

History Center News

A Member Benefit

Vol. 32, No. 1

Anoka County Historical Society

February 2002

We're Here!

The Anoka County Historical Society has moved to our new History Center! We are making sure we are doing right for Anoka County's history, and we're really here!

Moving Day was quite an exciting event. On a bright, beautiful day in November, volunteer Wayne Coble brought a huge Allied Van Lines truck to Colonial Hall. An army of volunteers—including Anoka National Guard members—arrived to move our precious collections from Colonial Hall to the new History Center. Everyone worked hard and the big truck made three trips, in addition to the loads carried by the hummers and pickup truck brought by the Guard members.



Our volunteer, Lucille Elrite, coordinated lunch for everyone. She prepared food donated by Cub Foods of Coon Rapids, got other volunteers to bring dessert, and kept everyone's strength up.

It was quite a day! We called it "Phase One".

It led to "Phase Two"—unpacking and trying to find the proper places for everything in our new space. That has taken up every moment for the past weeks and will continue for many more. Meanwhile, we were doing things like changing telephone services, installing computer networks, having mail forwarded and changed, and the assorted other things associated with moving.

New exhibits are under construction and will be for some time to come. The Exhibit Hall will remain closed as we create new, exciting, interactive exhibits for all ages. If you think it's taking a long time, keep in mind that many museums take 18 months to two years to bring in a single new exhibit. We are designing an entirely new exhibit hall in less than six months! We'll keep you informed of our progress and let you know about our plans for the grand Grand Opening!

Please don't stay away because the exhibit hall isn't open yet! Come research! We are pleased to announce the first opening—the libraries!

Yes, libraries plural! We have not only resources of the Anoka County Historical Society and

Genealogical Society in our building, we have the Anoka County Library, too!

Our new research space is many times what the old space was in Colonial Hall. We have eight separate reading tables, four microfilm readers, one reader/printer, a map table, two computer stations with Internet access, lots of room for books, files, indexes, and a volunteer table.

The Anoka County Library section has a reading room with about 1,000 books in a browsing collection. It also includes magazines, and newspapers. The area has comfortable chairs and tables, so visitors can relax and read. Books can be checked out using a self-check machine. Staff will help those who aren't familiar with the procedures. You can also use our computers to order any book in the Anoka County Library system and have it delivered to our History Center.

ACHS has room to grow here! We're adding new resources to our Research Library almost every day. Check out the list inside this newsletter—there is something on it for everyone!

For now, the hours of our library are limited as we are still settling in. The hours will be expanded as the weeks go by. Our hours will include one evening each week and Saturday hours in addition to our week day schedule. Until we complete the transition into our full schedule, it's best to call us to confirm the hours the libraries will be open.

Come visit our new Site! We're very proud of what the Anoka County community has helped us achieve and we want everyone to share in it!



Past Perfect By Marilyn Craine Anderson

10,450 items and still counting!

The move to the new History Center and Library has allowed much easier access to the many boxes containing the thousands of items donated to the historical society. It's giving staff an opportunity to go through each box, examine the artifacts, check the item for an accession number, note its condition, and photograph the item. This is an excellent way to insure each donation is properly catalogued and the donor identified.

We are filling in the Past Perfect museum cataloging software programs' *search* fields that distinguish an item in many different formats. Its age, color, name, donor, condition, and where it can be found on the shelf are just some of the fields being filled in. We also catalog a more detailed description of the accessions and correct any errors. An item originally noted simply as "high chair" is given its own unique record that distinguishes it from other high chairs in the collection. The program will generate a report to alert staff if this high chair should be looked at periodically for any deterioration.

The specific details in the descriptions benefit anyone researching family history. Adding names and dates found in documents, manuscripts and photographs gives staff another tool with which to search the database. Researchers will know what items and reference materials have names important to their research.

The visual documentation of each item has also helped us find objects that have been in the collection, but without an accession number. A missing number makes locating its history difficult. We now have the opportunity to find the history, mark the item, and eliminate any future confusion. The high chair now becomes the high chair donated by the Whoever family and used by their son, Anybody, born on January 1, 1868. This tangible piece of a family's heritage is yet another a reason to visit the History Center and Library.

Since November, there have been many new donations to the Historical Society. Past Perfect has made this process an enjoyable experience for all. The information is typed into the record as the donor relays all that they know about the item, documents are printed and signed before they leave.

Keeping the "*past perfectly*" has given me a unique perspective of the people who chose Anoka County as their home. The individual accomplishments and contributions have been many and preserving this history, *one box at a time*, for the benefit of all, has been a true labor of love.

Exhibits ...by Jean Smith

Our new exhibit hall at the Anoka County History Center and Library is a very exciting place in which to work. After designing exhibits in a house museum for several years, we now have an exhibit area unencumbered by radiators, furniture, and cracked plaster. The approach, of course, is vastly different and the vistas virtually unlimited. Construction of our permanent exhibits is first.

Volunteer David Legrid is busy helping construct our new logging exhibit. This exhibit includes the George Atwood logging diorama from our previous site, but with many new and exciting additions.

We are continuing to look for more carpenter/electrician helpers to continue designing other exhibits. If you are creative and good at basic building skills, give us a call to talk about this new project.

Artifact retrieval is now much easier and more convenient at the new site. Rows of sturdy shelves with archival boxes hold our collections. All the artifacts are stored in one area. Selecting artifacts for exhibit purposes is vastly improved. We can just place an artifact onto a cart and take the cart into the exhibit hall.

We are looking forward to the opening of our Exhibit Hall. The grand opening celebration of our new History Center will coincide with our summer celebration of Drums, Dreams and History on July 13, 2002. We hope to see you on this very special day!

Check Your Mailing Label!

If you find a red mark on your mailing label, you have not yet paid your 2002 dues! We don't want to take your name off our membership list, so it is important that you send in your dues as soon as possible. Only those members in good standing are eligible to vote at the annual meeting in March. ACHS has moved into some very exciting times and we don't want you to miss out!

Are you a life member or have already paid your 2002 dues? Use the membership form included in this newsletter to give a membership to a friend. If every current member would bring in just **one new member**, we could double our membership!

New on the Shelf...

Greetings from our new expanded Research Library! With our new space, we have been able to acquire more books, microfilm, microfilm readers and tables. Now it is possible to fit more than three researchers and two volunteers in the library without stepping on toes and feeling claustrophobic! Come check all the new resources! And don't forget the County Library and all their resources are available here, too.

Here is a list of new books, microfilm, and CD's to date:

Northern Lights – Teacher's Edition, by Rhoda R. Gilman & Stephen Sandell. For 6th & 7th grades, this curriculum gives an overview of Minnesota History. Minnesota Historical Society Press, St. Paul, MN., 1989, 213 pages.

Harvest of Grief, by Annette Atkins. The grasshopper plagues and public assistance in Minnesota, 1873-1878. Minnesota Historical Society Press, St. Paul, 1984, 147 pages.

The Tale of a Comet and other Stories, by Helen M. White. A collection of true accounts of diverse people and events relating to the state of Minnesota. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984, 273 pages.

Little Crow, Spokesman for the Sioux, by Gary Clayton Anderson. A biography of Little Crow and events leading up to the Dakota War of 1862. Minnesota Historical Press, 1986, 259 pages.

The Saga of Saga Hill, by Theodore C. Blegen. A portrait of a family around the turn of the 20th century and how they spent their summer at Saga Hill, a summer colony on the north shore of west arm in Lake Minnetonka. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1971, 78 pages.

Five Fur Traders of the Northwest, edited by C.M. Gates. A narrative and diaries of five fur traders. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1965, 296 pages.

Through Dakota Eyes, edited by Gary Clayton Anderson & Alan R. Woolworth. A narrative accounts of the Minnesota Indian War of 1862. Minnesota Historical Press, 1988, 316 pages.

Roster of Excavated Prehistoric Sites in Minnesota to 1972. by Minnesota Historical Society, 38 pages.

The Itasca Bison Kill Site, An Ecological Analysis, by C. Thomas Shay, Minnesota Historical Press, 1971, 133 pages.

Rainy River County, by Grace Lee Nute. A brief history of the region bordering Minnesota and Ontario. Minnesota Historical Society, 143 pages.

Kitchigami, Life Among the Lake Superior Ojibway, by Johann Goerg Kohl, Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1985.

Aspects of Upper Great Lakes Anthropology –Papers in Honor of Lloyd A. Milford, edited by Elden A. Wilford, Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1974, 190 pages.

Genealogical Resources of the Minnesota Historical Society, A guide to the vast resources at the MHS. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1993, 68 pages.

In Search of Your German Roots – A Complete Guide to Tracing your Ancestors in the Germanic Areas of Europe, by Angus Baxter, Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1987, 122 pages.

In Search of Your European Roots – A Complete Guide to Tracing Your Ancestors in Every Country in Europe, by Angus Baxter, Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1986, 289 pages.

Prussian Netzelanders and other German Immigrants in Green Lake, Marquette and Jwaushara Counties, Wisconsin by Brian A. Podoll, C.G.R.S. This book offers an alphabetized listing of those Prussian and German immigrants who provided their homeland birthplaces. Heritage Books, Inc., 1994, 241 pages.

Preserving A Sense of Heritage: Isanti, Minnesota Centennial 1899-1999, by Marlys Wickstrom & R. W. Dutch Schoenecker. A collection of photographs and vignettes about the history of Isanti. ECM Publishers, Inc., 1998, 177 pages.

Research Guide to German-American Genealogy, by The Germanic Genealogy Society. This book concentrates on research involving European records and what records are available in North America. 1993, 215 pages.

A Genealogical Handbook of German Research, by Larry O. Jensen. This book sets forth the things that a person must know and do to succeed in their Germanic research. 1978, 205 pages

New on the Shelf...Continued

The Atlantic Bridge to Germany, Volume III Bavaria (Bayern), by Charles Hall. Volume III in the series details Bavaria with 1:200,000 scale maps with indexes. Everton Publishers, Inc., 1978, 203 pages.

The Sandy Family History, by Debbie Robb. A family history traced as far back as fifteenth century England and the Mayflower. 2001, 440 pages.

Anoka High School Yearbooks 1967, 1968, & 1970.

Anoka County Births & Deaths, 1871-1900.

Saving Quetico – Superior, A Land Set Apart, by R. Newell Searle. The story of how the Boundary Waters Canoe Area came to be preserved and spawned the concept of wilderness preservation in America. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1977, 275 pages.

Flight Quarters, The War Story of the U.S.S. Belleau Wood, by John W. Alexander, U.S.N.R., 1946, 192 pages.

Polish Family Research, by J. Konrad. A book about ancestor hunting in Poland. Summit Publications, 1977, 56 pages.

Chaos and Confusion, by Vincent L. Jones. A manual on how to design a system to keep all of your genealogical research in order. 42 pages.

Meyer's Directory of Genealogical Society in the U.S.A. and Canada 1996-1997, 11th Edition, by Mary Keysor Meyer. 135 pages.

The German Researcher, by Fay & Douglas Dearden. How to get the most out of an LDS Family History Center, 1989, 58 pages.

Zion Lutheran Church Directories, Anoka, MN. 1975 & 2000.

Microfilm

Newspapers:

The Bethel Banner: January 1913 through December 1917

Columbia Heights Record: January 1939 to May 8, 1958

Disks

1880 United States Census and National Index – This set of compact discs contains the complete 1880 United States Census plus a national index. Census information is shown by household or institution for approximately 50 million individuals.

Volunteer News

Our newer, bigger facility will allow more members and friends to volunteer and take an active part in the daily business of “keeping your history”. It will take many people to make this new facility run smoothly. We plan to have extended hours, so those of you who work during the day will be able to join us. Please be receptive when called for volunteer help!

Currently, library and research volunteers are being trained on new microfilm readers and library basics. This is a fun place to interact with the public or uncover information needed for new exhibits and programs!

“Museum Guardians” are going to provide security and answer general questions in our new exhibit gallery, especially when large groups are visiting. We will plan training sessions close to the time our exhibits open.

Call now if you are interested so we get your name on the volunteer list!

Every day, volunteers continue to add photos to our collections, obituaries and manuscripts for the library. Others help by getting our newsletters ready to mail, special projects, and of course, our events. There will be many more opportunities in this new facility, so we'll have something for everyone!

Remember that old saying “UNCLE SAM WANTS YOU”? Well, let's say, “ACHS WANTS YOU”! Call Crystal at 421-0600 and let's plan how you can make history!

Special Thanks

Our “Around the County” Christmas tree and Sneak Preview event received donated refreshments from, Panera Bread Company in Coon Rapids, Greg's Family Foods in Anoka, and LeTourneau's Super Valu in Ramsey. Thanks, also, to our volunteers at this event!

Contributions

Donations

These contributions will help us keep Anoka County history.
(In the order received)

Pam Albinson
Alan & Hope Goddard
Clinton Caswell
Nowthen Lumber
Elder Opem
Erling O. Johnson
Wilma Walker
Pat Hesli
Karen Sivanich
Joseph & Orlaine Boshea
Eileen & Gary Rathbun
Betty Wilbur
Gary & Ann Steen
John & Lillian Meyer
Jim & Lee Swisher
John & Alice Ganter
Ruby Johnson
Jim Johnson
Jean Erlandson
Lee Carlson
Dean Polymeros
Rachel Peterson
Phyllis Dargis
Nellie Klein
Helen Helm
August & Gladys Farb
Joanne Wickberg
Chad Jones
Kevin & Patti Bellows
Catherine Hansen
John & Fran Bator
Frances Meneley
Jerry Jacob
Richard & Dolores Schanhaar
Richard DeLong
Leslie Ross
Barbara Walchessen
Vi Smith
Bernadine Heath
Julian Andersen
Christine Schinzel
Laurie & Rob Hansen
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Burtness

Building Fund

These contributions help us continue a safe place for County History.

Marlys Chutich
Don Smith
Myrtle Eveland
Millie Pratt Giddings
Abby Sherman

Lucille Elrite
Luella Giddings
Will & Gina Ridge
Richard Sorenson
Netha Feist
John & Shirley Lynch
Kristin Woizeschke
Ernie & Sharon Woizeschke
George Meyer
Audrey Joslyn
James Miller
Grosslein Beverages
Betty Wilbur
John & Yvonne Mann
Kevin & Patti Bellows
Joyce Brown Hollinder
Randy & Alice Getchell
George Raymond

Around the County

The Township of Burns presented the 2001 County Tree Ornament to ACHS on December 8, 2001. The ornament, created by Lou

Paulson, was given to the Township to present to ACHS. Lou made the ornament to represent the



Sparre Round Barn which stands in Burns. Township officials, county commissioners, ACHS members, Board and staff all gathered to share this special event. There were well over 100 people in attendance throughout the afternoon.

Our tradition of beautiful holiday music was provided by the Blake Family. Their wonderful music sounds as good in the History Center as it always did in Colonial Hall!

From the President... By John Weaver

How blessed we are in Anoka County to have assembled a cadre of volunteers—more than 40—on that delightfully warm Saturday, November 10, 2001, to make our move from our home in the precious Aldrich Museum to our spacious new Anoka County History Center and Library just up the avenue at 2135 Third Avenue North.

To our co-directors, Jean Smith and Vickie Wendel, and ACHS staff Diane Buganski and Crystal Batters, we extend a salute of thankfulness.

The move was seemingly flawless. With two vehicles and four uniformed National Guard members and a huge moving van provided by Wayne and Cheryl Coble, our volunteers performed like seasoned veterans.

Our staff had marked each artifact and container with a location code to be found in the new History Center.

That move—phase one—of the transition to “2135” permits us to catalog and situate most of our artifacts in our new quarters.

Yes, we do have another moving phase to accomplish early this spring.

No, we have not resolved the future operational status of the Aldrich House, but rest assured, Doctor Alanson and Doctor Flora Aldrich would be proud were they here, to know of our commitment to preserve this precious artifact for the use and admiration of future generations in our ever growing Anoka County.

I would be derelict in my duty as ACHS Board Chair if I were to neglect to acknowledge and applaud the remarkable leadership of our Board treasurer, Glen Hardin. 'Tis really a joy to have a conservative banker as our “Money Bag Tender”. But more than that, Glen has chaired our Finance Committee and led the bidding process as we have renovated our new home with new windows, new lighting systems, new carpeting, new telephone, computer, fire and security alarm systems, and a myriad of detailed efforts that have assured success. Glen’s entire family was involved all day long during our November 10th move to the new Anoka County History Center and Library.

Our libraries are open, so do come by to visit them. The History Center itself will officially be dedicated and completely opened at a further date to be announced.

A Year in Review...by Bart Ward

2001 was quite a year for ACHS. Our efforts to fund our new building through our capital campaign have been methodical and "by the book" when it comes to the advice given by the Minnesota Historical Society's (MHS) development director, Mark Haidet. Early on, his advice was to first build a plan that is attainable. We were to form a committee to get the job done, seek your lead investments from government, businesses, private individuals, and then start your general fund raising campaign.

To that end, the Society first, through its own building fund and donations from its board of directors, was able to commit some \$100,000 to this capital campaign. We were able to secure the operating funds necessary to support the new History Center from the county plus a one time expense for the move. Remember, the ACHS is a non-profit organization that exists through the "good graces" of our county commissioners and supporters. Our second lead investment came from the City of Anoka. In addition to leasing ACHS the new site for \$1 a year, the city donated a one time capital investment of \$114,000. These two lead investments were exactly to the formula that MHS advised us early on.

We then went to the business community for help. It was Connexus Energy that first stepped to the plate with a capital contribution of \$10,000. Next Wells Fargo made two commitments. The first was a \$25,000 donation from its foundation and a \$2,500 donation from its local branch. At the same time, numerous donations were received from ACHS members, board members, friends, and others. Wright Tire gave a donation of \$7,500. Patricia Zirul, donated \$600 in memory of her mother. At the end of the year, one of our own board members, Marion Schulz donated \$5,000 to the start the endowment fund. This was in memory of her husband, Lyle.

MHS encouraged us to seek as many in-kind donations where possible. This was especially true because we were renovating and retrofitting an existing building. We sought and received many in-kind donations from the county, private individuals and the business community. Waste Management gave us a commitment to provide up to four 40-yard dumpsters. They took care of separating and disposing of materials taken out of the building during reconstruction. This included any toxic waste we came upon. Hoffman Engineering agreed to build twelve custom enclosures for our historic clothing and artifacts. If we would have had to go out and buy these enclosures (to MHS specifications) we would have spent approximately \$33,000.

Presto Graphics, Adam's Street Photography, VA Graphics, and Wilkerson, Gutmann & Johnson, Ltd. all worked to get the image scanning, photo restoration, layout, mock-up, materials, printing, and

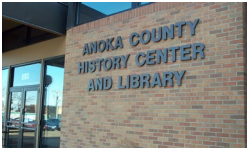
assembly of all of the capital campaign materials we needed. Zip Printing, of Edina has committed \$1,000 of unspecified printing for our capital campaign.

Hunt's Bus provided a vehicle to provide transport for our board members to the Minnesota History Center for review of the building with respect to fund raising and recognition of donors. B&B Carpeting and Barthel's Rental donated carpet removing machines and consultation on carpet removal. People like Tad Johnson (Anoka County Union) and Bonnie Stoll (First Choice Investments) gave precious hours in consulting and reviewing fund raising materials. The Anoka PAC School donated time in removing shelving from the new site. Bob 106 Radio station has donated many public service messages to promote the Society (last year during the Anoka County Fair) and will donate more for our fund raising efforts.

Many people have donated much time in helping with the packing and moving of the Society to its new location. The Anoka Kiwanis Club and the Coon Rapids football team have thrown in to help along the way. The local National Guard brought muscle and trucks to help us move. Wayne Coble donated his beautiful Allied Van Lines tractor and trailer and expert knowledge to help get us from Colonial Hall to the History Center.

E-Street Makers, owned by David Elvig and located in Ramsey, has contributed and donated in the design of our new reception desk. John Oertel, of Vision Woodworking, Inc., of Fridley, put in numerous hours in design and concept work for our reception area. Our architectural firm, Oertel Architects, owned by Jeff Oertel of Saint Paul, has donated part of our architectural needs. Richard Saliterman, of Saliterman & Siefferman, a Minneapolis based law firm, has spent some of his professional time in consulting and writing of a letter to a Fortune Five Hundred company, in helping to secure a cash donation.

As you can see, we are not letting grass grow under our feet. This capital campaign is about to move into its general phase. With lead investments secure, we will now move throughout the county in a general effort, continuing with this campaign. It has been exciting and will remain so as this Society puts the final touches on its new site and has the resources to expand its role throughout Anoka County.



History Center News

A Member Benefit

Vol. 32, No. 2

Anoka County Historical Society

April 2002

Around the County

SOCIETY NEWS FROM 1913 REVEALS MUCH

By Sharron Stockhausen

Some of you may be old enough to remember when the best way to get the news about what the "beautiful people" were doing was your local newspaper society section. I explored the April 11, 1913 (a Friday) edition of the *Bethel Banner* and learned a lot about what people in Anoka County were doing.

The news from St. Francis reported that nine members of the Union Sunday School attended the Sunday School convention in Duluth. That was the largest number of St. Francis attendees ever. The report ended with, "Oh, we are growing some in spite of old Satan and his friends."

Another St. Francis report read, "By the way the manure spreaders are leaving the various machine dealers in our burg, we may look for some up-to-date farming this year."

News out of West St. Francis revealed that "John Small is working for James Gaslin." It also mentioned "Mike Samletzka called on Date [sic] Milliman Sunday" and "Albert Small called on Fred Mattutat Sunday evening." For those keeping score, be sure to note that "Ernest Mattutat dined with Mike Samletzka one evening last week" as well. Seems like Mike was a social guy.

Other news out of West St. Francis told that "Herbert Mattutat sold some nice cattle to John Bodine." The biggest news, however, was that "Miss Amelia Mattutat is on the sick list. Dr. Young is attending her. Bethel can certainly be proud of their good doctor which they have in the village."

Moving on to North St. Francis news, we learn that "George Miller was on business at St. Francis Saturday," and "George Miller and his wife visited at Mr. and Mrs. Bryen's last Sunday." Obviously George had a full weekend.

Other North St. Francis news reported that more folks made the trek to town. "Walter Vangth and wife were in St. Francis Saturday" and "John Nelson was at St. Francis Friday on business." Finally, the big news reported that "Miss Margie Miller was at Dr. Vrooman's Saturday to see about her eyes." I trust all went well.

West Bethel checked in with news that "F.R. Joy went to Lake Netta Wednesday" and "S.S. Dyer made a trip to Anoka Monday." It was good to hear that "Miss Ada Green is working for Mrs. C.E. Ledin." Then there was the news of the guy who didn't go anywhere or see anyone, "Edwin Gustafson spent Saturday and Sunday at home."

I was sorry to read that "Mrs. John Pratt was sick the past week for a few days. Dr. Vrooman was called." I hope the doc helped her out. It was good to know that "N.D. Day has the material on the grounds preparatory to building an addition to his home." But the most interesting news to me was that "Mrs. James Mitchell arrived home Friday from a three months visit with relatives and friends in New Brunswick." Either Mrs. Mitchell had a lot of folks to visit or she overstayed at an unfortunate few. If you've ever had out of town guests stay too long, you know what I mean.

The April 18, 1913 edition of the *Bethel Banner* offered more society news. The report from Cedar was that "Miss Flynn Sundayed [sic] in Champlin," and "James Groat of Anoka Sundayed [sic] in Cedar," but "Alice Merrill was home over Sunday."

The Cedar report also updated business activity. "R.C. DeLong was in Minneapolis last week after horses," and "Mr. Anderson was putting in new phones about here [sic] Friday."

Other Cedar news editorialized on the worship experience. "Rev. Villars gave us a most excellent sermon Sunday and gave the sacrament to over 30" and "Dr. Young and daughter attended church here Sunday."

The most intriguing news (and I'm sure it's true because it's in print) reported that "The Stork left a fine baby boy at the home of J.W. Eakman, March 31." Obviously there was no mother involved at all since a mother wasn't mentioned.

From birth, the news moves to death. "The funeral of Harry Britigan, who was killed in Minneapolis by falling from the third story, was held in Cedar church Tuesday at 10:30. Rev. Nolte officiating. He was laid to rest in the Cedar Cemetery. We extend sympathy to the bereaved family."

Of course the *Bethel Banner* printed other newsworthy social activities, but space prevents me from sharing them. Come on into the new history center reference library and read them yourself sometime.

WHAT'S IN A MINNESOTA NAME?

by Bob Burtness

Many memorials of our state history are preserved in geographic names. Explorers, adventurers, military leaders, politicians, and early European immigrants have shared in these name choices. So have the Dakota or Sioux, the Ojibway or Chippewa Native Americans.

Warren Upham, a collector of such memorabilia has successfully researched and printed informative material on Minnesota names in his book *Minnesota Place Names: A Geographical Encyclopedia* (Minnesota Historical Society), now in its third edition. This book offers users more than an amusing list of stories from the past. It suggests a personal connection to history by helping Minnesota's communities to establish identity and to honor those who came before them.

Here are just a few geographic names familiar to Anoka County readers.

The Name of the State

Minnesota received its name from the largest river, which lies wholly within its area. The Dakota or Sioux word means sky-tinted water. The river, at its stages of flood, becomes whitish turbid.

The Dakota women explained it by dropping a little milk into water and calling the cloudy white water *Minne - sota*.

In the years 1846 to 1848, Henry H. Sibley and Morgan L. Martin proposed this name for the new territory and thus the Dakota title came into existence. In 1879, Gen. James H. Baker directed attention to a somewhat comparable Ojibway name for the wooded northern part of this state. "In one of my expeditions upon the north shore being accompanied by an intelligent Chippewa chief, I found the shrub Balm of Gilead, a small tree of medicinal virtue in great abundance. The chief gave me its Chippewa name as *Mah-nu-sa-tia*, and said it was the name given by his people to all that country west of the great lake."

This Ojibway word, however, had no influence upon the selection of our territorial and state name. Final choice of the name *Minnesota* was decided in the convention held at Stillwater on August 26, 1848, which then petitioned to Congress for territorial organization.

Mississippi River

The chief river of Minnesota and North America, the same river that has a significant place in our Anoka County life and history, bears the Algonquian name which it received from the Ojibway. The name *Mississippi* means simply the "Great River."

It was first made known by name to Europeans in the *Jesuit Relation of 1667-67* published in Paris in 1668, which mentions "the great river *Messipi*."

Earlier names had been given to the river by explorers. On the map resulting from the travels of the Spanish adventurer Pineda, the Mississippi River is named "Rio del Espiritu Santo (River of the Holy Spirit)." Father Marquette, writing of his canoe voyage on this river in 1673 with Joliet called it the *Missisipi*, but his map named the river "R.de la Conception." Father Hennepin in 1683 called the Mississippi the "River Colbert" and so mapped it; but later map editions named the river as "Le Grand Fleuve *Meschasipi*." And so, as adventurers and writers continued to explore the river, various names were documented but primarily some form of the name *Mississippi* prevailed in books and maps.

Rum River

The name of *Rum River*, which Carver in 1766 and Pike in 1805 found in use by English speaking fur traders, was indirectly derived from the Sioux. White men referred the most common spirituous liquor brought into the Northwest, rum. Nicollet's map, published in 1843, has "Iskode Wabor or *Rum R.*" This name was given by the Ojibway, but derived by them from the white men's perversion of the ancient Sioux name "Wakan," a more exact translation was "Fire Water".

Anoka County

The name of the county established May 20, 1857, was taken from the town of Anoka. The town had its first settlers in 1851-52 and the name was found in use by 1853. It is a Dakota or Sioux word meaning "on both sides." It was applied by founders to the city laid out on both sides of the Rum River and later to the county.

The Ojibway also used a name of nearly the

same sound for the Rum River and for the site near its mouth. The name meaning “where the work” was used because of the extensive early lumbering and log driving on this stream. The Ojibway verb, “I work” is *Anoki*.

An interesting name choice was an Anoka County township (Itasca) that has ceased to exist. Regarding Itasca, Upham comments --
- “Itasca was the name given

by Governor Ramsey and others to a town site platted in 1852 on sections 19 and 30 in this township, near an Indian trading post; and the first post office of Anoka County was established there and named *Itasca* in May of that year. The name was copied from Lake Itasca, at the head of the Mississippi, which had been so named by Schoolcraft in 1832. It was later applied to the Northern Pacific station near the former Itasca village site. Both the village and the railway station have been abandoned, but a new station, named Dayton, at the opposite side of the Mississippi, was established on the Northern Pacific and Great Northern railways about a mile southeast from the former Itasca station. This old village name, which was widely known sixty years ago, is now retained here only by the neighboring Lake Itasca, of small size, scarcely exceeding a half mile in diameter.”

Note: Material for this article was taken from Warren Upham’s “Minnesota Place Names: A Geographic Encyclopedia,” (Minnesota Historical Society). Readers interested in further information are urged to request the book through the Anoka County Library System or you may read the ACHS copy at the History center. If you really enjoy names and would like to purchase this book, it is available from the Minnesota Historical Society in St. Paul.

We’d like you to meet...

ACHS has had some staff changes in the last months. Jean Smith and Crystal Batters both resigned their positions. While we miss them, we wish them well in their new endeavors.

Sandra Thorson is our cleaning person in the History Center. Her home is in Coon Rapids and she has lived most of her life in this area. We’re convinced she knows everybody! This is a reflection of her outgoing personality and shining work ethics. We’re happy to have her cleaning for us and even more pleased she doesn’t slap us with a wet mop for tracking across her clean floors!

Lois Spadgenske, when asked to talk about herself wrote this. I am married to Wes and have three grown sons and seven grandchildren. I was born and raised in Pennsylvania, but have lived in Anoka County 31 years. Most of that time has been in an old farmhouse in Andover, on what used to be called Smuder Road—after the original owners. While our children were growing up, we were leaders in 4-H, and the Anoka County Fair was a highlight of the year. My husband still works with the poultry project and enters woodcarvings. I sometimes enter photography, which is one of my hobbies. I am also an avid reader and like to travel. Historical novels and historic sites have always been high on my list of books to read and places to visit. I am happy to be a part of the History Center and Library staff.

Maria King watched the comings and going at Colonial Hall from her classroom directly across the street, so when she retired from teaching, moving to the History Center was an easy fit. With her experience in teaching, Maria will be able to identify curriculum topics that the History Center may wish to address, and develop new programs to fit those areas.

“It’s so exciting to be a part of this evolving process and the History Center collection settles into its new home.” she said. She looks forward to expanding the niche the History Center currently has in the community. “Outreach means precisely that,” she said. “Reaching out to convince folks that history is about them—their lives. We tend to forget that today is history for the future.”

New on the Shelf...

Black Genealogy, by Charles L. Blockson. A how-to book tracing your ancestors back to Africa. Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977, 232 pages.

Worldwide Family History, by Noel Curren-Briggs. A reference guide to tracing your international ancestry. Printed in Great Britain, 1982, 230 pages.

Tracing your Irish Ancestors, by John Grenham. A comprehensive guide for people tracing their ancestors in Ireland. Published in Ireland, 1992, 281 pages.

Genealogical Research and Resources, by Lois C. Gilmer. A guide for researching your ancestors. American Library Association, 1988, 70 pages.

Collecting Dead Relatives, by Laverne Galeener-Moore. An Irreverent romp through the field of Genealogy. Genealogical Publishing Co., 1987, 155 pages.

History of Minnesota, Volumes I-IV, by Val Bjornson. Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1969.

History of Coon Rapids Methodist Church. This is a copy of their church history from Joyce Chapel to their current location 1 mile east on Hanson Boulevard.

One Hundred Years – Seven Dolors Parish. A history of this church in Albany, MN. 1968, 136 pages.

Le Sueur; Town on the River. A Bicentennial Horizon Project prepared in conjunction with our nation's 200th anniversary. 1977, 245 pages.

Albany-The Heart of Minnesota, by The Albany Heritage Society, 175 pages, 1991.

The Ford in the River, by Vincent A. Yzermans. A history of Holdingford and Holding Township in Stearns County, MN. Park Press, Waite Park, MN. 404 pages.

Microfilm

Minnesota Federal Census from June Novak Collection

Faribault	1910 part 1
Fillmore	1910 part 2
Freeborn	1910 part 1
Hennepin	1870 1880
Houston	1870 1880
Hubbard	1900
Isanti	1870 1880 1900
Itasca	1880 1900
Jackson	1870 1880 1900 1910 part 1 1910 part 2 1920
Kanabec	1870 1880 1900
Kandiyohi	1870 1880 1920
Kittson	1880 1920
Lake of the Woods	1870 1880
Le Seuer	1870 1880
Lac Qui Parle	1880
Lyon	1880
Marshall	1910 part 2
St. Louis	1870
Steele	1910 part 1

Wisconsin Federal Census from June Novak collection

Dane	1910
Door	1870 1880
Douglas	1870 1880 1920
Dunn	1860 1870 1880 1900 1910 1920
Eau Claire	1860 1870 1880 1900
Florence	1900
Fond Du Lac	1860

Contributions

Donations

These contributions will help us keep Anoka County history.
(In the order received)

Post #102 Auxiliary
Hoffman Enclosures
Deborah Sundeen
Mr. & Mrs. Albert Loehlein
Janet Wilcox
Wyane Howell
Zilla Way
Millie Pratt Giddings
Al & Dawn Springer
James Wennerlund
Marlys Burman
John & Shirley Lynch
Clinton Caswell
Laverne Anderson
Chester & Gladys Tollefson
Ronald & Harriet Burley
Joyce Paul
Sharon Holand
Dennis Berg
Merlin Hunt
American Legion Post #102

Looking for Anoka County Century Farms

The Anoka County Historical Society is seeking owners of farms in Anoka County that have been in the same family bloodline for 100 years or more. The purpose is to identify and honor those families whose hard work and persistence have resulted in the stability of ownership for at least a century. To be eligible, a farm must have at least 40 acres of original land continuously owned by a bloodline family member.

Special recognition will be given to these families during the Anoka County Fair, which runs from July 23 through July 28, 2002. Century farm owners are presented with a special plaque recognizing their family's achievement, receive free admission to the fair for the day, and have their family's farm recorded in the archives of the Anoka County Historical Society.

Please contact the Anoka County Historical Society at 421-0600 for an application packet. The packet contains an information sheet explaining the project and a response sheet to help verify family line data. All information gathered is retained in the ACHS archives. The response sheet must be completed and returned to the Anoka County Historical Society Offices BEFORE July 1, 2002, to be considered for the 2002 Century Farm Awards.

From the President... By John Weaver

The Anoka County History Center and Library is rapidly taking shape. Despite an occasional down stroke of "bad news", we have had our share of very special opportunities so as to "fill our sails" with optimism.

Our dear, loyal, talented ACHS Co-director Jean Smith resigned, for medical reasons, effective March 15th. Jean has served the Society for seventeen wonderfully fulfilling years—and leaves a staffing void "a mile wide".

Co-Director Vickie Wendel, after a good bit of soul-searching, has recommended, with Board concurrence, that the reins of staff leadership of ACHS be vested in a new full-time director. Vickie will serve as interim director until our search is satisfactorily concluded and then assume a menu of assignments befitting her vast array of unique talents.

Other staff positions are now being filled to replace our talented, recently resigned, Crystal Batters and to fill a new position required by the addition of our branch county library.

Steadily the History Center is being outfitted with state-of-the-art resources that will enhance our ability to better serve our history clients and our membership while more sensitively cataloguing and protecting our artifacts collections. A recent gift from Hoffman Engineering, an Anoka County company, provides our Anoka County History Center a vast one-of-a-kind environmentally safe storage resource for our delicate and expansive collection of historic textiles. This gift, valued at perhaps \$50,000, has caught the eye of the Minnesota Historical Society and may well open a new market in enclosures for our most generous benefactor. A special word of thanks to R.W. Johnson and Bart Ward for their diligent development of the Hoffman Engineering philanthropy.

Other individuals, businesses, and governmental units have made extremely generous investments in the fiscal well-being of ACHS. Each will be properly and permanently recognized on a recognition wall now being designed for the History Center.

Now for a quick look at our future. The Anoka County Historical Society has as its priority goal during the year ahead a quantum leap in our membership numbers. Our 18 cities and 3 townships in Anoka County are each enjoying population growth. We are seeking just that dynamic team from around the county who can "make our sizzle sell". With a History Center and Library that can be one of Minnesota's show pieces, and a staff and Board that are determined to make history sparkle in Anoka County, we're on our way. Please do join us as a volunteer.

Moving Day – Part II

We're planning another moving day from Colonial Hall to the History Center on Saturday, April 20, starting at 8:00 a.m. We need lots of hand to accomplish this second phase of the move and we'd like your help! We moved the majority of our collections last fall. The remaining items include all of our hanging garment collections and things in the attic. Many of these items are not heavy and our goal is to form a "bucket brigade" to hand them down the stairs and into the truck. We need lots of hands to make this work, so please consider giving a few hours on April 20th.

We are asking for help from the Anoka National Guard since they were such wonderful resources in phase one of the move. We want to move some larger pieces of furniture, so we'll need some muscle, too

Lunch will be served to all our helpers on the day of the move. We want to keep your strength up!

Join us for a fun day of work where you can really see your efforts making a difference. If you have questions or would like to help by donating something for the lunch, call the History Center at 763-421-0600.

ACHS Elections

Elections for the Board of Directors of the Anoka County Historical Society were held at the Annual Meeting held on March 21, 2002. Shirley Christenson of Anoka was reelected to serve as the Board secretary. Myrtice Hanson of St. Francis was elected to Director D, the seat vacated by Barb Scottston of Ramsey who was elected as vice president.

The Anoka County Historical Society Board of Directors is responsible for overseeing the operation of Society business. The ACHS Board of Directors is elected by the membership at its annual meeting. The existing board may appoint directors if a vacancy occurs.

New Cabinets!

Hoffman Enclosure, Inc. of Anoka presented a wonderful gift to ACHS this past winter. They custom designed 12 huge cabinets for our hanging garment collections, built them, and brought them to the History Center. It is an incredibly valuable gift as collections stored in these cabinets are protected from light, dust, water or smoke in the event of a disaster. They also allow us to isolate fur, wool, silk or other fabrics that need special care.



Staff is so thrilled with these cabinets that we are often caught just going back into the storage area to touch them, open the doors, turn the latches and just make sure the cabinets are "real". We love them and can't wait until we have all the hanging garments moved into them! (Which is happening on April 20th! Come see our cabinets and help us move!)

Library News

Having space for all the resources of our library is wonderful and we will be continually working to improve how patrons use it. One giant new step forward in the re-organizing for our book collection. Two experienced library volunteers, Shirley Christenson and Marlys Talbot, are in one day each week to get our books in the Dewey Decimal system. We've never had room for such a luxury of placing books in their proper order—we usually had to place them by where they fit! This project will take a long time, but will end with all the books having a fresh new label placing it in its proper place in the Dewey system and a searchable database to locate the books in our collection. We're excited and very pleased these two talented volunteers are taking on this big project! It will benefit patrons for years to come.

Thank You, Volunteers!

Volunteer Recognition Day is set for Saturday, April 13th at 1:00 p.m. We'll have some cake, visit, meet new staff members, and just enjoy each other's company in the new History Center. We're looking forward to seeing you as we need to say a huge thank you to each and every one of you!

Volunteers, take bow! You have turned an astounding number of volunteer hours! In 2001, we kept track of 3,442 hours volunteered to ACHS. We know there were many more hours that were not logged into the calendar—especially since during the move, many volunteers didn't even know which building the calendar was, much less be able to find it! We hope this list includes everyone, but the danger with lists is that someone gets left off. If you volunteered time in 2001 and your name is not on the list, PLEASE CALL US! We want to give you credit and add your hours to the total.

Volunteer hours are important. These numbers are required in some grants and help show support for the organization in others. Volunteer hours have value not just for the work done, but in many far-reaching areas of funding and support. Please help us by writing your down hours every time you work for ACHS. It also makes thanking you easier and that's important, too!

If you haven't joined in the volunteer fun, call the History Center at (763)-421-0600. We hope to hear from you soon!

History Center News

A Member Benefit

Vol. 32, No. 3

Anoka County Historical Society

June 2002

A Tale of Two Drums

A special drum in our collection was the inspiration for starting an annual summer celebration of history at ACHS. Our goal is drumming up support for the dream of keeping history. The 8th Annual Celebration will see one facet of that goal met—the Grand Opening of the Anoka County History Center and Library. Recently, history of another drum came to light and both will be highlighted in a special exhibit in the new Exhibit Hall. Here are the stories of our drums.

Built in a military style, this drum is believed to have been first used in 1750. It was carried by a Hessian musician whose job it was



to communicate orders through drum signals to the troops during the Revolutionary War. The Hessians were German mercenaries fighting with the British Army.

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

The drum remained with the Bain family until they passed it on to Richard Sorenson.

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

Sorenson wanted to share the rich history of this special drum, so he donated it to his hometown historical society, the Anoka County Historical Society.

The drum on the right came to Anoka with a Civil War veteran named Lemuel P. Storms. After the war, he served as a captain of the 48th New York National Guard. When Storms moved to Anoka, he brought the drum with him. He gave the drum to Josiah W. Clark.



Clark was a Charter member of Company B, 3rd Infantry Minnesota National Guard and a veteran of the Civil War where he had served as a musician. Clark played the drum in the Fife and Drum Corps and at meetings of the J.S. Cady Post of the G.A.R. in Anoka.

Clark died in 1906 and the drum was given to B.J. Witte, Jr. Witte's father ran a drug store on Main Street in Anoka. At the outbreak of World War One, Witte joined the Army to defend freedom in what was then called the "war to end all wars". After the war was over, the veterans organized the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion posts. Anoka had a VFW and an American Legion; Witte was active in both.

Witte played the drum in the 1st American Legion Drum and Fife Corps in 1921. This was thought to be the first such group in the state. In 1923, he used the drum in the Minneapolis VFW Fife and Drum Corps. It was Witte who brought the idea of having a fife and drum corps in Anoka.

Witte was active in preserving history and donated many artifacts to the Anoka County Historical Society. This drum and its story are preserved in the ACHS collections.

The New Exhibit Hall

Wow, is our new Exhibit Hall at the History Center *big!* Filling it with exhibits to teach, entertain, and engage visitors is a challenge, but one that has proven to be a great deal of fun. The new space is divided into five themed areas, each containing a number of individual exhibits on that area's theme.

Two of these themes, military and logging history, will rotate artifacts frequently, so while the theme may remain, the exhibits within them will not. Visitors will see new exhibits and different artifacts with stories to always keep you coming back for more of our incredible Anoka County history.

One area currently has a "school" theme and will be a great space to get involved with history. School desks highlight various eras of education in Anoka County—and you get to sit in those desks! There is a teacher's desk, a portable blackboard, teaching tools, books and more, even a big school bell! That, with the help of Steve Jenson and his crew, is hanging in a bell tower once again. Even though this area looks like a school now, it won't always stay that way. You'll just have to keep coming back to the History Center to see what it turns into next!

The largest exhibit theme is *Anoka County A to Z* and has 26 separate exhibits, each with artifacts beginning with that letter. This exhibit has been the most fun as it is providing a chance for us to bring out many artifacts that have not been on display before. There are some very fun things, so this will be an exhibit everyone will enjoy.

Join us for the Grand Opening of the Exhibit Hall when we cut the ribbon on July 13 as a part of the *Drums, Dreams and History Celebration!*

Logging

Logging was one of the earliest European activities in Anoka County, beginning in 1820-21 when soldiers working to build Fort Snelling cut trees on the Rum River. The tall white and red pines inspired awe amongst the first timber cruisers. The cruiser was the person out looking over the land to see if there was enough usable timber in an area to merit setting up logging operations. Cruisers in Anoka County found more than enough and logging operations, sawmills and settlements quickly followed.

A pike pole is in our collections at ACHS. It's a piece of equipment used by loggers to help steer and move logs as they were floated down river from the cutting site to the saw mills. This one is 142 inches long, shows evidence that it was once painted green, and has a sturdy iron point.

Doctor B. W. Bunker donated it to ACHS in 1977. A logger on the Rum River probably used it as he scampered along the floating logs to keep them moving and prevent or break up log jams. That might have been a harder task than we imagine—especially when unexpected factors are considered.

One such unexpected factor was a young girl named Mary Woodbury and her little brother, John. They lived in a house on the west bank of the Rum River south of Main Street. Mary wrote, many years later, about her experiences with log jams on the river below their home. Here are her words, just as she wrote them in the 1920's:

"The log drives were always interesting incidents in our young lives, and our activities with

those in the Rum River, I think might have rendered us liable, if not to imprisonment, at least to summary justice in some form, for my brother John and I, at the tender age of eight or ten, had discovered

that the cause of log jams by our house was almost invariably a long log being held across the middle of the river by two large boulders conveniently placed. As it was one of our great joys to watch the river-drivers break these jams, it logically followed that when they did not materialize often enough to give us this pleasant excitement, we rowed out and towed a log into the required position across the rocks, then went ashore and established ourselves comfortably on our high bluff to await developments. It seldom took more than an hour for the logs to pile up most satisfactorily, and then the red-shirted young giants would arrive and perform miracles of agility and skill in dislodging them, little dreaming that the innocent appearing children so gravely watching proceedings were responsible for all the turmoil."

That's just one of the stories an artifact like a pike pole can tell. Preserving the stories, as well as the corresponding artifacts, is something the Anoka County History Center works hard at. Dr. Bunker's pike pole is on display and visitors can hear more stories like Mary's in a portion of the Exhibit Hall dedicated to telling the history of logging in Anoka County.



Blue Star Banners

At ACHS, we gather history every day, so we have been gathering information on the revival of patriotism since the tragedy of September 11th. We see it in flags, music and attitudes around our communities. One revival has come in the form of Blue Star Service banners. These were previously used during World War One and Two. Created in 1917, a blue star banner in the window meant that household had someone in the armed service.

The blue star banner tradition is being repeated in Anoka County today. The spouse (or parents of an unmarried service person) may now apply for a banner if they live in Anoka County. It symbolizes the service that family is providing to our nation.

ACHS has a huge service flag, dated 1943, in its collections. The flag commemorated the service given to the nation by the armed forces in World War Two. This flag has a star for each student, alumni, and teacher serving in W.W.II from Anoka High School. At its dedication, the flag had 335 stars. The flag was white, trimmed in red and had blue stars in keeping with the blue star banners hanging in the windows of Anoka homes. One star, set in the center of the flag, was in

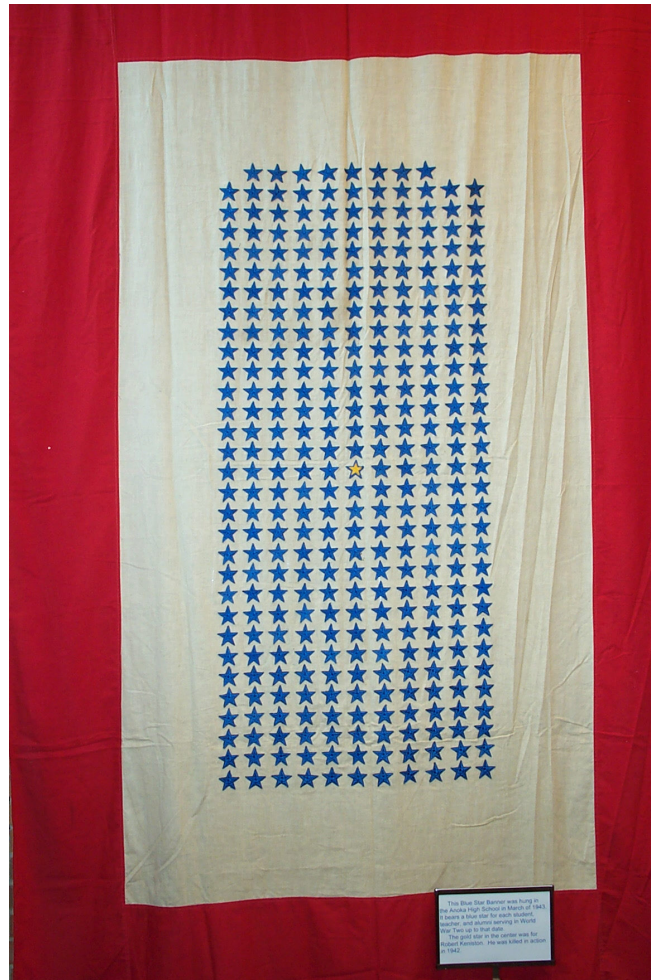
gold. It was for Robert Keniston who died in the service in 1942. The flag was dedicated at the High School in a ceremony in March of 1943 and presented to the school where it would hang for many years.

The *Anoka County Union* published a list of names the stars represented and

asked anyone who knew of someone not on the list to contact them in order that the list be complete. The paper gave its phone number—there were only three digits in their number at that time—and asked for calls. They must have received some as the total number of stars on the flag was increased.

Eventually, the flag was taken down and it made its way to the holdings of the Anoka County Historical Society where it has been preserved. This service flag, and the names the stars represent, will be part of an exhibit in the new Exhibit Hall when it is opened this summer. The exhibit focuses on the patriotism of Anoka

County residents and will surely bring back memories for many people and provide the means for sharing the stories with those too young to remember them. The service the Armed Forces have given our nation will be the center of one of the permanent exhibits in the new exhibit hall, rotating artifacts on this central theme. It will be an exhibit you will want to return to often!



This service flag was dedicated with 335 stars to Anoka High School in March of 1943. It was a blue star banner for Anoka, Minn. The flag was in the window of the Keniston family. The gold star in the center was for Robert Keniston. The flag was killed in action in 1942.

Century Farms

ACHS is seeking owners of farms in Anoka County that have been in the same family bloodline for 100 years or more. The purpose is to identify and honor those families whose hard work and persistence have resulted in the stability of ownership for a century or more. To be eligible, a farm must have at least 40 acres of original land continuously owned by a bloodline family member.

Special recognition will be given to these families at the Anoka County Fair, on Wednesday, July 24th, 2002. Century farm families are presented with a sign suitable for display recognizing their achievement, receive free admission to the fair for the day, and have their family's farm recorded in the archives of the Anoka County Historical Society.

Please contact the Anoka County Historical Society at 763-421-0600 for an application packet. The packet contains an information sheet explaining the project and a response sheet to help verify family line data. All information gathered is retained in the ACHS archives. The response sheet must be completed and returned to the Anoka County Historical Society Offices ***BEFORE July 8, 2002***, to be considered for the 2002 Century Farm Awards.

Anoka County Fair Spelling Bee

Kids! Can you spell "showmanship", "referee", "carnival", "historical" or "seize"? If you think you can, you just might be an Anoka County Fair winner in the Spelling Bee held on Children's Day, Thursday, July 25, 2002.

There are two age divisions: Junior Division - spellers ages ten years old and under and Senior Division - spellers eleven through fifteen years of age.

Contestants need only to appear and sign up anytime before 2:00 p.m. at the School House on the Old Farm Place at the fair on the day of the contest. The spell down will be held in the tent beside the Old Farm House. The Junior Division will begin their spell down at 2:00 p.m. with the Senior Division to follow.

Prizes will be awarded.

It's Fair Time!

Let's make "Prize Winning History" at the Anoka County Fair this year! Have you ever entered something you made, baked, grew, or raised at the Anoka County Fair? Did you win a ribbon or prize? We'd like to know about it! We can make copies of your prize and take photos of the winning entries to include in our display of "Prize Winning History" at the Farmhouse. Remember, not everyone wins a blue ribbon, so we'd like to have your stories of *anything* you entered at the Fair! (Even those infamous "black" ribbons!)

Activities at the Farmhouse and Summer Kitchen will highlight prize-winning recipes, handwork, historic prize displays, and more!

Here's what's going on--bead work, quilting, chores, a spelling bee on Thursday, laundry, lace making, canning vegetables, wood carving, soap making, butter churning and.....You'll just have to come to the Farm House and Summer Kitchen every day to see it all!

Have you been part of our "Fair Family"? If you have, you know how much fun the fair is. If you haven't, call us to volunteer your time to share history with hundreds of people at the Anoka County Fair. We need lots of volunteers to talk about the heritage crafts they do, interpret various aspects of "old tyme" farm life and lot more. It's always fun and we'd love to have you! Call Maria or Vickie at 763-421-0600 to volunteer.

Contributions

Donations

These e contributions will help us preserve Anoka County history.

Anoka Lodge #30
Margery Beckenbach
Dennis Berg
Michael and Katie Brey
Ronald and Harriet Burley
Marlys Burman
Robert and Pat Burtness
Clinton Caswell
Gladys Christenson
Carol and Bob Dordan
Fifth Avenue Dental
Charlotte Fitzpatrick
Terry and Quinley Free
Carol and Roland Freeburg
Millie Pratt Giddings
Elinor Godfrey
Laurie and Rob Hanson
Sharon Holand
Joyce Hollinder
Wyane Howell
Merlin Hunt
Henry and Pat Johnson
Rod and Maxine Larson
Judie Lee
Albert and Hannah Loehlein
John Shirley Lynch
Beth Mullinax
Beverly Olson
Joyce Paul
Christine Schinzel
Karen Sivanich
Al and Dawn Springer
Ray Steinke
Deborah Sundeen
Telephone Pioneers
Diane Thorpe
Chet Tollefson
Kathlee Wagar
Zilla Way
James Wennerlund
Janet Wilcox

Memorials

Given by Skip and Gloria Rither
In memory of Edythe Rither

From the President...By John Weaver

One of our county's most notable historians took her first tour through the Anoka County History Center and Library last week. She observed the office area with cubicles for staff members, the artifact collections area equipped with state-of-the-art garment and fabric enclosures given to us by Hoffman Engineering (a \$35,000 gift), and the Exhibit Hall "in bloom" as Vickie Wendel prepares her display dreams for our Grand Opening on July 13th.

She met with those staff members on duty and was made aware that we have a customer-friendly schedule of open hours totaling 37 each week.

Her response, in a nutshell---"I can't believe it! The building is classy, a perfect fit for the purposes as a History Center and a library. The Exhibit Hall has numerous nooks and crannies that permit unique privacy for, and focus upon, your collections displays, and there's room to grow. The enhancements made available by such philanthropic corporate citizens as Hoffman, E-Street Makers, Connexus, Wells-Fargo, The Elmer Anderson Foundation, and many others have provided elements within the Center that will make this history resource a showpiece."

I restrained my enthusiasm to let her finish.

"And your staff!! Eight live bodies---three with master's degrees in educational fields and historic preservation. Each of the staff members I met had a smile all over their faces, and they 'knew their stuff'. Wait 'till the folks out there see what this Society has accomplished---and on a shoestring budget."

How proud I was to hear that unsolicited testimony from a very fussy historian.

Our Board, on behalf of this county's commitment to collect, protect and interpret Anoka County's History, has indeed accomplished an enviable achievement in its transition from Colonial Hall Museum to the new Anoka County History Center and Library. What a delight it has been to observe our wonderfully professional staff work with, and lead, the unsung heroes of our Society---our precious volunteers---as they have so generously shared their skills and talents so that we may all enjoy our wealth of Anoka County history.

New on the Shelf...

You will not find a listing of new books and resources that have been added to our ACHS Library in this newsletter or even in the next one. Volunteers Shirley Christenson and Marlys Talbot have begun the incredible task of reorganizing our resources into the Dewey Decimal system. This will bring our resource books into the same kind of organization as the books in the Anoka County Library's system. While this process is going on, new books are placed on a "holding shelf" where they are available for research. These books will not be added to the list of resources until they are cataloged into the new system.

While the project is in progress, it may take an extra moment to find the book you are looking for, but the end result will be more than worth it as our resources will be computerized. Researchers will be able to search for material in our collections from any computer and know they can come to ACHS to find that book.

Research Trip to D.C.

Are you interested in researching at the National Archives in Washington D.C. for family history? Military history? A subject of special interest?

ACHS is planning a trip to the Archives in early November to research. We'll make the arrangements for flights, hotels and transportation, get you to the Archives, and show you places to eat. You only have to organize your research notes!

If you double-up in the rooms to save on cost, we expect we can do about four days for around \$500 (depending on the cost of hotel and airfare). We'll know more as we get closer and when we know how many are interested in going. Group rates begin at ten people!

If you are interested in researching at the National Archives (or just a trip to Washington!), please call Vickie at 763-421-0600. You do NOT have to commit at this time, just let us know you are interested. We'll add your name to the list and have a meeting later this summer to finalize costs and plans.

Volunteer News...by Maria King

The new space at the History Center provides a substantial opportunity for us to improve access to our resources. However, there is a lot of work involved. Volunteers are needed to read manuscripts from our files and index each piece by the name of the person and topic. Other volunteers are needed to do data entry, typing names, dates and places into the computer. The entire project is daunting, but each little piece is really very manageable. Training will only take about half an hour, so we'd love to have you volunteer a few hours.

Once again we are staffing the Anoka County Fair Farmhouse and Summer Kitchen. People with talents to share are encouraged to give me a call. I'm completing the schedule now, so call soon! Needleworkers, storytellers, carvers, hair braiders, and more are needed. We ask volunteers to commit to a five-hour time shift at minimum. The dates of the 2002 Fair are Tuesday, July 23rd through Sunday, July 28th. Monday, July 22 is set up day and we need willing workers to wash windows, shake rugs, sweep and clean before we move into our Fair home.

Do you have a favorite area of history that you would like to share with others? Do you have or know someone who has a special collection? Do you have skills in video production? Would you be interested in interviewing Anoka County residents and tape recording their stories? A transcriber for those stories is also needed.

As our outreach efforts grow, we will have more opportunities for enthusiastic volunteers. Until then, please know how valuable your service is to the Historical Society and to the people of Anoka County—especially those unborn generations. They depend on us to preserve yesterday for tomorrow.

Sesquicentennial Cancellation for Anoka's Post Office

"Neither rain, nor sleet, nor dark of night..."

This well-known motto of the post office should have included "nor edge of the frontier" as delivering mail in the earliest days of Minnesota's history could not have been easy.

The first post office to be established in what would become Anoka County was on July 22, 1852. It was in a large section of Minnesota known as Benton County at the time and the community it was established in was known as Decorri. By April of 1854, the name Decorri was discontinued and the town became known as Anoka.

It has been 150 years that the post office of Decorri, then Anoka, has served residents of Anoka County. In recognition of that achievement,

Anoka has been named a

Sesquicentennial Station. A

special cancellation

mark bearing the image of the

1916 vintage

Anoka Post Office building located on the corner of Third Avenue and Main Street will be available for 30 days.

The first public offering of this pictorial cancellation will be at the Anoka County History Center and Library on July 13th during the annual *Drums, Dreams and History* celebration. Hours for the cancellation are 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The History Center is located at 2135 Third Avenue North, Anoka.

To request a Pictorial Cancellation by mail, affix first-class postage to a self addressed envelope or postcard, using stamps issued before the date of cancellation. Place in a larger envelope and send to the following address:

Postmaster, Sesquicentennial Station,
PO Box 9998, Anoka, MN 55303-9998.

All requests must be postmarked by August 13th, 2002, as this cancellation is only available for 30 days.

For more information, please contact the Anoka Post Office.

From the Director's Desk...

Dear ACHS Members,

Hello and allow me to introduce myself. My name is Bonnie McDonald and I am the newest addition to the ACHS staff. I was hired in May as the Executive Director of the Society to oversee the operations of our organization and the new



ACHS History Center and Library. As a longtime resident of Anoka County, I am committed to preserving our common history and highlighting the resources that tell our stories. I moved to Blaine in 1985 at the age of 9 and graduated from Blaine High School in 1993. In 1998, I received my Bachelor's degree in Art History from the University of Minnesota and in May of this year received my Master's degree in Historic Preservation Planning from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

I am indebted to both Jean Smith and Vickie Wendel for their tireless work as ACHS's co-directors over the past nine years. Their dedication and talent, along with the leadership of the board, has positioned ACHS amongst the leading historical societies in the state. In the past year, we have moved into a larger home on Third Avenue North while continuing to care for our dear Colonial Hall. We have hired five part-time employees in the past six months to help preserve our collections and staff the facility. In addition, several individuals, businesses, and foundations have supported our ongoing efforts through generous grants and donations. And this is only the beginning!

ACHS is primed for its exciting future and I am proud to lead the charge. We will be implementing new programs, providing quality exhibits, expanding our resources for researchers, strengthening our membership, and increasing member benefits. So, expect to see our continued traditions paired with new opportunities in the coming months. Thank you for your continued support of the Anoka Co. Historical Society and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns at (763) 421-0600.



History Center News

A Member Benefit

Vol. 32, No. 4

Anoka County Historical Society

September 2002

What a Grand Opening it was!

The Grand Opening of the new Anoka County History Center and Library was indeed grand!

We started the festivities with a "Members and Friends" only preview on Thursday, July 11th. Our preparations went right down to the last ladder dragged out of the Exhibit Hall only minutes before we opened the door.

Beautiful harp music provided by Elaine Stindt greeted our special guests and tours of the behind the scenes areas were offered. It was great fun to see people enjoying what the exhibits staff had worked so hard on! About 170 people visited the Exhibits Hall, toured the storage area and enjoyed a treat of lemonade and cake in our Philolectian Room.

Saturday, July 13th, dawned bright and beautiful! A very nice crowd gathered at the Government Center atrium to hear Medal of Honor recipient Richard Sorenson speak. His story of the Revolutionary War drum was a highlight for everyone as it gave

its name to our annual summer celebration of *Drums, Dreams and History*.

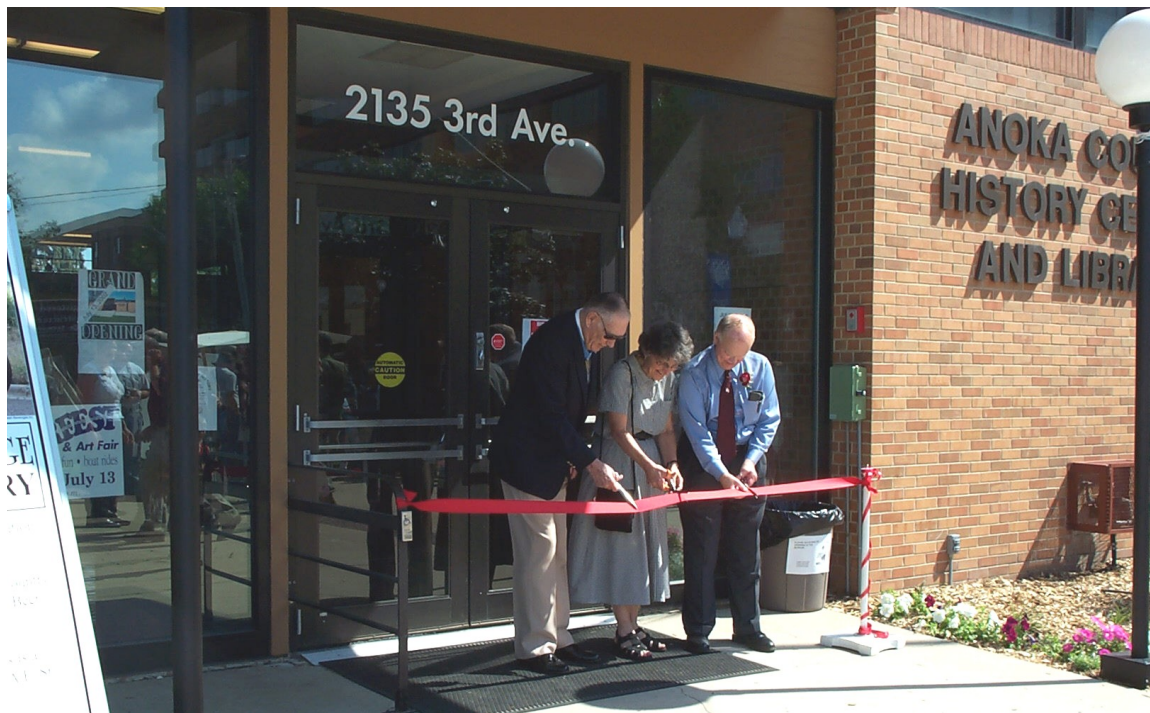
Director of the Minnesota Historical Society, Nina Archibal, spoke on the importance of keeping local history. Her words were an inspiration to everyone and it was great to hear her speak.

It was like the Pied Piper as we led everyone across the street to cut the ribbon at the History Center and welcome in nearly 1,200 people throughout the day!

Thanks to you, our Anoka County community, the Anoka County Historical Society has accomplished this huge undertaking. We never could have done the remodeling of the building, the packing, the move, the exhibits, and everything else without your commitment and support. We, and generations yet to come, all thank you.

Grand opening? That doesn't begin to describe it!

Richard Sorenson, Nina Archibal, and John Weaver cutting the ribbon on July 13, 2002.



Linwood Grange Hall

The Grange movement of the mid to late 1880's reached nearly every corner of America and Anoka County was no different. The proximity to the Grange's founder, Oliver Kelley, made the impact probably even greater.

The Grange was an organization to promote education in agriculture. It also provided social and cultural opportunities for farmers and their wives with regular club meetings. It was not a political party, but was involved in political issues that affected agriculture. Grange meetings were places to discuss new information about crops, machinery, and methods of farming. Granges helped their members by cooperatively buying and selling agricultural machinery, implements, threshing machines, brooms, groceries, and cattle for breeding stock.

The Crescent Grange #512 was established in Linwood Township in 1874. Members met in churches and homes around Linwood and began planning for the construction of their own place to meet. There were 20 charter members. Grange member Joel G. Green donated an acre of land on which to build the Hall conditional on its use as a Grange. This was established on a lease basis. In February of 1881, members voted to build a 32' x 20' hall. A month later, they met at the sawmill owned by George Haskells on Typo Lake and began cutting and sawing the logs for construction.

Building began in the spring of 1881 and continued through the summer and fall. In late November, it was decided to postpone further work until spring. When the work began again, they decided to enlarge the structure to include a kitchen. The Grange members took the project very seriously and one member was fined \$1.00 for not attending meetings regularly to help with construction.

On July 4th, 1882, the Linwood Grange members held their first celebration. They invited George Morrel of Anoka to be their featured speaker. He must have drawn quite a crowd as the proceeds, \$87.62, were used to furnish the new Hall. A cook stove and a heating stove were both installed.

In 1883, the Hall was painted at the total cost of \$10.00. In 1884, it was lathed and two coats of plaster were applied with a putty coat.

The charge was \$.10 a square yard. The next year, they built a barn big enough to hold 24 horses, which remained until 1947.

By 1916, the Hall was remodeled and enlarged. W.W. Wittay did most of the work, adding on to the south end of the Hall, putting on alcoves and replacing the shingles. Electricity was installed and the Hall had electric lights in 1940.

The Green farm was sold in 1948 and the Grange was given the title to their acre. In 1949, more remodeling was done to lower the ceiling and conserve heat. It continued to serve the area and received a new roof and paneling in the meeting room in 1966.

The Grange did not serve only its members, but the entire community. The Hall served as a gathering place for anniversary celebrations, showers, school exhibits, 4-H demonstrations, and many other community events. The Hall hosted New Year's Eve Masquerades, social suppers, Fourth of July celebrations, and Christmas parties.

Mrs. Mary Peterson, who was the Grange's National Director of the Year for the Midwest states in 1974, described the Crescent Grange in the Centennial booklet. "These patrons were energetic and frugal. With brotherly love and optimism they directed their efforts.... They were building a better environment for their families and those generations to come."



Linwood's Crescent Grange Hall.

The Story of an Artifact

V is for Violet Ray...

Telling the story of history often involves everyday items people don't usually think of as history. One of those items in the Anoka County Historical Society collection is a Violet Ray Machine. It is on display in the "Anoka County A to Z" exhibit in the letter "V".

The Violet Ray machine was a high frequency generator that claimed to "counteract the causes" of illnesses by use of a "violet ray" the generator produced. Minnie Foster Goodrich purchased the machine in the 1920's. She was born in Anoka County in 1865 and lived in the area her entire life. Family members remember her loaning the Violet Ray machine to friends and neighbors in the 1930's.

According to the manual, "All human ailments...can be traced to faulty circulation and impure blood." When activity was low, the circulation decreased, allowing impurities to collect in the "stagnant" blood and preventing richly nourished blood from reaching all parts of the body.

The Violet Ray machine promised to bring to "every home, at a reasonable price, a method whereby every vital process can be quickened and the blood made to course through the body with renewed vigor." The treatment was so gentle and safe that it could be applied to even the most tender nerve, muscle, or organ.

It worked by producing heat and vibration in a glass encased "electrode" held against the skin. The skin may "become slightly reddened by the blood that is sent in response to the stimulation."

The rays were said to work, depending on how they were applied, as a sedative, as a stimulant and tonic, as an internal antiseptic, for beauty, dandruff, headaches, rheumatism, "Brain Fog," and many other ailments.

Did it work? Well, you will have to come see the machine for yourself and decide if you think the rays it produced ever did anyone good! Whether or not the machine worked doesn't matter. What matters is the story the Violet Ray machine can tell us about how people took care of themselves and each other in Anoka County in the 1930's.



A "Fair" Event in Anoka County

Were you at the Anoka County Fair this year? We saw many friends and members at the Fair and had a great time. The weather was a little less than perfect, but that didn't stop our Fair Family! We talked to literally thousands of people throughout the week and shared Anoka County history, farm history, history of various crafts, and much more.

We were also honored to present a Century Farm plaque to the Peterson Family. To qualify as a Century Farm, the land must have remained in the same family bloodline for

100 years or more. The farm must be at least 40 acres of original land, be actively farmed, and be owned by the bloodline family member.

Peter Peterson bought the land in section 18 of Ham Lake in 1902 on a contract for deed, paying it off quickly to claim it as his own. He passed the land on to his wife, Lillie who then passed the farm on to her son, Lester. Lester farmed the land until he passed it to his son, Willis. Willis passed the farm on to his wife, Dorothy, who is the present owner of the land. The family celebrated the 100th birthday of the farm in June and received the Century Farm Award in July.

Congratulations to this family for their outstanding achievement.

Thanks to everyone in our Fair Family and we look forward to seeing you next year!

CONTRIBUTIONS

2002 Drum Donors

A sincere thank you to these donors who bought drums this year in support of our new ACHS History Center.

Gold Drums (\$1,000 or more)

Steve Jenson & Family
John Weaver

Silver Drums (\$500-\$999)

Ruth Franklin

Blue Drums (\$100-\$499)

Joe & Marlys Chutich
Lucille Elrite
Myrtle Eveland
Netha Feist
 in Memory of Warren Feist
A Friend
Mildred Jorgensen
Ed Rasmussen, Sr.
Will & Gina Ridge
Richard Sorenson
Ernie & Sharon Woizeschke

Red Drum (\$50-\$99)

Shirley Christenson
Barbara McDonald
Bill & Margaret Prugh
Jean Seaborg

White Drum (\$5-\$49)

Margery Beckenbach
Joan Rundell Haight
Laurie and Rob Hanson
Pat Hesli
 in Memory of Jerry Bennett
Lillian and John Meyer
James Miller
Abby Sherman
Barbara Walchessen
Betty Wilbur

Special Gifts

Anoka County Vietnam Veterans #470

From the President ... By John Weaver

Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient, Rick Sorenson, during his recent visit to participate in the Grand Opening of the Anoka County History Center and Library, was quartered at Ticknor Hill in Anoka. His first request when we met---"I would like to have a walleye dinner."

Of course, we had a tasty walleye dinner at a local restaurant and talked and talked.

Rick has a very special place in his heart for Jean Smith and Vickie Wendel. Over the years he has become aware of the commitment those two former co-directors have to history in Anoka County. The sensitivity they evidenced to his role as one of this nation's most prominent heroes led to his gift to the Anoka County Historical Society of the Revolutionary War drum now on display in our new History Center. The annual "Drums, Dreams and History" theme is, to Rick Sorenson, reflective of the creative, innovative events so typical of the Vickie Wendel/Jean Smith era.

"There isn't anyone else in the world," Rick quietly emphasized, "that could ask me to come to Anoka, pay my own way, speak for 15 minutes, cut a ribbon and then fly back to Reno."

"Jean and Vickie," Rick concluded, "were the diamonds that made this Society sparkle."

What an exemplary tribute to the two co-directors who, for more than 15 years, have done just that.

Jean, bless her heart. Never will we lose the memories of her gentle, quiet enthusiasm as she subtly convinced the ACHS Board that those really great ideas were theirs. Now we know better.

I sense that, at last, Vickie is in her niche. Programming is her strong suite and free is she from those never ending administrative details that she worried about long after the workday concluded.

Our thanks to Jean and Vickie, from our members and our friends, who will always be grateful for your tireless perpetuation of the history of our 145-year-old county.

From the Director's Desk ...

By Bonnie McDonald

Every year, Minnesotans marvel at how quickly our summer comes and goes. Before you know it, the county fair is over, we're closing up our cabins, and yellow buses are reminding us of our own first days of school. September is a great time to take stock of our wonderful summer memories while getting excited about the many fall and winter events to come.

We at ACHS are also taking stock of our summer. It was filled with some important milestones, including the establishment of a more user-friendly research library, retaining a circulating library in downtown Anoka, hiring ACHS' first full-time staff member, opening the new History Center museum, and celebrating our 23rd year of staffing the Farmhouse at the Anoka County Fair.

Fall is no time to rest, however! It's a time to further our goal of providing better service to our over 300 members countywide. You, our members, are a vital part of our mission to preserve Anoka County's history. We'd like to provide increased benefits to our friends who have supported us through membership.

First, we want to bring you varied and interesting exhibits about our shared history. Look for a new exhibit to open this winter in the unused portion of the History Center's exhibit hall. **Remember**, members receive **free admission** to the museum.

Ensuring that we record our community history from all over the county is another ACHS priority. Thus we've begun a program to conduct oral history interviews and are looking for interviewers and interviewees. ACHS will provide the recording equipment, the meeting space, and pertinent questions. Come share your memories of growing up in Johnsville, working in the fields in Burns Township, or visiting your favorite restaurant in Columbia Heights. If you're interested in making a contribution to our oral history files, please contact me at the History Center.

Finally, providing fun and educational events is another means to reward our members. Check out the "Coming Events" section of this newsletter for a complete list of our upcoming activities. Make sure to mark your calendar for the Photo History Mystery Day on September 21st, the "Monuments to Life" tour series in

October, and the Veterans' Day Tribute on November 9th. We're developing a lunch time lecture series and a monthly conservation workshop series, so look for more information about these programs in future newsletters. As always, members receive discounted or free admission. Hope to see you at the events this fall!

History Donations

ACHS would like to thank those of you who donated artifacts and archival material this summer. Your donation will help others understand our community's history.

Mary Jo Allen
Anoka American Legion Post #102
Anoka Senior High School
Walter Benjamin
Ken Cameron
Clinton Caswell
The City of Centerville
Katie Clark
Mike Clark
The Cooper Collection
Robert and Laverne Crose
Phyllis Dargis
Lucille Elrite
William P. Everts, Jr.
Neitha Feist
Marilyn Hamm
Tom Hammer
Catherine Hansen
Lorraine Hostetler
Wyane E. Howell
Mary Witte Kirk
Rita Kovar
Dave Latterell
Bonnie McDonald
Bob Muscovitz
Elynn and David Niles
Mary Ann Olson
Doris Paschke
Lou Paulson
Eleanore Pemberton
Arnie Scharber
Marion Schulz
Barb Scottston
Jean Smith
Sandra Thorsen
Barbara Tiede
United States Post Office—City of Anoka
Ruth Ann Witte
Mrs. Clarence Wolff
Elaine Witte Yotto

Photo History Mystery Day

Saturday, September 21st, 11:00 – 3:00

Is that Uncle Edgar and Aunt Ruby's wedding? What was the name of that family who lived across the street?

We need your help, Anoka County residents! The Anoka County Historical Society has teamed up with the *Anoka County Union* to help them identify some of their estimated 2,000 unidentified photos. Do you look for their "Photos from the Past" section every week to see if one of your long-lost relatives is pictured? Well, come on in to the Anoka County History Center on **Saturday, September 21st, between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.** and take a stab at identifying the subject of one of the 100 photographs on display. ACHS will serve light refreshments and we'll have staff on-hand to record your recollections. It'll be like a great big, fun family reunion—but, without Uncle Edgar there to eat all the potato salad.

Thanks, Volunteers!

Give yourselves a long, loud round of applause and a hearty pat on the back for your incredible accomplishments during the month of July. You staffed the farm house and summer kitchen at the county fair; you greeted and guided 1,200 people through the museum during Drums, Dreams and History; you swept, stacked, hammered, filed, painted, and sewed to get everything ready to open our Exhibit Hall.

July was a whirlwind of activity here at the History Center. We held the members only preview night, the Grand Opening, and then the Fair! Through it all, our loyal and talented volunteers filled so many roles and did their jobs so well.

In all, 62 people donated 918 hours in just the month of July to ACHS. And there are probably more we didn't have written on the calendar! Without you, it just wouldn't happen. Your devotion to this organization allows the Historical Society to bring our history into the communities of Anoka County, preserving our past for future generations. Thank you so much for your time, your labor, and especially for your enthusiasm and friendship!

The Next Goal...by Bart Ward

As you know, ACHS is in the process of meeting our capital campaign goal of \$700,000. What you may not know is that we have also set our sights on developing an endowment of \$500,000. To date, we have focused on the capital campaign as those monies are earmarked to improve the structural integrity of and build out our exhibits in the new History Center. As we near the end of the capital campaign, our energy will be geared toward the endowment. It is through the endowment that the Society will be able to add new collections, programs, and exhibits over the long-term. In this way, as the Society continues to collect our county's history, it will have sufficient resources.

The monies donated to the endowment will not be directly used, but rather invested. The endowment will be invested wisely and conservatively to provide ongoing funds through income that will then be used for appropriate projects approved by the board of directors. Finally, these monies are being raised through donations and planned giving which will include life income gifts, charitable remainder trusts, and bequests.

If you have questions or would like to make a donation, please call the Historical Society at (763) 421-

Calendar of Events

September/October 2002

- September 16th **National Archives Trip Planning Meeting**
Anoka County History Center and Library
7:00 p.m.
- September 21st **Photo History Mystery Day**
Anoka County History Center and Library
11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- October 19th **ACHS & DAR - "Light Up the Night" Parade**
City of Anoka Main Street
7:00 p.m.
- October 26th **ACHS & DAR -Anoka Grand Day Parade**
City of Anoka Main Street
1:00 p.m.
- "Monuments to Life" Tour, Part I**
West Oak Grove Cemetery, Oak Grove
6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
(See enclosed flyer for ticket prices)
- October 29th **"Monuments to Life" Tour, Part II**
Oakwood Cemetery, Anoka
6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- November 1st **"Monuments to Life" Tour, Part III**
St. Genevieve Catholic Cemetery, Centerville
6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- November 9th **Veterans Tribute**
Coon Rapids City Center
11155 Robinson Drive
11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
(See enclosed flyer for ticket prices)

Calendar of Events

September/October 2002

- September 16th **National Archives Trip Planning Meeting**
Anoka County History Center and Library
7:00 p.m.
- September 21st **Photo History Mystery Day**
Anoka County History Center and Library
11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- October 19th **ACHS & DAR - "Light Up the Night" Parade**
City of Anoka Main Street
7:00 p.m.
- October 26th **ACHS & DAR -Anoka Grand Day Parade**
City of Anoka Main Street
1:00 p.m.
- "Monuments to Life" Tour, Part I**
West Oak Grove Cemetery, Oak Grove
6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
(See enclosed flyer for ticket prices)
- October 29th **"Monuments to Life" Tour, Part II**
Oakwood Cemetery, Anoka
6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- November 1st **"Monuments to Life" Tour, Part III**
St. Genevieve Catholic Cemetery, Centerville
6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- November 9th **Veterans Tribute**
Coon Rapids City Center
11155 Robinson Drive
11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
(See enclosed flyer for ticket prices)

Research the National Archives! Week of November 10 –16, 2002

The Anoka County Historical and Genealogical Societies are planning a research trip to the National Archives in Washington D.C.

Search:

Military pension and service records up to W.W.I

Passenger arrival records

Homestead records

Bounty and land warrants

Bureau of Indian Affairs records

Freedman's Bureau records

U.S. Census (1790-1930)

Court of Claims files

Hundreds of other federally created records

Organizational Meeting:

**Monday, September 16, at 7:00 p.m.
Anoka County History Center.**

No commitment necessary at this meeting as prices and firm dates will be set after we know how many people will be traveling.

A deposit of \$200.00 will be required by October 1, 2002

More information? Call the Anoka County History Center at 763-421-0600.

Veteran's Tribute in Coon Rapids

Celebrate the service veterans have given our community and share stories of their adventures.

Join Us to:

- ❖ **View Military artifacts from Coon Rapids**
- ❖ **Attend a Flag History program – 1:00**
- ❖ **Participate in Cannon Drills**
- ❖ **Make a WWII Craft**
- ❖ **Visit a Civil War camp**
- ❖ **Visit with members of the Coon Rapids VFW and the Coon Rapids American Legion**

Coon Rapids City Center

11155 Robinson Drive

Saturday, November 9, 2002

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

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

Bring a non-perishable food item and receive a \$1.00 discount off your admission

**Sponsored by the Coon Rapids Historical Commission and
The Anoka County Historical Society**



History Center News

A Member Benefit

Vol. 32, No. 5

Anoka County Historical Society

November 2002

St. Francis' First City Hall Saved!

It came to the attention of ACHS' staff in mid-September that the City of St. Francis had voted to demolish a small, plain-looking building that stood on 233rd Avenue, near Highway 47. However, this seemingly nondescript structure has significant historic value and has a wonderful story to tell. The building began its life as a one-room schoolhouse in the Crown area (Itasca County) and was constructed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1935. In the early 1950's, the little schoolhouse was moved to St. Francis and set next to the high school to serve as an Annex for overflow classes. Several community members remember having a class or two in the Annex. The schoolhouse was moved again in 1971 to its address on 233rd Avenue, just a few blocks away from the old high school. There, it was put to use as St. Francis' first city hall when the city was formed in 1974 and municipal offices were located there until the late-1980's.

For over a decade, the schoolhouse sat vacant, vulnerable to vandals and taking in water in the basement. In September of 2002, the St. Francis City Council voted to demolish the structure to make way for a new water tower after several frustrating attempts to move the schoolhouse failed. Upon hearing about the history of the structure, and knowing that we have few historic schoolhouses left in the county, ACHS went into action to try and save the schoolhouse from demolition.

ACHS received the cooperation of St. Francis' Mayor Ray Steinke, an ACHS member, who called a special meeting for September 23rd to allow us to present our alternative. Unfortunately, the City Council voted 3-2 to once again to demolish the structure.

Even though we were unsuccessful with the Council, we did not give up on the schoolhouse. ACHS partnered with the Windego Park Society, a nonprofit preservation organization based in Anoka, who was successful in finding a partner



to finance moving and restoring the structure. The demolition company agreed to donate the building to the financier, ACHS board member Paul Pierce. After a long search, a suitable lot was found in the historic section of St. Francis on the corner of Woodbine Street and 229th Avenue. (This lot had been home to the First Baptist Church of St. Francis until it burned to the ground in the 1990's. The church had also been moved to the site in 1893 from Oak Grove.)

Mr. Pierce made a presentation to the St. Francis City Council on October 21st about his plan to move the schoolhouse to the purchased lot, and due to the lot's zoning, to rehabilitate it as a single-family home. The Council approved his plan unanimously.

To date, the schoolhouse has been raised up off its foundation and has been moved to a staging area behind where it has sat for 31 years. It will be moved at the end of November to its new home, where Windego Park Society, ACHS, and community volunteers will work on its rehabilitation. It is anticipated that the home will be sold in approximately a year, after work has been completed. Please look for frequent updates about the schoolhouse in upcoming ACHS newsletters and contact Bonnie at (763) 421-0600 x104 if you are interested in volunteering.

West Oak Grove Cemetery

Along County Road 9 in a secluded area of Oak Grove is the West Oak Grove Cemetery. Many of the earliest settlers of St. Francis and Oak Grove rest in this quiet place. The first burial here was for John Clements in 1856.

The Cemetery Association was incorporated on May 2, 1901, long after the cemetery was established. They agreed to meet on the first Saturday in May each year for the election of trustees. Those first trustees are named on a granite stone at the front of the cemetery. They were Orin Snow, G.H. Leathers, A.E. Wickstrom, Fred Leathers, F. Johnnett, N.A. Nason, J.F. Clements,

M.S. Seeley, and E.R. Smith. Most of them have grave markers in the cemetery over their final resting places.



Other notable events in the cemetery association minutes include the decision to pay for mowing the cemetery in 1918. Pay was \$.35 an hour. By 1935, when a bill was presented for mowing, the Association decided it was too high and did not allow it, so it was dropped.

The Association decided to buy a new rotary lawn mower and sell the old one in 1954. While the decision was not unanimous, it did pass and a new mower was bought at a price of \$114.17.

The Association did worry about other things than getting the grass mowed. In 1929, the Association voted to invest their cemetery funds in stock of Northern States Power.

Perpetual care began to be included in lot prices in 1974. The price? \$100.

The graves under this perpetual care tell many stories in their epitaphs and artwork. Ivy vines adorn the stones for the Gillespie family to symbolize immortality, fidelity, and eternal life. The Stewart stone has a tree woven into the design carved on it. The tree symbolizes life.

Many military markers for Civil War veterans are found in the rows of West Oak Grove. This may be related to the Homestead Act of 1862.

During the Civil War, the Federal Government offered veterans a deal on the Homestead Act. Usually, a person had to spend five years improving their homestead before they could claim it as their own. By this act, soldiers could take a homestead and subtract the number of years they had served in the Union Army off their claim time. This meant that if a man served three years in the Army, he only had to live on and improve his homestead two years before it was his.

Since Oak Grove and St. Francis were prime areas for homesteading at this time, it may be why so many veterans came, made their lives, and now rest here. Some of these veterans include Jacob Emmans, Fred Leathers, Jarvis Nutter, Chester Stewart, Andrew Wickstrom, and John Smith to name only a few.

The West Oak Grove Cemetery is filled with stories of the people who rest there and is well worth the time spent to stop by and walk among the stones. It is a place of history in Anoka County.



The Story of an Artifact

“Those were always the best to get in on a trade-in,” the elderly gentleman said, pointing at the washing machine with the bright copper tub. He had owned a washing machine sales and repair shop in Minneapolis in his younger days and brightened at the sight of the old machine in the ACHS collection. “During Prohibition, I could resell a used machine with a copper tub like that for more than I got for the new one.” He grinned. “With just a little work, it was the perfect still for making your own booze. The agitator would even stir the mash.”

While the machine in the ACHS collections was probably never used for more than washing clothes, the sight of it on display in the museum brought out the story of how that type of machine may have had more than one use. The story opened the door to more conversations between Grandfather and Granddaughter. They had a wonderful time in the museum and the memories they created that day will last forever.

Telling the story of the washing machine and preserving it forever may well have been on the mind of Mary Metro of Columbia Heights when she donated the machine to ACHS. Mary worked for many years for the Lavis Mouthwash Company in Minneapolis. That company began in 1902 and they originally owned the washing machine.

The machine is a “Daylight” model and was also made in Minneapolis by the Puffer Hubbard Company in about 1928. They sold the machine to the Lavis Company and it remained with them for a number of years. Mary, as an employee of Lavis, eventually ended up with the machine.

Mary kept the washer until 1976. At that time, ACHS had only been in Colonial Hall Museum for a short time and our furniture collection was much smaller, so when Mary asked if the Daylight Washer was something ACHS wanted, the answer was yes.

Thousands of people saw that motorized clothes washing machine with its bright copper tub and wringer. Students in later years were amazed at the wringer and needed

to have its operation explained as some of them hardly recognized it as a machine for washing clothes!

The washer moved to the new History Center with all of our collections last year and is currently on display in the “W is for Wash” portion of the “A to Z” Exhibit.

Come visit the “Daylight” machine and see what stories it might bring out for you. And if the washer doesn’t bring your story, there are 25 more letters in that exhibit and two more wings in the museum, so we can guarantee a story from something!



The Travelers

The first ever ACHS and ACGS research trip to Washington, DC, and the National Archives was a great success.



Though the group was small, we did a lot of research (we spent from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. two different days in the Archives!), saw some sights, got to know the guards at the Archives on a first name basis, ate out in some fun places, had our own assigned microfilm readers at the Archives, carried home piles of copies, and laughed until our sides ached every day of the trip!

Vickie and Marilyn even did some exhibit research and preparation for an upcoming exhibit in the History Center. They're planning ahead for an exhibit in 2004, so you'll have to wait until then to see what they were doing!

It was a great trip for research and fun, so while it may not be an annual adventure, there will probably be another one somewhere down the calendar. Keep an eye out for it!

CONTRIBUTIONS

Donations and Support

Anoka Halloween
Anoka Kiwanis
Construction Results – Mark Snyder
Dation Furniture - Pat Minor
Daniel Frank
Everett Gonzales
Judy Hanna
Mary Hampton & Nancy Kraft
Glen Hardin
R.W. Johnson
Barbara McCrimmon
Oertel Architects
Pierce Refrigeration - John Becker
Charlie & Mary Sell
VFW Post #230 – Columbia Heights

Endowment Contributions

Natalie Haas Steffen
Vietnam Veterans, Chapter #470

Volunteer Help Wanted

Graphic Designer

Assist with the layout and design of the publications of ACHS. This includes the newsletter, moving to a six times per year schedule in 2003, and periodic brochures and flyers. Hours are flexible and the experience looks great on a resume.

Handy person

Hours are your choice and would total about one hour per week. The job includes little projects such as replacing weather stripping on a door, a little painting, minor repairs, or other small building projects. The pay is "priceless" as the rewards are smiles, thanks, and lots of friendship at the History Center.

Good News!

ACHS applied for and has been awarded a grant from the Minnesota Historical Society through the Minnesota Grants in Aid program! This matching funds grant will allow ACHS to purchase 260 rolls of microfilmed newspapers from all around Anoka County. The value of this grant, including the ACHS match, is \$7,045. We've been very frugal with our library budget to be able to match this grant, so if anyone would like to help supplement the library budget, you are welcome to make a donation to the project.

The microfilmed papers will be available for research in the ACHS library in the coming months. Watch for the big announcement that the films are here—probably by spring!

History Donations

ACHS would like to thank those of you who donated artifacts and archival material this fall. Your donation will help others understand our community's history.

Bill Bean	Bill Prugh
Robert Blewett	Dan Ross-Jones
Dick Bennett	Richard
Butch Brandenburg	Schwartzlose
Evelyn Bonde	Charlie Sell
Marlys Chutich	Bjorn Skogquist
Wally Felix	Mathew True
Merle Frantz	Sandra Thorsen
City of Hilltop	Bart Ward
Tom Myhra	Marshall Way
Stacy Overby	Jim Wennerlund

Coon Rapids United Methodist Church
First National Financial Services

Membership

It is that time of year when *most* memberships at ACHS are due. We say *most* because we have moved to a new system of 12-month memberships. If you began your membership in June, your membership will expire in June. You will receive a reminder card prior to the expiration.

With this change, our continuing members will all have expiration dates of January first of each year. You can save ACHS time and expense by ***sending in your membership now!*** A form is included in this newsletter.

If your membership is not due, use the form to ***give a holiday gift*** to a friend or family member. Consider giving an ***ACHS membership as a housewarming gift to a new neighbor, use it as a birthday gift, or a thank you gift to a client or employee.*** It's hard to think of a better way to remember someone than with a gift they can use for free admission to the Exhibit Hall, discounts on events and merchandise, and *History News* all year.

Look for the membership form and be sure you remember yourself—or someone else—with a membership to the Anoka County History Center and Library. It really is a gift that keeps on giving all year long.

ACHS Wins Preservation Award!

The Anoka County Historical Society was one of fourteen projects to be honored with a 2002 Honor Award from the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, Minnesota's only statewide historic preservation organization. We received the award for our sensitive reuse of the former Anoka City Library building, which originally opened in 1965. Designed in the heyday of the Modern style of architecture, the Library's designers, David Griswold and John Rauma, received the American Institute of Architect's Award of Excellence for their design in 1968. The preservation award honored the cooperative partnership between Anoka County, the City of Anoka, architect Jeff Oertel, and ACHS. Without this partnership, ACHS may not have had such a wonderful new home. For more information, call Bonnie McDonald at (763) 421-0600 x104.

From the Director's Desk ...

By Bonnie McDonald

ACHS' staff has been kept very busy in October and November with some of our favorite work—group museum tours and outreach programming. In the past two months, we've had four Girl Scout groups come through, with between 15 and 150 children per group. We were able to make the groups' visits enjoyable by providing fun and education through living history programs, games utilizing specific objects in the collection, and walking tours of Anoka. A small group of Cub Scouts came through on a Tuesday night, utilizing our late evening hours, and had the pleasure of sharing the exhibit hall with a wonderful group from the Alpha Delta Kappa teachers' sorority the same evening. Thankfully, we have a dedicated group of volunteers who provided the assistance we needed to make the groups' visits fun for everyone.

In addition, we're receiving more and more reservations for our outreach living history programs. Diane and Maria, two of the History Center's hard-working staff members, have presented our "Quilts and Their Stories" program to two separate quilting groups. Local schools have also requested our "Early Education in Anoka" and "Fashion Trends" programs to help fulfill the Minnesota Graduation Standards requirements. To aide area teachers, we've developed a brochure that describes how our programs align with Minnesota's Graduation Standards. Please call us at the History Center to request this brochure and bring it into your classroom or to your child's or grandchild's teachers.

The staff of the History Center is excited about our programs and we hope that we can present to one of your favorite groups in the future. On behalf of ACHS' board and staff, we wish you a safe and joy-filled holiday season.

Deck the Halls!

The newest exhibit at the History Center is called "Deck the Halls" and features hundreds of holiday decorations sure to bring back memories of special times past. Do you remember the aluminum Christmas trees of the late 1960's? And the color wheel that turned them red, green, blue and yellow? This fun exhibit brings out many of the special decorations in the ACHS collection that haven't been seen in years!

The Anoka County holiday ornaments from each of our highlighted communities (ten so far) are featured in a special case and a home-like setting has been created in a section of the Exhibit Hall. The Logging Camp has a new look with more interactive exhibits and holiday touches have been added throughout the Exhibit Hall.

Come see what's new (and old!) in the Exhibit Hall for the Holiday Season. The exhibit opens on Saturday, December 7th and will run through January 4th, 2003.



Holiday decorations from the ACHS collection.

Anoka County Ornament

The City of Centerville is donating the 2002 County Ornament to add to the collection of ornaments from Around the County on December 7th.

This holiday season is the eighth annual "Anoka County Holiday Tree" celebration at the Anoka County Historical Society. Just as each state is 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 Centerville ornament is rumored to be hand-made and very special, but there is no sneak peek until the 7th.

Representatives from Centerville will be at the History Center to present their ornament as the 2002 County Ornament to the Anoka County Historical Society at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 7th. Officials from ACHS and Anoka County will be on hand to accept the gift on behalf of the Historical Society and extend an invitation to everyone to explore the newest exhibit, "Deck the Halls" in the History Center's Exhibit Hall.



This leaded glass "Ham Lake" with a loon floating on it came from the City of Ham Lake in 1998.

Volunteers, Volunteers, Volunteers! *By Maria King*

October was a particularly busy month for our volunteers. Our cemetery tour series was very successful and loads of fun! Volunteer living history characters lurked in the shadows of the graveyard until the tour arrived at their specific grave. Then they'd step forward in period costume and tell about the life of the person they were representing.

Costumes were also the order of the day for both of the Anoka Halloween parades. Wayne Coble drove his antique car and a contingent of History Center volunteers followed carrying candle lanterns and passing out bookmarks to the crowd.

On Sunday, October 20th, the History Center opened for a large tour group. Volunteers Charlie Sell, Vi Smith, and Linda Elliott, alongside staff, shared their expertise with over 130 Girl Scouts and their families.

The "Around the County Quilt Project" is progressing nicely. Quilters are still needed for several communities, including Spring Lake Park, Bethel, Lexington, Fridley and Blaine.

Nikol Johnson is a new volunteer this month. She has a Master's degree in library science, so we put her to work on our manuscript files. Most are now correctly filed, but volunteers are still needed to index and cross-reference them. This, in turn, will make it easier for staff and researchers to access Anoka County surnames. Nikol was also on hand when collections of old

Anoka High School newspapers were brought in and she saw to it that they were sorted, sequenced, and stored.

A number of on-going volunteer projects continued during October. The new voice on the phone was volunteer Dorothy Butler, who helps out as receptionist when needed. Charlie Sell continues to volunteer his time to work with students as they research and select photos for their historical calendar. Volunteers Lucille Elrite and Linda Mundel are available every Tuesday to help patrons find their way through resources in search of their family history. Shirley Christianson and Marlys Talbot continue their work in cataloguing our many reference materials, assigning call numbers, and bringing order to our ever-expanding resources. Marian Auchter cuts the obituaries from the local newspapers and maintains that file. Charlie Sell continues to chip away at the mountain of photos that need identification and cataloging.

Please forgive me if I have forgotten to mention all the myriad of activities that go on at the History Center. The contributions of our volunteers are so varied and so valued that listing them brings the risk of offending someone by omission. The staff and the directors are very grateful for the enormous amount of work that is accomplished by our volunteers. We estimate that so far this year roughly 150 people have contributed over 3000 hours at a financial value we can't begin to calculate!

Keep it up! You are the greatest!

Calendar of Events—November/December 2002

December 2 nd	Anoka County Genealogical Society Meeting 7:00 p.m., Anoka County History Center & Library
December 7 th	Anoka County Ornament Presentation and opening of the "Deck the Halls" exhibit 1:00 p.m. ornament presentation/ Museum open until 4 p.m.
December 24 th & 25 th	History Center closed for Christmas
December 31 st	History Center closing at 4 p.m. for New Year's
January 1 st	History Center closed for New Year's
January 4 th	Closing of the "Deck the Halls" exhibit