



History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

Vol. 40 No. 1

January– February 2010

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Blaine

Centerville

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An Ambassador for St. Francis

By Holly Broden, Contributing Writer



Ray Steinke, an ambassador for St. Francis History.

As people and families live increasing mobile lives, it is refreshing to meet someone whose roots have been firmly established for years. Such is the case with Ray Steinke of St. Francis. He is uniquely joined to the history of St. Francis and readily shares this knowledge with anyone who asks. In a recent interview, Steinke gave his top five list of people, places and events that have shaped the St. Francis area and its history.

Steinke served on the St. Francis City Council for a little more than 10 years, then served as mayor for 14 years, until December of 2004. For those who like to keep count, those numbers add up to almost seven terms as mayor. Additionally Ray's ancestors came to St. Francis in 1905, making him the fourth generation Steinke to live there. In short, he has seen a lot of changes take place in and around the City of St. Francis.

Uniquely qualified to speak on the history of St. Francis, Steinke does so at least once a year through the "Royalty Tour." It is a motorcade tour consisting of selected stops throughout the City of St. Francis which allows St. Francis

Ambassador candidates to learn more about the city they hope to represent. This article, in part, is a representation of the "Royalty Tour," as presented by Steinke and the top five historical features that, in Steinke's opinion, have impacted the City of St. Francis the most.

First Stop: Woodbury Park. Woodbury Park was given to then St. Francis Township to honor Albert Woodbury, a lieutenant in the Union army who was wounded during the Civil War (Battle of Chickamauga) and later died as a result of those wounds on Oct. 29, 1863. The one-acre park, donated by Albert's father, Dwight Woodbury, became a focal point for many in St. Francis. The gazebo standing in the park today is a larger replica of the original gazebo. The small flag pole at the peak came from the original. "In the late 1940s, early '50s, there were free movies in the park with a screen placed between the trees," said Steinke, recounting a favorite memory of that focus in the town.

Second Stop: Churches: The First Baptist Church of St. Francis and the United Methodist Church of St. Francis. First Baptist Church of St. Francis was organized in Oak Grove Township on March 15, 1864. When it was first organized, members met once a month in their homes. A church building was erected two miles south of St. Francis and was first dedicated as the Oak Grove Baptist Church. This church building was moved to a new location in the fall of 1893. According to historical documents, the church building was moved on sled runners to a lot in the Village of St. Francis donated by John Woodbury. Its name was later changed to First Baptist Church of St. Francis on May 6, 1894. The church moved to its current location adjacent to Highway 47 in 1977. "These churches are two of the oldest churches and both have generations of families in their congregations," said Steinke.

As for the United Methodist Church, (formerly the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren denomination until 1968), its history dates back to the arrival of the first settlers in 1855. The congregation met in the homes of early pioneer families until the church organized in 1890. At that time Dwight Woodbury donated a lot on Bridge Street in St. Francis on which a small church was completed and dedicated in 1892. In 1960, plans for a new church building and site began. A six-acre site was purchased and the new building erected where the church now stands.

Continued on page 5

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

Anoka County History Center & Library

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History Center Hours:

Tuesday 10-8

Wednesday-Friday 10-5

Saturday 10-4

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

From the Director...

By Todd Mahon

Lost Stories

The staff at the Anoka County Historical Society is pretty good at digging up the past, even when it prefers to stay buried. But there are many cases where we just can't seem to get the information that we want. Often, the problem is not knowing where to start. In a lot of these cases, we've been able to turn to our members who have filled us in with a memory or a story that was enough to get us started.

One story that is often told to me—usually draped in legend and hearsay—is about Laws BBQ and its owner, Dan Laws. The roadside restaurant was located in Ramsey and Laws was one of the county's few African-American business owners in the middle part of the twentieth century. I've had a lot of people come to me over the years with vague memories of the man and the business. Yet we have very little documentation of either. I've even been told that parts of the long-closed restaurant are packed away in sawdust, somewhere in a Ramsey municipal building.

One of the more persistent stories is about the menu itself. I've been told that raccoon was featured on the menu. I was also told that was not the case. Vickie Wendel, our talented program manager, found an advertisement for Laws BBQ in a 1948 edition of the *Anoka Union*. Sure enough, the advertisement prominently advertised a Raccoon Dinner (along with shrimp on the menu all year long).

So what was Laws BBQ like? Are there any photos?

I tell this story for two reasons. First, I'd love to have more documentation of an African-American-owned Anoka County business. Our collection is painfully weak on these types of things, rare though they may be. Second, I want more people to take advantage of our oral history booth in the new exhibit, *Tell Me a Story*. The exhibit features lots of unique Anoka County stories, but it also contains a recording booth to share your Anoka County memories. Maybe we can pull a few Laws BBQ patrons in to share.

From the President...

By Paul Pierce, III

The 2010 census is coming soon. The census data is a valuable resource for history and genealogical research. The founding fathers created the mandatory census as a way for government to serve the citizens in a regular and fair manner. It was most important for reapportioning political representation.

The first census was in 1790, and it asked who was the head of the family by name. It asked the number of people in the household in categories of free white males over age 16, under age 16, free white females, all other free persons, and finally, the number of slaves. The government's focus at that time was a lingering fear of the British and an indication of how many were eligible for military service, if needed.

By 1820, the questions on vocation were added to find out how many were engaged in agriculture, commerce, or manufacturing. In 1850, they asked about taxes, schooling, crime, and pauperism because of that focus on commerce. Later censuses included native language and country of origin because of fears about the growing numbers of immigrants.

The 1920 census asked if the respondent owned a home or rented, and the 1930 questions went further to ask what was the value of the home or the amount of rent paid. It asked if you owned a radio set. The number of questions steadily grew until the decision with the 1940 census to limit asking the long version form to a just a sample of the population instead of everyone getting it. That year everyone answered only 34 questions. In 1950, there were 20 questions, and in 1960, only 7. Since 1960, the long version has been requested from 16 to 20% of the population.

These records are very valuable to history and genealogy research on individuals to show the political influences on the government.

Because of privacy concerns, individual records are not available to the public for 72 years after a census is completed. That means the 1930 census is the most recent report currently available. In 2012, we will have access to the 1940 records.

These records are very short, but I have felt the power and wonder they can provide. Reading the 1870 data for Anoka County, it was quite emotional to see my great-Grandfather listed when he was only six years old on my great-great-grandfather's farm.

Be sure to visit our exhibit on the census and Anoka County at the Crooked Lake Library in January and at the History Center February through April.

See you there!

The Story of an Artifact by Vickie Wendel

Artifacts nearly always tell stories, but sometimes, they can tell much more. Such is the case of Martha Cooper's Marine Corps uniform. This uniform not only tells her story, but it highlights a pivotal point in the history of the women's movement, military history, and changing societal roles in the US.

Martha's uniform is a maternity uniform.

Such an idea was unthinkable in the U.S. military prior to 1976. While women took on the roles of nurses during the Civil War, they were never an official part of the army. In the 1880s and 1890s, women were actively discouraged from working as nurses in the military because it was feared they would need too many "luxuries" such as "bureaus, rocking chairs, and other special items not usually requisitioned for men." In 1901, the Army finally created the Army Nurse Corps and women were allowed to enlist only in that highly specialized role. The Navy followed with their own Nurse Corps in 1908.

When America's entry into WWI in 1917 created a manpower shortage, the Secretary of the Navy, Joseph Daniels, asked, "Is there any law that says a yeoman must be a man?" When no law was found to prohibit women from performing yeoman's duties, the Navy began enlisting women for clerical duty.

The Marine Corps followed in 1918, enlisting about 300 women to serve with the title of "Marinettes." When WWI was over, the role of women was reduced in the U.S. military until WWII began. "Free a man to fight" became the rallying cry for women to enlist and enlist they did. During the war, women fulfilled duties ranging from their traditional roles in clerical and nursing to airplane shuttle pilots, heavy equipment operators, drivers, mechanics and more. If, at any time during her service, a woman became pregnant, she was summarily discharged. In 1947, pregnancy was included on the daily sick report officially as "sickness not in the line of duty." Such a report was followed by the woman's immediate discharge.

The practice continued until the Department of Defense began to see how much they were losing when skilled women service members were forced out because of pregnancy. By 1976, the shift in the roles of women had finally reached a point where pregnancy no longer required an immediate discharge. Still, for a woman to choose to remain in military service while she was pregnant was unusual.



Martha Cooper (of Coon Rapids) enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1982. After boot camp, Martha trained as a photographer and was assigned to the Fleet Marine Corps for the Pacific in Hawaii. Martha met a sailor, George Cooper, while she was in photography school and he was also assigned to Hawaii. The relationship that started in school continued and they married while both were on active duty.

When Martha and George were expecting their first baby, Marine Corps regulations allowed

Martha to remain in the Corps if she wanted. Her job was not hazardous to her baby, so Martha wanted to stay in the Corps. She ordered maternity uniforms. When they came, the uniforms didn't look much like her regular uniforms and Martha wasn't sure how to wear them to be correct for any given uniform of the day order. She asked her commanding officer for maternity uniform regulations, but he didn't know them. Neither did anyone else, it seemed! Martha said she was afraid the baby would be born before she knew how to properly wear the uniform!

Martha kept her uniforms and one of them was featured in the *We Can Do It* exhibit on Women in Patriotic Service in the ACHS Exhibit gallery.

The uniform not only tells Martha's story, but a story of changes in attitudes in the American society as well as the military. It also helped shatter the stereotypical idea of a Marine being a big, burley, John Wayne-kind-of-guy eating ten penny nails for breakfast. Marines can be moms! By being such an unusual and eye-catching artifact, this uniform opened the door to many conversations about women's roles, the struggles of a military family, women in the military, and the evolution of attitudes in America.

Martha said she never thought about her uniform being something of historic value, but when placed in the exhibit, she agreed it really was something history should take note of. Martha also said she was going to tell her daughter-in-law, (wife of the baby Martha was carrying when she wore the uniform on display,) to keep her maternity uniform, too. Both Martha's son and daughter-in-law were in the military and Martha's grandbaby made maternity uniforms a necessity, even if they were no longer thought so unusual!

The role of women in uniform—maternity or otherwise—continues to evolve. In November of 2009, a commanding officer in Iraq issued an order forbidding his female soldiers from becoming pregnant. Those who did would be punished as would the father of the "against orders babies." First reports stated offenders would be sent to courts martial, but Major General Cucolo was quoted as saying he saw no circumstance where the punitive action would be more than a letter of reprimand in the soldier's official records. Still, his no pregnancy order stirred up a hornet's nest of controversy.

Currently, women serve in nearly all areas of the U.S. military and the issues of pregnancy in front line troops are difficult. Getting pregnant is no longer a "get out free" card for women, but many people argue that the military has no right to issue an order banning pregnancy, especially if the couple is married. Cucolo's stand is that he simply requires his troops to take precautionary measures to ensure their physical combat readiness is not compromised for the duration of their time in his war zone command.

As of this writing, the order still stands and people are lining up on both sides of it. The ultimate answer is yet to be determined. You can be sure history will record the decision and let future generations wonder at the struggles we of today went through to get them where they will be in the future.



A December to Remember!



Anoka County Commissioners Dan Erhart and Dennis Berg joined Library Board Chair Cathy Montain, ACHS Executive Director Todd Mahon; Library Board member Jane Daniels; and Library Executive Director Marlene Moun-ton-Janssen to dedicate a new step forward for patrons using the ACHS and Anoka County Library at the History Center.

December always brings some very special ACHS events and this year had both a multi-event December evening and a fun-filled Saturday, all with an eye on celebrating the holidays.



Our Civil War Santa (a.k.a. Ray Steinke) handed out packages to the soldiers at the Civil War Christmas in Coon Rapids.



Visitors in the *Tell Me A Story* gallery on opening night.



Civil War Christmas in Coon Rapids.



Three daughters of Doc Andberg with their father's veterinary and running items in the new *Tell Me A Story* exhibit.



The train display at the Civil War Christmas fascinated everyone!

2009 Holiday Ornaments from Coon Rapids and East Bethel

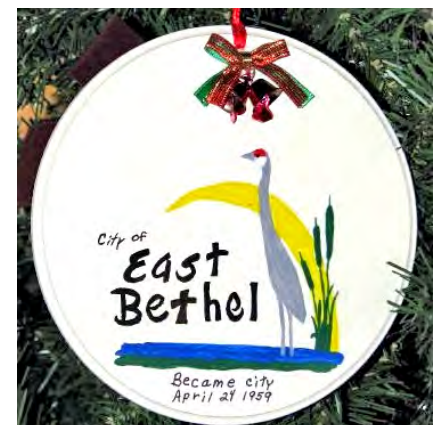
City officials and community members from Coon Rapids and East Bethel presented wonderful ornaments filled with history and symbolism for the County Tree in December. The two ornaments are amazing! Both so different and yet so perfect in representing their community on the tree.

The Coon Rapids ornament is a crystal disk with the city's new logo etched into the glass. The logo features a raccoon by a stream. The water represents both the Mississippi River and Coon Creek. There is also a banner that reads: "Celebrating 50 years" in recognition of their anniversary in 2009. The city decided to order a number of these special ornaments which are for sale (\$12) at the city hall. It is a limited edition, so get one before they run out!

East Bethel chose a different idea and brought a one-of-a-kind ornament; a single hand painted ornament by local artist, Helen Johnson. The image on the wooden disk is the city logo of East Bethel, a crane standing in a pond—a common sight within the city. The ornament provides the date East Bethel became a city, April 27, 1959. It is reversible with the same painting on both sides. It is the only one there is; if you missed it, you'll

have to come to the History Center next December.

Thanks to everyone in Coon Rapids and East Bethel who helped make the evening such a memorable one!



Third Stop: School District 15. The St. Francis school district was the first consolidated school district in 1912. Up to that point, according to Steinke, there were several one-room schools in northern Anoka County and southern Isanti County. The consolidation of school districts was started in 1911, when a bill passed the Minnesota State Legislature. If a petition was signed by twenty-five percent of the population, the legislation passed. The first consolidated school building was built in St. Francis on a \$20,000 bond in 1914. According to an October 12, 1915, *Anoka Herald* newspaper article, the final cost for the building was \$55,000. The building was constructed where the current middle school building is located and was used to consolidate seven school districts.

Fourth Stop: The Streetly Building. Site of the First Mercantile Store. C.C. Streetly was born in Galloway, Scotland, and came to St. Francis in 1866. He built and opened his first general store in 1870. In 1889, a new store was built to the east of the old one and is located where the hardware store is today. This building was also used as a post office after Streetly was appointed the first postmaster in 1867. The mail was delivered by horse cart. The building changed ownership several times from

Pastor Shadick of the First Baptist Church to C.H. Shaw, and then to Henry G. Leathers. Many changes to the store have been made throughout its long history in St. Francis.

Final Stop: Highway 47. Once known as Highway 56. Originally known as Highway 56, it came from Norris Lake to Ambassador Street and wrapped around the school. In 1960-61, the name was changed to Highway 47 and a new road was built in its present location. The divided highway through St. Francis came later. As long as Steinke can remember, the road has been an important link between Anoka, St. Francis, and destinations in northern Minnesota.

St. Francis, organized in 1857, is located in the northwest corner of Anoka County and has the Rum River running through the eastern section of town. Each July, the city holds its “Pioneer Days” Celebration where the new city ambassadors are crowned each year. The “Royalty Tour” always coincides with this celebration.

(Information used is gathered from ACHS files unless noted otherwise)

February is Black History Month

Green Chambers, J.W. Wells, Anna Arnold, Dan Laws—these and others like them stand out in Anoka County's past for the impact their lives had on their communities. Still, of that list, few would have been highlighted in history were it not for the color of their skin. The right, wrong, or other implications aside, these and a handful of others make up Anoka County's early Black History.

Black History Month began as Negro History Week in 1926 in an effort, led by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, to recognize the contributions of African Americans in American history. He chose the second week in February because of its connection to the February births of Abraham Lincoln in 1809 and of Frederick Douglass in ca. 1817. It became Black History Month in 1976. The goal remained to raise awareness of the contributions people of color have made to our American society.

In 1993, the Anoka County Historical Society began a project to recognize and celebrate the African Americans in our county's past and found some rather empty history.

Slavery was still legal in the U.S. when Minnesota became a state in 1858, but the tangles of slavery were here years earlier. Slavery was not allowed in the Territory of Minnesota and that led to the Dred Scott trial. Scott was a slave of an Army surgeon, John Emerson, who was posted to Fort Snelling in 1836. While here, Scott was allowed to marry—she was another Emerson slave. Scott tried to buy himself and his wife from Emerson, but when that failed, Scott brought suit for his freedom, claiming since the territory did not allow slavery, his residence there should make him free. The suit failed and was appealed all the way to the Supreme Court where, in 1857, Scott lost. The court ruled that the government did not have the power to declare anyone slave or free, but that the Constitution did not allow for slaves to be citizens. Therefore, Scott was considered “property” and had no right to bring suit in a Federal court.

Perhaps this decision, stemming from Minnesota, discouraged people of color from settling here. The 1860 census for Minnesota, the first federal census after becoming a state, showed not one African American as a resident of Anoka County. Green Chambers arrived in 1865. By 1870, there was a total African American population of 16 in Anoka County.

The number of African American citizens in Anoka County was slow to increase. An article in the *Anoka Union* newspaper in 1885 noted that there were “Five Negroes and one Mulatto to furnish color for the city” of Anoka. Some 95 years later in 1980, the total African American population of the county was 382 people or .2%.

The rapid growth in recent years and new immigrants moving into Anoka County has brought people of many races as county residents. Based on 2008 census estimates, Minnesota's population is 4.6% African American as compared to the national 12.8%. Anoka County is home to 3.7% people of color.

Perhaps the bulk of Anoka County's Black History is still to be written, depending on those residents of today to record their roles in county history. Remember, everyone's history is important. Don't let yours be lost.

Announcements and News

♦Just a reminder that the January 14 and February 11 ACHS Board of Directors meetings will be at 6:00 p.m. All are held at the History Center. Board meetings are open to the public and everyone is welcome.

A New Boiler!

The heating system at the History Center had been completely replaced! Over the past months, the old boiler was removed and a new, energy efficient system was installed. The heat came on in October—just in time for the cold, wet weather—and has been running well ever since. The new more efficient system is expected to cut heating bills significantly as well as keeping staff and patrons warm all winter.

Oral Histories -“Tell Me a Story”

By Maria King, Volunteer Coordinator

There are a number of volunteer projects currently in progress, including one that is particularly interesting—our oral history collection. Initiated when a tape recorder was the only technology available, the oral histories have grown into a large and fascinating body of firsthand accounts by Anoka County residents. Additional growth is expected as a result of our latest exhibit, *Tell Me A Story*. With this exhibit, families and individuals share their stories, via our recording equipment, without the constraints of a formal scheduled interview.

Many volunteers are needed for the oral histories, because there are multiple steps in gathering, storing, transcribing, and retrieving the files, all of which take great amounts of time. We are happy to help train volunteers on any or all of the steps required in this process. The added benefit to volunteers is that you get to hear the incredible stories of people you may even know!

The purpose of this collection, like most of our projects, is to chronicle the lives of Anoka County people *right now*. Remember the delightful stories that your Grandpa used to tell? Now that he’s gone, don’t you yearn to hear him tell those old stories again? Do you recall the details of life in the factory where you started working when you were just 17? Don’t you think your grandchildren would enjoy listening to your observations? Especially 20 years from now when the world is very different? Think about it! Gather your thoughts. Then, come to ACHS and “Tell Me a Story.”

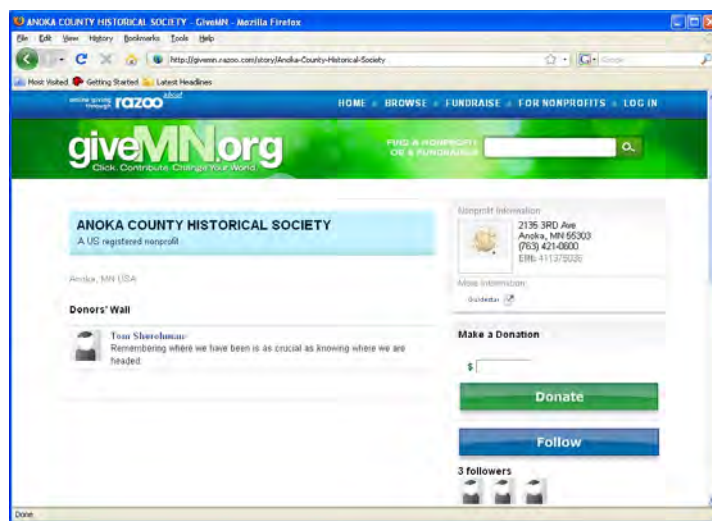
Did you send a Christmas letter?

If you did, we want one!

All Anoka County residents who send out an annual Christmas letter are encouraged to send a copy to the Anoka County Historical Society where it will be archived for future generations to enjoy. This fun holiday collection will recall the triumphs and challenges in the lives of everyday citizens in 2009. Imagine how delighted a future researcher will be to find such a detailed document of life in Anoka County, circa 2009.

All letters will become the property of the Historical Society; therefore individuals should send their own writing and not submit the letters they have received from others unless permission is obtained from the original Anoka County author.

This letter collection is an on-going project, so add us to your card list and send one to ACHS every year.



Donate to ACHS Through GiveMN.org

There is an exciting new and easy way to donate to the Anoka County Historical Society and any other U.S. registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. GiveMN is a recently developed web site that allows anyone to make an online donation to organizations like ACHS. It is a secure and efficient way to donate. There are no administrative costs to the donor or to Historical Society for donations made through GiveMN.

This is a great deal for the Historical Society and for our donors. It means that more of the donation comes to ACHS. GiveMN also provides donors with useful information about the organizations they would like to give to, including the mission statement and a link to the financial and legal statuses. Log on to www.GiveMN.org and donate to ACHS today!

Contributions & New Members — Thank you

(All lists are current to December 31, 2009.)

DONATIONS

Julien Anderson
Dennis and Darlene Berg
Dorothy Carlson
Richard and Darlene Caswell
Lyle and Elsie Elverud
Betty Erickson
Quinn and Terry Free
Karen Hand
David K. Hoagland
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William and Jeraldine Schulz
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Ann Steen
James and Lee Swisher
Vietnam Veterans of America
Ron and Vickie Wendel
Janet and Gloria Wilcox
Lester and Shirley Ziegler

EMPLOYEE MATCH

Dan Frank

NETWORK FOR GOOD

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Jean Seaborg
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BARN DANCE AUCTION

Marilyn Anderson
Catherine Vesley

CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS

Coon Rapids Veterans of Foreign War

ARTIFACT DONORS

Anoka Masonic Lodge
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Marlys Chutich
City of Coon Rapids
City of East Bethel
Lisa LaCasse
Linde Mundle
Ann Steen
Zilla Way

NEW MEMBERS

Janet Rupprecht—Coon Rapids
Peggy King Scully-Grosse Pointe, Michigan

YEAR-END APPEAL

Jan and Jim Anderson	Stan and Dee Knoll
Lyle and Jerene Anderson	Michael and Wendie Lapham
Anoka Lions Club	Melvin Larson
Marian J. Auchter	Scott and Carol LeDoux
Barbara Deeds Baldwin	Danny C. Martin
Richard Barstow	Kay Marvin
Jim and Mary Bauer	Carol Moen
Bryan and Janet Benskin	Cathy Montain
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Henry and Jeanette Blair	Jerry Newton
James and Doris Boos	M. Joyce Paul
Robert and Beverly Burtness	Rachel Peterson
Jeannine P. Chamberlain	Philip Pinewski
Shirley J. Christenson	Charles R. Porter
Marlys M. Chutich	Bill Prugh
Robert and Betty Comer	Donald & Joyce Bonnell Sage
Gail Dahl	Robert and Phyllis Seath
Frank and Vivian Daly	Millie Sorenson
Myrtle Eveland	Wes and Lois Spadgenske
Leo Foley	Douglas A. Stein
John and Sharon Freeburg	Marjorie Strouse
Roland and Carol Freeburg	Rodger Sundstrom
Goose Lake Farm and Winery	James and Lee Swisher
Karen Hand	Lael M. Theis
Bernadene Heath	Bar Thurston and Joey Norton
Rosie Herdina	Scott Varner
Sam Hermansdorfer	Evonne Wallin
Helen and William Hlavinko, Jr.	Jill Weaver
Beatrice J. Hoppenrath	Ernie and Sharon Woizeschke
Jim and Janis Johansen	Peter Wojciechowki
Gerald and Marlys Johnson	Lester and Shirley Ziegler
Raymond Jones	Ronald and Marilyn Zurek

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

Brian McClelland, who passed away on October 25, 2009. Brian was an
ACHS member, volunteer, and friend.

Coming Events

January

Riding the Rails from Anoka

Anoka County History Center and Library lobby. With the opening of the Northstar Commuter Rail line, passengers can once again board the train to ride it into downtown, just as they did in 1964. Learn more about rail transportation in Anoka County through this exhibit of photos and facts.

January 26, 7:00 p.m.

***We Can Do It* Exhibit Closing**

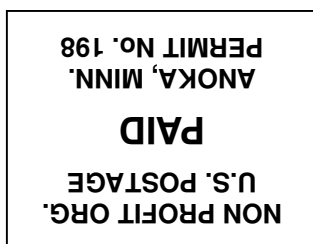
Anoka County History Center and Library. This is your last chance to see this exhibit featuring Anoka County women in wartime and their efforts to support and serve the nation's military. Some of the women featured in the exhibit will be on hand to help celebrate the very successful run of the exhibit before it is closed forever.

February—April

2010 Census —It's In Our Hands

Anoka County History Center and Library lobby. The U.S. constitution requires a census every ten years and this information is a treasure trove for historians and genealogists. This exhibit in the ACHS lobby will highlight what is on a census, how it is useful, when census information is released, and why getting counted in 2010 is important.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Anoka County Historical Society
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- Spring Lake Park

ACHS Tracks Down History of African-American Owned Ramsey Business

By Todd S. Mahon, ACHS Executive Director

In recent months, the staff at the Anoka County Historical Society has been on the trail for as much information as we can find on the fondly remembered Laws BBQ in Ramsey and its owner, Dan Laws. The restaurant is thought to have opened in the 1940s. Laws was one of the very few African Americans living in Anoka County at the time, and the fact that he was a business owner makes his story all the more intriguing.

According to Jack Guelker, a friend and former employee of Laws who now lives in Louisiana, Laws was a former railroad worker who moved to the area after having trouble purchasing land closer to Minneapolis. When Guelker once asked Laws why he opened a restaurant so far from Minneapolis, Laws told him that because he was black, many people either refused to sell him land or lied about the land already being sold before Laws could buy it. Finally, Laws found a piece of property in Ramsey on the southwest corner of the intersection of County Road 5 and Highway 47. Laws asked the broker if there would be a problem selling to a black man. The broker asked Laws if his money was green, to which Laws said yes. That was good enough for the broker and the sale was made.



Dan Laws enjoying a piece of birthday cake in 1978.



Dan Laws in his restaurant kitchen.

Before Laws opened his restaurant, he was known in the community for selling homemade perfumes at the Anoka County Fair. Fairgoers and residents remembered him having a raccoon on a leash at his perfume booth. After Laws opened the restaurant, he still sold the perfume as a side business. Tom Ward of Anoka remembers buying perfume for his wife at the restaurant.

The restaurant was originally built as a house. Guelker recalls there were three or four small rooms with tables set up in them. Laws bought the furniture second hand, so nothing matched. Laws was also color-blind, so the rooms were painted different colors—but he couldn't see the difference! The kitchen was built onto the side of the house. The menu consisted of spare ribs, steaks, fried chicken, and his special sauces. Coleslaw was served as a side as well as corn bread dressing. At certain times, Laws served sweet potato pie, which he referred to as simply "potato pie." Some folks even made special requests for raccoon, though it was not a particularly popular selection. The meat was purchased from a slaughterhouse thought to be near Constance. .

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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Anoka, MN 55303

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Fax (763) 323-0218

E-mail: achs@ac-hs.org

www.ac-hs.org

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Tuesday 10-8

Wednesday-Friday 10-5

Saturday 10-4

Board of Directors

President—Paul Pierce, III (At-Large F)

Vice President—Tom Sherohman

(District #4)

District #1—Patti Kurak

District #2 — Bill Prugh

District #3—Dick Johnson

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District #6—Judy Hanna

District #7—Bart Ward

At Large A—Lori Yager

At Large B—Dan Frank

At Large C—Tom Ward

At Large D—(vacant)

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At-Large G — Catherine Vesley

At-Large H — Harvey Greenburg

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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

Are There Parallels to Today?

The old saying goes, “Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.” It’s a phrase that we in the history preservation business use a lot to try and impress on the public the importance of our work. Rarely has it been so apparent in the work towards a new exhibit on Anoka County during World War I.

In 2007, Dave Niles finished an extensive research project, on behalf of ACHS, about Anoka County during the First World War. We are forever in his debt. Often we struggle to depict Anoka County in the context of national and international stories. In our military exhibits we usually tell the stories of those from Anoka County and their experiences, usually as soldiers, in war.

When Dave presented his research to staff, we had a conversation about how little most of knew about World War I. Many of us at the Historical Society have history degrees, and all of us are passionate about it, but this cataclysmic historical event was not well known to us. Sure, we knew it happened, we might be able to tell you about the *Lusitania* or Arch Duke Ferdinand, but the more that was revealed to us through Dave’s research, the more fascinated we became—and not with the events in the European theater, but what was happening back at home, right here in Anoka County.

The extent of censorship and anti-German sentiment is often forgotten. In 1917, the Anoka County Sheriff was responsible for collecting all of the firearms owned by “enemy aliens” (residents of German ancestry) in the county. Anoka’s various loyalty leagues were even praised by local politicians. Former Minnesota Governor Van Sant said he liked Anoka “because it’s so different from New Ulm” (a not-so-veiled reference to New Ulm’s large German descended population). Senator Sullivan was more direct in his praise for Anoka and condemnation for New Ulm when he said, “Thank God for Anoka, the first in the war of the Rebellion, she is now the first to give her answer to the hiss of the copperheads at New Ulm.”

Learn about these events and more in a new exhibit coming to the Anoka County History Center in May of 2010. We love to uncover history and this topic is providing excellent fodder.

From the President...

By Paul Pierce, III

As a child of the fifties, I have witnessed a lot of change. I am sorry to admit that, on careful assessment, the changes to the area I live in tips the balance to changes for the worse. I watched many well-made, lovely buildings destroyed and replaced by character free, cheap, functional replacements—or worse yet parking lots on corners that previously were occupied by businesses and buildings I loved to patronize. I was a child of the fifties, but my personal character is in many respects more in tune with the depression era generation. It physically hurts to see things wasted and thrown away.

It seemed like the era of senseless destruction had slowed and would soon be replaced by generally agreed upon appreciation for the value of older, better constructed structures. Add to that a slower economy and more difficulty obtaining financing and we should be witnessing a reduction in the previous trend toward the senseless waste of resources. Usually the perpetrators of the waste and destruction use the standard excuses that the building may have looked good, but it was in terrible shape. It would cost more to repair than it cost to throw it away and start over. These statements are very effective once the previous building is gone and no one can assess and judge the building for themselves. Even the trained experts the public should feel safe relying upon can, for various reasons, be induced to testify to this falsehood. I have witnessed personally when the building inspector and other government officials have insisted a building was about to collapse because a roof hatch had been left off and a small “cone” of repairable damage had occurred on the floors and ceilings below. That building is still standing and has been refurbished into the location for several businesses. All for less money and waste than the alternative plans.

The loss of a large section of century old structures would have been just another loss in the overall quality and feel of the area where I have lived for my entire life.

Although the private sector cannot afford to waste in these difficult times, you and I are now seeing government agencies scoop up and spend money to destroy relatively new buildings to create a vacant lot they hope will someday be sold to another business that will most often build something out of almost the identical materials and design. Several years ago, our society passed a resolution allowing us to advocate for preservation. As people interested in history, our members should speak up to the government officials when quality structures are threatened.

And as a favor to me, please mention the sheer waste of it all.

The High Fashion of Hats

The hat as a statement of high fashion was not easily ignored. Hats reached their extreme in both size and decoration by the early 1900s and was an essential wardrobe item for women. It was expected to be worn at all times, indoors and out, for social reasons as well as religious reasons.

Prior to and throughout the 19th century as women began to have more choices regarding fashion, the bonnet was the style of head covering most widely preferred. The bonnet, according to the book, [Vintage Hats & Bonnets 1770-1970: Identifying and Valuing](#), is a cloth or straw hat tied under the chin and worn by women and children. This definition was widely interpreted and in many ways “bonnet” simply became a catch all word for any type of hat.

Hairstyles and hats went together and eventually, the latest hairstyles began to influence hat fashions. As hairstyles climbed to new heights through the use of tall wired loops and knots—so did hats. Thumbing through an 1895 edition of the *Montgomery Ward & Co.’s Catalogue* at the ACHS (Anoka County Historical Society) library, it seems one could order almost anything to put on or to trim a hat. Such items included ribbons, fancy flowers, wreaths, sprays, Ostrich tips, plumes, and yes, whole birds!

“The catalogs were a little bit deceiving as to what is shown on hats,” said Vickie Wendel, ACHS Program Manager. “It showed everything that could be put on a hat. It allowed women to pick and choose what they wanted. In reality, most Anoka County women only added a few things as those trims all cost money. The more money you had, the more trims you put on a hat. It was about status--if you could afford to have the latest and greatest, then you were *somebody*.”

The ACHS has a quality collection of women’s hats with many representing the local fashion scene in the late 1800s and early 1900s. While many women wore traditional cotton sunbonnets for everyday use, the following photos from the ACHS collection represent the more extravagant variety of hats worn by local women.

Large, decorative hats for women have obviously lost their popularity, and are now being replaced by baseball and other types of caps, worn by both men and women. During the height of hat industry, the hat represented the individual and her sense of fashion—it often told more than a volume of words could tell. With that in mind, the type of hat worn made a visual statement and gave a first impression that could not easily be ignored.

The wedding bonnet worn by Bessie Adele Evans on May 13, 1844, when she married Alden Sumner Kimball. They operated a General Store in Champlin from 1896-1924. It is a pillbox style, with a white satin pleated top and trimmed with a large white feather across the front. It has thin brown strings to tie under the chin.



Jennie Mitchell is wearing a large turban style hat with white ornamental trim on top and a ribbon on the side. She was born Abbie Jane “Jennie” Dyer in 1874 in Bethel, Anoka County, Minnesota. She married James Mitchell in 1895, but they divorced and she moved to Barnesville, Minnesota, where she died in 1945.



This is a helmet style hat with brown trim on the sides and lace up the center. The hat featured white lace accents on the side and a cream colored grow grain ribbon. It was worn by the wife of Martin V. Bean, an Anoka County commissioner in the early 1890s.



This is a child’s bonnet. It is brown straw with decorative straw balls on the back, trimmed with raised ribbon rows to create a decorative design. It features very long red velvet ties.

(Continued from page 1)

Guelker recalls going out to buy meat with Laws and how insistent Laws was on getting the best quality meat

Terry Lehn remembers Laws BBQ well from growing up in Anoka. The stores in downtown Anoka were always open until 9:00 on Friday evenings, so every Friday after his parents closed Lehn Electric, they jumped in the car to go out to Dan's to eat. The Lehn's always had the ribs—Terry said he didn't even know what else was on the menu, but he thought there was fish on Fridays. The ribs

business was slow, Laws would close up early), Laws and Guelker would often go hunting for raccoons.

Many people were hunting partners of Laws at one time or another, Anoka County Commissioner Dennis Berg remembers going out with Laws in the evenings. He described Laws as a slow, methodical hunter.

We're happy to report that in recent months, ACHS has succeeded in adding more on Laws BBQ and Dan Laws to our collection. We recorded an oral history with Jack and Mavis Guelker. We received a copy of the recipe Laws used to soak his ribs in before smoking them (only soak for 7—10 minutes!), got two photographs of him from the archives of the *Anoka County Union*, and have located a section of the wall of the restaurant with a painting of Laws on it located in storage at a Ramsey municipal building.

But we're still looking for more and asking for the community's help. Laws and his wife, Minnie, cared for foster children and mentally handicapped children. We'd love to make contact with one or more of them to record their memories. Does anyone have a bottle of Dan's perfume?

What about a photo of the interior or exterior of the restaurant? Anyone who can help out with this is encouraged to contact the Anoka County Historical Society at 763-421-0600.

DAN LAWS , RIB SOLUTION MAKES 1 gal.

- 1 gal. Cider vinegar
- 2 cups Red Pepper
- 1/4 cup Cayene pepper
- 2 Lemons Squeezed & cut up
- 2 Table spoons black pepper corns
- 1/2 Cup whole red peppers
- 20 Bay leaves

NOTE: LEAVE IN SOLUTION: 7 to 10 MINUTES ONLY

were cooked in a large clay oven fed with wood, so in the summer, the kitchen was like a sauna.

The kitchen was a few steps lower than the dining rooms, so Terry could stand and watch people in the kitchen work. Terry also remembered that if you were late getting there, you might not get in for a while. Laws was a popular place and the food was always good.

Laws was known for being a great neighbor. He cleared snow from the roads in the area at no charge. He received the Ramsey Lions' Citizenship Award and was named man of the year by the Ramsey Jaycees in 1974.

His personal reputation and the quality of the food must have made for a bustling business. The restaurant was loved by locals, but it was also sought out by African Americans from Minneapolis. Because of the distance, the Minneapolis folks tended to come up on the weekends.

Laws BBQ was open from noon until 3:00am. Guelker was the bouncer (his wife, Mavis, worked as a waitress). After the local bars closed at 1:00am, Laws got busy. Guelker was a big man and never had any fights, using his size to settle any disputes before things got out of hand. Other former BBQ patrons have mentioned that the sight of Laws with his heavy butcher knife probably kept as much order as anything. Even former Anoka County Sheriff Buster Talbot said there was never any trouble at Laws BBQ.

After the place closed up at 3:00am (if



The folk art painting of Dan Laws that was on the wall in his restaurant. The wall fragment is held by the City of Ramsey.



2010 Anoka County
Historical Society

Annual Meeting

Tuesday, March 23, 2010
7:00pm to 9:00pm

At the new
Anoka County Sheriff's
Office
and
Tri-County Regional
Forensics Laboratory

13301 Hanson Boulevard, Andover



Join us for a inside look at the new Anoka County Sheriff's Office *before* its official public open house event. The event will include welcoming remarks from Anoka County Sheriff Bruce Andersohn, an announcement of the 2010 ACHS Board of Directors election results, a brief annual report from ACHS Executive Director Todd Mahon, and a program on Anoka County Sheriff's Office history given by ACHS Program Manager Vickie Wendel.

Ms. Wendel has been researching Anoka County Sheriff's history for two years in preparation for a published history. Come hear about everything from election recounts that rivaled Minnesota's 2008 U.S. Senate contest to running shootouts to the case of three escaped alligators!

Refreshments will be served.

Cost: \$5.00 for ACHS members and \$7.00 for non-members.



Up To Date

Announcements and News

♦Just a reminder that the March 11 and April 8 ACHS Board of Directors meetings will be at 6:00 p.m. All meetings are held at the History Center. Board meetings are open to the public and everyone is welcome.



The screenshot shows the giveMN.org website interface. At the top, there is a green header with the logo and the text "Click, Contribute, Change Your World". Below this, there is a search bar for "FIND A NONPROFIT OR A FUNDRAISER". The main content area features the "ANOKA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY" logo, which includes the text "A US registered nonprofit" and "Anoka, MN USA". There is a "Donors' Wall" section with a photo of Tom Sherobman and the text "Remembering where we have been is as crucial as knowing where we are headed." To the right, there is a "Nonprofit Information" box with the address "2135 3RD Ave Anoka, MN 55303", phone number "(763) 421-0800", and fax number "FAX: 413-93535". Below this is a "Make a Donation" section with a dollar sign input field and a green "Donate" button.

Remember the easy way to donate to ACHS—www.givemn.org and select Anoka County Historical Society.

Cue the Orchestra!

ACHS is continuing to collect the musical history of the county in this third musical project which is focusing on orchestras. If you played in the school orchestra—elementary through college—or continue to play as an adult, we want to hear from you!

Community, church orchestras, school orchestras, and orchestra instructors/directors will all be highlighted in the next exhibit ***with your help!*** Bring in your stories, photographs, music, uniforms, programs, or whatever all you past and present orchestra musicians may have.

March is Women's History Month

Celebrate with ACHS at a special program—

Stories in Stitches

Took me more than 20 years, nearly 25, I reckon, in the evenings after supper when the children were all put to bed. My whole life is in that quilt. It scares me sometimes when I look at it. All my joys and all my sorrows are stitched into those little pieces. When I was proud of the boys and when I was downright provoked and angry with them. When the girls annoyed me or when they gave me a warm feeling around my heart. And John, too. He was stitched into that quilt and all the thirty years we were married. Sometimes I loved him and sometimes I sat there hating him as I pieced the patches together. So they are all in that quilt—my hopes and fears, my joys and sorrows, my loves and hates. I tremble sometimes when I remember what that quilt knows about me.



Marguerite Ickis, quoting her great-grandmother.

Throughout history, women have been the primary quilt makers, though men have some special roles in the stories of the quilts in the ACHS collection. In recognition of Women's History Month, we'll be taking a closer look at some of the quilts, the stories they tell, and the history of the women who made them. Currently, there are more than 50 quilts in the ACHS collection, ranging in size from small doll quilts to huge bed quilts of nearly eight feet long. Some quilts will be on display for the evening, others will be viewed in photographs, and two are on display in the Exhibit Hall.

Join us for a cozy evening of stories and quilts.

Tuesday, March 16, 7:00 pm
Anoka County History Center
2135 Third Avenue North
Anoka, MN



Contributions & New Members — Thank you

(All lists are current to February 28, 2010)

DONATIONS

Marlys J. Burman
Jeannine P. Chamberlain
David and Winnifred Conger
Carol Dordan
John and Shaaron Freeburg
Roland and Carol Freeburg
Melvin Larson, Jr.
Jerome and Marilyn Manley
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EMPLOYEE MATCH

Qwest Foundation — Gary Greb
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CITY & TOWNSHIP DONATIONS

Linwood Township

YEAR-END APPEAL

Mel and Kathy Aanerud
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ARTIFACT DONORS

Anoka County Sheriff's Office
Eva Mae Cleator
Norma Cooley
Jack & Mavis Guelker
Tammy Hiltnev — Cheerful Chuggers 4-H
Janet Mros
Jean Seaborg

NEW MEMBERS

Glenda Meixell, Coon Rapids
Robert Munns, Anoka
Mike Petschl, Champlin
Diane Resvick, Chippewa Falls
Lauren W. Sage, Coon Rapids
Elizabeth Therkildsen, Minneapolis

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

Netha Belle Feist, who passed away on December 5, 2009. Netha was a long time ACHS member and active supporter of history.

Albert J. Talbot, who passed away on February 3, 2010. Albert was a member of ACHS and helped keep history alive with in his love of antique cars.

Donald W. "Red" Smith who passed away on February 9, 2010. Don was a life member of ACHS and served many years on the board of directors, was an active volunteer, and dedicated keeper of history.

2010 ACHS Board of Directors Ballots in the Mail

The ballots for the Anoka County Historical Society's 2010 Board of Directors election were mailed to all current members of the Historical Society on February 19 along with information about the Society's March 23 annual meeting at the new Anoka County Sheriff's Office and Tri-County Regional Forensics Laboratory.

There are five seats up for election on this year's ballot. Each seat has a candidate on the ballot, as well as a place for a write-in candidate.

This year's offices and candidates are:

- ◆ Al Pearson for the Commissioner District #1 Seat
- ◆ Bill Prugh for the Commissioner District #2 Seat
- ◆ Lori Yager for the At-Large Seat A
- ◆ William Erhart for the At Large Seat E
- ◆ Catherine Vesley for the At-Large Seat G

Ballots are due back to the Anoka County History Center by Tuesday, March 16, at 4:00pm. The results will be reported at the March 23 Annual Meeting.

If you are a member in good standing and did not receive a ballot in the mail, please contact us at 763-421-0600.

Anoka County Historical Society
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Coming Events

March 16, 7:00 p.m.

Celebrating Women's History Month

(Anoka County History Center and Library) Join ACHS for a delightful evening of stories and stitches bound up in the quilts of the ACHS collection. There will be some quilts on display and more will be viewed in pictures. Some history of quilt techniques, colors, styles, and more will compliment the stories of the women who made the quilts at ACHS during this special program. See page 6 for more details.

March 23, 7:00 p.m.

ACHS Annual Meeting

(Anoka County Sheriff's Office, 13301 Hanson Boulevard, Andover) Join us for an inside look at the new Anoka County Sheriff's Office before its official public open house event. The event will include welcoming remarks from Anoka County Sheriff Bruce Andersohn, ACHS Board of Directors election results, and a program on Anoka County Sheriff's Office history covering shootouts to the case of three escaped alligators! Members \$5, non-members \$7. See page 5 for more information.

Sunday, April 11, 2:00 p.m.

Volunteer Recognition Day

(Anoka County History Center and Library) If you volunteered in 2009, watch for your invitation to this special day set aside just for you! Look for your invitation to arrive in the mail in early April with all the details. If you didn't write your volunteer hours on the calendar at ACHS, please call Maria to get those hours recorded ASAP. We'll add your hours to the total and get your name on the invitation list. An RSVP is greatly appreciated!

April 22 & 24

American Girl Spring Tea Party

(Anoka County History Center and Library) Welcome in the sunny days of spring with Julie, the American Girl of 1970s! Tea Party activities will look at some of the trials and triumphs the American society was going through and top it all off with a fabulous hat making session. Girls, their dolls, and grown-ups will have a tea party to wrap up the event. **Reservations required.** Tickets for girls are \$7, adults are \$10—and dolls attend free! Thursday evening, April 22 at 6:00 and several sessions on Saturday, April 24. Additional teas may be scheduled based on demand.



History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

Vol. 40 No. 3

May — June 2010

SERVING:

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

First Union Volunteer Soldier: A Matter of Hours

by Holly Broden, contributing writer

“Dedicated to Aaron Greenwald and his comrades, who near this spot shortly after 10 a.m. on April 15, 1861, were the first Union Civil War volunteers in the nation,” - Historical marker near Main and Ferry Streets in Anoka

Aaron Greenwald was a miller in a flour mill near the Shuler Building in downtown Anoka. He was born December 2, 1832, in Pennsylvania and settled in the Anoka area. He and his wife, Anna, had two sons, William born August 8, 1859, and Louis on October 10, 1860. Little did he know that circumstance and opportunity would put him at the forefront of one of the greatest battles in the

history of United States and keep his legacy alive.

“The Civil War was quite an event in our country and people still reflect on it,” said Merrywayne (Ridge) Elvig during a recent telephone interview. Elvig, an Anoka County resident, is the great-granddaughter of Aaron Greenwald and the granddaughter of William.

In April of 1861, Minnesota governor Alexander Ramsey was in Washington D.C. when the rebels fired on Fort Sumter, South Carolina, and President Abraham Lincoln called for 75,000 troops to put down the rebellion. Ramsey promised 1,000 Minnesota troops to support the Union cause.



Aaron Greenwald, 1861. The uniform he is wearing is most likely a photographer’s prop and not Aaron’s own.

According to historical records, a telegram was sent by Ramsey to a former Minnesota Governor, Willis Gorman, who was “listening to court proceedings in the Shuler Building at Ferry and Main in Anoka when he got the message.” Reportedly, he postponed the court proceedings and addressed a crowd of onlookers which included Aaron Greenwald.

On April 15, 1861, at 10 a.m., 149 years ago, Greenwald became the first volunteer for the Union Army. He was enrolled in the First Minnesota Regiment under Colonel William Colvill. Greenwald was engaged in 14 battles in the Civil War and was fatally wounded on July 3, 1863, at the Battle of Gettysburg. That could have been the end of the story except for one debated issue. Was he really the first volunteer soldier?

According to a June 23, 1961, article in the *Anoka County Union* newspaper, the debate about who actually was the first Union soldier to volunteer started when the first day enlistments began. Greenwald, followed by James Groat, and four others signed up in Anoka in the morning. St. Paul enlistments, including that of Josiah R. King, were taken in the afternoon.

Continued on page 5

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From the Director...

By Todd Mahon

Get Ready for the Home and Garden Tour

My favorite event each year is the Anoka Heritage Home and Garden Tour. A partnership between ACHS and the City of Anoka's Heritage Preservation Commission, this tour features open house tours of some of Anoka's finest and most historic homes. This year's tour will be on Sunday, July 11. Each year, a different neighborhood is selected and this year the Oakwood neighborhood will be featured for the first time. This neighborhood is made up of mid-twentieth century homes and hugs the shores of Mississippi and Rum Rivers.

I enjoy this annual event so much for two reasons. First, I love the houses and their history. I've always loved houses of all kinds, from small to large, historic to new, all of them... This tour is a great chance to see the inside of many of the beautiful homes people are familiar with in Anoka—and learn about their history.

The other reason I love this event so much is getting to know the homeowners who put their houses and gardens on the tour. It takes a special kind of person to agree to have their home on the tour, and it's not something that is for everyone. But the folks that agree to have their homes on the tour tend to be generous in spirit for wanting to invite the public into their home, so they can be really fun to work with.

This year's tour would not be happening without the incredible assistance of two neighborhood residents. Peg Flaig and Lianne Rock have gone to extraordinary measures to help us recruit over a dozen beautiful homes—including their own. I cannot thank them enough.

I hope you will join us on this year's tour. Members and others on the Home Tour mail list will be getting reminder postcards in the mail soon.

From the President...

By Paul Pierce, III

With the recent Earth Day and now Earth Week, it brings to mind that preservation and reuse of already existing buildings is the "greenest" option of all. There is a great savings in landfill space and raw materials in recycling a can, but it is nothing compared to saving and reusing buildings. It cannot be compared to the loss and waste of time, fuel, and raw materials involved in tearing structures down to create a vacant lot.

Most people do not realize the "hookups" alone represent large investments of materials and labor. Hookups are the unseen connections of water, sewer, electric, etc. needed to serve the building and the distance they travel to get connected. Sure, in some instances an older building may not have big enough water lines to serve the new use or the electrical may need to be updated, but it is nothing in cost and materials to accomplish these needs compared to starting over.

The past standards of previous building practices used some high quality materials that have long life or functional advantages that are considered too expensive to use in today's building practices. Copper wire was the only choice for your electric lines in your home, but now almost all service wires are the more fire prone aluminum wire. It is just too expensive for a big copper wire to be considered as an option.

Cast iron sewer pipes are good for at least seventy-five years and can often do the job for a couple hundred years. Nobody knows for sure how long PVC (plastic) will last because it has not been in use long enough to be sure. The list can go on and on. Even when a structure has no worthwhile style or historic significance, it still makes more sense to remodel than to destroy. A building is really just a box of air and can be modified or added onto. It can be as simple as giving it a new look and making it a beautiful place to live or have a business, just like wrapping and a bow on a gift box.

On a trip to Tokyo, I was shocked at an idea so simple—yet so effective—that my experience as an American had made it seem impossible to imagine. All the buildings downtown were of various eras and ages. In America, many of them would be rundown dumps. Almost like a huge museum, each of these Japanese buildings were in perfect condition, true to their original designs. You could pick a style that you enjoyed most and have no penalty in quality because of its age.

Maybe it's a different attitude or maybe fitting a similar population to the United States into the small geographic space of Japan allowed them enough people to develop an appreciation for what they already have and perfectly maintain their old buildings!

An Original Suffrage Flyer

It was tucked between the pages of an 1919 *Red Cross* magazine, hidden for who knows how many years. The small flyer measures 10 1/2 by 7 inches and is printed on a lightweight, common paper of the era, but it was advocating something earth-shattering for its day—the right for women to vote.

The flyer was found completely by accident while assembling items for the World War I exhibit. It slipped down slightly and stuck out of the pages while the magazine was being removed from its protective sleeve for display.

Thinking it was a loose page, we opened the magazine to see if the damage could be repaired or if the magazine was stable enough for display—and there it was, an original flyer from the Women's Suffrage movement!

ACHS staff members were thrilled! There are not many of these flyers around and ACHS has one in beautiful condition!

Whose was it?

Unfortunately, we will never know. The magazine was part of a "resource" collection created many years ago. This collection is a hodgepodge of magazines, catalogues, articles clipped from unknown sources, and other odd items that were gathered because someone thought "someday this will come in handy." There is no donor information, no date of collection, no acquisition number, nothing to give even a hint of which woman in Anoka County might have tucked this flyer between the pages of her magazine.

Still, it speaks to the women of Anoka County and their role in the fight for equality and enfranchisement.

A Brief History of the 19th Amendment

The first time anyone publically declared that a woman should have the same right as a man to express her opinions at the ballot box was at the Seneca Falls, New York, Women's Convention in 1848. Elizabeth Cady Stanton gave the concluding speech of the convention and her speech was

a demand for the right to vote. Numerous women's rights organizations came and went through the next 70 years and while their approaches were different, their goal was always the same—voting.

There were organized opposition groups as well, arguing that voting would undermine women's roles in the home, that politics would be demeaning to women.

By the time America joined the fighting of World War I, women were close to reaching their goal. In 1918, even President Wilson was starting to bend and instead of

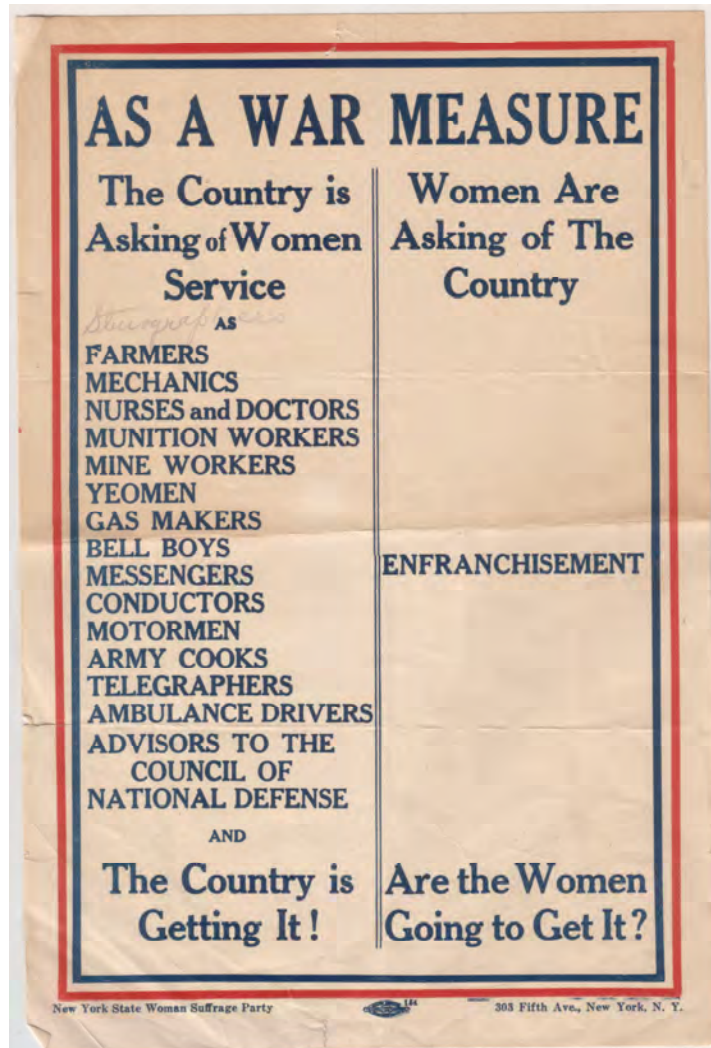
opposing women voting, he began to support the idea. Some women's organizations who angrily compared President Wilson to Kaiser Wilhelm, leader of Germany in WWI, may have contributed to his change of mind!

The 19th Amendment, passed by the U.S. House and Senate, stated that the voting rights of citizens of the United States would not be denied on the basis of sex. The amendment went to the states for ratification on June 4, 1919.

By June 10, three states had already ratified the amendment: Wisconsin, Illinois, and Michigan. Within a month, ten more states ratified it. 36 states had to ratify the amendment to make it law and Tennessee was the 36th state to vote on ratification. The amendment passed by a single vote. A 24-year old Tennessee state legislator was planning to vote no, but at the urging of his mother,

he changed his vote and the amendment passed. Voting rights for women became law on August 18, 1920. Women would be allowed to vote in the upcoming presidential election between Warren G. Harding and James M. Cox that November.

It took a little longer for all 48 states to ratify the 19th Amendment. In fact, the last state to ratify was Mississippi—that state did not ratify the 19th Amendment until 1984!



Safe for Democracy

A Closer Look at Anoka County in WWI

Exhibit Opening May 18, 7:00 pm



REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE
P.M.G.O. Form No. 68.

whom it may concern, I hereby certify that the following is the true and correct registration certificate of the President of the United States, and in compliance with law.

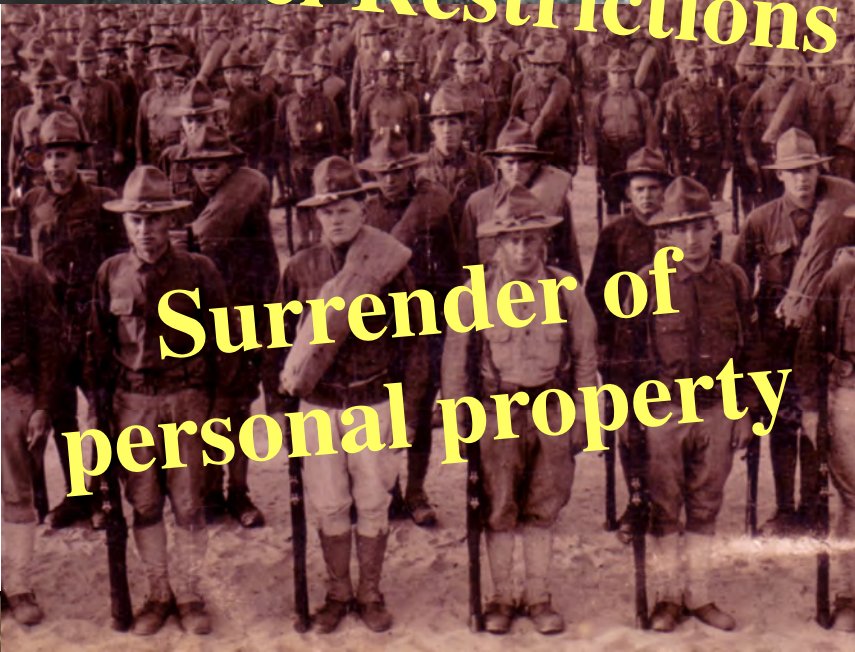
First name: *Ross* Middle name: *Willard* Last name: *Chase*

(No.) (Street or R.F.D. No.) (City or town.) (County.) (State.)

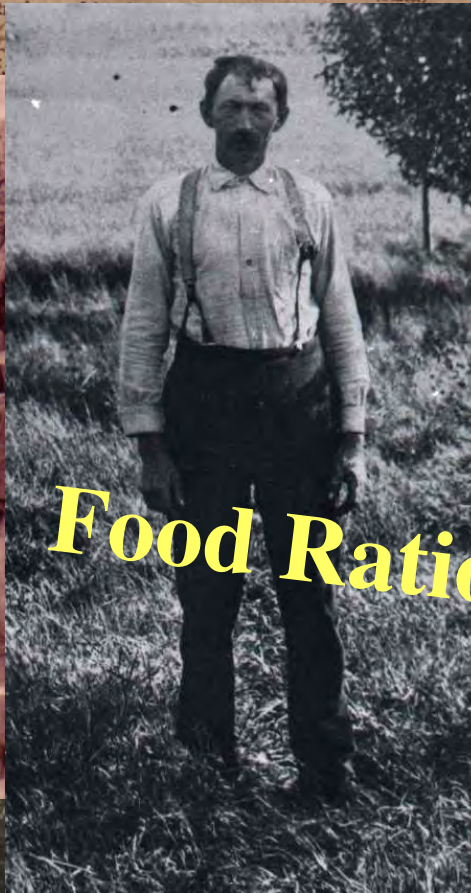
submitted himself to register of *Substant* designated on the back hereof.



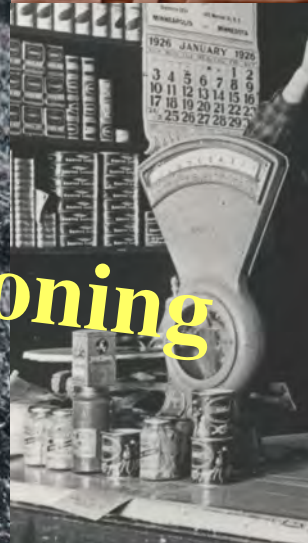
Travel Restrictions



Surrender of personal property



Food Rationing



Ethnic Discrimination



Censorship

Continued from page 1

A 1911 St. Cloud Journal Press newspaper article written by Roe Chase states, "... when the roster of the First Minnesota was made up these six enlistments were not placed first on the list. Over the years this has caused a lot of confusion..."

Louis, Greenwald's son, who was only five years old when his father died, weighed in on the topic, as an adult, in the 1911 newspaper article. He said, "Father was dead and the honor could do him no good. When the other soldiers claimed the honor, I refused to say a thing. I knew what it meant to those old soldiers. And so I kept still. My father was dead. But they are all gone now, those claimants. I no longer hesitate to say that I am sure my father has the prior claim." As for Elvig, she said that occasionally she will still receive a phone call or get a request for information, especially if someone is researching the history or thinks they are related in some way to Aaron Greenwald. As for his status as the first volunteer for the Union Army, she said, "Growing up there wasn't much questioning it; it was accepted as being correct."



Louis and William Greenwald, ca. 1870.

2010 Annual Meeting a Great Success

The Anoka County Historical Society's 2010 Annual Meeting was a great success. On March 23, the membership and friends of the organization met at the new Anoka County Sheriff's Office and Tri-County Regional Forensics Laboratory in Andover for a presentation on the Anoka County Sheriff's history. It was preceded by an announcement of the election results for the board of directors and a brief annual report from the executive director.

Al Pearson was announced as newly elected to the board to represent Commissioner District 1. Al comes to ACHS from Ramsey. Al has been a friend of the organization for several years now, helping at our annual Harvest Time Barn Dance by loaning us hay and straw bales for decorations. He is a lifelong resident of Anoka County and served on the Ramsey City Council. Al has already been to his first board meeting and is looking forward to working with the board. Also announced were the reelections of four other board members. Bill Prugh will continue to represent Commissioner District 2, and Lori Yager, Bill Erhart, and Catherine Vesley were each re-elected to At-Large positions on the board.

Todd Mahon delivered a brief annual report on the successes of 2009 and what ACHS is looking forward to in 2010. Copies of the report were distributed at the meeting. The report can be downloaded from ACHS's web site at www.ac-hs.org. Hard copies will be mailed at an individual's request. Call 763-421-0600 to request a copy.



Sheriff Bruce Andersohn leading one of the ACHS tours through the new Anoka County Sheriff's Office and Tri-County Regional Forensics Laboratory, March 23, 2010.

After the annual business was finished, Program Manager Vickie Wendel gave a thorough and entertaining presentation on Sheriff's Office history. From contested and close elections, to running gun battles in the streets, to missing alligators, there was little left uncovered. Vickie is working on a comprehensive history of the Sheriff's Office.

After Vickie's presentation, Sheriff Bruce Andersohn and Captain James Stuart divided the group in two and gave tours of the new facility. Attendees got a behind-the-scenes look at the crime lab, evidence storage lockers, training areas, the motor pool, and much more. This was the best attended annual meeting in recent memory. Thanks to everyone who made it happen—including all of our guests that evening!!

Up To Date

Announcements and News

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



Cue the Orchestra!

ACHS is continuing to collect the musical history of the county in this third musical project which is focusing on orchestras. If you played in the school orchestra—elementary through college—or continue to play as an adult, we want to hear from you!

Community orchestras, church orchestras, school orchestras, and orchestra instructors/directors will all be highlighted in the next exhibit **with your help!** Bring in your stories, photographs, music, uniforms, programs, or whatever all you past and present orchestra musicians may have.

The “Done” List and the “To-Do” List at ACHS ... By Maria King

Staff and volunteers have achieved a great deal and it's nice to just look over a list of what has been accomplished in the past months.

Local obituaries from the *Anoka County Union*, *Star Tribune*, and *Pioneer Press* newspapers have been compiled and indexed. Special thanks go to Jeorgette Knoll and Kate Morphew for their outstanding work on this project.

Gary Greb is scanning the WWI era newspapers for some special items. They will become part of the WWI exhibit, opening May 18th. Gary is also photographing the new headstones on the graves at the Anoka State Hospital. The images will be added to *Silent Cities*, our comprehensive county burial index.

All of the oral history interviews have been added to the computer and a record created. They will be easier to find and much more accessible to researchers.

Handwritten account books indexing land records of Anoka County from the late 1800s have been given to ACHS and the first part of their preservation was completed by Ami Passenheim. She built custom fitted paper envelopes for each volume. Those land record books now need a record created and an index compiled to take this project from the “done” list to the “to do” list! Which comes next...

When Charlie Sell passed away, he left us his extensive photo collection. Each photo needs to be scanned into our computer, a description added, a number assigned, and a folder made for its home location in the files.

An ongoing photo project needs someone to go through the computer description of each photo and make sure the names are repeated in the “People” field. This will allow the researcher to search photos by name.

May 4th is Ghost Tour docent training. This incredibly popular program reaches thousands every year and is one of



Volunteer Appreciation luncheon, April 11, 2010.

our most successful outreach efforts. We need a team of trained guides to offer multiple tours as they fill up. You get to wear a costume and people hang on your every word! It's great fun! The tours are offered on Thursday and Saturday evenings and last roughly two hours. Volunteers must be able to walk a little over a mile and be comfortable speaking to a group. **Above all, tour guides must be reliable.** Costumes, training, and script will be provided.

Another volunteer opportunity involves the American Girl Teas. Help is needed with the craft to maintain safety with little girls and hot glue guns. There is also a very narrow window for washing up the dishes to be ready for the next tea. This month's spring teas ran into a snag and needed to be rescheduled. They will be offered on May 8th, so there's still time to sign up!

Other upcoming volunteer opportunities include the annual Heritage Home and Garden tour to be held on Sunday, July 11th. The Anoka County Fair will be Tuesday, July 27th through Sunday, August 1st. Please mark your calendar and plan to volunteer.

For these and other opportunities as they come up, please call Maria at the History Center. 763-421-0600.

Contributions & New Members — Thank you

(All lists are current to April 16, 2010)

DONATIONS

Anoka American Legion
Dennis and Darlene Berg
Jon and Mary Caine
Raymond and Bonnie Carlson
Marlys M. Chutich
Edward B. Cutter Post #102
David Dietz
John and Alice Ganter
Eloise A. Graham
David K. Hoagland
Al and Millie Kordiak
Richard and Mary Lang
John and Lillian Meyer
Lew Morris
Marlene J. Nichols
Robert and Joyce Schmidt
Jim W. Plowman
Ralph W. Talbot
Scott D. Varner
Ernest and Sharon Woizeschke

EMPLOYEE MATCH

Ameriprise Financial – Dan Frank

YEAR-END APPEAL

Guila Ann Hunt
Richard and Krista Johnson
Richard Salitermann
Frank and Karen Walmsley
John and Mildred Wolfe

ARTIFACT DONORS

Anoka County
Robert Blewett
William H. Dickenson
Duane Krueger
Philolectian Society
Bert Runquist
Bart Ward
Kent York

MEMORIALS

In Memory of Don Smith
From Judith Smith DeMarais & family

NEW MEMBERS

Robert & Lois Blewett – Anoka
Doris & James Boos – Ramsey
Lois French – Andover
Al & Millie Kordiak – Columbia Heights
Dale & Barbara McKusick – Ramsey
Marlene J. Nichols – Colville, WA
Amie Peterson — Ramsey

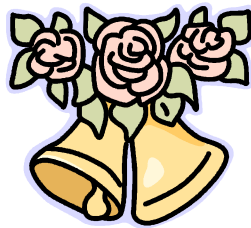
Our Volunteers are the best!

Imagine donating enough to cover a full-time staff person plus another person at half time! That is what our incredible volunteers recorded in hours donated to ACHS in 2009!

A total of 125 people recorded 3,696 hours working at everything from leading tours to clipping obituaries at ACHS.

Not only that, but we KNOW there were many more hours given that were not recorded on the calendar. These hours too, are precious, and we appreciate every single minute of your time. We honestly could not accomplish what we do without our fabulous volunteers. Thank you for your donation of one of the most valuable things you have—your time!!

Wedding Bells are Ringing...



Congratulations to two of our members, Sam and Kathy Hermansdorfer, who were married on March 3, 2010. Sam has put in hundreds of hours volunteering for ACHS in each of the past several years, and Kathy has been volunteering for over a year.

We wish them all the best in their new life together!

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

Joseph Chutich, who passed away on March 12, 2010. Joe operated the Hardware Hank Store in Anoka for 32 years. Everyone knew this kind hearted man who loved people and his community.

Reinhard "Mike" Jenne, who passed away while sitting on his John Deere tractor, March 4, 2010. Mike loved farm history and delighted in having the Nowthen Threshing Show next to his home. We'll miss his visits to the show "Store" this summer.

Mildred Pratt Giddings, who passed away on March 12, 2010. We called her Millie. She was a member and volunteer for ACHS for many years. Her love of history was evident every time she spoke of her family and her town—Anoka.

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

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Coming Events

May & June

(History Center Lobby) To complement the *Safe for Democracy* exhibit, ACHS has invited a local collector to share some of his World War I artifacts with everyone through a special display in the History Center lobby.

World War One Artifacts

May 8, 10:00 am and 1:00 pm

(Anoka County History Center and Library) Welcome in the sunny days of spring with Julie, the American Girl of 1970s! Girls will look at some of the trials and triumphs that American society was going through, and top it all off with a fabulous hat making session. Girls, their dolls, and grown-ups will end the day with a tea party. **Reservations required.** Tickets for girls are \$7, adults are \$10—and dolls attend free!

RESCHEDULED American Girl Teas

May 4, 6:00 pm.

(Meet at the History Center) If you have ever thought about leading one of these incredibly popular tours, this is your day! We will provide training for new volunteers, share the latest stories we've heard, and dust off the tour guiding skills of our experienced docents. Call Maria with any questions.

Ghost Tour Docent Training/Refresher

May 20 & 22 7:30 pm.

(Meet at the History Center) Take a walk on downtown Anoka's spookier side and hear stories of things that go bump in the night! These tours are filled with stories of history and of unexplained things. Advanced tickets are highly recommended—these popular tours sell out very fast. Reserve your place by calling 763-421-0600 and use your Master or Visa card to be sure you get your place on the tour. Tours are on the first and third Thursday and Saturday of each month through October.

Ghosts of Anoka Tours

May 18, 7:00 p.m.

(History Center) Join our American Legion and VFW organizations to open the newest exhibit in the ACHS military gallery—*Safe for Democracy: A Closer Look at Anoka County in WWI*. This exhibit tells the story of what Anoka County citizens did, what they gave up, and what they went through in the war to end wars. See page 4.

World War I exhibit Opening

July 11

Save the date! We have a great line up of beautiful homes and gardens in Anoka's Oakwood Drive neighborhood on this tour! Mark your calendar and watch for more information in the next newsletter.

Anoka Heritage Home and Garden Tour



History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

Vol. 40 No. 4

July – August 2010

Oakwood Neighborhood—2010 Anoka Home & Garden Tour

SERVING:

Andover

Anoka

Bethel

Blaine

Centerville

Circle Pines

Columbia Heights

Columbus

Coon Rapids

East Bethel

Fridley

Ham Lake

Hilltop

Lexington

Lino Lakes

Linwood

Nowthen

Oak Grove

Ramsey

St. Francis

Spring Lake Park



305 Oakwood Drive

This rambler-style home has been in the Freeburg family for nearly its entire existence. The 1950 home was purchased by Don and Merlyne Freeburg in 1952. Don owned Freeburg Fuel, which operated on the banks of the Rum River on the north end of Second Avenue in Anoka. The company was started in 1933

by Don's father and uncle and was known as Freeburg Bros.

Don and Merlyne raised their two sons, John and Mark, in this house and it remains in the family today. The sons remember their parents hosting formal dinner parties for their neighbors and friends, many of whom were also local business owners. John still chuckles at the thought of dinner guests arriving in formal attire, including a three-piece suit. For most of the guests it was little more than a walk down the street, but that didn't stop them from treating it like a special occasion. Merlyne attended to all of the cooking and hosting duties for the dinners. Alterations and renovations to the house include refinished floors, opening up the living room into the bedroom, and the kitchen into a 3-season porch. The current owner was once a landscape contractor and created the yard with his wife handling the flowers. They believe that you have to love your garden—because it's a lot of work. The maple tree on the front corner and the pine and spruce in the back yard were planted by Don when the family moved in. The shuffleboard court he installed is buried.

1300 Oakwood Drive

Built in 1941, this Cape Cod-style home was built by one of Anoka's auto dealers, Don Odegard, owner of Odegard's Sales and Service, a Ford and Mercury auto and tractor dealership. Don lived here with his wife, Rosella, and son until Don's 1950 death in an auto accident. Some have said that Rosella is responsible for the name Oakwood Drive.

Sam and Jean Gesko lived here from 1967 until 1975. Sam Gesko was the first professionally trained city manager in Anoka's history. He was also the first Anoka city manager not born and raised in the community. During Sam's tenure, the city redeveloped many older homes into apartments. He also navigated contentious border battles with Ramsey and Grow (now Andover) Townships. Two Anoka-Hennepin School District teachers lived here for the next ten years when Dennis and Marlene Colvin owned the home.

Pastor Jerry O'Neill and his family moved in on Christmas Eve of 1985. Their first Christmas in the home saw a living room with no furniture, just a tree, a fire in the fireplace, and their children. It was the first home they owned. Jerry served at Advent Lutheran Church in Anoka, and Denise was a flight attendant with Northwest Airlines. That first drafty, winter evening was the impetus for a series of improvements to the home, including new windows and insulation. In 1990, they turned a first floor bedroom into a dining room and added French doors that open from the new dining room to the deck. The O'Neills lived here until they sold the home to the current owners in 2002.



1285 Oakwood Drive

Likely built in 1941, this house was the home to Dr. Frank and Mary Gratzek. Dr. Gratzek was born in Wright Township and graduated from the University of St. Thomas before training at the University of Minnesota's medical school. After graduating in 1926 from the U, he served as the Chief of the Radiology Outpatient Department at the V.A. hospital and on the medical staff at Hennepin County General. Throughout his career Dr. Gratzek served as an instructor

in radiology at the University of Minnesota Hospitals. Mary worked for the Modern Sanitary Supply Company. Harlan and Gyda Dalluge lived in the home from 1971 to 1976. Harlan worked for Volunteers of America, first as a social worker at the Bar None Boys Ranch, then as state director. In 1979, the house was purchased by local realtor, Carl Youngquist. His time in the home saw a major remodel of the first floor. They completely gutted the kitchen, expanded and created the current family room. Youngquist still remembers the four months of outdoor cooking on the grill during the kitchen remodeling and how it nearly swore him off BBQing for life!

See page 5 for all the details of the tours in this neighborhood!

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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President – Paul Pierce, III (At-Large F)

Vice President – Tom Sherohman

(District #4)

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District #2 – Bill Prugh

District #3 – Dick Johnson

District #5 – Jan Anderson

District #6 – Judy Hanna

District #7 – Bart Ward

At Large A – Lori Yager

At Large B – Dan Frank

At Large C – Tom Ward

At Large D – Robert Munns

At-Large E -- William Erhart

At-Large G -- Catherine Vesley

At-Large H -- Harvey Greenburg

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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

Suburbanization: Anoka County's Twentieth Century Story

Anoka County is in a unique position of being able to tell the national story of suburban development without having to leave the county limits. Columbia Heights grew as a streetcar suburb of Minneapolis in the late nineteenth century thanks to Thomas Lowery's streetcar company. Then, same as today, there were lots of people who worked in the business district of Minneapolis, but wanted to live in a more spacious and affordable home away from the city. Lowery knew this and he made money from it.

After World War II, real estate developers Orin Thompson and Vern Donnay built thousands of homes around the metro area, including homes in Blaine and Coon Rapids. Across the nation there was a boom in housing construction as the United States entered a previously unknown era of prosperity. The growing middle class wanted new homes and improved infrastructure of our roads and highways, along with cheaper cars, made it possible to buy a home in the suburbs and still commute to a job in the city.

In Anoka County, the story continued into the 1970s and 1980s with the growth of communities like Andover and Ramsey. Even an established community like Anoka was not immune to the effects of suburban development. Previously farmed land on the edges of town was bought up and sold off in smaller units for housing. One great example in Anoka is the Oakwood neighborhood on the eastern banks of the Rum River and the Mississippi River. This land was some of the first settled in the city and was farm land until the early twentieth century. By the 1940s, upscale homes were being built for Anoka's new generation of business owners and white collar workers. Naturally, they were owners of businesses that drove and were driven by this new America: auto dealerships, construction and building companies, and fuel companies.

Eleven homes and gardens from the Oakwood neighborhood will be on the July 11 Anoka Heritage Home and Garden Tour. **See page 1 and 5 for more information.**

Look for ACHS to do more with the history of the county's suburban development in the near future.

From the President...

By Paul Pierce, III

Technology has altered the way we get information. There was just an article in last weeks' paper about how Ancestry.com has experienced record success. It has given the company the respect in the business world that it deserves and overcome previous skepticism that it had a viable product to sell. Their ever-increasing database has been impressive.

TPT (channel 2+) has created an excellent collection of history programs, most produced "in house" over the last decade. Public television has been an early adopter of the new technology, providing programming on most of their expanded channel capacity. Those shows can be enjoyed on the over-the-airways channel 2.2 thanks to the new digital signal system. Most of the programming on that station is local or Minnesota history and maybe worth putting your rooftop antenna back up. Those of you on cable or satellite stations can watch services like the History Channel, etc. to see more. The History Channel did a Halloween in Anoka show that airs most years in October. Look for it if you haven't seen it yet.

Wikipedia and the internet are so full of information that you could spend the rest of your life reading all of the "hits" that a Google search on "history" would list.

If your experience is like mine, you rarely find exactly what you were looking for and while you're looking, you see the same thing repackaged hundreds of times. It's also hard to sift the junk from the real information on the web.

Still, none of these compare to the wealth of local information you can find at the Anoka County History Center. We have had some wonderful new artifacts and lots of new photos that are now scanned into our collection.

Always remember that you don't have to give away your family's collection to share them with us. We can scan photos and give the originals back to you. Sharing your pictures with us is also a good idea because it creates a copy in our care that is safe from the usual calamities (fire, theft, flood and tornado). Our library of photos is very easy to search and enjoy now that it is computerized.

Also the Anoka County Genealogical Society is currently working on a way to provide Ancestry.com to the public at our location, so that will be another resource ACHS will have for you to use and enjoy.

Ballistic Vest



Front view. The straps are Velcro to make the vest adjustable.

Body armor has become standard in law enforcement because of the added protection it affords the officers. In Anoka County, some departments require their officers to wear their body armor at all times when they are in uniform. Other department “strongly recommend” wearing body armor while in uniform, cautioning their officers that the uniform itself can be seen as a target.

This vest is from the Sheriff’s Office and is currently on display in the *Law and Ladders* exhibit at the Anoka County History Center.

There are several companies that manufacture body armor. The Sheriff’s Office gets their armor from the Gator Hawk Armor, Inc.

The manufacturer’s recommendation for this type of Kevlar body armor puts a life span on the equipment. Once it reaches five years old, it is no longer considered serviceable and



Back view. Ballistic panels to protect the officer are inside the fabric covering.

should not be worn. This creates a turnover in body armor and an unique opportunity to help in 2003.

At the outbreak of the Iraq War, news came of injuries to American troops because their humvees were not armored. The U.S. Marine Corps came up with a creative way to solve that problem—at least in part. They contacted law enforcement agencies all over the United States to ask for outdated body armor. The outdated armor was of no value to law officers, but the Marines knew it was, in all likelihood, still going to stop most bullets. Even if it stopped only some rounds, that was better than no armor at all. The Marines did have their own body armor and were not planning to wear the outdated armor—they wanted to line their humvees with it!

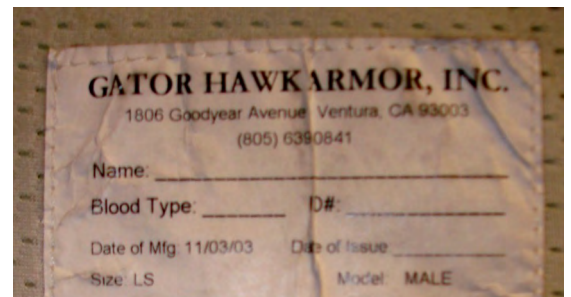
Law enforcement agencies across the US packed up their outdated body armor and shipped it to Iraq where it was used to line the passenger areas inside the humvees. The Anoka County Sheriff’s office collected about 40 outdated ballistic vests and sent them overseas in an effort to help.

Congress has since provided funding to upgrade the vehicles used in Iraq, so they no longer need the outdated vests from law enforcement agencies.

The vest on display was manufactured in early 2003—too old to be safely used by an officer in Anoka County.



The front of the vest has a pocket for a “soft trauma plate”—a pad-like liner to lessen impact of a bullet against the armor



The label in the vest asks not just for the owner’s name, but their blood type, a grim reminder of the reason for wearing it.



Police Safety Fair at Riverfest

See law enforcement equipment and talk with officers from across Anoka County at the History Center on Saturday, July 10, 10am-3pm! There will be demonstrations, photo opportunities, safety tips, and tons of fun! The Anoka Police Department has a few bike helmets to give away to some lucky kids, so come early and stay late! The *Law and Ladders* exhibit, featuring the history of county fire and law enforcement agencies, is free on the day of Riverfest!



**Bring the Kids—
and your
camera!**



RIVERFESTRIVERFESTRIVERFESTRIVERFESTRIVERFESTRIVERFESTRIVERFESTRIVERFESTRIVERFESTRIVER

Strings, Things, and Notable Staff...By Cally Smithers, ACHS intern

The third installment in the ACHS series on music focuses on orchestras, instructors, and conductors from Anoka County. Some of the notables include Kenneth Davenport, Thaddeus Giddings, Ruth Hallenberg, Charles “Chuck” Olson, and what each brought to the musical community.

Some of the stories uncovered in preparation for this exhibit are incredible! One of the best is about Kenneth Davenport’s very special Bass Cello. Ken owned a 17th Century Guarneri Bass. It is the only one left of the three that were made. Ed and Janet Davenport told the story of Kenneth’s cello, starting in 19th century Russia. The czar’s palace musicians first used this cello. During the political unrest of the Russian Revolution, the cello was hidden deep in a hay wagon to sneak it out of the country. The soldiers charged with stopping people from fleeing the country used a pitchfork to stick in the hay to see if anyone was hiding there before passing the wagon through. There are still holes from the pitchfork tines in the cello, but they never affected its sound.

The cello went to Austria, but before World War II, the cello’s Jewish owner came to the United States. When the owner gave up playing, he decided to sell the cello. He told the Chicago shop owner to only sell it to a symphony musician. Kenneth and a man from New York were both vying for this remarkable treasure. As luck would have it, there was a snowstorm and the man from New York could not get there. At the end of the day, the shop owner told Kenneth the cello was his. Apparently, Kenneth called his wife and told her to mortgage the house! Kenneth played the cello as the Assistant Principal Bass in the Minnesota Symphony Orchestra for many years. Kenneth willed the bass to the Minnesota Symphony Orchestra and that is its current home.

Davenport Repair has loaned ACHS a Bass Cello very similar to Kenneth’s very special cello for the exhibit to help tell Kenneth’s story.

Please join us for the opening of the exhibit on Saturday, July 10th.



Kenneth Davenport with his Guarneri cello.

Anoka Heritage Home and Garden Tour

Sunday,
July 11, 2010
 1:00pm to 5:00pm

Pre-Sale/Ticket: Available at the Anoka County History Center
 3146 Third Avenue North, Anoka
 Day-of-Tour Tickets: Available at The Antique, 1300 Third Avenue South,
 and Devon's Gardens, 2346 Fourth Avenue North

A highlight of the summer, the Anoka Heritage Home and Garden Tour features open house tours of some of the city's most beautiful and historic homes and some of its most well-tended gardens. Raffle prizes will be given away by local businesses on the tour. This year's tour features homes in the Oakwood neighborhood on the banks of the Mississippi and Rum Rivers. For more information on the tour and the homes participating, visit www.ac-hs.org or call us at 763-421-0600.

Hosted by:

Anoka County Historical Society



Win a FREE one-night stay at Ticknor Hill Bed and Breakfast in Anoka!!
 All ticket buyers are entered in a drawing to win.
 Call 763-421-0600 for details.

Tour all 14 sites for only **\$15**

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Up To Date

Announcements and News

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



giveMN.org

Anyone can use this convenient website to make a donation to ACHS with your credit card at any time. Thank you for support of the ACHS mission.



Have you checked out the ACHS page on Facebook? On random days of the week, we post a question about county history and encourage our “fans” to answer it. We give our fans a day or two to comment before we post the answer—or what we know as the answer! Sometimes our fans have additional information that is not in our files—so we learn, too. It has proven to be a lot of fun and a unique way to disseminate some little history tidbits that often go unnoticed.

Check it out—we have a public page, so anyone can see our content even if you are not a Facebook member—and join the Facebook discussion.

Summer Interns

We have two summer interns with ACHS this year and we are pleased to be working with these wonderful people, though we’re still stumbling over their names a bit! We have Kaylee Blechinger, a recent grad from St. Cloud State, and Cally Smithers, a student at Metro State. It’s hard not to confuse Kaylee’s name with Cally’s!

Kaylee is working with Marilyn on a project to repack artifacts in new acid-free paper/boxes, inspect them, and be sure they remain in good condition. She is also starting some preparation work with Vickie on a new exhibit about death and dying.

Cally has been working on the third installment of the music exhibit with Vickie and the music committee. When that opens, Cally will start a new project with the collections.

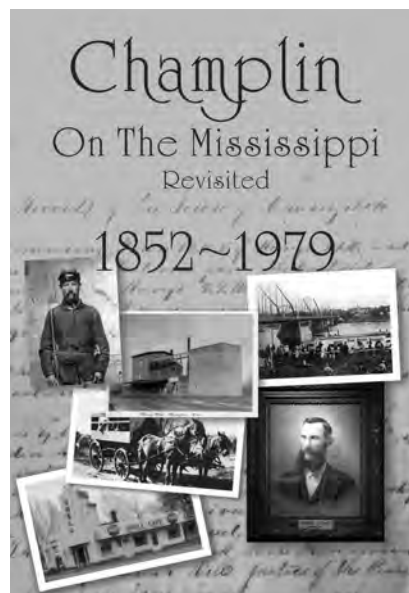
Volunteer Opportunities... by Maria King

Summer has arrived and those hot humid days bring to mind lots of summer opportunity for volunteers. In fact, July vies with October to be our busiest month!

The annual Heritage Home and Garden tour will require roughly 25 volunteers to greet patrons, check tickets, answer questions, and direct patrons through each house or garden. The work is not hard and you get to meet lots of interesting people. Unless you are stationed in one of the gardens, you can expect to spend the afternoon in air-conditioned comfort. Check your calendar for Sunday, July 11, from 12:45 until 5pm, and call Maria if you can help.

This year’s Anoka County Fair will be held the week of Tuesday, July 27 through Sunday, August 1st. A minimum of six people are needed each day in two shifts. The morning shift is 10:00am to 3:30pm, and the afternoon shift will be 2:30pm until 8:00pm. For many years, ACHS has staffed the farmhouse near the north end of the fairgrounds. We demonstrate old-fashioned crafts and explain items that were once common in rural Anoka County. A gain, the work is not hard, you will meet interesting people, but this time there is no air conditioning! You wear a costume and your entry ticket will be provided. You will have enough time off to visit the attractions and fill up on fair food!

Other volunteer opportunities are also available for people seeking shorter time commitments and for those seeking a project of their own. Call Maria for ideas and to schedule. Thanks in advance for all you do to make this organization a vital advocate for local history.



Champlin’s Got History

It’s not too early to think about Christmas presents!

Champlin’s story is now available in a beautifully embossed hardbound book printed on acid-free paper with a full color-dust jacket. Included are many pictures, stories, portraits, maps, and for easy reference, they’ve even added an index.

The Champlin Historical Society is offering a pre-print price of their new book for

\$29.95 until the end of July 2010. After the book goes to press in August, the price will be \$36.00.

Order forms are available through the City of Champlin website and at the Anoka Historical Society.

Contributions & New Members – Thank you

(All lists are current to June 11, 2010)

DONATIONS

Warren & Eva Mae Cleator
Mary Ward & Jon Ekerholm
Janet Galvin
Mac & Laurie MacKechnie
Eugene & Monica Swieringa
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EMPLOYEE MATCH

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Liann Lisana
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Dennis and Janice Olson
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John and Jill Sales
Katie Voss
James Wolfe

NEW MEMBERS

Larry Backlund
Stephanie Donahue & Kathleen Keegan family
Danae Kylander
Amie Labo
Gladys Nelson Pully
Jeanne A. Radotich

CORRECTION:

The last newsletter listed both the Anoka American Legion and Edward B. Cutter Post #102 organizations having made donations. However, it was the Anoka American Legion *Women's Auxiliary*, Unit 102 and the Edward B. Cutter Post #102 that made the donations.

MEMORIALS

In Memory of Millie Pratt Giddings

From Roger & Dorothy Carlson

In Memory of Larry Elrite

From Jerry & Karen Boles of Keller Williams Classic Realty

Marlys M. Chutich
Robert & Carol Dordan
Donald M. Greenberg of Greenberg's Leasing, Inc.
Mike & Maria King
Genevieve Meyer
Randy & Pat Snodgrass
Ron & Vickie Wendel
Ernest & Sharon Woizeschke

In Memory of Lynn Mahon

From Board Members/Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums

Mike & Maria King
Randy & Pat Snodgrass
Marlys Talbot
Ron & Vickie Wendel family

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

Nellie Kline, who passed away on December 2, 2009. Nellie was a life member of ACHS and continued her support of history her entire life of 98 years.

Lawrence "Larry" Elrite, who passed away on April 29, 2010. Larry was the husband of ACHS member and dedicated volunteer, Lucille Elrite.

Lynn Mahon, who passed away on May 10, 2010. Lynn was the father of ACHS executive director Todd Mahon and a loyal ACHS volunteer.

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

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Coming Events

July 10, 10am to 4pm

Anoka Riverfest Police Safety Fair

(History Center lawn and parking lot) We're hosting a Police Safety Fair to compliment the *Law and Ladders* exhibit! Police departments from across Anoka County are bringing equipment to see, try out, and talk with officers. When you finish the Police Safety Fair outside, come inside to tour the exhibit—NO ADMISSION for the ACHS Exhibit Gallery on Riverfest! See page 4.

July 10, 10am to 4pm

Sounds of Anoka County: Strings, Things and Notable Staff

(History Center Exhibit Hall) Come see the third phase of our musical history with this new exhibit that looks at the orchestras, instructors, and conductors in Anoka County's musical past. Stories, photos, instruments and more will make your heart sing! See page 4.

July 11, 1pm to 5pm

Anoka Heritage Home and Garden Tour

(Anoka's Oakwood neighborhood) Get your tickets NOW for this fantastic tour of homes and gardens in the Oakwood neighborhood of Anoka. Several businesses are included in the tour where special displays and activities are happening. Stop by Ticknor Hill B & B to see if you are the lucky winner of a night's stay! Visit with "Doctor Flora" at the Artique! See page 5 for all the details.

July 1, 3, 10, 15, and 17, 7:30 pm.

Ghosts of Anoka Tours

August 5, 7, 19, and 21, 7:30 pm.

(Meet at the History Center) Take a walk on downtown Anoka's spookier side and hear stories of things that go bump in the night! These tours are filled with stories of history and of unexplained things. Advanced tickets are highly recommended—these popular tours sell out very fast. Reserve your place by calling 763-421-0600 and use your Master or Visa card to be sure you get your place on the tour. Tours are on the first and third Thursday and Saturday of each month through October.

July 21-26

Anoka County Fair

(Anoka County Fair Grounds, North Ferry Street, Anoka) The ACHS will continue our tradition of bringing life to the Old Farmhouse. Be sure to stop by to see what is happening when you are at the Fair! Call Maria at 763-421-0600 to volunteer.

August 1, 3pm

Prairie Lightening: The Rise and Fall of William D. Washburn

(Anoka County History Center) ACHS is hosting a book signing for author, Kerck Kelsey, a great-great-grandson of Washburn. He will give an illustrated presentation on the life of William Drew Washburn and sign copies of the book. Washburn was a leading entrepreneur and politician of early Minnesota, owned the saw mill in Anoka, and was deeply involved lumber, flour milling, railroads, and streetcars.

August 21-23

Nowthen Threshing Show

(7415 Old Viking Blvd., Nowthen) Join in the fun as ACHS staffs the General Store at the Threshing show—but remember, when you



History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

Vol. 40 No. 5

September — October 2010

SERVING:

Andover
Anoka
Bethel
Blaine
Centerville
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Columbia Heights
Columbus
Coon Rapids
East Bethel
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Hilltop
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Oak Grove
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Spring Lake Park

Dancing up a storm at Anoka's Armory

Anoka has been home to a National Guard unit since the first one was formed with 46 members on August 27, 1887, but they didn't have a place to call their own until 1897. Before the first Armory was built, company members met to drill in a narrow basement under a downtown store, then in the courthouse, and finally the Anoka City Hall. This last did not always work out well—any time the city had a meeting, drill had to be cancelled. That was troubling enough since they were required to drill regularly by state law, but worse was the lack of a way to tell members before they traveled the miles into town only to find the building occupied and drill cancelled.

The members of the company began raising money to build their own armory and had plans drawn for a building 60 x 120 feet. They got bids from builders and realized they were about \$400 short of their needs. The choice was to sell “subscriptions” to the public to raise the last \$400, though it was not a popular idea among the members of Company B. They would have preferred to do it all themselves, but when faced with the choice of not building and probably disbanding the company, subscriptions looked better. The subscriptions were sold starting in September. Most people bought \$5 or \$10 shares in the building; some as little as \$1. One man, E.P. Sawyer, bought \$25.

Construction began as they ended the subscription sales. The company held their first drill in the building even before it was finished. The “lighting plant” was not yet installed when their first drill began. The report on the building said the company “double-quickd about the room without any perceptible vibration to the floor.”

Opening night for the new Armory was December 3, 1897. The decorating committee used bunting, flags, evergreens, and “varicolored decorations in pleasing profusion” artistically draped “from every girder and crossbeam.” Music was provided by the Twin City Mandolin Club, whose music was “choice and for the dancing incomparably fine.” A special train of dignitaries arrived from Minneapolis and included Minnesota's governor, D.W. Clough and his wife.

The proceeds from the gala opening night ball was enough to pay off all the subscribers and leave the Armory debt free.

Company B used the building—as did many other groups in the area—for drill, dances, balls, and gatherings of all kinds. The Armory was the only building in Anoka that had space for a large gathering.



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

A New Fundraising Event for the Historical Society

This fall, the Anoka County Historical Society is holding a new fundraising event. The ACHS Sock Hop will take place on Friday, Oct. 1 at the Anoka Armory. It will be a fun event with live music from the TC Cats and a live-remote from WDGY, "The True Oldies Channel." The TC Cats play covers of '50s and '60s rock and roll and doo wop. We'll also feature a cake walk, beer and wine, root beer floats, and hors d'oeuvres.

As with our previous fundraising event, the Harvest Time Barn Dance, the Sock Hop will feature lots of great silent-auction items and packages. The Sock Hop committee is currently combing the county and beyond for goods, services, trip packages and more for attendees to bid on and win. The better the quality and the greater the quantity, the more funds will be raised through the auctions.

And this is where you, an ACHS member and friend, can really help us out. Do you have season tickets for a local team or to one of the Twin Cities many theaters? If yes, please consider donating tickets to a game, event, or performance. You will receive a letter confirming the donation that can be used for tax deduction purposes. If you don't have tickets, perhaps you are a valued customer at a local business and can request a gift certificate for a service or merchandise. If you are a crafter or hobbyist, you could also donate high quality hand-made items, like quilts, woodwork, or more.

This is going to be a fun event and the number of tickets available is limited to just a few hundred as space at the Anoka Armory is limited. So come on out, dust off your poodle skirt and put a shine on your campus shoes because this is going to be one of the most memorable events of the year!

See you at the Hop!

From the President...

By Paul Pierce, III

Somewhere on the shelf of my old storeroom is a roll of music posters from the 1960s featuring groups like *The Castaways*, *High Spirits*, and *The Underbeats*. Those show posters were highly coveted, but you couldn't touch them until after the show and then everybody was trying to get them. The posters were in the windows and on the front doors of the Anoka Armory—usually two posters—and if you were lucky, sometimes four or more. You'd never get all four, but the more there were, the better chance you had to get one.

My successful scores went up on my bedroom wall with some of my own creations, and I took pictures (most a bit fuzzy) of the progress as my collection grew. Most of those groups didn't have a record. If they did, it was a one hit song and some other song on a "45."

Those were very primitive days in music. You could only see most of these groups live unless one happened to be featured on the late night local music shows. John Gallos was one local TV personality who hosted the show. On most weekends, it featured a polka band or something, so the chance to see a rock band was even more fleeting than the live show. There were no VCRs to record the show, so if you fell asleep, the opportunity was gone forever.

The most famous band to play at Anoka's Armory at that time was *The Trashmen* with their 1964 hit "Surfin' Bird". Until Prince, they were our most famous and successful rock band—so famous they even played on *American Bandstand*. Next most well known were *The Castaways*. Their hit was "Liar, Liar" and they made it to #12 on the hit parade. They also toured with the *Beach Boys*. Other groups I remember at the Armory were *The Delcounts*, and later, *Crow* ("Evil Woman") and one of my favorites, *The Litter* with their most popular song, "Action Woman."

The Junior High social scene back then was a little wilder than our Historical Society Sock Hop on October 1st will be—I guarantee no one will ask you to step outside to fight and no one will be "sniffing glue!" I can guarantee it will be a great time as we take the Armory back to the days of 50s and 60s rock and roll with the T.C. Cats, fantastic silent auction items, friends and fun! Tickets are on sale now at the History Center. Be there or be square!!

The Story of an Artifact

Preserving Your Own Artifacts:

Cleaning Vinyl Records...By Todd Mahon

For the last few years, the Anoka County Historical Society has occasionally featured a segment on our cable television show, *It's Your History*, that deals with preserving and handling family heirlooms and collectibles. The Historical Society is home to thousands of three-dimensional objects, photographs, and paper records. Our techniques to preserve them are often quite easily accomplished at home, and usually don't require extraordinary measures.

In keeping with our Sock Hop theme, we decided to give our newsletter readers the information we featured in a TV segment on how to preserve vinyl records by cleaning them. Cleaning a record and periodically changing the needle on your record player can ensure years of listening pleasure.

First, it's important to note that the procedure used here is for vinyl records only, not for the older, and less common, shellac records. Recognizing a vinyl record is easy as they are thin, shiny, black (usually), and slightly flexible. When kept out of the sunlight, away from caustic chemicals, and handled with care to avoid scratches, these records can easily last several hundred years—something that cannot be said for CDs or any kind of magnetic tape.



What you'll need :

- A clean spray bottle
- Distilled water
- Isopropyl alcohol (90% or higher)
- Kodak Photo-Flo solution
- Velvet record-cleaning pad or brush

What you'll do:

Mix three parts distilled water with one part Isopropyl alcohol in the spray bottle. I suggest $\frac{3}{4}$ cup distilled water and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Isopropyl alcohol. Add a few drops of Photo-Flo solution. This can be kind of tricky to get right. Do it slow, and shake the bottle between every few drops. Bubbles should form and disappear right away. If the bubbles remain, you've added too much Photo-Flo.



Wash your hands thoroughly. Place the record on your turn table. Cover the label and lightly squirt the contents of the spray bottle on the record. I find that 2-3 sprays tends to be enough.

Using a velvet record-cleaning pad or bar, rotate the record on the table, until the surface of the record is clean. Repeat with second side.

After the record is completely dry it can be returned to its sleeve.



Some of this information was found in Don Williams' book *Saving Stuff* (2005). You can read more about preservation in the ACHS library.

S O C K H O P

A benefit for the Anoka County Historical Society



Fri., Oct. 1, 2010
at the
Anoka Armory

6:30pm to 10:00pm

\$15



Live music with the
TC Cats, a live
remote from WDGY,
silent auctions, and
more.

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. These tours are evenings filled with stories, traditions, characters, history, and symbolism.

Tuesday, October 5—Oakwood Cemetery, Anoka
Thursday, October 7—Incarnation Cemetery, Lino Lakes
Saturday, October 9—Cedar Cemetery, Oak Grove

Come to one or come to all three!

Tickets for individual tours are \$7.00 (ACHS members)

\$8.00 (non-members)

Ticket Packages 3 Tours for \$18.00 (ACHS members)

\$21.00 (non-members)

Tickets are limited and must be purchased in advance!

You will receive maps 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

All tours begin at 7:00 p.m. and go on rain or shine, so dress for the weather. Be prepared for walking in low light and standing as we visit graves and hear the stories they have to tell. Tours last about an hour.

Continued from page 1

In 1912, the state announced that they would provide \$10,000 for each company to build an armory, and members of the Anoka Company seized the opportunity to improve and expand their building. The “new” Armory was dedicated on November 3, 1914, with “speeches, music, dancing, refreshments and a pleasant social time.” The Company brought in an “orchestra” to play for the dedication dance.

The Armory in Anoka was the center for dances, banquets, basketball, indoor kitten ball, graduations, and more as it was the only facility in town that could host large crowds until the Anoka High School expanded in 1929.

The Armory was destroyed by the tornado that ripped through Anoka on Father’s Day in 1939. The drill hall was leveled and the iron roof supports were thrown out onto Main



Street; but almost miraculously, the people who had taken shelter in the basement of the Armory were all safe.

The outbreak of WWII got in the way of rebuilding the Armory and no progress was made on the site until 1952. By early in 1954, the rebuilt Anoka Armory was dedicated, once again with great ceremony, speeches, and music provided by the 47th Infantry Division band.



Though it is not the only place in town large enough to host large groups of people anymore, the Armory still continues to be a gathering place in the Anoka area as well as serving the National Guard members who actively drill there today.

Join us as we bring back those wonderful memories of dancing at the Armory with our first ever “Sock Hop” to be held in the Armory on October 1st!
See page 4 for more details.

Up To Date

Announcements and News

◆Just a reminder that the September 9 and October 14 ACHS Board of Directors meetings will be at 6:00 p.m. All meetings are held at the History Center. Board meetings are open to the public and everyone is welcome.

Participate in a Project to Document Suburban History

The Anoka County Historical Society is partnering with the Hennepin History Museum on a project to research the suburban development of the two counties. We are looking for candidates to be interviewed about their suburban experiences. Did you or your family purchase an Orin Thompson home in Coon Rapids or a Vern Donnay home in Blaine? Maybe your family sold the farm in Oak Grove to be developed for housing? If so, we'd love to interview you. Interviews last about a half hour and can include other members of your family. If you are interested, please call us at 763-421-0600.

“Star Power” Quilts

One of our wonderful ACHS quilts is going to be part of a special exhibit at the Minnetonka Center for the Arts from October 12th-November 4th. The exhibit is called “Star Power” and features many quilts—antique and new—all with some kind of “star” pattern.

The Center is located at 2240 Northshore Drive in Wayzata. For more information, please call 952-473-7361.

Thank you, Dave

Many of our members did not know Dave Niles, but you have all benefited from his hundreds of hours of work at the History Center.

Dave's first project with ACHS was the oral history interviews with Korean War vets; then he moved on to interview Vietnam War vets. His next project was an exhaustive study of the Anoka State Hospital. The resulting work is a phenomenal resource that is used by many people in our library. Dave's next project was to research Anoka County's role in WWI. His report is what our *Safe For Democracy* exhibit was built from and it would not have been possible without Dave's extensive report.

Dave passed away after a short and unexpected illness on July 12, 2010. His dedication to detail, his love of history, his quiet smile, incredible sense of humor, and his friendship will be sorely missed. We wish his wife, Elynn, comfort and peace.

Volunteers, Volunteers, Volunteers!

By Maria King

Volunteers have been busy this summer, starting with the Heritage Home and Garden Tour on July 11th. This annual event was a big success. There were 35 volunteers who either helped staff a house, garden, or the booth at Riverfest. At the end of the tour, all the volunteers had an opportunity, along with the homeowners, to visit each house on the tour. One volunteer remarked that the homes were beautiful; another that he met so many nice people; and another said she had learned more history in an afternoon than in all her boring college classes! In short, a good time was had by all!

Nothing is more Americana than the County Fair! Amid the 4H displays, the horseback riding, and the cheese curds, the Historical Society brought meaningful local history to fair goers. We've staffed the farmhouse at the fair for more than 30 years, greeting visitors and demonstrating old tools and household tasks. Sometimes we've wrestled the old treadle sewing machine into sewing clothing or quilts. We've churned butter, worked old puzzles, and braided rugs. This year, my favorite moment came when I was showing a youngster the sauerkraut cutter. I explained that it was laid on top of a crock to catch the shredded cabbage. “You do know what a crock is, right?” He assured me he did, but his mother later explained to me that he had a mental image of shredding cabbage into a specific kind of popular PLASTIC SHOE today known as a “croc!”

Another wonderful crew sold pickles and penny candy to hundreds of children at the Nowthen Threshing Show, all while speaking in first person about 1920 history.

Every year, our volunteers represent ACHS to the public. They are an incredible group of charming and enthusiastic individuals who willingly give their time in return for the simple satisfaction of seeing a patron's face light up with interest. Whether they are at the fair, the Heritage Home and Garden Tour, the Threshing Show, or the Sock Hop, volunteers are the ones who make sure everyone has a great time and learns a little something in the process. We simply couldn't function without them!

This county fair was particularly poignant to me because it will probably be my last! I have decided to retire at the end of the year. Next year I will probably be back as a volunteer myself!

Summer and autumn finds our dedicated docents on the trail of Anoka's haunted places. Each year more and more tours are offered as people discover the sheer joy of good storytelling! Veteran tour guide Gary Greb leads a team that now includes 12 guides. There have been 17 tours already and they continue through Halloween. It's a great tour and if you haven't been on one, you should go! It costs less than a movie and is more entertaining! Call Maria to buy a ticket or to schedule a private tour for 15 or more of your friends!

Contributions & New Members — Thank you

(All lists are current to August 23, 2010)

DONATIONS

Anoka Business and Landowners
Association
Lyle and Jerene Anderson
Kevin & Patti Bellows
Janet Douglass Johnson
Linda Kelly
Lynne Larson
Barbara Lewis
Linwood Township
Teri L. Ningen thru Community
Shares of Minnesota
Joseph Pelawa
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Ameriprise Financial – Dan Frank

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Anoka Halloween Committee
Jan Breuer
Marvin Christenson
Lucille Elrite
Ed Evans
John Freeburg
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David Legrid
Charles Lindberg
Myron Martin
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Mark Moberg
Dave Niles
A.J. Olson
Fred Olson
Graydon Peterson
Kathy Provance-Cheerful Chuggers
Peter Enich Kindergarten Center
Gwen Reiter
Pat Schawappach
Mary Sell
Bertha Shroyer
Majorj Strouse

NEW MEMBERS

Mary L. Chamberlain, Blaine
Lyle Goff, Coon Rapids
Dennis Lenz, Los Angeles
Barbara Lewis, Anoka
Dr. Neil L. Macheledt, Anoka
Jeanne and Tom Radotich, Anoka

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

Wayne Pickett, who passed away on July 10, 2010. Wayne was one of our Korean War vets featured in the *38th Parallel, The Forgotten War* exhibit. He provided many stories and items for the exhibit and was a good friend of history.

Dave Niles, who passed away on July 10, 2010. Dave was a member, volunteer, researcher extraordinaire, and friend. We will miss him greatly.

Do you remember this?!

This root beer stand was located across from the Soderquist store on Hwy #65 and Crosstown in Ham Lake in 1929.

In the photo is Margaret (Soderquist) Livgard. She was 14 years old when she worked selling hamburgers and root beer at this stand. It had a refrigerated table—the coils ran through it—the pop went through the coils and the glasses were set on top of the coils. Ice in the root beer mugs helped keep the root beer as “ice cold” as advertized.

This photo and story is one of hundreds in the ACHS collection. Come see what else is in our archives!



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

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ANOKA, MINN.
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Coming Events

September 2,4,16, & 18 at 7:30 p.m.

Ghosts of Anoka Tour

October 2,7,21, & 23 with more Halloween week 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 \$7 for non-members, \$5 for members and \$5 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/October Lobby Exhibit

***Pretty as a Picture* Lobby Exhibit**

(Anoka County History Center Lobby.) This exhibit highlights the changes in the everyday items we take for granted and how they've changed with the theme of looking good for photographs. See the progression of cameras with the beauty items! This exhibit will remain in the lobby through the fall.

September 11, events scheduled all day

Linwood Family Fun Day

(Linwood Town Hall) This family fun event is a Linwood tradition, and ACHS will be a part. Expect pancakes, music, a car show, displays from the Linwood Fire Department, and more. See the Linwood website or call the Linwood Town Hall 651-462-5565 for more information. Everyone is welcome!

September 25, all day

City of Nowthen Heritage Day

(Nowthen City Hall, 19800 Nowthen Blvd.) Celebrate the history and heritage of Nowthen! The day is filled with historical displays, crafts, food, games, music, and more! ACHS will have an exhibit on Nowthen history from 10:00-4:00.

October 1, 6:00 p.m.

Sock Hop!

(Anoka County Fairgrounds) Poodle skirts, duck tails, and saddle shoes will be all the rage as we recreate a sock hop at the Anoka Armory! We'll have wonderful music to dance to from the days of the sock hops, with fun and fabulous auction items at the Historical Society's biggest event of the year! This is a not-to-be-missed event, so get your tickets now! For more information, see page 4.

October 5, 7, & 9, 7:00 p.m.

Annual "Monuments to Life" Cemetery Tours

The 8th annual *Monuments to Life* cemetery tour series. This year's tour starts at **Anoka's Oakwood Cemetery on Tuesday, October 5th**. Next is the **Incarnation Cemetery in Lino Lakes on Thursday, October 7th**, and the tours wrap up on **Saturday, October 9th, at the Cedar Cemetery in Oak Grove**. All tours begin at 7:00 and go on rain or shine. Buy a single tour ticket or save money with a ticket package for all three! See page 5 for more details.



History Center News

Newsletter of the Anoka County Historical Society

Vol. 40 No. 6

November — December 2010

SERVING:

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

ACHS Receives Minnesota History Award

The Anoka County Historical Society is a proud recipient of a Minnesota History Award for its Collections Management Project from 2008 and 2009. The Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums (MALHM), a statewide organization dedicated to elevating the quality of work in Minnesota's historical societies and history museums, recognized ACHS's efforts in its *Behind-the-Scenes* category. ACHS received the award at the Alliance's annual meeting at the Winona County Historical Society on October 29.

Members and friends of ACHS may recall a series of articles that ran in *History Center News* in 2008 about the process of removing items from our permanent collection, why it is sometimes done, and how it can happen. The articles aimed to educate the public about what type of objects are collected and ACHS's our commitment to caring for them while supporting our mission to preserve and interpret Anoka County's history. After publishing the articles and sharing their stories before several community groups, ACHS staff and volunteers embarked upon an extensive, year-long project. It included the physical examination of thousands of objects and artifacts in the collection, trying to determine their literal connection to Anoka County, their physical condition, and if there were duplicate items in the collection.

Board members Catherine Vesley and Tom Sherohman with Executive Director Todd Mahon accepting the MALHM award.

In all, 1,070 items from 369 records were deaccessioned. These included empty frames, unidentified tools, furniture, dishes, and items never intended for the collection, but were instead donated for use by the staff. While the actual process of researching and filtering through the objects was of the highest professional standards, the awards committee selected ACHS's project based on the merits of ACHS's insistence on engaging the public in a process that is usually shrouded in secrecy. Rather than covertly removing the items by cover of night, ACHS invited the public to see the procedure and even asked them for help.

This was the second year that the Minnesota History Awards have been offered. Also recognized with awards were the Northfield Historical Society, the Washington County Historical Society, and the Winona County Historical Society.



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

Anoka County History Center & Library

2135 Third Avenue North
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www.ac-hs.org

History Center Hours:

Tuesday 10-8

Wednesday-Friday 10-5

Saturday 10-4

Board of Directors

President—Paul Pierce, III (At-Large F)

Vice President—Tom Sherohman

(District #4)

District #1—Al Pearson

District #2 — Bill Prugh

District #3—Dick Johnson

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District #7—Bart Ward

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Office Staff—Gail Dahl, Carol Dordan,

Don Johnson, Alan Santoro,

Janitorial—Sandra Thorsen

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

From the Director...

By Todd Mahon

Facilities Issues Resolved

For several years, the Anoka County Historical Society has grappled with an issue that literally surrounds us. It's the exterior brick on our home at the Anoka County History Center. Since we moved into the building in 2001, we've worked to diagnose and correct a problem that saw the exterior faces of hundreds of bricks flaking off.

After a few attempts to fix the damaged bricks, we discovered that we were only treating the symptom and not the cause. Working closely with our friends and landlord, the City of Anoka, we learned that the issue was moisture getting between the interior and exterior brick walls. We found evidence that the issue had been there since 1966—the buildings earliest day's. Anoka's building supervisor had correspondence with the building's architects, trying to fix the problem, even back then.

Armed with an engineer's report, we have been working to take the proper steps to prevent the moisture from getting in. This was accomplished with a new roof, better drainage around the building, repair to windows, and installation of additional flashing.

The final step was to replace the damaged brick, which, ironically, was drawing even more moisture in through the damaged surfaces. I'm pleased to report that that work has been completed in the last few weeks. This is a great relief to the Historical Society and the city.

This building has the potential to be named to the National Register of Historic Places. It is a fine example of mid-century modern architecture. ACHS is pleased with its role in helping to preserve the building not only for our continued use of it, but for its historical importance as well.

What excites many people about this is that it signifies completion on a promise we made to our members and supporters during our capital campaign that moved us into this building nearly ten years ago. Civic and community leaders placed a great deal of trust in us to make this building our long-term home and to make it even better than we found it while preserving its historic integrity. We feel we have done that; I hope that you do, too.

From the President...

By Paul Pierce, III

Our historical society has a close relationship with the Anoka County Library System. It is not just because we have provided a history research library for over thirty years. It is not just because we provide a convenient satellite location for patrons close to our downtown History Center. It is because we serve the same type of people.

What do I mean by that? We are not much help if you are looking for a quick game of touch football, but if you want to know where and how the game of touch football developed, we can direct you to the resources to find that out. We cannot fix your car or roof, but we can help you find the information you need to do it yourself or provide you with some leads on someone to do it for you. With our Internet terminals, we can often get that information to you very quickly.

I want to be sure our members are aware of several special free programs the Anoka County Library is offering. The first one is Saturday December 11th; it is the **ACHS Civil War Christmas** at 10:30 am. at the Rum River Library. Thanks to the Civil War reenactors and our volunteers this event is great fun and very educational for everyone.

Maintain your brain workshops and **Musical Saturdays** happen in the months of January, February, and March at most of the Anoka County Libraries. Check the library web site at www.anoka.lib.mn.us for times and locations and the names of the musical groups. **A Reading with Author Peter Smith** is at 2pm. on Saturday, November 27th, at Northtown Library. **Quilts and Their Stories** is on Saturday, December 11th, at Northtown Library at 2pm. **Tastes and Sound of Minnesota in the Civil War** is at Rum River Library on Saturday, February 19th at 2pm. Don't let your brain get all dusty or rusty! Don't miss the **four pillars of brain health** to learn how to keep your brain well fed, oiled, and ready to go when you need it.

The partnership of providing resources between the History Center and the library is especially clear with four of our ACHS programs scheduled at county libraries in the coming months. We hope everyone, especially our ACHS members, will make these programs so successful that even more will be planned for next year!

The Story of an Artifact

The Evergleam by Program Manager Vickie Wendel

Few holiday items were as polarizing as the aluminum Christmas tree—it was either loved or hated and there was little middle ground in the 1960s, when the trees reached their height of popularity.

The sparkling, space-age tree was the first mass-produced artificial tree that was not green in color. No one is sure where the idea came from, but the first aluminum trees were made in Chicago by Modern Coatings, Inc. for the holiday season of 1958. Perhaps the idea of a metal tree may have come from veterans of WWII and Korea who told about making their trees in camp of what ever happened to be available including tin ration cans. No documentation can be found to definitively answer who invented the aluminum tree.

The best known manufacturer aluminum trees was the Aluminum Specialty Company of Manitowoc, Wisconsin. They made more than a million trees between 1959 and 1969, with their most popular model being the “Evergleam” tree. It sold in the stores for about \$25. (The same tree would cost \$174 in 2010 dollars.)



These trees were full size trees and designed to stand on the floor. Some came with rotating stands, but lights were not recommended. Stringing electric lights on a metal tree was just asking for a short circuit! Instead, most aluminum trees were lit by a separate light that sat on the floor near the tree. A flood light shone through a rotating color wheel to cast the tree in colored light that changed as the wheel rotated. Most came with three or four colors on the wheel.

The design of the aluminum tree was very simple. Branches covered in aluminum foil-weight “needles” fit into a center “trunk” made with a wooden or metal pole. Holes in the trunk were set at a angles so the branches formed the shape of a tree. They were called “futuristic” and were well suited to the streamlined and space-age furniture in modern American homes of the 1960s.

The Sears catalogs suggested the tree be decorated in a single color of foam balls covered with satin thread:



"Whether you decorate with blue or red balls . . . or use the tree without ornaments - this exquisite tree is sure to be the talk of your neighborhood. High luster aluminum gives a dazzling brilliance. Shimmering silvery branches are swirled and tapered to a handsome realistic fullness. It's really durable . . . needles are glued and mechanically locked on. Fireproof . . . you can use it year after year." - *Sears, 1963 Christmas Book.*

Just as quickly as the aluminum tree fad came into fashion, it fell out of fashion and became almost an icon of bad taste. Ironically, it was a cartoon character who is probably responsible for the demise of the aluminum tree. In the animated cartoon, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, Charlie Brown was encouraged to get a big shiny tree, maybe a pink painted one. Charlie disparaged the aluminum tree, and it became the symbol of an over-commercialized Christmas and loss of the true meaning of the holiday. The show first aired in 1965, and by 1967, sales of the aluminum tree had dropped dramatically. The heyday of the sparkling trees was over.

A Charlie Brown Christmas still plays every season on several channels and the message of an over-commercialized holiday still resonates, but that is not a new sentiment. Historical references to the over-commercialization of Christmas can be found in newspapers and letters that stretch throughout American history back to the late 1700s!

As with so many things in history, the aluminum Christmas tree has made a comeback in the first years of the new century, though the most popular current day aluminum trees are table top models rather than full trees.

The 1960s era aluminum tree in the ACHS collection was first used in Ham Lake, then sold at a garage sale to a family in Blaine. It is an “Evergleam” from the Aluminum Specialty Company in Wisconsin. The tree was used for several years in Blaine, but always relegated to the basement rec room as the “real” tree got top honors in the living room!

To compliment the suburbanization research project ACHS is currently involved in, we will celebrate the 1960s at our December 7th event with a lobby display of “vintage plastic” ornaments and other holiday decorations of the era. We’re even going to put all of our county ornaments on a large (modern) aluminum tree including the newest one, presented by the City of Lexington on December 7th! The 1960s tree with its original color wheel will also be on display.

This is history many of us remember—which is probably why those aluminum trees are making a comeback! Join us this holiday season to bring back memories of some of those iconic decorations.

Anoka's Scouting Program Turns 100!

by Holly Broden, contributing writer

Boy Scouting in America celebrated its 100th year in 2010 and so did Anoka Troop 102, though records from the Northern Star Council suggest a lapse in continuous charter, only 979 months (81.5 years) of continuous membership, scouting came to America and to Anoka and it stuck. "It certainly is one of the oldest troops in the Northern Star Council," said Marketing Director Kent York. The shift came when Anoka Troop 102 came under the Kiwanis sponsorship umbrella and was renamed Anoka Troop No. 204.

According to historical documents and an article written by Arthur D. Caswell in the book, *Anoka County, Minnesota: A Collection of Historical Sketches and Family History*, the Boy Scouts of America movement reached Anoka with the formation of the Anoka Troop No. 102 in 1910. When the club first started in Anoka, it gathered in the basement of the Methodist Church, then located at the corner of Jackson Street and Third Avenue. The first scout master was Roy Hall.



Anoka Boy Scouts, L-R: Leigh Dwight & Arthur Caswell. ca. 1911.

"The basement room had rough wood floor with many splinters. This combined with wood columns in the playing area caused a number of bruises and wounds. The program usually consisted of signaling, both flag



Boy Scouts at an Anoka camp, 1911. Back row: L-R: Victor Horn, Lloyd Palmer, Everett Penny, Dell Dimick, Warren C. Bowers, Fernando Johnson, Mr. Palmer, Webster Sherwood, Robert Pratt, (in front of Mr. Palmer), Clyde C. Colwell, Akely L. Stevens, Dwight W. Caswell, Anton Sorenson, Walter Bowers, Everett Hanson, Erwin Penny, Frank Howell. Front row: Clyde Secor, Cy Johnson, Guy Hall, Ralph Hall, Harold D. Dinsmore.

semaphore and telegraph key for the Morse code," wrote Caswell. The article went on to say that boys studied the Scout Handbook, but very few merit badges were earned. "...in general the boys had a rollicking good time. Basketball, boxing and wrestling also prevailed."

For summer encampments, the "Coleman Cottage" property located two miles north of Anoka on the east bank of the Rum River was used. "The scouts lived in canvas wall tents which at time of rain leaked and since no mosquito nets were available, the scouts smeared their bare skin heavily with bacon grease," wrote Caswell. In addition to camping, other summer encampment activities included boating, canoeing, fishing, baseball, and swimming.

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) grew rapidly from its introduction in the United States and became the largest youth organization across the country. The Boy Scouts of America program was inspired by and modeled after a similar program in England developed by General Baden Powell in 1908. According to the newly released *Honor Bright: A Century of Scouting in Northern Star Council*, a historical book chronicling different boy scout troops in the Midwest, the original goal for forming Scouting patrols and troops was "to rediscover the joys of outdoor life."

"The Boy Scouts filled a void for many boys whose parents were just too busy to do some of the things the club offered," said David Elvig, former Boy Scout District Chair of the Three Rivers District. He also mentioned that as the Eagle Scout program developed, it provided a great labor pool for many special projects in the community.

Anoka's Troop 204 continues yet today and you can see them at the Anoka County Fair where they have an ice cream booth. It's a great place to get the "scoop" on scouting in the county seat.

*Join us on Tuesday, December 7,
7:00 pm. for Two Special Events!*

Opening of *In Memoriam*

It can't help being noticed that we no longer have "funerals"—we have "celebrations of life" for the person who has died. We put together DVD's and picture boards of photos, we display the person's favorite items or things they made, a vastly different way of handling our grief than what was done 50 years ago and much more in keeping with how death was handled in the 1800s. Our collective response to a loved one's death has come full circle in some respects and this newest exhibit explores some of the old—and new—ways we mourn, care for, and remember our loved ones who have passed on.



Items from the ACHS collection that have never been displayed before are part of this special exhibit of funerary artifacts and range from mourning jewelry and a wicker casket to a mourning veil and embalming tools used by a local mortician.

Some of the other traditions uncovered in this exhibit include the meaning of flowers and symbols on gravestones, the "prescribed" mourning periods of the mid 1800s, funeral pie, and black bordered stationary.

Come see how much our mourning has—or hasn't—changed in the past 150 years!.



Embalming tools.

2010 Holiday Ornament

from Lexington



City officials and community members from Lexington will present the 2010 Holiday Ornament for the County on Tuesday evening, December 7, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., at the Anoka County History Center.

This holiday season is the 15th Annual "Anoka County Holiday Tree" celebration at the Anoka County Historical Society. Just as states are invited to provide the National Christmas Tree in Washington, each community in Anoka County is invited in turn to provide an ornament for the County Tree. Each ornament reflects a unique aspect of its community, along with the year of presentation. The Lexington ornament will not be shown to anyone until the ornament is presented on December 7th. Come get in on the surprise!

Right: The ornament presented by the City of East Bethel in 2009 in recognition of their 50th anniversary of incorporation as a city.

Up To Date

Announcements and News

♦Just a reminder that the November 11 and December 9 ACHS Board of Directors meetings will be at 6:00 p.m. All meetings are held at the History Center. Board meetings are open to the public and everyone is welcome.

Goodbye and Good Luck, Pat!

Pat Snodgrass, ACHS's bookkeeper, receptionist, membership secretary, and so much more has decided to retire! While we are happy for Pat and hope she enjoys every minute of her well-deserved retirement, we will miss her bright smile and friendly manner at the front desk. Pat's last day at ACHS was November 5, 2010. We understand she will be soaking up the sun in Florida while the rest of us shiver in the snow this winter!

Good luck and best wishes, Pat! We'll miss you!

A Goodbye Letter from Maria

This is a hard letter to write because it's my good-bye letter to all the wonderful people I have met through ACHS. I will be retiring at the end of December and leaving the STAFF of ACHS; I am, by no means, leaving ACHS.

Very few people are blessed with true joy in their work. Most of us just drag ourselves out of bed and go to work because we must. Here at ACHS, every day was a discovery! I came here with an interest in local history and it was nurtured into a true passion. I love the work so much that when I recruit volunteers, I genuinely believe I'm offering them an opportunity. Like me, the volunteers can learn new things, impact their community, and meet terrific people!

I can't begin to sufficiently thank the staff for all they've taught me, all they've shared, and all the ways that they have supported me with the volunteers. ACHS has a great team in place, and I have been richly blessed to be a part of it.

But the very hardest part about leaving is the volunteers! I haven't felt like this since 1972, when I first left my baby with a sitter. Will the sitter be good to my kids? Will my kids be good for the sitter? I have to trust that the people who select my successor will be discerning. I can't leave my volunteers to just anyone!! I need to know that he/she will be kind to them, and sensitive to their needs—and trust my volunteers to be patient and kind to the new coordinator while he/she learns to make this job his/her own.

I will decompress awhile and then you'll see me around again. I intend to remain available to help with all the fun events I love here at ACHS.

In the future, I'll be on the other side of the desk; I'll be a volunteer and not a coordinator. But I'll still be learning new things, impacting my community, and meeting terrific people!

Maria King

Volunteers Come Through for ACHS Again!!

Once again, autumn has been a busy season.

ACHS is delighted to welcome several new volunteers: Jerry McCullough has helped out at community events, Jo Rhody is a new volunteer transcriptionist, and James Joyce has gotten the manuscripts up to date.

Pam Mahon donated countless hours in preparing the decorations for the Sock Hop. Sam Hermanstorffer and many others helped to set up and clean up afterwards while others tended the popcorn, closed the auctions, and served up delicious bars and coffee. Their efforts are very much appreciated.

Our Ghost Tour numbers have surpassed last year's record breaking totals. We hosted over 60 tours in October alone! In addition, the "virtual" Ghosts of Anoka tour went on the road, enabling people in other parts of the county to have the ghost tour experience. Kudos to all our dedicated volunteer tour guides, especially to Gary Greb, who single handedly led 34 tours this season!

We also held five cemetery tours; three open to the public and two conducted as private tours. Many of the same volunteers who help with Ghost Tours became living history characters in the cemeteries. A special thanks to Darlene Bearl for her outstanding work in making the cemetery tours so very successful.

There were several community events where ACHS was well represented by our volunteers; Gary Greb at 4H Family Farmfest; Jerry McCullough and Gary Greb at Nowthen Heritage Days; and Sandy Connor and Jerry McCullough at Linwood Family Fun Day.

Upcoming opportunities include the American Girl Teas, Thursday, Dec. 2nd, and Saturday, Dec. 4th. This time we'll revisit Kirsten and take a look at the Swedish Christmas traditions that would have been familiar to her. Volunteers are always needed to set up, help with the craft and wash up afterwards.

We have acquired several boxes of land deed records. Many of them date to the 1880s. Volunteers are needed to go through each book to create an index of names on the computer so researchers can find original records of those transactions.

The library really needs a shelf reading every few months to compare the books on the shelf to the records in the computer. That should be done soon.

Another opportunity exists for someone to go through the photos in our collection to "fix the holes" where problems exist. Some photos are not linked to the image, others may not have been scanned due to their size, and some have captions that are incomplete or have spelling errors. We are always refining our collection in the pursuit of perfection, and there is room for you to help! Call Maria at 763-421-0600.!

Contributions & New Members — Thank you

(All lists are current to October 22, 2010)

DONATIONS

Anoka Lions Club
Sandra Karasch
Leanne Patchen
Donna Smith

EMPLOYEE MATCH

Ameriprise Financial – Dan Frank

MEMORIALS

In Memory of Reuben Kravik
From Roger & Dorothy Carlson

In Memory of Bob Schwappach
From Roger & Dorothy Carlson

NEW MEMBERS

Andrew Yurista, New Brighton

SOCK HOP SPONSORSHIPS

Community Pride Bank
Village Bank

SOCK HOP DONATIONS

ABC Newspapers
Abeler Chiropractic
Ace Solid Waste
All About Cats & Dogs
Amish Corner
Anchor Bank
Lyle & Jerene Anderson
Marilyn Anderson
Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce
Anoka Coin
Anoka County Historical Society
Anoka County Parks & Rec
Anoka-Hennepin Credit Union
Bea Backman
Better Values Liquor
Billy's Bar & Grill (Anoka)

Billy's Bar & Grill (St. Francis)
Bridge Street Coffee
Canvas Craft
Champlin Family Dental
Champlin Sinclair
Shirley Christenson
Lillian Christian
Community Pride Bank
Connexus Energy
County Market (St. Francis)
Cub Foods (Coon Rapids)
Dahlheimer Beverage
Carol Dordan
Federal Cartridge
Fifth Avenue Dental
Floyd Freeman
Furniture & Things
Grand Casino Hinkley
Greenhaven Golf Course
Hakanson Anderson
Judy Hanna
J. Grundy's Reub 'N' Stein
Gary Greb
Hair Designers of Blaine
Dick Johnson
Donald Johnson
Richard and Krista Johnson
Ashlie Kaess-Ameriprise Financial
Maria King
Lyric Arts
Lavonne Lyons
Todd Mahon
Main Motors
Milagros Bakery
Millie P's
Robert Minish
Moffitt Restorative Dentistry
Muller Family Theaters
James Neilson
Northfield Historical Society
O'Reilly Auto Parts
Stacy and Jay Overby

Party Papers
Patriot Lanes and Lounge
Paul's Barber Shop
Paul Pierce III
Karen Reiks
Round Barn
Rum River Hills Golf Club
Rum River Inn
St. Francis Barber Shop
St. Francis Foods
St. Francis True Value Hardware
Joyce Schmidt
Service Garage of Blaine
Tom Sherohman
Shorewood Bar & Grill
Lois Spadgenske
Subway
Tasty Pizza (St. Francis)
Sandy Thorsen
Val Torrez
Truffles & Tortes
Catherine Vesley
Vietnam Veterans, Anoka County Chapter
Village Bank
Wells Fargo
Vickie Wendel

ARTIFACT DONORS

Anoka Halloween Committee
Anoka Masonic Lodge #30
Lillian Christian
Marlys Chutich
City of Columbia Heights
Lucille Elrite
Harvey Greenberg
Clifford G. Johnson
Lake George Conservation Club
Alexander C. Larson
Carol Hutchinson Moen
Myra Blumenthal Shapiro
Philolectian Society
Dave Westendorf

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

Dorothy Bacon, who passed away on August 25, 2010. Dorothy was an ACHS member and an active contributor of artifacts and history of her family and Ramsey

Reuben Kravik, who passed away September 11, 2010. Reuben participated in ACHS events and made of lot of history himself while he was with Hoffman Engineering, as well as many community organizations.

John Breckenridge, who passed away on September 15, 2010. John was a long time member of ACHS.

Bob Schwappach, who passed away on September 30, 2010. Bob was a long time member of ACHS and volunteered hundreds of hours through the years, especially while his wife, Pat, was our director.

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Coming Events

November 24, 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 this holiday favorite! Since it's the day before Thanksgiving, pie is the perfect choice of topic to discuss. Many people will be baking pies for the big meal the next day; so bake one early, take a break and join us for some fun history about pies during this informal discussion. The format is a roundtable discussion where everyone is welcome to share their own stories about PIES they've made or eaten. We'll provide the coffee, and no one is allowed to count calories at this special lunch time history event.

December 2 & 4

American Girl Christmas Tea Party

(Anoka County History Center and Library.) Come to the History Center for a tea party! We will complete a hand-on craft activity and learn more about daily life in the early days of Anoka County. Celebrate the season with Kirsten, the American Girl of the 1850s. Activities highlight Swedish Christmas traditions and experiences that would be familiar to girls during the early years in Anoka County. Girls, their dolls, and the grown-ups share a tea party to wrap up the event. **Reservations required.** Tickets for girls are \$7, adults are \$10—and dolls attend free! Thursday evening, December 2 at 6:00 and several sessions on Saturday, December 4. Additional teas may be scheduled based on demand.

December 7, 7:00 p.m.

Holiday Ornament Presentation

In Memoriam Exhibit Opens

(Anoka County History Center and Library.) Join ACHS for the 15th annual Holiday Ornament presentation featuring the new ornament from the City of Lexington. A new lobby exhibit opens with a look at a 1960s Christmas as well as the newest exhibit in the Exhibit Hall, *In Memoriam*. It's a great way to kick off the holiday season! See page 5 for more details.

December 11, 10:30-1:30

A Civil War Christmas

(Rum River Library, 4201 6th Avenue N., Anoka.) What was this celebration like in Anoka County in the 1860s? Did they put up a tree in their homes? Did they send gifts to the soldiers serving in the Civil War? Come to this special event to learn more about one of America's favorite holidays with hands-on activities and a special Christmas talk.