



History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

Vol. 37 No. 1

January-February 2007

Celebrating 150 Years!

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

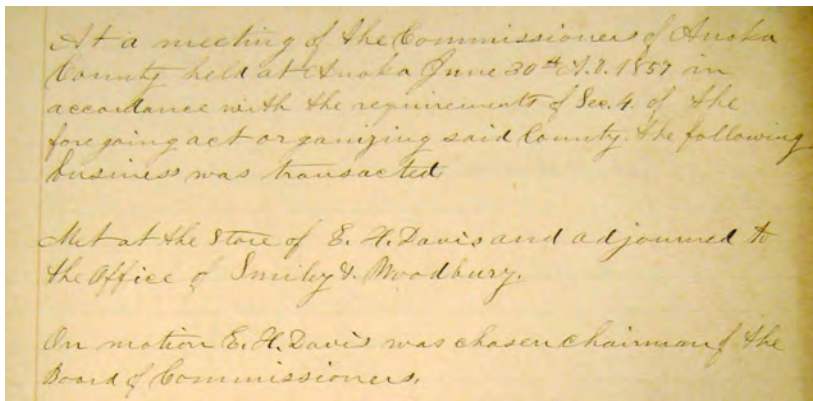
Ramsey

St. Francis

Spring Lake Park

The year 2007 marks 150 years since Anoka County was formally organized as a county. People were already living, working, and changing the face of the land that would become the county, but the official organization of local government was a turning point.

The Territory of Minnesota was preparing for statehood in the mid 1850s. County lines were drawn, political districts were created, and a census was taken in 1857 to prove there were enough inhabitants in the territory to qualify. Anoka County's population was put at 1,000 people that year. As each county organized and set up their local government, they were recognized by the territorial government; thus, Minnesota's counties were not all formed at the same time. Anoka County was formally organized on May 23, 1857. The county was divided into three voting districts with three county commissioners. They were Silas Lum, E. H. Davis, and J.P. Austin. These commissioners met in Anoka on June 30, 1857, to hold the first official Anoka County Board meeting. On their agenda was appointing a sheriff, a treasurer, and a coroner. The town of Anoka was the county seat,



A page of minutes from the first Anoka County Board meeting, June 30, 1857.

though no courthouse was built in the county until 1878. Prior to having an official county-owned building, the commissioners meetings, judicial proceedings, and other county business was conducted in rented rooms around the town of Anoka. Throughout the years, there have been attempts to move the county seat away from Anoka. One attempt would have moved it to Columbus; another to "Glencarie" (Ham Lake). Neither was successful and the county seat has remained in the city of Anoka.

In 1857, the county was divided into eight townships: Anoka, Watertown, Round Lake, Bethel, Columbus, St. Francis, Oak Grove, and Centerville. Watertown became Dover and then Ramsey. Round Lake changed its name to Grow, which eventually became Andover.

The map those first commissioners used for the county had a different outline from maps today. In 1857, the land that is present-day Fridley, Spring Lake Park, Columbia Heights, and Hilltop, was not included in Anoka County. It was its own county named Manomin and was comprised of just 18 sections of land. Manomin was organized on the same day as Anoka County, May 23, 1857, and Abram Fridley was made the chair of the county board. Being so tiny, Manomin County had a harder time providing for its citizens, so, in 1870, Manomin joined Anoka County and became the township of Manomin. The name changed to Fridley Township in 1879, and all four of the present day communities were incorporated from this area.

From that moment on, Anoka County never paused in the growth and development that led to the 300,000+ people who call it home 150 years later. This is the year to celebrate with many events scheduled to celebrate our history and to use it as a foundation for planning Anoka County's next 150 years!

Celebrate! Participate! Get involved! This is *your* history!

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

Anoka County History Center & Library

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www.ac-hs.org

History Center Hours:

Tuesday 10-8

Wednesday-Friday 10-5

Saturday 10-4

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

From the Director's Desk...

By Todd Mahon

The sesquicentennial year is here. I can hardly even believe that I'm writing it.

For more than a year we have been planning events, programs, and activities to celebrate Anoka County's 150th year and we finally get the chance to show off what's happening. Many of the upcoming dates are covered in Jan's column and can be found on the ACHS web site (www.ac-hs.org), or in the Town Planner Calendar that is mailed to many of the households in the county. But I'd like to take some time to reflect on all of the people and organizations that helped us get to this point and will play a large role in this year's celebration.

The new book *Picturing Anoka County* would not be possible without the support of sponsors Village Bank, Connexus Energy, and Mercy and Unity Hospitals. The Anoka County Fair Board has donated the use of the fairgrounds for the events of May 18-20. Anoka County has committed \$40,000 in support, and we are working with each of the 21 cities and townships in the county to come together to collectively contribute an additional \$20,000 in support.

The AC150 Education Task Force, and Jan Anderson in particular, deserve a lot of praise for their effort in putting together *Anoka County and Its Neighbors*. This "big book" will be used as a curriculum tool in third grade class rooms throughout Anoka County. This project is made possible with \$7,000 of in-kind support from Bromley Printing, a \$5,000 grant from the Anoka-Hennepin Education Foundation, \$300 from the Retired Education Association of Minnesota, \$250 from the Anoka Kiwanis, and \$200 from the Anoka Hennepin Credit Union. In addition, Elk River and Fridley Public Schools are contributors of \$1,000 and \$200 respectively.

This just names a few of the people and organizations that have been so helpful. Many others have contributed their valuable time and resources. We thank them all. To date we have well over \$100,000 in commitments to make this once-in-a-lifetime event something of which we can all be proud. The ACHS Development Committee is spearheading the drive to raise these funds. If you would like to help please contact me at 763-421-0600.

From the President...

By Jan Anderson

'Tis the season, 'tis the year to reminisce about the past, to renew relationships, and to reaffirm our commitments and goals. Just as we gather as relatives and friends to celebrate the holidays, the year 2007 offers many opportunities for all of us to gather in celebration of Anoka County's Sesquicentennial. Families change over the course of years as has the county. It is important to remember that in our 150th birthday year, we not only look back to our past, but that we look ahead to the future.

Nothing preserves our past and present memories better than photos. The Anoka County History Center will host the opening exhibit of *Picturing Anoka County: 150 Photographs for 150 Years* on January 16 at 7:00 pm. A traveling component of the exhibit will visit the county throughout all 21 cities/townships.

February will be filled with events for the Anoka County Library's selected book entitled *The Children's Blizzard* by David Laskin. One event features Anoka County's own meteorologist Dave Dahl at the Rum River Library on Saturday, February 17 at 1:30 pm. Watch the local papers for other event listings and book club activities, or tune in to QCTV's monthly feature of "It's Your History."

Mark your calendars for May 18-20, as this is the Sesquicentennial Celebration at the Anoka County Fairgrounds. Indeed, there will be something for everyone from garage bands and wave/skateboard demonstrations to reenactors from different time periods, to an old-fashioned baseball game, to a fashion show, and the ACHS annual barn dance and live/silent auction. This will allow everyone to see the wagon train up close as it makes camp on the fairgrounds after its three-day trek throughout the county. Where else can you see history on the hoof?!

July 15 will be exciting as this is an Anoka County-wide Heritage Home and Garden Tour. Selected businesses and homes will be featured. Watch for more details later.

Throughout the year, there are various community events with long-standing traditions that have been endorsed by the Sesquicentennial Executive Board. (See the Town Planner calendar for specific dates/times.) It is important to remember to come together and build community in the largest sense of the word in order to achieve a strong, forward-thinking county.

A Happy New Sesquicentennial Year to all!

New Exhibit Opening on January 16, 7:00 p.m.

Picturing Anoka County: 150 Photos for 150 Years

Join us on opening night at the History Center as ACHS and Anoka County kick off the first event in a full year of Sesquicentennial activity!

This classic exhibit will feature photographs from all around Anoka County, including some that are not found in the *Picturing Anoka County* book. With thousands of photographs to choose from, this exhibit highlights the very best. The exhibit will remain open throughout the Sesquicentennial year during regular ACHS History Center hours.

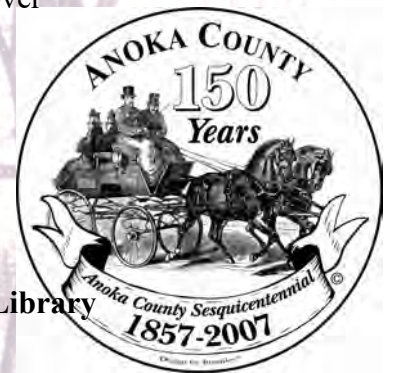
Look for the traveling exhibit, *Picturing Anoka County: A Snapshot of History*, in a location near your home or business.

The Anoka County Historical Society has produced a traveling exhibition entitled, *Picturing Anoka County: A Snapshot of History*. This traveling exhibit will visit each of the 21 cities and townships in Anoka County throughout 2007 and serve as a companion to the larger exhibition of 150 photographs on exhibit at the Anoka County History Center and Library.

The *Snapshot* exhibit will feature one historical photograph from each city and township in Anoka County as well as a handful of additional images of the community that is hosting the exhibition. Two of these exhibits will travel simultaneously, on a staggered schedule, to assure that the exhibit will reach each community for a three week stay. Host locations are invited to add their own images to the exhibit if they choose. A third exhibit is also available to travel to community festivals and special events.

The tentative schedule is as follows:

January 17 to February 8 at **Village Bank** in Ramsey
February 1-22 at **Mercy Hospital** in Coon Rapids
February 14 to March 7 at the **Andover YMCA Community Center** in Andover
March 1-22 at the **Columbia Heights Public Library** in Columbia Heights
March 13 to April 5 at the **Senior Center** in Linwood
May 15 to June 8 at **Pine River Bank** in Burns
June 19 to July 6 at **Northtown Mall** in Blaine
July 16 to August 6 in Centerville (location TBA)
August 1-21 at the **Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts** in Fridley
August 17 to September 7 at **City Hall** in Hilltop
September 4-21 at the **Sandhill Center for the Arts** in Bethel
September 17 to October 5 at the **St. Francis Branch of the Anoka County Library**



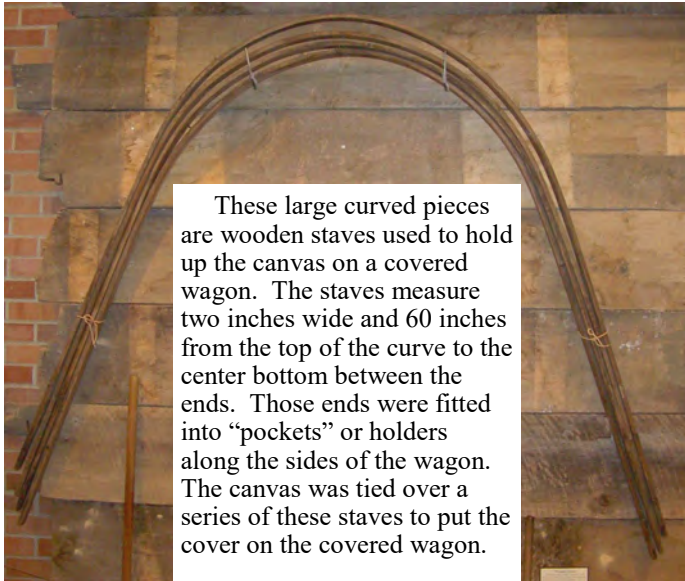
We are still seeking locations in remaining cities and townships. If you have a location or suggestion for a location, please call Todd at 763-421-0600.

The Story of an Artifact

Artifacts in the collection at the Anoka County Historical Society range in age from before the county was organized all the way to this morning's newspaper, but it is usually the older items that are of the most interest to visitors. With plans fully underway for the Sesquicentennial Wagon Train to cross Anoka County this coming May, the "wagon train" theme was used to search through the collections to find an artifact for this newsletter. Two unrelated items came up, but both have wonderful provenance.

A little background of the county settlement is needed to help understand these two artifacts.

There were many people coming to Anoka County in the 1850s. Most were looking for a place where they could build a life, raise a family, and make enough money to live comfortably into old age. Anoka County was on the edge of the frontier in 1862, when one of the most well known homestead acts was passed. The Homestead Act of 1862 provided an opportunity for anyone 21 years of age or older, or the head of a family, to take a claim on 160 acres when they paid an \$18 filing fee. If they built a dwelling and worked to improve the land for five years, it was theirs. This was an opportunity for even the poorest immigrant to own land. The act was intended to help settle the newly acquired lands of Minnesota, but it continued to be a driving force as westward settlement spread across the continent. Once a piece of land was proved up and a clear title given, many farmers took mortgages on the land. This provided them with a means of cash to buy more land, buy implements to allow them to farm larger acreages, buy more animals to increase the size of their herds, and more. In part due to the Homestead Acts, Anoka County's population rose from 2,106 in 1860 to 7,108 by 1880.



These large curved pieces are wooden staves used to hold up the canvas on a covered wagon. The staves measure two inches wide and 60 inches from the top of the curve to the center bottom between the ends. Those ends were fitted into "pockets" or holders along the sides of the wagon. The canvas was tied over a series of these staves to put the cover on the covered wagon.

Richard and Jane Porter came to St. Anthony, Minnesota in 1852. In 1853, they moved to Anoka County where they remained for a short time before moving farther west to a farm near Paynesville, Minnesota.

The Dakota Indian conflict of 1862 drove many settlers out of the western portions of Minnesota, the Porters among them. They returned to Anoka County where they spent the rest of their lives. Moving around Minnesota in those early years meant using a covered wagon and the staves that are shown here came from the Porters Anoka County farm. It is believed the staves may have been from the wagon the Porters used to move to Anoka County.



Moving in a covered wagon pulled by oxen or horses over rough roads—if there were roads—would seem to demand everything be durable and tough, but settlers did not give up all traces of a gracious life. This cream pitcher traveled to Minnesota in a covered wagon. It was a part of a young bride's wedding dishes, which she brought with her when they moved to this area in the 1880s. Eventually, this young bride gave the pitcher to her daughter, Inah, and told her the story of how the pitcher had moved to this new land by covered wagon.

Inah grew up to marry Willis Stout, a graduate of the Anoka Business College and a local businessman. Inah was active in the church and she served as the pastor at Joyce Chapel in Coon Rapids (then Anoka Township) from 1913-1916. She collected cream pitchers all her life, amassing over 100 of them. She was careful to number each one and write down what history she knew of it. Her care in keeping the story is how we today know that this small pitcher arrived in Minnesota by way of a covered wagon, a part of Inah's mother's wedding dishes.

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

GENERAL DONATIONS

Through December 19

Ameriprise
Julian Andersen
Dennis and Darlene Berg
Robert Burtness
Joan Christensen
Betty Erickson
Wallie Felix
Dan Frank
Quinley and Terry Free
Glen and Eileen Hardin
Joyce Brown Hollinder
Merlin Hunt
Dorothy Linse
Clarence Monegar
Beverly Perrin
Rachel Peterson
Virginia Stewart
James Wennerlund

CANDAD CAMERA ANOKA COUNTY SESQUICENTENNIAL PHOTO PROJECT DONATIONS

Anonymous
Stephen Buie
Marie Cullen
Diane Dahl
Keller Williams Realty
Lexington Manufacturing
Mary T., Inc.
Jolee Molitor
Quad Cities Cable
Sam's Club
Steinwall, Inc.
Sandra Zimmerman

OCTOBER 19, 2006- DECEMBER 19, 2006 SESQUICENTENNIAL SUPPORT

Carol Huntsperger
City of Hilltop
Northland Screw Products
City of Ramsey
David Swanson
Town of Burns

OCTOBER 19, 2006- DECEMBER 19, 2006 BARN DANCE SPONSORS

North Country Ford

ARTIFACT DONATIONS

Lindahl B. Gleason
Richard Holland
Frank Humphreys
Jan Johanson
Robert Kirchner
Rod McArdle
Connie McCormick
Jean Morehouse
Michael (Miguel) Newman
Sandburg Middle School
L. Irene Sundberg

YEAR END SESQUICENTENNIAL

Through December 19

Jim and Jan Anderson
Anonymous
Dick and Helen Bennett
Harry and Jeanette Blair
Lee and Caren Carlson
Joe and Marlys Chutich
Dave and Winnie Conger
Shirley Curbow
Roy and Lois Downs
Robert Guzy
Grace Hawkins
Pat Hesli
Terry Johnson
James and Jane Knoll
Tom and Patti Kurak
David and Dorothy Latterell
David and Donna Legrid
Becky Loader and Michael Ritchie
Gen Meyer
Jean Morehouse
Donald and Christa Mowery
Tom and Jan Redmann
Jean Seaborg
Dori Schumacher
Bjorn Skogquist
Carl and Sharon Steinwall
Kenneth and Bonnie Stoll
Ralph Talbot
Wes and Cheryl Volkenant
Mark and Martha Walmsley
Mark Welter
Ernie and Sharon Woizeschke

Welcome New Members!

OCTOBER 19-DECEMBER 21, 2006

Rick Armstrong (Anoka)
Jean Carlstrom (Andover)
Lindahl and Helen Gleason (Anoka)
John and Laurel Hanson (East Bethel)
Ed and Bonnie Hemmelgarn
(East Bethel)
Henri Kovar (Ocean Springs, MS)
Terry and Karen Lehn (Coon Rapids)
Marion Loch (Coon Rapids)
Todd Miller (Andover)
Harold Netkow (Columbia Heights)
Liane Oanes (Ramsey)
John Ottenstroer (Andover)
Robert Sellstedt (Oak Grove)
Barbara Smith Rue (Columbia Heights)
Donna Smith (Coon Rapids)
Dennis Ward (Anoka)
Lori Yager (Champlin)

*The Anoka County Historical
Society wishes to impart
our sincere condolences to the
families and friends of*

Audrey Gadbaw,
*who died October 10th.
She was the mother of
ACHS member Joey Norton.*

ACHS Member
Jay McLinden,
who died November 4th.

Ty Blewett,
*who died on November 7th.
He was the grandson of
ACHS members
Robert and Lois Blewett*

Long-time ACHS Member
Anna Rogers,
who died November 24th

Jean Stack,
*who died December 6th.
She was the sister of ACHS Member
Rod McArdle,
and mother of ACHS members
Terri Cleveland and
Mary Jo Davich*

*We will remember their
commitment to preserving history.*

2006 Holiday Tree Ornament

“If you think of Columbia Heights as a jelly filled donut, Hilltop is the jelly in the middle,” said Hilltop City Clerk, Ruth Nelsen. “Because we have the sweetest people!”

With those words, she presented the 2006 Holiday Tree ornament to the Anoka County Historical Society on behalf of the city of Hilltop. Ms. Nelsen created the ornament at the request of the Hilltop city council.

Hilltop became a city in 1956, and celebrated its 50th anniversary this past summer. In recognition of that anniversary, Hilltop was invited to present the 2006 ornament for the tree. The ornament was made in the shape of a heart to fit with the city’s unofficial slogan: Little city with a big heart.

The mayor and officials from the city of Hilltop joined ACHS board members, friends and visitors to present the ornament on December 5, 2006.

It was with a great deal of pleasure that ACHS president Jan Anderson accepted the heart ornament to represent Hilltop on the tree.

ACHS thanks the City of Hilltop and Ruth Nelsen for this very unique and wonderful donation. The story of the city and the ornament will be preserved and told for generations yet to come.



Anoka County Collects



Almost everyone collects something—whether it be stamps, coins, barbed wire, bottles, tea cups, rocks, spoons, match books, dolls, postcards, or ??? and ACHS wants to show off your collection!

During the next year, ACHS is looking for collectors to display their collection in cases in the lobby of the History Center. There will be a new collection and collector highlighted each month. The display will include a brief profile of the collector and some history about their collections.

For everyone who comes to see the collection, there will be a special stamp for them to collect. Come each month to see what new collection is on display and collect one more stamp. Anyone who collects eight stamps in 2007 will receive a special limited edition Sesquicentennial prize in December during the Holiday Celebration on December 4th.

If you have a collection you would like to display in the lobby for a month, please contact Vickie at 763-421-0600 to see which months are still open. We will take a photo of you with your collection, do a brief interview about you and what you collect, and help set up the display. All collections loaned to ACHS will be in locked exhibit cases for security.



January will be a “timely” exhibit of antique and collectible clocks from Don Johnson of Coon Rapids. Don might not look like Father Time, but his clock collection has some great pieces and even better stories. Be sure to save enough “time” to get in to see this exhibit!

February may be the shortest month on the calendar, but it can be longest and coldest part of a Minnesota winter, so curling up with a cup a tea and a good book is a great idea. Lotus Hubbard from Columbia Heights has over 300 tea cups, so she could certainly provide a proper choice of tea cup! Her favorites will be on display in the lobby during the month of



February.

Come in to see what’s on display, collect your stamp and enjoy everyone’s history!

Announcements and News

2007 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	11	July	12
February	8	August	9
March	8	September	13
April	12	October	11
May	10	November	8
June	14	December	13

Projects for the New Year

By Maria King

By the time this reaches you, the holidays will be a rapidly fading memory. I hope yours was beautiful--filled with family, friends, good food and good times. Personally, I tend to procrastinate, shopping for gifts at the last minute when there is little left from which to choose.

In the realm of volunteerism, there is also a point where the choices become limited. This time of year we have an opportunity to catch up on all the projects that have had to take a back seat to more pressing issues.

Receptionist- At least one day a week, preferably Tuesday, we need a volunteer from roughly 10 am to 4 pm. The receptionist's duties include answering phones, selling tickets to events, and recording money transactions at the front desk.

Obituaries-The obituaries require a volunteer to simply cut and paste them onto a template. They are then copied onto card stock, cut and filed. This project has been the task of Marian Auchter, who will continue to take care of the obits from the Anoka County Union, but at least two helpers are needed for the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* obits and those from the *St Paul Pioneer Press*. Volunteers are needed to read, mark, clip, copy, file and index the additional obits. This can even be done from home, so don't let snowy roads stop you from this important task.

Photo Archive-This project needs someone to move photos from their current storage to acid free folders. Good, clear handwriting is required, and after initial training, can be done at any time.

Manuscripts- This project is ongoing and requires multiple volunteers. First, a "cut and paste" crew of about four people is needed to work either separately or together, anytime after initial training. Second, a filing clerk is needed to work about two hours per week. Finally, a data input person is needed to index the completed manuscripts. This is an urgent need, but requires access to our system computer, so the time must be scheduled in advance.

Unscheduled things pop up from time to time, so, if you are interested in volunteering, just call and leave your name and phone number. I will contact you to find out what sorts of jobs you are looking for. Then I'll keep you in mind when the need arises.

The Book is Here!

The Sesquicentennial book, *Picturing Anoka County* is here and on sale now! These beautiful hard-cover books are filled with over 250 photographs taken throughout the county covering all 150 years. Care was taken to be sure all sections of the county were represented in this book, so from the largest community to the smallest, each has photos telling their stories.



The books are \$34.95 (plus \$2.27 tax) for those who are not members of the Anoka County Historical Society.

Members receive a discount, so the member price is \$29.95 (plus \$1.95 tax).

Get your copy at the History Center! If you would rather have your book mailed, please include \$3.50 for postage and handling.

American Girls Christmas Tea

By Maria King

Once again, the American Girl Teas were a resounding success. Those who have not yet participated may want to know what they are all about!

Although girls both younger and older also enjoy the event, the target audience is 8 to 11-year-old girls and their mothers and grandmothers. Each tea starts with a half hour of history in a format that will interest both adults and children. It is followed by a craft activity that enhances the history learning. Girls are invited to try on hats and gloves collected for that purpose before going to tea. The girls help serve the pastries and cookies, and every one is invited to try several kinds of tea. A door prize drawing for beautiful hand-made doll clothes is held at the end, thanks to Darlene Bearl and her clever needles.

The teas are based on the *American Girl* series of novels, and the American Girl dolls that are fashioned after the books' characters. After initial introductions, the dolls are left in "Dolly Day Care" while the girls learn about Anoka County through the eyes of one of the heroines.

During our last tea, we imagined that Kirsten, a Swedish immigrant to Minnesota in the 1860s, settled on a farm in rural Anoka County, perhaps St. Francis or Burns. We learned about farming, the effects of the Civil War, and the Homestead Act on families like Kirsten's. Then we made a log cabin out of popsicle sticks.

Teas are held twice a year. Reservations are required and the teas usually sell out quickly.

The work of several very special volunteers makes the teas possible. Heartfelt thanks go out to Tanya Weisser and her fabulous daughter Amber Hall, along with soon-to-be-a-mother, Laura Estby. This team knows how to ensure that everyone leaves with a craft to be proud of, a tummy full of pastries, and that they had a great time doing it.

The challenge is to provide a comparable experience for boys of the same age. Your suggestions are welcome!

Coming Events

January Lobby Exhibit

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) Throughout the year of 2007, the lobby exhibit will feature Anoka County collectors and their collections! The first collector is Don Johnson, from Coon Rapids, and he will display his clock collection. A brief profile of Don will be included. The collector and the collection will change each month. Stop in to see what your county neighbors are collecting and start collecting stamps on your "attendance sheet." See page 6 for more information.

Anoka County Collects — Don Johnson & Clocks

January 9, 9:30 a.m.

(Anoka County Government Center) Join the Anoka County Board of Commissioners in declaring the Year of the Sesquicentennial for Anoka County at this first board meeting of the 150th year of Anoka County's history. A brief ceremony will precede the regular County Board meeting. Be part of the official opening for this special year.

Opening of the 150th Year of Anoka County's History

January 11, 7-9 p.m.

(Bardella Fabric Arts, 2013 Second Avenue, Anoka) Gather with others to make your Anoka County Sesquicentennial Quilt with this class, held once a month through May. Quilters will receive history and instructions on each block for a cost of \$5 per class. Each month will feature several blocks to finish in time to enter your quilts in the Anoka County Fair in July. For more information, call Bardella's at 763-421-9606.

Sesquicentennial Quilt Club

January 16, 7:00 p.m.

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) This classic exhibit will feature photographs from all around Anoka County, including some that are not found in the *Picturing Anoka County* book. With thousands of photographs to choose from, this exhibit highlights the very best. Join in on the opening night fun as ACHS and Anoka County kick off the first event in a full year of Sesquicentennial activity!

Exhibit Opening-Picturing Anoka County: 150 Photos for 150 Years

February Lobby Exhibit

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) Winter is a great time to cuddle up with a cup of tea and a good book. Lotus Hubbard could supply the tea cups as she has over 300 of them in her collection! She'll be bringing her favorites to display. Lotus is a fourth generation Columbia Heights native. Remember, collect your attendance stamp each month!

Anoka County Collects — Lotus Hubbard & Tea Cups

February 17, 1:30 p.m.

(Rum River Library) The One Book, One County Sesquicentennial project is reading *The Children's' Blizzard* by David Laskin. There will be many events surrounding this book. One of the highlights is a visit from meteorologist Dave Dahl of KSTP TV and a graduate of Anoka County's own Centennial High School at the Rum River Library to talk about Minnesota's changeable weather.

One Book, One County with Dave Dahl

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History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

Vol. 37 No. 2

March-April 2007

A Heritage of Protection and Service—The Anoka County Sheriffs Office

By Sheriff Bruce Andersohn

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

On June 30, 1857, the first Anoka County Board of Commissioners met in the town of Saint Francis. The newly created County of Anoka, formed by an act of the legislature, needed governance. Hence, they appointed the first Anoka County Sheriff, J.C. Frost. Sheriff Frost served for one year before losing to Thomas J. Henderson in the 1858 election. This began the history of the Office of Sheriff in Anoka County.

During its 150-year history, 16 individual sheriffs have served varying terms. Some of those sheriffs and their deputies have been legendary.

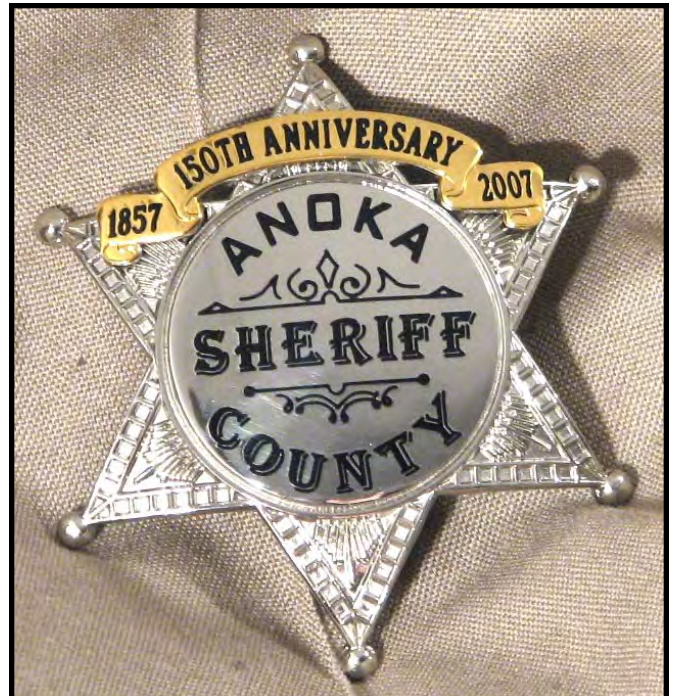
Sheriff Henderson reportedly arrested the first documented murderer in Anoka County on January 11, 1860. On December 15, 1868, Sheriff Henderson swore in J.F. Blodgett as the first Deputy Sheriff of record.

Sheriff Charles Lenfest made history by appointing the first woman deputy in June 1891. He appointed his wife as a Deputy Sheriff with “all the power usually given in such appointments” as written in the Anoka County Union.

Sheriff U.S. “Red” Pratt was a very controversial sheriff. A 1929 photograph of Sheriff Pratt during prohibition shows him and his deputies with the largest alcohol still ever seized in Minnesota. Gun battles in the early days were common, and a 1930 photo shows Sheriff Pratt, beside a suspect vehicle full of bullet holes. In addition, Sheriff Pratt was involved in solving one of Minnesota’s most mysterious murders. In the early hours of December 22, 1921, the remains of a man were found in a burnt out schoolhouse. The only clue being a crucifix found in the rubble with “Kelly” engraved on the back. Through publication of the information, it was determined that Frank L. Kelly of Mankato, a former member of the Minnesota legislature, was missing. Kelly’s widow identified the crucifix as having belonged to her husband. The day before the murder, Kelly had left in his own vehicle with a stranger. That vehicle was later found in a Minneapolis garage and contained a blood-stained fur coat with a bullet hole in the back. The garage proprietor described a man with rattlesnake eyes. The suspect was later found in a hotel in Blue Earth, Minnesota. Arrested was Earl Slater who later pled guilty and was sentenced to prison for life.

Sheriff “Oscar” Olson was elected in 1930. He was responsible for hiring a deputy who eventually became one of Anoka County’s most famous sheriffs, L.A. “Mike” Auspos. Deputy Auspos was involved in numerous high profile arrests, vehicle chases, and shoot outs with suspects. He became a legend as a deputy. In 1946, Auspos was elected Sheriff of Anoka County. Sheriff Auspos was in office during the December 7, 1953, killing of Deputy Ernie Zettergren, who was shot and killed while investigating a burglary of Silvern Tavern in Fridley. His murderer, Francis Anderson, was later arrested and killed himself in Stillwater Prison.

On September 18, 1957, Sheriff Auspos’s deputies were involved in another manhunt, which became a TV episode for *Real Stories of the Highway Patrol*. Deputy James Sampson was shot twice by one of the three O’Kasick brothers. Deputy Sampson and his partner Deputy Gottwald were investigating a suspicious individual on Crooked Lake Road.



This specially designed badge will be worn by all Anoka County Sheriff’s Office personnel during the Sesquicentennial year of 2007. The design is modeled after an original badge of the early 1900s look for it on the uniforms of the deputies and a decal near the rear windows of Anoka County Sheriff squad cars.

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 – Paul Pierce, III

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

From the Director's Desk...

By Todd Mahon

The Fringe Benefits of the Sesquicentennial

When the Anoka County Historical Society agreed to spearhead the efforts to plan and produce the 2007 Anoka County Sesquicentennial Celebration, we agreed that we should look at it as a development opportunity for the organization. We certainly hope for financial gain to support our mission with these efforts, primarily with our annual barn dance fundraiser as a feature to the events at the Anoka County Fairgrounds on May 19th.

But dollars and cents aren't the only way we are seeing tangible benefits from the sesquicentennial. The planning has helped us gain recognition and visibility for the organization and has already seen great benefit to our archival and museum collections.

As many of you are aware, we opened a major photograph exhibit, *Picturing Anoka County: 150 Photographs for 150 Years*, at the Anoka County History Center on January 16th. I'm always pleased when we have great exhibits and programs that reach a lot of people. It's also easy to explain to people how an event that brought in nearly 100 people on a very cold January evening could be considered a success. The untold success of this event was the months of work that went into the development of the gallery and the selection and procurement of the 150 images that make up the exhibition.

We could have put together a wonderful exhibit using only images we already had in our collections, but we tried hard to follow through on our commitment to treat the sesquicentennial as a development opportunity. Therefore, we went out and found photographs we hadn't seen before. We made contacts in the county from areas that needed better representation in the exhibit and in our collection (after all, we're celebrating the entire county's anniversary this year). I'm happy to say that these efforts made this a much better exhibit and are helping to make us a much better organization.

Many of the photographs in the exhibit were given to ACHS specifically for the purpose of the exhibit and its companion book *Picturing Anoka County: 150 Years of Anoka County History*. In many cases, the images were scanned and the originals were returned to the donors. This project will reap benefits years down the road as we continue to preserve and collect the county's history.

I'd like to thank all of the cities, organizations, and individuals who contributed images for this project. I know that many of them will continue to be supporters of ACHS and the county's rich history.

From the President...

By Jan Anderson

In wagon train terminology, it is time to hand over the reins as my one-year presidency term is drawing to a close. How quickly the time has gone! Ray Steinke, our current vice president, will assume the role of wagonmaster/president at the annual meeting which will be held Sunday, March 18, at the church located on the Nowthen Threshing Show grounds beginning at 1:03 p.m. Ray, a St. Francis resident, has been a very committed board member over the past year and has served on the Publicity/Special Events committee. Ray also has an avid passion in genealogy and can trace some of his family roots back to 1855 in and around the area of East Bethel. A community-minded individual, Ray served on the St. Francis Council for 24 years and was the mayor of St. Francis for 14 of those years. His leadership has also been shown in serving as president of the St. Francis seniors. Indeed, Ray's expertise, congeniality, and openness to new ideas will help to guide ACHS through its event-filled Sesquicentennial year.

Initially, my vision for ACHS was centered around two themes which have shaped my experiences: farming and education. In the past year, not only have we completed our third phase of the grant chronicling farming from 1845-present in Anoka County, but our current contract historian, John Diers, is working on the ancillary businesses that have a connection to agriculture, namely, logging, milling, starch factories, implement dealerships, etc.

The big book, *Anoka County and Its Neighbors*, a third grade reading tool written according to Minnesota standards, is nearing publication with Bromley Printing and will be going out to many area schools within the county. Compiling the information proved to be fascinating, and I so enjoyed meeting many different teaching/learning representatives from various school districts. A special thank you also to my AC-150 Education Task Force consisting of Shirley Christenson, Marlene Colvin, and Maria King.

Kudos go out as well to Todd Mahon, our executive director, our knowledgeable staff at the History Center, and the ACHS Board with whom I had the privilege of working this past year. Their dedication truly made my job enjoyable, and I greatly appreciated their sense of humor. (Who else would endure my puns?!)

As I move into the position of past president, I'm reminded that our wagon train will continue to roll along on ever new exciting trails.

The Story of an Artifact

Yearbooks

There is nothing like opening a yearbook to bring back memories of schools days, but in history, yearbooks do far more than bring back memories! Each yearbook is a concentrated microcosm of history that is tied to a specific place and time with many photos, people, words, graphics, and more. Yearbooks are incredible resources for research, surprising as that may seem to many people. A closer look at one yearbook in the ACHS collection will help explain why these books are so highly sought after.

The Spring Lake Park *Oasis* for 1970 opens with photos of their building and the sign out front. The title page contains the date, the volume number and a puzzle. That puzzle is the location of the school. Even though it says Spring Lake Park High School, its location is listed as “Minneapolis.” Why? Because in 1970, the city of Spring Lake Park did not have its own post office and mail was routed through Minneapolis, thus, the address was listed as Minneapolis.

A list of advertisers is included in the yearbook, telling what goods and services were available in the area in 1970. The addresses for each business place stores in locations and at least one date of operation.



The yearbook contains a section on sports. This provides information on which sports were popular, which were only for the boys, only for the girls, and which sport had teams for each. Many times, these photos include uniforms and equipment, again providing clues to what was used in 1970. The difference between a 1970 football helmet and one of 2007 is astonishing!

Beyond sports are the clubs and organizations of the school. These, too, speak volumes about what was popular, trendy, or important to the students in Spring Lake Park in 1970. This particular yearbook even has small articles to explain what was going on in each organization and club, the projects they undertook, and the accomplishments they made.

The teaching staff is included and gives a little history of education in School District #16. An interesting note is social studies as a separate subject from history. The choice of which foreign languages are

taught can be found in the staff pages, as can the changes in titles, such as Home Ec for girls in 1970 as compared to Domestic Science for both genders in later years.

Genealogists love finding yearbooks from an ancestor! Many yearbooks are indexed, so finding out that Aunt Tillie sang in the choir is easy, not to mention seeing how she looked, what other activities she was involved in—like honor society—or was she not-so-hot of a student?

If the yearbook happens to be signed with autographs, as many in the collection are, those inscriptions are treasures of the uses of language, current sayings or fads, relationships in high school, and more. Even the handwriting is fun to compare to the present styles! Anyone remember the Palmer method?!

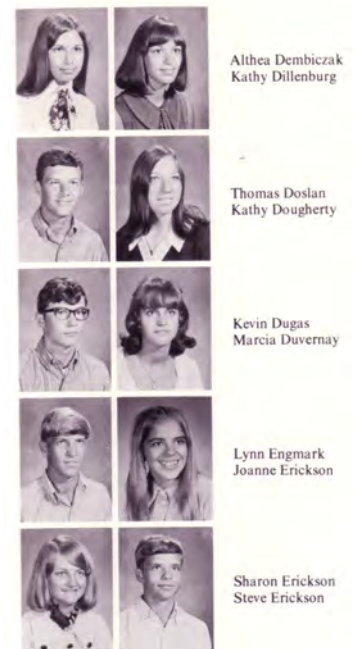
These are just some of the things yearbooks can tell a researcher or historian, so it is easy to understand why ACHS continues to search for yearbooks to fill in the holes in our collection.

There are some high schools in the county that are well represented in the yearbook collection and others, such as Totino–Grace in Fridley, are completely missing! There are only a few from St. Francis, Columbia Heights, and Fridley. Blaine, Coon Rapids, and Anoka are well represented, but certainly not complete. Even a school as new as Andover High School has a “missing” yearbook in what ACHS has in the collection.

If you have yearbooks or know of someone who does, please call Marilyn Anderson at 763-421-0600 to see what may be in the collection or if donating your yearbook can help us fill a hole.

Remember, store your yearbooks in an upright position such as on a bookshelf, away from high heat, high humidity, and rapid temperature changes. That will help preserve them for your great-grandchildren to “discover” what life was like when you were in school!

Assistant Editor: Candy Sheppard



Althea Dembiczak
Kathy Dillenburg

Thomas Doslan
Kathy Dougherty

Kevin Dugas
Marcia Duvernay

Lynn Engmark
Joanne Erickson

Sharon Erickson
Steve Erickson

All images on this page are from the 1970 Spring Lake Park *Oasis*.

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

All lists are current to February 9, 2007

YEAR END SESQUICENTENNIAL EXHIBIT DONATIONS

Katherine Allquist
James Andre
Ronald and Harriet Burley
Roger and Dorothy Carlson
Richard DeLong
Robert and Marilyn Douglass
Betty Erickson
Rose Marie Freeman
Edward and Lora Hamilton
Guila Ann Hunt
Jim and Janis Johansen
Henry and Audrey Johnson
Dick and Mary Lang
Mike and Wendie Lapham
Todd Mahon and Nikki Theis-Mahon
John and Yvonne Mann
Bonnie McDonald
Carol Moen
Donald Parrott
Janet (Mrs. Warren) Paulson
Dianne Pederson
Steve Schmidt
Charlie and Mary Sell
Lorraine Soderquist
Millie Sorenson
Gary and Ann Steen
Dick and Nancy Swanson
Barb Thurston
Jill Weaver
Ron and Vickie Wendel

SESQUICENTENNIAL CITY SUPPORT

City of Coon Rapids
City of Lexington
Linwood Township

SESQUICENTENNIAL MILITARY TIMELINE SUPPORT

Vietnam Veterans Chapter 470

SESQUICENTENNIAL BIG BOOK SUPPORT

Elk River School District #728
Fridley School District #14

SESQUICENTENNIAL AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY DONATIONS

Coon Rapids Collision, Inc.
Pure Bliss (Karen Lehn)

CATALOGING PROJECT DONATION

Shirley Christenson

GENERAL DONATIONS

Ameriprise/Dan Frank
Ronald and Harriet Burley

Roger and Dorothy Carlson
Katie Clark
Dave and Winnie Conger
Marilyn Glenn
Karen Hand
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Melvin Larson, Jr.
Clarence Monega
M. Joyce Paul
Doris Pease
Leslie Ross
Deborah Sundeen
Frank and Karen Walmsley
Zilla Way
Amanda Wendel
Betty Wilbur
Lester and Shirley Ziegler

ARTIFACT DONATIONS

June Anderson
Dorothy Carlson
Shelly Carty
Mark & Wendy Case
Suzanne Dilcher
Barbara Dill
Lindahl Gleason
Sam Hermanstorfer
City of Hilltop
Jan Johansen
George Meyer
Terrance Mox
Terry Nightingale
Avis Oppergard
Charles Sell
Anoka County Vietnam Veterans
Chapter #470

SPECIAL DONATION IN HONOR OF VICKIE WENDEL

Janet Wilcox

Welcome New Members!

Brian and Kari Abbott (Ramsey)
Richard and Wylone Abbott (Ramsey)
Richard Barstow (Ramsey)
Blaine Historical Society (Blaine)
Vernon Boettcher (Stacy)
Howard Bradley (Cedar)
Karen Brettschneider (Anoka)
Freddie and Kathy Cruz (Coon Rapids)
Nancy Gustafson Gage (South Haven, MN)
LaVerne Gamm (Anoka)
Marvin and Mary Hannah (Spring Lake Park)
Barb Hanson (Andover)
Nancy Hoffman (Elk River)
Jeorgette Knoll and family (Andover)
David and Pam Koch (Coon Rapids)
Villa Konen (Ramsey)
Tim Lehn (Anoka)
Ewen and Zelda McClellan (Oak Grove)
Don Miller (Anoka)
James Nelson (Columbia Heights)
Jerry Nelson (Coon Rapids)
Jane Nordin (Anoka)
Jerome Nordin (Anoka)
Mike and Laura Olson family (Ramsey)
Roger and Avis Oppergard (Coon Rapids)
John Radzilowski (St. Louis Park)
Betty Reinhart (Anoka)
Florence Skogquist (Elk River)
Marjorie Soderquist-Strouse (Anoka)
Rose Marie Steiner (Anoka)
Goldie Taber (Anoka)
Margaret Twiss (Ramsey)
Julie VanderBloomer (Lexington)
Commissioner Robyn West (Blaine)
Jon Westrom (Burns Township)
Peter Wojciechowski (Ham Lake)
Ronald Zurek (Columbia Heights)

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

From Rodney and Maxine Larson

Given in memory of

Francis Courteau
Clara Courteau
Robert Burman

The Anoka County Historical Society wishes to impart our sincere condolences to the families and friends of

*long-time ACHS member **Ruth Oliver**.*

Ruth died January 15th, in Indiana, where she lived in recent years to be near her daughter, Elise Chang. Other survivors include her cousin, ACHS member Nancy Auspos.

*Frequent library patron **Grace Reier**, who died January 22nd*

*ACHS member **Noranda Anderson**, who died January 26th*

We will remember their commitment to preserving history.

Up To Date

BALLOTS

Everyone with paid-up ACHS memberships was mailed a ballot to vote for the ACHS Board of Directors on February 13, 2007. If your dues are paid up and you did not receive a ballot, please give us a call at 763-421-0600.

Those paying their dues before Friday, March 9th, 2007 will also be mailed a ballot. All completed ballots must be received by ACHS by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, March 12, 2007. The name and address of EACH VOTER MUST be on the return envelope. To preserve anonymity, nothing should be written on the ballot envelope itself.

The results of the election will be announced at the Annual Meeting on March 18th, at the Church on the Nowthen Threshing Show grounds in Burns.

The Book is Here!

The Sesquicentennial book, *Picturing Anoka County* is here and on sale now! These beautiful hard-cover books are filled with over 250 photographs taken throughout the county covering all 150 years. All sections of the county are represented in this book, from the largest community to the smallest, each has photos telling their stories.

The books are \$34.95 (plus \$2.27 tax) for those who are not members of the Anoka County Historical Society.

Members receive a discount, so the member price is \$29.95 (plus \$1.95 tax).

If you would rather have your book mailed, please include \$3.50 for postage and handling.



Look for Picturing Anoka County: A Snapshot of History in a location near you!

The *Snapshot* exhibit features one historical photograph from each city and township in Anoka County as well as a handful of additional images of the community that is hosting the exhibition. Host locations are invited to add their own images to the exhibit if they choose.

A third exhibit is also available to travel to community festivals and special events.

We are still seeking locations in remaining cities and townships. If you have a suggestion for a location, call Todd at 763-421-0600.

March 1-22 Columbia Heights Public Library in Columbia Heights

March 13 to April 5 at the Senior Center in Linwood

May 15 to June 8 at Pine River Bank in Burns

June 19 to July 6 at Northtown Mall in Blaine

July 16 to August 6 in Centerville (location TBA)

August 1-21 at the Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts in Fridley

August 17 to September 7 at City Hall in Hilltop

September 4-21 at the Sandhill Center for the Arts in Bethel

September 17 to October 5, St. Francis Branch, Anoka County Library

I Volunteer Because...

By Maria King

Our volunteer appreciation event has been planned for March 24th, but appreciation for our volunteers is a year round 24/7 kind of thing. **Together, 162 people donated over 6000 hours to ACHS in 2006.** If you have volunteered in 2006, **please consider yourself invited to the event, even if we missed getting you an invitation!**

People volunteer for many different reasons. Some donate so many hours that we forget they are volunteers and we count on them as if they were paid staff. Lucille Elrite is tops in that category.

Others find a fascinating project and they make it their own. Dave Niles said of the Anoka State Hospital project, "The project took on a life of its own. I just went along for the ride!" Dave's donation of almost 600 hours proves that it was *some* ride. Similarly, Jan Anderson wrote and published *Anoka County and Its Neighbors* for use in the fourth grades throughout the county.

Some, like Kay Skubitz, enjoy getting out of the house and meeting people. Kay has volunteered as a receptionist and has helped on countless other projects whenever she is needed. Her 252 hours prove that she is needed often!

Shirley Christenson and Marlys Talbot understand the importance of a well organized reference library. They work hard one day every week to make it so.

Ann Steen, Tanya Weisser, Gary Greb, Lynne Rickert, and Darlene Bearl enjoy the "theater" aspect of ACHS and make fabulous living history characters. They make the Ghost Tours and the cemetery tours possible, and effectively reach out to our communities whenever an opportunity arises.

Some, like our board and officers, volunteer because they want to have input into the direction that ACHS is moving. Their leadership and devotion to the cause of history keeps us focused on our mission. Bart Ward, for example, promotes ACHS at every opportunity, and has donated over 600 hours.

Whatever the reason, our volunteers are incredible! With their help, we have made huge strides this year in our outreach efforts and our in-house projects. We've forged new alliances with businesses, industries, and community government, to allow the sesquicentennial events to involve as many citizens as possible.

Think about becoming involved as a volunteer. There is always much to do, and even more *that could be done* if we had the help! Make ACHS the kind of organization that you want it to be by donating your time, your work, and your ideas to our programs. You may find it enriches your life in ways you've never dreamed of!

Call Maria at 763-421-0600 to talk about a volunteer project that fits your talents and schedule.

Trailblazers' Club for Boys Begins March 17th!

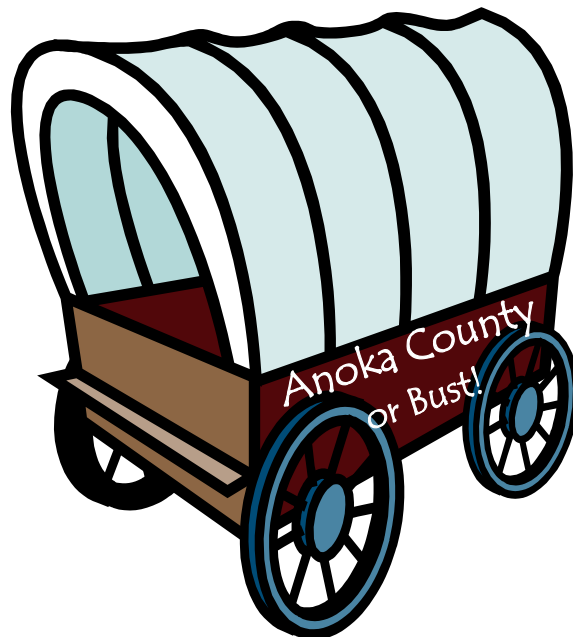
A new program is available for boys, ages 6 to 11. It provides them with an experience similar to that of the American Girl Teas for the girls. Boys and their accompanying adults meet for a two hour session involving an outdoor activity with a history focus, a related craft, and a pie and ice cream social.

The first session is planned for Saturday, March 17th at 1:00 pm. If we need to hold a second or even a third session, additional dates will be set.

The boys and their adults meet at the History Center, divide into groups and walk with their tour guide to the south end of Akin Riverside Park. They will walk the trail, read the signs, and listen to their guide add information about local history beyond what is available on the signs. There may even be a Living History character or two along the way! After the history hike, everyone returns to the History Center to make a miniature paper Red River Ox Cart. Hot cocoa and apple pie will take the chill off and allow time for sharing conversation.

Future Trailblazers Club meetings will look at topics such as the depression era, logging, WWII, and mechanical inventions.

Sign up to spend some quality time with that special son, nephew or grandson! RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED and space is limited, so please call for your tickets. Tickets are \$7 for boys and \$10 for their adult companions.



The Sheriff's Office, continued from the front page

After contacting Ronald O'Kasick, they stopped to investigate a vehicle owned by Ronald's brother, James. The O'Kasick brothers opened fire on the two deputies. The deputies returned fire. The gunfight left Deputy Sampson shot, once in the side and once in the ankle. When the O'Kasick brothers ran off, Deputy Gottwald was out of ammunition and Deputy Sampson was down to his last six shells. The O'Kasick brothers fled on foot, kidnapped Eugene Lindgren from his home, and fled the area, beginning one of the largest manhunts in Minnesota's history. They were intercepted by law enforcement officers near the Carlos Avery Game Refuge. During their attempt to flee, Roger O'Kasick killed Lindgren with a gunshot to his neck; at which time Highway Patrolman James Crawford fired five shots from his shotgun at the fleeing O'Kasicks, killing Roger and Ronald. The youngest of the O'Kasicks, James, shot himself in an attempted suicide. Later, he admitted that he had been involved in severely wounding Minneapolis Officer Ward Canfield a few weeks prior and that Roger, the oldest, had killed Canfield's partner, Roger Fossum, as they were en route to rob a store in Minneapolis.



Sheriff Bruce Andersohn talked about the history and development of the Sesquicentennial badge at a swearing-in ceremony for new deputies, December 28, 2006.

Sheriff Auspos retired after 47 years in law enforcement in 1960, and Deputy Ralph "Buster" Talbot was appointed as Sheriff. Sheriff Talbot continued to serve until 1987 and was the longest serving Sheriff in Anoka County. Under Sheriff Talbot, the Major Crime Investigative Unit was started in 1973 and the first S.W.A.T. Team was established in 1980.

Sheriff Ken Wilkinson was elected in 1986 and established the first K-9 Unit for the Sheriff's Office, along with the first computerized records system. In the fall of 1994, Larry Podany defeated Sheriff Wilkinson and served for almost eight years, overseeing more significant changes at the Sheriff's Office.

As I look forward to our next 150 years, exciting times are ahead. In 2007, as you deal with staff of the Sheriff's Office, I would ask you to take the time to congratulate them and celebrate with us 150 years of serving the citizens of Anoka County.

2007 ACHS Annual Meeting

Sunday, March 18, 2007

1:30 pm—3:30 pm

The Nowthen Threshing Show Grounds in the Burns Free Church

\$10 for members, \$12 for non-members

7415 Old Viking Blvd. Burns
Take Co. Rd 5 and turn East on Old Viking Blvd.
about 1 mile.

Join the Anoka County Historical Society for our 2007 Annual Meeting on the grounds of the Nowthen Threshing Show at the Burns Free Church. We'll announce the results of this year's board election, and play bingo and trivia games.

Doug Ohman, from Pioneer Photography, will give his slide presentation *Just Down the Road: Minnesota's Historic Churches*. This program features many churches from Anoka County.



2007 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 **by March 12, 2007** 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 Lobby Exhibit

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) JoAnn Leistico from Burns has tins to hold spices, tobacco, powder, food, and much more! Come see what kinds of items came in tins in the days before plastic. Plan to take some time as these tins are beautifully decorated and filled with wonderful advertising. Don't forget to have your card punched so you can collect your prize in December for having eight punches!

March 17, 1:00 –3:00 p.m.

Trailblazers Club

(Anoka County History Center and Library) This is a new program for boys, age 6 to 11. Boys and adults meet in a two hour session for an outdoor activity with a history focus, a related craft, and a pie and ice cream social. RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED! Tickets are \$7 for boys and \$10 for adults. Call Maria at 763-421-0600.

March 18, 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

ACHS Annual Meeting

(Church on the Nowthen Threshing Show Grounds in Burns) The annual meeting is your opportunity to hear the latest news about ACHS and the Sesquicentennial celebration, provide your input to the organization, hear the election results for the ACHS Board of Directors, and have a lot of fun. Get your reservation in soon! See page 7 in this newsletter for more details.

April Lobby Exhibit

Anoka County Collects--Barb Thurston & Cocktail Shakers

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) Variety hardly begins to describe the shakers in Barb Thurston's collection! Barb is from Anoka and will be displaying her shakers throughout the month of April. Come see this unique collection and collect another punch on your card this month.

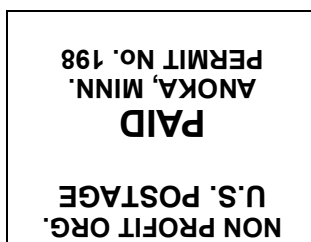
March 24, 1:00 –3:00 p.m.

Volunteer Recognition Day

If you volunteered in 2006, watch for your invitation to this special day set aside just for you! Look for your invitation to arrive in the mail in early March. If you volunteered and do not receive an invitation, call Maria at the History Center, 763-421-0600.

Ongoing in the Exhibit Hall

150 Photos for 150 Years of Anoka County History; Vietnam: The Soldiers' Experience; The Winds of Change, Anoka County Agriculture from 1844 to 1900.



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. 37 No. 3

May - June 2007

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

To Establish and Govern a New County—Anoka County, 1857

On Thursday, May 21, 1857, the *Daily Pioneer and Democrat* newspaper in St. Paul ran a list of the bills that were to be undertaken by the territorial legislature. Midway down the column is a single line that reads: "To organize the county of Anoka." There was no fanfare, no drama, just a simple act of the legislature and the County of Anoka was born on May 23, 1857. The appointment of three county commissioners to do the actual work of setting up and managing Anoka County was done by the territorial governor and was not newsworthy enough to merit a mention in the paper. Despite how ordinary it may have seemed at the time, these three men would begin to lay the first foundation stones for building the county we live, work, and play in today.

Who were John Austin, Eli Davis and Silas Lum? Research can provide at least a glimpse of these men who were charged with creating the county we call home.

John P. Austin

John P. Austin was born in Whitestown, New York, on September 10, 1808. He was the son of New York born parents, so John was truly of Yankee stock. By 1833, John was living in Kentucky where he married Mary C. Beaty. Their first two children were born in Mason County, Kentucky, before they moved north to Ohio. Seven more children were born to the couple while they lived there.

Records are not clear, but it is believed John arrived in St. Francis, Minnesota, in 1855, making him one of the earlier settlers in the area. If this is correct, then Mary did not immediately accompany him as their last child was born in Ohio in 1856. It was not uncommon for the father to go ahead and get a home established before the mother and the children followed. It is also possible that John's arrival date was a year later—after the birth of the last child.

By the time of the territorial census in 1857, the family appeared, confirming their Anoka County residency. John was listed as a farmer. Others in the household included John's wife Mary, and five children, ages ranging from 21 years down to 5 years. The oldest son, Devalston, was noted as a farmer at age 21.

When Anoka County was organized on May 23, 1857, and three county commissioners were appointed to govern the new county, John Austin became the representative from the district that included the town of St. Francis. He served from that first meeting on June 30, 1857, to January 4, 1858. For his work as a county commissioner, county orders for payment were authorized in the amount of \$35 on October 5, 1857. Austin also received payment for his service as commissioner and mileage amounting to \$11.40 on November 10, 1857.

The 1860 census showed John owned a real estate with a taxable value of \$300 and a personal estate with a taxable value of \$2,435. Mary was listed on the census, but only one child remained with them, Henry. Mary's family, the Beatys, lived with the Austins. The Beatys were her father, mother 75, and brother, Henry, age 50 and they lived with John and Mary in St. Francis.

The May 25, 1865, *Anoka Union* newspaper carried an article about a boy with the last name of Austin who drowned while fishing in the Rum River below the dam in St. Francis. The father's name was written as Mr. Austin. Death records provide the proof that this was John's son Henry who drowned on May 18, 1865, in the Rum River.

John ran for another term on the county board in 1866. He was elected by a margin of only four votes to represent the second District, the St. Francis area.

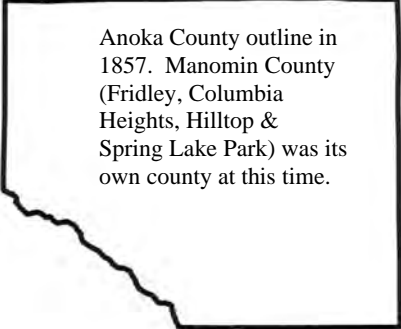
Sadly, Mary died on March 12, 1874, in St. Francis. John did not remain alone as he married again in about 1878. His second wife was Margaret Barner.

The Austins lived in St. Francis until at least 1885, the last year they appeared on the St. Francis census rolls. Exactly when is not known, but John and Margaret moved to Minneapolis. They may have moved to the city to be closer to John's children as the 1889-90 business directory for Minneapolis listed J. B. Weller Austin. J. B. was John's son.

Margaret passed away on December 10, 1891, in Minneapolis. John laid her to rest in Lakewood Cemetery.

By 1900, John was living with his granddaughter, Addie. Addie and her husband also had several other boarders, so making room for Addie's grandfather was probably easy for them.

John died on September 21, 1900, eleven days after his 91st birthday. Where he was buried is unknown as records indicate he was not buried beside Margaret.



Anoka County outline in 1857. Manomin County (Fridley, Columbia Heights, Hilltop & Spring Lake Park) was its own county at this time.

The First Commissioners
Continued on page 4

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

Anoka County History Center & Library

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www.ac-hs.org

History Center Hours:

Tuesday 10-8

Wednesday-Friday 10-5

Saturday 10-4

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District #5 – (Open)

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

From the Director's Desk...

By Todd Mahon

Come Celebrate Anoka County's 150 Years!

I hope by now that you are well aware of the events and activities to celebrate Anoka County's 150th anniversary. Over the last year, we have been regularly featuring the County's sesquicentennial and are receiving some great coverage in the local media. It all begins with the Anoka County Sesquicentennial Wagon Train as it departs from the County's eastern border on Wednesday, May 16 and makes its way west before landing at the Anoka County Fairgrounds to begin a weekend of events celebrating our county's rich history.

There will be something for everyone that weekend at the Fairgrounds. On Friday, May 18, Freshtip Design will produce an urban wakeboard event with professional riders. For a \$7 gate fee, the wakeboard show will feature high flying acrobatics and amazing moves in a large wave pool constructed by Freshtip for the event. In addition to the wakeboard show, Sunshine Behavior will treat showgoers to a concert. Food vendors and a beer garden will be part of the celebration.

On Saturday, May 19, the fairgrounds will host a series of events leading up to the Anoka County Historical Society's annual barn dance, a major fundraiser for the Society's general operations. For the cost of only \$5, visitors gain all-day access to the fairgrounds and a wide variety of family oriented activities. There's an antique tractor pull, an 1860s rules base ball game, Tom Knapp, the shooting star, a living-history military timeline, a skateboard park, a classic car show, antique farm equipment from the Nowthen Historical Power Association, and much more. A full list of events and times can be found on pages 8-9 in this newsletter.

It all leads up to the Anoka County Historical Society's fourth annual Barn Dance. This is the major fund raising event for this Historical Society and we want the large number of people at the fairgrounds to participate in our silent and live auctions. This year, we'll also be raffling off a \$500 travel certificate. We've received great support from our sponsors, including our presenting sponsor, Friendly Chevrolet, and the Bank of Elk River, Corriveau Realty, Dan Frank, Greenberg Implement, M & I Bank, North Country Ford, Pierce Refrigeration, Village Bank, and Wells Fargo. Their support makes this fundraising event possible.

I hope you will attend the events at the Anoka County Fairgrounds. Its going to be a lot of fun and you don't want to wait another 150 years for us to do this again!

From the President...

By Ray Steinke

What am I doing here? How did I get here? I keep asking my self these questions.

Thinking back to when I was in high school, this is the last position I would have ever seen myself in. I hated history. I would have wondered, "Why study the past?" My high school history teacher was stuck on the Roman Empire, so for four years, no matter what time period we were studying, he could bring in the Seven Hills of Rome.

So, I ask you. How did I become president of the Anoka County Historical Society?!

I guess it all started about ten years ago when I decided to trace my family tree. The hunt took me back to 1855 and Bethel Township. According to records, my great-great-grand mother and great-great-grandfather were the first couple married in the township and their son was the first white child born in Bethel Township.

Looking for family got me started looking at who, where, and when they were they here and why *here*? First white child in Bethel Township? What does that mean?

At this same time, I was the mayor of St. Francis, so I decided to look into the history of this city. Therefore, I came to the Anoka County History Center and joined the organization. Through the years, I've made extensive use of the resources here to help answer some of my family and city history questions.

When a seat opened on the Board of Directors, I was asked to consider filling it. My interest in history—based on family and my connections to the county and the city of St. Francis and not the Seven Hills of Rome—led me to accept.

From that acceptance, my involvement has grown until now I am the president of this organization during an incredible time—the celebration of the Sesquicentennial! For 150 years, the County of Anoka has existed, evolving and changing to meet the needs of the people who call it home.

I want you all to know that I lead by following. By that, I mean I am open to—in fact I encourage—suggestions from members and staff. I work with those I lead.

We have the 150th Anniversary of the County to celebrate this year. What project should we begin for next year? And the year after?

I look forward to working with all of you, our members. Bring me your thoughts and suggestions. We'll work

The Story of an Artifact

With Anoka County being established, county government began and a place was needed to conduct that business. The first county commissioners meeting was convened on June 30, 1857, in the hardware store belonging to one of the commissioners, Eli Davis. No business was undertaken except to move the meeting to the mill office of Smiley and Woodbury. One of the items of business conducted that day was a vote to receive proposals for locating county buildings.

The next mention of county buildings in the commissioners meetings wasn't until January of 1858 when it was voted that the legislature be petitioned to authorize the Commissioners of Anoka County to borrow a sum of money not to exceed \$15,000 at a rate of interest not to exceed 12% for the purpose of building a courthouse. They also asked to be allowed to issue bonds and raise taxes as necessary to pay the bonds. The first building built was the jail, bids were called for in April of 1858 with the completion no later than May of 1859. The "lowest responsible bidder" was to receive the contract.

At a meeting on December 17, 1858, Commissioner Dunn made the motion "the interest of the County of Anoka demand the erection of County Building as speedily as possible."

"Speedily as possible" did not quite work out as those early commissioners probably expected. Ground was not broken for a courthouse in Anoka County until about June 15, 1877. It was completed and tours given to the public of the new facility in February of 1878. The entire cost for the Anoka County courthouse, its "furniture, furnaces, architect, superintendent, extra, in fact everything, is inside \$20,000."

Part of the delay may have been due to the projected cost. There were those who thought the price too high. The *Anoka Union* newspaper reported a story in the February 10, 1877 issue. It said a local man was heard to mutter, "Build a courthouse; not by a d—d sight. My taxes are too high, already. I will never give my consent to have it built." It was afterward ascertained that he paid the exorbitant tax of 97 cents, and the building of a courthouse would increase his yearly tax about 3 cents. Then we reflected that those who pay the least tax are the ones who usually fight and work most against any needed improvement.

The location was another disputed issue. The February 7, 1877 paper contained a letter to the editor complaining about the location first chosen— "the lot is low and wet, and out of the way, or soon would be, if the city grows....It would soon be in a depopulated part of the city, mixed in with manufactories and surrounded by lumber yards and thus endangered by fire."

An opinion the other side of the coin in the same issue of the paper stated, "It is time Anoka awakened from her Rip Van Winkle sleep, and by putting up a building worth several thousand dollars proclaim to the outside world that her citizens have confidence in her future prosperity and wealth. Anoka never will be anything more than she is to-day, unless her people wake up to the realization that something has got to be done."

The first courthouse gave "the first and principal impression is solidity and convenience; these ideas are carried throughout in the design and finish and fail not to make a very pleasing effect; we have in fact a beautiful building," said the *Anoka Union* in February 1878.

The old courthouse stood in the center of the same block the current one occupies in 2007. It served until 1960 when it was razed to make room for the new building, what today is the courtroom section that faces Main Street. County population and demand for government services have bought a number of additions to the 1950s building though the years until the courthouse has evolved into the County Government Center that stands today.

That first courthouse was a much loved building and many photos exist of it today, some 50 years after it was torn down. Many people took souvenirs of the building as it was dismantled and some of those have made their way to the collections of ACHS. Among the stamps for the clerk of courts, the ledger books, and other office and business related items, are pieces of the courthouse itself, as pictured here.



A pair of locally manufactured Anoka County bricks from the first courthouse.



A spindle from a stair railing inside the first Anoka County courthouse

Eli H. Davis

Eli H. Davis was born in New York in 1827. By 1855, he was living in Minnesota and had opened a hardware store in Anoka about the first of August that year. The store stood on the east side of the Rum River.

The 1857 census listed Davis as living in the town of Anoka with wife, Lucelia. Another man, C.F. Davis also lived with them. Both Eli and C.F. were noted as born in New York and both were merchants. It is believed they were brothers.

Eli was the representative from the district that included the town of Anoka. Their first formal meeting as a board of commissioners was held on June 30, 1857 and began at Eli's hardware store, but they adjourned before any business was transacted. They reconvened the meeting at the office of the Smiley and Woodbury mill. That mill was located on the east bank of the Rum River just off the end of the bridge at what would become Main Street in Anoka. (The location of Anoka City Hall in 2007.)

Eli was chosen to chair the county board. The business the commissioners took action on that day included a vote to accept proposals for locating county buildings, appointing a sheriff, a county treasurer, and a coroner; and accepting the bond of S.T. Creighton for the Registers Office.

Eli served from that first meeting on June 30, 1857, to January 4, 1858. At the October 5, 1857, meeting, payment was approved for Eli's services as a county commissioner. He was paid \$12. Eli received a second payment at the November 5th meeting. His payment included expenses involved with the ballot boxes for the St. Francis Precinct as well as his services as commissioner—the total amount was \$2.70.

Davis served as the third postmaster in the town of Anoka in the 1850 and in January of 1858, he was appointed by the county board (of which he was no longer a member) as the treasurer for the county.

The hardware store was still in operation and Eli was running it according to the 1860 census. He was noted as a hardware dealer with a taxable real estate value of \$2,110 and a personal estate value of \$4,100. Eli was among the wealthy of early Anoka based on those estimates. The census also showed Lucelia and their six-year old daughter, also named Lucelia.

Eli took his family to Michigan and they were living in Lansing by 1870. Eli was again operating a hardware store. The Davis' had family in Michigan and by 1880, their household included Eli's mother-in-law, Jane Carpenter, and a baby niece.

The death record index for Michigan does not show a record for Eli, but in the 1900 census, Lucelia was listed as a widow, living in Lansing with her nephew, John Carpenter.

Silas Lum

Augustus and Nancy Lum added a son to their family in Mannsville, New York when a baby boy was born on October 30, 1829. They named him Silas. Little is known about Silas' early years, but it is believed he received some kind of schooling as he was an educated man by the time he went west to Minnesota. It was 1856 when Silas arrived in Grow Township to join what was becoming a thriving settlement.

Silas must have made his mark in the new community rapidly. When the territorial governor appointed the first three county commissioners, Silas was the man chosen to represent the district that included much of the eastern side of Anoka County, including Grow Township. The commissioners met regularly to establish a government for the county.

On October 5, 1857, payment was authorized for services rendered by the commissioners. Silas received \$16. He received another payment for his services on November 10th for his services and for mileage. Those two expenses totaled \$2.80.

Silas married Emily Thorndike, a school teacher from Champlin, in 1858 and the couple began their family a year later when their first son was born. The family eventually grew to include five children, four boys and a girl.

The first board of commissioners for Anoka County only served from June 30, 1857 to January 4, 1858. Three new commissioners met from January to November of 1858 when Silas again took his place at the county board table. Research is on-going to determine the pattern of changes on the county board as this second term Silas served lasted only until May 29, of 1858.

Silas and Emily continued to live on their farm in Grow Township. The 1860 census showed the taxable value of their real estate as \$2,000 with an additional \$500 in personal estate value. Silas was a farmer by occupation.

Exactly when Silas moved his growing family to Minneapolis is unknown, but Elizabeth was born there in September of 1879. The 1880 census listed Silas as a flour and feed merchant. In the household were sons Leon, who was a "student at law," and Clarence, who was apprenticing at marble cutting. The younger children and Emily were "at school" and "keeping house." Also in the household was a Swiss immigrant who was attending school and worked as a servant for the Lum family.

The Minneapolis City Directory placed the Lum family's address as 413 6th Street. The business of Foster and Lum was located at 309 Hennepin Avenue and the partners were listed as commercial merchants for flour and feed.

Silas died two days after Christmas in 1904 and was laid to rest in Minneapolis' Lakeside Cemetery. A family plot was purchased as eventually Leon, Clarence, Fred Elizabeth, and Emily all joined Silas.

Sometime after Silas' death, Emily went to live with their daughter, Elizabeth, in California. Emily stayed there until her death on March 26, 1930. She was 90 years old. The report of her death in the Anoka newspapers noted that she had been a teacher at the very first school in Champlin in the summer of 1855 and that her husband had served as an Anoka County Commissioner. A photograph of Emily appeared with the article. Emily's body was returned to Minnesota where she was buried beside Silas in Lakewood Cemetery.



Up To Date

Volunteer Opportunities at the Sesquicentennial Events

The many events on May 18th and 19th will require volunteers! Several groups of new volunteers from outside the historical society will be lending a hand. The ladies of the Philolectian Society will staff the ticket booths, and bank employees will help with selling sesquicentennial merchandise.

Opportunities are still available for helpers to help set up and clean up before and after the event, direct parking, and staff the information booths. The ACHS Barn Dance will require helpers to close down the silent auction. For more specifics, call Maria at 763-421-0600.

More than half sold!

The Sesquicentennial book, *Picturing Anoka County* is selling quite well and over half are already sold. These beautiful hard-cover books are filled with over 250 photographs taken throughout the county covering all 150 years. All sections of the county are represented in this book, from the largest community to the smallest, each has photos telling their stories.



The books are \$34.95 (plus \$2.27 tax) for those who are not members of the Anoka County Historical Society.

Members receive a discount, so the member price is \$29.95 (plus \$1.95 tax).

If you want a book mailed, please include \$3.50 for postage and handling.

Look for Picturing Anoka County: A Snapshot of History in a location near you!

The *Snapshot* exhibit features one historical photograph from each city and township in Anoka County as well as a handful of additional images of the community that is hosting the exhibition. Host locations are invited to add their own images to the exhibit if they choose.

A third exhibit is also available to travel to community festivals and special events.

May 15 to June 8 at Pine River Bank in Burns

June 1-21 at City Hall in Lexington

June 19 to July 6 at Northtown Mall in Blaine

July 16 to August 6 at Main Street Bank, then to St. Genevieve's

Catholic Church in Centerville

August 1-21 at the Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts in Fridley

August 15 to September 7 at City Hall in Hilltop

September 4-21 at the Sandhill Center for the Arts in Bethel

September 17 to October 5, St. Francis Branch, Anoka County Library

October 8-29 at Columbus Elementary School

October 15-November 7 at Anoka S.T.E.P.

November 1-21 at East Bethel Senior Center, East Bethel

November 15– December 7, Kraus-Hartig VFW in Spring Lake Park

December 1-21 at the Chain of Lakes YMCA in Lino Lakes



Wagons, Ho!

ACHS is announcing a series of limited edition, hand-made wooden wagons to celebrate Anoka County's 150th anniversary. Artist Bob Johnson recently delivered the first of 150 wagons to sell at the Anoka County History Center and Library in Anoka.

These small wonders are selling for \$64.99 each with the proceeds going to support the Historical Society and the sesquicentennial celebration. Each wagon is individually numbered and comes with a certificate of authenticity. Johnson says the design will be retired at the end of this limited production and the drawings will be shredded after the 150th wagon is finished. Johnson based his drawings from photographs he researched for the project.

Each wagon is made from oak harvested in Anoka County and measures 16" long, 5 1/2" wide, and 7" tall. The Anoka County Sesquicentennial logo adorns the canvas of each wagon.

Wagon Number 150 will include horses, a pair of riders, as well as tools and furniture loaded in the back of the wagon, similar to the loads the early pioneers would have brought with them to Anoka County in the nineteenth century. This one-of-a-kind wagon will be auctioned off at the Historical Society's annual barn dance on Saturday, May 19th at the Anoka County Fairgrounds—just one of many events occurring the weekend of May 18-20 at the fairgrounds. See pages 8 & 9 for all the details!

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

All lists are current to April 13, 2007

YEAR END SESQUICENTENNIAL EXHIBIT DONATIONS

Katherine Allquist
James Andre

SESQUICENTENNIAL CORPORATE SUPPORT

Barna, Guzy & Steffen, Ltd.
Federal Cartridge
Northeast Bank

SESQUICENTENNIAL ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

Anoka-Hennepin Credit Union
MN Chapter 18 Telephone Pioneers
Telecom Pioneers/Mpls. Council

SESQUICENTENNIAL CITY SUPPORT

Anoka County
City of Columbia Heights
Columbia Heights Historical Society
City of Spring Lake Park

SESQUICENTENNIAL INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

Laurene Lambert

SESQUICENTENNIAL MILITARY TIMELINE SUPPORT

Coon Rapids VFW
Edward Cutter Post #102 American Legion

SESQUICENTENNIAL BIG BOOK SUPPORT

Shirley Christenson

SESQUICENTENNIAL AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY DONATIONS

Coon Rapids Lions Club
Moon Rock Café & Grill
Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

ARTIFACT DONATIONS

Paul Anderson
John A. Freeburg
Jane Hall
Sam Hermanstorfer
Patti Kurak
Julie Jones/City of Fridley
Richard Lockwood
Genevieve Meyer
Stacy Overby
Clifford Johnson
Darrel Roselan
Ms. J.V. Robidoux
Charles Sell
Brian Strand

BARN DANCE SPONSORS

The Bank of Elk River
Dan Frank
M&I Bank

GENERAL DONATIONS

Anonymous
Evelyn Bonde
Charles Boos
City of Lino Lakes
Coon Rapids Historical Commission
Suzanne DiPaolo
Edward Cutter Post #102
American Legion Auxiliary
Jerry Hall
Judy Hanna
Donald Hunter
Mary Kallinen
LeOra Kroger
Charles Lindberg, Jr.
Shirley Lynch
Dianne Pederson
Rodger Sundstrom
Steve and Agatha Straus
L. Irene Sundberg
Jeff Weaver

Welcome New Members!

Charles Boos (Spokane, WA)
Robert Brock (Anoka)
Jeannine Chamberlain (Anoka)
William Cox (Anoka)
David Gillund (Ham Lake)
Gary Greb and Laura (Ramsey)
Tom and Kathy French (Ramsey)
Marc and ReNee Hanson
and Bailey (Anoka)
Jerry Hall (Albertville)
Sally Hellman (Fridley)
Chris and Marlis Hovaldt (Andover)
Kenneth Johnson (Coon Rapids)
Mary Kallinen (Coon Rapids)
Randy and Jane Larson (Coon Rapids)
Marne Lemke (Andover)
Terry Luke (Ramsey)
Alicia Manley (Ham Lake)
Jerome and Marilyn Manley (Fridley)
Kay Marvin (Ramsey)
Thomas McAuley (St. Paul)
Hartley Medin (Coon Rapids)
Joanne Myers (Coon Rapids)
Jerry Newton (Coon Rapids)
Orrell Nilsson (Anoka)
Marlene Palm (Andover)
Matt Peterson (Burns Township)
Sue Watlov Phillips (Fridley)
Pamela Reeves (Forest Lake)
Tom and Mary Rowe (Lino Lakes)
LeeAnn Sanborn (St. Francis)
Daniel and Yvonne Schivone (St. Paul)
Steve and Agatha Straus (Ham Lake)
Ronald Sweezo (Andover)
Dede Thomas (Blaine)
Adeline Watson (Coon Rapids)
Suzanne Whetstone (Notre Dame, IN)

*The Anoka County Historical Society wishes to impart our sincere
condolences to the families and friends of*

Donald Montgomery, who died February 21, 2007.

He was the father of ACHS staff member, Patrick Montgomery.

ACHS member Ewen McClellan, who died March 15, 2007.

He was the husband of ACHS member Zelda McClellan.

Ernestine Skubitz, who died March 17, 2007.

*She was the mother of Frank Skubitz, and mother-in-law of
ACHS member and volunteer Kay Skubitz.*

We will remember their commitment to preserving history.

Three Cheers for Our Volunteers!

Anderson, Jan	556	Jarvis, Allie	5	Scottston, Barb	10
Anderson, June	7	Jarvis, Ashley	5	Sell, Charlie	271.25
Anderson, Marilyn	187.5	Johnson, Don	2	Serryn, Pat	15
Anderson, Roger	7	Jones, Tammy	2	Shaugobay, David	5
Ashwood, David	15	Jones-Kost, Bethany	117.5	Shields, Chris	4
Auchter, Marion	72.75	Kelly, Sean	5	Skogquist, Bjorn	7
Baldwin, Barb	7	Kempinich	9	Skogquist, Erik	12
Bearl, Darlene	163.25	King, Maria	16	Skubitz, Kay	252
Beckhoff, Barb	7	King, Michael	13	Smith, Vi	7
Bell, Dani	7	Kirchbaum, David	17.5	Spadgenske, Lois	14
Bell, Loralie	7	Knutson, Amber	15.5	Spadgenske, Wes	81
Bell, Walt	7	Kopka, Mariam	7	St. Sear, Bob	10
Berg, Dennis	4.5	Kurak, Patti	25	Steen, Ann	20
Bergling, Dick	6	Ladwig, Brianna	2.5	Steinke, Ray	35
Bochenske, Anja	7	Lampson, Michael	3	Stockhausen, Sharron	509
Bode, Byron	2	Langiewicz, Rachel	6	Swing, Karen	7
Boos, Doris	7	Legrid, David	6	Talbot, Marlys	22
Brazinsky, Alaina	8	Lerom, Kirsten	122	Theis-Mahon, Nikki	12
Breckenridge, Barb	16.75	Lerom, Susan	5	Thorsen, Sandy	15
Brodeen, Diane	7	Levens, Darlene	5	Thurston, Barb	32
Bruin, Alnora	7	Lexvold, Roberta	42	Vesley, Catherine	56
Bruin, Cary	7	Loader, Becky	19	Vosika, Linda	7
Bruin, Steve	7	Lundberg, Brianna	8	Vosika, Rosie	7
Bruin, Tom	4	Martin, Nancy	4	Walker, Jane	2.5
Burkholder, Barb	12	Mayer, Chesea	144.25	Wallin, Evonne	25
Burkholder, Carol	7	McArdle, Rod	8.5	Ward, Bart	703
Camp, Mary	5	McClelland, Brian	49.5	Ward, Ellen	252
Campbell, Diane	2	McDonald, Bonnie	17	Ward, Tom	35
Carpenter, Myron	4	Meneley, Fran	7	Watson, Amanda	7
Chevalier, Wayne	29	Meyer, Gen	22	Weisser, Tanya	77
Chorn, Michelle	45	Meyer, Lillian	7.75	Wendel, Mandy	13
Christenson, Shirley	9.5	Miller, Eloise	5	Wendel, Sally	7
Chutich, Marlys	7	Miller, Laura	7	Wendel, Vickie	64
Clark, Mary	2	Miscovic, Suzanne	4	Wetherall, Maria	7
Clark, Mike	39	Moeller, Caroline	5	Whalen, Michelle	4
Cleveland, Terri	46	Mundel, Linda	76.25	White, Katelynn	4
Connor, Sandy	8.5	Myslicki, Nick	277.4	Widmer, Rita	4
Czyscon, Larry	5	Nigh, Cassandra	1	Woizeschke, Ernie	10
Elliott, Linda	348.75	Nigh, Chanelle	2.5	Woizeschke, Sharon	8.25
Elrite, Lucille	10	Nigh, Jim	8	Wreh, Emmanuel	15
Erickson, Debbie	2	Nigh, Lavon	7	Youso, Donna	7
Essling, Ann	24.5	Niles, David	7	Zarling, Carolyn	6
Estby, Laura	10	Norton, Joe	589	Zarling, Daniel	1
Eye, Julie	46	Overby, Stacy	7	Ziegler, Lester	78.5
Frank, Dan	31	Paulson, Lou	10	Ziegler, Shirley	11.5
Frank, Judy	39	Pelkey, Elaine	101.5		
Frank, Gary	10	Peterson, Joe	3.5		
Greb, Gary	136.5	Pierce, Mary	10		
Gustafson, Rande	52	Pierce, Paul III	7		
Hall, Amber	7	Rafferty, Gene	7		
Hanna, Judy	49	Redning, Annabelle	137.5		
Hanson, Renee	11	Redning, Jennifer	25		
Hardin, Glen	8	Redning, Paul	13		
Healy, Jessica	149	Redning, Samantha	16		
Hedlund, Yvonne	2	Rickert, Lynne	19		
Hermanstorfer, Sam	17.75	Roberts, Dawn	11		
Hershey, Dick		Sakry, Tammy	31		
Hetland, Amy		Saunby, Caleb	2		
Huber, Sandy	7		18		

Total hours: 7,272!

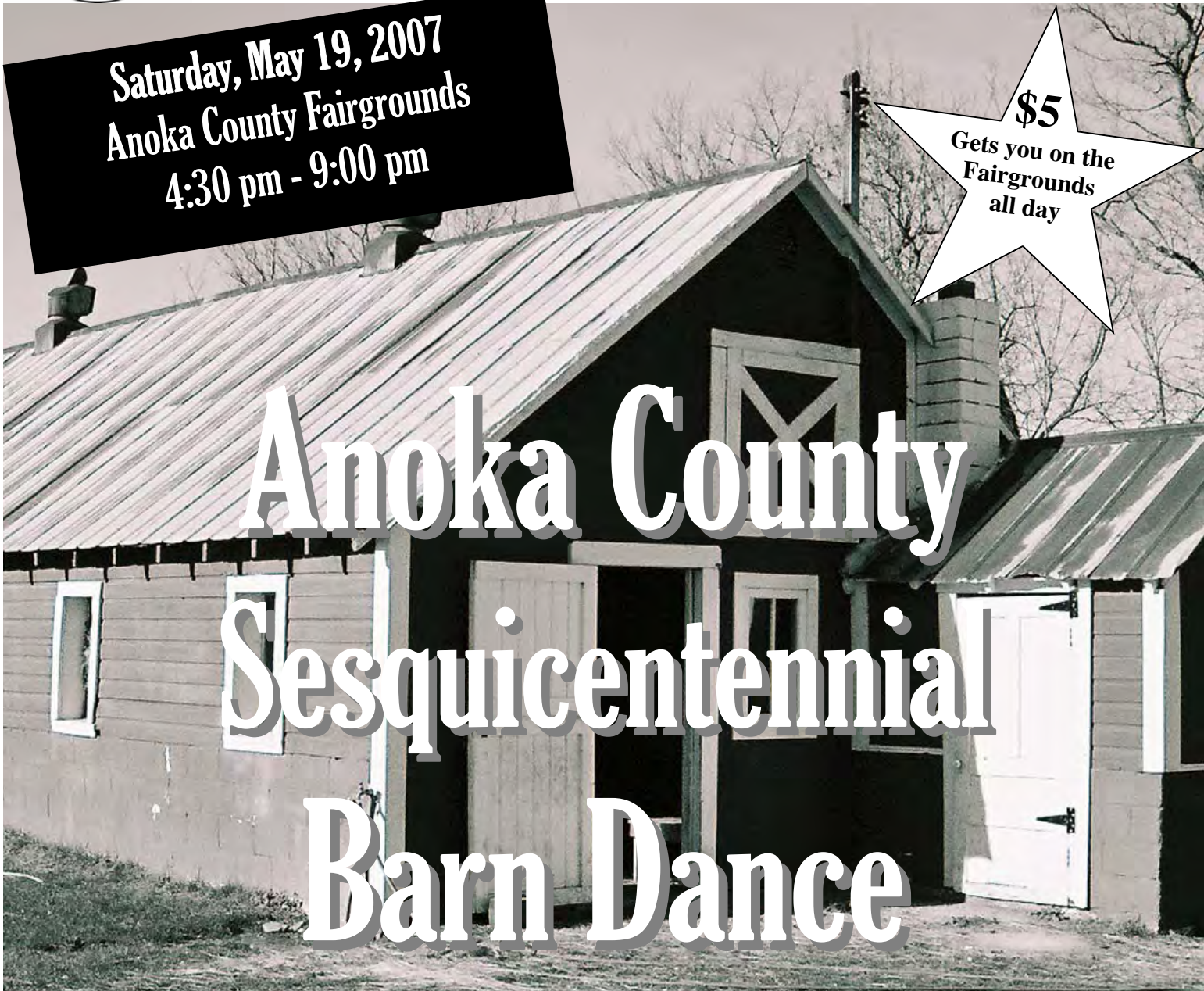
There is no way to express our gratitude for all of the support and effort our volunteers give us. Without our volunteers, we could never accomplish what we do to preserve history. We know there are many more hours given that were not recorded on the above volunteer calendar. Thank you for those, too!



Grab your partner and come on down for the Anoka County Historical Society's 4th annual Barn Dance

Saturday, May 19, 2007
Anoka County Fairgrounds
4:30 pm - 9:00 pm

\$5
Gets you on the Fairgrounds all day



Anoka County Sesquicentennial Barn Dance

Join us for food, fun, and dancing as we celebrate Anoka County's Sesquicentennial and raise funds for the Anoka County Historical Society. With silent and live auctions, and a raffle for everything from gift certificates from local merchants, to fine art, to a catered meal, there's something for everyone. Purchase food from many of the fine vendors and kick up your heels to the live sounds of Jack Norton and the Mullet River Boys. This year's barn dance is just *one* of the many events at the Anoka County Fairgrounds this weekend.

Event Proudly Sponsored By:



Dan Frank

Anoka County Sesquicentennial Merchandise Order Form

Item	Individual Price	Qty	Price
Limited edition model wagons	\$64.99 + tax (\$69.21 w/ tax)		
<i>Picturing Anoka County: 150 Years of Anoka County History</i>	\$34.95 + tax (\$37.22 w/ tax)		
<i>Stitches in Time: The Anoka County Sesquicentennial Quilt Pattern and History Book</i>	\$9.39 + tax (\$10.00 w/ tax)		
<i>Anoka County and Its Neighbors</i>	\$25.00 + tax (\$26.61 w/ tax)		
Sesquicentennial Golf Shirt [please circle size(s): S, M, L, XL, XXL]	\$20.00		
Sesquicentennial T-shirt [please circle size(s): S, M, L, XL, XXL]	\$11.00		
Sesquicentennial Coffee Mug	\$7.04 + tax (\$7.50 w/ tax)		
Sesquicentennial Afghan Throw [please circle color]: Navy or Sage	\$40.00 (\$42.60 w/tax)		

I will pick up my order

Please send to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Sub total:	
10% Member Discount:	
6.5% sales tax:	
Shipping:	
TOTAL:	

Shipping rates:

\$0—\$10.00	\$5.00
\$10.01— \$20.00	\$7.00
\$20.01— \$50.00	\$10.00
\$50.01- \$100.00	\$15.00
\$100.01 & up	Please call

Please circle method of payment (checks payable to Anoka County Historical Society)

Check Visa Mastercard

Credit Card Number: _____

Exp. Date: _____

3-digit code (back of card): _____ Signature: _____

Name on card: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Same as above

Questions?
Call (763) 421-0600

Please send payment and order form to:
Anoka County Historical Society
2135 Third Avenue North
Anoka, MN 55303

Celebrate 150 Years with ACHS May 15-20



Anoka County Sesquicentennial Wagon Train Travels Across the County May 15-20

The Wagon Train, led by Wagon Master Jon Olson, starts its journey on the eastern side of the county in Columbus, when it leaves camp in Coon

Lake Park on Wednesday, May 16. The covered wagons will roll through the Carlos Avery Game Preserve before returning to Coon Lake County Park to make camp for the night. Thursday morning, the group will head west and travel approximately 18 miles before making camp in Bunker Hills Regional Park.

Friday's journey will take them through Blaine and Coon Rapids before reaching Anoka, where the wagon train will arrive in front of the Anoka County Government Center at approximately 3:00pm. Waiting to welcome the wagon train, will be various dignitaries, officials, and sponsors.

After a short ceremony, the wagon train will travel to the Anoka County Fairgrounds, accompanied by the Wells Fargo Stagecoach and the Leinenkugel's Original "Bel-ony" Horses. Their arrival at the fairgrounds will signal the beginning of weekend of events at the fairgrounds, including a **dinner** and entertainment, featuring the band **Buggy Whip**. Tickets to the dinner and dance are available for \$16.

Early Saturday morning, the wagon train will leave the fairgrounds and travel west into Ramsey, before looping back and returning to the fairgrounds for its final night. The following morning there will be a 9:30am church service at the church on the fairgrounds, followed by a 10:30 brunch, before the wagon train breaks camp. Dinner and brunch tickets are available by advance purchase only. Dinner tickets include access to the fairgrounds on Friday night.

Friday Features a Wakeboard Show with the band *Sunshine Behavior*

There will be something for everyone at the Anoka County Fairgrounds. On Friday, May 18, Freshtip Design will produce an **urban wakeboard** event with professional riders. For a \$7 gate fee, the

show will feature high flying acrobatics and amazing moves in a large pool constructed by Freshtip just for the event. In addition to the wakeboard show, *Sunshine Behavior* will treat showgoers to a concert. Food vendors and a beer garden will be part of the celebration.

Saturday Features Events and Activities All Day, Leading to the ACHS Barn Dance

On Saturday, May 19, the fairgrounds will host a series of events leading up to the Anoka County Historical Society's annual barn dance.

For the cost of only \$5, visitors gain all-day access to the fairgrounds and a wide variety of family orientated activities. Starting at 10:00am, and running all day in the grandstand, there will be an **antique tractor pull**, featuring tractors from 1955 and older.

Also running all day are a **classic car show** and **vintage farm equipment** provided by the Nowthen Historical Power Association. At 11:00am, a **flag raising ceremony** will take place with a rifle squad provided by the Anoka County Vietnam Veterans Chapter 470 and an honor guard featuring representatives from Anoka County VFWs and American Legions.

The military's place in Anoka County's history will be evident in a **living history timeline**, which will feature costumed interpreters depicting encampments from different eras in the county's history.

School age children can visit the one room schoolhouse on the fairgrounds and get a taste of what a **1907 school day** might have been like.

The Anoka County **Sheriff's Office** will be at the events sharing their 150 years of history in the county. Already this year, the Sheriff's Office has issued Anoka County Sesquicentennial badges for each officer to commemorate this historic year.

A **cowboy crew** will staff the old post office and print shop on the fairgrounds. Visitors can see real life cowboys having fun and raising a good-time ruckus. Rumor has it that the strong box is in danger of being stolen—visitors will want to be on alert for this!

The **Ramsey Fire Department and Boy Scout Troop 204** will have activities and demonstrations taking place from 10:00am to 2:00pm. The Ramsey Fire Department will have a number fire trucks and other vehicles on display.

At 11:00, a **vintage base ball** game between the Quicksteps and the Silver Stars begins. Playing by 1860s rules, onlookers will recognize the game that has become the national pastime. It's three strikes and you're out under 1860s rules, but a ball caught on the bounce qualifies as an out.

The **Leinenkugel's Original "Bel-ony" Horses** will do a demonstration of their choreographed routines in the horse arena at noon and 2:00pm. Sponsored by Miller Beer and Grosslein Beverages, the horses are featured in parades throughout the Midwest.

At 1:00pm, **Tom Knapp, The Shooting Star**, will amaze onlookers with his accurate and outlandish trick shooting. Setting up on the east side of the grandstand, Knapp, who is equal parts P.T. Barnum and Wild Bill Hickok, always puts on a great show.

Costumed actors will present a **dramatic reenactment** of the one of the early meetings of the Anoka County Board of Commissioners at 2:30pm. The re-enactment will take place in the Barn Dance stage area.

At 3:00pm, the Anoka Philolectians will present a **vintage fashion show**. Men's and women's fashions from the last 150 years will grace the runway as models show off the historic clothing. As the audience watches, narrators will share the county's history and its link to the fashion styles of the time.

At 4:00pm, the **Hot Foot Stompers** will demonstrate square dancing techniques and welcome the public to the Anoka County Historical Society's annual **Barn Dance**. An annual tradition in its fourth year, this year's Barn Dance has been moved up from its traditional fall schedule to help celebrate the County's 150 years. An important fundraiser for the Historical Society, the Barn Dance features **live and silent auctions, and a raffle**. Attendees can bid on merchandise and services from local merchants. Items range from tickets to sporting events, to decorative and fine art, to travel packages and meals. The music of **Jack Norton and The Mullet River Boys** will entertain dancegoers.

At 9:00pm, **fireworks** displays will occur simultaneously throughout Anoka County in three locations. Visible from the fairgrounds, fireworks will be launched in Anoka near the Rum River Library. Blaine's National Sports Center will host a second display. A third display will be on the County's northern reaches in St. Francis at the Ponds Golf Course.



**Commemorate this 150th Anniversary
with a book or show off with your own
shirt and mug! See page to order
your keepsake of history!**

Schedule of Events

Tuesday, May 15 - Sunday May 20

Anoka County Sesquicentennial Wagon Train

Friday, May 18

3:00pm

Wagon Train arrives at Anoka County Government Center

6:00pm

Wagon Train BBQ Dinner (advanced ticket required)

6:00pm-9:00pm

Urban Wakeboard Event & Sunshine Behavior

Saturday, May 19

10:00am-2:00pm

Ramsey Fire Dept/Boy Scout Demos

10:00am-4:00pm

Antique Tractor Pull

Classic Car Show

Living History Timeline

1907 Schoolhouse

Cowboy Crew

Skateboard Park with Fallen Angels

11:00am

Flag-raising ceremony

11:20am (following flag-raising ceremony)

1860s Base Ball game

12:00pm

Leinenkugel's Original "Bel-ony" Horses

1:00pm

Tom Knapp, the Shooting Star

2:00pm

Leinenkugel's Original "Bel-ony" Horses

2:30pm

Re-enactment of the first Anoka County Commissioners' meetings

3:00pm

Philolectian Vintage Fashion Show

4:00pm

Hot Foot Stompers Square Dancing Demo

4:30pm

ACHS Barn Dance & Silent Auction with Jack Norton and the Mullet River Boys

9:00pm

Fireworks in Anoka, Blaine, and St. Francis

Sunday, May 20

9:30am

Church Service

10:30am

Brunch (advanced ticket required)

Anoka County Historical Society

2006 Annual Report

Executive Director's Report submitted by Todd S. Mahon

2006 was a fulfilling year for the Anoka County Historical Society. It marked the first year in which I served as the Executive Director. I'd like to take a brief moment to thank all of the board members, staff, volunteers, and supporters who have helped me establish myself and keep this great organization moving forward since I started. The successes that ACHS has had and will have under my direction are a direct result of each and every one of you.

Much of 2006 was occupied by the planning and fundraising for the 2007 Anoka County sesquicentennial celebration. This has proved to be a wonderful development opportunity for the Historical Society, both financially and in other areas. Because of our commitment to including all of Anoka County, we have been fortunate to be in front of many groups in the County and demonstrate our greatest assets. We have been to each city and township in the County and the reaction has always been positive and affirming. To know that we are respected and valued is not something that we take for granted.

This report is just a sample of our accomplishments in 2006. I'm proud to say that we pushed ourselves to new heights this past year, and look forward to even more success in 2007. ACHS represents a county with rich history, and we take seriously our commitment to preserving and sharing this history. Thank you to everyone who made 2006 such a wonderful year for ACHS. I hope you are as proud of these accomplishments as we are.

Anoka County Sesquicentennial Planning

There's much to look forward to in 2007, when ACHS leads the county-wide celebration of Anoka County's 150 years, but let us take a moment to look back on our 2006 accomplishments. Planning for Anoka County's sesquicentennial began in 2005 when Anoka County officials asked ACHS to take the lead in planning and executing a celebration. We decided to form the Sesquicentennial Executive Board to handle the fundraising and, act as the official planning entity for the events. Beneath the SEB is the 150th Task Force, which is made up of groups and individuals interested in holding their own events, planning their own projects, or work with ACHS on larger projects and events.

The goals for the celebration were determined in the first few meetings of 2005. They are:

- Fostering a sense of community** and county identity in the citizens of all Anoka County communities;
- Educating Anoka County's citizens** about their communities' history and instilling respect for our heritage;
- Inspiring our citizens** to seek greater knowledge of and understanding about our County's past and engaging them in collecting history for the future; and
- Creating festivity** around the celebration of 150 years of Anoka County's history.

ACHS and the SEB worked hard to include the entire county in this once-in-a-lifetime celebration. We went before the city councils and town boards of all 21 communities to tell them about the impending celebration and invite them to participate. We have also partnered with local businesses in the celebration.

Fundraising has been an important part of the planning, and the business community has been a major part of that. In 2006, we received commitments from local businesses to offset the printing and promotional needs. Anoka County made an generous initial contribution and we went to each city and township and asked them to collectively come together to match that contribution. We are proud to report that at the time of this report we received funds from nearly all of the County's communities.

Much of the celebration is taking place in 2007 with a four-day wagon train through the County, a weekend of events at the Anoka County Fairgrounds in May, and a major exhibition that opened in January. However, we got an early start on the celebration by introducing merchandise and publications that share Anoka County's rich history

In July, we produced *Stitches in Time*, a quilt pattern and history book. Experienced and first-time quilters can follow the patterns in the book to create a quilt that interprets the County's history and their own history. Select quilts will be exhibited at the History Center at the end of 2007. In December, we introduced *Picturing Anoka County: 150 Years of Anoka County History* to rave reviews. Authored by Sharron Stockhausen, this book has been a wonderful kickoff to the 150th celebration.

Looking ahead to 2007, ACHS and its partners anticipate a year-long celebration and hope to see all of Anoka County join in on the fun.

Fundraising and Organizational Development

Donations

We are so grateful for the support we receive from our friends, members and donors. Fundraising owes a great deal to momentum. When we are able to show potential donors that their contribution is part of a larger picture, they are more inclined to give. Donations build upon previous donations and encourage future ones.

In September we held our third annual Harvest Time Barn Dance fundraiser. The event was another grand success, as we netted over \$10,000 to benefit ACHS's operations.

2006 cash donations, amounting to more than \$46,000, came from all sources and in all dollar amounts. We sincerely thank everyone who gave to ACHS in 2006. Your contributions not only help the bottom line, but they also prove that we have value in your lives and in the community.

Membership

393 memberships renewed their commitment to ACHS in 2006. There were 61 family memberships, 77 individual memberships, 254 senior memberships, and 1 student membership. These members enjoy free admission to our exhibition hall, a subscription to our newsletter, and free and discounted prices to our programs. They also elect the board of directors and choose the board's vice president.

2006 was another strong year for gaining new memberships. We gained an astounding 84 new members; many of these new members joined us when purchasing a copy of *Picturing Anoka County*. Our mission and how we carry it out, is validated and strengthened when people who work with us choose to enroll as members.

Our membership revenues are one of our most reliable and growing sources of income. Many of our members contribute an additional financial sum in addition to their membership dues.

Volunteers

We received an incredible amount of support from our volunteers in 2006. Volunteer hours amounted to 7,272 hours—an increase of almost 900 hours compared to the previous year! That is the equivalent of more than three additional full-time staff members for our organization. 162 volunteers contributed to these totals. The fact of the matter is, not all of our volunteers report all of the hours they work.

Building and Facilities

Facilities

This past year we officially closed the capital campaign that raised funds for facilities improvements. Nevertheless, improvements to the building are still needed. In late 2005, ACHS began a project to repair the deteriorating brick and masonry on the exterior of the building. Not long into the project, the contractors discovered asbestos contaminated insulation behind the brick. With winter setting in, the wall was sealed up until a new course of action could be determined. IEA kindly donated its services to confirm the job site conclusion that asbestos was indeed in the insulation. Work began anew in the fall of 2006. There is still some work to finish in 2007.

2007 will mark our fifth year in the Anoka County History Center and Library. The facility is owned by the City of Anoka and ACHS has made a commitment to caring for the building's long-term future.

Circulating Library

Since 2002, ACHS has collaborated with the Anoka County Library to host a deposit collection in the reading room of the Anoka County History Center and Library. It is a partnership that we value, as it allows us to work closely with ACL and is one more service we can provide for county residents.

Approximately 750 adult and children's books can be checked out by any person with an Anoka County Library card. A fresh selection of books is guaranteed by a rotation of the collection every three months. ACHS also provides daily and weekly newspapers, a selection of magazines for reading room use, and basic tax forms. In addition, books and other library materials can be sent to the Anoka County History Center and Library for pick-up, and

any library materials can be dropped off at our location.

Over 2,000 books, tapes, and other library materials were reserved, charged, or renewed at our facility in 2006; a significant increase from the previous year. Use of our public Internet terminals increased an incredible 63% percent, with 3,460 users.

Preserving Your History

Events/Programming/Outreach

2006 was a great year for public programming at ACHS. We continue to emphasize sharing the entire county's history. Our staff and volunteers helped us bring our programs throughout the County and to add history to our growing archives.

Anoka County Communities

ACHS helped celebrate several important community anniversaries. In June we were proud to help with the planning and celebration of the 50th anniversary of Anoka's city hall. Program Manager Vickie Wendel gave a bus tour of the city and, ACHS staff helped edit and create panels that commemorate the building and past city officials. In August we were part of a rainy celebration of Hilltop's 50th year. We had a presence at community celebrations in East Bethel, Andover and Anoka, promoting the Historical Society and the County's sesquicentennial. Preparation for the book *Picturing Anoka County* brought us to many more communities to collect and copy photographs that depicted Anoka County's communities. It was a great year to make new contacts and strengthen our existing partnerships.

Anoka Heritage Home and Garden Tour

For the third year, we partnered with the Anoka Heritage Preservation Commission to produce the Anoka Heritage Home and Garden Tour. In 2006, the tour focused on Anoka's Christian Hill neighborhood, which straddles historic Third Avenue. Some of the oldest and most prominent homes in the city were featured on this year's tour.

Ghosts of Anoka walking tours

This was the biggest year yet for the Ghosts of Anoka tours. This walking tour of Anoka features spooky tales and a whole lot of local history and continues to grow each year. This year several new guides were trained and each put his or her own personality into the tour.

Monuments to Life cemetery tours

In 2006 we offered cemetery tours in Linwood (Victor Hill), Coon Rapids (Morningside), and Anoka (Forest Hill). These popular tours feature a guide and first-person living history interpreters.

Anoka County Holiday Ornament presentation

In December, Hilltop became the most recent Anoka County community to present ACHS with a unique ornament for our holiday tree. Each year, one community presents us with an ornament that speaks to its unique history and community. Ruth Nelsen, Hilltop's City Clerk, created a crocheted, heart-shaped pillow with the city's 50th anniversary on one side, and its unofficial motto "Little City With a Big Heart" on the opposite side.

As with everything we do, our public programs wouldn't be possible without the strong support of Anoka County and its people.

ACHS Artifact Collection

Approximately 1,500 artifacts have been updated or added to our cataloging database. We now have nearly 15,000 artifacts catalogued in total. Over 400 photographs were added to the database in 2006, meaning we now have over 7,400 photos that document Anoka County's history included in our electronic records. Over 2,500 archival items (documents, audiovisual media, personal papers, etc.) were added last year to the over 44,000 catalogued items, and 750 books were catalogued and arranged in Dewey order.

We continue to accession recently donated items as well as a back catalog of objects donated to ACHS over the last 74 years that have not yet been entered into the database. Members, current and former Anoka County residents, and many more continue to donate artifacts for our collection. This trust is taken seriously by ACHS.

Among the notable items donated in 2006 is an 1898 souvenir booklet for graduates of School District No. 51 (covering the Ham Lake area). ACHS received a circa 1850s wooden loom and warping reel belonging to the Ecklund family, who owned a farm where Cooper's Corner is today. The Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts generously donated an ornate 1890s era pump organ that once belonged in the historic Banfill-Locke House. Thanks in large part to the exhibit *Vietnam: The Veteran's Experience*, we received many items from Anoka County veterans with ties to the Vietnam conflict. These are just a few examples of the artifacts donated to ACHS in 2006.

The cataloguing and recording of our collections is a vital part of what we do at ACHS. Without this information about these pieces, found in an easy-to-access format, the objects become separated from their stories.

Research Library

370 people registered to use the research facility in 2006, an increase of nearly ten percent.

The ACHS library is a wonderful repository of historical photos, personal papers, microfilmed newspapers, birth records, census records, and much more. Genealogists, students, and others interested in local history use the collection. Staff and volunteers are available to help all researchers.

Exhibitions

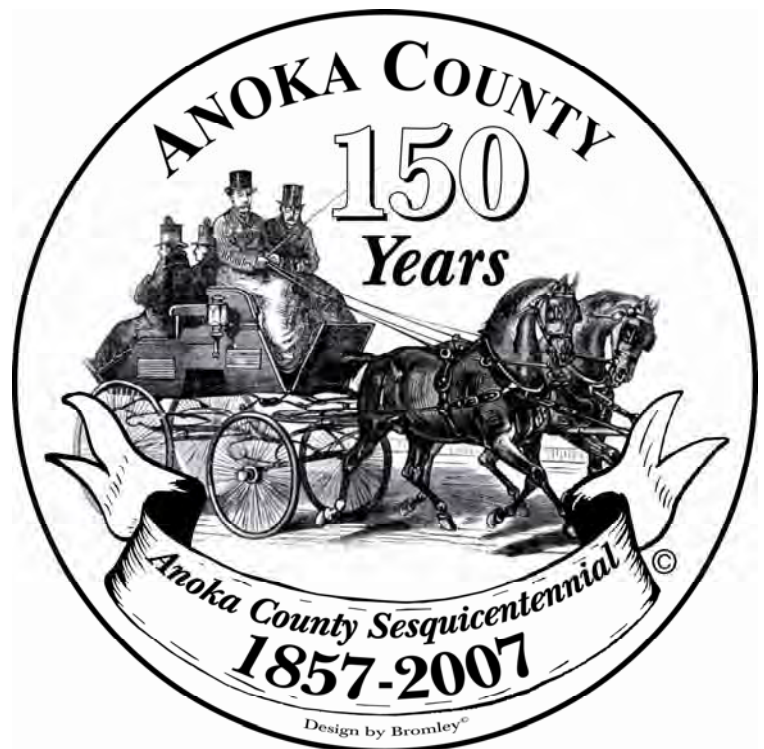
Interpretive exhibits are one of the most effective ways ACHS explore Anoka County's history. They allow us to highlight objects donated to our collection and demonstrate the county's history in new and exciting ways. There is no denying the impact of seeing objects and artifacts up close, knowing Anoka County residents used them.

In 2006, ACHS opened a new exhibit, "re-opened" another, and said goodbye to an exhibit that helped open the Anoka County History Center in July of 2002. In September, we opened the third and final exhibit in a three-year project to document the history of Anoka County's agriculture. With funding from the Anoka County Agricultural Extension Service ACHS, produced the exhibit *Winds of Change: Anoka County Farming, 1844-1900*. The exhibit examines the earliest years of harvesting the county's soils.

On Veteran's Day, the exhibit *Vietnam: The Veteran's Experience* re-opened to significant fanfare. The event, supported by the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 470, brought over 100 veterans and their families to see the new additions to the gallery. This powerful exhibit continues to heal as the word spreads throughout the County and across the region. In 2007, the exhibit was nominated for an award from the American Association for State and Local History. The award recipients will be announced in July 2007.

At the end of the year, we closed the exhibit *A to Z*. This exhibition was an original installation from our opening year in the History Center, though it was a gallery that, as intended, changed frequently. One of the consequences of changing the exhibit was finding storage space for some of the larger collections pieces that had never known a home outside of the gallery hall. With a little planning and a little "hard labor," staff and volunteers created new and creative storage spaces for these objects coming off exhibition. The closing of *Anoka County A to Z* was in preparation for a new photograph exhibit, which opened in January of 2007.

We continue to offer free exhibitions to the public in the lobby of the History Center. This past year we provided exhibits that featured winter objects, a preview of the 2007 sesquicentennial photo exhibit, an installation provided by the 4-H, and a feature on Christmas shopping.



ACHS 2006 Annual Report

Financial Report

BALANCE SHEET	12/31/2006*	12/31/2005	12/31/2004	12/31/2003
ASSETS				
Total Current Assets	339,747	306,702	268,286	329,100
Total Fixed Assets	<u>289,257</u>	<u>261,913</u>	<u>276,691</u>	<u>185,037</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	629,004	568,615	544,977	514,137
LIABILITIES & EQUITY				
Total Liabilities	2,120	3,736	4,866	1,373
Total Equity	<u>626,884</u>	<u>564,879</u>	<u>540,111</u>	<u>512,764</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	229,004	568,615	544,977	514,137
INCOME STATEMENT				
Total Support	303,572	276,168	260,600	268,529
Total Expense	<u>263,167</u>	<u>251,400</u>	<u>233,253</u>	<u>219,528</u>
NET	40,405	24,768	27,347	49,001
REVENUE SOURCES (Gross)				
Anoka County - general	107,120	103,000	100,000	112,529
Other grants	13,400	24,425	29,230	21,935
Donations	46,481	12,109	13,629	12,462
Endowment Contribution	-	855	1,835	5,078
Special Events	24,840	27,770	16,552	21,839
Library Services	80,000	80,000	80,000	75,796
Admissions	1,380	1,393	1,614	1,382
Fees	3,513	2,692	3,770	3,304
Memberships	5,642	6,055	4,420	3,429
Rental income	6,000	7,200	1,310	-
Interest income	4,485	6,306	8,240	10,775
Other income	<u>10,511</u>	<u>4,363</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL	303,572	276,168	260,600	268,529

**2006 figures are from ACHS's internal records and have not been subjected to an independent audit.*

Coming Events

May Lobby Exhibit

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) Bill Prugh from Ham Lake has an incredible collection of military items spanning nearly 150 years! He will be putting some of his favorite military items on display in May in honor of Memorial Day. Don't forget to have your card punched so you can collect your prize in December for having eight punches!

Anoka County Collects — Bill Prugh & Military

May 5

DIVA Days in Anoka

DIVA stands for "Delightfully, Inspiring, Vacation In Anoka" and features wine tasting, shopping, trolley tours, dinner, a fashion show, and lots more in the historic county seat of Anoka. For more information or reservations, call the Convention and Visitor Bureau, Visit Minneapolis North, at 1-800-541-4364 or 763-566-7722. Their website is: http://www.visitminneapolisnorth.com/diva_days.aspx

May 4, 5:00 pm and May 5, 10:30, 1:00 & 3:00 American Girl Teas

(Anoka County History Center and Library) This spring tea will feature Kit and the Great Depression era. The depression years were hard, but we'll have fun making a spring hat and tasting "Hoover Soup". Cost is \$7.00 for girls and \$10.00 for adults. **RESERVATIONS REQUIRED.** Call 763-421-0600.

May 18—20

150th Celebration!!

(Anoka County Fairgrounds) There is a whole weekend of events planned! See pages 8 & 9 for all the details!

June Lobby Exhibit

Anoka County Collects--Marlys Burman & Sock Monkeys

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) Yes, toy monkeys made from socks! These clever toys come in a wide array of sizes, shapes and styles and Marlys, who lives in Cedar, has more than 50 of them! She'll be displaying her favorites throughout the month of June. This is a collection you have to see to believe—and while you're looking, remember to collect another punch on your card this month.

June 2, 7, 16 & 21 7:00 p.m.

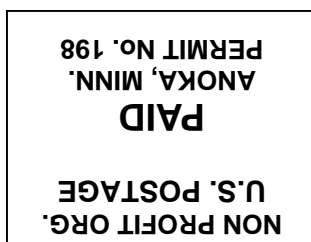
Ghosts of Anoka Tour

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 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. Offered on the first and third Thursday and Saturday of each summer month. May tours by appointment. Get your tickets early as we sell out of these popular tickets *fast!*

Ongoing in the Exhibit Hall

150 Photos for 150 Years of Anoka County History;

Vietnam: The Soldiers' Experience; The Winds of Change, Anoka County Agriculture from 1844 to 1900.



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. 37 No. 4

July-August 2007

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 Heritage Home & Garden Tour

To celebrate the sesquicentennial of Anoka County, the Heritage Home and Garden tour has gone county-wide for this one year! Homes, gardens and businesses from Burns, St. Francis, Andover, Ramsey, Anoka, Coon Rapids, and Fridley are featured on this unique tour. The businesses on the tour are offering special attractions such as Inez Kelsey's 1911 silk wedding dress on display at the Kelsey House (Portraits from the Heart), "Dr. Flora Aldrich" to visit with you at Colonial Hall (The Artique), wine tasting at Anoka County's first winery, special exhibits at the Banfill-Locke House and the District #23 Schoolhouse in Fridley. Another added treat for this year is the horse-drawn carriage to take you to tour stops on Third Avenue in Anoka! To tempt you and whet your appetite, here are a few of the special bits of history we'll share on July 15th! Tickets are limited, so don't wait too long to get your ticket for the tour!



1808 Third Avenue, Anoka

This beautiful Italianate house is believed to have been built about 1865, and it must have been built by someone who knew about Minnesota winters firsthand. The walls of the house were insulated with sawdust from the lumber mills. Alex Graham was the first person to call it home. He was a successful wheelwright and came to Anoka on the heels of the Civil War, about 1865. He married in 1867 and brought his bride up the same front steps as guests use today, as it is believed the porch is still the original from when the house was built. The interior woodwork, though refinished though the years, is also thought to be original.

The present owners, Tim and Erin Nigh, have been in the house for five years and have updated the plumbing and electrical, removed the old wallpaper and painted, replaced the boiler system, and updated the kitchen. They have also done a great deal of landscaping.

Goose Lake Farm and Winery in Burns is the only licensed and bonded winery in Anoka County! Though the Ohmans have owned the land for over 20 years, their winery operation didn't begin until 2004. The land has been farmed since the county was organized, but instead of traditional farm crops, the land is now used for orchards and vineyards. Much of the fruit used to make Goose Lake's wine is raised right on the property, making it truly an Anoka County wine. The Ohmans built their home in 1987 in what had been an open corn field and began working to establish their winery. After the house came other buildings and eventually their wine tasting room—which will be open for the Home and Garden Tour! Guests are invited to stroll through the gardens, pet the horse and the llama, and check out the progress of the fruit in the orchards before sampling some of the wines Goose Lake is fast becoming known for! While not a traditional home on the tour, this stop is sure to be a delightful interlude that won't soon be forgotten.



6760 213th Avenue, Burns



22940 Woodbine Street, St. Francis

This building has had many lives and will soon be embarking on yet one more! It was built as a Works Progress Administration project in 1935. It was a one-room schoolhouse and stood in Crown, Itasca County. By the 1950s, the building was no longer in use and was moved to St. Francis to become an "Annex" to the high school where students went to over flow classes in the building. In 1971, the building was moved again, this time only a few blocks. It became the city hall and municipal offices when St. Francis incorporated as a city. The city used the building until the mid-1980s when they moved out, leaving the building empty for over a decade. When the lot it stood on was needed for a new water tower, the school was slated to be torn down, but once more, it found a way to a new use. It was moved to its present site in 2002 and restored as a charming home, completed just this spring.

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

From the Director...

By Todd Mahon

On behalf of the Anoka County Historical Society and the Sesquicentennial Executive Board, I would like to thank everyone who participated in and helped to support the Anoka County Sesquicentennial celebration in May.

We were overwhelmed by the positive support the celebration received. On the weekend of May 18-20, we had over 1,300 people join us to commemorate the rich history of our community. Hundreds more watched as the Anoka County Sesquicentennial Wagon Train rolled through neighborhoods and down local streets on its four-day route through the county.

I'd like to thank our sponsors. Anoka County, Wells Fargo, Barna, Guzy & Steffen, Anoka Hennepin Credit Union, Grosslein Beverages/Miller Beer, Bromley Printing, the ABC Papers, BOB 106 Radio, and Avalon Fortress Security were all major contributors to the successes we've had. I hope the community knows the good works these organizations do. We were proud to have been associated with such fine names and hope they benefit from their association with us.

We also received great support from the Anoka County Fair Board and the volunteers and staff at the Anoka County Fairgrounds. They are always a pleasure to work with and are unfailingly helpful.

About the only thing that went wrong that weekend was the forced postponement of the fireworks displays. High winds and dry weather conditions caused us to cancel the displays that evening, but we are in the process of rescheduling. An announcement on the new date will be made soon.

We have so many people and organizations to thank we are sure to miss someone. Know that we thought of you all, but may have missed mentioning some of you, and for that we apologize.

Finally, I want to remind everyone that the celebration of Anoka County's 150 years continues throughout the year. The next major event is the county-wide Heritage Home and Garden Tour on Sunday, July 15. Also, *Picturing Anoka County: A Snapshot of History* continues its travels to every city and township in the county.

It has been a real pleasure celebrating and sharing the county's history. Thank you to everyone who helped make this happen and joined in on the fun.

From the President...

By Ray Steinke

Let me talk about this year's Barn Dance, held in May this year instead of September to take advantage of the Sesquicentennial Celebration.

First of all, I wish to thank Steve Braastad for stepping in as our auctioneer. Our scheduled auctioneer was unable attend at the last minute, so Steve stepped in and did a wonderful job for us. We had so many great items for the auction thanks to the generosity of our Anoka County community donors. There were 12 full tables of merchandise for the silent auction plus larger items along the wall. The auction brought \$5,272 to help preserve history. In total, the Barn Dance raised just over \$14,000 this year. That will go a long way in helping ACHS keep history.

The barn dance itself was fun to watch! I love to watch the dancers and listen to the music. I've heard *Jack Norton and the Mullet River Boys* a few times at the State Fair and our previous Barn Dances and I've always enjoy their music. The personality they bring to the dance is fun, too. Our guests really enjoyed the little set done as a sing-along with Jack joining them on the straw bales in the crowd.

With the barn dance being the evening part of the larger event of the Sesquicentennial celebration, I had the opportunity to check out many of the activities on the fairgrounds during the day. I was able to visit with members of the Minnesota 2nd Lt Artillery reenactment group and some of our current National Guard members. It was fun to compare the difference in their gear.

There were a lot things going on at the fairgrounds that day! The Wagon Train was one of the top attractions as they left the grounds to travel in the western part of the county and made a grand return about 4:00. Their camp was a neat place to visit!

Some of the things I enjoyed were the Old-time baseball game, the sharp shooter, and Boy Scouts playing accident victims for the Ramsey Fire Department demonstrations. (Did you see that helicopter come in?! That was pretty impressive!)

There was hardly time to get to everything and several people told me we should have had it go two days! Visitors could sit in the Wells Fargo Stage Coach, talk to the Sheriff's Office about its 150 years of history, see equipment and uniforms from WWI, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam, go to school in the 1907 school house, and lots more.

I hope you had as much fun as I did!

150 Years of Property Records & Property Taxes

Anoka County's first three county commissioners had a lot of setting up and organizing to do to get the new county up and running. One important office was the Registrars Office. It is possible that office may pre-date the county as during the very first county commissioner's meeting, the minutes reference the need to file bonds with the Registrars Office, indicating the office was already in operation.

The Registrars Office was the place responsible for recording property ownership of land within the county. The Auditor and Recorder would have worked closely with the Registrar of Deeds to prevent land disputes and manage land transactions, but one very important duty was probably higher on their list of priorities—taxes!

The early Anoka County government needed money to operate and pay for the services it provided for its citizens. After all, Sheriff James Frost expected a pay check for his work, as did the crews building and maintaining roads in the county, and taxes were the way to obtain the money the county needed.

Land needed to be mapped and surveyed to get a clear description of a piece property so it could be sold. The taxes collected from land owners helped to fill the treasury.

The Preemption Act of 1840 made it possible to settle "new" land even before it was surveyed or organized. Settlers who moved into an area before it was surveyed and lived there for about 14 months, could purchase 160 acres from the Government for \$1.25 an acre. If you did not, when the lands were offered for public sale, your land was not legally yours and it could be sold out from under you.

Preemption was how the very earliest settlers took up residence in Anoka County, but only on the east side of the Rum River. The west side was not open for legal settlement until after the Traverse des Sioux Treaty of 1851.

When Minnesota became a territory in 1849, one of the first acts of the Territorial legislature was to divide the territory into three counties: Washington, Ramsey and Benton. Everything east of the Rum River was in Ramsey County; everything west was in Benton County.

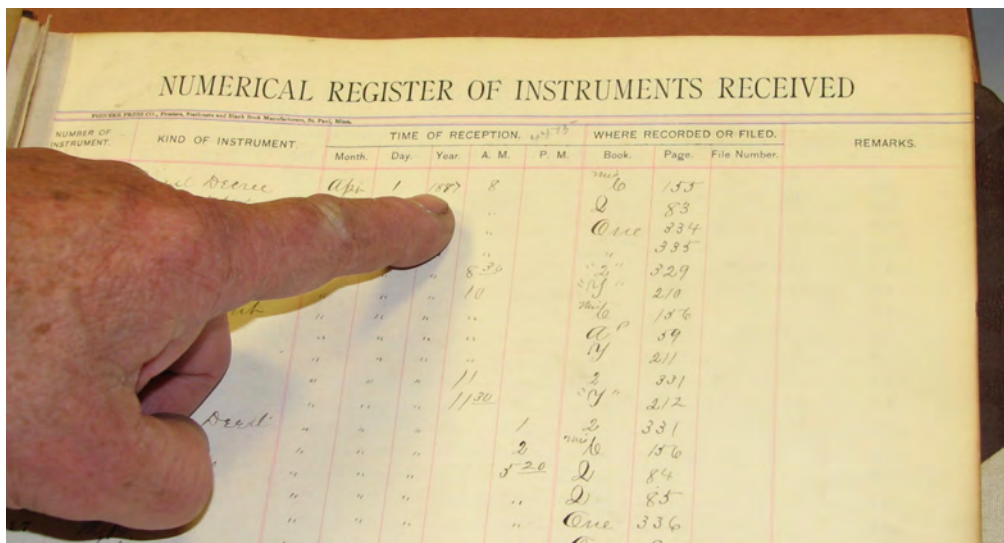
In 1856, Sherburne County was organized and the ground beneath our feet was reorganized as a part of Ramsey County for a short time—only a few months—until Anoka County was organized on May 23, 1857.

At the second commissioners meeting, held on July 6, 1857, the county was divided into three assessors districts. At the meeting on August 12, 1857, they voted to assess a tax of 4 1/2 mills.

That 4 1/2 mill tax would not bring the county any money unless people owned the land. Anoka County needed settlers and an act at the federal level provided a means for citizens to become land owners.

part of the Property Records and Taxation office in 1991. Maureen Devine is the current Division Manager.

Land records have gone from leather bound ledgers written by hand to sophisticated computer programs. Property within the county today is identified by a PIN (Property Identification Number) which is based on geographic location utilizing the section, township, range and 1/4 1/4 of the



The Homestead Act of 1862 made a bigger impact on Anoka County's settlement. That was the year the Federal government replaced the Preemption Act with the Homestead Act. It said any person at least 21 years of age and the head of a household could homestead 160 acres of government land, live on it and improve it for five years, pay a total of \$18 in filing fees, and the land was his. In 1864, the Union Army needed soldiers, so an amendment was made to the Homestead Act—same rules, but any time you served in the Union Army was deducted from your proving up time. That meant if you served three years, you only had to live on the land for two years before it was yours. Now you could take a mortgage on that land to buy better livestock, new equipment, or more land and expand your farm operation!

It was, essentially, free land and Anoka County was heavily homesteaded in the next decades, making it even more important to have access to good land records for ownership and taxation purposes.

The county's system for keeping property records has changed through the years even if the purpose for keeping the records has not. The Registrar of Deeds became the County Recorder in 1976. The auditor, treasurer, and assessor duties all became

parcel. It is used to identify property for tax purposes and to organize documents filed against each individual parcel of land in the county. The PIN makes it very easy to locate tax and title information associated with each property..

There are two kinds of property in Anoka County today—Torrens title and Abstract title. Torrens is an Adjudicated Title. This means all matters pertaining to the title are under the supervision of the District Court. Each property in the Torrens System is issued a Certificate of Title, which, with few exceptions, contains all current liens and encumbrances that affect the title to the property. Abstract property makes up about 70% of Anoka County land. This system works on proof of an unbroken chain of title back to a good root of title. Most Anoka County abstracts go back to the 1850s.

If you own property, get your abstract out and take a look. Abstracts are historical documents and can be very interesting. Write down the names from your abstract and use the resources in the ACHS research library to find out more about the people who owned your land before you. This is the "genealogy" of your property and some of the stories land can tell are fascinating!

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One of the largest outdoor Craft Fairs in the Twin Cities Metro Area.

9th Annual
ANOKA RIVERFEST
& Craft Fair
Saturday, July 14, 2007

9:00a.m.-5:00p.m. in historic downtown Anoka

- more than 150 crafters & artists
- free, live entertainment on 3 stages
- classic car show
- walking tours
- skateboard competition
- kids' activities

- free admission, free parking
- Anoka Superstar contest
- fishing contest
- food court
- free pontoon rides (10am-2pm)
- and much more



visit www.anokariverfest.com or call (763) 421-7130

The Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota Community will have teepees, displays, demonstrations, and information about the Dakota way of life on the lawn of the History Center during Riverfest!

What's with the raccoon on the Coon Rapids logo?

New Exhibit Opening At Riverfest, July 14!

Is there really a spring in Spring Lake Park?

From Roots to Roofs

Growth & Development of Anoka County's 21 Municipalities

This new exhibit explores the beginnings of the 21 incorporated communities in Anoka County and tells the story of how they grew from the original eight townships established when the county was organized in 1857. In addition to artifacts from the various cities and townships around the county, there are many photographs of town and city halls showing the growth and development of Anoka County. These photos and artifacts date from the earliest days of the communities to the present and tell some wonderful stories. One of the stories involves opening a safe in Burns with a blow torch—and the man who did it is a current Anoka County Commissioner!

Come explore some history and stories of the communities we call home!

Grow?! What kind of name is that?

Does the Heights part of Columbia Heights' name really mean it's higher?

Where's Johnsville? Or Soderville and Cedar? Why aren't they cities?

Did Andover get its name from a train wreck?

How did Nowthen get such a weird name?

Hilltop is more than a water tower?!

We have townships still?

This town wasn't always in Anoka County? Who moved?!
When?

4th Annual Anoka County Heritage Home & Garden Tour



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

Sunday, July 15th, 11:00 to 5:00 p.m.



Tour all sites for only \$12.00!

Anoka County Historical Society

Tour incredible homes and gardens throughout Anoka County on this special Sesquicentennial tour! Homes range in age from an 1800s log cabin in Burns to a 1950s Orrin Thompson rambler in Coon Rapids. Also included on the tour are several historic businesses that will share their history with some special attractions, such as: the wedding dress Inez Kelsey wore when she was married in the Kelsey home in 1911 will be on display; “Dr. Flora Aldrich” will be available to chat with at Colonial Hall; and the Banfill-Locke House will host an Anoka County photo display. **Ride a horse-drawn carriage down Third Avenue to tour three homes!** These special events will happen on the day of the tour only. And – every ticket holder has a chance to win great door prizes offered at each business tour stop! Tickets are available at the Anoka County History Center, (763) 421-0600, until July 13th. On July 14th, you can purchase tickets at the ACHS/HPC booth at Anoka’s Riverfest celebration from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Log Cabin, 7415 Old Viking Blvd Burns



St. Francis



1808 Third Avenue South, Anoka

Sites on the tour include:

22940 Woodbine Street, St. Francis — Log Cabin, 7415 Old Viking Blvd, Burns — Goose Lake Farm & Winery, Burns — Gardens at Nowthen Nursery, Burns — Kelsey House, 14853 7th Avenue, Andover — Plants & Things, 13745 Sunfish Lake Blvd, Ramsey — 1808 Third Avenue, Anoka — Ticknor Hill, 1625 Third Avenue South, Anoka — Garden at 901 Jefferson Street, Anoka — The Antique, 1900 Third Avenue South — Kristia Artista, 2005 Second Avenue North — Something Different, 209 East Main Street — 11331 Wren Street, Coon Rapids — Mary J.’s converted schoolhouse at 11748 Keon Blvd. and 11703 Keon Blvd., and Mary J.’s Brick House at 11801 Keon Blvd., Coon Rapids — Schoolhouse Museum, 611 Mississippi Street, Fridley — Banfill-Lock House, 6666 East River Road, Fridley.

Sesquicentennial Celebrations at the Fair!

The Anoka County Fair is offering two special categories in the Open Class Division for this Sesquicentennial year. If you have a photograph taken at any of the 150th events so far, you can enter it in the Sesquicentennial Photography competition. Think of all those photos to choose from! The wagon train, 150 Photograph exhibit opening, the Barn Dance, events at the Fairgrounds, the traveling exhibit, book talks—anything sesquicentennial as the subject can be entered!

The second category is needle craft and uses the quilt pattern book, Stitches in Time, created by Maria King and Vickie Wendel. Make wall hanging or a quilt using the patterns in the book and enter it at the fair—and in November, loan it to ACHS to display in our “wrap up” quilt exhibit! For more information on the Open Class entries, see the Fair’s website at www.anokacountyfair.com

To get you started on your quilt or wall hanging, here is a sample history and block from the book. Each block pattern was chosen to tell one facet of Anoka County’s history. Even if you don’t quilt, the book has good history!

The House That Jack Built Block

This block could be named the “House That Orrin Built” or the “House that Vern Built” as it tells the story of the rapid development that began in the middle of the county in the 1950s. One of the most dramatic building projects began in Coon Rapids.

In November of 1954, the Orrin Thompson Construction Company announced it was going to build 600 homes in Coon Rapids. Thompson had a reputation for building large numbers of “tract” homes in Bloomington and Brooklyn Park. “Tract” housing in the 1950s and ‘60s referred to the idea of a single builder laying out the streets and building many homes throughout that tract of land. To keep prices affordable, prospective buyers were given a limited choice of floor plans. There were a few options that could be added, but for the most part, the houses looked very much alike. Since the developments were done on a large scale, the streets, lots sizes, boulevard trees and landscaping were also quite uniform. The first Orrin Thompson homes in Coon Rapids were built in the plat called “North Dale” but was later renamed Thompson Park.

Part of the tract concept was to provide all the amenities a suburban community would need: a central water system, parks, a country club with a swimming pool, townhouses, and recreation areas. Small neighborhood stores were encouraged and schools quickly followed the new homeowners.

Orrin Thompson was successful in his plans and in 1958, the company was recognized as one of the nation’s outstanding builders. The firm sold more than 1,100 homes in the first eight months of 1958, an all-time record for this part of the country at the time.

The “Orrin Thompson era” in Coon Rapids lasted over 15 years and saw the completion of over 4,000 homes in the community.



Blaine’s big development boom came five years later than Coon Rapids. There, the builder was Vern Donnay. His announcement came in August of 1959: “The largest private building project ever undertaken in the Twin Cities area—a \$28,000,000 community of 2,000 homes in Blaine Village—has been launched by Vern Donnay Homes.” It began in a 240 acre plat called Oak Park that was divided into 800 lots, furnished with streets, city gas, storm sewers, and a water system. By April of 1964, Blaine was rated one of the fastest growing communities in the Twin Cities area.

While these may have been some of the biggest, they were not the first such planned developments in the county. Thomas Lowery had dreams of a carefully planned community when he became interested in Columbia Heights in 1893. His plans were spe-

cific: He envisioned only the best quality in stores and businesses. All the buildings had to be iron, brick or stone, two stories or more, and at least 22 x 60 feet in size. He promoted the idea that families could live in the healthy and wholesome environment of the country, away from the grit and possible corruption of the city while Father took Mr. Lowery’s street car to work. One piece of advertising read: “This is a bright, helpful, hopeful community. Each man is continually helping the other man with the result that we have never had any trouble with men out of work and sickness is practically unknown.” Who wouldn’t want to live in such a place?!

Another tract style development came in Fridley Township, but it was not as big as those to come in Coon Rapids or Blaine a few years later. Bronson-Erickson, Inc., a development company, was largely responsible for the start of Spring Lake Park as its own community. Credited with platting 75% of Spring Lake Park, Bronson-Erickson, Inc., bought tax-forfeited land and small farms that came up for sale. They marketed the lots, which were selling for \$15 to \$35 an acre and could be bought on a \$50 down payment and payments of \$6 a month at 6% interest. Their “tract office” was located at the junction of Highways 10 and 65.

Anoka County continues to grow as it reaches its Sesquicentennial year and developers are still changing the face of the landscape, though few with such dramatic impact as Lowery, Donnay, and Thompson.

The House that Jack Built is the pattern chosen to tell the story of suburbanization as each of the pattern’s squares are different, yet so very much alike.

Instructions for Completing The House That Jack Built Block

Step 1: Choose five fabrics, including one dark (C) and two contrasting medium colors or prints (D and E) One light fabric (A) which will become your background fabric and a single square of similar, but not identical fabric (B), for the center.

Step 2: Cut one 7 1/4 inch square. Cut it diagonally twice to make four triangles. Use fabric A.
 Cut two 4 1/2 inch squares and cut them diagonally to make 2 triangles. (These may require slight trimming.). Use fabric A.
 Cut one 4 3/4 inch square of fabric B for the center.
 Cut four 4 3/4 inch x 1 7/8 inch rectangles from each of the three contrasting fabrics C, D, and E.

Step 3: Assemble the striped squares first. Sew one C strip to D, then sew D to E. Repeat to assemble all four tri-color striped squares.



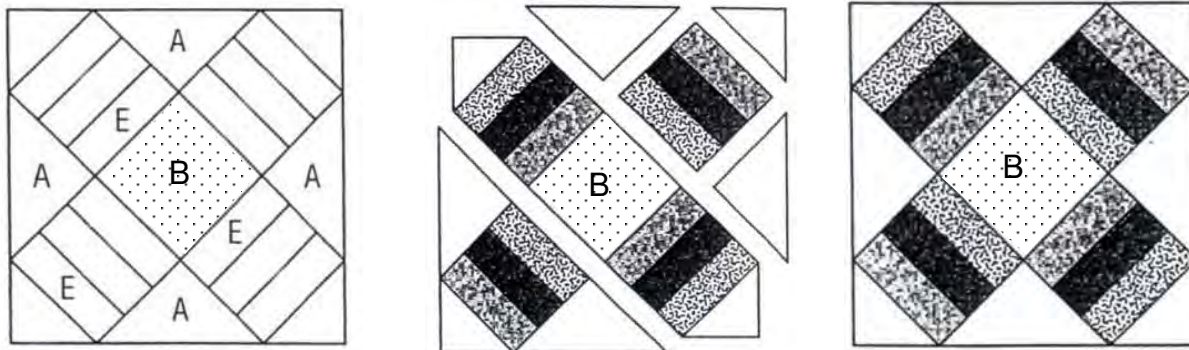
Step 4: Sew a striped square onto the center square. Repeat on the opposite side. On the outside (the side opposite the center) of each striped square sew a triangle from fabric A. You should now have a strip that is a triangle, a square made up of three colored rectangles, the center, another three piece square and another triangle.



Step 5: Sew another fabric A triangle onto the three colored square as you did in step 3. Then sew a larger triangle of background fabric A onto each side of the tri-colored square. You should now have a large triangle.



With right sides together, sew the triangle assembly onto the strip so that the tri-colored square matches the center square. Repeat the triangle assembly, and sew it to the opposite side of the center to complete your block.



That wasn't so hard, was it?! Go on to the next block and you'll find it is very similar.



Just for fun...

Everyone has heard of “Where in the world is Waldo?” so we decided to do our own version of “Where in the world” and we’re calling it “Where in the world knows Anoka County is 150?!”

As you travel, take pictures of yourself wearing the Sesquicentennial tee shirt or golf shirt by some identifiable place outside of Anoka County. Either digital or film prints are fine. Send them to Vickie at ACHS. Be sure to identify who and where the picture was taken.

We’ll post all the photos as they come in on a display board at the History Center. Stop by often to see where our news has been lately!

Pack those shirts and let’s see how far the news can travel before the end of 2007!

Don’t have a shirt yet or need another one? There are still some available at the History Center. For best choice of sizes, get one soon!

Send your photo (with identification) to Vickie@ac-hs.org or regular mail to 2135 3rd Avenue N, Anoka, MN 55303

Don Johnson is the first “where does the world know” photo! He is seen at left wearing his 150th tee shirt in Palmitopamba, Equador!

A Grand Celebration of History! May 15-20, 2007



Anoka County celebrated in style with the wagon train crossing the county, a barn dance, living history, historic costumes, food, fun, and lots of laughter and learning! Everyone from the County Commissioners to our visitors got the Sesquicentennial Spirit!



Top left—Wagon train arrival at the Government Center. Top right—Commissioners Lang, West and Berg. Bottom left—Doing the *Hokey Pokey* at the Barn Dance. Bottom right—An “arrest warrant” for Natalie Steffen. Center—relaxing at the wagon camp in Bunker Park.



Up To Date

Announcements and News

♦Just a reminder that the July 12 ACHS Board of Directors meeting will be at 6:00 p.m. The August 9 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.

♦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!

Vietnam: The Veterans' Experience Earns A National Award!

The American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) has awarded our Vietnam exhibit a Leadership in History Award of Merit!

The AASLH Awards Committee liked the very personal content of *Vietnam: The Veteran's Experience*. The rich content driven by personal narrative showed the complex interaction of Anoka County soldiers with a complicated foreign war and the division and tension in their hometowns.

Another aspect the committee was quite impressed with was the collaboration between ACHS and Veterans Services to help those who came to the exhibit and then realized they truly needed to talk to someone about their traumatic experiences. One jurist commented, "We tend to think of history as a frill and then an exhibit like this comes along and makes you remember that history is important."

The award will be presented at a banquet on the final night of the AASLH National History Conference, September 5-8, in Atlanta, Georgia.

Nine history projects in Minnesota earned AASLH awards from a total of 72 awards given for projects throughout the nation this year. Hurry in! ACHS's award-winning exhibit will only be open until November, 2007. For more about AASLH, visit www.aaslh.org.

Look for Picturing Anoka County: A Snapshot of History in a location near you!

The *Snapshot* exhibit features one historical photograph from each city and township in Anoka County as well as a handful of additional images of the community that is hosting the exhibition. Host locations are invited to add their own images to the exhibit if they choose.

A third exhibit is also available to travel to community festivals and special events.

June 15 to July 9 at Northtown Mall in Blaine

July 16 to August 6 at Main Street Bank, then to St. Genevieve's Catholic Church in Centerville

Calling all volunteers!

By Maria King

Summer is upon us and that means a flurry of activities. Lots of summer festivals are being held throughout the county and it is a terrific opportunity for ACHS to do some outreach. We are only limited by the availability of volunteers to represent us.

Ghost Tours are back this summer and in full operation! We'd love to train a few more new guides. These very fun tours take people on about a mile long walk through downtown Anoka while telling stories and history of the places you walk by. The tours are extremely popular and the more guides we can train, the more people we can accommodate on the tours! The training is easy and it's a lot of fun leading these tours!

Our annual Home and Garden Tour will take place on July 15th, but for the Sesquicentennial, it's going county-wide! We'll be touring homes and buildings from St. Francis to Fridley. ACHS has become rather famous for this fantastic tour and people come from great distances to walk through these wonderful homes. We'll need about 50 volunteers! Volunteers will welcome visitors, check their tickets and supervise their journey through the homes. A few additional volunteers will sell tickets, give the other volunteers a break, and generally help out where needed. This tour is an important outreach effort, as well as a successful fund raiser for ACHS. It's really fun to be a part of it!

The Anoka County Fair begins on July 24. No other outreach effort reaches as many people as the fair. There is a change this year in that the summer kitchen has been turned into a bunkhouse! ACHS will still staff the farm house and the front porch, but we have new neighbors!

We will use the front porch for demonstrations or performances. The farmhouse itself will feature old-tyme crafts and hand work and function as a walk through mini-museum depicting life on the farm, circa 1900. All of these great plans depend on volunteers! We need at least 6 people per day in half-day shifts. We especially want to hear from you if you have a skill that could be demonstrated on the porch such as whittling, crocheting, toy making, or crafts of any kind. (We currently have soap making, butter churning, and loom weaving.)

A volunteer with a computer background might enjoy linking photos with their corresponding record. This would need to be done at the History Center, and would take about 10 to 12 hours.

Ongoing projects require volunteers too! If you have an hour or two, and a willingness to help, I'd love to hear from you! Just call Maria at the History Center, and join the team. We're saving a spot for you!!

August 1-21 at the Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts in Fridley

August 15 to September 7 at City Hall in Hilltop

September 4-21 at the Sandhill Center for the Arts in Bethel

September 17 to October 5, St. Francis Branch, Anoka County Library

October 8-29 at Columbus Elementary School

October 15-November 7 at Anoka S.T.E.P.

November 1-21 at East Bethel Senior Center, East Bethel

November 15- December 7, Kraus-Hartig VFW in Spring Lake Park

December 1-21 at the Chain of Lakes YMCA in Lino Lakes

To our precious volunteers...

We owe many of our volunteers an apology and we sincerely wish to make it right. To do so, we are reprinting the list of 2006 volunteers and their hours.

In the last newsletter, something happened between the electronic uploading of the file to the printer, the faxing back and forth of the proofs, and final ink-on-paper newsletter. The column containing the number of hours was shifted up and/or down from the names those hours belonged to and gave a very skewed picture of our volunteers' true efforts. While it was right on our computer screens, the printed version came out wrong.

Again, we apologize for the mistake and hope you will continue to support ACHS with your time and talents.

Anderson, Jan	556	Hanna, Judy	52	Nigh, Lavon	7	Wendel, Sally	7
Anderson, June	7	Hanson, Renee	7	Niles, David	589	Wendel, Vickie	64
Anderson, Marilyn	187.5	Hardin, Glen	49	Norton, Joey	7	Wetherall, Maria	7
Anderson, Roger	7	Healy, Jessica	11	Overby, Stacy	10	Whalen, Michelle	4
Ashwood, David	15	Hedlund, Yvonne	8	Paulson, Lou	101.5	White, Katelynn	4
Auchter, Marian	72.75	Hermanstorfer, Sam	149	Pelkey, Elaine	3.5	Widmer, Rita	4
Baldwin, Barb	7	Hershey, Dick	2	Peterson, Joe	10	Woizeschke, Ernie	10
Bearl, Darlene	163.25	Hetland, Amy	117.75	Pierce, Mary	7	Woizeschke, Sharon	8.25
Beckhoff, Barb	7	Huber, Sandy	7	Pierce, Paul III	137.5	Wreh, Emmanuel	15
Bell, Dani	7	Jarvis, Allie	5	Rafferty, Gene	25	Youso, Donna	7
Bell, Loralie	7	Jarvis, Ashley	5	Redning, Annabelle	13	Zarling, Carolyn	6
Bell, Walt	7	Johnson, Don	2	Redning, Jennifer	16	Zarling, Daniel	1
Berg, Dennis	4.5	Jones, Tammy	2	Redning, Paul	19	Ziegler, Lester	78.5
Bergling, Dick	6	Jones-Kost, Bethany	117.5	Redning, Samantha	11	Ziegler, Shirley	11.5
Bochenski, Anja7		Kelly, Sean	5	Rickert, Lynne	31		
Bode, Byron	2	Kempinich, Teresa	9	Roberts, Dawn	2		
Boos, Doris	7	King, Maria	16	Sakry, Tammy	5		
Brazinsky, Alaina	8	King, Michael	13	Saunby, Caleb	18		
Breckenridge, Barb	16.75	Kirchbaum, David	17.5	Scottston, Barb	10		
Brodeen, Diane	7	Knutson, Amber	15.5	Sell, Charlie	271.25		
Bruin, Alnora	7	Kopka, Mariam	7	Serryn, Pat	15		
Bruin, Cary	7	Kurak, Patti	25	Shaugobay, David	5		
Bruin, Steve	7	Ladwig, Brianna	2.5	Shields, Chris	4		
Bruin, Tom	7	Lampson, Michael	3	Skogquist, Bjorn	7		
Burkholder, Barb	4	Langiewicz, Rachel	6	Skogquist, Erik	12		
Burkholder, Carol	12	Legrid, David	122	Skubitz, Kay	252		
Camp, Mary	7	Lerom, Kirsten	5	Smith, Vi	7		
Campbell, Diane	5	Lerom, Susan	5	Spadgenske, Lois	14		
Carpenter, Myron	2	Levens, Darlene	42	Spadgenske, Wes	81		
Chevalier, Wayne	4	Lexvold, Roberta	19	St. Sear, Bob	10		
Chorn, Michelle	29	Loader, Becky	8	Steen, Ann	20		
Christenson, Shirley	45	Lundberg, Brianna	4	Steinke, Ray	35		
Chutich, Marlys	9.5	Martin, Nancy	144.25	Stockhausen, Sharron	509		
Clark, Mary	7	Mayer, Chesea	8.5	Swing, Karen	7		
Clark, Mike	2	McArdle, Rod	49.5	Talbot, Marlys	22		
Cleveland, Terri	39	McClelland, Brian	17	Theis-Mahon, Nikki	12		
Connor, Sandy	46	McDonald, Bonnie	7	Thorsen, Sandy	15		
Czyscon, Larry	8.5	Meneley, Fran	22	Thurston, Barb	32		
Elliott, Linda	5	Meyer, Gen	7.75	Vesley, Catherine	56		
Elrite, Lucille	348.75	Meyer, Lillian	5	Vosika, Linda	7		
Erickson, Debbie	10	Miller, Eloise	7	Vosika, Rosie	7		
Essling, Ann	2	Miller, Laura	4	Walker, Jane	2.5		
Estby, Laura	24.5	Miscovic, Suzanne	5	Wallin, Evonne	25		
Eye, Julie	10	Moeller, Caroline	76.25	Ward, Bart	703		
Frank, Dan	46	Mundle, Linda	277.5	Ward, Ellen	252		
Frank, Judy	31	Myslicki, Nick	1	Ward, Tom	35		
Greb, Gary	39	Nigh, Cassandra	2.5	Watson, Amanda	7		
Gustafson, Rande	10	Nigh, Chanelle	8	Weisser, Tanya	77		
Hall, Amber	136.5	Nigh, Tim	7	Wendel, Mandy	13		

Total hours: 7,272

There is no way to express our gratitude for all of the support and effort our volunteers give us. Without our volunteers, we could never accomplish what we do to preserve history. We know there are many more hours given that were not recorded on the volunteer calendar. Thank you for those, too!

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

DONATIONS

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Carol Schouweiler
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Welcome New Members!

April 14 – June 15, 2006

Dorothy Anderson (Ramsey)
Faith Berghofer (Embudo, NM)
Ruby Bigelback (Oak Grove)
Eloise Graham (Santa Cruz, CA)
Gerald and Yvonne Graves (Fridley)
Jane Hall (Deephaven, MN)
Jean Hall (Oak Grove)
Marilyn Haubrich (Ramsey)
Marilyn Hoss (Andover)
Margaret Hughes (Forest Lake)
Mac and Laurie MacKechnie (Anoka)
Thomas Vicha (St. Michael)
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HOME & GARDEN TOUR SPONSORSHIP

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Mary T., Inc.
Nowthen Historical Power Association
Portraits from the Heart – Gay Hartfiel

They're going fast!



The Sesquicentennial book, *Picturing Anoka County*, continues to sell quite well and over half are already sold. These beautiful hard-cover books are filled with over 250 photographs taken throughout the county covering all 150 years. All sections of the county are represented in this book,

from the largest community to the smallest, each has photos telling their stories.

The books are \$34.95 (plus \$2.27 tax) for those who are not members of the Anoka County Historical Society.

ACHS members receive a discount, so the member price is \$29.95 (plus \$1.95 tax).

If you want a book mailed, please include \$3.50 for postage and handling.

Get your copy before the books are gone!

Wagons, Ho!

There are still a few of these precious little wagons left for sale! These limited edition, hand-made wooden wagons celebrate Anoka County's 150th anniversary. Artist Bob Johnson has already delivered the last of 150 wagons to sell at the Anoka County History Center and Library in Anoka.

These small wonders are selling for \$64.99 each with the proceeds going to support the Historical Society and the sesquicentennial celebration. Each wagon is individually numbered and comes with a certificate of authenticity. Johnson says the design has been retired at the end of this limited production and the drawings have been shredded! There will be no more of these wagons, so when they are gone, they are *really* gone! Each wagon is made from oak harvested in Anoka County and measures 16" long, 5 1/2" wide, and 7" tall. The Anoka County Sesquicentennial logo adorns the canvas of each wagon.

The wagons are indeed pieces of history you can own for your enjoyment or to give as a very special gift.



Coming Events

July Lobby Exhibit

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) David Gamble of Anoka has a wonderful collection of model airplanes and advertising memorabilia he will be sharing in the History Center Lobby for the month of July. Come see these miniature works of art and collect one more punch on your card!

Anoka County Collects — Airplanes

July 5, 7, 14, 19, 21, 7:00 p.m.

Ghosts of Anoka Tour

August 2, 4, 15, 18 7:00 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 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 14, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Anoka's Riverfest & New Exhibit Opening

The Anoka County History Center and Library. Stop in at the History Center to see the newest exhibit, *Roots to Roofs—Growth and Development of Anoka County's 21 Municipalities*. Stop by our booth on Jackson Street to get your Ghost Tour and Heritage Home tour tickets. The Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota Community will have teepees, displays, demonstrations, and information about the Dakota way of life on the lawn of the History Center. See page 4 for more information on ACHS activities at Riverfest.

July 15, 11:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Anoka COUNTY Heritage Home & Garden Tour

In conjunction with the Anoka Heritage Preservation Commission, ACHS will host this tour of homes and gardens from Burns and St. Francis to Fridley and Coon Rapids with more stops in between. Tickets are available at the History Center for \$12 to tour the homes. You can also purchase tickets at the Anoka Riverfest celebration on July 14th at our booth on Jackson Street and 2nd Avenue in Anoka. (See page 3 for more information)

July 24—July 29

Anoka County Fair

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

August Lobby Exhibit

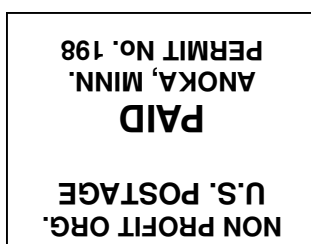
Anoka County Collects — Antique Scuba Gear

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) With the hot days of summer upon us, Jerry Lang will help us think cool thoughts with his collection of scuba gear. Imagine putting on a wool swim suit and donning some of this gear before your dip in the lake!

August 17—19

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!



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. 37 No. 5

September-October 2007

SERVING:

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

Death, Taxes, and CSI

The old saying about no one escaping death and taxes may not have been what was on the minds of our first Anoka County commissioners, but the subjects of death and taxes certainly were. One of the first offices set up to provide services to county citizens was the office of the coroner.

The idea of having a regular office for someone who investigates deaths dates back to medieval England. At that time, the name for the person assigned to the duty was “crowner” and it was simply a person who went out to verify how a death occurred. It was important in medieval England to know how a person died. Committing suicide was looked upon as a sin and considered a crime. If a person committed suicide, all their possessions, family, lands, everything they had, went to the King. The King’s “crowner” went to the scene of a death on behalf of the King to be sure that the death was not self-inflicted and collect the King’s due if the death was a suicide. The word eventually evolved into the term “coroner” and took on the current meaning of someone who investigates the causes of death.

The first coroner for Anoka County was Joseph Varney. He was appointed to the office on June 30, 1857, at the first board of commissioners meeting. Nothing in his past seems to lead to having any special skills that would make him a good choice for Anoka County’s first coroner. It is known he helped build the first dam on the Rum River in Anoka, built at least one house, and was a farmer. He had been born in Maine, married there in 1852, and moved to what would become Anoka County in about 1853. Their first child was born while they were living on their farm in Ramsey in 1854. Joseph has another link to the “death and taxes” connection. He was appointed tax collector for the township of Ramsey when it was organized, also in 1857. Records located thus far do not tell us how long Joseph served as coroner, but he did enlist to fight in the Civil War in 1862 and did not return to the job when he came home from the war.

The practice of investigating deaths continued, the office changing as the population of the county grew and technology began to play an ever-increasing role. The term “medical examiner” (ME) came about in the 1960s with the beginnings of forensic pathology. A TV show about a medical examiner helped raise interest when *Quincy, ME* began in 1976. That show ran until 1983 and gave the general public a “glamorous” view of investigating a death.

In reality, most often, the ME was the local doctor. Doctors acting as MEs were not paid much, if at all, for their ME duties, and they had to run for the office. Many times, counties in Minnesota did not have an ME because no one would run for the office. Conflicts arose when a family practice doctor was called to the scene of a death (accident, homicide, etc.) when he had living patients waiting for him at his office. The first responsibility of a doctor is to his living patients, so the investigation was often left to law enforcement. Few law enforcement people were trained as MEs and having the same people investigating as apprehending left little room for checks and balances.

Anoka County’s current ME is Dr. Janis Amatuzio. She completed her training at the Hennepin County Medical Examiner’s Office in the 1970s and became the first forensic pathologist for Anoka County. She has remained with Anoka County and is now the Chief Medical Examiner. Under her leadership, the Anoka County Medical Examiners Office has taken on a new structure where law enforcement and the ME’s office each have their own investigators. While law enforcement seeks to answer the “who did it” and “who is culpable” questions, the ME asks “what happened, who is the deceased, who is their family.” Both offices work together to complete the process of the death investigation.

Dr. Amatuzio is an advocate for history. She believes it is very important to remember the past and “use it to craft the path to the future. Everything we have today is built on the fine work of the past,” such as her predecessor, Dr. Joseph Wethington. She likes to quote Winston Churchill, who said “I may have seen farther than others because I have stood on the shoulders of giants.” She hopes her legacy to Anoka County will be building the bridge between the old system of the 1960s where a doctor divided his/her time between treating the living and the dead, to the current system where the ME, a forensic pathologist, and law enforcement work together with separate agendas to complete each death investigation.

(Continued on page 3)

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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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 Ray Steinke

As president of ACHS, I get to do some special things and I wanted to share one of my recent experiences. I spent time at the 2007 Anoka County Fair working at the Old Farm House. I was there on Friday. The most fun place in the house is working in the kitchen and challenging visitors to see who can figure out what is that round thing in the corner of the kitchen! And NO! I am not going to tell you what we have displayed there! You'll have check it out next year at the fair. We'll see you there, okay?

The greatest time for me, personally, was presenting the Century Farm Award to Catherine Elwell and family on Wednesday.

James T. Elwell established his farms on the border of Ham Lake and Blaine, known as the Oak Leaf and Golden Lake stock farms, respectively, in 1888. The two farms were connected by an eight-mile road that Elwell built at his own expense. The road was built over an air line and was made with a ditch on each side. The soil removed from the ditches was used to elevate the road. This method became known as the Elwell Grade and became a standard method of road construction in the marshy areas of the county. These types of roads made it possible to bring product to the markets.

Today the farm is owned by a limited family partnership made up of Catherine Elwell and her children. Catherine is the widow of the late Phillip A. Elwell, the grandson of James T. Elwell. Their sod farm, part of the original expanse of James T. Elwell's farm, is just south of the old Oak Leaf farm.

This is history preservation at its best and we are proud to recognize the Elwell Century Farm.

If you are, or if you know of a family that may have a farm eligible for this award, please let us know. The requirements are a continuous line of ownership for at least 100 years on 40 or more acres that are still farmed. Call ACHS for an application packet and we'll celebrate it with you at the 2008 Fair.

Second best was watching the fireworks over the fairgrounds that were held over from the Sesquicentennial Celebration because of the high winds. What a grand way to celebrate the fair and the Sesquicentennial!

I feel very honored to be in this position as ACHS president.

From the Director...

By Todd Mahon

An Uneasy Proposition

One of the many reasons I have spent my professional life working for historical societies and research libraries is my love of OLD STUFF. I think you know what I mean. I have an affinity for antique furniture, old books, and much more. You might have your own preference for art, antique silver, or anything else found in the collections of the Anoka County Historical Society.

I am not alone at ACHS in my passion for old stuff. Staff and board members each have items that they are drawn to in the collection. Yet we are always called upon to set aside those personal interests and remember that the goal is to benefit the Historical Society and Anoka County's history. This can happen in any number of ways. I remember in one of my first columns for the newsletter I wrote about our policies for how we collect items to store and preserve. In that column I wrote, "Any object that is considered for our collection must meet specific criteria to determine whether it will become a part of our permanent collection, or if it will be used as a hands-on object. If the object becomes a part of our permanent collection, (in the museum world we refer to this as *accessioning*) it must meet specific criteria. These criteria include having a direct connection to Anoka County, the object is in reasonably good condition, and that we have the space and resources to care for it."

The ACHS Board of Directors approved our first formal collections policy in August of 2003. The Historical Society was organized in 1934. That's nearly 70 years of taking in objects and artifacts without a focused and guiding policy.

But let me be clear, this is not to say that the first 70 years of collecting were a failure. Far from it. The staff did have a list of guiding principles, but even those were not developed until the 1980s. There are a number of pieces in the collection that, quite simply, do not meet the current criteria for accessioning. This brings us to an extremely uncomfortable subject for all museums: deaccessioning.

First, let's define the term. There are more delicate and manipulative ways to state it, but once you get down to the essentials, it is simply the act of removing something from the collection. The difference is in how and why the items are removed.

(Continued on page 4)

Death, Taxes, and CSI (Continued from page 1)

TV dramas, such as *CSI*, have brought a public awareness of what a medical examiner does. Most people know a death investigation has two parts: scene and circumstance, and that all deaths fall into one of four categories: accidental, homicide, suicide, and natural. In Anoka County, 90% of deaths, perhaps more, are due to natural causes and only 20 to 25% of deaths require an autopsy. All autopsies in Anoka County are done by a forensic pathologist and they are very seldom filled with the intrigue and glamour of the TV episodes.

Anoka County is now part of the “Multi-County Medical Examiners System.” Dr. Amatuzio is the Chief ME for eight counties: Anoka, Wright, Mille Lacs, Crow Wing, Sibley, Meeker, McLeod, and Todd. Each county has its own local investigators who work within that county, but report to Dr. Amatuzio. Her office is located at Mercy Hospital in Coon Rapids, but will be moving to a sophisticated modern facility in the city of Ramsey in 2008. What kinds of records are kept at the coroner’s office? The most publicly available record is a death certificate, though a few depositions, investigation notes, and testimony about a case may also be found there.

One of Anoka County’s well remembered crimes still has records in the ME’s office. In September of 1957, brothers Ronald, Roger and James O’Kasick, robbed a store in Minneapolis. During the robbery, they shot two police officers, killing one and severely wounding the other. The manhunt to find the brothers was noted at the time as being one of the biggest in Minnesota history and it ended in Anoka County’s Carlos Avery Game Farm.

On that fateful day, the brothers took a hostage, Eugene Lindgren, as they tried to make a get-away after being discovered by two Anoka County deputies. It took only minutes before law enforcement officers from the local communities, county deputies, and state highway patrol converged on the scene. After crashing their stolen car, they tried to escape on foot. Roger held the terrified hostage, threatening to kill him if the officers came closer. As the fugitives tried to run, Roger was said to have pointed his gun at Lindgren’s neck and fired, killing him. The officers in pursuit opened fire and when the shooting was done, Roger and Ronald were dead. James was alive, but had a self-inflicted bullet wound in his chest.

Rumors began that said Lindgren was not killed by the O’Kasicks, but from an accidental shot by a police officer. This was the angle taken by the defense attorneys when James came to trial for the deeds that ended that day in Linwood.

Newspapers reported on the case as experts testified the shot that killed hostage Lindgren was fired from “not more than two feet” and was from a .45 caliber weapon, the same kind of weapon that was found on Roger’s body. Notes on the case in the files at the coroner’s office state that the victim was killed when bullets from a “large caliber gun” shot through his neck and clipped his jugular vein. These same notes indicate the O’Kasick brothers were killed by multiple projectiles from a “riot gun.” The highway patrol officer who did the shooting used a “riot gun” that fired double-ought buckshot in a shotgun-like pattern. Notes call the projectiles that killed Roger a “pellet” which would be a description for a single piece of buckshot.

Wallace Miller, Anoka County’s coroner, was brought in to identify the holsters, bandoliers, and armor-piercing ammunition that was taken from the bodies of Ronald and Roger. He said he did not see any visual signs of powder burns or discoloration on the skin of Lindgren.

Eventually, the State Crime Bureau was brought in to help sort out the facts. Its report said a shell casing from Roger’s gun was found near Lindgren’s body. Reports from the officers on the scene said Roger was holding his hostage with his left arm and was said to have grabbed Lindgren by the back of the neck with the left hand just before the fatal shot was fired. Corroborating this evidence was the fact that the middle finger on Roger’s left hand had been partially shot away. The conclusion was that he shot off his own finger when he killed the hostage, the bullet going through Lindgren’s neck and striking Roger’s finger.

Newspaper reports on the testimony described how tests were conducted using salt pork because it was the closest to human flesh. A .45 caliber bullet was fired into the salt pork to see where the powder would fall and what kind of wound the bullet would make at various distances. The tests concluded that the fatal shot was fired from a distance of about two feet. At the end of the trial, the case was handed to a 12-person jury who took six and half hours to find James guilty of third degree murder and kidnapping. The forensic evidence—provided by state and county medical examiners—played a leading role in that verdict.

Today’s coroner—or ME—no longer seeks to learn the truth to get the King his due, but examines the body and the evidence to help families, law enforcement, and the public to know the truth of what happened. In this respect, the purpose of the office has not changed. What has changed is the technology and the professionalization of the office, providing a balance of examination and enforcement to ensure that the truth is not a mystery.

18. CAUSE OF DEATH (Enter only one cause per line for (a), (b), and (c))		19. INTERVAL BETWEEN ONSET AND DEATH	
PART I. DEATH WAS CAUSED BY:		Gen. Del., Anoka, Minn.	
IMMEDIATE CAUSE (a) <i>Murder wounds through throat</i>		Found Dead	
Conditions, if any, which gave rise to above case: (b) <i>copy</i>			
stating the underlying cause on line (c) DUE TO (c)			
PART II. OTHER SIGNIFICANT CONDITIONS CONTRIBUTING TO DEATH BUT NOT RELATED TO THE IMMEDIATE CAUSE GIVEN IN PART I (d)		19. WAS AUTOPSY PERFORMED? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
19a. DATE OF ORATION		19b. MAJOR FINDINGS OF ORATION	
MEDICAL CERTIFICATION		20a. ACCIDENT, SUICIDE OR HOMICIDE (SPECIFY): <i>Homicide</i>	
20b. TIME OF INJURY (Hour, Month, Day, Year)		20c. DESCRIBE HOW INJURY OCCURRED (Enter nature of injury in Part I or Part II of item 18.)	
		<i>Shot by criminals after being taken as a hostage</i>	
20d. INJURY OCCURRED WHILE AT <input type="checkbox"/> NOT WHILE AT WORK		20e. PLACE OF INJURY (e.g., in or about home, farm, factory, street, office, hotel, etc.)	
		<i>Fields</i>	
		20f. CITY, VILLAGE OR TOWNSHIP COUNTY STATE	
		<i>Linwood Anoka Minn.</i>	
21. I certify I attended the deceased living and that death occurred at <i>8:15 P.M. Found Dead</i> and that I list saw the deceased alive on _____ 19____			
_____ (base of my knowledge, from the cases stated)			

The medical certification of Eugene Lindgren’s death.

Monuments to Life Cemetery Tours

Explore the stories of those who reside in our “silent cities” during the Anoka County Historical Society’s *Monuments to Life* cemetery tours. It’s an evening filled with stories, traditions, characters, history and symbolism. All tours begin at 7:00 p.m. and go on rain or shine, so dress for the weather. Be prepared to do some walking and standing as we visit graves and hear the stories they have to tell. Tours last about an hour.

Thursday, October 4—Twin Lakes Cemetery, Burns

Saturday, October 6—Fridsborg Cemetery, East Bethel

Tuesday, October 9 Oakwood Cemetery, Anoka

Come to one or come to all three!

Tickets for individual tours are \$8.00 (non-members)

\$6.00 (with ACHS member discount)

Ticket Packages **3 Tours** for \$21.00 (non-members)

\$15.00 (with ACHS member discount)

Tickets are limited and must be purchased in advance!

You will receive maps and information with your ticket purchase.

Get your tickets at the Anoka County History Center, 2135 Third Avenue, Anoka,
or by calling 763-421-0600 with your VISA or Mastercard

An Uneasy Proposition *(Continued from page 2)*

Under our collections policy, here are the reasons why an item would be a candidate for deaccession:

- It does not have a direct connection to Anoka County or the history of the item is not general enough in nature as to be valuable to Anoka County interpretation.
- The history (or provenance) of the item is not known or documented.
- The item presents a hazard to the staff or other ACHS collections.
- ACHS cannot safely store and care for the item using accepted museum practices (This includes space, expense, maintenance, etc.).
- There are duplicates of the item in the collection.
- The item is in such a state of disrepair it loses its historic value.

These are, for the most part, objective criteria on which to judge an item’s value to the collection. Where most institutions run into trouble is how they go about deaccessioning. Organizations like ACHS hold a sacred public trust that is inherent with accepting and housing a community’s history. In the event that some of those items do not meet the above criteria, the organization has a responsibility to respectfully and openly go through the deaccessioning procedures. Again, we at ACHS have strong policies in place on how to proceed.

Why do I bring this up? For more than five years, we have been computerizing our collections. During this process we have found a number of objects that lack adequate documentation, do not have a connection to Anoka County’s history, or we have duplicates of the item. As this process concludes, we need to deaccession some of the items in our collection. I wanted to bring this uncomfortable process to our membership’s attention and ask for your support and understanding. You will be hearing more about this subject in the future, but if you have any questions or concerns about these matters, please contact me directly at (763) 421-0600 x104.

Those shirts are getting around!

Many places are learning about Anoka County when our members and friends have worn their Sesqui-centennial shirts as they have traveled. The furthest location submitted thus far is Tokyo, Japan!

This is our version of the “Where in the world is Waldo?” and we are calling it “Where in the world knows Anoka County is 150?!”

We have lots of room for more photos, so as you travel, take pictures of yourself wearing the Sesqui-centennial tee shirt or golf shirt at some identifiable place outside of Anoka County. Either digital or film prints are fine. Send them to Vickie at ACHS. Be sure to identify who is in the picture and where the picture was taken.

We’ll post all the photos as they come in on a display board at the History Center. Stop by often to see where our news has been lately!

Pack those shirts and let’s see how far the news can travel before the end of 2007!

Don’t have a shirt yet or need another one? There are still some available at the History Center. For best choice of sizes, get one soon!

**Send your photo (with identification) to
Vickie@ac-hs.org or
regular mail to 2135 3rd Avenue N, Anoka,
MN 55303**

The Story of an Artifact

Our *Vietnam: The Veterans' Experience* exhibit has been an incredible journey for everyone involved from the moment it opened in May of 2005 to accepting the American Association for State and Local History Leadership Award of Merit on September 8, 2007. The stories and artifacts that have been added to the collections will be here to continue telling this story long after the exhibit closes—which will be on Saturday, November 10, 2007. Planning is in the works to make the exhibit closing a very special event, so mark your calendars.

This means patrons have only two more months to take a last look at the exhibit before it comes down.



Signal Panel

Flight crews on planes and helicopters carried signal panels in case they were shot down. The bright colors could be seen by other planes flying over the area. The bright orange was for signaling in a jungle area; the hot pink for a sandy area.

This panel was brought home by Michael “Miguel” Newman, a souvenir of his time as a crewman on an Army helicopter in Vietnam in 1971. Miguel lives in Spring Lake Park.



Michael Newman, 1971



Letter Tapes

Putting a pen or pencil to paper was not the only way to send letters home from Vietnam. For those who had access to a tape recorder, it was popular for soldiers to send letter tapes home. Handwritten letters on paper were by far the most common, but letter tapes like those sent home by Jon Freeman (pictured at left) were played on a reel-to-reel tape recorder. Jon sent recordings of himself playing the guitar and singing on his tapes home to his family in Columbia Heights, something a paper letter could never do. Jon’s letter tapes have been copied onto CDs for preservation and access purposes and both are in the collections at ACHS.



Jon Freeman, 1968

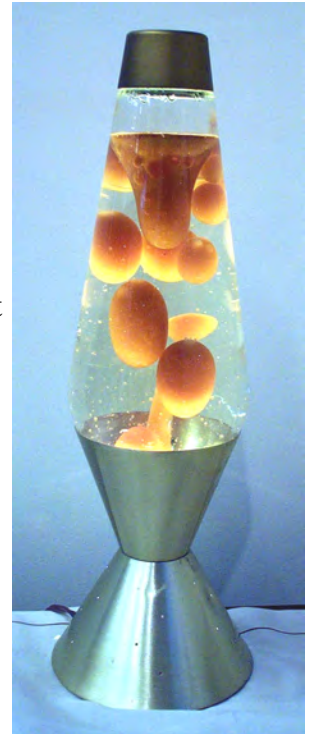
Lava Lamp

The hypnotic movement of the “lava” in these lamps made them wildly popular in the 1960s and early 1970s. When the light bulb heated the water enough to melt the “lava” in the lamp, the blobs began to move, changing and shifting forms continuously.

The constant change might be seen as symbolic of the rapid and intense changes going on in American society during the 1960s and 1970s.

This lamp was once a blue/green color, but has faded with time. It belonged to Dave and Elynn Niles of Andover. Elynn said they watched the lamp because, “*it was better than the black and white TV we had. It was years down the road yet before we could afford a—be still my heart—**color TV!!!!**”*

Though this lamp presents some unique preservation challenges, it has been added to the collections at ACHS to help tell the story of the 1960s and is certain to delight future generations. After all, in recent years, lava lamps made a comeback in popularity!



Announcements and News

◆Just a reminder that the ACHS Board of Directors meets at 6:00 p.m. on September 13 and October 11. Meetings are held at the History Center. Board meetings are open to the public and everyone is welcome.

◆Are you (or do you know of) a graphic designer who would be willing to help us design a new History Center brochure? We will provide the information, photos, and/or graphic pieces if someone can help design a good looking brochure to place in strategic locations around the county.

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

Women in Patriotic Service

Have you, or a woman you know, served in the military? Worked in the defense industry? Supplied support services to the troops?

We want to talk to you! When the Vietnam exhibit closes in November, the military gallery will change to tell the history of women who have served their country by their patriotic service—not just formal military service, but any defense-related industry, support for the troops, or other service. Service in any time period is fine, so Great-Grandmother's membership in the "Sammy Backers" club during WWI is what we'd like to know about, as well as women who are just home from Iraq or sending care packages to soldiers there now.

Please call Vickie at 763-421-0600 or email her at vickie@ac-hs.org to let her know about your "Women in Patriotic Service."

"Stitches in Time" Quilts

The Sesquicentennial quilt competition at the fair was superb! There were 17 quilters represented in the main category, and we know of at least three more who chose not to compete, not including Maria and Vickie. We are already looking forward to the exhibit in December that will feature these quilts and more. Remember, to have your quilt included in the exhibit, it must arrive at ACHS by November 1, 2007! We need time to get the displays built!

For those not familiar with the project, *Stitches in Time* is a book that combines the history of Anoka County with a "how to" book for quilters to make a heritage quilt. It contains traditional patterns and uses them to introduce a topic in local history. A short history on each topic is followed by the instructions for completing a quilt block. The book is designed for beginners as well as seasoned quilters. When finished, the quilt tells the story of Anoka County's development and the quilter's personal or family history.

All completed Sesquicentennial quilts are welcomed for display at the Anoka County History Center and Library that will open on December 4, 2007.

Books are \$10 each and available at the History Center.

Volunteers! We need you!

By Maria King

It's been a busy summer at ACHS and fall promises to keep us busy right up 'til snowfall!

All the sesquicentennial events have really counted on our volunteers to be successful and we thank each and every one of you for your help. Many of the same people have worked numerous events—causing me to worry we may burn them out! I do hope we offer enough variety and fun that we don't have burnout and that we can continue to count on our volunteers to help us in our mission to gather, preserve and share Anoka County's incredible history! I also hope we can bring in new volunteers to share the fun and excitement—call me to get started!

Of special note was our very different role at the fair this year. The "Cowboy Crew" took charge of the "town"—the row of shops beside the farmhouse. They fixed, painted, and cleaned up the shops, then gave the summer kitchen a make-over that turned it into a cowboy bunkhouse! It was quite charming and was very well received by fairgoers. We are excited to see such a great new use for the building! We interpreted history in the farmhouse and enjoyed seeing so many people at the fair.

UPCOMING EVENTS TO GET IN ON!

Linwood Family Fun Day on Sept. 8, Ramsey Happy Days on Sept. 15, and Farm Fest in Lino Lakes on October 7 are all fun events with loads of activities. We would very much like to have a presence at these community events if a willing volunteer can be found. In each case we need someone to staff a table to hand out literature and answer questions about the Historical Society. The volunteer may also be asked to sell sesquicentennial merchandise.

Volunteers are also needed to set up and take down the traveling photo display as it rotates around the county. It is only a 20-minute task for a person who is already in the area, but can take over an hour if a staff member has to drive out to do it.

The archival storage area will undergo yet another shuffle, as we are running out of space (again!) Additional shelving will be procured and volunteers are needed to help move items, both large and small, to their new home locations. Time and date will be announced once the shelving has arrived.

TOUR GUIDES & LIVING HISTORY CHARACTERS!

Those volunteers with a theatrical bent may want to consider becoming a tour guide for our Ghost of Anoka Tour. These popular tours are offered every first and third Thursday and Saturday of each month through October. A script is provided but storytelling talent is still a big plus.

Monuments to Life Cemetery Tours are very different from the Ghost Tours, but similar skills are required. Living history characters are "actors" who dress in costume, make an "appearance" at the grave of some significant person, and tell about his or her life in first person. Some volunteers have chosen to portray their own ancestors! Of all the programs we do, I personally think the cemetery tours are the most fun!

To volunteer for any of these events, just call Maria at 763-421-0600, or leave me a message, and I'll get back to you right away.

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

DONATIONS

AmeriPrise
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SPECIAL GIFT-BOOK PROJECT

Vietnam Veterans Chapter 470

SPECIAL GIFT—AASLH TRIP

Vietnam Veterans Chapter 470

Welcome New Members!

June 16 – August 17, 2007

Karen Acker (Champlin)
Kimberly Bergsten (St. Francis)
John Billstrom (Pacific Grove, CA)
Pat Branch (Centerville)
Mitch Brecto (Coon Rapids)
Wayne Chevalier (Ramsey)
William Erickson (Columbia Heights)
Steve Johnson (Coon Rapids)
Jim and Karan Murphy,
Patrick and Ryan (Anoka)
Ross and Sonja Olson (Anoka)
Carol Schouweiler (Eagan)
Joyce Swanson (Anoka)
Kermit Wellman (Ham Lake)

ARTIFACT DONORS

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Rebecca Joehum
Linda Lee Rodgers
Carol Bachman Schouweiler
Lorraine Soderquist
Renee Wirz

The Anoka County Historical Society extends our sincere condolences to the families and friends of:

Margaret Ramsey,

who died June 22, 2007.

She was the sister of ACHS Board Member Tom Ward, and AHCS Member Dennis Ward.

—

ACHS Member and Vietnam Vet

Frank Humphreys,

who died of Agent Orange-related cancer on July 30, 2007.

He was a good friend of many ACHS members.

—

ACHS Member

Roger Anderson,

who died suddenly at the lake on August 4, 2007.

He was the husband of ACHS member June Anderson.

—

Susanna Enloe,

who died August 10, 2007,

at the age of 100 years., 4 months.

She was the mother of ACHS member Lois Beach.

Coming Events

September 1, 6, 15, 20 at 7:30 p.m.

Ghosts of Anoka Tour

October 4, 6, 18, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 7:30 p.m.

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 accept VISA and Mastercard.

September Lobby Exhibit

Anoka County Collects—Douglas Stein and Owls

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) These feathered friends are all tiny in scale—on purpose, according to Doug—and few real feathers will be found in the display. Owls are a symbol of wisdom and a popular icon. See them in the lobby all this month.

September 8, 7:00 p.m.

Linwood Family Fun Day

(Linwood Town Hall) This family fun event is a Linwood tradition and ACHS will be a part of it this year with a special display and the traveling Snapshot of History Photograph exhibit. Open to the public and everyone is welcome.

October Lobby Exhibit

Anoka County Collects—Barb Scottston and Cookbooks

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) Some of Barb's cookbooks predate the standardization of measurements, so be prepared to measure out a "lump of butter the size of a hen's egg" when you bake with these! See them in the lobby all through October.

October 27, 1:00 p.m.

Grand Day Halloween Parade

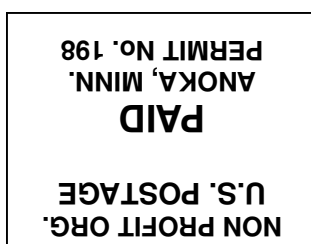
(Main Street, Anoka) Come wave and cheer as we celebrate Halloween with the City of Anoka, the Halloween Capital of the World! This is the last parade of the summer and has a reputation for being one of the largest community parades in the state.

October 4, 6, and 9, 7:00 p.m.

Annual "Monuments to Life" Cemetery Tours

The 6th annual Monuments to Life cemetery tour series. **Twin Lake Cemetery in Burns on Thursday, October 4th at 7:00 p.m. Saturday, October 6th, at Fridsborg Cemetery in East Bethel at 7:00 p.m.** The final tour in the series will be in **Anoka's Oakwood Cemetery on Tuesday, October 9th, at 7:00 p.m.** Buy a single tour ticket or save money with a ticket package for all three! See page 4 for more details.

SAVE THE DATES!! December 2—Civil War Christmas Celebration in Columbia Heights; December 4—Sesquicentennial Christmas Ornament and Quilt Exhibit; and December 7—Sesquicentennial Hangar Dance!



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. 37 No. 6

November-December 2007

SERVING:

Andover

Anoka

Bethel

Blaine

Burns

Centerville

Circle Pines

Columbia
Heights

Eden Prairie
Lumbus

Coon Rapids

East Bethel

Fridley

Ham Lake

Hilltop

Lexington

Lino Lakes

Linwood

Oak Grove

Ramsey

St. Francis

Spring Lake
Park



Together, Robert W. Johnson (left) and his son, Robert M. A. Johnson (right) have served as the Anoka County Attorney, combined, for nearly 60 years.

County Attorney's Office Dates Back to 1857

Here's an Anoka County trivia question: what is the name of the person who has served as the Anoka County Attorney since 1950? If you answered Robert Johnson, you are half-right. To receive full credit, you would need to indicate that Robert W. Johnson served from 1950 to 1982, and his son, Robert M. A. Johnson, has served from 1982 to the present. This remarkable length of service has jokingly given the Anoka County Attorney's Office the nickname of "the Johnson Law Firm."

As Anoka County's sesquicentennial year draws to a close, we wrap up our yearlong series on offices set up by the county's first commissioners in 1857. Recent issues of *History Center News* have examined the history of the sheriff's office, the registrar's office, the coroner's office, and the first three county commissioners. We now turn our attention to the office of County Attorney.

As with many county offices, the Anoka County Attorney has seen an expansion in its duties and responsibilities. However, its core mission today is similar to its earliest duties of acting as the legal counsel for Anoka County, and prosecuting civil and criminal cases.

As stated, a large part of the history of the Anoka County Attorney's Office is found with the father and son Johnson duo. Nevertheless, the office began in 1857, when an act by the county commissioners created the office. According to *For the Record: 150 Years of Laws & Lawyers in Minnesota* (1999), the first Anoka County Attorney was William McClure of Anoka. Charles Curtis, also of Anoka, followed him in 1860, and served until 1863. The following years saw Marcus Q. Butterfield and David L. Bugbee serve non-consecutive terms in the office. Little is known about McClure, but he was known to have left the county and lived in Illinois by 1880.

Curtis, who was born in 1834, came to practice law in Anoka a month before the county organized in May of 1857. In 1860, Curtis prosecuted the first murder trial in Anoka County, for an incident near Coon Creek. Anoka County Board of Commissioner minutes from 1861 shows Curtis earning \$350 per year.

Butterfield served as a First Lieutenant in the Eight Minnesota Volunteer Infantry during the Civil War. He was promoted to Captain after the

(Continued on page 11)

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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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 Ray Steinke

Please don't mind my ramblings...

Here we are almost at the end of the year 2007, and over halfway through my term as President of ACHS. This means we are at the end of Anoka County's Sesquicentennial Celebration year. For final highlight to the year, we will be having a hangar dance at the Golden Wings Museum. The date is December 7 at the Blaine-Anoka county Airport, from 5:30pm until 11:00pm. Most of the planes at the hangar are from the 2nd World War, so dress (if so desired) would be from the early 1940s.

Along with the Sesquicentennial year I have been highlighting a couple of the county communities each month on the cable station that covers most of the county. I do have three favorite communities, which are St. Francis, Bethel and East Bethel, due to the fact that's where my families started. But I guess I could say that about the whole county. We hope to get through all 21 of the communities. I gave up my time in October, so that Jan Anderson, who talks about museum objects, could have more time talking with the veterans of the Vietnam War and our exhibit of it.

Speaking of the Vietnam exhibit, it will be closing November 10, with a special ceremony during that day. There's more information about the closing on page 12.

Following the war theme, have you witnessed the Civil War Christmas? This year, the event will be at Murzyn Hall in Columbia Heights on December 2, from 11:00am to 4:00pm. If you have not, this is the year to do it. A couple of years ago I took part, it was fun and interesting. And don't forget the Christmas tree decorating at the Anoka County History Center on December 4, with Anoka County providing the tree topper this year. In addition to the tree topper presentation, we will open the sesquicentennial quilt exhibit and have an Anoka County Sesquicentennial postage stamp cancellation. I hope to see you there.

From the Director...

By Todd Mahon

Saying Goodbye to an Old Friend

After a 30 month run, ACHS will close the fabulously successful exhibit *Vietnam: The Veteran's Experience* on Saturday, November 10. Closing it will be more emotional than other closings.

What made this exhibit unique was its focus on the experiences of Anoka County veterans. From boot camp, to combat, to their return home, *Vietnam* took great pains to remove the politics from a very political subject. As Anoka County Commissioner and Vietnam Veteran Dennis Berg says, the exhibit gave Anoka County vets the pardon they never thought they would see in their lifetimes.

As you may already know, the exhibit received an Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History. One of the most significant reasons the exhibit was selected for the award was its success in community-building. The subject matter and its presentation helped heal many painful and psychological wounds for many vets. It offered them a forum to talk about their experiences and how it affected them. It was not uncommon to hear from family members that this was the first time they heard the vets tell some of their stories.

But this exhibit has helped ACHS as well. When the exhibit was in the planning stages ACHS staff had to go out into the community and find both artifacts and stories. This was achieved with the help of dozens of Anoka County vets, many of whom are members of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 470. Many of these men have become members of ACHS, volunteer here, and offer financial support. I have come to know them as members and count many of them as personal friends, and all of this came together because of this exhibit.

Now you understand why this will be no ordinary exhibit closing. I hope you will join me as we say goodbye to this important exhibit on November 10. Dr. Ernest Boswell will speak about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and members of the veterans community will symbolically turn off the lights at the end of the day.

The Story of an Artifact

Anoka County to Donate Sesquicentennial Tree Topper



Anoka County tree ornaments from various communities. Top to bottom: Columbia Heights, Centerville, Blaine, Fridley, and Lino Lakes.

When the Anoka County Historical Society was headquartered in Colonial Hall in Anoka, decorating the old National Register home for Christmas was always looked forward to by the Society and the community. In the early 1990s the City of Coon Rapids commissioned holiday tree ornaments as a fundraiser and donated one to ACHS all six years. At this point ACHS came up with the idea of having one Anoka County city or township donate a unique ornament each year, and in 1997, St. Francis continued the project. In each succeeding year, a new community has stepped forward and a unique tradition has begun.

With the sesquicentennial, we realized that the 2007 ornament needed to represent the entire county. We approached Anoka County about creating a one-of-a-kind tree topper. Commissioner Robyn West has spearheaded the effort, and on Tuesday, December 4, the County will present this Sesquicentennial Tree Topper.

As we anticipate what the topper will look like, it seems like a good time to look back at the 13 community ornaments given so far. Some are shown on the left, but the only way to see them all is to come see the tree in the lobby of the Anoka County History Center during the month of December.

1990-95 - Coon Rapids

The City commissioned and sold a series of ornaments as a fund raiser six years. Proceeds were used to purchase holiday decorations for Coon Rapids' city streets. Each design was chosen in a citywide art competition.

1997 - St. Francis

St. Francis found an artist to create a very special ornament for their city. Their glass, hand-painted ornament features their bandshell in Woodbury Park decorated for the holiday season.

1998 - Ham Lake

The loon floating on a lake the shape of a ham is the Ham Lake City logo. The ornament was designed and hand-made by a Century Farm owner in Ham Lake, John Ganter.

1998 - Anoka

The design suspended inside the glass ball is the logo from the City's 120th Anniversary celebration. Mary Jane Beberg, wife of Anoka's mayor in 1998, created the ornament.

1999 - Columbia Heights (shown at left)

The president of the Columbia Heights Library

Board, Barbara Miller, designed and stitched, this ornament. The scene depicts the streetcar and the development it brought to the area that grew into the City of Columbia Heights.

2000 - Bethel

Bethel's city council member, Arnie Sharber, was better known as Santa Claus for his many hours portraying the jolly old elf in stores and malls across the county. "Santa" wanted to have the biggest, shiniest, reddest ball on the tree!

2000 - Linwood Township

This birch-bark ornament honors the history and community spirit that prevailed during the Carlos Avery fire in the fall of that year.

2001 - Burns

The barn depicts the Sparre Round Barn, a landmark in Burns Township. It was designed and created by Lou Paulson, a life-long resident of Burns. The barn is on the National Register of Historic Places.

2002 - Centerville

Centerville's Santa is in a canoe in honor of the city's lakes, their Native American and French voyageur heritage, and their deep pride in the past.

2003 - Blaine (shown at left)

Blaine's "Aquatore" water tower is depicted with holiday trimmings. This unique landmark is one of only two towers using this design in the nation. The ornament was sculpted by artist and Blaine city resident Pat Krueger.

2004 - Fridley (shown at left)

The windmill is the symbol of the Fridley Historical Society and is a reminder of the agricultural roots of the city. This ornament was handmade by Fridley resident and artist, Charles Martin.

2005 - Lino Lakes (shown at left)

Balloonist Mary Alice Divine is from Lino Lakes, and she carried the city's logo on her balloon for many years. When the city was asked for an ornament, Mary used the fabric from her retired real balloon to create this tiny replica for the county tree.

2006 - Hilltop

To commemorate the city's 50th anniversary, this specially designed and handmade needlepoint pillow, with ribbon embroidery and beading, proclaimed Hilltop as the "Little City with a Big Heart."

Civil War Christmas in Columbia Heights

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 with Santa – 2:30 p.m.
- ❖ Talk to War Artists
- ❖ Decorate a Tree in the Camps
- ❖ Sing Period Christmas Carols



Murzyn Hall
530 Mill Street, Columbia Heights

Sunday, December 2, 2007

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

Admission: Adults - \$2.00, Children 6-17 - \$1.00

Children 5 and under are free

Bring a non-perishable food item for the SACA food shelf
and get a \$1 discount on your admission!

Sponsored by the Anoka County Historical Society and
The Columbia Heights Historical Society
For more information, please call (763) 421-0600



This project has been financed in part with funds provided
by the State of Minnesota through the Minnesota

Join the Anoka County Historical Society for an evening of dinner, music, and dancing as we cap off the momentous Anoka County Sesquicentennial year.

Bid on framed photographs used in the exhibition *Picturing Anoka County*, and tour the dozens of beautifully restored airplanes at the Golden Wings Museum.



The Anoka County Historical Society presents:

ANOKA COUNTY SESQUICENTENNIAL HANGAR DANCE



Featuring The Tom Ward Riverfest Jazz Ensemble

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7TH

5:30 TO 11:00PM

AT THE GOLDEN WINGS MUSEUM

AT THE BLAINE-ANOKA COUNTY AIRPORT

DINNER & DANCE TICKETS: \$20, DANCE TICKETS (AFTER 8PM): \$10

8 PERSON TABLES ARE AVAILABLE FOR \$150

MORE INFORMATION: (763) 421-0600, WWW.AC-HS.ORG

SPONSORED IN PART BY OPPENHEIMER & Co.



The Anoka County Historical Society seeks the public's help in finding photos like this image of the Bethel Brass Band for a future exhibit about Anoka County's music heritage.

Reflecting Anoka County's Music History

The Anoka County Historical Society is undertaking a most noteworthy project of compiling information concerning the musical history of Anoka County for the purpose of establishing a rotating exhibit in the Anoka County History Center and Library. However, since the field of music is so broad, information will be collected and shown according to music types.

- **Phase I** features community, school, and dance bands.
- **Phase II** concentrates on orchestras
- **Phase III** focuses on choir and vocal groups, and
- **Phase IV** examines composers, music educators, and instrument makers.

If you have any information on bands, past or present, please contact the History Center at 763-421-0600 or e-mail Todd Mahon at todd@ac-hs.org. A committee made up of ACHS board members and community members is especially looking for photos (which can be scanned and returned to the original owner), programs, uniforms, instruments, yearbooks, scores, etc. It is hoped that the first exhibit will open in July of 2008 to celebrate Minnesota's sesquicentennial. Let's band together and share our county's rich

Those shirts are getting around!

The whole world is learning about Anoka County when our members and friends have worn their Sesquicentennial shirts while they travel! So far, we have photos from five states and two foreign countries!

This is our version of the "Where in the world is Waldo?" and we are calling it "Where in the world knows Anoka County is 150?!"

We have room for more photos, so as you travel, take pictures of yourself wearing the Sesquicentennial tee shirt or golf shirt at some identifiable place outside of Anoka County. Do you go south for the winter? Pack those shirts and send us a photo from your "other" home! Either digital or film prints are fine. Send them to Vickie at ACHS. Be sure to identify who is in the picture and where the picture was taken.

We'll post all the photos as they come in on a display board at the History Center. Stop by often to see where our news has been lately!

Don't have a shirt yet or need another one? There are still some available at the History Center. For best choice of sizes, get one soon!

Send your photo (with identification) to
Vickie@ac-hs.org or
regular mail to 2135 3rd Avenue N,
Anoka, MN 55303

Picturing Anoka County: 150 years of Anoka County History



Picturing Anoka County books are still available. These are sold on a first come, first served basis and the number of books available is dwindling. Get your copy soon and remember, these books make great Christmas gifts! (They are easy to mail, too!)



150th Merchandise

Get the perfect holiday gift for the history fan in your life. Buy Anoka County Sesquicentennial merchandise.

Limited edition model wagons

Hand-made by craftsman Bob Johnson, these limited edition models are made from Anoka County wood and measure sixteen inches in length.

\$64.99 + tax



Picturing Anoka County: 150 Years of Anoka County History

By Sharron Stockhausen

The history of Anoka County is found not only in the author Sharron Stockhausen's words, but through the hundreds of photographs that capture the emotion and spirit on which the county was built. Hardcover.

\$34.95 + tax



Stitches in Time: The Anoka County Sesquicentennial Quilt Pattern and History Book

By Vickie Wendel and Maria King

Create you own piece of Anoka County history with this quilt pattern book that weaves the County's stories into the quilt block patterns.

\$9.39 + tax



Anoka County and Its Neighbors

By Jan Anderson

Developed as a curriculum tool for third graders, this book also makes a wonderful addition to any personal collection.

\$25.00 + tax



Sesquicentennial Apparel

Cotton T-shirts and golf shirts that feature the Anoka County Sesquicentennial logo. Golf shirts come in a warm, cream color, and the T-shirts come in light gray. Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL.

Golf shirts: \$20.00

T-shirts: \$11.00



Sesquicentennial Coffee Mug

Enjoy your warm beverage in these 8 oz mugs.

\$7.04 + tax



Sesquicentennial Afghan Throw

Curl up in this unique afghan throw. Blankets come in sage or navy, feature historic sites and landmarks of Anoka County, and measure 42 inches by 72 inches.

\$40.00 + tax



Order form on the next page.

Anoka County Sesquicentennial Merchandise Order Form

Item	Individual Price	Qty	Price
Limited edition model wagons	\$64.99 + tax (\$69.21 w/ tax)		
<i>Picturing Anoka County: 150 Years of Anoka County History</i>	\$34.95 + tax (\$37.22 w/ tax)		
<i>Stitches in Time: The Anoka County Sesquicentennial Quilt Pattern and History Book</i>	\$9.39 + tax (\$10.00 w/ tax)		
<i>Anoka County and Its Neighbors</i>	\$25.00 + tax (\$26.61 w/ tax)		
Sesquicentennial Golf Shirt [please circle size(s): S, M, L, XL, XXL]	\$20.00		
Sesquicentennial T-shirt [please circle size(s): S, L, XL, XXL, XXXL (M - SOLD OUT)]	\$11.00		
Sesquicentennial Coffee Mug	\$7.04 + tax (\$7.50 w/ tax)		
Sesquicentennial Afghan Throw [please circle color]: Navy or Sage	\$40.00 (\$42.60 w/tax)		

- I will pick up my order
 Please send to:
 Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Telephone: _____

Sub total: _____
 10% Member Discount: _____
 6.5% sales tax: _____
 Shipping: _____
TOTAL: _____

Please circle method of payment (checks payable to Anoka County Historical Society)

Check Visa Mastercard

Credit Card Number: _____

Exp. Date: _____

3-digit code (back of card): _____ Signature: _____

Name on card: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Same as above

Shipping rates:	
\$0—\$10.00	\$5.00
\$10.01— \$20.00	\$7.00
\$20.01— \$50.00	\$10.00
\$50.01- \$100.00	\$15.00
\$100.01 & up	Please call up

Questions?
 Call (763) 421-0600

Please send payment and order form to:
Anoka County Historical Society
2135 Third Avenue North
Anoka, MN 55303

Up To Date

Announcements and News

♦Just a reminder that the ACHS Board of Directors meetings are on the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. The next meetings are November 8 and December 13. All are held at the History Center. Board meetings are open to the public and everyone is welcome.

American Girl



Christmas Tea Party!

Bring your grandmother, your auntie, your daughter or your friend and share history together!

First, get one of *The American Girl Collection* series books. We'll be focusing on Kirsten for this tea. There are the Kirsten titles available through the Anoka County Library system. The novels are set during the 1880s.

On Friday and Saturday, **December 14 and 15**, come to the History Center for a tea party, discuss the story, and learn more about daily life in the 1880s. Activities will highlight experiences that would be familiar to Kirsten, and there will be opportunities to try your hand at the skills she would have learned. We'll explore Christmas traditions through time, and everyone will have a tea party! You'll be expected to stick out your pinky finger in much the same way as Kirsten would!

Wear your own 1880s costume or hat, and bring your favorite doll along to share the fun! We'll have hats and gloves to share. Activities are geared to girls age six to ten. Everyone is invited, but **space is limited, so get your tickets fast** by calling the History Center at 763-421-0600. **Tickets are \$ 10.00 for adults and \$7.00 for girls**, but your doll can have tea for free!

Anoka County Collects

Have you been collecting your punch each month? We know many people have been as they come to see what is new in the lobby exhibit each month.

The displays in the lobby cases have been changing each month to highlight a new collector. We've seen wonderful antique scuba gear, delicate tea cups, cuddly sock monkeys, fascinating model plane engines, fun cocktail shakers, impressive Civil War military gear, fascinating clocks, very unique owls, collectible Tins, and fabulous antique cookbooks.

Everyone who brought their card in to be punched had a great time seeing what was new and those who collected eight stamps in 2007 will be receiving a special Sesquicentennial prize on December 4th during our Holiday Celebration.

SECOND CHANCE!!!

If you didn't get in on the collectors game early enough or missed a couple of months on your card, we have a second chance for you to get a Sesquicentennial prize! Bring your card, even if it only has one punch on it, and enter it in the second chance drawing! Put your name, address and phone number on the back and drop it off at the History Center before December 4th. We will draw one lucky winner from all the "didn't quite get 8 punches" cards at the Holiday Celebration on December 4th and that person will receive a Sesquicentennial prize!

AND IN 2008...

Considering the success of the Collections exhibit, we are thinking about continuing it through 2008 if there are enough interested collectors to fill the cases another 12 times. If you have a collection you would like to display in the lobby for a month, please contact Vickie at 763-421-0600. Already, we have five collectors lined up, but we need seven more. If you have a collection to display, we will take a photo of you with your collection, do a brief interview about you and what you collect, and help set up the display. All collections loaned to ACHS will be in locked exhibit cases for security.

November will be a "heavenly" display of angels from Barb Breckenridge, and December will feature a variety of Nativity sets from Maria King.

Come see what's on display and enjoy everyone's history!



Ghosts of Anoka docents Darlene Bearl, Gary Greb, and Ann Steen. These volunteers and many more have helped make the tours a smashing success.

Ghost Tours Rule!

By Maria King, Volunteer Coordinator

October is for ghoulies and ghosties and long-legged beasties and things that go bump in the night! ACHS has been offering ghost tours of downtown Anoka for some time now, but during October we did little else! At this writing, there are 41 Ghost tours scheduled between October 1st and Nov. 3. Each tour averages 25 people, so this is an incredibly effective outreach! All of our tour guides are volunteers, so the tours are cost effective too!

Now we can also offer an indoor version of the Ghosts of Anoka tour, thanks to volunteer Don Stauffer, who photographed the houses for us. I've put the photos into a Power Point presentation, so that we can project them onto a screen as the stories are relayed. It opens a number of possibilities to take our tour on the road, and allows us to reach remote parts of the county, and the disabled. It also extends the season, so we can offer the tour during the cold winter months.

Another side-light to the Ghost Tours, is the additional stories that we accumulate in the parking lot after the tour is over, from participants who have stories of their own. Adding these stories keeps the tour fresh, and keeps 'em coming back for more!

Volunteer Opportunities

By Maria King, Volunteer Coordinator

The American Girl Teas are planned for December 15, and we will feature Kirsten because she fits so well with the sesquicentennial. We will look at Kirsten's work day and try our hand at butter churning, soap making, quilting, and kneading bread dough. We will even use clothespins to hang shirts on the clothesline. These once common household skills are all pretty foreign to today's little girls. Help is needed to show the girls how it's done! Come and share your own experiences with the next generation.

Ongoing projects, like the obituaries, the photos, and

the manuscripts, all need attention, and the frosty winter months are a perfect time to get out of the house and seek out a new volunteer experience. If you have a few hours or one afternoon each week, we can offer you meaningful volunteer opportunities here at the History Center. Or if you'd rather not travel, we have a few chores that could be done at home, like laundering our costumes, or sewing some doll outfits to be used as door prizes at the American Girl teas.

Just call Maria, and you'll be on your way to a fun and rewarding volunteer career.

Women in Patriotic Service

With the closing of our Vietnam exhibit on November 10th, a new exhibit is in the process of production. This time, our focus is not a specific time in our military history, but a group—women. Women have played a role in our county's military history since its organization in 1857. Anoka County women actively supported the military in the Civil War and, by the time of the Spanish-American War, Anoka County women were signing up to serve as nurses.

This exhibit will document those stories of women and their roles in military history through all 150 years of Anoka County's history. The exhibit is expected to open in December.

If you are, or know of, an Anoka County woman who has served in, or supported, the military, please call Vickie at 763-421-0600, or email her at vickie@achs.org to let her know about your "Women in Patriotic Service."

"Stitches in Time" Quilts

Did you make a Sesquicentennial quilt this past year? Let us help you show it off! All completed Sesquicentennial quilts are welcomed for display at the Anoka County History Center and Library in an exhibit that will open on December 4, 2007.

To have your quilt included in the exhibit, it must arrive at ACHS by the first week of November, 2007. Quilters will need to fill out a loan form AND include the story of their quilt before leaving quilts at the History Center. Loan forms are available at the History Center.

For those not familiar with the project, *Stitches in Time* is a book that combines the history of Anoka County with a "how to" book for quilters to make a heritage quilt. It contains traditional patterns and uses them to introduce a topic in local history. A short history on each topic is followed by the instructions for completing a quilt block. The book is designed for beginners as well as seasoned quilters. When finished, the quilt tells the story of Anoka County's development and the quilter's personal or family history.

It's probably too late to get a quilt finished for the exhibit, but quilt books are still available at \$10 each and available at the History Center.

County Attorney

(Continued from page 1)

previous holder of that position was killed. In addition to serving as County Attorney, Anoka elected Captain Butterfield mayor in 1881. He committed suicide in 1886.

Born in Vermont in 1840, Bugbee studied law in Iowa before moving back East to practice law in New York. He moved to Anoka in October of 1879 with his wife, Ermina, and was elected County Attorney the following fall.

Fast forward to 1950, and we find Robert W. Johnson of Anoka running for the office. Johnson had already distinguished himself as a judge and as an attorney in private practice. When he assumed the office in early 1951, the office consisted of him, and him only. In many ways, Johnson worked so closely with the commissioners that he was a de facto county administrator, according to his son, Robert M.A. Johnson. There were no other attorneys on the payroll. This would be the case into the 1960s, as a handful of attorneys were added to the office.

Among those early additional attorneys was Robert M.A. Johnson. He ran for County Attorney in 1982, after his father left the position to return to private practice. By his estimation, the office has roughly doubled in size since he took office.

When asked about the unique circumstance in following his influential father, M.A. says that his father gave a gift he did not appreciate for several years. R.W. did not set foot in the office for five years after he left the position. M.A. feels this gave him the opportunity to establish his own identity in the position and now realizes how his father helped him by not helping.

What does the future hold for the "Johnson Law Firm"? M.A. does have a son who works for the Hennepin County Attorney. When asked, M.A. smiled and said he didn't know what his sons plans were.

Contributions & New Members

Welcome New Members!

August 17-October 19

James Bailey (Charlotte, NC)

Tony Blake (Coon Rapids)

Matt and Debi Billing

(Andover)

Jon and Mary Caine (Anoka)

Douglas Hoppe (Blaine)

Wayne Meloche (Ramsey)

David and Kelley Scales

and family (Anoka)

Pam Sevre (Ramsey)

Ruth Grant

Sandra Karasch

Orval and JoAnne Leistico

Zola Malamen

Gene Merriam

Clarence Monegar

Leanne Patchen

K. Bruce Robinson

Virginia Stewart

SESQUICENTENNIAL SUPPORT

Grosslein Beverages, Inc.

ARTIFACT DONORS

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DONATION FOR NOWTHEN BOOKS SOLD AT THRESHING SHOW

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David and Donna Legrid

DONATION FOR PORTABLE MICROPHONE FOR GHOST TOURS

Jean Seaborg

GENERAL DONATIONS

Robert Akin

Dave Burns

Dan Frank

The Anoka County Historical Society extends our sincere sympathy to the families of:

Grace Ohnstad,

who died September 6, 2007.

*She was the mother of ACHS Board Member and
Past President Jan Anderson*

Evelyn Bonde,

who died September 10, 2007.

She was a member and frequent contributor to ACHS.

Barbara Wilhelm,

who died September 17, 2007.

*She was the sister of ACHS board member Terri Cleveland and ACHS member
Mary Jo Davich, and niece of ACHS member and volunteer Rod McArdle*

Coming Events

November 10, 1:00 pm—4:00 pm

Closing of Vietnam: The Veterans' Experience

Anoka County History Center and Library. Join ACHS and the veterans of our county in saying good-bye to this award-winning exhibit. The event will begin with a short talk about the impact of the war and its aftermath, followed by a discussion. At 3:00, VVA Chapter #470 will post the colors. There will be a few brief remarks about the legacy of this project (and a special announcement!) before the entrance to the exhibit is closed, followed by the playing of *Taps*.

November 21, 12:00 noon to 1:00

Celebrating PIE!

Anoka County History Center and Library. Bring your favorite holiday pie for all to sample as we share stories and history about a holiday favorite—PIE! Being the day before Thanksgiving, pie is certainly a logical choice of topic to discuss. Many people will be baking pies for the big meal the next day, so bake one early, and come share some fun history about pies during this informal discussion. The format is an informal roundtable discussion where everyone is welcome to share their own stories about PIES they've made or eaten. We'll provide the beverages, and no one is allowed to count carbs at this special lunch time event!

December 2, 7:30 p.m.

Civil War Christmas in Columbia Heights

Murzyn Hall, Columbia Heights See page four for more details.

December 4, 7:00 p.m.

Sesquicentennial Quilt Exhibit Opening County Holiday Ornament Presentation Sesquicentennial Postage Cancellation

Anoka County History Center and Library. See the very special sesquicentennial ornament designed and made just for Anoka County's 150th birthday, visit with the makers of the Sesquicentennial quilts and see their work, and bring your Christmas cards to have the stamps cancelled with a once-in-a-lifetime Sesquicentennial cancellation!

December 7, 6:30—11:00 pm

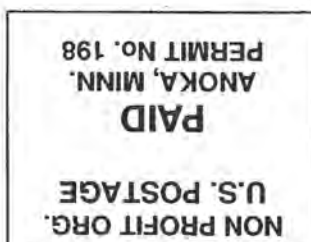
Sesquicentennial Hangar Dance & Photo Auction

Golden Wings Museum, Blaine-Anoka County Airport. See page five for more details.

December 14 & 15

American Girl Christmas Tea Party

Anoka County History Center and Library. See page nine for more details.



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