Able Street, 1990.

The Story of an Artifact

Tell Me A Love Story!

That is just what some of our favorite artifacts at the History Center can do! While we appreciate each and every artifact, no matter what its provenance, the stories behind them are what really make them memorable. Such is the case with the story of these artifacts.

The story starts with artifact #954.M, a small handkerchief with the word “Sweetheart” on it. Jim Farrier was serving with the Army Air Corps in WWII stationed in Italy. He mailed the handkerchief home to his sweetheart, Donna (Bobbie) Closson. Bobbie and Jim remained sweethearts through the end of the war. When Jim arrived back in Anoka, the two began making plans for a wedding.



The hanky Jim sent Bobbie.

Bobbie chose a dress made of cotton netting and satin. It had long sleeves with three buttons on the cuffs, a round neckline with a satin bow, and a three-layered skirt of nylon. Gathers and bows trimmed the skirt and a train completed the effect. Bobbie wore a special slip under the dress to make the most of the layers of skirts. The dress and slip are part of the ACHS collection and they tell Bobbie and Jim’s wonderful love story.

Two more artifacts continue the tale. Jim’s mother, Anne, also needed a dress for her son’s wedding. She chose a full-length, burgundy lace dress with a bias-cut skirt and matching bolero jacket. For the ceremony, she wore a corsage of dusty pink and warm brown velvet gardenias trimmed with green cloth leaves. All were donated to ACHS in 1992.

Wedding invitations were necessary and these, too, were ordered, as well as reserving the First Methodist Church in Anoka for the day of June 4, 1946. An invitation and photographs of the wedding have all been donated to ACHS to help tell the story of this couple and starting their life together.

But Bobbie decided the story wasn’t quite all told yet. Just recently, she brought yet one more piece of her wedding to ACHS. She brought a beautiful handmade kneeling pillow of brocaded satin. Bobbie used her own mother’s wedding dress to make the ruffled pillow she and Jim knelt on at the altar on their wedding day. Bobbie’s mother was Lillian Bennet Closson. Lillian died suddenly of a stroke not long before the wedding and the pillow made from her dress was Bobbie’s way of including her mother. The pillow added yet another chapter in the story that started with a simple handkerchief sent home as a souvenir to his sweetheart from war torn-Italy in WWII.



Jim and Bobbie’s wedding, June 4, 1946.



The kneeling pillow Bobbie made from her mother’s wedding dress.

Stories like these are what make artifacts so special! Stop by the History Center in June and July to see the Farriers’ kneeling pillow and other wedding artifacts in the lobby display and join ACHS for the HiSTORY Roundtable lunch on June 16th when the topic will be “Weddings.”

Anoka County Historical Society 2003 Annual Report (Amended)

TREASURER'S REPORT Submitted by Glen Hardin

ANOKA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

December 31, 2003, 2002, 2001 Financial Statement Comparison.

BALANCE SHEET	12/31/2003	12/31/2002	12/31/2001
ASSETS			
Total Current Assets	302,086.91	262,839.57	246,881.24
Total Fixed Assets	177,170.00	154,779.37	154,525.37
TOTAL ASSETS	479,256.91	417,618.94	403,257.25
LIABILITIES & EQUITY			
Total Liabilities	0	0	4,563.15
Total Equity	479,256.91	417,618.94	398,694.10
Total Liabilities & Equity	479,256.91	417,618.94	403,257.25
INCOME STATEMENT			
Total Revenue	281,663.66	247,670.19	389,630.30
Total Expense	230,608.90	230,645.13	137,751.25
Net Income	51,054.76	17,025.06	251,879.05

2003 Revenue Sources (Gross Revenue)

Anoka County General Support	112,529.00
Anoka County Library Support	75,796.00
Weaver Recognition Event	21,743.25
Capital Campaign	5,000.00
Agricultural History Grant	20,000.00
Catalogue Project Grant	5,500.00
Endowment	5,078.26
Programs & Events	8,622.25
Interest	8,435.46
General Support	8,961.82
Membership Dues	3,429.00
Other	6,568.62
TOTAL	281,663.66

FUNDRAISING REPORT (Amended)

submitted by Bart Ward, Capital Campaign Coordinator

■ Capital Campaign ■ [Goal: \$700,000]

Total cash and in-kind contributions, 12/31/02: \$553,311

2003 cash and in-kind contributions: \$ 66,040

Total contributions to date: \$619,351

Capital Campaign Goal: \$700,000

Remaining Capital Campaign fundraising: \$ 80,649

■ Endowment Fund ■ [Goal: \$500,000]

Total endowment contributions, 12/31/02: \$11,100

2003 endowment contributions: \$11,182

Total contributions to date: \$22,282

Endowment Fund Goal: \$500,000

Remaining Endowment Fund fundraising: \$477,718

NOTE: The original capital campaign goal was to raise \$700,000 for capital improvements at the new History Center. Many of the in-kind labor donations have been recorded at lower than retail value due to accounting standards that require non-professional labor to be booked at minimum wage hourly rates. Therefore, while we have booked the donations according to accounting standards, we have received far more in value than the booking entries. We have also taken a very conservative approach to estimating any non-labor in-kind donations that values were not placed on by the individual donor.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

submitted by Bonnie McDonald

The year 2003 was one of continued progress in fulfilling the mission of the Anoka County Historical Society. As ACHS has become more involved in preserving the history of our many communities, further opportunities have been presented for our participation. The Board of Directors and staff have enjoyed experiencing and directing this exciting growth, while meeting the challenges set forth by our success. There are far too many stories to include in this report about the positive impact of this organization, but I assure our members that you can take pride in our achievements and the fulfillment of our mission. Allow me to highlight your Society's accomplishments for 2003.

◆ ACHS FACILITIES ◆

ANOKA COUNTY HISTORY CENTER & LIBRARY

- The History Center & Library celebrated its first full year of operation in 2003 and welcomed approximately 12,650 visitors throughout the year.
- Capital projects – In October and November, landscaping on the north and west sides of the History Center was improved to allow for better drainage of water away from the building. Improvements included the addition of drain scuppers, drain tile, and drywells. To date, this project has been completed as a donation to the Capital Campaign Fund and the remaining work for this project will be completed in 2004. Second, the History Center roof has leaked three times since February, 2003. Roof replacement is planned for spring/summer of 2004.

CIRCULATING LIBRARY

- A total of 1,122 books, tapes, and CD's, were reserved, charged, or renewed from our facility in 2003. This represents a 31.7% increase over 2002 figures in the number of resources reserved, charged, or renewed in our branch library. Also, the History Center branch had the greatest percent increase in this regard amongst all the Anoka County Library branches. However, we also had the fewest charges of any branch.
- The total usage of the public internet terminals increased by 114% from 2002 to 2003. Internet sign-ins totaled 1,411 in 2003, up 754 sign-ins from 2002.
- ACHS staff began tracking patrons who used additional library services in 2003. Our periodicals were used by 458 patrons, 663 patrons browsed in the circulating library without charging a book, and we received 540 "other" requests (normally relating to finding a book or tax forms.)
- If we assume that there was one person represented for each of these services, our estimate for total usage of the circulating library in 2003 is 4,194 people, an increase of 49.7% from 2002.

EXHIBIT HALL & LOBBY

- ACHS Program Manager Vickie Wendel was kept very busy with exhibits in the History Center Exhibit Hall in 2003. The "Home on the Farm" exhibit opened in March and was followed by the opening of "38th Parallel: Stories of the Forgotten War," which opened in May. Throughout the year, Vickie also alternated themes and/or artifacts located in the "Anoka County A to Z" exhibit in letters A, C, D, H, I, J, L, Q, R, T, and Z. The Historical Society follows professional museum practice in rotating artifacts frequently to prevent light damage.
- Vickie Wendel and Diane Buganski, ACHS Library Assistant, also created many exhibits for the History Center lobby to create interest for entering the exhibit hall. In 2003, lobby exhibit topics included: ACHS Members' Collections, Archaeology, the Korean War, Farming, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.
- Each year, the Historical Society provides one day where museum admission is free to the public, in order to provide equal access to our county's history for all its residents. In 2003, 150 patrons participated in "free day," held on Memorial Day in conjunction with the "38th Parallel" exhibit opening.
- A total of 1,281 patrons visited the exhibit hall in 2003. We had 384 paying adults, 553 paying students, 225 complimentary adults, 24 complimentary students (under 6 years old,) and 95 ACHS members.

RESEARCH LIBRARY

- A total of 303 people registered to use our research facility in 2003; this is down from 331 in 2002. Diane Buganski, ACHS' Library Assistant, believes that this 9% decrease is on account of several researchers who did not register and thus, were not counted. A total of 74 new researchers registered in 2003.
- Additional requests for research were received by telephone, mail, and e-mail. Few of these requests are officially recorded, as staff or volunteers answer them quickly. A total of 37 such requests were recorded in 2003.
- By December 2003, volunteers Shirley Christenson and Marlys Talbot had cataloged over 790 books in the research library and they are nearing completion. Soon, patrons will be able to search research library resources by keyword and title.

COLONIAL HALL

- The ACHS board made Colonial Hall its priority project for 2003. Meetings were held throughout 2003 with representatives of the Anoka Masonic Lodge #30, owners of Colonial Hall, and the decision was made for ACHS to attempt to sublease the building. ACHS retained the services of real estate firm Premier Commercial Properties. Premier was unsuccessful in finding a tenant, nor did further classified ads in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* bring about a sublease agreement. The ACHS Board is continuing its work with the Masons to find a responsible solution for Colonial Hall's vacancy.

◆ ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING ◆

MEMBERSHIP

- ACHS continued to make considerable gains in membership from around Anoka County in 2003. A large factor in this gain can be attributed to the 414 people who received complimentary memberships from ACHS by attending the "Tribute to John Weaver" event on May 29, 2003. Proceeds from this event benefited the ACHS Endowment Fund.
- ACHS memberships increased by 137% from 2002 to 2003, with 698 memberships, representing 957 members, as of December 31, 2003. Every membership category grew, except the "Life" memberships, which are no longer offered. Significant gains occurred in the "Family" (412%), "Individual" (316%), and "Senior" (34%) categories.
- One of ACHS' primary priorities is ensuring that we are representing the interests of each of Anoka County's 21 cities and townships. As of December 31, 2003, we had members from 19 of our 21 communities. We saw significant membership increases in 8 of these communities from our 2002 levels.
- From 2002 to 2003, our membership doubled in two communities (Centerville, St. Francis.) It tripled in five communities (Andover, Anoka, Coon Rapids, Ham Lake, Lino Lakes) and quadrupled in two communities (Columbia Heights, Fridley.) The following were the number of members in our 21 cities and townships at the end of 2003: Andover, 68; Anoka, 335; Bethel, 4; Blaine, 21; Burns, 4; Centerville, 2; Circle Pines, 2; Columbia Heights, 22; Columbus, 0; Coon Rapids, 123; East Bethel, 6; Fridley, 14; Ham Lake, 28; Hilltop, 1; Lexington, 0; Lino Lakes, 3; Linwood, 2; Oak Grove, 15; Ramsey, 60; St. Francis, 11; and 235 from outside Anoka County.
- Finally, over the past eleven months, ACHS has been the target of a member's unproven allegations about administrative concerns. The Board of Directors has heard these concerns and will continue to hear member concerns as long as they do not compromise the organization's mission and goals. Throughout this process, ACHS has maintained a strong Board of Directors determined to guide this organization according to its mission to new levels of achievement.

VOLUNTEERS (Amended)

- Maria King, ACHS Volunteer Coordinator, worked diligently in 2003 to complete our many ongoing projects using volunteer help. She has found volunteers to work at special events, to complete the ongoing manuscript project, and to catalog our large photo collection.
- We had overwhelming and continued support from our volunteers during our first full year in the History Center. In 2003, volunteer time totaled 4,585.3 hours, or the equivalent of over two additional, full-time staff persons. This represents an additional 29.3 hours donated over 2002 hours. A total of 109 volunteers donated hours in 2003, representing a 27% decrease in the number of volunteers from 2002. (Numbers for 2002 were greater due to the museum move.)

- In 2002, our volunteers donated an average of 30.5 hours per person. That number increased to 42 hours per person in 2003. This indicates that our dedicated volunteers are donating more of their precious time to ACHS. Thank you!

POLICIES

- The ACHS Board of Directors has continued to professionalize our operations by passing several organizational policies in 2003. The following policies were passed: Disaster Policy – Preparedness, Implementation, and Recovery Procedures; Facility Operations Policy; Volunteer Policies and Procedures; Community Preservation Policy; Collections Management Policy; Information Systems Policy; and the Donations Policy. The remaining policies, the Board Strategic Plan and the Membership Policy, will be completed in 2004.

◆ PRESERVING AND PROTECTING HISTORY ◆

ACHS ARTIFACT COLLECTION

- In June of 2003, ACHS staff moved all remaining artifacts out of Colonial Hall and from a storage unit we had been using. All artifacts are now stored in the History Center with the exception of the Revolutionary War Drum, located in a bank vault, and paper records being housed in the Anoka County Government Center.
- It became clear after all artifacts were in the History Center that ACHS needed more artifact storage. Using funds from the ACHS Capital Campaign Fund, the Board of Directors purchased new and used pallet rack shelving that would take advantage of the History Center's ceiling height for storage purposes. This shelving was installed on October 16 and 17, after many dedicated volunteers moved all the artifacts out of the collections storage area. They returned a week later to replace them on our new shelving, which increased our storage capacity by at least 60%. In addition, a student from Coon Rapids constructed paintings storage frames for ACHS as his Eagle Scout project. Now, ACHS staff is able to store the artifacts according to accepted museum standards.
- ACHS Project Curator Marilyn Anderson catalogued 128 accessions in 2003, representing a total of 973 artifacts. Over 400 of these artifacts were new acquisitions for our permanent collection. A total of 13,122 artifacts have been catalogued, which we believe is between 1/3 and 1/2 of the collection. *(The cataloguing project has been able to continue through the generous support of the Anoka American Legion Post #102 and the Post #102 Auxiliary, the Columbia Heights V.F.W., the Anoka Kiwanis, and many special ACHS members. Thank you!)*

◆ PROMOTING ANOKA COUNTY'S HISTORY ◆

EVENTS/ OUTREACH/ PROGRAMMING (Amended)

- Staff presented 36 history programs in 2003 to an estimated 2,400 people. Programs were presented in Anoka, Andover, Blaine, Champlin, Coon Rapids, Dayton, Ham Lake, Maple Grove, Linwood, and Ramsey.
- ACHS was fortunate to participate in two incredible history projects in 2003. First, we received a \$20,000 grant from the Anoka County Ag Preserves Program to complete a history of agriculture in Anoka County from 1945 to the present. Through this grant, ACHS has compiled a written history document to accompany oral history interviews and a photo survey of agricultural buildings relating to our agricultural heritage. Second, ACHS partnered with the Anoka Parks and Recreation Board and the Anoka Heritage Preservation Commission to complete their Akin-Riverside Park Heritage Trail. Vickie Wendel was able to work with their subcommittee to develop signage content relating to 3,000 years of Anoka history.

Projects like these enabled ACHS to further fulfill its wonderful mission of bringing history to the public.

- Throughout 2003, ACHS held a number of outreach events to promote our mission, including a panel discussion with Korean War veterans, a Memorial Day celebration to open the “38th Parallel: Stories of the Forgotten War” exhibit, Drums, Dreams, & History, the Around the County Quilt unveiling, the Photo History Mystery Day, and the Anoka County Holiday Tree ornament presentation. Approximately 811 people attended these events. In addition, ACHS systematized the promotion of our events by formalizing a press list and press release format.
- ACHS participated in several events around the county to continue our outreach efforts. Volunteers and staff presented information about Anoka County’s history at the Northtown Mall Community Day, the Ramsey Environmental Fair, Carpfest (Coon Rapids,) the Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museum’s conference, the Ramsey Lions’ Picnic, the Anoka County Suburban Fair, the Nowthen Threshing Show, the Anoka Halloween parade, and to the Minneapolis Metro North Convention and Visitors Bureau group tourism meeting. Diane Buganski also designed and installed two exhibits in the Crooked Lake Library in Coon Rapids. Our website at www.ac-hs.org has also been a helpful outreach tool. Through these and other outreach efforts, engaging members and non-members alike, we were able to promote Anoka County’s history to over 6,800 people.
- ACHS continued to promote new relationships with affiliate history groups in the County, such as the Anoka Heritage Preservation Commission, Columbia Heights Historical Society, and Fridley Historical Society, and to provide assistance and education to County municipalities like the cities of Anoka and Centerville.

**In 2003, AHCS was able to share the history of Anoka County
with almost 24,000 people, a 20% increase over 2002!**

I am proud to report that the Anoka County Historical Society was able to accomplish these achievements within our budget. It is the aim of the Board of Directors and staff to ensure that you, an investor in this organization, receive an exceptional value for your donation.

In conclusion, 2003 was another year in which ACHS was better able to fulfill its important mission and another part of the rich history of our county was preserved because of your involvement. On behalf of the Anoka County Historical Society, I thank you for your support. The Society looks forward to 2004 and its possibilities!

Featured Volunteer...David Thorsen

by Maria King

This month's featured volunteer aspired to the rank of Eagle Scout and the requirements involved a service project that would benefit the community. David Thorsen wanted a labor intensive project with affordable materials. Eagle



Scouts need to show their leadership skills by organizing and directing the entire project from beginning to end. They identify needs, search out community resources, write up a plan of action and find volunteers to help.

David talked with Executive Director Bonnie McDonald about the museum's needs, and Bonnie came up with the idea for a storage rack for our framed art. David sought approval from scout leaders and his father and together they refined Bonnie's initial design. David measured,

drew up plans, sought donated materials, purchased lumber, and organized his crew. Fellow scouts, fathers, family, and friends were recruited to help. In all, over a dozen people came to David's family garage to actually build the racks.

The racks this hard-working crew built hold the framed art in ACHS' collections on its side in such a way that the surfaces do not touch each other. By placing the framed art racks atop the huge Hoffman cabinets, David created useable space where as many as 30 frames can be safely stored in a double row. He then coordinated the construction of five more racks custom made to fit the sizes of our framed art.

The total cost of the project was only \$50 as a result of David's hard work in seeking donations. He put in 137 hours of his time into the project and his volunteers worked another 104 hours. David's project has resulted in a lasting legacy for the entire community.

If art is indeed inherent in man's nature, then storing it safely is inherent to our mission to preserve and protect the history of Anoka County, a task made easier because of David Thorsen.

Announcements and News

◆ Just a reminder that the May 13 and June 10 ACHS Board of Directors meetings are at 6:00 p.m. at the History Center. Board meetings are open to the public and every is welcome to attend.

◆ We are continuing to interview veterans of the Vietnam War in preparation for an upcoming exhibit. We need your help to find them! If you know of someone, please call the History Center at 763-421-0600 to give us their names and contact information.

◆ Want to help with a special event? On July 11, 2004, we will be holding the Anoka Heritage Home & Garden Tour with the Anoka Heritage Preservation Commission. We need many volunteers. All volunteers receive a free ticket for the Tour. If you are interested in helping, please contact Bonnie or Maria at (763) 421-0600.

Volunteers Gear Up for Summer—

By Maria King

Spring is such an energizing time. When sunlight once again warms our countryside, I get the feeling that anything is possible. The empowering effects usually don't last until the end of the project, but the feeling is welcome nonetheless. Somehow, it's always easier to be a starter than a finisher.

As summer approaches, volunteers are needed for summer festivals and events. These are wonderful opportunities for the type of volunteer who enjoys dressing up in costume and is not afraid of speaking to new people. Coon Rapids Carpfest on June 19th, and the Anoka Heritage Home & Garden Tour on July 11th, are a few examples. In each case, the volunteer is given creative freedom in deciding how much interaction he/she is comfortable with. Carpfest organizers would like ACHS to provide a short skit, or an illustrated talk, which is already being researched by another volunteer. Volunteering for the Anoka Heritage Home & Garden Tour is as easy as sitting in a chair, greeting visitors, and helping to provide the homeowners with an added sense of security. Once again, from July 27th to August 1st, ACHS will be at the Anoka County Fair—and we need your talents as a volunteer in the farmhouse and summer kitchen. In each case, the volunteer does not need to be an expert on Anoka County history, but simply needs to be a good listener, with a friendly attitude.

It is important for the Historical Society to have a presence at festivals because so many Anoka County people attend. (Ideally, our outreach efforts would include just about every civic event in the county!) Even though participants always have a fun time, it has become increasingly difficult to find enough volunteers to staff these festivals. I suppose people think they need to be historical experts in order to represent the Historical Society. You don't! Our need is great and becoming greater, so please become a volunteer.

If you are interested in helping, please call Maria at the History Center. We can usually provide a costume, so don't let that hold you back. And we'll make sure you have the information you need in order to represent the Historical Society well. Let's make 2004 the summer that the Anoka County Historical Society reaches every corner of the county, making everyone aware of who we are and what we do.

Three Cheers for Our Incredible Volunteers!

Volunteers are the heart of our organization and we couldn't do our job without them. Each time volunteers work for ACHS, we ask them to sign their hours on the calendar in the break room. In 2003, 109 volunteers gave 4,585.3 hours to ACHS! We appreciate each and every one of our loyal volunteers. We also know there are many more hours given to ACHS projects that are not written on the calendar. We thank you for those hours, too, though we have no way to list them here.

Once again, thank you, ACHS volunteers! You are the best!

Elrite, Lucille	397.5	Canny, Megan	17	Rathbun, Anna	5.25
Mundle, Linda	357	McDonald, Barb	17	Swenson, Ashley	5.25
Niles, David	288	Hubley, Anne	15.5	Boltz, Jason	5
Pierce III, Paul	206	Steen, Ann	15.5	Jersak, Robert	5
Berg, Mai	187.75	Pierce, Mary	15.25	Ludens, Michele	5
Stockhausen, Sharron	174	Gilbert, Margaret	14.5	Handrick, Mary	4.5
Hanna, Judy	167	Breckenridge, Barb	14.25	Karpen, Scott	4.5
Talbot, Marlys	160	Legrid, David	14	King, Michael	4.5
Christenson, Shirley	157.75	Rathbun, Eileen	14	Loader, Becky	4.5
Sell, Charlie	154	Eye, Julie	13.5	Smith, Vi	4.5
Ward, Bart	141	Fitzpatrick, Caitlin	13.5	Steffen, Natalie Haas	4.5
Thorsen, Dave	137	Spadgenske, Lois	12	Wilson, Diane	4.5
McElhaney, Pat	114	Tomashek, Brian	12	Mammenga, Jeff	4
Anderson, Jan	113	Skogquist, Erik	11.75	Rickerec, Andy	4
Skubitz, Kay	100	Horne, Jennifer	11.5	Overby, Jay	3
Wendel, Vickie	95.5	Lerom, Kirsten	11.5	Chutich, Marlys	2.5
Hardin, Glen	92.5	Murphy, Megan	11.5	Essling, Anne	2.5
Scottston, Barb	84.5	Serryn, Pat	11.5	Pratt, Jeaneane	2.5
Auchter, Marian	78.25	Buganski, Diane	11	Saunby, Kelsey	2.5
Schulz, Marion	77	Courteau, Fran	11	Dordan, Carol	2
Novak, June	70.25	Overby, Stacy	11	King, Jared	2
Wallin, Evonne	69.5	Butler, Dorothy	8.5	Becker, Barb	1
Larson, Maxine	64	Ziegler, Shirley	8.5	Bochenski, Anja	1
Wendel, Mandy	63.5	Marsolais, Jim	8	Drury, Mary	1
Prugh, Bill	57.5	Niemi, Saralyn	8	Medin, LaRee	1
Hanson, Myrtice	47.5	Remley, Chris	8		
Spadgenske, Wes	39	Thurston, Barb	8		
Paulson, Lou	37.5	Solheim, Amanda	7.5		
Weaver, John	36	Njaa, Rebekah	7		
King, Maria	35.5	Bator, Fran	6		
Wendel, Ron	34	Bator, Jessica	6		
Johnson, Nykol	28	Berg, Dennis	6		
Ward, Ellen	27.5	Burns, Tom	6		
Ziegler, Lester	27	Delgado, Truman	6		
Frank, Dan	24.75	Jacobs, Ben	6		
Skogquist, Bjorn	24.5	Jacobs, David	6		
Elliott, Linda	20.5	Jacobs, Nick	6		
Burns, Kyle	20	Pierce IV, Paul	6		
Miller, Jon	20	Courteau, Clara	5.5		
Waite, Cory	20	Desig, Joel	5.5		
Wilkerson, Bobby	20	Rickert, Lynne	5.5		
Puterbaugh, Debbie	18.8	Szmanda, Justin	5.5		

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

DONATIONS

Elmer Andersen Foundation
Jan Anderson
Kevin and Patti Bellows
Clinton Caswell
Shirley Christenson
Helen Dawson
Judy Hanna
Myrtice Hanson
Frederick Judd
Tom and Patti Kurak
Melvin Larson
Orrin and Linda Nyhus
Lorraine Shingledecker
Ann Steen
Mike Sullivan
Rodger Sundstrom
Catherine Vesley
Vickie Wendel

ARTIFACT DONORS

Anoka County Parks & Recreation
Anoka Halloween, Inc.
Shirley Christenson
Margo Cotton
Joseph Dehen
Donna (Bobbie) Farrier
John Freeburg
Naomi Johnson

*The Anoka County Historical Society
wishes to impart our sincere condolences
to the families of our members
Pat Burtness, Elder Opem, Roy Clark,
and John Perrin
who recently passed away.
We will remember their deep commit-
ment to preserving history.*

ARTIFACT DONORS (Con't)

Phyllis Lahn
Orval Lesticco
Charles R. Lindberg, Jr.
R.W. McArdle
Terrance E. Mox
Fred Nash
Paul Pierce, III
Donald Smith
Ray Steinke
Target Stores
Barb Thurston
Margaret Raney
Al Roehlke
Bart Ward

Welcome New Members!

FEBRUARY 16—APRIL 15, 2004

Hannah Arsenault (Lino Lakes)
Elizabeth Helm (Coon Rapids)
Charles Lindberg Jr. (Anoka)
Taylor Lund (Circle Pines)
Ashley Mack (Lino Lakes)
Glenda Meixell (Coon Rapids)
Chelsea Miller (Lino Lakes)
Andrew Morse (Anoka)
Rosalie Pierce (Ft. Myers, FL)
Alex Rafferty (Lino Lakes)
Matthew Ries (Lino Lakes)
Laura Sandberg (Lino Lakes)
Rodger Sundstrom (Coon Rapids)
Alexandra Titterud (Lino Lakes)
Alice Wagner (Anoka)

A Banner Day in Bethel

History was celebrated in Bethel as more than 75 people gathered in the community center for the ACHS Annual Meeting on March 13, 2004. The historic building, built by the Modern Woodmen of America about 1910, has recently undergone some repairs to its roof, siding and windows.

Its interior, still paneled with the original patterned tin and wooden floor, has welcomed many gatherings of all kinds through its nearly 100 year history, but few as “historic” as this. Dubbed a “Pie Social,” everyone enjoyed pie and ice cream as they heard about the activities of the society. City Councilmember Mike Sullivan welcomed the gathering to Bethel and acted as the city’s official host.

Historical Society Vice President Barb Scottston conducted the election for Treasurer and for Director D on the Board of Directors. Glen Hardin from Ramsey was re-elected as Treasurer and Myrtice Hanson of St. Francis was reelected to the position of Director D.

Society President Paul Pierce III talked about the goals met in 2003 and those now set for 2004. Updates were provided on the fiscal activity in both a Treasurer’s report and a capital campaign report. Executive Director Bonnie McDonald provided an overview

of Society operations, events and progress in 2003.

Numerous door prizes were donated by board members. These were drawn for and given away just prior to the program, which was the highlight of the event. The program, a play entitled, “The History of Minnesota in Five Acts, with Prologue and Interlude,” was presented by the MinneHaHa Players.

This lively look at history was presented in the theatrical style popular in the second half of the 1800s. A narrator, Professor Kepler, provided the commentary while a cast of six acted out tableaux depicting the narration’s subject. Tableaus in the 1800’s were scenes usually hidden behind a screen until the right moment when the screen was dropped to reveal the actors in some quickly recognizable scene.

One of the favorite scenes in the history of Minnesota was the “Ode to a Mosquito” where the annoying reminder of summer appeared as a hand puppet to search for its victims.

A grand time was had by all! Special thanks to the City of Bethel for hosting ACHS’ annual meeting in 2004.

Coming Events

May 12, 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

HiSTORY Lunch Roundtable

Anoka County History Center and Library. We will be celebrating Minnesota Archeology Week all through the month of May and the HiSTORY Lunch Roundtable discussion will center on “*Backyard Archeology—or what’s the oddest thing you’ve found while digging in the flower garden?*” This informal roundtable discussion ranges in topics on a monthly basis. Bring your lunch and your own stories of backyard finds. We’ll provide the beverages, but you will need your own shovel in case the stories get a little “deep!”

June 16, 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

HiSTORY Breakfast Roundtable

Anoka County History Center and Library. The first months of summer seem to be filled with weddings, so we’ll talk a bit about the history of some of our favorite wedding traditions while sharing our own wedding stories. Bring your lunch and something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue! This informal roundtable discussion ranges in topics on a monthly basis and everyone is welcome to join in the fun.

July 10, Anoka’s Riverfest

Drums, Dreams and History

The Anoka County History Center and Library is the starting point for our “Tour the Town” tours! You may purchase tickets for individual tours or a package to let you really Tour the Town! We’ll have walking tours of the downtown area, guided tours of Akin Riverside Park, tickets for the History Center exhibit hall, a preservation workshop, and a Ghost Tour! Watch for more information to come in the July-August issue of *History News*.

July 11, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

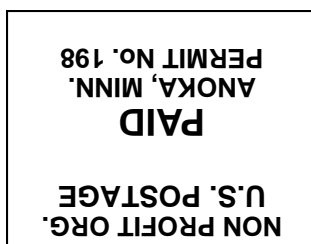
Anoka Heritage Home & Garden Tour

In conjunction with the Anoka Heritage Preservation Commission, ACHS will host this tour of six beautiful, historic homes and their gardens in Anoka. Tickets will be available at the History Center for \$10 to tour all six homes! You can also purchase tickets at the Anoka Riverfest celebration on July 10th at our booth next to the Information tent.

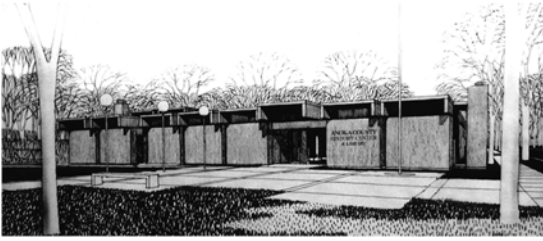
September 11—SAVE THE DATE!

Harvest Time Barn Dance

In partnership with the Tri-County Old Tyme Threshers, ACHS will be celebrating Anoka County’s agricultural history and the opening of our agricultural history exhibit with a threshing show, harvest feast, barn dance, and silent and live auctions. ACHS’ portion of the proceeds will benefit our Endowment Fund.



Anoka County Historical Society
2135 Third Avenue North
Anoka, MN 55303
(763) 421-0600



History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

EXTRA! EXTRA! EXTRA! EXTRA! EXTRA! EXTRA! EXTRA! EXTRA! July 2004

SERVING:

Andover
Anoka
Bethel
Blaine
Burns
Centerville
Circle Pines
Columbia Heights
Columbus
Coon Rapids
East Bethel
Fridley
Ham Lake
Hilltop
Lexington
Lino Lakes
Linwood
Oak Grove
Ramsey
St. Francis
Spring Lake Park

Tour the Town with the Anoka County Historical Society *during Riverfest* July 10, 2004

The 2004 annual summer celebration of *Drums, Dreams, and History* during Anoka's Riverfest has an offering of a special series of tours and programs like none ever before! Tickets for any of these special activities may be purchased in advance at the History Center or at our table next to the Information Booth on Jackson Street on the day of Riverfest, July 10, 2004. Buy a ticket package including all the days' activities and save 20%! Only 50 tour packages will be sold! An adult ticket package price is \$17.50; children's packages are \$5.50. ACHS members will receive a \$3.00 discount on adult packages. Tickets are limited!

ACHS members! Show your membership card to receive your member discount!

Important! Starting times and locations will be printed on the tour tickets and tickets are required to attend. All tours and programs will begin promptly at their scheduled times.

Tour descriptions are featured inside this special mailing!

Drums, Dreams and History “Tour the Town” Program Saturday, July 10, 2004

Walking Tours of The County Seat

Tours begin and end at the History Center, 2135 Third Avenue North. Each tour lasts about one hour and is limited to 30 people on each guided tour. Tours start promptly at:

11:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m., and 3:30 p.m.

Adults-\$5.00

ACHS Members-\$4.00

Children-\$2.00



Preserving Your Family Heirlooms



Learn the techniques used by professional museums to help safeguard your family history. Tips for preserving photos, quilts, paper certificates and other documents, dresses, dishes, silver, and more will be discussed in this one-hour program. This program will be held in the lower level of Anoka City Hall in the Community Room. This talk is an educational program and not well-suited for children.

Programs begin at 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. and last about one hour each.

Adults - \$5.00

ACHS Members- \$4.00

Guided Akin Riverside Park Tours

Hear additional history and behind the scenes development stories of Anoka’s historic promenade. This park has been nominated for an American Association for State and Local History Award! Each tour last about 30 minutes and includes being present when the Civil War reenactors in the park fire their replica cannon! These guided tours are limited to 30 people each. Tours start promptly at: 11:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

Adults-\$4.00

ACHS Members-\$3.00

Children-\$1.00

Anoka County History Center

The Exhibit Hall is a great place to see artifacts and learn the stories of the people who have called Anoka County home. Five exhibit galleries tell the stories of Farming, Logging Camp life, a one room School house, the Korean War, and Anoka County A to Z. Interactive components of the exhibits make them fun for all ages.

SPECIAL ADMISSION RATES FOR RIVERFEST

Adults-\$2.00

Children-\$1.00

MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!



Ghosts of Anoka

This special tour takes guests to places where something unexplained has happened and lets you decide what it might be! This tour will have guests walking just over a mile in the twilight and evening hours, so be prepared! These tours are limited to 25 people. Tours begin promptly at: 8:00 p.m. and 8:15 p.m.*



*Additional tours may be added by demand.

Adults-\$6.00

ACHS Members \$5.00

Children-\$3.00

All 5 events included in a package ticket!

1st Annual Anoka Heritage Home & Garden Tour

Anoka County Historical Society



Sunday, July 11th, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.



Hosted by the Anoka Heritage Preservation Commission and the Anoka County Historical Society

Tour six beautiful, historic homes and their gardens, meet the homeowners, and hear about their restoration efforts. Homes on the tour date from as early as 1867 and as late as 1930 and have a range of styles from Italianate and Queen Anne to Arts & Crafts.

Tour all six homes for only \$10.00!

Tickets are available at the Anoka County History Center, (763) 421-0600, before July 10th and on July 10th, you can purchase tickets at the ACHS/ HPC booth at Anoka's Riverfest celebration from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The History Center will be open on July 11th from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for last minute ticket sales.

Homes on the tour include:

- 433 Harrison Street
- 410 Van Buren Street
- 427 Van Buren Street
- 432 Van Buren Street
- 1850 6th Avenue South
- Ticknor Hill B&B 1625 3rd Avenue South



433 Harrison Street



1625 3rd Avenue South

Anoka Heritage Home & Garden Tour Sponsors

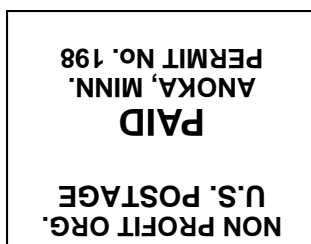
- Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce
- Anonymous Donor
- Corriveau Properties
- Corriveau Realty
- The Countess' Cottage
- Ivy-N-Lace
- Kathie & Maureen, ReMax Associates Plus
- Krista Artista
- The Mad Hatter Tea Room
- Mikki B's Italian Restaurant
- Rick Theisen, Counselor Realty, Maple Grove

***EXTRA!! EXTRA!!
READ ALL ABOUT IT!***

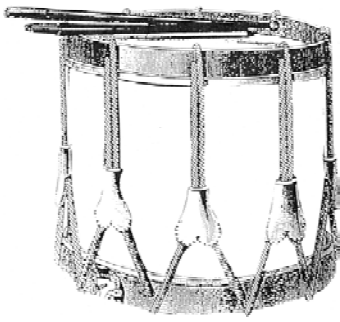
ACHS ANNOUNCES JULY EVENTS

**JULY 10-ANOKA'S RIVERFEST/
DRUMS, DREAMS, AND HISTORY**

**JULY 11-ANOKA HERITAGE
HOME & GARDEN TOUR**



Anoka County Historical Society
2135 Third Avenue North
Anoka, MN 55303
(763) 421-0600



Drums, Dreams, and History *2004*

Let the drums roll on! The need for funding to continue gathering, preserving, and sharing history is an ongoing need. Our programs, exhibits, and outreach efforts since we have moved to the new facility have expanded, but our budget still places tight limits on what ACHS can do. ACHS is counting on each member to help “drum up support for history!”

Your tax-deductible donation to the capital campaign will be recognized by a drum in the appropriate color displayed at the History Center at the July 10th celebration.

White Drum	\$5 to \$49
Red Drum	\$50 to \$99
Blue Drum	\$100 to \$499
Silver Drum	\$500 to \$999
Gold Drum	\$1000 and over

Yes! I want to participate in Drums, Dreams and History 2004! Here is my support for keeping history.

Name: _____

Address: _____

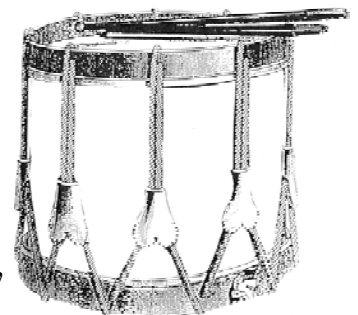
City, State & Zip: _____

Phone: _____

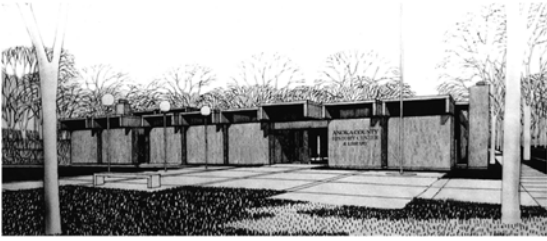
Donation Amount: _____

Return this form with your donation to:

Anoka County Historical Society
Drums, Dreams and History 2004
2135 Third Avenue North
Anoka, MN 55303



Your generous support will help preserve Anoka County history now and for all future generations. Donations are fully tax deductible. Thank you!



History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

Vol. 34 No. 4

July-August 2004

SERVING:

- Andover
- Anoka
- Bethel
- Blaine
- Burns
- Centerville
- Circle Pines
- Columbia Heights
- Columbus
- Coon Rapids
- East Bethel
- Fridley
- Ham Lake
- Hilltop
- Lexington
- Lino Lakes
- Linwood
- Oak Grove
- Ramsey
- St. Francis
- Spring Lake Park

Come Browse Our Books!

Summer is a great time to read that novel that you've been waiting to all winter and what better place to check out that novel than your favorite local library?

Anoka's first reports of borrowing books in some kind of an organized system began as early as 1859—before Anoka was incorporated as a city—but the efforts were sporadic. The true lending library was established above the Ticknor Building on the corner of Second Avenue South and Main Street in 1893. The efforts to keep it growing were spearheaded by the Philolectian Society, an Anoka women's organization. They continued to work for an expanded library in the city with donations and support. With the Philolectian's help, a Carnegie library was built in 1904 on the corner of Third Avenue North and Jackson Street. In 1965, the Carnegie Library, seen as antiquated by some members of the community, was replaced with a one-story, brick library on the corner of Third and Golf Street.

The Anoka County library system began with a study in 1956 outlining the status and projected need for library services in the county. At the time, only two libraries existed in the county—Anoka and Columbia Heights both maintained city libraries. The study, ordered by the Anoka County Board of Commissioners, provided several plans that would bring library services to all of the people of Anoka County. The present system of libraries operating throughout the county in cooperation with the city libraries grew out of that plan. (A copy of the 1956 library study is in the ACHS archives.)



Newly hired librarian, Dennis Shanley, in the new library's Fireside Room, October, 1967.

The 1990's brought increasing population to Anoka County and with the heavy demand for library services came discussions of merging the Anoka City library into the Anoka County library system. Costs and demands worked together and in 1993, plans were made to merge. On January 1, 1995, the library maintained by the City of Anoka was brought into the county library system with a plan for continued service in the downtown area.

The merger made it possible for a much larger facility to be built on Bunker Lake Boulevard just north of the Anoka Senior High School. Ground was broken on the site in 1999 and the expanded Rum River Library was opened in 2000. However, the downtown library did not close! Patrons may still check out books in the library building located at 2135 Third Avenue North in downtown Anoka just as they have for nearly 40 years. The name on the building has changed from Anoka Library to the Anoka County History Center and Library, but the services of the county library system are still available to everyone.

The History Center Library includes a collection of circulating books from the Anoka County Library system. These 1000+ volumes include fiction, children and young-adult books, non-fiction, large print, books on tape, and paperbacks. The collection changes frequently, so the browsing patron will always find something new to read. A selection of magazines and newspapers are available for use in the reading room that is stocked with comfortable chairs. Come sit, read, and relax in this cozy

nook provided just for readers.

Patrons can checkout, return, or request books at the History Center. Patrons looking for something special or by a favorite author need a valid library card to request any item in the system to be sent to the History Center through the County Library's book delivery system. Requests can be made from any computer with an Internet connection, either at home or in the History Center. You will need a PIN number to request books. If you need one, the staff at the History Center can help you obtain your number while you wait. If you don't have a library card, staff at the History Center have the forms you can fill out to request a card by mail.

Just want to do a little surfing on the Internet? There are two computer stations for patron use. Use of the computers is limited to 30 minutes when others are waiting.

More library events are in the planning stages. Coming soon, we will have a children's story time where books with a history turn of mind will be read. Our reading program made its debut last February and promises to be bigger and better this coming winter. Also, watch for *American Girl* series teas and, with enough interest, a book club.

Books are great resources, teachers, and friends. Come find a new one at the History Center in downtown Anoka.

History Center News is published by the Anoka County Historical Society six times yearly as a member benefit.

Anoka County History Center & Library

2135 Third Avenue North
Anoka, MN 55303

(763) 421-0600

Fax (763) 323-0218

E-mail: achs@ac-hs.org

www.ac-hs.org

History Center Hours:
Tuesday 10-8
Wednesday-Friday 10-5
Saturday 10-4

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Vice President – Barb Scottston
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Director B – Bart Ward
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The Anoka County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions to ACHS are tax-deductible within the allowable limits of the law.

From the President...

By Paul Pierce, III

I want to be sure everyone is ready for our upcoming Harvest Time Barn Dance on September 11, 2004. There will be something for everyone to enjoy. For those of you who like to dance, we will have the "Tune Trotters." They play a variety of styles, so be ready for those polkas, waltzes, square dances, swing, and more. For those of you who say you can't dance, there is plenty of time to order those correspondence school diagrams, find a local dance school, or impose on a friend who knows how to dance. The band has a "caller" and that means there will be assistance for shy dancers.

But a dance isn't all you will get for your price of admission! There will be a live auctioneer and a silent auction at our event. Do you have an auction item to donate to help the Historical Society? Call Bonnie or, or ask your favorite local business to donate items or be a monetary sponsor.

The dance and auction would be a great event all by themselves, but we are also including a delicious harvest feast!

And wait! There's more! An exciting event with dinner, an auction, and a dance was not enough for the planners of this event. No! You will also be able to attend an old-fashioned threshing show during the day! Feel the mighty power of the antique machines, see the smoke and heat they create, smell the hot grease and fumes of these antiquated farmers' helpers, and see and smell what they can do to crops and produce. You won't want to miss a moment of this amazing extravaganza.

If you're interested in displaying your own farming equipment or antiques for static display, see the enclosed form on page 7.

Now what would you expect to pay for admission to a jam-packed day of fun, frolic and food? \$100.00 per person? \$200.00? No! Tickets are only \$35.00 in advance or \$40.00 at the door! Be sure your friends and family don't miss a single minute of this value-packed event to benefit the ACHS Endowment Fund and the Tri-County Old Tyme Threshers. Mark your calendars for September 11th and get those tickets soon!

From the Director's Desk...

By Bonnie McDonald

Congratulations are in order! Many groups in addition to the Anoka County Historical Society are hard at work preserving our history. We would like to recognize a few of those groups and highlight their upcoming events. Congratulations to St. Genevieve's Catholic Church in Centerville, which is celebrating its 150th birthday in 2004! This congregation is commemorating its anniversary with a series of events throughout the fall. If you're interested in learning more about St. Gen's events, please call the Reverend Tom Fitzgerald at (651) 429-7937.

Three cheers to the Anoka United Methodist Church congregation, which is also turning 150 this year. Celebrations will be held on September 19th and December 4th. If you have questions, please call their church office at (763) 421-2378.

Congratulations to the Blaine Historical Society, which has reorganized after disbanding several years ago. Call Nyle Zikmund at (763) 786-4436 if you would like to get involved.

Finally, we extend our wholehearted congratulations to the Sandburg Centennial Committee on their progress in celebrating the 100th birthday of the Sandburg building in Anoka. An event is planned for September 24th to highlight the informational exhibits to be displayed in the school. If you are interested in volunteering, please call Maria King at (763) 421-0600.

The Anoka County Historical Society is partnering with other groups around the county to expand and maximize our outreach efforts. First, we have just been informed that the City of Anoka and ACHS have been awarded a Certificate of Commendation by the American Association for State and Local History for the Akin Riverside Park project. ACHS is proud of Vickie Wendel and her part in this project working side-by-side with the Anoka Parks Board and the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC). We would like to further thank the Anoka HPC for our partnership with them on the Anoka Heritage Home & Garden Tour.

Our wonderful relationship with the Anoka Riverfest and Craft Fair Committee continues and we value the opportunity to speak with so many people at the Riverfest celebration.

And, what would summer be without the Anoka County Fair? Once again, ACHS has been welcomed back to the farmhouse and summer kitchen from July 27 to August 1 where we will engage an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 people in our county's history. We thank the Anoka County Fair Board for the opportunity.

Thanks are also in order to the Nowthen Historical Power Association for allowing us to have fun interpreting history at the Nowthen Threshing Show general store August 20, 21, and 22.

Finally, we have had great fun organizing the September 11 Harvest Time Barn Dance with the Tri-County Old Tyme Threshers and we appreciate their support.

We appreciate working with the aforementioned organizations and look forward to future opportunities to work with them. If your organization is interested in partnering with ACHS, please give me a call at (763) 421-0600 x104.

The Story of an Artifact

ACHS Scrapbooks: Collecting Memories on Paper

Artifacts tell stories and few tell stories better than a family album or photo collection. We've all been encouraged, and scolded, to date and identify our photographs and almost everyone has a box or envelope of old family photos we can't identify. We've all lamented over those unknown ancestors and wished someone would have just written down the names!

That is one facet of the advertising behind the current popularity of scrapbooking and one reason historians can support this trend. Making a scrapbook that tells a story will be so very appreciated by those who come after us. Of course, as museum professionals, we encourage people to use archival materials and fixatives and the availability of these specialty products is growing as scrapbooking shops open around the Twin Cities. These shops have sprung up all over Anoka County to sell specialized papers, stamps, stickers, and albums catering to those making scrapbooks. You can even book a "scrapbooking party" where a "consultant" comes to your home—which you have filled with guests—and teaches a class on the latest scrapbooking techniques and tips. Oh, and they sell their products, too!

Scrapbooks, however, are not a new phenomenon. Keeping memories in a book is a time-honored tradition and scrapbooks have been passed down in families for generations. The Anoka County Historical Society has 101 scrapbooks cataloged into the collection at this writing. They vary in age, topic, and skill level, but each one tells a story. Our featured artifact this newsletter is just a little peek at some of the unique and wonderful scrapbooks that have been donated to ACHS.

Francis Gilles graduated from Anoka High School in 1924 and she kept a scrapbook of her high school years. The cover calls the volume a "School Friendship Book," which is bulging with notes and clippings of activities and friends Francis knew at the high school. Some of the notes are much the same as teenagers write to each other in yearbooks today; other notes are very, very different in tone, grammar and content!

O.H. Prestemon kept a scrapbook of all the editorial columns he wrote while he was the editor of the *Columbia Heights Bulletin*. The topics he wrote about in his columns cover the gamut of what was going on in Columbia Heights in the 1920's. The book in which he chose to collect his columns was a big, formal-looking, black, hard cover book with a string tie binding. Emblazoned in gold on the front is the single word, "Scrapbook."

A series of five scrapbooks tell the story of who the Coon Rapids Federated Womens' Club (C.R.F.W.C.) was and what they did from the early 1970s until they disbanded in 1991. The books are all very orderly. Pictures are identified and dated, annual reports, programs, yearly membership lists and more are all neatly contained in the books. All but one of the scrapbooks are the usual type of books purchased at the store. The exception is the scrapbook with "Northstar Federated Women's Club" printed across the white cover in a deep navy blue and decorated with gold leaves at the margin. If you belonged to this group, your name, maybe even your photo is in there!

Dr. Ray Springer was a medical doctor who practiced in Anoka. He must have liked to travel as he made a scrapbook of travel post cards, many from Colorado and Chicago. His postcards are dated in the first years of the 1900's.

Writing inside the front cover tells us that another small, green hardcover book contained the pages made by Charles Harvey McCaslin when he was from 4 years to 5 ½ years old. The pages themselves are handmade sewing cards depicting animals, leaves, boats, and such. Most of the pages of this young man's intricate scrapbooks are signed "Harvey" and date from 1895 to 1901. One thing the scrapbooks do not tell us—who little Harvey was! They were donated in the 1970's and we believe he may have had a connection to Oak Grove, but no records tell us anything about him. If you know, please tell us about Harvey!

There are at least 96 other wonderful stories between the covers of the scrapbooks in the ACHS collection! Come explore the stories they have to tell and think about the stories the scrapbooks you are making right now will tell in the future! They are a great legacy!



A page from Francis Gilles' scrapbook, 1924.



C.R.F.W.C. Dinner Dance, the theme being "Saturday Night Live," January 24, 1981.



A moon painted in watercolor by Charles Harvey.

Featured Volunteers...

Marlys Talbot & Shirley Christenson

by Maria King

The spotlight this month is on Marlys Talbot and Shirley Christenson. Marlys spent many years in the library at St. Stephen's School and currently works for the Anoka County Library system at the Northtown facility. Shirley Christenson is retired from her career with Anoka Hennepin School District 11 where she was the media consultant. The ACHS library project was, therefore, a natural fit for their skills and interests.



Library volunteers Marlys Talbot, left, and Shirley Christenson, right.

Back in 2001, researchers were often frustrated because it was difficult to find resources in our collection. At that time, we were still at Colonial Hall and limited in terms of space. As soon as the books were moved over to the new facility here at

the History Center, talk began about an improvement plan. At Vickie Wendel's urging, Marlys got together with Shirley Christenson, and together they determined that the most immediate need was simply to organize the books in the familiar Dewey Decimal system. While patrons who have used the library for years were familiar with the unique system and could find anything, new patrons had a more difficult time with the non-standardized catalog. In addition, some books had multiple call numbers, some were incorrectly cataloged, and some had been recataloged to the point where the book spine was littered with numbers and no one knew which set to use.

Over the next two and a half years, Marlys and Shirley donated one half day a week, and slowly pecked away at the enormous task. First, they assigned Dewey Decimal numbers to all the books, which is a painstaking and precise task requiring a knowledgeable professional. During this phase, they added the catalog information to the computer so that eventually the entire library would be consistent. That phase was completed this May.

The reorganization phase occurred the first week of June. Marlys took her vacation time to make it happen! Newly printed labels were applied to the spines of all the books and volunteers helped shelve them correctly. The computer that is provided by the Genealogy Society will be available to researchers as a computerized card catalog.

The next piece will be to set up a vertical file for the many pamphlet type books and to mark the call number inside each book, just in case the label should come off.

Plan to stop in and see the reconfigured research library. You will be delighted! Everything is tidy and in proper order. Researchers will now be able to find their way through the myriad of resources we have available. Congratulations, Marlys and Shirley, on a job well done! We are all very proud of our library!

Announcements and News

- ◆ Just a reminder that the July 8 and August 12 ACHS Board of Directors meetings are at 6:00 p.m. at the History Center. The public is welcome to attend.
- ◆ We are continuing to interview veterans of the Vietnam War in preparation for an upcoming exhibit. We need your help to find them! If you know of someone, please call the History Center at 763-421-0600 to give us their names and contact information.
- ◆ Want to help with a special event? Volunteer for the Anoka Heritage Home & Garden Tour on July 11th or the Harvest Time Barn Dance on September 11th. We need many volunteers and all volunteers receive a free ticket to the event. If you are interested, please contact Maria at (763) 421-0600.

Volunteer Opportunities

Riverfest is coming! Volunteers are needed for the Anoka Heritage Home and Garden Tour to be held on July 11, from 1:00 until 5:00 pm. People are needed to greet the visitors and to share the house history with them. It is not strenuous work and it includes a free ticket to the tour. Please call Maria at 421-0600 to volunteer.

I'm looking for a volunteer to distribute information about the Historical Society at Linwood Family Fun Day. It will be held on Saturday, July 10 from 10:00 am to about 4:00 pm. This is a fun opportunity to speak with people and share enthusiasm for local history. However, no real expertise is needed. The Linwood folks struck me as unusually warm and friendly last year when I took this job for myself. I had a great time.

July 27 to August 1 will be the Anoka County Fair. A great many volunteers are needed because this is our most important outreach effort of the year. Ideally, we will staff three venues: the front porch, the farmhouse and the summer kitchen. We need to staff each venue all day, everyday, Tuesday through Sunday. Hours vary slightly, but 10 am to 9pm can be expected. A minimum of five people are needed per shift and two crafters per shift each day. A shift is ½ day, generally from 10 am-4 pm and 4-9 pm. A free, one-day gate pass will be given to those who volunteer more than two shifts. Costumes are optional and we can help with period clothing.

I'm seeking crafters for the fair who would be able to demonstrate needlework (including quilting, embroidery, knitting, crocheting, beadwork, appliqué, etc.) and toy making (including kites, carving, paper dolls, corn husk dolls, etc.) and child-friendly people to supervise children's hands-on painting, printing and coloring activities. I am particularly eager to find someone willing to take responsibility for the spelling bee. This traditional event is held on Thursday afternoon at the fair.

The Nowthen Threshing Show will be held on August 20, 21 and 22. Workers are needed to help run the general store. Times will be announced, but there will be two shifts each day of two people or more each shift.

Be sure and mark your calendars for the September 11 Harvest Time Barn Dance. A large number of volunteers will be needed to take tickets, help with the silent auction, set up, and clean up afterwards. It should be a great time and an important event for the community as well.

Just call Maria King at (763) 421-0600 and leave your name and number and I'll get back to you. Thanks for giving the gift of time and self. It makes this organization great.

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

DONATIONS

APRIL 16-JUNE 22, 2004

Anonymous
Jan Anderson
Rose Anderson
Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce
Bob and Kathy Bahma
Kevin and Patti Bellows
Dick and Helen Bennett
Shirley Christenson
Sandy Connor
Bob and Laverne Crose
David Dietz
Dan and Kathy Erhart
First National Bank of Elk River
Shannon Gillespie
Kay Goesser
Helen Halvorson
Mary Hamacher
Judy Hanna
Bernadene Heath
Pat Hesli
Don and Lorraine Hostetler
Brian and Lynn Kelly
Melinda and Jim Kohrt
LeOra Kroger
Mike and Wendie Lapham
Kay Lorentzen
Mikki B's Italian Restaurant
Jean Morehouse
Norma Nash
Vicki Orr
Becky Panopoulos
Bruce and Marjorie Perry
Personal Touch Bridal Agency
Bill Prugh
Ramsey Lions Club
Albin Savela
Richard and Delores Schanhaar
Jean Seaborg
Dave and Rita Skeels
L. Irene Sundberg
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Jim and Lee Swisher
Richard A. Theisen, Ltd.
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Rosemary Jackson
Clifford G. Johnson
Mrs. LeOla Kroger
Terrance E. Mox
City of Oak Grove
Paul Pierce, III
Margaret Raney
Al Roehlke
Martin Syring
Target Stores
Judi Thurston
Barb Ulvin
Vickie Wendel

Welcome New Members!

APRIL 16—June 15

Nancy Auspos (Anoka)
Jerry and Jeanne Arzdorf (Blaine)
Paul and Laura Estby (Anoka)
Michele and Robert Jersak (Coon Rapids)
Melinda and Jim Kohrt (Minnetonka)
Kay Lorentzen (Anoka)
Jeanette Magnuson (Anoka)
Glenda Meixell (Coon Rapids)
George Moline (Merrifield, MN)
Denise Morrow (Anoka)
Albin Savela (Anoka)
Douglas Stein (Ham Lake)
Darian and Amy Vietzke (Blaine)

A bit of Blaine is in Ramsey County!

In the last issue of *History News*, the featured history was on the city of Spring Lake Park. We speculated that perhaps Spring Lake Park was one of the only communities in the state to be located in two different counties.

Soon after publication, we received a call from County Commissioner Dick Lang. He let us know that a portion of the City of Blaine also lies over the county line. A close examination of a map does indeed show a small portion of Blaine in Ramsey County. The area of Blaine in Ramsey County is near the intersection of U.S. Highway 10 and 35W.

What fun it is to add this tidbit of history to our files and we are very happy that Commissioner Lang pointed it out to us. This is indeed the way history makes its way into the record book!

Thanks for helping us gather history and preserve it for future researchers, Commissioner Lang!

ARTIFACT DONORS

APRIL 16—JUNE 15

Andover High School
Dorothy Bacon
Coon Rapids Historical Commission

The Anoka County Historical Society presents the

Harvest Time Barn Dance

partnering with the Tri-County Old-Tyme Threshers



Anoka County Fairgrounds
Saturday, September 11, 2004

Grab yer partner and step back to a time when a barn dance brought the community together to celebrate a bountiful harvest.

Start out the day with our **threshing show** from 9am to 5pm, featuring tractor displays, gas engines, threshing demonstrations, and antique cars and household items. Bring the whole family! See page 7 of this newsletter if you would like to display an item at the threshing show.

A **harvest feast** will follow at 6 pm and the barn dance at 7:30pm. The dance features the **Tune Trotters** playing waltzes, reels, polkas, swing, and more! Two left feet? A caller will be on hand to announce the dance steps. Great items will be up for **silent and live auction** during the dance!

Purchase your ticket for this one-of-a-kind event before September 11th and **save \$5!** Advance tickets are \$35; tickets are \$40 at the door. You may purchase a \$5 ticket to attend the threshing show only.

Reserve your ticket now by calling (763) 421-0600.

Historical Society proceeds from this event will benefit the ACHS Endowment Fund and are tax-deductible. So, while you whoop it up and drive away with a great auction item, you'll also be helping to preserve our county's history for the future.



The Anoka County Historical Society in partnership with the
Tri-County Old-Tyme Threshers presents the

Harvest Time Barn Dance

Anoka County Fairgrounds
September 11, 2004

Threshing Show Exhibitor Registration

We would like to have a display of pre-1960 farm machinery, memorabilia, etc.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Proof of insurance required – Membership/insurance available for \$20.00

Please tell us what you are planning to display or demonstrate so appropriate space is ready for you. Exhibits *must* be set up by 9:00 a.m. on September 11. Exhibits may be brought in on September 10 and removed on September 12, if needed. Security will be provided.

Description of Exhibit/Machinery: _____

You must confirm your exhibit not later than August 15, 2004.

Please return this form to:

Lyle & Karen Illg
26361 Durant Street NE
Isanti, MN 55040

For questions, please call 763-444-5232

Coming Events

July 10, Anoka's Riverfest

Anoka. The Anoka County Historical Society is hosting "Tour the Town" tours for Riverfest! You may purchase tickets for individual tours or a package to let you really Tour the Town! We'll have walking tours of the downtown area, guided tours of Akin Riverside Park, tickets for the History Center exhibit hall, a preservation workshop, and a Ghost Tour! Tickets available at the History Center or at our booth on the day of Riverfest.

Drums, Dreams and History

July 11, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Anoka. In conjunction with the Anoka Heritage Preservation Commission, ACHS will host this tour of six beautiful, historic homes and their gardens in Anoka. Tickets are available at the History Center for \$10 to tour all six homes! You can also purchase tickets at the Anoka Riverfest celebration on July 10th at our booth and at the History Center on July 11 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Anoka Heritage Home & Garden Tour

July 16, 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

Anoka County History Center and Library. How did you spend summer vacation when you were a child? Stories of travel, the things we've seen and the troubles we've had along the way are the topic for our middle of the summer lunch. (Gone through security at the airport lately?) Pack your bag (lunch) and join us at the History Center! Don't forget your passport!

HiSTORY Lunch Roundtable

July 27—August 1

Anoka County Fairgrounds. The Anoka County Historical Society will continue our tradition of bringing life to the old Farmhouse and Summer Kitchen. Call us to volunteer and be sure to stop by to see what is happening when you are at the Fair!

Anoka County Fair

August 20—22

Burns Township. In partnership with the Nowthen Historical Power Association, ACHS will be staffing the General Store on the threshing grounds. Stop by the Store to purchase candy or pickles, or just to catch up on the latest gossip!

Nowthen Threshing Show

August 18, 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

Anoka County History Center and Library. The Dog Days of Summer (why do we call it that?) and ways to keep cool before air conditioning will be our history focus and everyone is invited to share tales of how hot it got and what they did to cool off! Bring your lunch. Cold beverages (of course!) will be provided.

HiSTORY Breakfast Roundtable

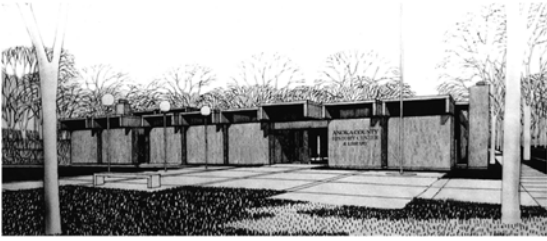
September 11—SAVE THE DATE!

Anoka County Fairgrounds. In partnership with the Tri-County Old Tyme Threshers, ACHS will be celebrating Anoka County's agricultural history and the opening of our agricultural history exhibit with a threshing show, harvest feast, barn dance, and silent and live auctions. ACHS' portion of the proceeds will benefit our Endowment Fund. *Get your tickets in advance and save \$5!*

Harvest Time Barn Dance

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Anoka County Historical Society
2135 Third Avenue North
Anoka, MN 55303
(763) 421-0600



History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

Vol. 34 No. 5

September-October 2004

Farms and Families

Anoka County's Agricultural History

SERVING:

Andover

Anoka

Bethel

Blaine

Burns

Centerville

Circle Pines

Columbia Heights

Columbus

Coon Rapids

East Bethel

Fridley

Ham Lake

Hilltop

Lexington

Lino Lakes

Linwood

Oak Grove

Ramsey

St. Francis

Spring Lake Park

Have you thought about the changes in Anoka County's farms in just the last 50 years? Farms are disappearing quickly and this rapid change resulted in a grant from the Anoka County Agricultural Preserves Fund through the Anoka County Extension Office to ACHS to document Anoka County roots in farming.

The first phase to document farming from 1945 to the present is now complete. A written report is available in the ACHS library and the companion exhibit is now open. Come see this celebration of agriculture and the inventive ways farmers have adapted to the changing needs and resources of the 21st century!

Creating an exhibit to tell the varied stories of farming in Anoka County brought many challenges as staff needed to invent some rather "odd" things! Would you believe you can make fake sod from two types of carpet, quilt batting, and lots of spray paint?! Planting corn is easy in a field, but now bring that field of corn inside—without using any real soil or plant material that will attract insects or other pests into the museum collections. Even hay for the cow had to be "invented" for this exhibit.

Yes, we do have a cow and her calf since dairy farming has been a strong component of Anoka County's farm economy. At one time, there were as many as five large creameries and more smaller ones operating in the county. As recently as 15 years ago, there were some 30 farmers making a living

milking cows. Today, the number of dairy farms in the county can be counted on one hand. This, too, created challenges in the exhibit. A real cow was out of the question, but a barn with a hay loft and block floor just needed a cow. Plants and Things in Ramsey provided the answer to that problem. Visit "Bossy" in our barn and see the 1960's equipment used to milk her up close and personal!

(Continued on page 3)



There really is a cow and her calf in the ACHS Exhibit Hall! Bossy is on loan from Plants and Things in Ramsey and Harold the calf from a friend of ACHS. The other artifacts seen here are from the ACHS collections.

History Center News is published by the Anoka County Historical Society six times yearly as a member benefit.

Anoka County History Center & Library

2135 Third Avenue North
Anoka, MN 55303

(763) 421-0600

Fax (763) 323-0218

E-mail: achs@ac-hs.org

www.ac-hs.org

History Center Hours:

Tuesday 10-8

Wednesday-Friday 10-5

Saturday 10-4

Board of Directors

President – Paul Pierce, III

Vice President – Barb Scottston

Secretary – Shirley Christenson

Treasurer – Glen Hardin

Director A – John Weaver

Director B – Bart Ward

Director C – Judy Hanna

Director D – Myrtice Hanson

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County Commissioner Liaison –

Dick Lang

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The Anoka County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions to ACHS are tax-deductible within the allowable limits of the law.

From the President & the Director...

by Paul Pierce III and Bonnie McDonald

This month, we have combined our two columns to celebrate the Historical Society's 70th birthday. At approximately 7p.m. on September 15th in 1934, the Anoka County Historical Society was born. A dedicated group of amateur historians gathered at Anoka's beautiful Carnegie Library to give birth to an organization that would preserve Anoka County's rich history. This group saw the pioneers' stories fading into the past without being recorded. Mrs. C.E. Chase called the meeting to order, Dr. Scipio Bond was appointed temporary Chairman, and Mrs. C.P. McLean was made temporary Secretary. Read on as we share the stories of ACHS's success through our growth spurts and growing pains.

The Historical Society's early childhood was spent in the attics and basements of board members. Without a permanent home, artifacts collected from the public had to be stored in board members' homes. Our heart was in the right place during these formative years, but the importance of record keeping was not as appreciated as it is today. As a result, some artifact's stories, or artifacts themselves, were misplaced or lost over time.

Our toddler years began in April of 1936 when Anoka County agreed to keep the Historical Society's documents in the County Courthouse and more space was officially authorized in 1946. The organization took its first outreach steps by having annual picnics to increase membership and exhibiting at the Anoka County and state fairs.

Since 1941, the question of a permanent location for our collection had been explored. The opportunity arrived in 1968 for a museum to be housed at the Banfil-Locke Tavern in Fridley. The Historical Society made new friends, like the Anoka County Parks Department and the Minnesota Historical Society, in a cooperative effort to restore the tavern. The museum opened in July of 1969, but the ACHS Board soon began searching for a larger home.

We ventured out on our own and asserted greater independence in 1970 when we began negotiating a lease with the Anoka Masonic Lodge for Colonial Hall, a 5,200 square foot home for our growing collection. Within a year, over 1,500 people had visited and history finally had a home. It was fortunate that the Historical Society upgraded to a larger space, as we soon gained a sister organization. In 1975, Leslie Gillund and Maxine Larson organized the Anoka County Genealogical Society to promote and extend interest in genealogy and family history. Over the next 20 years, the Historical Society advanced through the hard work of our dedicated volunteers and staff and under the professional guidance of directors Pat Schwappach, and co-directors Jean Smith and Vickie Wendel.

As we've grown older, the Historical Society hasn't slowed down one bit, but is more like a teenager—full of energy and exploring new ideas. In 2001, ACHS moved its operations to the History Center and Library to allow for better storage of an ever-expanding collection, handicapped accessibility, growing outreach programs, endless possibilities in the exhibit hall, and increased staff and hours of operation. We have experienced a dramatic increase in membership and community support since the move and have been able to capitalize on more opportunities than ever before.

Come celebrate your Historical Society's 70th birthday by stopping in to see our wonderful lobby exhibit entitled *From House to History Center* running throughout September. You don't need to pick up a birthday present, but your donations are always truly appreciated.

**70 Years &
Growing!**

The Story of an Artifact

(Continued from page 1)

Truck farming, organic farming, and stalls at the Farmers' Market have all become part of the farming industry in our county. These elements are included in the exhibit. The Weed Lady of Burns, Lou Paulson, was a fixture at the Minneapolis Farmers' Market for over 30 years before she retired in 2003 and her market stall sign now graces a portion of the exhibit as does several of her incredible dried arrangements.

Dennis Berg has his market stand where he and his grandchildren sell sweet corn on Nowthen Blvd. His corn field has been moved into the exhibit hall to tell that story and you'll just have to come see it to believe it. Oh, there is also a tractor from Mel Larson of St. Francis working that field!

Next time you wander through the produce section at the local supermarket, think about how carefully timed the planting of that produce is. Stanley Knoll grew millions of radishes in Andover and if he planned it right, he could get two crops of radishes and a crop of sod off the very same piece of land each year. The exhibit features sod, radishes, and Stanley Knoll.

Yet another crop Anoka County produces is Christmas trees and wreaths. Probably the best known farmers in this field (pun intended!) is the Mickman family. Grandmother Johanna began making wreaths to sell in 1934. Now, they sell over 500,000 wreaths to nonprofit groups such as Boy Scouts for fundraisers, not to mention what they sell themselves at their Ham Lake facility. It felt a little odd putting up Christmas trees and wreaths in August, but they tell the story of one more face of Anoka County's farmers.

And then there is the portion of a house under construction, provided by Semler Homes, Inc. Urbanization and the growing population has put pressure on farmers in this area until many of them have given up their life-long work to sell their land to developers. This, too, is a new use of the land and is documented in the exhibit. As Dennis Berg so eloquently put it, "Now we're growing houses on so much of the county's farm land."

Still, as fun as the barn, market stall, sod field, milk house, corn field, and construction zone are, the highlight of the exhibit are the panels that tell the story of the people who work the land. Ten large panels use the words of the families to talk about their life as farmers in Anoka County. Their faces, pictures of their crops, animals, barns, and of course, their tractors, make the people the most important and vibrant part of the exhibit.

Visit. See. Learn. Share. After all, these people are not only your neighbors, but we all enjoy the rewards of their labor.



The 1948 Massey Harris "Pony" tractor came from Mel Larson of St. Francis and is shown here behind an "electric fence" in Dennis Berg's "cornfield."



Guests at the exhibit opening, September 21, 2004.

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

DONATIONS

JUNE 23 – SEPTEMBER 21, 2004

Robert Akin II
Anoka-Hennepin Credit Union
Architectural Restoration, Inc.
Krista Artista
Dennis Berg
Brick House Deli
Scott Bromley
Gil Bruner
Mary Caine
Clinton Caswell
Joe and Marlys Chutich
Corriveau Properties
Cotton's Automotive Supply
The Countess' Cottage
George Chamberlain
Shirley Christenson
Denny's Classic Diner (Rogers)
Mrs. Donald
Lucille Elrite
Excel Motor Sports
Netha Feist
(in memory of Warren Feist)
Brad Fields
Fifth Avenue Dental
Ruth Franklin
Eileen Fredrickson
Randy Getchell
Paul Goebel
John and Kay Goeser
Michael & Elizabeth Gundlach
Judy Hanna
Catherine Hansen
Helping Hand Club of Linwood
Hidden Haven Country Club
Jenny Hinds
Isanti County Equipment, Inc.
Ivy-N-Lace
K&M Properties, LLC
Cindy Kevern
Kelly Kraemer, Edina Realty
LeOra Kroger
Dick Lang
Rochelle MacLean
Mad Hatter Tea Room
Rena McManus
Amy Meyer
James Miller

New Image Remodeling
North Country Ford
Steve Novak
Janet Olson
Sheri Packer, American Family Insurance
Donald Parrott
Eleanore Pemberton
Dorothy Peterson
Paul Pierce III
Pierce Refrigeration
Sannerud, Savarese & Associates
LaVonne Sauter (Lake Netta Reunion)
Jack Schmidt
Marion Schulz
Donald Seipke
Shurgard Self Storage
Richard Sorenson
Gary and Ann Steen
Suburban Lawn Center, Inc.
John Sullivan
Robin Tokar
Edna Walter
Wells Fargo
Betty Wilbur
Wirz Nursery
Ernie and Sharon Woizeschke
(in memory of Elder Opem)
Woodland Stoves and Fireplaces

WEAVER ENDOWMENT

Joe and Marlys Chutich
Michael and Wendie Lapham
Amy Elvig Meyer

ARTIFACT DONORS

James Bauer
Donald Broz
Jim Corriveau
Thomas P. Crosbie
Kelly Frances Drew
Debbie Erickson
Melva Ekvall
Micheal Gundlach
Jennifer Keller
Phyllis Lahn
Melvin Larson
Ruth Oliver
Eleanore Pemberton

Larry C. Phillips
Al Roehlke
Flo Schultz
Wanda Tilleskjaer
Marlys Talbot
Ernie Woizeschke

Welcome New Members!

JUNE 23 – SEPTEMBER 21, 2004

Robert Akin II (California)
Robert Back (Anoka)
Dan and Jeanne Baker (Anoka)
Troy and Karen Brown (Andover)
Madeline and Cob Burandt (Mound)
John Callan (Lino Lakes)
R. George Chamberlain (Anoka)
Lori Cram (Anoka)
Debbie Erickson (Coon Rapids)
Robert and Sharon Fischer (Anoka)
Fridley Historical Society (Fridley)
Becky Gander (Champlin)
Norm and Judy Gensmer (Zimmerman)
Rochelle MacLean (Anoka)
Rod and Lois McArdle (Elk River)
Gene and Patty Mortenson (Coon Rapids)
Sonja and Howard Olson (Anoka)
Jim Plowman (Ramsey)
Dr. Ken Rice (Columbia Heights)
Robin Schloesser (Blaine)
Jack Schmidt (Anoka)
Ms. J. Smith (Anoka)
Angela Stangler (Bethel)
Darwin Sylvester (Rogers)
Ross and Heidi Taflin (Coon Rapids)
Robin Tokar (Anoka)
Margaret Twiss (Ramsey)
Kimi Wolff (Andover)

Anoka County Made Presidential History!

September 16th brought President George W. Bush to a rally at the National Sports Center in Blaine after he made an unscheduled stop at the Brick House Deli in Anoka's historic Post Office Building at Third and Main Street. The big buses and hoards of security certainly got everyone's attention as windows all over downtown Anoka were filled with people hoping to catch a glimpse of our national leader. Hundreds more gathered in Blaine for a rally to support President Bush's bid for reelection. ACHS staff was on hand to record the event in Anoka on film.

Is this the first time a sitting president has visited Anoka County? The White House speech office actually called ACHS to ask that very question. We believe it might be the first time, but we are not sure. It is thought that perhaps Franklin Delano Roosevelt may have visited the Northern Ordinance Plant in Fridley during WWII, but no documentation has been found to either prove or disprove that thought. Do you have any memories of a presidential visit to Anoka County? Write them down and send them to us—even if your memories are of George W. this past month! With your help, we'll have a solid answer the next time the White House calls on ACHS with a question!



President Bush at Third & Main in Anoka, September 16, 2004.

Announcements and News

◆**ACHS now takes credit cards!** You may phone in your order for event tickets, membership dues, research, or whatever and have it charged to your VISA or Mastercard.

◆The American Association for State and Local History has awarded the joint project of the Akin Riverside Park Heritage Trail, produced by the City of Anoka and ACHS, a **certificate of commendation**. The prestigious award will be presented on October 1st in St. Louis, Missouri, in recognition of excellence within the context of available means and regional standards. Take this special walk along the Rum River in downtown Anoka to see the park and the interpretative markers that won the award.

Featured Volunteers—All of them!

By Maria King

I'm incredibly proud to report that our volunteers really outdid themselves this summer. In July, they contributed a record breaking 865.5 hours to the Historical Society!

Lots of those hours were spent at the Anoka County Fair, where we once again manned the farmhouse and the summer kitchen. The front porch was a stage where demonstrations were given to entice fairgoers to come inside. The farmhouse itself is an excellent opportunity to do some real historic interpretation, so costumed ladies sipped tea, while they embroidered, or quilted, or sewed a petticoat on the old treadle machine.

The children were the target audience in the summer kitchen, where various hands-on activities were available. Youngsters were able to make corn husk dolls, try their hand at jacks or marbles, or make a flour/salt clay ornaments.

Another fine event was the Anoka Heritage Home & Garden Tour, where 44 volunteers donated roughly 5 and one half hours each, enabling people to tour six wonderful old houses in Anoka. Patrons and volunteers both learned a great deal while homeowners shared their homes and their restoration challenges with over 280 ticket holders.

Meanwhile, back at the History Center, several ongoing volunteer projects were drawing to a close. Tremendous strides have been made in the photo project, and all our captioned photos have now been entered into the computer. Another census has been indexed, and is currently being checked for accuracy prior to publication. Manuscript files are pretty much up to date, and births, deaths and marriages are currently being compiled. Obituaries are ongoing, of course, and new volunteer opportunities crop up from time to time.

Upcoming opportunities include the Monuments to Life Cemetery tours and the Halloween Parade. Ghost Tours have been so successful that a few more will undoubtedly be added for October. After the flurry of activity in July, the volunteer opportunities have dried up a bit. However, that's always a temporary situation, so keep us in mind if you find yourself with time on your hands!

Volunteer Update...By Maria King

The County Fair brings out the very best in our volunteers. The weather gets hot and humid, the dusty wind coats everything in grit, and still we manage to have a great time. Living a midsummer day without modern air conditioning makes one appreciate the achievements of our forefathers. The old farmhouse is tiny and lacks plumbing, but it has a quiet charm that brings back memories for many fairgoers. Whether they grew up on a farm or just visited, they probably associate the farmhouse with the good times they knew when the day's work was over and there was no television to distract them from each other.

If I could give out ribbons like they do at the fair, these would be my choices:

Blue ribbon for historic interpretation goes to the little girl who looked at the ice box and guessed, "Is it an antique microwave?"

Blue ribbon for showmanship goes to Whiplash the Cowboy Monkey, who upstaged Vickie Wendel during the History Bee, sucking spectators away in droves. (She's still pouting!)

Blue ribbon volunteer would be Maxine Larson who sang in the summer kitchen for 10 hours per day for all six days, and who has done so for many years.

Blue ribbon for fair food goes to Mary Pierce who brought us raisin bread and grapes and cheese as a healthy alternative to fair fare.

The blue ribbon for architecture goes to Lynn Rickert for her log cabin made of pretzels with a Wheat Thin roof and graham cracker shutters.

Blue ribbon for storytelling goes to Kay Skubitz who read a book to kids despite the roar of the demolition derby.

Blue ribbon for artistic endeavors goes to Paul Pierce and his family who copied the famous "American Gothic," cutting holes to insert ones own face into the painting.

Blue ribbon for hospitality needs to be shared by all of the 60 or more volunteers who staffed the summer kitchen, greeted fairgoers, answered questions, demonstrated crafts, and generally shared their love of history with Anoka County residents. You couldn't ask for a finer bunch of folks. They made me proud to be part of ACHS!

Yes, another fair is over, but already plans are underway to make next year even better. Suggestions? Let us know your ideas because we always strive to stay fresh, while fulfilling the community's expectations for the fair.



Coming Events

October 13, 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

HiSTORY Breakfast Roundtable

Anoka County History Center and Library. Bring your breakfast and your stories of Halloween! What better place to share the memories and traditions of Halloween than in the Halloween Capital of the World?! We'll share some history of how Anoka got that title and anything is likely to happen after that! Beverages will be provided from a bubbling cauldron!

October 16, 19, and 21, 6:30 p.m., 2004

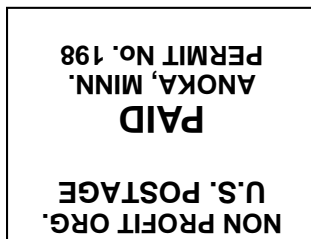
Annual "Monuments to Life" Cemetery Tours

ACHS will be giving our 3rd annual Monuments to Life cemetery tour series. This year, join us as we enliven the history of Sacred Heart Polish National Cemetery in Fridley on Saturday, October 16th at 6:30 p.m. We'll go back to the Fridley Historical Society for treats after the tour. On Tuesday, October 19th, the tour will be in Ramsey's Trott Brook Cemetery and begin at 6:30 p.m. We'll hear about the farmers who homesteaded this land and remain there yet today. The final tour in the series will be in Anoka's Calvary Cemetery on Tuesday, October 21st, at 6:30 p.m. Here we will see many stones with engraving symbolic of the beliefs of those buried in this Catholic cemetery. After the tour, we'll have treats and visit in the History Center's meeting room. Buy a ticket package or just one! See the flyer inside for more details. Tickets for each tour are \$5.00 for ACHS members and \$7.00 for non-members. Purchase a ticket package—all three tours—\$12.50 for members and \$18.50 for non-members. Tickets MUST be purchased in advance and space is limited! You will receive maps with your ticket purchase. VISA and Mastercard accepted.

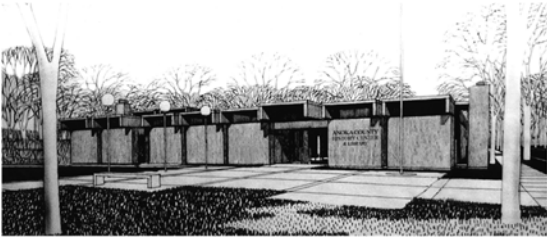
October 27, 28, 29, and 30, 7:00 p.m.

Ghosts of Anoka Tour

Meet at the History Center. Tickets required. This special Ghost Tour takes guest to places where something unexplained has happened and lets you decide what it might be! This tour is just over a mile long and is in the twilight and evening hours. Adult tickets are \$6 for non members, \$5 for members and \$3 for children under 18 years. Get your tickets quick as we sell out of these popular tickets *fast!* Remember, we can now accept VISA and Mastercard.



Anoka County Historical Society
2135 Third Avenue North
Anoka, MN 55303
(763) 421-0600



History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

Vol. 34 No. 6

November-December 2004

SERVING:

- Andover
- Anoka
- Bethel
- Blaine
- Burns
- Centerville
- Circle Pines
- Columbia Heights
- Columbus
- Coon Rapids
- East Bethel
- Fridley
- Ham Lake
- Hilltop
- Lexington
- Lino Lakes
- Linwood
- Oak Grove
- Ramsey
- St. Francis
- Spring Lake Park

Colonial Hall is Celebrating!

The beautiful and historic house on Third Avenue South, known to so many as Colonial Hall, is celebrating its 100th birthday this year at the same time as it is celebrating a new tenant who will once again open it to the public!

Colonial Hall is currently receiving a gentle face lift (always keeping in mind preservation needs) and will be open soon as the new home of The Artique antique shop! People will once again be welcomed into the beautiful parlor, invited to explore the nooks and crannies of the round dining room, and climb the elegant spiral staircase to the second floor all while browsing through a fascinating collection of antiques for sale.

Colonial Hall began as the home of the Doctors Aldrich, built in 1904 for Alanson and Flora Aldrich. The pair were husband and wife and both were physicians. They had input into the design of their home and they named it Colonial Hall as it was designed in the Colonial Revival style. They built the house as both their home and for their medical offices, which were located on the north side of the building on the main floor. After the death of both doctors, the house was sold to the Anoka Masonic Lodge. This fraternal organization built their Lodge Hall on the east side of Colonial Hall and connected the buildings. For the next 50 years, the Masonic Lodge used Colonial Hall as the residence for a caretaker for both buildings.

In 1971, the Masonic Lodge worked out a lease agreement with the Anoka County Historical Society to turn the building into a museum. Colonial Hall blossomed with treasured artifacts from all over the county and countless people toured its rooms to learn about the people and stories of Anoka County. As the years went by, the collections grew until space became the defining issue for the Historical Society and it was obvious to everyone that more space was a desperate need.

After many different ideas and a few false starts, the History Center became a reality in the early months of 2001. Colonial Hall had been our home for 30 years and it was not something the Historical Society could simply walk away from and forget!

The Historical Society has continued to hold the lease on Colonial Hall and care for it, trying to find an appropriate reuse for the building. That use has now been found and Colonial Hall will soon open its doors to visitors again!

The Artique first opened in 1996 on Jackson Street in Anoka and specialized in art and antiques. The trio of women who own the business, Mary, Debbie, and Diane, approached ACHS with a request to sublease Colonial Hall and once again invite everyone to explore the rooms of this special building! They will be opening in mid-November so you can do some Christmas shopping with them; they have also promised to do two fundraisers per year for ACHS in Colonial Hall.

Stop by to say hello not only to Colonial Hall again, but to the new tenants. We're sure Dr. Flora is happy to once again see visitors coming through the doors of Colonial Hall. We wish the Artique the best of luck in their new—and completely wonderful—surroundings!



Executive Director Bonnie McDonald handing over the keys to the Artique's owners, November 1, 2004.

History Center News is published by the Anoka County Historical Society six times yearly as a member benefit.

Anoka County History Center & Library

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E-mail: achs@ac-hs.org

www.ac-hs.org

History Center Hours:

Tuesday 10-8

Wednesday-Friday 10-5

Saturday 10-4

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The Anoka County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions to ACHS are tax-deductible within the allowable limits of the law.

From the Director's Desk...By Bonnie McDonald

I have spent many hours in Colonial Hall in the past month as we prepare to welcome our new tenant, The Artique. Each time I enter its majestic front doors, my belief in the endurance of historic buildings is reaffirmed. This year marks Colonial Hall's 100th birthday, and rather than throwing her a party, we are giving her a new lease on life. We believe that the owners of the Artique, and their individual dealers, will love and care for this vital community landmark as we have for over 30 years. I hope that you will welcome them, encourage them, and patronize their store as it will help to ensure Colonial Hall's future.

Like Colonial Hall, the Anoka County Historical Society has a strong foundation that provides the support to fulfill our mission; that foundation is our membership. At the very first ACHS meeting on September 15, 1934, 11 people stepped forward to support the fledgling organization as members. Steady gains in membership have occurred in our 70-year history, including the 305% membership growth we have seen in the past three years. There are numerous reasons why our 607 members joined ACHS. For some, their family history stems back generations in Anoka County and they are interested in preserving that history. Others are new to the area, but crave more knowledge about the place they now call home. I believe that the overarching reason, and the reason that connects us as a society of members, is our strong commitment to ensuring a future for our past.

Over the years, the Board of Directors worked diligently to keep membership rates at a reasonable price so as to ensure that membership was affordable. The fact is that our membership rates have not changed since November of 1996 (with the exception of the Student category, which was raised by \$.50 in February of 1997.) In the eight years since the last increase, our expenses have risen to better meet the needs of the public and for the greater fulfillment of our mission. For example, it costs the Historical Society roughly \$9.00 per member per year just to publish the newsletter. As a result, much-needed donations are currently subsidizing our membership costs rather than our other programmatic expenses.

The Membership and Nominating Committee carefully considered a membership rate increase. We found that our rates were far below those of other historical societies in surrounding counties and a similar rate schedule was recommended to the board. Consequently, the following membership categories and rates were passed by the board on June 10, 2004, and will take effect on January 1, 2005, pending adoption of the amended Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws (see page 4):

Individual, \$15 (annually)

Family, \$25 (annually)

Senior/ Student, \$7 (annually)

ACHS will not longer offer the Sustaining and Business membership categories. This will allow us to recognize a higher level of monetary support as a donation, which is normally the intent of Sustaining and Business members.

We value your membership and hope that you will continue to support the society as a member. Members are the foundation on which we stand and every member is important to the preservation of our history.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff, we wish you very happy holidays! Don't forget to bring your out-of-town guests to the History Center museum and to purchase gift memberships for your loved ones.

Gift Memberships Available Now!

Give the gift that keeps on giving—an ACHS membership!

A membership to the Historical Society is the perfect holiday gift for a friend or family member. It's hard to think of a better way to remember someone than with a gift they can use for free admission to the Exhibit Hall, discounts on events and merchandise, and to receive *History Center News* all year long.

Or, consider giving an **ACHS membership as a housewarming gift to a new neighbor, use it as a birthday gift, or a thank you gift to a client or employee.**

Stop by the History Center to pick up a personalized gift certificate for any level of membership. Or, call us at 763-421-0600 to place your credit card order. An Historical Society membership really is a gift that keeps on giving all year long.

Remember, you can pay for your membership and all your gift memberships with your **Visa or Mastercard!**

The Story of an Artifact

Holiday Greetings & Christmas Cards

Sending greetings to friends and family at the holidays is a well-established tradition with roots that go back the Egyptians and Romans as it is believed they sent messages with their New Years' gifts. The next phase of holiday greeting took hold in the 18th century in the form of a calling card. A handwritten greeting was added to the back of your name card and left when you called on someone who was not at home.

The first American-made Christmas card came in the early 1850's. It provided not only a greeting and Christmassy scene, but advertising, too! Still, the man who really brought the Christmas card to the American people was Louis Prang.

Prang was a German immigrant, having arrived in New York in 1850. After several years of working for others in the engraving business, he went into a partnership with Julius Mayer to produce lithographic plates. By 1860, Prang was ready to go into business for himself and L. Prang and Company, a printer of business cards, came into being. His work to improve the quality and colors of printing soon set his work apart from others and he was known to use as many as 20 colors to achieve the look he wanted his cards to have.

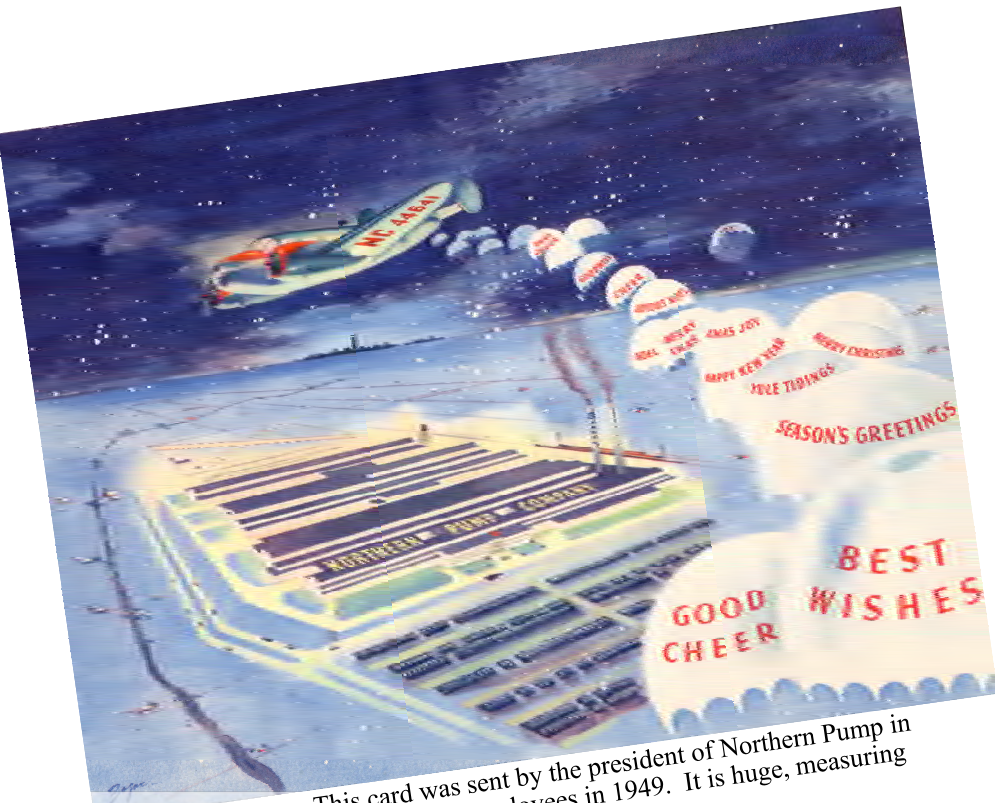
In 1873, he took a stock of his cards to the Vienna International Exhibition where the cards were such a hit that he distributed over 20,000 of them by the end of the exhibition. The next year, at the suggestion of the wife of his London agent, Prang added a Christmas greeting. The cards were so popular that Prang could not keep up with the demand. Within a year, he and his staff of 300 people were producing five million cards a year. Quality was one thing Prang refused to compromise on and he did not do the cheap comic cards or tasteless types that began to appear. He saw his cards as miniature works of art and wanted them to be available to everyone. He sold most of his cards at prices of 10 cents to one dollar each and he began sponsoring contests for Christmas art. While not achieving the intended goal of promoting fine art in the public eye, Prang's competitions made Christmas cards so popular that other companies soon began printing them. The competition



This Santa postcard is dated 1924 and has a greeting written in pencil on the back.

grew fierce and overseas competitors entered the market. Prang finally withdrew from the card industry and turned his attention to the promotion of the Prang Method of Education that tried to foster awareness of art in the young. His manufacturing changed to art supplies.

Today, the heaviest mail bags of the year come stuffed with Christmas greetings from friends and family all over the world. Cards have changed with the times, reflecting the popular themes or trends of the day. Many are discarded when the tree comes down, others are used to make a multitude of craft projects. Some cards are saved and a few of those saved have come to the collections at ACHS. They are a review of history and we have chosen two from our collection to share in this holiday newsletter. We hope you enjoy them and have a happy holiday season!



This card was sent by the president of Northern Pump in Fridley to his employees in 1949. It is huge, measuring 11 1/4 inches by 8 1/2 inches.

Information for this article was drawn from the book, *Christmas in America, A History*, by Penne L. Restad, Oxford University Press, 1995.

Special Membership Meeting

Thursday, December 9, 5:00 p.m., at the Anoka County History Center
Your vote is needed!

Reprinted here are excerpts from Vice President Barb Scottston's article in the January-February 2004 *History Center News* about the process of amending our bylaws. We have now received the final edits from the Anoka County Attorney's office, as well as suggested revisions to our Articles of Incorporation. Both of these are available on our website, www.ac-hs.org, or at the History Center. Please take a look, and then attend our special membership meeting at 5 pm on Thursday, December 9th!

What?

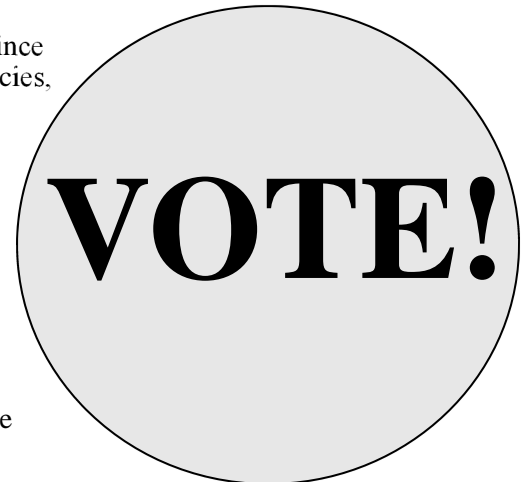
Your Anoka County Historical Society Board of Directors has called a special meeting of the membership on December 9, 2004, for the sole purpose of adopting new bylaws and articles of incorporation, which were approved by the Board of Directors. We completed a collaborative and thorough process (spending many, many volunteer hours) to recommend this new and improved set of bylaws and articles to govern ACHS.

Why revise the bylaws or articles?

"Why does the board feel that the old isn't good enough anymore?" Bylaws of any organization need to be updated regularly and changed to meet the needs of changing goals, technology, or use. The last update to the ACHS bylaws was completed in 1996, so we do have a "history" of regular review to reflect the changing needs and vision of our organization. It is now time to look once again at the bylaws to be sure they govern the actions of ACHS in the best possible way to meet our mission. The same can be said for the Articles of Incorporation. These, too, need updating to remain current and consistent with our bylaws.

"As our members are aware, ACHS has achieved many positive changes since 1996: a fine new building, professional executive management, administrative policies, larger staff, expanded hours, and an increased budget to go with our new operating responsibilities (a branch of the public library). As such, we are now a different organization. Therefore, what does that mean in terms of bylaws "needs"? Your board identified four goals (which our bylaws should reflect) in answering this question.

1. We are essentially a publicly funded non-profit. While other recreational and educational nonprofits derive significant revenue from dues, we do not. The majority of our funding (80% of operating budget) comes via the public tax rolls.
2. We have an obligation for fiscal and fiduciary responsibility in serving the entire county.
3. We now have systems in place for accountabilities and direction (i.e. governing policies, and the professional administration to implement them). There is no longer a need at the board level for hands-on management nor individual agendas.
4. Our bylaws should be membership-driven, and drafted to serve outreach via a more democratic forum with increased member access to the board. Member access means board seats at leadership levels, too, not just involvement as patrons and volunteers."



How will ACHS meet these goals?

"Instead of a nominating committee searching for candidates, all members will seek and welcome many candidates for the available seats." Our long tradition of welcoming floor nominations isn't necessarily encouraging to last-minute candidates and the new bylaws will reflect this change. *The names of all qualified board candidates will be placed on a ballot that will be mailed to voting members.* These ballots must be returned to ACHS by a predetermined deadline, and the *winning candidates will be announced -- not voted upon -- at our annual meeting in March.* In this manner, all members may exercise their vote, even if unable to attend the meeting."

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

DONATIONS

Judy Hanna
Orval and JoAnne Leistico
Glen Lindstrom
Tom and Lyn Olson
Donald and Joyce Bonnell Sage

WEAVER ENDOWMENT DONATIONS

Mike and Wendie Lapham

MEMORIALS

In memory of
RICHARD SORENSON
given by Dave and Elynn Niles

ARTIFACT DONORS

Anoka County 4-H Extension Office

*The Anoka County Historical Society
wishes to impart our sincere condolences
to the family of our member
Richard Sorenson
who passed away on October 9, 2004.
We will always remember his deep
commitment to preserving history.*

Anoka-Hennepin I.S.D. #11
Anoka High School
Mary Capra
Shirley Christenson
Cub Pharmacy-Coon Rapids
Bobby Englund
Marian Granfield
Barbara Kesser
Paul Pierce III

Welcome New Members!

SEPTEMBER 22-OCTOBER 21, 2004
Teresa Chapman (Crystal)
Fran and Clara Courteau (Coon Rapids)
Orval and JoAnne Leistico (Burns Twp.)
Frank & MaryAnne McDonald (Arizona)
John, Julie, Ethan, & Colin McDonald
(Big Lake)
Tom and Lyn Olson (Burns Township)

Donald and Joyce Bonnell Sage
Sandburg Centennial Committee
Barb Thurston
Bert Williams

Thank you, Shirley! Welcome, Jan!

Our “dream team” of ACHS Board Secretary Shirley Christenson and recording secretary Jan Anderson has lost a valued player. Free agent Shirley Christenson, an active community volunteer, has been awarded the coveted “MVP” of the Anoka Kiwanis—that’s right, in October, Shirley took over as the Kiwanis President. With the hectic schedule involved including weekly meetings, peanut sales, and the well-loved pancake breakfast, Shirley retired her jersey as Secretary as of October 1, 2004.

Shirley was appointed as a first-round draft pick for the Secretary’s position in January of 2001 after all-star Becky Loader left the board. Right away, Shirley invigorated the board minutes, provided strong leadership, and offered her excellent experience in library administration to make the research library more user-friendly.

Shirley’s winning moves could not have been achieved without her wing guard, recording secretary Jan Anderson. Jan volunteered in December of 2000 to take minutes at ACHS board meetings to help the Secretary interact as an officer of the organization. Together, she and Shirley have recorded the organization’s history as it was in the making.



At its October 14th meeting, the ACHS Board
Shirley Christenson, Nov., 2003

of Directors appointed seasoned player Jan Anderson to fill Shirley’s unexpired term (to March, 2005.) Jan had taken on far greater challenges than our team may present in the next five months, as she was a middle school teacher for almost three decades. Fundraising is a breeze compared to 13-year olds with hormones! Jan is a resident of Andover, which is a community that had not been represented on the Board of Directors. We look forward to a winning streak with Jan on the team.



Jan Anderson, Nov., 2003.

In Jan’s absence, we are now seeking a recording secretary. Responsibilities include attending the ACHS Board meeting on the second Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. and taking minutes of the meeting. If you are interested, please call Bonnie McDonald at (763) 421-0600 x104.

We all thank Shirley Christenson for her years of dedicated service to the Anoka County Historical Society and for being one of our most valuable players and we welcome Jan Anderson and look forward to working with her.

Up To Date

Featured Volunteer...Kay Skubitz

by Maria King

Kay walked into the History Center one day and wanted to borrow a costume for some event she was involved in. She couldn't help looking around in fascination at all the activity that is typical here. Pretty soon the questions started! The curiosity bug had bitten Kay, and a great volunteer was born!

"I was retired and had some time on my hands," Kay recalls. "I was looking for something fun!" Kay particularly likes the variety of tasks that need doing at the History Center. She has now been a volunteer for over two years and has accomplished a great deal. Kay was an integral part of the photo project, having worked on both the scanning and the captioning. She is currently revisiting the project, looking for errors and fine tuning. In addition, Kay is always willing to lend a hand wherever the current need is most crucial. She helps with the folding and mailing of the newsletter, researching for programs and displays, being a docent for school tours, and, of course, the Fair. Her latest project involved encapsulating photos, documents, and posters in mylar for preservation.

"I enjoy dressing up in costume for the Fair and the Halloween parade," she recently told me, "but the thing I like most is the gals at the History Center. Working with them is always interesting. Volunteering is great and I highly recommend it!"

Thanks, Kay, for all the enthusiasm and talent you have brought to your 309 hours of volunteer time so far. We appreciate you!



Announcements and News

◆38th Parallel: Stories of the Forgotten War

This exhibit was scheduled to close in November, but we have decided to extend it though the holiday season. If you haven't yet brought your kids/grandkids in to see this special exhibit on the Korean War, make a date to see it before January 1st as it will be closing in the first week of the new year.

◆We are continuing to interview **veterans of the Vietnam War** in preparation for an upcoming exhibit. We need your help to find them! If you know of someone, please call the History Center at 763-421-0600 to give us their names and contact information.

◆For your convenience, **Visa and Mastercard** are now accepted at ACHS for membership dues, program reservations, gifts, etc.

◆We need **fancy old hats and gloves** for our American Girls Tea party. Straw, pillbox, cloche, bonnets, etc. will all be appropriate. Please realize that these will not be returned, but will remain in our hands-on collection.

Volunteer Opportunities—

By Maria King

Several interesting new volunteer opportunities have become available this month. Someone with an eye for accuracy is needed to proof read the now completed 1905 census. The property tax records will be the next indexing project, and ideally, one person should take ownership of the project, instead of multiple volunteers all working on it all at once. Four or five volunteers will be needed to help with the American Girl Tea. (See separate article for details.) The Around the County committee has requested some help taking photographs throughout the county. All necessary direction in terms of what to look for and where to go will be provided by the committee.

If you find that the gloomy, wintery skies get you down, my recommendation is simple: Get out of the house and volunteer at the History Center. You will be appreciated! You will meet interesting people and you will have fun!



PROJECT BOOKSHELF

This holiday season, donate **NEW**, unwrapped books for young people, ages infant through high school, and **share the magic of books!**

Books may be donated at the History Center, or at any Anoka County Library or Columbia Heights Public Library, through the month of November.

Share your own favorite childhood classic, or peruse the new books, and select a timeless treasure to share with a child. From *Winnie the Pooh* to *Wuthering Heights*, from Shakespeare to baseball, there's a book for every child!

American Girl Christmas Tea Party



Girls of all ages...females, girls, ladies, women, lassies and gals. The **American Girl Christmas Tea Party** is just for you! Bring your grandmother, your auntie, your daughter or your friend and share history together.

First, grab one of *The American Girls Collection* series books. We recommend you start with *Kirsten*. There are six *Kirsten* titles available through the Anoka County library system. The novels take place in Minnesota during the 1850's and depict the life of a Swedish immigrant family.

Their life was similar to that of many Anoka County residents at the same time, and you may be surprised to learn that some traditions, like the Santa Lucia crown mentioned in the books, took place here as well.

Then, on **Saturday, December 18th, at 1:00 pm**, come to the History Center for a tea party, to discuss the story, and to learn more about daily life in Anoka County during the 1850's. Activities will highlight experiences that would be familiar to *Kirsten*, and will offer an opportunity to try your hand at the skills she would undoubtedly learn. You'll tour the museum, explore the quilts in the ACHS collection and do some patchworking of your own. Make a wreath for the Santa Lucia celebration, and explore Christmas traditions through time. Then kids, their dolls, and the grown-ups will have a tea party! You'll taste several authentic teas, and pastries, and be expected to stick out your pinky finger in much the same way as *Kirsten* would. There will be time to select your next book from our library, and you can even help to plan the next American Girl Tea by sharing your opinions, ideas and suggestions for future fun!

Wear your own 1850's costume or sunbonnet, and bring your favorite doll along to share the fun! We'll have hats and gloves to share. Activities are geared to girls age six to ten. Everyone is invited, but **space is limited, so get your tickets right away** by calling the History Center at 763-421-0600. **Tickets cost \$ 7.00 for adults and \$5.00 for girls**, but your doll can have tea for free!

ACHS Receives Second \$20,000 Agriculture Grant!

ACHS received a second generous grant from the Anoka County Agricultural Preserves Program this spring to record our county's agricultural history from 1900 to 1945. The \$20,000 grant project, entitled "A History of Agriculture in Anoka County: 1900 to 1945," will allow ACHS to continue to compile a written history of our agricultural heritage. Information will be gathered from primary and secondary written sources, oral history interviews with past and current farm families, and a photographic survey of existing agricultural buildings will continue.

Contract Historian Linda Cameron has been hired once again to complete the project for ACHS—welcome back Linda! Linda's research experience from past employment with the Minnesota Historical Society and Washington County Historical Society and her fine work on the first phase of this agriculture grant guarantee ACHS with a great end product. Anticipate seeing the written history in May, 2005, and a corresponding exhibit scheduled to open in late summer of 2005.

This will be the second phase of what ACHS hopes will be a comprehensive history of Anoka County's agricultural heritage with one final grant focusing on pre-history to 1900. If you have any questions about the project, or know of a person we should interview, please call Bonnie McDonald at (763) 421-0600.



Come visit Bossy and her friends in the Farms and Families exhibit now open at ACHS!

Coming Events

November 24, 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

HiSTORY Lunch Roundtable

Anoka County History Center and Library. THE TOPIC IS PIE!!!! Bring your favorite recipe (or even better, bring a pie and we can all sample!) of your favorite holiday pie. Being the day before Thanksgiving, PIE was the best topic we could think of to discuss. We'll share a little history and then some recipes, followed by sampling PIE!! This informal roundtable discussion ranges in topics on a monthly basis. Bring your lunch and your own recipes or pies! We'll provide the beverages, and no one is allowed to count carbs at this special PIE luncheon!

December

County Christmas Ornament Presentation

Anoka County History Center and Library. As final details are being arranged with the City of Fridley, you will find the date and time of the presentation in your local newspaper or call ACHS offices for more information. (763) 421-0600.

December 9, 5:00 p.m.

Special Membership Meeting

Anoka County History Center and Library. This meeting will answer any remaining questions about the proposed changes in the ACHS Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation and bring them to a vote. Please attend as you, the members, are the driving force behind our organization!

December 18, 1:00 p.m.

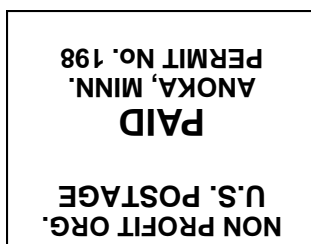
American Girl Christmas Tea Party

Anoka County History Center and Library. Come to the History Center for a tea party to discuss the *American Girl* story, and to learn more about daily life in Anoka County during the 1850's. Activities will highlight experiences that would be familiar to Kirsten, and will offer an opportunity to try your hand at the skills she would undoubtedly learn. Kids, their dolls, and the grown-ups will have a tea party to taste several teas, and pastries, and be expected to stick out your pinky finger in much the same way as Kirsten would. (See page 7 for more details.)

December 15, 7:30 a.m.

HiSTORY Breakfast Roundtable

Anoka County History Center and Library. The December discussion topic is Christmas Past and Present. The origins of some of our treasured traditions will be discussed and then the discussion will open to the traditions in our participant's holiday celebrations. New, old or just-invented traditions are all welcome at this informal roundtable discussion. Maybe you will find something new that you'd like to begin in your holiday celebration this year! Bring your breakfast and your tradition stories! We'll provide the beverages, an maybe even a Christmas cookie or two!



Anoka County Historical Society
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