

History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

Vol. 35 No. 1

January-February 2005

Ahhh, Romance!

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

The soft fragrance of the rose Vivian Roach carried at her wedding to Ronald Babcock in 1927 still lingers, pressed between the pages of a book. It was a special keepsake she treasured until the end of her life, so many years later. And even then, the rose was given to the Historical Society to help preserve their romance for future generations.

Flora Ruffcorn patiently sewed her wedding dress while she waited for her sweetheart, Walter Barott, to return from the fighting in WWI. He did return safely and the couple was married, she in her handmade dress and he in his uniform, on June 14, 1919. Their wedding was held in the garden of Flora's parents in Linwood Township. Walter's uniform and Flora's dress are preserved in the ACHS collection to tell of their love in years to come.

Aaron Greenwald practiced signing his name over and over in the fly leaf of an etiquette book where he also penned the date, September 26, 1857—about the time he met Anna Sweeney. Aaron most likely used that book to polish up his manners to win Anna's hand, as they were married in 1858. Aaron's story and his etiquette book are at the History Center to speak of their story.

Physiologists tell us humans are communal creatures and that we need the companionship of others to be healthy. Statistics say couples in committed relationships live longer and tend to be healthier than those who are not. February 14th is set aside as a day to celebrate romance and every mass media tactic plays up our romantic ideals.

But is "romance" really the soft lights, gentle music, wine and candles, and perfect atmosphere of the movies, or is it something else? A look at love, romance, and how people have cemented their relationships is the history ACHS is currently seeking for our files. Here are just a few of the stories we've gathered so far, and they seem to bear out an interesting trend—the perfect setting for romance isn't always necessary!

Where is the most romantic place in Anoka County? Burns Township, of course! Waldo Leistico knows just which little dirt road you could go down to get there and it was called Lovers Lane! If you think otherwise, please let us know about *your* most romantic place!

Dave and Elynn Niles of Coon Rapids met in high school when they were both in the National Honor Society and soon became high school sweethearts. After graduation, Elynn went off to college and Dave enlisted in the Navy. When he was home on his first leave, Elynn was sure he was calling for a date so he could tell her he was breaking up with her. After all, he was this worldly-wise Navy traveler and she was just a farm girl. They went to a drive-in movie and the feature was Tony Perkins in "Psycho." That's hardly the stuff of a Hollywood *romance* scene! Well, Dave stumbled over his words a bit, but finally he said, "I wanna know if you will marry me or else I'm going to go to Officers' Training School." Elynn was so elated you could have knocked her over with a feather, and of course said yes! They celebrated their 40th anniversary this year.

Bob Muscovitz and his wife, Patty, got engaged when a win at the casino provided ready cash for an engagement ring. They hadn't yet gotten around to a wedding when a need for surgery unexpectedly arose. That meant a need for medical insurance, so the wedding was on to provide family coverage. Bob works for the Anoka City Parks Department and Patty works for the City of Columbia Heights. Once again, real life defies the Hollywood ideal of romance!

Do you have a story—romantic or otherwise—about how you met the love of your life? We'd love to include it in our archives at the History Center and may even use it in our February lobby photo exhibit. Please bring or send your story, along with a photo of you both, to the History Center by January 26, 2005.

Just think how much fun it will be for generations beyond us to read about how their great-grandparents "courted!"



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Tuesday 10-8

Wednesday-Friday 10-5

Saturday 10-4

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From the Director's Desk...

By Bonnie McDonald

It is the focus of countless poems, songs, and paintings. It elicits euphoria and anxiety all at the same time while making your face red and your palms sweat. What is this miraculous "it"? Love. We all have a love story—love found, love lost, love unrequited—and each of our stories is unique. Just by asking, we have found that our volunteers, friends, neighbors, and coworkers have amazing tales to tell about love. Therefore, we are dedicating this newsletter to love, past and present, and its important place in our history.

Are you interested in more love stories? Then, please plan to attend our February "HiSTORY to Go" lunch talk, the new name for our HiSTORY roundtable series. This new twist on our roundtable series will find us every other month at a restaurant around the county where you can order lunch and share your stories. On February 16th we'll be at one of Anoka County's most romantic spots, Red Lobster in Blaine, where many a couple dines on Valentine's Day. Can't make the lunch talk? Just come on in to the History Center in February for our "Love is a many splendored thing" lobby exhibit. You'll find that truth is certainly stranger than fiction when it comes to many Anoka County love stories.

A person can also feel love for a topic of interest in their life, like history. The Historical Society is grieving the loss of our past president and board member, John Weaver, who had a deep and true love for history. John passed away on December 18th, 2004, at the age of 76. He and wife, Jill, have supported ACHS as members for over 20 years and John gave of his time as a board member for the past 10 years, serving as president from 1997 to 2003. ACHS has achieved many great strides during John's tenure and this organization owes our success to his support. John will be truly missed.

Finally, we sincerely appreciate those who have shown their affection for our organization by making a donation toward our year-end appeal for technology needs. To date, 75 members and friends of the organization have donated over \$5,000 in cash, pledges, and in-kind support to grant our holiday wishes. Because of your generosity, we are able to purchase everything on our wish list! On behalf of the directors and staff of ACHS, I wish all of our members and friends a very happy new year and we look forward to seeing you at our programs and events in 2005.

From the President...

By Paul Pierce, III

The historical society's cable television program, *"It's Your History,"* is one year old this month. The idea came about when the group of volunteers working on the Dunning School in Champlin wanted to do a program showing off their good work. The possibility was raised that there are so many great examples of well done restorations and great stories in the "Quad" cities area (Andover, Anoka, Champlin, and Ramsey) that it was a natural subject for a lot of shows. The ACHS archives and the History Center are like a theater full of rough scripts and props, so all we needed to do was sort out which stories and artifacts to talk about first. The staff and I have had a good time planning and executing the show. Bonnie McDonald and Vickie Wendel do most of the work, but any one of the staff can be called on for the many segments dreamt up.

I hope many of you have seen the shows. It shows several times a week on channel 15 in the Quad cities, but it is also starting to appear on other cable systems in Anoka County. If you are a cable subscriber on a system that is not showing our programs, please call your local access commission and request that they put us on their schedule.

Some of my favorite highlights of the twelve we have finished so far are: Maria King's depiction of Edith Patch (first woman to be superintendent of county schools). Another was Bonnie's introduction to the show in June when tornadoes were the topic. The crew at QCTV rigged up a large fan and blew debris on our executive director. If you'd like to see our past shows, we can make a VHS tape available at the History Center, just give us a call to arrange it.

I wish to thank QCTV for all their help. This has been a wonderful way for ACHS to extend our mission outside of our museum walls.

Special thanks go to Terry O'Connell, Jean Stauffer, and Reed Johnson, our production and camera crew, for all their cooperation and help. Another thanks to all the people who have let us into their facilities and assisted us on the many outside "shoots" that we have done for the show. The show is homespun localcentric edutainment. If you haven't seen any of the shows yet, you are missing out. Besides, January's program puts Bonnie and Vickie on ice skates! Tune in for more!

The Story of an Artifact

A Very Special Valentine

The Philolectian Society is a women's organization that has existed in Anoka since 1890. Their name, a word that means lovers of learning, states the mission they undertook from the very first meeting. One of their desires was to see a library, a proper library, in Anoka. When the Carnegie Library was completed in 1904, the Philolectians had been involved in promoting the idea and in fundraising. Their dedication to the library was acknowledged with a room known as the Philolectian Hall in the building. On February 14, Valentines' Day of 1905, they decided to have a Valentine Party at the library.

According to the *Anoka Union* newspaper, "crowds" attended the party. "Seldom has Anoka seen a more pretty and pleasant function than was that last night" begins an article fully three columns long. The bulk of the article was the speech given by Maria Gow, president of the Philolectian Society.

Mrs. Gow's speech focused on how much the Philolectians supported the library. Then she announced that they wanted to give a Valentine to the Library. However, being that they were 65 ladies who "all have minds and opinions of our own and are free to express them," they had trouble deciding what kind of Valentine to give. Finally, they settled on three Valentines.

The first Valentine presented was a picture, described by Mrs. Gow as something that would "prove not only ornamental, but that it will be helpful to the youth as they shall from time to time visit the library, that as they gaze upon the picture of Shakespeare they may become more interested in his character and may more carefully study his writings and through that study cultivate a taste for good or at least better literature."

The second Valentine was an elegant grandfather clock that stood 91 inches tall. It had a beautiful wood case with three brass finials at the top and intricate scroll work embossing on brass to surround the clock's face. It was made by the Ansonia Clock Company of New York about 1904. That company began making clocks in the early part of the 1800's and became a subsidiary of its

parent brass rolling mill in 1851. Ansonia continued to make clocks, despite the factory burning down in 1879, until 1930.

Mrs. Gow explained why the Philolectian chose to give the clock to the library.

"You probably remember when the library was first established, one of the gifts our society presented was a clock, just an ordinary looking wall clock with a plain face. We were told it would keep time and it has. But many of us think the old clock has served its day at least in a conspicuous way.

We are told it still keeps good time and it may do service for some years to come on a wall in Philolectian Hall or some more remote part of the building, but we think it rather too shabby to hang on one of the conspicuous walls of our new library building and that it is also out of keeping with the furnishings of the building. The new clock will probably keep no better time than the old but we think it will be more attractive and ornamental in appearance."



The third Valentine was a statue of the Greek and Roman goddess Minerva. Mrs. Gow said, "It is fabled that she sprang into life, full armored for war with a shout of war and that she at once took part in the discussion of the gods as an opponent of savage Mars....She was the patron of heroism among men, the protectress of the arts of peace, the symbol of thought and the goddess of wisdom."

The speech concluded with the hope that the Valentines would be appropriate for the library and that the library board would accept them as worthy. President of the Library board, George H. Goodrich, accepted the gifts in what was described as a "humorous speech" that concluded with a list of other Valentines the library needed, such as more pictures, a lawnmower, an automobile, warm weather, an easy chair, and green grass.

The evening was concluded with a program and a "liberal supply" of bonbons, cake, and frappe—a frozen party drink.

The clock given as a Valentine moved with the library to their new building in 1965 at the corner of Third Avenue and Golf Street. When the library grew once more and moved to its present location on Bunker Lake Blvd., it was decided the beautiful old clock should stay in the 1965 building under the care of the Anoka County Historical Society. The clock is a treasured artifact and can currently be seen standing in the corner of our reading room where patrons can still check out a book or sit and read.



John L. Weaver

1928 – 2004

How does one even *begin* to pay tribute to a life that has influenced so many people, a life filled with community service, a life that so touched our organization? It is not an easy task.

We pay tribute to our own John L. Weaver, who was serving ACHS as a board member when he passed away on December 18, 2004. John's involvement with the Historical Society reaches back over more than 20 years. He was a loyal member and donor for each of those years. His formal service with ACHS began when John was elected to the board of Directors in 1994. In 1997, he was elected president and served two terms, for a total of six years, as the president of the Historical Society. It was during those six years that John left his greatest mark on ACHS.

When he accepted the office of president, John knew he was taking on a formidable task—a museum that could no longer accept artifacts as there was not one inch of museum room to put them. There was no plan for a new space and only a little money. John, with the full support and help of the

board and members, began working steadily to find the best answer for the long-term future of ACHS.

Being no stranger in the community, John was often able to bring many connected people together to seek the best new space for the Historical Society. It was through John's efforts that the idea of the Anoka City Library building being reused as a facility for ACHS began to be considered. How many meetings must John have sat through, "carefully and deliberately" as he would always say, working to ensure the best outcome for history?

Fundraising was another side to the complex puzzle of new space and there again, John was on the side of history. Many were the times when he simply took out his checkbook when something was needed and even though he prided himself on being "tighter than the bark on a tree," John was always generous when it came to history. Other times, he helped convince others to "step up to the plate" with cash or in-kind donations.

When all of the pieces finally came together in 2001 and the remodeled library building was becoming the History Center, John was there again. He helped carry boxes, placed books on the new library shelves, carried more boxes, and helped with the massive task of moving for many hours. He was there to lend a hand in anything needed during that wild time of setting up the library and new exhibits in a real exhibit hall for the very first time, be it phone calls for a particular need, or just wielding a broom.

It was with great pride in what John called a "community accomplishment" that he helped cut the ribbon to open the doors of the new Anoka County History Center and Library on July 12, 2002. He proudly showed off the building, the exhibits, and most of all, community pride in the museum facility he had helped to organize.

In 2003, John once again was key in making provision for the future of history. A gala event, called "A Tribute to John Weaver," was turned into a fundraiser for the John Weaver Endowment Fund. This fund continues to grow and will provide ACHS dividends to continue gathering, preserving, and sharing history for many years to come.

John has indeed left his mark on Anoka, our county, and in Minnesota history as not only a friend to ACHS, but also a patron of the Boy Scouts and the Anoka Technical College, a member of the Anoka City Council, and a leader in the state legislature. We all mourn the loss of such a friend.

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

MEMORIALS

In memory of Richard Sorenson

Given by Robert and Connie Brog
Harlan and Janet Droogsma
Will and Gina Ridge

YEAR END TECHNOLOGY

DONATIONS Through December 22

Dr. Jim and Sandy Abeler
Jan Anderson
Laurie Anderson,
in memory of Virginia Anderson

Anonymous
James and Molly Bauer
Margery Beckenbach
Eric Becker
Kevin and Patti Bellows
Dick and Helen Bennett
Sheila Beutler
James and Doris Boos
Marlys Burman
Marlys Chutich
Katie Clark
Leslie Clemmons
Sandra Connor
Shirley Curbow
Duane Dingman
Roy and Lois Downs
Chuck and Mary Drury
Dan and Kathy Erhart
Dan Frank
John and Alice Ganter
Myrtice Hanson
Glen and Eileen Hardin
Grace Hawkins
Pat Hesli
Beatrice Hoppenrath
Don and Lorraine Hostetler
Donald Hunter
Jim and Janis Johansen
Henry and Pat Johnson
Morris Johnson
Terry Johnson
Mildred Jorgensen
Audrey Joslyn
LeOra Kroger
Mike and Wendie Lapham
David and Donna Legrid
Dorothy Linse
Becky Loader and Michael Ritchie
John and Yvonne Mann
Bonnie McDonald
Frank and MaryAnne McDonald
John, Julie, Ethan, and Colin McDonald
Fran Meneley
Gen Meyer
Carol Moen
Clarence Monegar

Diana and Darrell Norton,
in memory of Philip DeJarlais
Bev Olson
Vicki Orr

Robert Powell
Bill Prugh
Tom and Jan Redmann
Linda Roeder
Albin Savela
Marion Schulz
Barb Scottston
Jean Seaborg
Charlie and Mary Sell
Karen Sivanich
Greg Smith
Lorraine Soderquist
Gary and Ann Steen
Doug and Barb Stein
Ralph and Kathryn Talbot
Barb Thurston
Barbara Ulvin
Web and Cheryl Volkenant
Robert and Katherine Voss
Barbara Walchessen
James Wennerlund
Betty Wilbur
Janet Wilcox
John and Mildred Wolfe
Kenneth Wuest

GENERAL DONATIONS

Through December 22

Ronald and Harriet Burley
Elizabeth Grimm
Linda Harris
Pat Hesli
Yvonne Marie Kelly
Mark, Shannon, and Maddie LaBore
Mel Manley
John and Lillian Meyer
Dean Polymeros
Catherine Vesley
Vickie Wendel

BARN DANCE DONATIONS

Bonnie McDonald
Rapid Sport Center

CATALOGING PROJECT DONATION

Shirley Christenson

Welcome New Members!

OCTOBER 22-DECEMBER 22, 2004

Anthony Bianchi (Red Wing)
Joan Christensen (Ramsey)
Mimi Doran and Tom Durkin (Coon Rapids)
Jamie Dunn (Coon Rapids)
John and Jeanne Fraune and family (St. Francis)
Jeff Green (Coon Rapids)
Elizabeth Grimm (Ramsey)
Darlene Hinz (Burns Township)
Rudy Jensen (Isanti)
Yvonne Marie Kelly (Coon Rapids)
Karen Kiefer (Ogilvie)
Mark, Shannon, and Maddie LaBore (Anoka)
Don and Sue Manion (Coon Rapids)
Mel Manley (Brooklyn Park)
Clarence Monegar (St. Francis)
Alan Norton (Andover)
John Ottenstroer (Andover)
Marian Robertson (Oak Grove)
Holly Stone (St. Paul)
Justin Szmanda (Champlin)
Cathi Weber (Coon Rapids)

ARTIFACT DONORS

Robert Akin
Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce
Anoka County Extension Service
Anoka-Hennepin I.S.D. #11
Marian Auchter
Hazel Boggs
Clinton Caswell
Robert & Betty Comer
Rose Donnette
Roy Downs
City of Fridley
Marian Granfield
Jamie Kveton
Paul & Zola Malmen
Elynn Niles
Bill Prugh
Charles Sell
Milt Setzler
Vi Smith
Lorraine Soderquist
Kay Turner
Ernest & Sharon Woizeschke

2004 Holiday Tree Addition from Fridley

Fridley artist, Charles Martin, shows the holiday ornament he created for the City of Fridley and the Fridley Historical Society to present to ACHS on December 7, 2004.

The ornament is a windmill, symbolic of Fridley's farming heritage and is the logo of the Fridley Historical Society. Fridley Historical Society President Robert Christenson explained that agriculture was Fridley's main industry for more than 100 years and the windmill was chosen in honor of this important part of the city's history. It was not easy to find someone to create this miniature work of art. One company gave an estimate of \$800 to do the project; another said it could not be done. Fridley Historical Society board members met to discuss what they might try next when it was suggested they talk to a local artist who "lived just down the street."

The miniature model of a windmill, complete with spinning blades and a tiny pump, was created by Fridley artist and resident Charles Martin. Martin chose brass to work with because it will not rust or decay and he wanted this windmill to be a permanent symbol of Fridley's heritage as it represents Fridley on the County Holiday Tree. Martin said he spent some 100 hours in creating the tiny ladder, blades, vane, tower and pump. Three small aluminum panels on the sides of the windmill feature the logo of the Fridley Historical Society; the City of Fridley; and the year and from whom the ornament was presented.

ACHS thanks the Fridley Historical Society and the City of Fridley for this unique and wonderful donation.



2005 ACHS

Board Meeting Schedule

All ACHS board meetings are open to the public and are held at 6:00 p.m. in the Anoka County History Center and Library meeting room.

January	13	July	14
February	10	August	11
March	10	September	8
April	14	October	13
May	12	November	10
June	9	December	8

Just a reminder...

As of January 1st, 2005, our membership categories and rates will change! Our membership schedule will be as follows:

Individual	\$15.00
Family	\$25.00
Senior/Student	\$7.00

The rate represents a one-year membership, which runs for a full calendar year from date of purchase. You are able to deduct the dollar value of your membership over \$9.00, which is our cost to provide you with our *History News* newsletter. Also, you can now use your MasterCard or Visa to purchase your membership and/or make a donation—just call the History Center at (763) 421-0600 to use your card. We thank you for your continued support as a member as you are ensuring a successful future for ACHS.

By-Laws Meeting Update

...By Barb Scottston, ACHS Vice President

Many thanks to all who attended our special membership meeting and unanimously supported the adoption of our new bylaws. Two key changes you will see soon are the broadening of our board base to serve all parts our county with geographic representation, and voting to be conducted by balloting prior to the annual meeting. You need not attend the meeting in order to vote! Ballots will be mailed to members, and results of the election will be announced at the annual meeting.

In 2005, we will have board seats available for a representative from Anoka County Commissioner districts # 3 (Commissioner Margaret Langfeld) and #4 (Commissioner Jim Kordiak). Two at-large seats will also be opened, as well as the position of vice president. The vice president position is important, as this person will serve in it for one year, then become president for one year before taking over a final year in the position of past-president. (Now, instead of one person in a three-year president's term, we will be led by a three-person team, each with one-year rolling terms.)

The three currently seated board members with terms expiring this March are: Barb Scottston (VP), Jan Anderson (Secretary), Marion Schultz (Director E).

As an organization largely dependent upon the volunteer efforts of our membership, we succeed because of the generous sharing of each member's time, talents, or treasures – and often all of them! We invite you to consider serving as part of the administration of your organization. NOW is the time! We now have opportunities for new board members, and we welcome your involvement. To nominate a board candidate or to ask questions, please contact either Bonnie at 763-421-0600, or Barb at 763-422-0010 by Friday, January 21, 2004.

Announcements and News

◆WANTED: HISTORY DAY JUDGES

Several judges will be needed to help with the History Day competition to be held on February 22, 2005, in St. Francis. Training will be provided and no special knowledge of history or historical topics is required. It only requires a few hours on a weekday afternoon. Students are counting on us! Let's let them know how important history is to all of us by supporting their efforts in this competition! Please call Maria at the History Center (763-421-0600) for more information and to sign up.

New Volunteer Projects...By Maria King

I'm always looking for ways that volunteers can participate in the vital work that we do here at ACHS. These are a few possibilities during the long winter months!

NEWSLETTER MAILING: The newsletter mailings require a well-trained team to get the phases of the project correctly done in a timely manner. I need a responsible chairman to set up a committee to call in when the newsletter needs to be mailed. Training is provided for the chairperson and he/she would train the other volunteers in all aspects of folding, labeling, sorting, and mailing the newsletters. This committee is needed about four hours every other month.

NEWSPAPER INDEX: This is a very ambitious undertaking. A group of people would take an issue of the newspaper from the microfilm and list the titles of the articles. They would need to read enough of each article to assign a topic word. Then all that information would need to be typed into the computer. The purpose is so that eventually a researcher could easily identify all the articles about a given topic.

CURRICULUM WRITING: I would love to see teaching boxes developed as mini-units for teachers to borrow. Each box would contain a list of goals and objectives, reading material, comprehension questions, hands-on activities to extend learning, and an assessment tool to measure success. This would be an exciting task for a retired teacher!

PROPERTY TAX INDEX: This requires the ability to read handwriting that is "old fashioned," to put it kindly. These records need to be entered into a database to allow researchers to find the tax history of a property by location, by year, or by the owner's name. This is a long-term project.

POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS: A PowerPoint presentation on history would be great to have for use in classrooms and at the museum. A wide variety of potential topics would be appropriate for this medium and there's no limit to the fun and creativity that the computer makes possible. The volunteer needs to be familiar with PowerPoint software, but help with the research and writing is available.

Other ideas? We welcome your input!

For more information, or to volunteer for any of these projects, call Maria at the History Center.

Volunteer Update...By Maria King

There are plenty of opportunities at the History Center for those seeking volunteer work. You get to see your work make a real difference here!

The costume project involves cataloguing our hands-on clothing. Most of the photos are done; the next step is to design and print a "check-out" system for the costumes. This eliminates the risk of misplacing parts of complex costumes and guarantees that we know who borrowed what and when it was returned.

Transcriptionists are needed now more than ever. The oral histories from the agriculture grant are not quite finished, and the new batch will be arriving soon! There are still a few Korean War stories to be typed and the Vietnam project is growing rapidly! We have a transcription machine at the History Center and another we can loan out if you would like to do the work at home.

The manuscripts are now a substantial stack of clippings that need to be copied and dated. The copying would probably take about two hours to get caught up. As soon as the manuscripts are copied, we will need them filed into the proper file and indexed correctly. This can be done at any time, and there is no deadline. It is, however, physical work that involves bending over.

I realized I do not know the names of volunteers who can sew! We periodically need costumes replaced or mended, and hands-on items such as hats and gloves need repairing. This is something you can do at home.

Please call Maria for further information or to volunteer. Remember that any amount of time, at your convenience, would be appreciated here at the History Center.

A Time to Say Thank You!...By Maria King

As the holidays draw to a close, I can't help reflecting on the many blessings that have come into my life as a result of my job here at the History Center. I have met a cadre of dedicated people who share a true spirit of service to their community. I cannot stress enough the tremendous respect I feel for those people who give of themselves to volunteer. You willingly and enthusiastically work at whatever task needs doing. Despite the materialism and selfishness that seems so prevalent today, you volunteers do it without looking for recognition or pay of any kind. You are the embodiment of philanthropy, defined by the American Dictionary as the effort to improve mankind by investing one's resources for the community.

If you volunteered this past year, and you didn't get a thank-you note, it was not because you were not appreciated or your efforts were taken for granted. Quite the contrary! There are so many of you and you do so much so often that thank-you notes would be overwhelming. Postage alone would cost a fortune and you are the kind of people who would not want our resources spent in that way. Nonetheless, you are appreciated! Not a day goes by that we are not enriched by your generosity. You see a need and you fill it. You bring us vision and perspective. You enlighten and entertain. You type and you sort and you box and you carry because people need you. Your community needs you. Your Historical Society needs you. I need you. And you never let me down!

I give thanks, especially at this time of year and all year long, for volunteers!

Coming Events

January Lobby Exhibit

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) This will be a special display of artifacts brought back from the 50th anniversary celebration of the end of the Korean War held by the South Korean Government. One of our own Anoka County Korean War veterans attended and will share his memories of the event in this exhibit.

January 25, 7:00 p.m.

50th Anniversary of the Korean War Exhibit

Closing Ceremony-38th Parallel: Stories of the Forgotten War Exhibit

(Anoka County History Center and Library.) Join us as we honor and remember those who served and those who helped with our special exhibit, "38th Parallel, Stories of the Forgotten War," before the exhibit is dismantled. Special speakers and a poignant tribute to veterans are a part of the evening, so mark this night on your calendar as one not to be missed.

February Lobby Exhibit

Love is a Many Splendored Thing

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) We gathered the love stories and photographs of many people from throughout the county, both past and present, to highlight in this lobby exhibit. Come see who you might know and find out how they met their special person! Bring your story and photos to add to the collection!

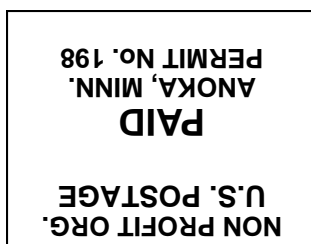
February 16, Noon

"HiSTORY To Go" Lunch

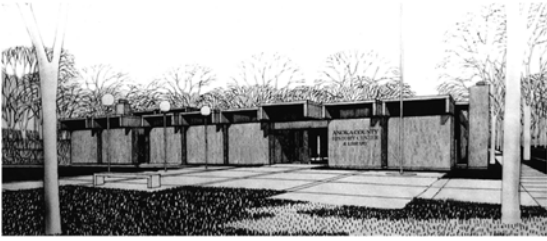
(Red Lobster, 8500 Hwy 47, Blaine.) This fun discussion of history is changing! All of the HiSTORY events will be lunches and will be moving around the county to different places where you can order your lunch, hear a little history and share some of your own stories about the topic of the day. February's topic will be *Love Stories of Anoka County*. Bring stories about how you met the special person in your life, or other significant romance stories. We'll each order lunch, talk about some of the famous (or infamous) love stories in the county and share our own stories.

March 5, 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. ACHS Annual Meeting

(St. Genevieve's Catholic Church, 7087 Goiffon Road, Centerville) Save the date for this important meeting. Come hear an update and outlook for ACHS' future in this beautiful, century-old church. Election results for the ACHS board will be announced and St. Francis' Playhouse 15 will present a condensed review of the hilarious play, *Meshuggah Nuns! The Ecumenical Nonsense*. Enjoy French pastries in tribute of Centerville's French-Canadian heritage and win fabulous door prizes. Watch for more in your mail in February.



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. 35 No. 2

March-April 2005

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

Anoka County's French Connection

The community known today as Centerville has gone through a host of changes since the first settler built a structure there in the 1850's. In the earliest years of the Minnesota Territory, Centerville was included as a part of Ramsey County. When the county lines were redrawn in preparation for statehood, Centerville became part of Anoka County. The boundaries of Centerville were much different than today, encompassing not only what is now Centerville, but all of Lino Lakes and a small section of Circle Pines.

Depending on which source is used, the first settler to build a permanent dwelling in Centerville was either German immigrant Frederick W. Traver in 1850 or Francis LaMotte, a French-Canadian, in 1852. LaMotte was the first of a number of French-Canadian immigrants who formed the French settlement on the east side of the community. The Germans settled in



The Dupre family, early residents of Centerville.

the western side of then Centerville, now Lino Lakes, so it is possible for both sources to be correct.

These immigrants found evidence that Native Americans had come to Centerville before them. Burial mounds and excavations that appear to be defensive earthworks were noted as early as the 1880's and attributed to the Native Americans who used the lakes and creeks for fishing and ricing. Hundreds of arrowheads and other Native American artifacts have been found in the Centerville area.

As a community, Centerville was organized on August 11, 1857, with the first town officers being Oliver

Peltier, Stephen Ward, Charles Peltier, and Francis LaMotte. The village was laid out and platted by Charles Peltier, F.X. Lavallee, and Francis LaMotte, and named "Centerville" because it was about equi-distant between Stillwater, St. Paul and Anoka. The spelling has changed over the years as well, with the French derivation spelling, "Centreville."

The first classroom instruction in Centerville was held in the kitchen of F.X. Lavallee's home during the winter of 1854-55. It then moved to the St. Genevieve's church building where students attended classes until the first school building was built in 1865.

Today Centerville comprises only 2.15 square miles of land, but it is home to 3,202 people as of the 2000 census. It is in a high-growth area of Anoka County, with more history being written every day. It is with great pleasure that the 2005 ACHS annual meeting is being held in this historic community of Anoka County.

See page 6 of this newsletter for more details!

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

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Fax (763) 323-0218

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www.ac-hs.org

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Tuesday 10-8

Wednesday-Friday 10-5

Saturday 10-4

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Vice President – Barb Scottston

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From the President...

By Paul Pierce, III

I would like to thank the many people who have helped the Anoka County Historical Society accomplish our programs and events. We have more activities that cover more of the county than ever before. In the last three years we have achieved many firsts. Thanks to a grant from the County Board we are well along on a report documenting the rich history of agriculture in our county. Starting from present day, we are documenting chronologically backwards in time because the change to a residential and commercial county from an agricultural county is happening so fast that it was hard to record the changes in this decade alone. That grant also inspired the Barn Dance fundraiser that raised about \$9,000 for our endowment fund.

In the difficult times that government funding is going through, it is an example of the Society's emphasis of finding more funds from collaborations with other groups and from new donors. Donations from individual members, companies and corporations have all increased over the last two years. Our year-end appeal alone in 2004 brought in double the donations of our request in 2003. The Minnesota Historical Society helped us with a grant for purchasing more microfilmed newspapers and a grant for ultra violet light protection for our artifact collection. In 2004 we received an award from the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota for our preservation and sensitive stewardship in our reuse of the Anoka Public Library Building for our new History Center. The American Association for State and Local History gave us national recognition with a Certificate of Commendation for our part in the Akin Riverside Park heritage trail in Anoka.

Our new facility has allowed us to save more artifacts and the public has been entrusting us with their precious heirlooms and stories more than ever before. This year our number of paid members is at a record high. Activities and events of all kinds have increased and are more widespread within the county. With our cataloging grants and computer database projects our collection is becoming ever easier for the public to access and enjoy. We have an ever growing collection of "oral histories" of the 1st hand experiences of veterans of WWII, Korea and Vietnam wars. I am proud to say the Society is more serious and effective in documenting, disseminating and saving the rich and unique history of our county than we have ever been before. I want to thank everyone who helped us with their support and invite anyone who can to help us make 2005 our best year ever.

From the Director's Desk...

By Bonnie McDonald

Spring is an exciting time of year as we wind up for the year ahead. Planning is underway for the events and programs you've come to expect, like our annual meeting, volunteer recognition, and Drums, Dreams, & History and the new events returning in 2005 like the Anoka Heritage Home and Garden Tour, the Ghosts of Anoka Tour, the 2nd Annual Harvest Time Barn Dance, and the *American Girls* tea parties. The second phase of the agricultural history project is underway and Vickie Wendel has a lineup of exhibits planned to share the county's history with everyone who visits the History Center this year. The board and staff have worked diligently to bring you a year filled with opportunities to get involved.

On March 5th, we will come together as a Society for our 2005 Annual Meeting in Centerville. This year's meeting is filled with fun, food, and door prizes. To register for the meeting, please see page seven. The Annual Meeting is an opportunity to share in the excitement of this growing organization as you hear about our successes, our current financial position, and the results of the Board of Directors election. Meet your new representatives and thank those members leaving the Board for their years of service: Marion Schulz (9 years) and Barb Scottston (5 years).

At the Annual Meeting, you will hear about our vision for the Society's future. We are continually approached with opportunities to share our history; however, with our limited staff and budget, we cannot accept them all. We must choose those that best meet our mission. To do this, the Board of Directors has embarked upon a strategic planning effort to address issues affecting the Society today and to develop strategies to ensure our future success. How do we best fulfill our mission to preserve and share Anoka County's rich history within our means? How do we maintain and increase our outreach, visibility, publicity, and funding? How do we integrate with the City of Anoka's redevelopment plan and capitalize on the opportunities it presents? The strategic planning effort addresses these questions to develop a vision for our continued success. Representative stakeholders will be invited to participate to ensure that everyone's needs are considered. The outcome will define the Society's operational future for the next three to five years to make certain our continued growth. Now is a wonderful time to be a member of the Anoka County Historical Society as we make successful strides forward in preserving the county's history and making it accessible and interesting to the public.

The Story of a National Register Property

St. Genevieve of Paris

The Church of St. Genevieve of Paris located in Centerville is a National Register property with history and significance richer than gold. The story of the church begins with the first Catholic masses held in the home of Francis LaMotte in the early 1850's. The mission church was founded in 1854 by Reverend Kailer, also spelled Keller. A year after the founding of the parish, the first church building was constructed under the direction of Reverend Kailer. It stood on the shores of Centerville Lake on the site of what in 2005 is the rectory building.

In 1859, a second church was built. Pastor J. Robert oversaw that construction, but it burned down and was rebuilt in 1870 by Reverend Joseph Goiffon. He was the priest at St. Genevieve's from 1861 to 1891. Reverend Goiffon was said to have helped build the new church, even helping to roof it despite the fact that he had a right wooden leg and a left wooden foot. Father Goiffon always made his artificial limbs himself! The street on which the present church is located is named for Father Goiffon because of his dedication to the church and his own colorful history.

The present Church of St. Genevieve of Paris was built in the Gothic architectural style overseen by Reverend Masl in 1904. The key gothic elements are the high peaked roof and steeple, the large stained glass windows, the ornate woodwork, and expanding archways. The lavish style reaching toward the heavens was supposed to bring the members closer to God and show reverence to God.

A summer storm in 1975 brought about some renovation and changes to St. Genevieve's. Several of the stained glass windows on the west side were destroyed and had to be replaced. While the original patterns of the windows were restored, some slight color differences can still be seen. The pastor in 1975 then decided to continue some of the renovation in the church. Some of the woodwork and the ornate detailing was changed at this time.

As the needs of the congregation changed, so did the church. The communion rail was removed, the altar was brought closer to the congregation, and a ceramic banner over the main archway into the sacristy was taken down. A pair of new additions, the reconciliation room and the crying room, help meet the needs of a still vital and active congregation.

Many of the windows in St. Genevieve's were purchased by the founding fathers of the parish, among them the Cardinals, LaMotes, Landroches, Houles, Carpentiers, and LeRoux. One window depicts St. Genevieve, the patron saint of the farmer. She was chosen as the patron saint of this parish in honor of Centerville's primary industry in the 150 years of settlement—farming.

In the early years, a bell in the church bell tower called the faithful to worship when the missionary priest had arrived to say the mass. Bells at St. Genevieve's rang in the bell tower to signal the start of mass until the 1970's.

In 2004, St. Genevieve's celebrated a dual anniversary with the centennial of their building and the sesquicentennial of the founding of their parish.

Learn more about the Church of St. Genevieve at our annual meeting on March 5. *See page 6 for more details.*



Church of St. Genevieve, February 2005.



St. Genevieve statue. She is said to be the patron saint of farmers.



The St. Genevieve window.

Up To Date

Announcements and News

♦ Just a reminder that the ACHS Board of Directors meetings are at 6:00 p.m. at the History Center on the second Thursday of each month. Board meetings are open to the public and everyone is welcome to attend.

American Girls Birthday Tea Party

“Molly” is the star of our next *American Girls* Tea on Saturday, April 23, 2005. Molly celebrates her tenth birthday amid the patriotic fervor of 1943.

Participants will learn about ration coupons, air raid drills, Victory gardens, and black out curtains. Crafts and games will enhance the learning as girls and their mentors revisit the activities that would have been common to World War II American children. They will roll bandages, make a toy parachute, and create a “star whirler” appropriate for parades. \$10.00 for adults and \$7.00 for girls. Dolls can come free!



Volunteer Opportunities...by Maria King

February can mean the doldrums, but not around here. Things have been hoppin’! Several important projects have been completed by our dedicated volunteers. That closure has enabled us to begin a few *new* projects, and that creates opportunities for new folks to become involved.

Docent training is starting! If you took part in last year’s Ghost Tours and would like to lead a group, then here’s your chance. Please call Maria or Vickie at 763-421-0600 to volunteer.

Census checkers are needed to verify the computerized data. The “Around the County” boxes need continued indexing. We have need of some painters and a seamstress. Call for details on what and when.

Our greatest need continues to be for transcribers to make a written version of the oral interviews that keep rolling in. We have not finished the Korean War vets’ stories, and the first year of stories from the agriculture grant are also ready. Volunteers continue to collect farm histories, and we are working on the Vietnam vets interviews. So, despite our best efforts, we are falling farther and farther behind. Transcription is not an easy task. It requires good composition and punctuation skills, proficiency with written dialog, as well as excellent keyboarding speed. Volunteers who possess the necessary skills have an advantage. They can work at home whenever they have the time! We now have one machine that can be loaned out and one machine that is borrowed and needs to be used here at the History Center. If you can help, please contact Maria.

Whatever your talents, whatever your schedule, we can promise you a meaningful volunteer experience here at the History Center. Give us a chance to prove how much fun history can be!

Donor Board Unveiled

The red carpet was rolled out and the “bubbly” was chilled for our *Donors with Hearts of Gold* evening on February 18, 2005. Over 90 people attended the unveiling of our special recognition board honoring our donors. The sculpture was created by artist Bill Mowerson of Oak Grove’s StoneScapes Studio to represent Anoka County in beautiful brushed and burnished copper. The “quilt” motifs around the shape of the county depict emblems from our county quilt to represent each of our cities and townships. Name plaques sprinkled around the county’s shape vary in size and color, indicating the level of gift each person has given ACHS during the capital and endowment campaign.

We send out thanks to Elaine Stindt for the beautiful harp music and Anoka’s Brick House Deli for their delectable hors d’oeuvres and sparkling cider served throughout the event.

Stop by to see this beautiful work of art that honors our donors and supporters! There is room for more names! The names of those contributing \$100 or more to the endowment fund will continue to be added.



Artist Bill Mowerson talked about the symbolism of the new donor recognition board, February 18, 2005.

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

MEMORIALS

In memory of John Weaver

Given by Kevin and Patti Bellows
Columbia Heights Historical Society
Don and Lorraine Hostetler
James and Janis Johansen
George Meyer
Howard and Sonya Olson
Will and Gina Ridge

In memory of Ann Talle

Given by Glen and Eileen Hardin

In honor of

Lila Mae and Clarence Froberg

Given by Steven and Patricia Zirul

DONATIONS

Katherine Allquist
June Anderson
Bruce Bacon
Roger Carlson
Coon Rapids Historical Commission
David and Winnifred Conger
Jim and Lisa Corriveau
Donna (Bobbie) Farrier
Karen Hand
Judy Hanna
Joyce Hollinder
Merlin Hunt
Henry and Pat Johnson
Melvin Larson, Jr.
Rod and Maxine Larson
Clarence Monegar
Beth Mullinax
Donald Parrott
Leon and Doris Pease
Bev Perrin
Penny Quast
Ed Rasmussen
Terry and Lynne Rickert
Leslie Ross
Patricia Russell
Dick and Delores Schanhaar
Vi Smith
Deborah Sundeen
Cindy Torfin
James Wennerlund
Janet Wilcox

WEAVER ENDOWMENT

DONATIONS

Mike and Wendie Lapham

CATALOGING PROJECT

DONATION

American Legion Post 102

SPECIAL GIFTS

Vietnam Exhibit

Vietnam Veterans Chapter 470

American Girls Tea

Lisa Torma

YEAR-END APPEAL

DONATIONS

Through February 5, 2005
Anoka Kiwanis
Stephen Cowdery
Richard DeLong
Carol Dordan
Hakanson Anderson, Associates
Rev. William Hyllengren
Shirley Lynch
Paul and Lois McCarron
Clarence Monegar
Dorothy Peterson
Dori Schumacher
Edna Walter

ARTIFACT DONORS

Wayne Anderson
Anoka County Extension
Dorothy Bacon
Katie Clark
Robert and Betty Comer
Roy Downs
Wilmer and Carol Dufresne
David Elvig
Donna Farrier
City of Fridley
Carl Hoffsted
Rod McArdle
Elynn Niles
Lou Paulson
Graydon and Helen Peterson
Bill Prugh
Lynne Rickert
St. Olaf College
Jim Sannerud
Charlie Sell
Sharron Stockhausen
Sally Wendel

Welcome New Members!

December 20, 2003—February 19, 2005

James and Molly Bauer (Fridley)
R. Peter and Angela DeLong (Anoka)
John Freeburg (Ramsey)
Donald Gorder (Coon Rapids)
Edward and Lora Hamilton (Ramsey)
Launa Johnson (Anoka)
Jim and Jane Knoll (Andover)
Stan and Dee Knoll (Andover)
Leon and Doris Pease (Coon Rapids)
Jeanine Pratt (Champlin)
Patricia Russell (Monticello)
Chet Skoglund (Columbia Heights)
Cindy Torfin (Monticello)
Bob and Pat Weil (Anoka)

A Special Thank You

A very heartfelt and special thank you to everyone who answered our year-end appeal! We were overwhelmed by the generosity of our members who heeded our call for assistance and committed their resources to fulfill our needs. Over \$7,000 in cash, in-kind donations, and pledges have been received from friends like you. The year-end appeal funds will be used to purchase upgraded technology equipment. Apparently, we all share the belief that the Historical Society's equipment should not be historic!

The future of the past depends on our ability to make history continually vital and relevant in our ever-changing world. Technology enables ACHS to keep history vital by providing an efficient, comprehensive, and creative manner in which to share our vast collection. By keeping us plugged in to the future, you have helped us fulfill our mission to protect the past.

Thank you!

THE ANOKA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PROUDLY PRESENTS OUR

2005 Annual Meeting

- ◆ Learn about Centerville's French Connection
 - ◆ Election Results
 - ◆ French Pastries
- ◆ Play History Bingo
 - ◆ Fellowship

Entertainment by St. Francis' Playhouse 15
performing a condensed revue of
Meshuggah Nuns
(Part of the Nunsense series)

Win prizes while you learn about Centerville's history in the historic
St. Genevieve's Catholic Church.

RESERVATION FORM ENCLOSED—RETURN BY FEBRUARY 28, 2005

**SATURDAY, MARCH 5 FROM 12:30 PM - 4:00 PM
ST. GENEVIEVE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
7087 GOIFFON ROAD, CENTERVILLE**

COST: \$10 FOR MEMBERS / \$12 FOR NON-MEMBERS

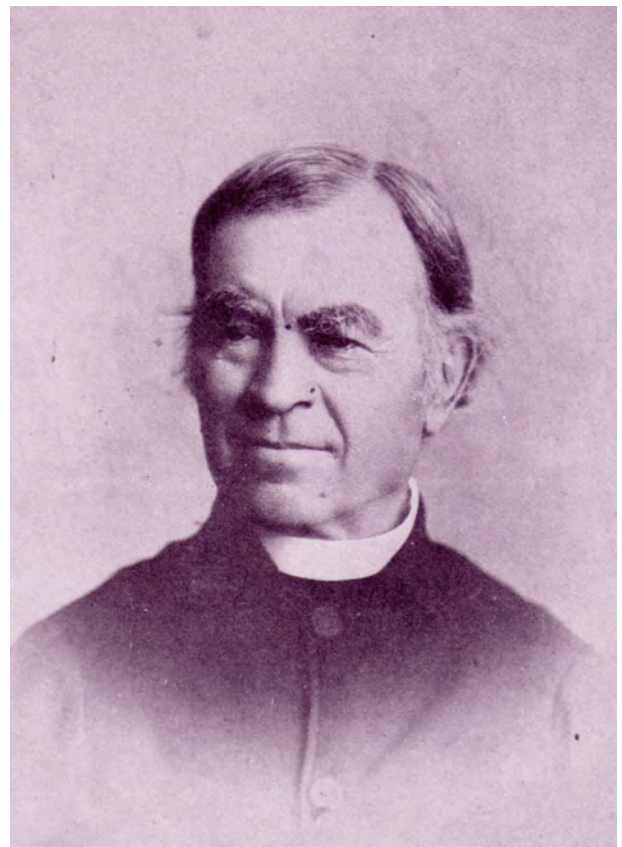
RESERVE YOUR TICKETS TODAY

CALL (763) 421-0600

FREE BUS RIDES BY REQUEST



This is the current St. Genevieve's Church building, built in 1904. The interior was remodeled and the parish hall in the lower level was added in the 1940's. This beautiful building will host our 2005 Annual Meeting. Don't miss your opportunity to learn about its fascinating history!



Reverend Joseph Goiffon was the priest at St. Genevieve's Church from 1861 to 1891 and has a remarkable history. Once, to escape freezing to death, he tried to cut open the belly of his dead horse to crawl inside and stay warm until help arrived. Hear more about him at the meeting!

2005 ACHS Annual Meeting Reservation Form

Attendee(s) Name: _____

Address: _____

City/ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

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

Member tickets: _____ Non-member tickets: _____

MasterCard and Visa Accepted!
You may call in your reservations by using your credit card to (763) 421-0600 during ACHS business hours!

Ticket subtotal: \$ _____

Additional donation: \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Reserve your seat by returning this form and your payment AS SOON AS POSSIBLE to:
Anoka County Historical Society
2135 Third Avenue North
Anoka, MN 55303

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

Coming Events

March 5, 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

ACHS Annual Meeting

St. Genevieve's Catholic Church, 7087 Goiffon Road, Centerville. The business meeting will begin at 12:30. Entertainment is provided by St. Francis' Playhouse 15 presenting a condensed review of *Meshuggah Nuns*, a part of the Nonsense series. French pastries and coffee will be served following the program. See inside this newsletter for more details and use the registration form on page 7.

April 9, 1:00 p.m.

Volunteer Recognition Day

Bunker Hills Activity Center, 550 Bunker Lake Blvd, Andover. If you volunteered in 2004, watch for your invitation to this special day set aside just for you! Look for your invitation to arrive in the mail during the last week of March. If you volunteered and do not receive an invitation, please call Maria at the History Center at 763-421-0600.

April 13, 12:00 noon

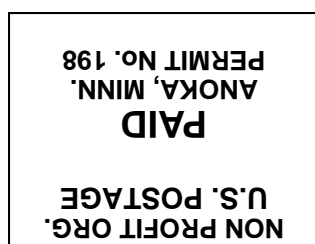
HiSTORY To Go Luncheon

Broadway Pizza, 8298 University Avenue, Fridley. Join our lunchtime talk series in FRIDLEY at BROADWAY PIZZA where our topic will be School Days! Remember pizza day on the school hot lunch menu? Or having pizza brought in for a special treat? We'll go back to those memories with pizza at Broadway in Fridley as we remember graduation, prom, exams, dates, sport and more! Good memories and bad are all fair game to talk about at this informal lunchtime talk. We'll order off the menu and brag about who had the worst prom dress, the best graduation party, and more school memories!

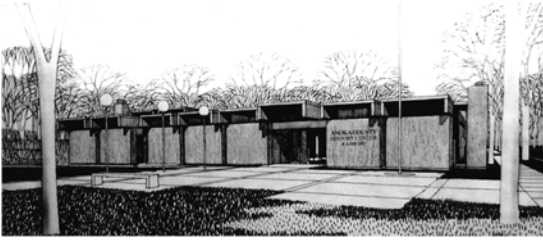
April 23 (Times will be assigned upon registration)

American Girls Birthday Tea Party

Molly celebrates her tenth birthday amid the patriotic fervor of 1943. Participants will learn about ration coupons, air raid drills, Victory gardens, and black out curtains. Crafts and games will enhance the learning as girls and their mentors revisit the activities that would have been common to World War II American children. They will roll bandages, make a toy parachute, and create a "star whirler" appropriate for parades. \$10.00 for adults and \$7.00 for girls. Their dolls can come to the party for free! RESERVATIONS REQUIRED!!



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Letters from Vietnam

December 25, 1966

Dear Mom and family,

I am in Peliku. Its about in the center of Viet Nam. Boy I sure am nervous...The first night there the V.C. (Viet Cong) had some kind of small attack. We all had to run to bunkers for cover. I am not with anybody I know. The guys here are all pretty friendly but they know what's going on and I don't. I guess they stay out in the field for sometimes 150-200 days. Mom, I sure hope I can do a good job over here and I hope I get back to the U.S.

Well, they just scared me a little more. They issued me a shotgun. I have to be point man.



PFC Roger Verwers, 1966

This letter was written by Roger Verwers from Coon Rapids. He was serving with Company C, First Battalion of the 35th Infantry in the U.S. Army and had arrived in Saigon, South Vietnam, on December 21, 1966. On Christmas Day, he was flown by an Army transport plane to Peliku where he was assigned to his unit and given five days of additional training. He wrote home often, three and four letters some weeks. Most were short, two pages long at best. They were filled with his thoughts and worries, pouring out his fears to his mother.

December 28, 1966 I wish I was home with you all. I am so nervous and scared. I suppose I am a big baby and a coward but I can't help it, Mom. I have never been so dirty in all my life. We have no place to wash and when we do it is in cold water. I guess it is really bad out in the field where I will be going next week. Roger worried about other things, too, and arranged for an allotment to be sent home from his pay. Mom, if at anytime you need this money feel free to use it. I know that money is pretty scarce at home right now. I hate to see you go to work but I guess you have to and I hope you find a job.

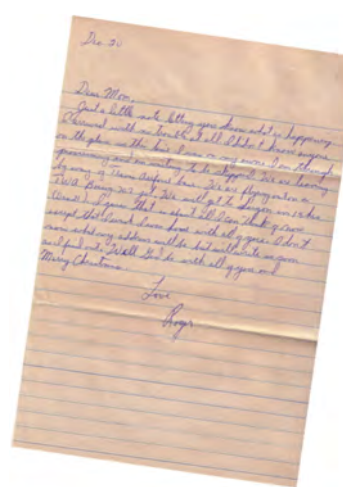
In that same letter, Roger noted he was trying not to be angry at friends for having a good time at home while he was in Vietnam, but then wrote, *Actually, Mom, I hope they never have to go.*

The letter went on with complaints about the food and more of his fears. *Mom, I have never been so depressed or put in another world with strangers in all my life. Mom, I hope I don't worry you to much but I got to tell someone. I think it helps. I guess I have cried to you enough. I'm supposed to be a man and a soldier but I guess I am still a little scared boy.*

Roger's letters continued to come regularly, describing enemy threats, guard duty, his assignment to carry the radio, the jungle, and pleas for mail. On January 2, 1967, he wrote, *We were out in the jungle on that patrol and it is so thick you can't see 5 feet in front of you. We went through a rice paddy and I went up to my butt in mud and water for 100 yds.*

He also wrote that *If you send any packages, make sure they are under 4 lbs.* Since he was in the field, anything he got, he had to carry. He was already carrying all of his own gear, weapon and ammunition, plus the radio.

Gradually, Roger's words lost the edge of fear his first letters carried and he spent more time writing about the mountains, jungles, and valleys his unit was patrolling. His first fire fight saw two comrades killed only a few feet from him.



Continued on page 3

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Saturday 10-4

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Past President – (Open)

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District #6 – Judy Hanna

District #7 – Bart Ward

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At Large B – Dan Frank

At Large C – Tom Ward

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Dick Lang

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From the President...

By Paul Pierce, III

Many of you are not aware that Diane Buganski has taken a job at Murphy's Landing. She has worked for us for nine years handling the ACHS library and helping patrons with their research. Her knowledge of how and where to find information is an ability that takes a long time to acquire and she has a mental inventory that allows her to remember if we even have anything on a requested subject.

I have often been shocked at how quickly Diane has been able to supply me with pages of newspaper clippings on requested subjects. My own research efforts have always required poring through many weeks of newspapers looking for often scant tidbits of questionable value. The work also exposes you to the most time-consuming pitfall of research, the reading of all those things that look so interesting that you find yourself reading in depth about events that have nothing to do with your topic.

Having the experience and assistance available that Diane has provided has saved vulnerable novices like me countless hours of valuable time. Multiply that by all the other people who have benefited and you have a sizable amount of time that was made available for patrons with their kids, grandparents or whoever. Without question Diane has made the world a happier place in her time with us. We are sad to see her go, but we are happy for her and proud to have her still working in history developing interactive programming for the wonderful activities at Murphy's Landing. We know that we will always be proud to say, "she worked for us."

ACHS is made up of many good people; all those people put together make the "body" we call the Historical Society. I vaguely recall that the human body replaces all of the individual cells that make up the body approximately every seven years. Even with all the individual changes that go on, the body still seems to be the same. It is reassuring that ACHS is very much like that also. It can be worrisome to see important people go, but like a living organism, every important job is taken up by a different individual and our good work continues on.

I hope you will go to one of the events at Murphy's Landing this year because Diane is working there and to just have a good informative time.

Board, staff, and friends gathered for a farewell dinner for Diane on April 21. We will all miss her, but are happy for her new opportunities at Murphy's Landing. The look on Diane's face says how excited she is to be starting a new venture!

From the Director's Desk...

By Bonnie McDonald

Too many people think of history as stodgy, boring, and irrelevant. I'm sure that you've met a person or two who wrinkles their nose when you state your love of history. "It's just dates and names in a book," they often say. Aha—the teachable moment! When they begin a tirade about being forced to learn the Gettysburg Address in sixth grade, you can take the opportunity to reinforce that history is more than dates in a textbook. History is real, it is vital, and it is made everyday. It is the story of our lives—the everyday people that contribute to the greater story of our community and our nation.

Now you've peaked their interest—make a break for it and shuffle them in to the History Center! On May 17th, the Anoka County Historical Society will unveil our newest exhibit—*Vietnam: The Veterans' Experience*. "Vietnam? That's not history; I was alive then!" they will say. Another opportunity to reinforce that history is the collection of our experiences, past and present, and together, the documentation of these experiences creates the history written about in textbooks. Point out to your skeptical friend that this exhibit was created from the veterans' stories documented through their letters (see cover story), photographs, artifacts, and oral history interviews and at times, they tell a story of Vietnam that was never shown on television or written about in *Life* magazine.

Your guests will begin to share their own experiences, their own history, as you sit together on the couch in the 1960's-era living room and reflect on how Vietnam touched all our lives. Congratulations—the transformation is complete! You have created another history "buff." Now, to celebrate, we'll all recite the Gettysburg Address...*"Four score and seven years ago..."*



Letters from Vietnam Continued from page 1



By February, Roger was writing more about the tactics they were using, their leadership, and the fighting his unit was seeing. He wrote how tired he was—they only got 5-6 hours of sleep a night—the mountains and vegetation, the snakes and the thorns. Other horrors, such as being assigned to dig up some freshly disturbed ground and finding decomposing bodies, raids on enemy positions, and searching villages began to fill Roger's letters. He still shared his fears with his mother, but those lines were becoming fewer. He was getting used to the work of war and the heat,

though his nose still sunburned terribly.

By the middle of February, 1967, packages from home had caught up to Roger and he got five in one mail call. *Those cookies you sent were a little hard but they were delicious. With all that food it seemed just like Thanksgiving. That Kool-Aid sure makes the water taste better.* Other things he received were pictures from home and his gratitude for the familiar things rang through clearly. The letter continued, describing the casualties Roger saw, the “rest” days and trying to explain to a Vietnamese barber in sign language how to cut his hair.

Well right now I am sitting in the bushes between two rice paddies. The letter was dated March 1, 1967, and Roger told his mother about ambushes, punji stakes hidden in the tall grass, mines, and then calmly went on to give some advice to his sister on how to start the car she had. The next letter, March 3, was a big day for Roger. He got to take his first shower since arriving in Vietnam. *Here they pump the water out of a creek and into a pipe and you stand under the pipe and that's your shower. It is not real swift but it sure felt good to get clean again.*

More letters in March told of capturing suspected V.C., napalm, and searching a village. Roger's unit was moving around more now, being flown by helicopter to various places. The mentions of being scared were almost gone. The letter dated March 21st found Roger wondering how the people there could live, describing the poor conditions they found in some of the villages. *I guess we have it pretty lucky back home.*

April brought a brief respite for Roger's unit as they went to “battalion” where they could rest and get hot food. On the third of April, Roger wrote, *They had steaks and all the beer or pop you wanted. They also showed a movie on the back of a tent painted white. I had a steak, 2 cans of beer, went to the movie and then hit the sack. I got to bed about 10:00. It sure felt good to sleep in a tent with a roof over your head. Also it was nice because we got to sleep the whole night.*

The next letter was two weeks later as, *They have really been keeping us hopping.* The unit had moved out again and was back in the field under a platoon sergeant that was, in Roger's words, a *real dud*. He recounted with glee the sergeant getting a piece of grenade fragment in his backside.

Well its been 4 months today that I left home. 8 months more, God willing, I will be home. This letter was dated April 19, 1967, and he went to tell about moving a lot farther north than they had ever been before. *Mom, I guess this is supposed to be a real hot spot. We are still by the S. China Sea. We are going into a bunch of known V-C villages tomorrow. They are supposed to be heavily booby-trapped and a lot of snipers. Our platoon is down to only 19 men now. We are supposed to have 43. So you see we are real short of manpower. I hope we get some new recruits in soon. I am carrying an additional 500 rounds of ammo now. If Charlie (VC) gets me its not going to be because I ran out of ammunition.* Roger asked for some batteries for the flashlight his mother had sent and complained about the heat and the rain, concluding the letter with, *Well, lots of love to you all. Don't know when I will get this mailed, depends on if a chopper comes or not. Love, Roger.*

It was the last letter he wrote. Roger was killed in action three days later on April 22, 1967. The Bronze Star citation he received described the action in which he was killed. *Shortly after the mission was underway a fire team, along with the platoon leader, was crossing a bridge under heavy fire from enemy automatic weapons when it was pinned down. The platoon leader could see the source of the enemy fire but without communications he could not call for friendly artillery fire to reduce the strong point. PFC Verwers, a radio operator with the unit, saw the platoon leader's problem and with complete disregard for his own personal safety left his position and ran with his radio across the bridge to the area in which the platoon leader was located. He was successful in reaching the platoon leader but in doing so was mortally wounded.*

Roger's body was returned to Anoka County for burial in Anoka's Forest Hill Cemetery.



Roger, late 1966



Roger's headstone in Forest Hill Cemetery.

The Story of an Artifact

A Bag of Many Uses

Necessity is often said to be the mother of invention and that saying applies to the bag as the ACHS artifact highlighted here. It has two very different stories.

Officially, the plain Army green bag was designed to hold an M18A1 antipersonnel mine. It was often called a Claymore mine and was primarily a defensive weapon. These kinds of mines were usually set around the perimeter of an area to be protected. When the C-4 explosive the mine contained was detonated, it sprayed some 700 steel balls in a fan shaped pattern in front of it. The balls had an effective range of about 165 feet.



The bag itself is made of heavy green canvas and measures 11 1/2" wide and 10" tall. It has a green shoulder strap and the top flap snaps down to the front of the bag. The two pockets inside the bag hold the mine and its firing device. Sewn into the underside of the flap are the instructions of how to aim, arm, and fire the mine complete with drawings. The sheet carries a warning that "The mine may be safely fired only from protected or shielded positions no closer than 50 feet from the mine." The underlining is the Army's.

Once the mine was used, the bag was discarded. Its next duty began when a young man named Mike Clark got it. He was an Army Medic assigned to the 9th Infantry Division in Vietnam. He had arrived in Vietnam on January 2, 1967. As a medic, he carried first aid supplies on the patrols with his unit and did what he could in the field for anyone wounded. Mike said it didn't take long to know the first aid bag he had been issued was nowhere near big enough to carry all the bandages and medical equipment he used. He needed another bag if he were to carry the amount of supplies he wanted to have with him. Mine bags were easy to get, heavy duty, and green!

Mike packed this mine bag full of his additional medical supplies and used the shoulder strap to carry it on his back. The bag rode on the top of his other pack where it was easy to get to quickly. Mike carried the bag until he was wounded and sent back to the United States. He kept the bag until 1994 when he donated it, and his uniform, to ACHS. Mike was aware of the importance of keeping history and thought his uni-



Mike with his mine bag, 1967.

form and the bag would help do that. Mike believed in history so much that in 1995 he took his place on the board of directors for ACHS. Mike served on the ACHS board for three years.

The bag, Mike's uniform shirt, hat, and canteen are all included in the Vietnam exhibit. Be sure you look for this artifact in the military gallery and learn more about many of the Anoka County veterans of the Vietnam War.



Mike reading his hometown newspaper outside a bunker.

Anoka County Historical Society 2004 Annual Report

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

submitted by Bonnie McDonald

The year 2004 was one filled with continued opportunity to grow the organization and to continue our efforts to best fulfill our mission, which is to discover, preserve, and share the rich history of Anoka County with the public. The Board of Directors and staff worked together to find creative ways of meeting our current members' needs, as well as finding new audiences for our history. Thus, we kept your favorite programs, like the annual Drums, Dreams, and History celebration, but also initiated new programs like the Ghosts of Anoka Tour and the Harvest Time Barn Dance. Out of this continued reinvention of our organization, we have met with the enduring commitment of our current membership to support our efforts, as well as welcoming new friends who want to invest in the future of our history. As one of those supporters, you can be proud of the achievements that you made possible. Allow me to highlight your Society's accomplishments for 2004.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING

DONATIONS

- In 2004, donations to ACHS came in record number, totaling over \$56,000 in cash and in-kind support from members and friends of the organization. The year-end appeal alone garnered over \$7,000 to allow us to purchase updated technology equipment. Donations from businesses around Anoka County made our first annual Harvest Time Barn Dance a true success, as their donations for the silent and live auction helped us to raise almost \$9,000 for our Endowment Fund. We sincerely thank all of you for your continued support and helping ACHS to expand our capacity through your generosity.

MEMBERSHIP

- ACHS continued to make considerable gains in membership from around Anoka County in 2004. We found that ACHS memberships increased by 17.6% from 2003 to 2004, with 639 paid members as of December 31, 2004 (the 2003 number excludes the 414 complimentary members from the 2003 "Tribute to John Weaver." Almost 25% of these members renewed in 2004.)
- 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, 2004, we had members from 18 of our 21 communities.



SMILE! Your donation preserved your community's history.



Happy ACHS volunteers Marian Auchter and Linda Mundle.

VOLUNTEERS

- We had overwhelming and continued support from our volunteers in 2004. Volunteer hours totaled 4,439.75 hours, or the equivalent of over two additional, full-time staff people. A total of 125 volunteers donated hours in 2004, representing a 9% increase in the number of volunteers from 2003.

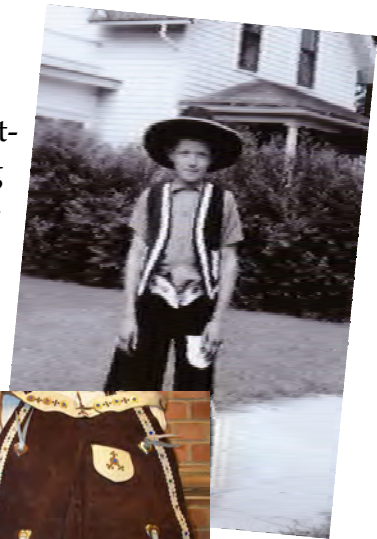
ADMINISTRATION

- In our continuing effort to professionalize our operations, the Board of Directors has continued to adopt and review administrative policies. In 2004, the Philolectian Room Use and Community Preservation Policies were amended and three new policies adopted: the Interest Income Policy; Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy; and the Strategic Membership Plan. The board initiated work on the Strategic Visioning Plan in January of 2005.
- On December 9, 2004, the members of the Anoka County Historical Society approved our restated Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws after an extensive redrafting process led by board members Shirley Christenson, Marion Schulz, and Barb Scottston. The restated documents ensure for countywide representation on the Board of Directors, as well as restructuring the election process and officer term length.

PRESERVING AND PROTECTING HISTORY

ACHS ARTIFACT COLLECTION

- In 2004, ACHS Project Curator Marilyn Anderson handled 4,620 artifacts in our collection; handling included either cataloguing, preparing an artifact for exhibit, or acquisition of a new artifact. A total of 633 of these artifacts were new acquisitions. To date, 60,221 items have been catalogued, including objects, photographs, archival records, and books. We believe this number represents an estimated 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 Anoka Kiwanis, the Ramsey Lions Club, and many special ACHS members like Shirley Christenson and Ann Steen. Thank you!)*



Young Charlie Sell wearing cowboy regalia donated to ACHS in 2004.

PROMOTING ANOKA COUNTY'S HISTORY

EVENTS/ OUTREACH/ PROGRAMMING

- Staff presented 28 history programs and an additional 16 outreach events in 2004, like the HiSTORY Roundtable series, I Love to Read History Month at Rice Lake Elementary School, the Anoka Heritage Home and Garden Tour, and the Anoka County Holiday Tree ornament presentation. These programs engaged 10,155 people in the rich history of Anoka County and helped us to have a presence in the following communities: Andover, Anoka, Bethel, Brooklyn Center, Burns Township, Centerville, Champlin, Coon Rapids, Fridley, Lino Lakes, and Ramsey.

- The publicity of our programs in 2004 was a major success for our organization. ACHS had several stories in our local press, as well as the *Star and Tribune* and *Pioneer Press'* North Metro Sections. Quad Cities Cable Television launched "Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow," a monthly program hosted by ACHS that focuses on Anoka County's history. ACHS programs have been a regular feature on KOOL108 FM's "Anoka Now" program, Vickie Wendel was a guest on TPT Channel 2, and our Harvest Time Barn Dance was featured on KARE 11's "Coffee with KARE." This success

is on account of Volunteer Coordinator Maria King who has developed an extensive media list and an efficient system to send press releases.

- Two very important documentation projects continued in 2004. ACHS was fortunate to receive a second \$20,000 grant from the Anoka County Ag Preserves Program to continue our documentation of Anoka County's agricultural history, with this second phase covering the dates 1900 to 1945. The project includes a written history, photographic survey of agricultural buildings, an exhibit, and oral history interviews with past and present farmers. Oral history interviews are the cornerstone of our

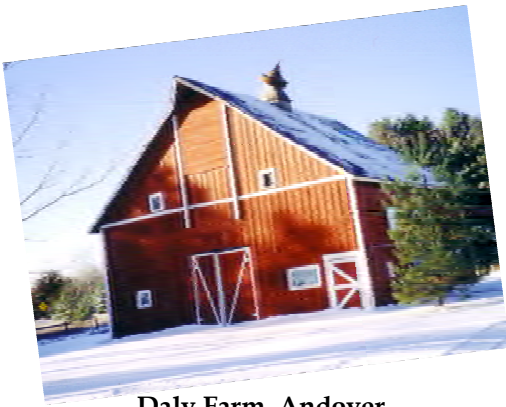
second documentation project and that is to gather the stories of Anoka County veterans. To date, volunteer Dave Niles has completed over 45 interviews with veterans representing service from the 1940s to the 1990s so that their stories live on in perpetuity.

- ACHS continued to promote our partnerships with affiliate history groups in the County, such as the Anoka Heritage Preservation Commission, the Blaine Historical Society, and the Fridley Historical Society. In addition, we were proud to be a part of new history efforts like the Sandburg Middle School Centennial, St. Genevieve's Catholic Church Sesquicentennial, and the new Midwest Preservation Institute.

- Finally, in September of 2004, ACHS was honored with a national Certificate of Commendation from the American Association for State and Local History for our



Artist Charles Martin presenting the Fridley tree ornament.



Daly Farm, Andover

ACHS FACILITIES

ANOKA COUNTY HISTORY CENTER & LIBRARY

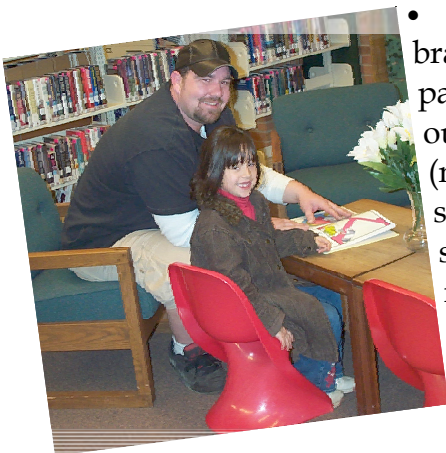
- News is spreading about the History Center & Library! In 2004, we welcomed approximately 15,739 patrons throughout the year, an average of 1,311 patrons a month and a 24% increase over 2003.
- In May of 2004, the Historical Society approached the City of Anoka to discuss an extension to our 20-year lease for the History Center. After investing over \$400,000 into the structure, we would like to see our investment amortized over a longer lease period. The City of Anoka would not commit to an extension at this time, as our area of Anoka is being considered for redevelopment as part of the North Central Business District. We have been involved in the redevelopment planning meetings to ensure that the History Center is integrated into the project and anticipate that lease discussions will resume after the development plan has been adopted.
- Capital projects to improve the History Center have continued in 2004. ACHS received a grant from the Minnesota State-Grants-in-Aid Program to install light-blocking window film where artifacts are present and to create a lighting plan for the exhibit hall. This work was completed in the spring of 2004. A much larger project was completed in June and that was the complete reroofing of the History Center by Palmer West Construction. The roof slope was improved and new copper flashing installed to improve the roof's drainage while maintaining the integrity of the building's design.



History Center roofing project, June of 2004.

CIRCULATING LIBRARY

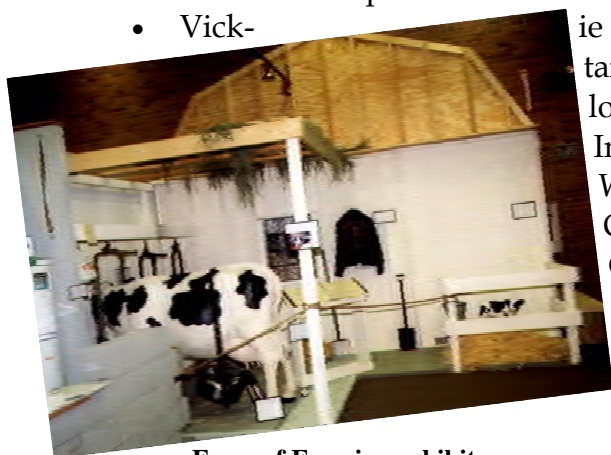
- A total of 1,103 books, tapes, and CD's, were reserved, charged, or renewed from our facility in 2004 and the total usage of the public internet terminals increased by 42% from 2003 to 2004 with 1,997 users.
- ACHS staff began tracking patrons who used additional library services in 2003. In 2004, our periodicals were used by 476 patrons, 1,206 patrons browsed in the circulating library without charging a book, and we received 417 "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 2004 is 5,199 people, an increase of 24% from 2003.



Family reading time in the circulating library.

EXHIBIT HALL & LOBBY

- ACHS Program Manager Vickie Wendel was kept very busy preparing exhibits in the History Center Exhibit Hall and the lobby in 2004. The “Home on the Farm” and “Logging” exhibits were replaced in September with “Farms and Families: The Changing Face of Anoka County Agriculture – 1945 to 2003.” Throughout the year, Vickie also alternated themes and/or artifacts located in the “Anoka County A to Z” exhibit in letters B, D, I, N, O, P, Q, S, and Y. The Historical Society follows professional museum practice in rotating artifacts frequently to prevent light damage.



Faces of Farming exhibit

- Vickie Wendel and Diane Buganski, ACHS Library Assistant, also created many exhibits for the History Center lobby to create interest for those entering the building. In 2004, lobby exhibit topics included: I Love to Read, Women in the Military, Archaeology, Weddings, the Ox Cart Trail, Political Campaigns, and the History of Christmas Cards. Traveling exhibits were also created at the Rum River and Crooked Lake Libraries.
- A total of 1,032 patrons visited the exhibit hall in 2004 – a 19% decrease over last year. We had 331 paying adults, 462 paying students, 60 complimentary adults, 37 complimentary students (under 6 years old,) and 142 ACHS members.

RESEARCH LIBRARY

- A total of 366 people registered to use our research facility in 2004, an increase of 21%. A total of 83 new researchers registered in 2004.
- By December 2004, volunteers Shirley Christenson and Marlys Talbot had cataloged almost 1,100 books in the research library, or all of the books currently found on our shelves. They recently began cataloguing books that are kept in the storage area, so that patrons can access the titles using our searchable database. In addition, the research library has been reorganized according to the Dewey Decimal System.

COLONIAL HALL

- Identifying and solidifying a reuse for Colonial Hall has been a priority project for ACHS since our move in 2001. In 2003, a decision was made to sublease the building, as our lease with the Anoka Masonic Lodge #30 continues for another six years. The Artique, an antique and framing shop in Anoka, approached us in August of 2004 to explore a sublease for Colonial Hall for the remaining six years of our lease. An agreement was reached in October and the Artique opened its doors in Colonial Hall for their annual after-Thanksgiving sale.



**In 2004, ACHS was able to share the history of Anoka County
with almost 26,000 people, an 8% increase over 2003!**

ACHS was able to achieve these many accomplishments because of the support of Anoka County, our members, friends, and donors. You can feel good that you had a direct impact in the preservation of history in your community. Yours was a gift that protected the future and the past.

In 2005, ACHS will develop a strategic vision for the next three years. During this time we will assess our current programs and determine if they are beneficial to our mission and the organization. We look to maintain our growth trend and that will require focusing on our strengths—our collection, our programs, and our members and donors.

In conclusion, this is a time of great change in many Anoka County communities and the Anoka County Historical Society is vital now more than ever. Our aim is the continued protection of our predecessors' legacy and the recognition of the history being made every day. We will continue the legacy set by former board President John Weaver, a friend of history lost in December of 2004, to reach out to all of our 21 cities and townships in Anoka County. As we look forward, we see many opportunities to fulfill our mission in 2005.

FUNDRAISING REPORT

submitted by Bart Ward, Capital Campaign Coordinator

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

Total cash and in-kind contributions, 12/31/03: \$619,351

2004 cash and in-kind contributions: \$ 27,299

Total contributions to date: \$646,650

Capital Campaign projects complete – Campaign ended

■ **Endowment Fund** ■ [Goal: \$500,000]

Total endowment contributions, 12/31/03: \$27,360.51

2004 endowment contributions: \$13,036.90

Total contributions to date: \$40,397.41

Endowment Fund Goal: \$500,000.00

Remaining Endowment Fund fundraising: \$459,602.59

TREASURER'S REPORT

submitted by Glen Hardin

ANOKA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

December 31, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001 Financial Statement Comparison.

BALANCE SHEET	12/31/2004	12/31/2003	12/31/2002	12/31/2001
ASSETS				
Total Current Assets	254,648.03	302,086.91	262,839.57	246,881.24
Total Fixed Assets	185,036.71	177,170.00	154,779.37	154,525.37
TOTAL ASSETS	461,046.28	479,256.91	417,618.94	403,257.25
LIABILITIES & EQUITY				
Total Liabilities	1,373.01	0	0	4,563.15
Total Equity	459,673.27	479,256.91	417,618.94	398,694.10
Total Liabilities & Equity	461,046.28	479,256.91	417,618.94	403,257.25
INCOME STATEMENT				
Total Support	284,204.06	281,663.66	247,670.19	389,630.30
Total Expense*	336,199.78	230,608.90	230,645.13	137,751.25
Net	(51,995.72)	51,054.76	17,025.06	251,879.05
2003 Revenue Sources (Gross Revenue)				
Anoka County General Support	100,000.00	112,529.00		
Anoka County Library Support	80,000.00	75,796.00		
Admissions	1,613.50	NA		
Weaver Recognition Event	In Endowment	21,743.25		
Capital Campaign	6,400.00	5,000.00		
Agricultural History Grant	20,000.00	20,000.00		
Catalogue Project Grant	6,930.00	5,500.00		
Lighting Grant	2,300.00	NA		
Endowment	1,853.00	5,078.26		
Programs & Events	16,274.85	8,622.25		
Interest	8,238.10	8,435.46		
General Support & Donations	14,958.50	8,961.82		
Membership Dues	4,420.00	3,429.00		
Sales	3,441.84	NA		
Rental Income	1,310.00	NA		
Other	16,464.27	6,568.62		
TOTAL	284,204.06	281,663.66		

*2004 Expenses exceed Support on account of the \$108,794.86 payment for the new roof.

2nd Annual Anoka Heritage Home & Garden Tour

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

Anoka County Historical Society



Sunday, July 10th, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.



Tour all sites for only \$10.00!

Tour eight beautiful historic homes and their gardens in Anoka's Whiskey Flats neighborhood, meet the homeowners, and hear about their restoration efforts. Homes on the tour date from as early as 1852 and as late as the 1910's and have a range of styles from Greek Revival to Arts & Crafts. This year, you will also be able to tour several historic businesses in downtown Anoka and have a chance to win fabulous door prizes.

Tickets are available at the Anoka County History Center, (763) 421-0600, before July 9th. On July 9th you can purchase tickets at the ACHS/ HPC booth at Anoka's Riverfest celebration from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



1500 South Ferry Street



206 Fremont Street

Sites on the tour (to date) include:

*2321 N. Ferry Street — 2315 N. Ferry Street — 1703 S. Ferry Street — 1627 S. Ferry Street
1500 S. Ferry Street — 302 Fremont Street (pending sale to new owner) — 214 Fremont Street
206 Fremont Street — The Artique, 1900 Third Avenue South — Avant Garden, 215 Main Street*

Up To Date

A newly revitalized Around the County Committee is on the scene! Under the leadership of board member Myrtice Hanson, the Around the County Committee is revved up and ready to take on its mission.

The Around the County Committee serves as a conduit for communication between ACHS and the cities and townships of Anoka County. Members are volunteers who help document the activities in each area and gather photos of ongoing changes. They are ACHS liaisons to the communities, and are often called upon to identify a local source of specific information, as was the case with the search for Anoka County farmers, and Korean War veterans. At the same time, Around the County members take information *from* ACHS back to their communities. In this way they help get the word out about upcoming events, current projects, new exhibits, and volunteer opportunities.

Past Around the County projects have included the photo documenting of local street scenes, and the construction of the Around the County quilt, which will be on display again this year at the Anoka County Fair. Ideas for new projects include scrap booking, gathering information for a speaker's bureau type of presentation about their city, and providing new media contacts. Members can also be instrumental in increasing membership, finding new volunteers, and increasing participation in ACHS events.

Although all 21 communities in Anoka County are represented on the committee, some members are more enthusiastic than others. If you are interested in joining this dynamic group, please call Maria at the History Center or contact Myrtice Hanson. Planning meetings will only be held four times a year, but they will be productive.

It's a great way to serve your community, to have some input into what history gets saved, and to impact the outreach efforts of the Historical Society.

American Girls Tea Parties!



Busy hands paint dowel rods for a "star twirler", while other girls and their mentors plant a seed for their Victory Garden. The *American Girls Tea*, held on the Saturdays of April 23 and 30, had the girls rolling bandages and constructing a parachute before eating apple pie instead of birthday cake. Pie was due to sugar rationing. "Molly," who turned 10 in 1942, taught the girls about WWII on the home front and on the battle lines, focusing on the experiences of Anoka County people.

Announcements and News

◆ Just a reminder that the May 12 ACHS Board of Directors meeting will be at 5:00 p.m. The June 9 meeting will be at 6:00 p.m. All are held at the History Center. Board meetings are open to the public and everyone is welcome to attend.

◆ Do you enjoy rummage sales? If so, we are looking for some items and you could help us search for them. The items MUST be VERY inexpensive and usable! We need matching tea cup and saucer sets, cloth napkins, ladies hats and gloves, salad or dessert plates. Call Maria (763) 421-0600 if you have questions.

◆ Want to help with a special event? On July 10, 2005, 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 Maria at (763) 421-0600.

Volunteers, Volunteers, Volunteers!

By Maria King

The Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon was held on April 9th at the Bunker Hills Activity Center in Andover. Volunteers enjoyed friendly conversation and camaraderie until the pizza finally arrived. After lunch, a brisk game of History Bingo left everyone feeling like a winner! Because volunteers give us their *time*, the theme was CLOCKS and battery powered clocks were given to each volunteer as a token of our appreciation.

Special recognition was given to those very special volunteers who have given us over 200 hours of volunteer service in 2004. Lucille Elrite leads the list with 398 hours, and her colleague, Linda Mundle with 320. They are a valuable resource for genealogy information every Tuesday. Other recipients include Kay Skubitz, who worked on the maps and blueprints after completion of the photo project and was an incredible ally in the battle of the Christmas decorations! She accumulated 309 ¼ hours! Dave Niles has contributed 274 hours working on the oral history project and gathering information on the history of the Anoka State Hospital. Although rarely seen at the History Center, Sharon Stockhausen's wonderful weekly articles for the *Anoka County Union* use up roughly 236 hours of her time annually. The library project, and the many assorted duties of a board secretary, took 205 ½ hours of Shirley Christenson's time. Paul Pierce, our president, has done everything imaginable from unplugging toilets to negotiating our budget with the county! He's not afraid to get his hands dirty and we all appreciate his many talents. Paul donated 207.75 hours last year. Finally, a special award was given to recognize an entire family. Vickie Wendel brings the special skills of her husband Ron, son Lee, daughters Mandy and Stacy, and Stacy's husband Jay, and her parents, Lester and Shirley Ziegler. Together, they contributed 272 hours.

Our volunteers are the backbone of this organization. We would be lost without them. Whether you give us a few hours or hundreds of hours, we appreciate you, and want you to know just how very wonderful you are!

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 2004, 124 volunteers gave 4,470 hours to ACHS! We appreciate each and every one of our loyal volunteers. We *know* there are many, 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	398	Rathbun, Anna	10	Scottston, Barb	4
Mundel, Linda	320	Mack, Chris	10	Schulz, Marion	4
Skubitz, Kay	309.25	Serryn, Pat	9.5	Morrow, Denise	4
Niles, David	274	Saunby, Valerie	9.5	Lundburg, Brianna	4
Stockhausen, Sharron	236	Zarling, Carolyn	9	Jersak, Michele	4
Pierce, III, Paul	207.75	Novak, June	8.5	Hollman, Lana	4
Christenson, Shirley	205.5	Bellows, Kevin	8.5	Hanna, Judy	4
Meneley, Fran	186	Piere, Tyler	8	Baldwin, Mary	4
Talbot, Marlys	151.5	Overby, Stacy	8	Bohner, Lorena	3.25
Levens, Darlene	151.5	McClymonds, Melanie	7.5	Thompson, Charlie	3
Sell, Charlie	133.5	Jersak, Robert	7.5	Maccario, Ed	3
Berg, Mai	133	Hegglund, Nikki	7.5	Hagglund, Nikki	3
Paulson, Lou	123.5	Caswell, Raelene	7.5	Zuppas, Marlene	2.5
Wendel, Vickie	105	Frank, Dan	7	Thorsen, Dave	2.5
Hardin, Glen	90	Hubley, Anne	6.5	Saunby, Kelsey	2.5
Ward, Bart	81.5	Wendel, Lee	6	Roehlke, Al	2.5
McElhaney, Pat	74.5	Schmidt, Jackie	6	Kok, Tammy	2.5
Pratt, Jeanine	67.5	Overby, Jay	6	Fitzpatrick, Caitlin	2.5
Auchter, Marion	61	Hansen, Chuck	6	Bator, Tawnya	2.5
Larson, Maxine	60	Hansen, Colleen	6	Wagner, Alice	2
Wendel, Mandy	55	Breckenridge, Barb	5.75	Stoltz, Howard	2
Widmer, Rita	54.5	Steffen, Natalie Haas	5.5	Stanley, Ryan	2
Hanson, Myrtice	54	Solheim, Amanda	5.5	King, Maria	2
Wallin, Evonne	49	Skogquist, Bjorn	5.5	Baldwin, Michael	2
Wendel, Ron	48.5	Olson, Lil	5.5	Baldwin, Diane	2
Stauffer, Donald	32	Miscovic, Suzanne	5.5	Bedor, Tom	1.5
Legrid, David	31	Meyer, Lillian	5.5	Remley, Chris	1
Thurston, Barb	30.25	Medcalf, Amanda	5.5	Prugh, Bill	1
Ziegler, Lester	29	Kluge, Arlette	5.5	Pierce, Shirley	1
Estby, Laura	26	Elliott, Linda	5.5	Pierce, Paul IV	1
Anderson, Marilyn	24.5	Chutich, Marlys	5.5		
McDonald, Barb	24	Chutich, Joe	5.5		
Ward, Ellen	23.5	McCormick, Brighten	5		
Skogquist, Erik	23.5	Welch, Mary	4.5		
Saunby, Ashley	23	Wallace, Debbie	4.5		
Gilbert, Margaret	22	Wallace, Dave	4.5		
Ziegler, Shirley	20.5	Steen, Ann	4.5		
Anderson, Sarah	16	Rickert, Lynne	4.5		
Thorsen, Sandy	15	Orr, Vickie	4.5		
Anderson, Jan	15	Orr, Jeannie	4.5		
Bellows, Patti	14.5	Malinak, Jaqie	4.5		
Martindale, Tyler	14	Goeser, Kay	4.5		
McArdle, Rod	13.5	Flanders, Becky	4.5		
Butler, Dorothy	12.5	Fiala, Judith	4.5		
Zarling, Jonathan	12	Eye, Julie	4.5		
Pierce, Mary	11.5	Callender, Linda		4.5	
Erickson, Debbie	11	Weaver, John	4		

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

DONATIONS

Don Ahlberg
Phil Blake
Evelyn Bonde
Dan Frank
James Keck
Dick Lang
Wendy Maechtle
Sylvia Marier
Barbara McDonald
Donald and Joyce Sage
Albin Savela
Rodger Sundstrom
Catherine Vesley

JOHN WEAVER ENDOWMENT AND MEMORIAL

Michael and Wendie Lapham
The Weaver Brothers Company

MEMORIALS

In Memory of Betty Batters
Given by Terry and Lynne Rickert

CATALOGING PROJECT

American Legion Post 102 Auxiliary

GRANT DONATION

Elmer L. & Eleanor J. Andersen Foundation

YEAR-END APPEAL

Glen Lindstrom

ARTIFACT DONORS

Carl Anderson
Anoka County Elections Dept.

*The Anoka County Historical Society wishes to impart
our sincere condolences to
Barbara Kesser on the death of her sister, Patricia Hayden,
and
Ralph Talbot on the death of his wife, Kathryn.
We will remember their deep commitment to preserving history.*

Bruce Bacon
Diane Buganski
Lorraine Evensen
Michael & Elizabeth Gundlach
Diane Hahn
Tim Layeux
Rod McArdle
Lisa Olson
Donald Parrott
Lou Paulson
Ronald Picotte
Bill Prugh
Patricia Betchlach Russell
Catherine Weber

Welcome New Members!

FEBRUARY 20—APRIL 22, 2005

Don Ahlberg (Andover)
Paula Goetzke (Isanti)
Kathryn Grafsgaard (Anoka)
Mike and Liz Gundlach (Anoka)
Susan Jarosch (South St. Paul)
James Keck (Minneapolis)
Joan Landberg (Columbia Heights)
Dan and Sue Lehrer (Andover)
Joyce Manthey (Bethel)
Bill and Marsha Mowerson (Cedar)
John and Heidi Swisher (Andover)
Dianna Wise (Forest Lake)
Frank Yost (Andover)

The Annual Meeting in Centerville

If Centerville had a red carpet, they would have rolled it out for ACHS on March 5th when St. Genevieve Catholic Church opened its doors for us! There to greet everyone was St. Genevieve of Paris herself, as portrayed by Centerville's mayor, Mary Capra. It set the tone for a great day of history, business, and fun in a wonderful historic setting.

Following the business portion of the meeting, Playhouse 15 from St. Francis took center stage and delighted everyone with non-stop jokes, songs, and laughter from the play *Meshuggah Nuns!* Tasty french pastries were the treats we shared in the basement of the church, followed by several rousing games of History Bingo with lots of prizes.

The meeting was *packed* with over 90 people attending!

A special segment of the business meeting was the election results for the ACHS Board of Directors. We have some new people on our board and the number of board members is expanding!

Jan Anderson of Andover was elected Vice-President. This one year term will see Jan in the role of president in 2006 when current president Paul Pierce III

moves to the seat of Past President.

Dan Frank, who grew up in Ham Lake, was elected to an At Large seat on the board. Tom Ward of Anoka was elected by a write in vote to fill an At Large seat. Catherine Vesley from Columbia Heights was elected to the District #4 seat.

At present, the District #3 seat is open and the board will appoint a resident from that commissioner district to serve on the Board.

Barb Scottston and Marion Schulz both chose not to run again for their board seats. While we are sad to see past board members leave, we know they will continue to be involved and are excited to have the energy of the new board members!

One little "oops!" we need to correct. In the past newsletter, it was stated that St. Genevieve's Catholic Church was on the National Register of Historical Places. It is not. We apologize for any confusion.

Coming Events

May 14, 11:00 a.m.

Photo History Mystery Day & School Patrol Picnic Films

Heights Theatre, Central Avenue, Columbia Heights. Bob Comer, a former Sheriff's Department photographer, filmed field trips local school patrol children took to Excelsior Amusement Park from 1962 to 1965. These films are sure to bring a smile to everyone's face and you might see someone you know! Or even you, if you were in the school patrol during those years! The films will be shown during our Photo History Mystery identification day when we ask for your help in learning more about some of the unidentified photos in our collection. There event is FREE!!

May 17, 7:00 p.m.

Vietnam: The Veterans' Experience

Anoka County History Center and Library. Vietnam veterans will cut the ribbon to open this newest exhibit in the military gallery of the ACHS Exhibit Hall. Come walk through the jungle while you try to avoid the "booby traps" of being "in country" as you learn the stories of some of the veterans from Anoka County who served in this conflict. There is no admission to the Exhibit Hall for this special opening night.

June 15, Noon

HiSTORY To Go Lunch

Lakeside Park, on McKinley Street in Spring Lake Park. It's summer! Time to head for the beach—and Anoka County has plenty of them! Bring your favorite picnic lunch and we'll share stories of where "we used to swim" or perhaps still do! We'll bring a few fun things along to get the conversations rolling and share from there. This informal roundtable discussion ranges in topics on a monthly basis and everyone is welcome to join in the fun. Don't forget your lunch and sunscreen! This event is free.

July 9, 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 Ghost tours and antique car tours of Anoka! Watch for more information to come in the July-August issue of *History News*.

July 10, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

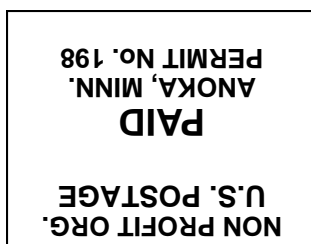
Anoka Heritage Home & Garden Tour

In conjunction with the Anoka Heritage Preservation Commission, ACHS will host this tour of beautiful, historic homes and their gardens in Anoka. Tickets will be available at the History Center for \$10 to tour the homes! You can also purchase tickets at the Anoka Riverfest celebration on July 9th at our booth on Jackson Street and 2nd Avenue in Anoka. (See page 12 for more information)

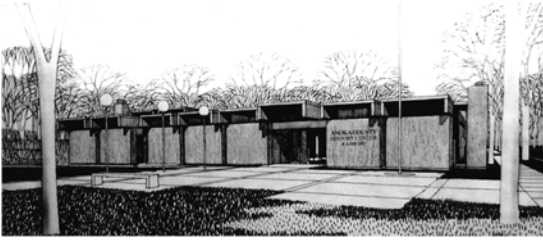
October 1—SAVE THE DATE!

Harvest Time Barn Dance

Anoka County Fair Grounds. ACHS will be celebrating Anoka County's agricultural history and the opening of our second agricultural history exhibit with our SECOND ANNUAL harvest feast, barn dance, silent and live auctions. Proceeds will benefit our Endowment Fund. More information will be coming soon!



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. 35 No. 4

July-August 2005

Sample some history in historic Anoka homes!

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

Watch any group of people at a buffet table and you inevitably see them taking at least a small amount of just about everything. It's fun to sample! In the spirit of "sampling", we've decided to spread an array of house histories to whet your appetite for the Anoka Heritage Home and Garden Tour coming up on July 10. See page three for more details. These bits of each home's history won't satisfy your entire appetite for history, but give you just enough to "hold you over" until the 10th when you will be offered a full menu of wonderful stories about the people, houses and businesses. Don't forget to order your tickets for the tour—there are only a limited number of tickets available!

2321 S. Ferry Street

Edward L. Reed was born into a lumbering family, so it is reasonable to believe that he had this house built about 1881 with the intention of selling it rather than living in it himself. He owned it for only two years when the Cheevers bought it and they are thought to be the first to live in the house.



William and Gertrude Cheever came to Anoka from "back east", William having been born in Massachusetts. They arrived in Minnesota in 1863, and for the rest of their lives, Anoka was their home. It was 1883 when they bought this house. William was the county surveyor for many years and had been nominated for that same position again at the time of his death in 1890. He was just 63 when he died.

1703 S. Ferry Street

The house here was built before 1867, probably by H. G. Crosswell. By 1869, John B. Snow was living in the house with his wife, Emma, and their daughter Amy. John was a dentist and had moved his family to Anoka seeking to ease the consumption from which he suffered. The change of climate did not help his disease as had been hoped and John died in June of 1871. John had taken steps to provide for Emma and Amy. He had a life insurance policy with the Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance Company in the amount of \$2,000, quite a sum of money in 1871.



Emma stayed in Anoka and was remarried to Minot B. Giddings. The ownership of the house changed to reflect both of their names in 1880. The couple sold the house in 1882 and Emma went to live in New Medford, Connecticut. That was Minot's home and she remained there until her death in 1917.

206 Fremont Street



The first resident of this home arrived in Minnesota on the river boat, *War Eagle* in 1854. Benedict Brooks did not come to Anoka, however. He acquired land in Maple Grove and began to establish himself before he returned to Ohio to find a bride. Benedict married Miss Jennie Grove in 1858 and brought her back to Minnesota. They continued to live in Maple Grove until 1862 when he enlisted in the Ninth Minnesota Infantry, Company B. Benedict served in the Union Army for three years before he was discharged at the end of the Civil War and returned to Jennie and his civilian life.

In 1873, Benedict and Jennie built this house in Anoka. The couple had two sons, Bert and Jesse. At the time of Benedict's death in 1901, it was said that "his was a good life, well spent" he being nearly

70 years old when he died.

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 – Jan Anderson

Past President – Ray Steinke

District #1 – Glen Hardin

District #3 – (Open)

District #4 – Catherine Vesley

District #6 – Judy Hanna

District #7 – Bart Ward

At Large A – Myrtice Hanson

At Large B – Dan Frank

At Large C – Tom Ward

County Commissioner Liaison –

Dick Lang

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Program Manager – Vickie Wendel

Admin. Assistant – Lois Spadgenske

Volunteer Coordinator – Maria King

Office Staff – Gail Dahl

Office Staff – Carol Dordan

Special Projects – Marilyn Anderson

Janitorial – Sandra Thorsen

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

Many people have approached me and the Society for help with threatened properties that they do not want to see demolished. Our official policy at present is only to educate the people involved about the history and importance of the buildings threatened. There is an expectation by the public that we should support the restoration, rehabilitation, and reuse of significant properties. They expect us to advocate or recommend that buildings be saved.

Many people do not know Anoka County is one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. Most of you are aware that development is racing through the formerly rural parts of the county because so many people have shared that observation with me. Everywhere, there are local examples of farms disappearing and housing or stores sprouting up in their place.

The issue that brings the Historical Society to mind is when new development proposes or requires the destruction of buildings and homes that people have always had a fondness and appreciation for. It can be a road widening or reroute, or a developer that feels the old farmhouse will reflect badly on all of the new construction they have planned. Sometimes an owner may not have the same taste as the public or wishes they actually had a new style building, but they could only afford an older building in which they feel out of date. Occasionally, people who have owned a structure for a long time become blind to the best features and think of it as just an old insignificant building that robs them of all their time or money. Whatever reason for the proposal to remove an old building, people expect the society to be interested and be involved.

The surroundings we live in lend a powerful influence on how pleased and content we are with our lives and enhance our sense of self-worth. The developers that are afraid of old farmhouses ruining the presentation and positive impression of their overall project are right to be concerned. Shakespeare's line "life is but a stage" is very true in that the "props" and "scenery" make a big difference in if we feel we are performing in a warm and

romantic tale or are trapped in a sterile, hopeless, sci-fi horror story. The feeling

we get is largely due to the "staging" of those surroundings. The more thoughtfully planned and coordinated the staging, the more complete and powerful the effect is on us.

Our membership is pro-history and wishes to see history saved, preserved, and enjoyed. The loss of significant old buildings is the loss of history and the sensitive issue is preservation.

I am not up-to-date on the most current figures, but statistics from the 1990's revealed that the average Minnesotan owns the same home for only seven years. That average is probably less now and even more shocking to people like me who have lived in the same place all their lives. With all that turnover, the threat is far more dire. The only real stability for neighborhoods is in well planned historic preservation policies and public awareness and support. There are several important issues that must be remembered and balanced together to respect the property rights of owners and the public's need to have well maintained, uplifting surroundings. The rights of owners and avoiding the abuse of those rights by our government is sacred to me.

The early suburbs around Minneapolis (Camden, Brooklyn-Park and Center) were developed with the original farm house left where it was and the new houses filled around it. It looks nice and it's great for history buffs to be able to recognize the original structure in that area. Historic designation and districts can be created without infringing on the property rights of owners. There are several effective mechanisms that could help.

I will be recommending that our board of directors review and reconsider our official policy and see if ACHS can do more to help those who are asking us for our expertise and support.

If you, a member of ACHS, have an opinion about the role a local historical society should take, please call me, Paul Pierce, III, at 763-421-0600.

2nd Annual Anoka Heritage Home & Garden Tour

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

Anoka County Historical Society



Sunday, July 10th, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.



Tour all sites for only \$10.00!

Tour nine beautiful historic homes and their gardens in Anoka's Whiskey Flats neighborhood, meet the homeowners, and hear about their restoration efforts. Homes on the tour date from as early as 1852 and as late as the 1910's and have a range of styles from Greek Revival to Arts & Crafts. This year, you will also be able to tour several historic businesses in downtown Anoka and have a chance to win fabulous door prizes.

Tickets are available at the Anoka County History Center, (763) 421-0600, before July 9th. On July 9th, you can purchase tickets at the ACHS/ HPC booth at Anoka's Riverfest celebration from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



1500 South Ferry Street



206 Fremont Street

Sites on the tour include:

*2306 N. Ferry Street — 2321 N. Ferry Street — 2315 N. Ferry Street
1703 S. Ferry Street — 1627 S. Ferry Street — 1500 S. Ferry Street
302 Fremont Street — 214 Fremont Street — 206 Fremont Street
The Artique, 1900 Third Avenue South — The Countess' Collage, 2007 Second Avenue N.
Ivy-N-Lace, 2013 Second Avenue N. — Something Different, 209 E. Main Street
Grant Garden, 215 Main Street*

The Story of an Artifact

A special drum—and a treasured friend of history

A special drum in our collection was the inspiration for starting an annual summer celebration of history at ACHS and it is time to refresh everyone's memory about this special artifact as well as share the story with our new members. *Drums, Dreams and History* began years before we moved to the present building and was the start of our building fund for a new place to keep history. Colonial Hall was full to the brim and to continue gathering, preserving, and sharing Anoka County's history, we needed more space. The drum, featured here, was given to ACHS just at that time and was the perfect rallying point as we worked to drum up support for the dream of keeping history in a new facility. The building fund is now completed and we are settled into our new surroundings, but the financial cost of keeping history continues. Please use the drum flyer in the newsletter to help us continue keeping history and see your name displayed on a paper drum during our celebration of *Drums, Dreams and History* on July 9th as a part of Anoka's Riverfest.

Built in a military style, this drum is believed to have been first used in 1750. It was carried by a Hessian musician whose job it was to communicate orders through drum signals to the troops during the Revolutionary War. The Hessians were German mercenaries fighting with the British Army.

During the Battle of Bemis Heights, the drum was captured by Patriot James Bain. He carried it throughout the remainder of the Revolution and handed it down to his son John, who played it in the Mexican War. It remained in the family to be carried through the Civil War by John's grandson, Robert Bain. Robert continued to play the drum at G.A.R. veteran's meetings and parades until he played it during the First World War to help arouse patriotism.

The drum remained with the Bain family until they passed it on to Richard Sorenson, a former Anoka resident.

Sorenson had a special history of his own. He was 18 years old in 1942 when he enlisted in the Marine Corps and was sent to Namour, a Japanese-held island in the Marshall Islands. Sorenson and five other Marines were in charge of a heavy machine gun and it was critical to keep that gun in the action. When a grenade landed in the fox hole, Sorenson fell on it to protect his comrades and their mission. Gravely wounded, he was sent back to the States to recover and was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his actions. Ever humble, he explained his actions with the reasonable statement of, "I did it because I was the closest one to the grenade."

A hometown hero in every sense of the word, Sorenson decided he wanted to share the rich history of this special drum, so he donated it to hometown museum, the Anoka County Historical Society. The drum has been on display in several exhibits through the years since it came to ACHS and will continue to be cared for as a treasured piece of history.

Richard Sorenson passed away on October 9, 2004, at his home in Reno, Nevada. His love of history prompted him to share his drum with ACHS and he was very proud to see it featured as a symbol of our search for a new building. More

of that pride was evident as he helped cut the ribbon to open the new Anoka County History Center and Library on July 12, 2002. Richard Sorenson will be missed, but his love and support of history will never be forgotten.



Revolutionary War drum



Robert Bain with the drum, ca. 1900.



Richard Sorenson presenting the drum to ACHS, 1994.



Ribbon cutting at ACHS, July 2002. Rick Sorenson, Nina Archibal, John Weaver

Drums, Dreams and History *2005*

Let the drum roll continue! We are established in the new Anoka County History Center and Library, but the need for funds to continue preserving history is ongoing. With our new facility comes the possibilities of expanded programming, collecting and preserving—but this requires funds. Continue to beat the drum in the support of history! Choose your level of support from the chart below and make a donation to the ACHS Building Fund. Your name will appear on an appropriately colored "drum" displayed at the History Center during Riverfest on July 9, 2005!

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 2005* and celebrate our history! Here is my donation to help keep history.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Return this form with your donation to:

Anoka County Historical Society
Drums, Dreams and History 2005
2135 Third Avenue North
Anoka, MN 55303

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

Thanks!

Cut along this line and return with your contribution

Up To Date

Announcements and News

◆Just a reminder that the July 14 ACHS Board of Directors meeting will be at 6:00 p.m. The August 11 meeting will also be at 6:00 p.m. All are held at the History Center. Board meetings are open to the public and everyone is welcome.

◆Do you put up hay/straw? Or have access to bales of hay or straw? ACHS would like to borrow some bales to make “seating” at the Barn Dance on October 1st. We only need the bales that one day. If you can help by loaning out some bales of hay or straw, please call Bonnie at 763-421-0600.

◆Ghosts of Anoka Tours are back in full gear! Check the Upcoming events section on the back of the newsletter for dates. Order your tickets early as these sell out quickly! The tours are offered on the first and third Thursday and Saturday of each summer month. Tours for private groups are available—call 763-421-0600 to set up a special private tour for your group!



Volunteers! Pick your favorite activity!

By Maria King

June and July are busy months on the volunteer scene! Opportunities abound! Here's a sampling of the upcoming events. Please compare them to your schedule and your interests, then consider donating a few hours. You'll be fulfilling an important need in your community, meet new people, learn new things, and get out of the house!

Heritage Home and Garden Tours will be held **Sunday, July 10**, from 1:00 until 5:00 pm. We need volunteers who will serve as greeters and also to keep an eye out for safety. There are nine homes and five businesses! We need about 50 volunteers for this one day! Please call if you can help!

Then there's the county fair coming up! That requires at least two people in each of three different stations: the front porch, the farmhouse, and the summer kitchen. Again this year we will offer craft demonstrations, hands-on activities for children, music, and historic interpreters in the Old Farm Place. Shifts vary slightly each day, but are roughly 10 am to 3:00 pm and 3:00 until 8:00 pm. A free ticket into the fair is provided. This year's dates are **Tuesday, July 26th through Sunday the 30th**. We especially welcome people who can demonstrate skills that were common to our pioneer settlers: carding wool, sewing on the treadle machine, quilting, kite making, wood carving, etc.

August brings the Nowthen Threshing Show on Friday through Sunday, August 19th to 21st. We will once again run the General Store. Two volunteers are needed each day.

If you are interested in volunteering, please call. If you're thinking of volunteering, but think it's too late to call, just call anyway and leave a message on the machine. **I promise I will call you**, because I need the help and greatly enjoy working with new people. Once you find out how much fun volunteering can be, you'll want to come back and work on other projects. There is always something for everyone at the History Center!

Last Chance to see Ag I! Ag II is coming soon!

The first exhibit in our Agriculture series will be closing on July 11, so this is your last chance to see the farm history of Anoka County from 1945 to present. While some elements of the exhibit will remain in a changed form, much of this exhibit will be taken down and replaced by the second phase exhibit which looks at our agricultural roots from 1900 to 1945.

The next exhibit will complete the second phase of the grant to record and preserve the agricultural roots of Anoka County. The written report has been completed and will be available for research in the ACHS library soon.



Our agriculture project will continue as ACHS has been informed that we will be receiving the third grant from the Agricultural Preserves Fund through the Anoka County Extension Office. This grant will provide funding to research and record the history of Anoka County farming from the earliest days of the 1840's and 50's through 1900, completing the entire timeline of farming in the county.

Don't miss your last chance to see *Farms and Families, 1945 to Present* before it is gone forever!

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

Anoka High School

Welcome New Members!

APRIL 23 — JUNE 15, 2005

Michael Anderson (Ham Lake)
Robert Comer (New Brighton)
Ken DuFresne (Lino Lakes)
Dale and Judy Frank (Ham Lake)
Rosemarie Freeman (Minneapolis)
James Gonyea (Sacramento, CA)
John and Mary Hartzell (Anoka)
Mark & Diana Neumann Family (Oak Grove)
Gwen Reiter (Coon Rapids)
Bertha Szyperski (Anoka)

DONATIONS

Bruce Derscheid
David Dietz
Dyers Corner Helping Hands Club—
—Genevieve Sylvester
Dale and Judy Frank
Glen Hardin
John Harwood
Pat Johnson
Terry Johnson
Clarence Monegar
Kathy Opel-Overtoom
PEO Chapter Z
Elliot and Diana Perovich
Bill Prugh
Gwen Reiter
Bertha Szyperski
Participants in Columbia Heights Theater
History Mystery Day.

*The Anoka County Historical Society wishes to impart
our sincere condolences to
the family and friends of Edna Walter, a long time member of ACHS,
who passed away on May 4, 2005..
We will remember her deep commitment to preserving history.*

HOME & GARDEN TOUR SPONSORSHIP

Amain Home, Inc.
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BARN DANCE DONORS

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ARTIFACT DONORS

Merrilee Adler
City of Anoka

Vietnam: The Veterans' Experience Now Open!



Mike Clark (left) and Dennis Berg (right) cut the ribbon to open the Vietnam exhibit, May 17, 2005.

The mark of success in an exhibit is when it evokes emotion in the people who see it. If tears and hugs count, then the opening of *Vietnam: The Veteran's Experience* was certainly a success! Over 100 people gathered to see two Vietnam vets with long standing loyalties to ACHS, Dennis Berg and Mike Clark, cut the ribbon to open the military gallery on May 17th.

Enthusiasm has continued as people have spread the word about the exhibit. This flow of visitors has brought us several new connections. We added four more names to our Vietnam Wall in the exhibit. These four men were recorded as having addresses such as Minneapolis or Forest Lake and were not on any county list of those killed in Vietnam. Thanks to our wonderful patrons, their names are now included.

ACHS is continuing to gather history on the role of Anoka County citizens in the Vietnam War, the Korean War, WWI, WWII, Iraqi Freedom, and what people here at home were doing during each of those conflicts.

Coming Events

July 2, 7, 9, 21, & 23, 7:30 p.m.
August 4, 6, 18, & 20, 7:30 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 them 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 early as we sell out of these popular tickets *fast!* Remember, we can now accept VISA and Mastercard.

July 9, Anoka's Riverfest

Drums, Dreams and History

The Anoka County History Center and Library is the starting point for our antique car rides and the Ghost Tours during Riverfest in Anoka. You may purchase tickets for Ghost tours and antique car tours in advance or on the day of Riverfest.

July 10, 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 beautiful historic homes and their gardens in Anoka. Tickets will be available at the History Center for \$10 to tour the homes! You can also purchase tickets at the Anoka Riverfest celebration on July 9th at our booth on Jackson Street and 2nd Avenue in Anoka. (See page 12 for more information)

July 26—July 31

Anoka County Fair

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!

August 19—20

Blue Heron Days—Lino Lakes

Lino Lakes. ACHS will have an exhibit set up for this special 50th Anniversary celebration. Join the fun with a parade, taco eating contest, bike rodeo, coronation of Miss Lino Lakes, classic car show, 5K run, concerts, and much, much more! See their website for details: <http://www.blueherondays.org/>

August 19—21

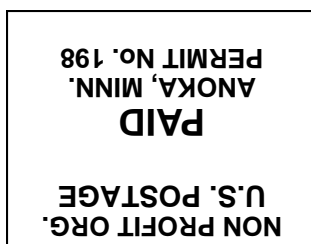
Nowthen Threshing Show

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

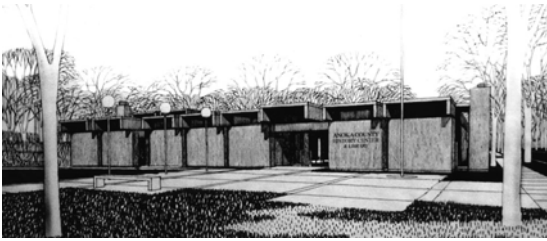
October 1—SAVE THE DATE!

Harvest Time Barn Dance

Anoka County Fair Grounds. ACHS will be celebrating Anoka County's agricultural history and the opening of our second agricultural history exhibit with our SECOND ANNUAL harvest feast, barn dance, silent and live auctions. Proceeds will benefit our Endowment Fund. More information coming soon!



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. 35 No. 5

September-October 2005

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

Lino Lakes—50 years of incorporation

HOW IT ALL STARTED

The year was 1953 and the area that would soon become known as Lino Lakes was part of Centerville Township. It was brought to the attention of the town board, and resident Arnold Kelling in particular, that the township had lost 120 acres of land in the southwest corner to the newly formed community of Circle Pines. As Centerville Township, they were “fair game” for a higher form of government to annex contiguous property. The village of Circle Pines had done just that.

The idea came forward that perhaps incorporation as a village would protect their boundaries, but that idea did not gain much support until 1955. In that year, residents of the Lakeview area were fed up with loose sand roads and all the blowing dirt. They wanted their roads surfaced. The township did not have money for such a project and townships were not allowed to petition or borrow—unless they incorporated as a village.

Kelling worked for incorporation and was successful. Lino Lakes was incorporated as a village on May 11, 1955. Kelling was elected to the office of mayor in the spring of 1955, a position he held until 1963.

In 1974, the State of Minnesota made the decision that communities would either be cities or township and villages had to choose to be one or the other. Lino Lakes incorporated as a city that year.

FROM LINE O' TO LINO

The name “Lino Lakes” is unique and, according to the United States Geological Service, there is only one community by that name—the one located in Anoka County, Minnesota.

Such an unusual name most often includes a story and this story begins at a meeting in a small room in Tim Manning’s barber shop in 1955. The community, then called Centerville Township, was soon to be incorporated as a new village and it needed a name.

Arnold Kelling, who became the first mayor of the new village, recounted how the name was chosen: *“Paul Schmidt was there and as he was loyal to the name Centerville, he proposed the name be Centerville Township Village. Most of us thought that confusing and too much of a mouthful. Paul had been the town assessor. Dolor Nadeau mentioned Line ‘O Oakes, then a tavern, as bringing to mind a line of lakes or some such thing. I then proposed Line O’ Lakes reminiscent of Land O’ Lakes, Wisconsin. Harry Proulx objected to such a split up name as he had to write the name on the mail and into the minutes—we had no typewriter—so we settled on the simpler Lino Lakes.”*

Lino Citizen of the year



ARNOLD KELLING

Circa 1975

Sign dated 1961.



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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Past President – Ray Steinke

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District #6 – Judy Hanna

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Janitorial – Sandra Thorsen

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

The month is speeding past—do you know where your tickets are for the Second Annual Harvest Time Barn Dance? If you have not yet bought tickets, it is time to call ACHS at (763) 421-0600.

The committee has worked hard to make this year's event even better than last year and the first change you see will be the ticket price! This year you will get all the fun you had last year, the same wonderful meal from "Those Pork Chops", great music by "Jack Norton and the Mullet River Boys", a silent and fun-filled live auction, and some new attractions. Even though you get so much more, we (through careful planning) have reduced the ticket price to only \$20 per person (\$25 at the door)! Please thank our new and renewing sponsors because their contributions have made that reduction possible.

We will have a "caller" to help direct you through the waltzes, reels, polkas, and more. Jack and his band have a special place in my heart. They are the only group I know that can make you feel like the year is 1917. Their authentic sound and careful attention to detail can transport you back in time to long gone eras of live music.

On Saturday, October 1st, come enjoy the company of your friends at ACHS, bid on some treasures, and see if you can guess who we have invited as special guests.

If you attended last year, you already know what fun it is going to be. If you missed it last year, now is the time to make sure you don't make that mistake again!

Get your tickets by coming into the at the History Center. You can order your tickets by phone at 763-421-0600 and use your Visa or Mastercard.

See you at the dance!

From the Director...

By Bonnie McDonald

The past is always closer than we may think. I remember watching Ken Burns' PBS documentary, *The Civil War*, and listening to the soldiers' words as they brought that time closer to the present. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, the last remaining Civil War veteran died in 1958 at the age of 112. This fact indicates that anyone over the age of 47 could have met a Civil War veteran in your lifetime! History is indeed closer than we think.

The date May 23, 1857, may seem like ages ago, but it is a date that will become very close to us in the next year. Anoka County organized on that date; thus, the year 2007 marks our county's 150th birthday, or sesquicentennial as it is commonly called.

Anoka County and the Anoka County Historical Society have already begun planning a monumental celebration. Our goal in hosting the celebration is to instill a sense of history in our county residents. We seek to bring a sense of festivity around celebrating history and to create a greater sense of community for citizens in each of our 21 cities and townships. The Sesquicentennial presents our organization with its greatest opportunity since the 1957 County Centennial to fulfill our mission: to gather, preserve, and share the rich history of Anoka County with the public.

Over the next year, we will be working with Anoka County, the Sesquicentennial Executive Board, and our working committee to create partnerships with municipalities and county and local organizations to ensure a countywide focus. We will work to weave a history focus into the many county events planned for 2007. While our efforts will utilize as many existing resources as possible, we are also excited to bring you some new publications and events.

Plan to read more about Anoka County's Sesquicentennial celebration in future newsletters and get ready for 2007 as a year for history. Your input is welcome on plans for the Sesquicentennial by sending me an e-mail at bonnie@ac-hs.org by giving me a call at (763) 421-0600 x104.

The Story of an Artifact

Imagine looking up to see clouds of swarming insects landing in your fields, hungry, and ready to devour anything in sight. Anoka County's farmers didn't have to imagine it in the 1930's. The hordes of grasshoppers were all too real.

The Great Depression of the 1930's brought many challenges to the people of Anoka County, but farmers had quite a few extra ones in the form of those pesky little 'hoppers.

Grasshopper plagues tend to run in cycles and the 1930's were a high point for grasshoppers. This was compounded by the conditions of the dust bowl. Bird and rodent populations suffered during the years of drought and fewer of them were around to eat enough grasshoppers to help control their population. Drought also favors the grasshoppers in that some of the natural diseases they are prone to are not as active in dry conditions. Fewer diseases mean more grasshoppers laying more eggs, more hatching into mature insects and fewer predators to threaten them. More adults mean even more eggs—and the cycle goes on until there is a "grasshopper plague."

An average grasshopper can eat more than half its body weight of green vegetation each day, so swarms of them can devastate a field in a very short time. Grasshoppers eat vegetable plants off completely to the ground. Crops such as corn are stripped of leaves, killing the plant.

Anoka County farmers fought back against the plague by spreading a poison bran mash. In 1932, the Agricultural Service reported that farmers had spread 40,000 pounds of the poison over about 10,000 acres of crop land. They estimated some 20,000 bushels of crops were saved by the effort. The battle continued during the next years, but the biggest infestation came in 1937-38.

Cold weather early in the 1937 growing season delayed the hatching of the grasshoppers, but when they came, they came with a vengeance. Severe damage was reported to corn, potato, vegetable and alfalfa crops and many farmers suffered great economic hardships as a result. Something had to be done, so farmers formed a "grasshopper control committee" in Anoka County, with an insect control officer appointed in each township.

Abe Fast, a farmer from Ham Lake, was in charge of mixing the sawdust, bran and sodium arsenate as bait for the grasshoppers. Two mixing stations were set up and within just a few days, they produced 115 tons of poison bait.

The next year was looking to be even worse as a survey showed two to three pods of grasshopper eggs per square foot as an average infestation rate. Each pod holds 60-80 eggs. Quick math puts the potential for hatching at **over 200 grasshoppers per square foot**—a plague by any standard.

Something had to be done, so the grasshopper control committee was again organized. They began mixing poison bait and built a spreader to help distribute it. Their spreader was the rear axel of a Model T, a 50 gallon barrel, and a metal disk. The machine was demonstrated at township meetings and quickly adopted for use. That summer, seven more of the machines were built or bought by groups of area farmers. The basement of the Freeburg Warehouse became the main bait mixing station. It was staffed by Abe

Fast as foreman and workers from the WPA (Works Progress Administration) program.

The Anoka County Board of Commissioners needed to be sure all affected acreage was treated, so they passed a resolution that should a piece of property go untreated, the county would handle treating it at the owner's expense. A display focusing on grasshopper control was set up at the Anoka County Fair that

An unidentified Anoka County farmer loading grasshopper poison bait into a homemade poison spreader. 1938.



summer and many farmers stored bait material for 1939.

Thanks to the hard work and widespread efforts the year before, 1939 saw only a few localized infestations of grasshoppers. Still, farmers were taking no chances. They spread 215 tons of bait on about 250 farms. It was estimated that they saved about \$150,000 worth of crops that season by spending just \$565 in baiting efforts.

Hard work and coordinated efforts beat the grasshoppers in the 1930's and farming continued in Anoka County.

**New
Farms and Families
Exhibit Opens
October 4th
7:00 p.m.**

that

**Hop
over
and
catch
the
plague
with ACHS on Octo-
ber 4th!**



Up To Date

Announcements and News

◆Ghosts of Anoka Tours are back in full gear! Check the Upcoming events section on the back of the newsletter for dates. Order your tickets early as these sell out quickly! The tours are offered on the first and third Thursday and Saturday through October. Tours for private groups are available—call 763-421-0600 to set up a special private tour for your group!

◆Just a reminder that the September 8 and October 12 ACHS Board of Directors meeting will be at 6:00 p.m. All are held at the History Center. Board meetings are open to the public and everyone is welcome.

◆Do you put up hay/straw? Or have access to bales of hay or straw? ACHS would like to borrow some bales to make “seating” at the Barn Dance on October 1st. We only need the bales that one day. If you can help by loaning out some bales of hay or straw, please call Bonnie at 763-421-0600.

VOLUNTEERS COMPLETE INDEX OF BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES

Early in August, Lucille Elrite, Linda Mundle and Darlene Levens announced that their indexing project was finally complete! Linda and Lucille copied birth announcements, marriage licenses and obituaries from the Anoka County Union and Anoka Herald newspapers. Then Darlene typed all the names into a spread sheet so that they could be alphabetized.

The scope of this project is mind boggling, and it has taken many years to complete. The project covers the time period between 1863 and 1972—over a century of births, deaths, and marriages! The death index is accurate up to the present, and Marian Auchter continues to update the obituary file on a monthly basis.

This will prove to be a valuable tool to researchers, who until now, had to look through newspapers on microfilm in the hope of finding some reference to their ancestor. The complete work is housed in 25 tidy white three ring binders on our library shelves.

Congratulations, Ladies, on your enormous achievement!

ACHS staff gathered to bid Carol Dordan a fond farewell in August. Carol worked for ACHS as one of our office staff since the spring of 2002. While we are sad to see Carol go, we wish her well in her next endeavors and know we will see her back as a loyal member and volunteer!



Volunteers chalk up huge number of hours in last two months.....By Maria King

I had a few neighbors over the other night for cake and coffee. Nowadays, that's a very unusual thing to do because our culture has lost the fine art of visiting! The Anoka County Fair gave me an opportunity to rediscover the joys of visiting, both with fairgoers and with the other volunteers. While we sewed or knitted, we gossiped; while we drilled with an old fashioned auger drill, we complained about the weather; while we tinted old black and white photos or tried spinning cotton balls into yarn, we learned of one another's joys and sorrows. We exchanged stories, recipes and opinions. We became connected to one another and we had a fine time doing it! Time stands still at the old farm place—or at least it slows down enough to enjoy.

A sincere thank you goes out to all the volunteers who helped during the past two months, with the Heritage Home and Garden Tour, with the Anoka County Fair, with Riverfest, with the Threshing Show, and with the Ghost Tours. All were very successful and all were fun besides! When I say “successful” I mean that each of these programs advanced our mission to gather, preserve and share the history of Anoka County. Effective programs require effective volunteers who answer questions, manage traffic, welcome patrons with a friendly smile and generally keep an eye on things. Our programs are the best because our volunteers are the best!

Over 800 volunteer hours were donated to ACHS in July 2005!



Lou Paulson (left) and Becky Loader (right) at work in the “store” at this year's Nowthen Threshing Show.

Ongoing projects were somewhat neglected during July, overshadowed by big events. That creates a backlog and that means opportunities for new volunteers to come to the History Center and be trained. The manuscript file needs people to input data, and the census is ready to print and needs people to put the pages into plastic page protectors and into a ring binder.

There's always filing to do, and cut and paste newspapers in preparation for the files.

Each time we mail a newsletter we need a committee to aid in labeling and sorting. As we gear up for the Barn Dance we need help with approaching potential donors, and we will need hauling help in order to get all the donated objects to the event's location. Those with an eye for design might enjoy helping with the decorating before the dance and there is always a need for clean up afterwards. If you can help, even for just an hour or so, please call Maria at 763-421-0600.

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

Welcome New Members!

JUNE 16 — AUGUST 19, 2005

Roy and Beryl Anderson (Cedar)
James Andre (Roseville)
Joe Aragon (Anoka)
Tony Arellano (Ramsey)
Barbara Deeds Baldwin (Anoka)
Richard Beck (Brooklyn Center)
Richard Bergling (Anoka)
Roger Bobby (Coon Rapids)
Gregory & Jackie Bortnem (Anoka)
Mike Clark (Anoka)
Warren and Eva Mae Cleator (Anoka)
Linda Coffin (Minneapolis)
Larry Czysion (Elk River)
Gregory Frikken Sr. (New Brighton)
Michelle Frost and Sara (Anoka)
Cece Gellerman (Champlin)
Larry Hall (Oak Grove)
Sam Hermanstorfer (Ramsey)
Richard Hirschey (Coon Rapids)
Paul and Laura Johnson (Ramsey)
Bethany Jones-Kost (Anoka)
James and Joanne Keogh (Blaine)
Tim Kirk (Elk River)
Michael and Jeannine Lian,
 James and Sarah (Ramsey)
Jim Maass (Blaine)
Mark Manolis (Blaine)
Brian McClelland (Anoka)
Richard and Barbara McNamara
 (Minnetonka)
Doug and Joanne Moody (Blaine)
Terrence Mox (Ramsey)
Donald Mowery (Andover)
Jeremy Nielsen (Anoka)
Tim and Erin Nigh (Anoka)
Ronald Nordin and family (Andover)
Rod Pullis (New Hope)
Dave Redding (Champlin)
Steven Ruud (Anoka)
Thomas Slavik (Coon Rapids)
Tom and Linda Sullivan (Blaine)
Dan and Leanne Thyken (Anoka)
Jack and Nancy Warneke
 (San Jacinto, California)

*The Anoka County Historical Society wishes to impart
our sincere condolences to the family and friends of:
Kay Hansen, who passed away June 28;
Wayne Howell, who passed away on June 29;
Ed Rassmussen, who passed away on June 6th.
Each were long time members of ACHS. We will remember their deep
commitment to preserving history.*

*Our condolences also go out to our members who
have recently lost loved ones.
Natalie Haas Steffen, who lost her mother, Luella Johnson, on July 7;
Barbara Horejs Walchessen, whose husband of 58 years, Theodore,
passed away on May 29;
Zilla Way, whose husband, Marshall Way, died July 6;
Irene Sundberg, whose sister, Blanche Wright, passed away on July 22.*

DONATIONS

James Andre
Richard Bergling
Linda Coffin
Debbie Erickson
Fair Patrons
Dale and Judy Frank
Cece Gellerman
Maria King
Michael and Jeannine Lian
Clarence Monegar
Dave and Elynn Niles
Dave and Ruth Peterson
Dorothy Peterson
Bill and Margaret Prugh
Leslie Sanborn
Carolyn Stevens
Dan and Leanne Thyken
Bob Williams

BARN DANCE DONORS

First National Bank of Elk River
Friendly Chevrolet
North Country Ford
Village Bank
Wells Fargo Bank

SPECIAL DONATIONS

(Funding for special programming in the
Vietnam Exhibit)
Alliant Tech Systems/Federal Cartridge

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American Legion Post #102
Anoka Halloween, Inc.
Lorraine Bonin
Mary Carr
Shirley Christenson
Roy Downs
Lucille Elrite
Ellamae Emmans
L. Edward Evans
Don Helmstetter
William Hunt
Isanti County Historical Society
Linwood Helping Hands Club
Mercy Hospital Auxiliary
Jack Mersereau
Carol Moen
Mary Ann Muehlbauer
Karen Vogel Pearsall
Paul Pierce, III
Barbara Reichel
Kari F. Schubel
Jean Seaborg
Charlie Sell
Barb Thurston
Lynne Yarbrough

ARTIFACT DONORS

Grab your partner and come on down for the 2nd Annual Harvest Time Barn Dance

Purchase your tickets by
calling ACHS at
(763) 421-0600.
Advance tickets are
only \$20!
VISA/MC accepted.



Saturday, October 1, 2005
Anoka County Fairgrounds
6:00 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.

Sit down for a bountiful **harvest feast**, catered by Fair favorite "Those Pork Chops," and then put on your dancing shoes for the live sounds of **Jack Norton and the Mullet River Boys**. Waltz your way over to the auction table and walk away with a "barn good" **auction item**. From gift certificates to fine art – they're something for everyone. Proceeds from this event will provide operating support for the Anoka County Historical Society. **So, kick up your heels for a good cause!**

Event Proudly Sponsored By:



Dan Frank

Tom & Patti Kurak



MONUMENTS TO LIFE:

TOURS OF THREE ANOKA COUNTY CEMETERIES

Join characters from Anoka County's past as they share stories of the antics and agony of life in Burns Township, Lino Lakes, and Anoka. This is an up close and personal look at our ancestors and the beautifully symbolic artwork found on their memorials.

Saturday, October 8th, 7:00 p.m.

Lakeview Cemetery in Burns Township

We'll visit the grave of the man who gave the land for Lakeview Cemetery to learn more about him and his resting place beside the gate. Erick Sparre and his wife, Anne, are in this cemetery—Erick built the round barn just over a mile from where he now rests. Veterans from the Civil War, WWI and WWII are here and we'll hear their stories, too. Beautiful monuments and deep symbolism can be found on some of these grave markers, so we'll explore some of their meanings and traditions.



Tuesday, October 11th, 7:00 p.m.

St. Joseph's Cemetery, Lino Lakes

In this pretty cemetery, we'll talk about Patrick Golden, who as a young man driving a stagecoach west, would stop to sleep in graveyards for the night to avoid encounters with Native Americans. Another cemetery resident, John H. Hughes, had his funeral described in detail in the newspaper. Andrew Matushak left a puzzle that confounded his neighbors in 1926 and still leaves us puzzled today, but we'll make some educated guesses as to what he was thinking when he made out his will.



Thursday, October 13th, 7:00 p.m.

Oakwood Cemetery, Anoka

If you think you have been on the tour to Oakwood before, you haven't been on this tour! While some of Anoka's early settlers and prominent citizens will be visited, this tour will go to other graves whose stories have not yet been told. Fantastic stone work and deep symbolism fills many stones at Oakwood and we'll talk about their meanings, traditions and messages. Just because you think you've seen this cemetery is no reason to stay away! This is a new tour for 2005.



Tours will go on, rain or shine, so dress for the weather (sunglasses and a parka?!) Be prepared to do some walking over uneven ground in low light and we'll be standing as we visit each grave to hear the stories they have to tell. Tours will last about an hour each.

*Tickets 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 and information with your ticket purchase. Get your tickets at the Anoka County History Center, 2135 Third Avenue North, Anoka, or by calling (763) 421-0600. Visa/MC accepted.*

Coming Events

September 1, 3, 15, and 17 at 7:30 p.m.

Ghosts of Anoka Tour

October 6, 8, 20, 22, 26, 27, 28 and 29 at 7:30 p.m.

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

October 1, 6:00 p.m.

Harvest Time Barn Dance

Anoka County Fair Grounds. ACHS will be celebrating Anoka County's agricultural history and the opening of our second agricultural history exhibit with our SECOND ANNUAL harvest feast, barn dance, silent and live auctions. Proceeds will benefit our Endowment Fund. See page 6 for more information!

October 4, 7:00 p.m.

Farms and Families 1900-1945 Exhibit Opening

Anoka County Historical Society and Library. Join us in celebrating the second in our series on Anoka County's agricultural history. This new exhibit looks at the trials and triumphs of farming in the early years of the 1900's. Visitors will explore the beginning of silos, the poultry industry, potatoes and starch factories, and the impact of war on farming. Guests will have a special chance to meet hundreds of farm "creatures" that really bring this exhibit to life. Everyone is invited to hop on over and catch the plague—the grass-hopper plague, that is! See page 3 for more information.

October 8, 11, and 13, 7:00 p.m.

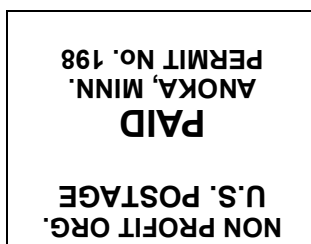
Annual "Monuments to Life" Cemetery Tours

The 4th annual Monuments to Life cemetery tour series. **Lakeview Cemetery in Burns on Saturday, October 8th at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, October 11th, in St. Joseph's Cemetery in Lino Lakes and begin at 7:00 p.m.** The final tour in the series will be in **Anoka's Oakwood, on Thursday, October 13th, at 7:00 p.m.** Buy a ticket package or just one! See page 7 for more details.

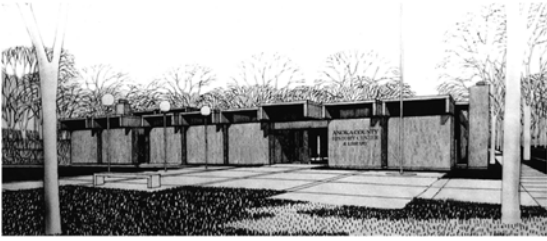
November 19, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

A Civil War Christmas

Sandhill Center for the Arts in Bethel. *Save the date!* You won't want to miss your chance to join actor-historians in an interactive day of holiday traditions and fun the way it was celebrated in the years of the Civil War, 1861-1865. More information will be coming in the next newsletter.



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. 35 No. 6

November-December 2005

Let's Talk Turkey!

SERVING:

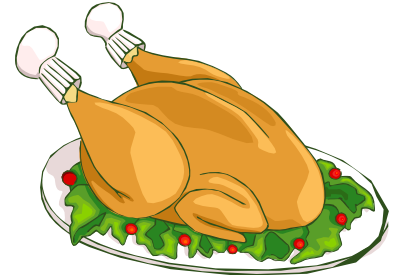
- Andover
- Anoka
- Bethel
- Blaine
- Burns
- Centerville
- Circle Pines
- Columbia Heights
- Columbus
- Coon Rapids
- East Bethel
- Fridley
- Ham Lake
- Hilltop
- Lexington
- Lino Lakes
- Linwood
- Oak Grove
- Ramsey
- St. Francis
- Spring Lake Park

The holidays are almost here and of course, that means many gatherings centered around food. One of the most popular items on American menus for holiday dinners is turkey.

Minnesota farmers raise more turkeys than any other state in the U.S., with some 45.5 million birds raised in 2003. In an average year, each American will eat 17.4 pounds of turkey and that average is continuing to rise. This rise is attributed to the lower cost of turkey as compared to other meats, and its nutritional value. Turkey is low in fat and high in protein, and contains significant amounts of iron, zinc, phosphorus, potassium, and B vitamins.

Folklore states that even the Pilgrims, with their first Thanksgiving in the 1600's, had turkey on the menu, though it would have been wild turkey. Today, an estimated 45 million turkeys are eaten each Thanksgiving.

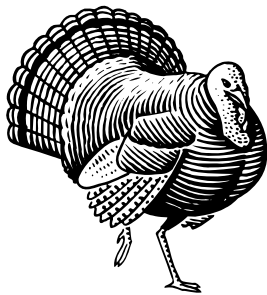
Turkey, quite clearly, is the bird of choice. Benjamin Franklin thought even more highly of the bird than most. In a letter to his daughter, written from France on January 26, 1784, Franklin casts doubt on the propriety of using an eagle to symbolize the fledgling United States. Franklin, perhaps somewhat playfully, extends his argument to the superiority of the turkey as a symbol for the United States.



For my own part I wish the Bald Eagle had not been chosen the Representative of our Country. He is a Bird of bad moral Character. He does not get his Living honestly. You may have seen him perched on some dead Tree near the River, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the Labour of the Fishing Hawk; and when that diligent Bird has at length taken a Fish, and is bearing it to his Nest for the Support of his Mate and young Ones, the Bald Eagle pursues him and takes it from him.

With all this Injustice, he is never in good Case but like those among Men who live by Sharping & Robbing he is generally poor and often very lousy. Besides he is a rank Coward: The little King Bird not bigger than a Sparrow attacks him boldly and drives him out of the District.

For the Truth the Turkey is in Comparison a much more respectable Bird, and withal a true original Native of America . . . He is besides, though a little vain & silly, a Bird of Courage, and would not hesitate to attack a Grenadier of the British Guards who should presume to invade his Farm Yard with a red Coat on."



Perhaps it is good that Franklin did not get his choice for the national bird. Imagine sitting down to the Thanksgiving meal and serving up an eagle!

Join ACHS at the History Center in Anoka on November 23, the day BEFORE Thanksgiving, for our noontime talk on the history of turkey! We'll talk turkey, but we'll eat pie as we talk! Everyone is encouraged to bring a favorite holiday pie for all to sample as we talk turkey. We'll share a little history on turkey, and share some stories, all done while we eat pie! This is an informal roundtable discussion where everyone is welcome to bring their own stories about turkey dinners you've made or attended.

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
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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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Vice President – Jan Anderson

Past President – Ray Steinke

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District #3 – (Open)

District #4 – Catherine Vesley

District #6 – Judy Hanna

District #7 – Bart Ward

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At Large B – Dan Frank

At Large C – Tom Ward

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Office Staff – Alan Santoro

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Janitorial – Sandra Thorsen

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

Our Executive Director was offered her "dream job" and, of course, accepted. We are proud to see her become the Director of the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota. In her three and a half years with ACHS, we have seen great changes and improvements.

Bonnie McDonald started with ACHS during our move to the History Center. It was a wild and fast-paced time with exhibits to open, artifacts to protect and store, and many planned improvements to the building still to be done. No dust collected on Bonnie! She finished those projects and kept up that pace throughout her time with us.

There isn't enough space to list all of the things this organization has accomplished thanks to Bonnie, but here are some: She reached out to far parts of the county and collaborated with other organizations to accomplish our goals. The ACHS board is expanding on a schedule to represent all parts of the county. Annual meetings traveled throughout the county and were *fun!* The Harvest Time Barn Dance began.

Cemetery tours and Ghost tours were started. ACHS joined the Anoka Heritage Preservation Commission to present the Heritage Home and Garden Tours, and the Wargo Nature Center in Heritage Labs. The Philolectian room was upgraded and decorated through the hard work of the "Philo's." The former library shelves were replaced to make even more storage capacity. New technology and roof replacement were also Bonnie's projects.

The professionalism Bonnie brought with her thorough reports, record keeping, and the management of staff and History Center operations helped lift ACHS to new standards. A curator position, a committee and policy on donations, new layout and an improved newsletter are her accomplishments. Bonnie has been a polished, high visibility spokesperson for ACHS with the *It's Your History* cable show, the county government, city and township governments, and organizations such as the Nowthen Threshers and the Anoka County Fair Board. Bonnie put together the very successful year-end appeal and many successful grant proposals. The plans and preparation for the 2007 150th anniversary of Anoka County are well organized and underway, thanks to her late nights and hard work.

We will do our best to find a replacement to continue the high standards and expectations Bonnie has created for all of us. There will be a sendoff party for Bonnie on her last day with ACHS, Nov. 11th at 5 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend.

From the Director...

By Bonnie McDonald

For over three years, the Anoka County Historical Society (ACHS) has been a place that I have called "home." You, our members, have supported the board, staff, and me in our pursuit to lead this organization to new heights and we have truly achieved great things. Therefore, it is difficult for me to write that I have decided to resign as your Executive Director and pursue a new area of my career.

My life's passion is the preservation of our historic places—places that give meaning to our memories as we step back inside and relive our experiences. As a college student, I interned for the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota and learned about their vital mission and this important organization. The Alliance has hired me as their Executive Director to lead the growth of their organization and I am excited for the opportunity to pursue this dream.

I am proud to have been a part of this period of achievement for our organization. Our accomplishments are many, from a new facility and an expanded membership base to the greater fulfillment of our outreach mission. It brings me great joy to see the attention that is being paid to our efforts and more importantly, to the history of this county.

There is a bright future ahead for ACHS and I am confident that your next Executive Director will continue to capitalize on opportunities like our 2007 Anoka County Sesquicentennial and the growing Harvest Time Barn Dance. With the support of such dedicated members, board members, our professional staff, and our great cadre of volunteers, this organization can only continue to prosper.

I will dearly miss working with all of you and being at the helm of this amazing organization. However, you will surely see my name on the membership list for years to come, my face at our events, and me as a volunteer (Maria is very persuasive!). Thank you for the opportunity to work with ACHS; it has been a rewarding experience and a pleasure.



There will be a farewell party for Bonnie on November 11, 2005, 5:00 pm at Billy's on Jackson Street in Anoka. Everyone is welcome!

The Story of an Artifact

Christmas Gifts

The giving of a gift to special person in your life is something very important. Many hours can be spent in searching—or even making—just the right thing to delight that person and bring a smile to both the receiver and the giver.

It was probably with just that kind of care that a precious tea set was chosen as a gift to delight young Genevieve Meyer in the mid 1940's. The dishes are glass, a wonderful Art Nouveau style of colored glass, and made to set a "modern" tea table for dolls. And the best part was that "Santa" had brought this special gift to her!

Gen played with the dishes until she outgrew her dolls, but she didn't part with the dishes. At least, not until she decided to share them with many future generations of little girls by donating them to the Anoka County Historical Society!

The set began as all green dishes, but playing took a few pieces of the original set away. They are, after all, glass! Other pieces came as later gifts from friends and neighbors, and brought a variety of colors. The set Gen donated to ACHS now has five cups, two blue and three green. The green teapot sports a yellow lid and there are some yellow saucers. Other saucers are a slightly different shade of yellow or white. The six green plates are from the original set. Silverware would be needed to set a proper table, so the dish sets Gen donated includes a butter knife, five spoons, four table knives, and six forks.

Come see Gen's Christmas doll dishes and other Christmas gifts through the years in the December lobby exhibit at the History Center. Included are a pair of pants given to a boy in Coon Rapids, a doll from 1881, a scrub board, books, and other gifts all from the collections of ACHS.

Do you have something to contribute to the exhibit? Bring in your photograph of gift-opening, gifts under the tree, showing off a gift, or other photos of special Christmas gifts—with full identification included—to ACHS before Saturday, November 26. A selection of photos will be part of the exhibit in the lobby and added to our incredible photograph collection. We can scan your photos, too, so you won't need to part with the original!



2005 Holiday Ornament from Lino Lakes!

City officials and community members from Lino Lakes will present the 2005 Holiday Ornament for the County Tree in honor of the 50th anniversary of the City on Tuesday evening, December 6, 2005, at 7:00 p.m., at the Anoka County History Center.

This holiday season is the tenth annual "Anoka County Holiday Tree" celebration at the Anoka County Historical Society. Just as each state is invited in turn to provide the National Christmas Tree in Washington, each community in Anoka County is invited in turn to provide an ornament for the County Tree. Each ornament reflects a unique aspect of its community along with the year of presentation. The Lino Lakes ornament will not be shown to anyone until the ornament is presented on December 6th, so come and be in on the surprise!

This is the ornament presented by the City of Fridley in 2004.

Harvest Time Barn Dance A Hit!

The second annual Harvest Time Barn Dance was a great success! Held on Saturday, October 1, 2005, the Harvest Time Barn Dance was attended by over 315 people—a 50% increase in attendance from last year.

During the excellent dinner, catered by Those Pork Chops, attendees applauded Anoka County's remaining century farmers as they were honored by ACHS. Jack Norton and the Mullet River Boys kept the dance floor moving with their mix of old time music and called dances.

The success of the silent and live auctions was also a sure indication of attendees' belief in our cause. In total, the event raised over \$14,500 for the Historical Society's operating fund. ACHS thanks all those who attended, our donors, and volunteers for making this event such a success.

Collections Grant

ACHS received a grant to bring a conservator from the Upper Midwest Conservation Association to our building to help evaluate our media collections. Elisa Redman spent half a day at ACHS on October 10th. She is helping us better understand how to organize, preserve, conserve and utilize our media collection. This collection includes photographs and negatives of many types, slides, video tapes, negatives, DVD's, audio tapes, CD's and electronic photo files.

The first step is to identify the most vulnerable part of the collection. We will then determine what needs to be done to stabilize it. Ms. Redman will be providing ongoing help for resources and references, as well as possible grant sources to help fund these preservation projects. Ms. Redman will be back for another half day in January to complete her evaluation and recommendations.

History of the Anoka State Hospital

ACHS has initiated a project to research and document the history of the Anoka State Hospital from the 1890's to the present. We are searching for any of the patients, patients' families, hospital staff, volunteers at the hospital, or other people closely associated with the hospital who would be willing to share their first-hand experiences at the hospital with ACHS. Your stories would be of great importance to the project and very much appreciated. If you are willing to share your experiences at the hospital, please contact Vickie Wendel, Program Manager, at (763) 421-0600 or email at vickie@ac-hs.org

Busy Hands and Happy Hearts!

...By Maria King

At ACHS, we are always saying, "Just wait until the end of the month and then things will settle down around here." But they never quite do. Let me first tell you what's ahead, then what we've accomplished since the last newsletter.

ACHS has an exciting opportunity to work with the Upper Midwest Conservation Association expert to determine how best to archive our media collection. We need a committee of about six volunteers to count and catalogue audio tapes, glass photo negatives, film, DVD's and video tapes. The committee members need to attend an orientation meeting to have the whole project explained, and will then be able to work independently as their own schedules dictate. If you can help, call Maria King at (763) 421-0600.

On the 19th of November, we have a grant to do a Civil War Christmas in Bethel. See page 7 for more. Volunteers are needed for hospitality and ticket collection.

December 16th and 17th are the dates of our *American Girl* Teas. Several volunteers are needed to wash dishes between sessions and to help the little ones with craft activities. The children serve the tea themselves, but a helper would be appreciated.

We will host the annual presentation of the County Holiday Tree Ornament on December 6th at 7:00 p.m. Hospitality volunteers are needed for coffee and cookies that evening. We'll also be decorating the History Center for the holidays, so if you like to decorate, let us know. We'll start right after Thanksgiving.

Even if you are stuck at home, you can still volunteer. We need someone to launder and iron costumes and mend a few tears. After the teas, we will need the napkins washed and ironed so they are ready for the next time.

We need a volunteer to go through the yearbooks to list the years that are missing. We hope that someone may have the missing years and be willing to donate them. Look for a detailed appeal in a later newsletter.

On the "Accomplished" side, October saw the Ghost Tours really take off. Staff and volunteers have shared this responsibility all summer, and hosted almost 50 tours, with 20 tours in October alone! Cemetery Tours were also a big hit, involving volunteers as living history characters.

The biggest undertaking on the volunteer scene has been Wargo Nature Center's Heritage Lab. Jan Anderson, Kay Skubit, Stacy Overby and I taught over 3,600 children about homesteading in Anoka County. We had eight classes a day for 17 days. Our experiential activities gave kids an appreciation for the work of building a homestead in the wilderness. If you would like to help with the lab next year, please let me know so that we can plan early.

ACHS was well represented at Family Farm Fest, Art at Rice Creek, the Lincoln School Community Night, Ramsey Happy Days, the Nowthen Threshing Show, Blue Heron Days at Lino Lakes, Linwood Family Fun Day, Anoka's Riverfest, Blaine's Blazin' Fourth, and Ham Lake History Day. Volunteers explained our mission, passed out brochures and answered questions at each of these events, allowing us to have an ever greater presence in the county.

In short, ACHS has the best volunteers in the world!

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

Welcome New Members!

AUGUST 19 — OCTOBER 18

Ed Bakke (Blaine)
Jeanne Brustad (Wayzata)
Bill Eaves (Blaine)
Scott and Sid Hagen (Zimmerman)
Eileen Jansen (Anoka)
Sherry Jordon (Blaine)
Sandra Karasch (Anoka)
Nancy Leong (Columbia Heights)
Terry and Frances Sorenson (Blaine)
Don and Arlene Tesch (Anoka)
Jill Thurston and family (Elk River)
Myrna Ward (Anoka)

BARN DANCE DONORS

Melvin Aanerud
Katherine Allquist
Anoka Lions' Club
Doris Boos
Dan Frank
Judy Hanna
Glen Hardin
Barbara Held
Mike King
Tom Kurak
Barb McDonald
Sharp & Associates
Vietnam Veterans Chapter 470

Beryl Anderson
Marlys Chutich
L. Edward Evan
Patti Kurak
Marilyn Lee
Jean Seaborg
Lorraine Soderquist
Vietnam Veterans Chapter 470
Zilla Way

GRANTS RECEIVED

American Express Foundation

GENERAL DONATIONS

Barbara Case
Dan Frank
Eileen Jansen
Sandra Karasch
Orval and JoAnne Leistico
Clarence Monegar
Awilda Ortiz
Virginia Stewart

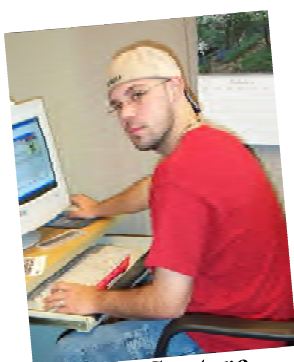
BARN DANCE SPONSORSHIP

Corriveau Properties
Pierce Refrigeration
Thomas Auto Mall

ARTIFACT DONORS

*The Anoka County Historical Society wishes to impart
our sincere condolences to our members who
have recently lost loved ones.
Anthony Bianchi, who lost his 24 year old son, J.J., in an accident on July 26.*

Some New Faces



Alan Santoro

I am a senior at St. Cloud State University and will be graduating this December with a degree in History and a minor in Anthropology. I started at ACHS

as an intern working on the Agriculture Grant windshield survey last January. After getting married this summer, I realized I needed to make a little more money, so now I'll be working the front desk at ACHS every other Saturday and filling in on additional days as needed.

I am the contract historian doing the research on Phase III of the History of Agriculture in Anoka County. I'm working on the 1840-1900 time period. My degree is in writing. I have worked on several research and writing projects as a volunteer for the Historical Society. I'm happy to now be working with the Historical Society on this very important project.



Jeanine Pratt

I am a geophysicist and for nearly 30 years have been conducting investigations for grave mapping, archeological investigations, mineral exploration, and environmental clean-up. I am self-employed, giving me a schedule flexible enough to do other things that I enjoy, such as helping other people any way I can here at the History Center. My position is office staff, so I will be working at the front desk

Don Johnson



Civil War Christmas in Bethel

Come see how Christmas was kept in Anoka County and in the camps of our soldiers serving in the Civil War.

Join Actor Historians to:

- ❖ Attend a Lyceum – 1:00 p.m.
- ❖ Participate in Cannon Drills
- ❖ Make Christmas Crafts
- ❖ Visit from Santa – 2:30 p.m.
- ❖ Talk to War Artists
- ❖ Decorate a Tree in the Camps
- ❖ Sing Period Christmas Carols



Sandhill Center for the Arts

23820 Dewey Street, Bethel

Saturday, November 19, 2005

11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Admission: Adults - \$3.00, Children 6-17 - \$2.00

Sponsored by the Anoka County Historical Society

For more information, please call (763) 421-0600



The grant for this program is made possible through the regranting program of Sandhill Center for the Arts of funds provided by the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council through an appropriation from the Minnesota Legislature.

Suncatcher Ornament



This elegant ornament has been developed especially for the Anoka County Historical Society and is only available from ACHS!

These 3-D suncatchers are finished in 24Kt. gold over a beautiful glass background that allows light to dance through. Each comes with a history card describing Anoka County's involvement in the Civil War and is beautifully gift boxed.

Get yours today!

Suncatchers are \$17 each at the History Center. Please add \$1.50 for mailing. Members—Show your membership card and receive a 10% discount!

Here is a sample of some of the information you will receive about Anoka County's involvement in the Civil War. The history cards that come with the ornaments provide only a broad overview of the information found in our ACHS manuscript files; there is much more Civil War history for you to discover in our library!

Anoka County in the Civil War 1861-1865

Anoka County's involvement in the Civil War began when Aaron Greenwald volunteered "for the Union." He was one of seven men from the Anoka area who volunteered even before the first call for soldiers was issued by President Lincoln on April 15, 1861. The men served in the First Minnesota Infantry, the first unit tendered to Lincoln when Fort Sumter was attacked on April 12, 1861. It is believed by many that Greenwald was the first man to enlist in that first unit, making him the first volunteer for the Union Army. Greenwald did not survive the war. He died at the Battle of Gettysburg, though his wife and sons stayed in Anoka and his descendants still live in the county.

At least 305 men listed Anoka County as their home when they enlisted in the Union Army. There were 40

men who served in the First Minnesota Infantry. Company A of the 8th Minnesota Infantry was primarily men from Anoka County with at least 72 men. This unit patrolled the frontier before going south—their enlistment coming at the time of the Dakota Conflict of 1862.



Coming Events

November 12, 1:00 p.m.

History and Hollywood

Anoka County History Center and Library. Come watch a movie with ACHS, then compare it to reality to see how good (or bad) the movie is at portraying history. We will watch *We Were Soldiers* starring Mel Gibson, released in 2002. The movie is a combat film about a battle during the Vietnam War and rated R because of the sequences of graphic war violence and for some language. After the movie, a panel of Vietnam War veterans will lead an informal discussion on the film. Pop and popcorn will be available at a minimal cost. The movie and discussion are free.

November 19, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

A Civil War Christmas in Bethel

Sandhill Center for the Arts in Bethel. This will be a great way to kick off the holiday season! Join actor-historians in an interactive day of holiday traditions and fun, the way it was celebrated in the years of the Civil War, 1861-1865. These actor-historians portray the Second Minnesota Battery of Light Artillery, the unit depicted on the new holiday ornament available only from ACHS! See inside for more information on the event and the ornament.

November 23, 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

HiSTORY Roundtable

Anoka County History Center and Library. The topic this year is TURKEY!!!! But we'll be eating pie as we talk! Bring your favorite holiday pie for all to sample as we "talk turkey." Being the day before Thanksgiving, TURKEY was a logical choice of topic to discuss. We'll share a little history on TURKEYS and then some stories, all done while we eat pie! This is an informal roundtable discussion where everyone is welcome to share their own stories about TURKEY dinners you've made or attended. We'll provide the beverages, but no one is allowed to count carbs at this special lunch time event!

December 6, 7:00 p.m.

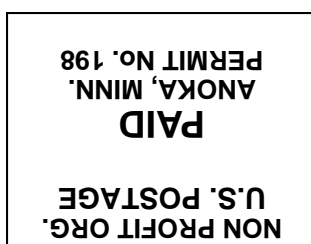
County Holiday Ornament Presentation

Anoka County History Center and Library. Come see what kind of ornament the City of Lino Lakes will bring to add to the County Holiday Tree this year! Page 3 has more details. The tree and its county ornaments will be on display in the lobby throughout December.

December 16 & 17

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 years of WWII, 1941-1945. Activities will highlight experiences that would be familiar to Molly, and will offer an opportunity to try your hand at the skills she would undoubtedly learn. Girls, their dolls, and the grown-ups will have a tea party to wrap up the event and be expected to stick out your pinky finger in much the same way as Molly might have done! **Reservations required.** December 16 at 6:00 p.m., December 17 at 10:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.



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