

# THE BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORIAN

Spring 2022

A Blue Earth County Historical Society Publication

Vol. XXVIII No. 2



Mankato Post Office during 1933 expansion

## The Mankato Post Office: A Collective Remembrance

By Tim Pulis

The Blue Earth County Historical Society with the full support of APX Construction Group, the Mankato Post Office/Federal Courthouse new owners, recently conducted guided tours of the historic building. With the help of 50 volunteers, over 350 people toured one of Mankato's most stately structures with a behind-the-scenes look at places they likely never had a chance to view before and because of remodeling, may never see again. The tours were spread out over three days.

The Mankato Post Office was constructed in three major phases: 1896, an expansion in 1933 that more than doubled its size and another major expansion of the work area in 1965. BECHS Staff and volunteers researched the building's history and put that information into a script for tour guides to lead people through the building. For most of the guides there was little rehearsal time. They followed a numbered map that corresponded with numbers on walls to indicate a stop and a chance to read the appropriate number in the script – like little breadcrumbs around the approximately 61,000 sq. foot building. Arrows on the walls indicated which way to go for the

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# THE BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORIAN

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Archivist@BlueEarthCountyHistory.com

## History Center & Museum

424 Warren Street, Mankato, MN  
507-345-5566  
Tuesday-Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Research Center By Appointment

## R.D. Hubbard House

606 South Broad Street, Mankato  
507-345-4154  
Open Memorial Day-Labor Day  
Friday-Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Sunday 1-4 p.m.



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## The Blue Earth County Historian

Spring 2022

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# DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Jessica Potter, Executive Director

Thank you! Since the last issue we successfully concluded the \$240k in 240 Days Campaign! Check out page 13 for results and next steps.

Thank you to APX Construction Group, volunteers and attendees of the Historic Mankato Post Office and Federal Courthouse guided tours April 28-May 1! It was such an incredible opportunity to see the Post Office, share stories and explore the past. Kudos to APX for the work you are doing to preserve this historic building.

What's ahead? We are excited to open the Hubbard House for another season beginning Friday, May 27 at 10 a.m. The Hubbard House will be open Fridays and Saturdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sundays 1-4 p.m. from Memorial Day - Labor Day. To kick-off the season, check out our Hubbard House Nooks and Crannies Tour on Thursday, May 26. We also have some great family events planned this summer including the annual Victorian Lawn Party on June 11 and the annual Medicine Show on August 27. The Twilight Garden Club has already been busy in the gardens and will host their annual Plant Sale on June 4-5 at the Hubbard House.

The Blue Earth County Historical Society and Twin Rivers Council for the Arts are collaborating for a very special evening celebrating the art, culture and history of Blue Earth County. A special event, Art of Blue Earth, will be held the evening of Saturday, June 11 at McGowan's Farm. Tickets are on sale now (see page 10 for details). All proceeds will be split between the two organizations supporting Mankato's rich arts and cultural community.

We announced in the previous issue the new "coffee table" book dedicated to the art of Marian Anderson. As I write, the book is in the final edit and will be printed soon. We anticipate the book to be released this summer along with a big celebration—watch for details.

And finally, we are very excited to announce some staff changes. Heather Harren has accepted the role of Operations Manager. So, if you were used to seeing Heather in the Research Center, you will now spot her at the front reception desk. We are excited for her to serve in this new role. BECHS is currently in the interview process for a couple of new positions at the History Center. Watch for announcements of additional new staff coming soon.

Have a great summer and don't forget to be a tourist in your own backyard!

## POST OFFICE Continued from page 1

next stop. Considering the complexity of the layout of the building and the unknown nature of the script, the volunteer guides did a fantastic job! As part of the discovery phase of redevelopment, all of the drop ceilings that had been installed in parts of the building over the years were removed. This enhanced the tours. One of the most stunning “finds” was an unobstructed view of the 14’4” high ceilings with ornate plaster crown molding in the original 1896 courtroom. Views that had been hidden for nearly 60 years were again visible.

Back in 2019, I toured the building with Post Office maintenance supervisor Robert Miller and BECHS Collections Manager Shelley Harrison, which led to an article in the Summer 2019 issue of *The Historian*. I thought I had learned everything I could about the building, but I was wrong. Once we began exploring the building under this new light, many new tidbits were discovered through the many personal stories that were shared along the guided tours. Here are a few of those colorful stories:

### Cigar Stand

We knew there had been a cigar stand in the corner of the lobby for decades run by a blind man. During a tour lead by a former postal employee, we learned there was more to this story. The Randolph-Sheppard Act of 1936 provided people who were blind to have employment through the operation of vending facilities in federal buildings like post offices. Lots of visitors recalled buying candy bars from the stand and watched him count the coins that he could tell apart by feel.



Penny Banwart starting a tour in the location of the former cigar stand.

### 1896 Courtroom

The beautiful and stately 1896 courtroom was divided into smaller offices in 1965. Even with the room having been remodeled, one could still get a sense of how large (17’4” high ceilings) and ornate (its woodwork was exposed) the room was. While we were admiring this on one of our tours, one lady suddenly realized that she had been in this room before. Helga Becker recalled how she had come to the United States from Germany in 1952. She had to wait five years to become a naturalized citizen. In 1957, the ceremony had taken place right where we were standing! Even though 65 years had passed, she recalled it like it was yesterday. Much of what happened in the original courtroom is, I’m afraid, lost to history. All the federal court cases and other ceremonial activities are now like ghosts, as all living connections to this era are too far removed.

### 1933 Courtroom

Over half of the building was added with the 1933 expansion. A beautiful remnant of that expansion is the Federal Courtroom added then. To this day, it remains a stately room with rich mahogany woodwork, cork floor and the original judge’s bench featuring two Art Deco bronze lamps.



Bob Williams, former postal employee from 1959-1980 recalled, “it had a cork floor to deaden sounds.” The judges chamber had a couch like a psychiatrist bench for the judge to

rest. There was also a small jail near the courtroom on the second floor, room for one prisoner during lunch time. There was a murder trial in that courtroom about 1977 and they wanted to put the defendant in that jail over the noon hour, but they could not find the key, because it had not been used in years. Eventually, the bars were removed and the room was converted to a small office. Records from past trials dating back to the early years were kept in a vault in an office near the courtroom. Over the years a lot of different government agencies rented office space on the second and third floor including the Postal Inspector's office, Army, Navy, and Marine recruitment, Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Selective Service, and Soil Conservation. Later occupants were the Directors of Mail Processing, Director of Finance and others, when Mankato became a management center covering about 100 Post Offices in South Central Minnesota."

Many people recalled a murder trial in the mid-1970s, but more recently the room was used for bankruptcy hearings. Even though this was a federal courtroom, the last case tried in this room was a Blue Earth County case in the 1990s that took 11 weeks. As the case was anticipated to take so long, the County didn't want to tie up their courtroom for that length of time.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Offices

The second floor was built to support the judicial system with two courtrooms and support offices. As the number of federal cases tried locally decreased, nearly all the rooms on this floor were then used for other purposes. People remembered taking civil service exams and registering for the selective service when they turned 18 years old in these offices. Others shared memories of protests during the Vietnam War.

One of our tour guides, Madysen Pearson reflected on what she gleaned from the experience, "I am so happy I had the opportunity to be part of the tours. I was able to learn so much from both the tour itself as well as people coming to see it! A common thing

pointed out during my tours was the second-floor ceiling and the wood carving on doorways. They could not believe the detail and how it was back then compared to today's architecture. With having a large amount of my group older than me, I got to hear a lot of how it was back in the 1970's and 1980's around the post office. I had an older gentleman telling me about the protests he witnessed at the post office for the Vietnam War in the 1970's. I loved being able to hear about it firsthand rather than what was briefly taught in school. A lot were happy to have the opportunity to see the whole building rather than just the main lobby everyone was so familiar with before it closed."

### Third Floor

Due to the size of the building and the unremarkable nature of the third floor, this was not included on the tours. I'm sure many people anticipated it to be as grand as the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, but it really is not. In fact, the area that was part of the original 1896 building is now an attic space with HVAC ductwork running through it. When the addition opened in 1933, there were rooms on the third floor for: "the Prohibition Department, the United States Commissioner, Naturalization Officer, US Navy Recruiting Officer and Civil Service Examiner."

The 1896 portion was used as a Grand Jury room. Grand juries were used to determine whether criminal charges should be brought against someone. They were usually citizens that were called to investigate and subpoena records before a

trial. Accompanied by APX staff, we were allowed a brief peek into this space. Although it would have been nice to share more than just photos of this space, the current condition was



not safe and there's something special about preserving this area as a little untouched time capsule of this building in 1896. If these walls could talk...

Some more tidbits and stories shared by visitors on the tours:

- Willard Vetter surmised that his company, Vetter Stone, got the 1965 expansion bid to supply stone because they owned the quarry where the original stone came from and they could utilize the techniques on shaping the stone that were used in the original construction of the building.
- The requirements for free mail delivery to begin in Mankato in 1888 were "numbers on the buildings, name the streets and put-up sign boards". Before this, all mail would be picked up at the Post Office. It wasn't until 1900 that the farmers in the area received their mail by delivery – rural free delivery (R.F.D.)
- A typical 1887 postal worker worked 6:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m.
- The freight elevator was installed in 1974, but it wasn't until 1985 that a people elevator was installed and the handicap ramp was added in 1992.
- In 1977 green awnings were placed over the three public entrances.
- The post office building was placed on the National Register of Historical Places in 1980.

### The Next Chapter

I think the big question on everyone's mind was what will happen to this landmark building in downtown Mankato. In 2015, due to decreased demand for extensive postal services, the federal government downsized the Mankato postal service and listed the historic building for sale. In 2020, the building was purchased and is being redeveloped by APX Construction Group.

When the federal government sold the building to APX Construction Group in 2020, they not only sold the building, but also all the fixtures including the 1933 lobby tables and mailboxes. APX purchased them to maintain the historic integrity of the building. Also, at the

time of sale, a preservation easement was added to the property protecting the exterior facade, lobby and 1933 courtroom from changes that would affect the historic integrity.

The question remains, what will become of the historic Mankato Post Office and Federal Courthouse? The new name will be "The Post at 401". It is being redeveloped to house a grand event venue, a high-end restaurant, a speakeasy, and more. It will continue to serve as a public building and the community will be able to admire the unique craftsmanship of this grand building for generations to come. Thank you APX Construction Group for taking on this rehabilitation project.



Top: Lobby under construction, 1933. Side: Concept of "The Post at 401" lobby restoration.



### Sources

- Various articles from the *Mankato Free Press*
- United States Postal Service Historic Structure Report 11/2014
- Oral Interviews with Earl Holmes, Postmaster 1972-1982; James Kirschbaum, Postmaster 1988-2005; Willard Vetter; Bob Williams, Post Office worker 1959 -1980
- Photographs from the collections of the Blue Earth County Historical Society and APX Construction Group

# NEW BOARD MEMBERS

BECHS is excited to welcome five new board members. We would like to introduce them to you below.

## What is your occupation?



**Mary Ann Brenden**  
University professor

## Jennifer Echevarria

I am the Development Director, as well as the Unit Serving Executive for Mankato-area units for the Twin Valley Council Boy Scouts.



## Sophia Hoiseth

I currently work at the Minnesota Council of Churches in their Refugee Services area as the Community Engagement Specialist in Mankato.

## Eric Oleson

Principal Architect and Partner with Oleson + Hobbie Architects



## Dan Tomhave

I am a Program Intake Specialist with Client Directed Services at MRCI.

## What is your favorite place/thing about Blue Earth County?

**Mary Ann** The people, of course... they are so welcoming and friendly!

**Jennifer** I love the diverse beauty of Blue Earth County, from Minneopa Falls to the Red Jacket Trail, to the rolling farmlands and peaceful rivers. Blue Earth County has something for everyone.

**Sophia** My favorite place in Blue Earth County is Rapidan Dam and anywhere along the river.

**Eric** My favorite place to visit in Blue Earth County is Minneopa State Park.

**Dan** Blue Earth County has a great mix of scenery and the area has a lot of great history. In my time living here, I have really enjoyed exploring the area and learning more and more about its history.

## What are you most excited about as a new BECHS Board Member?

**Mary Ann** Being part of a team that connects Blue Earth County's rich history with the exciting future of the Historical Society.

**Jennifer** I have a love of learning about and preserving history. I look forward to helping BECHS continue to be successful in protecting our history and introducing it to our children and future generations.

**Sophia** I am most excited about engaging with others about how history affects the community today!

**Eric** I'm excited to be part of a diverse leadership team that shares the same passion for preserving our history, while engaging with our communities and sharing it with others.

**Dan** Learning the inner workings of BECHS. Organizations such as this have many layers of work and, in many cases, that work is not always seen by the public. I'm excited to learn more about all of the great things that BECHS does for the area.

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

The BECHS 2021 Annual Report is now available on our website at [BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/About](http://BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/About)

The report, along with full financial information, is also available upon request by contacting the History Center.

# GIFT SHOP & ART GALLERY

Heather Harren, Operations Manager

Hi, from my new desk! When Danelle told us she found a great new opportunity, I volunteered to take over what she had been doing for BECHS. As of April 1, the position was official and I am now permanently at the front desk. I love seeing people as they come in and learning a different side of the organization.

As summer rolls around, the History Center is excited to announce that we are once again a Blue Star Museum. From Armed Forces Day (May 21) through Labor Day, any active service member will receive free admission for themselves and up to five family members at the History Center Museum. All you need to do is show your Military ID.

We have also been designated a "Museum 4 All" for those who use an EBT card. They may show their card for reduced adult admission and free child admission to the History Center. The program is available all year.

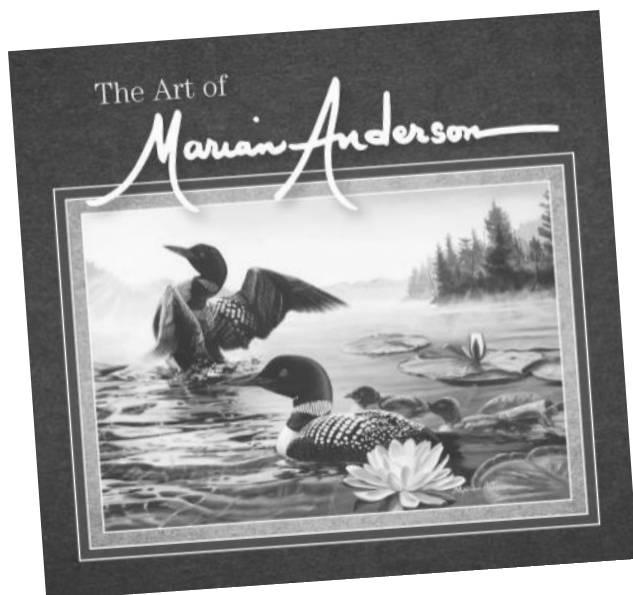
For those looking to get away this summer, the Gift Shop has some great books in stock to help plan or guide your trip! Explore Minnesota through *Historic Places of Minnesota* (\$13.95), *History Along the Highway* (\$13.95) or *Minnesota Place Names* (\$11.95)!



Want to have a little fun at these stops? Purchase Marian Anderson Note Cards (pack of 6 for \$7.95) and send a little note to someone you care about while you explore the world around you. A variety of different prints were made into notecards, so there's a card for every occasion.

These books and cards plus much more are available in our store and online at [BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Online-Store](http://BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Online-Store).

## NEW BOOK RELEASE COMING SOON



Retail: \$49.95  
Hard cover w/dust jacket, 150+ pp.  
10.5" x 9.75"  
Published by Minnesota Heritage Publishing

The Blue Earth County Historical Society announces the upcoming release of *The Art of Marian Anderson*. It is a hard cover, full-color, limited edition commemorative book featuring an impressive collection of images by artist Marian Anderson. The book contains published art prints and original paintings from her personal collection never before published. The diversity of Marian's art subjects spans from wildlife to canine, nostalgic to landscape and Native American to Mountain Man. Included is a biography and some of Marian's original writings. *The Art of Marian Anderson* is a wonderful keepsake commemorating the life and work of this beloved Minnesota artist.

**Don't miss this opportunity.  
PRE-ORDER TODAY!**

[www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Online-Store](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Online-Store)

**All proceeds benefit BECHS**



# COLLECTIONS AND EXHIBITS

Shelley Harrison, Collections Manager

The History Center presents our newest temporary exhibit "Blue Earth County: 120 Years, 120 Stories!". This exhibit celebrates the 120th Anniversary of the Blue Earth County Historical Society and features a display of the wide variety of 120 artifacts, documents, photographs and stories preserved by the Society.

Through the years, the Society has collected over 22,000 objects from which only 120 are featured for this display. The exhibit focuses on objects that represent the people, art, trades and places in Blue Earth County. They range from the everyday objects like a little girl's pink dress, a Sterling Township School souvenir program, to a local artist's etching press, whose work now hangs in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Our aim is not simply to showcase the Society's collection, but to create an ongoing discussion of how history is interconnected with our daily lives.



It was not easy to narrow down the Society's collection to just 120 objects. We chose an object to represent each year that the Historical Society has existed as well as each community and township in Blue Earth County. This is not a complete or comprehensive story of Blue Earth County; it is the story of what the Historical Society has collected over 120 years and how and what we have collected has changed over time. There are objects we do not have in our collection and therefore, there may be stories yet to be told. BECHS is always excited to add new objects into our collections to preserve and share for future generations.

The exhibit welcomes visitors to wander the History Center to discover the 120 objects and their stories featured. Unlike most exhibits, not all the objects are gathered in one place. In

fact, some are not even at the History Center. Some objects are just too large to fit in the History Center and are permanently housed at the R. D. Hubbard House and Carriage House. Visitors can use a scavenger hunt guide to inspire their exploration to find all 120 objects throughout the History Center, Hubbard House and Carriage House.



If you are unable to visit this summer, check out a virtual tour available on our website. We hope to have different activities while the exhibit is on view through September.

BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Blue Earth County  
**120 YEARS**  
STORIES

The people, places and objects  
that shaped Blue Earth County

March 4 - September 30, 2022  
Blue Earth County History Center  
424 Warren Street, Mankato

[www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com) 507.345.5566



# EVERY OBJECT HAS A STORY...

At the History Center we showcase objects that tell the stories of Blue Earth County's past and present. These objects are quite diverse, with only about ten percent of the collection on display at any given time. This ensures their long-term care. For our latest exhibit, "Blue Earth County: 120 Years, 120 Stories", we highlight the history of the County and Society, along with other social and cultural trends. Here is just a glimpse into a few of those objects and stories now on display.

## 1901 Haynes Apperson



A two-cylinder "horse-less carriage" capable of reaching speeds of 15 miles per hour. Only 240 models of this vehicle were

manufactured in 1901. The automobile is on display in the R. D. Hubbard Carriage House.

## 1913 Electro-Vitalizer



The Electro-Vitalizer is a belt exerciser, which hit its peak between 1900 - 1930. This type of exerciser required the user to place a vibrating belt around a targeted part of the body. By intense shaking the belt loosened the fat and helped your body flush it away. Electro-Vitalizer was patented by Dr. Catlin and made in Mankato.

# RESEARCH & GENEALOGY CENTER

Thank you to all the volunteers who have helped the past few months in the Research Center to keep the room open to the public during our transition period. A new Archives Assistant will be joining the team soon.

The Research Center remains open by appointment only for the foreseeable future. Volunteers continue to work on indexes, not only for in-house researchers, but also for online searches. Keep an eye on our weekly e-newsletter, Facebook and website concerning Research Center updates.

## 1912 Letterpress, Carlson Craft



Letterpress printing is a process in which raised, inked surfaces—usually made of wood, metal or linoleum—are pressed onto paper. This practice is essentially the same method of relief printing that was invented in the fifteenth century by Johannes Gutenberg using movable

type, hand-carved blocks and hand-cranked printing. This letterpress was used by Carlson Wedding Service from 1950 - 1965. William "Bill" and Betty Carlson started their business in their home on Mound Avenue. It was their first motorized press.

Now the next time you take a spin through the R. D. Hubbard House, Carriage House or History Center, you'll know three of the 120 stories on display; only 117 to go! Happy exploring!

## Local History at Your Fingertips!

[www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com)



Love Blue Earth County History and want to learn more? Visit the NEWS tab on BECHS online for blogs, podcasts and videos about local Blue Earth County history.

# HISTORY CENTER ART GALLERY

**LINDSEY BEYER**

**Art of the Earth**

**April – June 30, 2022**

## Artist's Statement:

"I seek clarity in nature. It helps me know myself and make sense of the world around me. The peace and beauty of the natural world inspires and ignites awe in my being, which I attempt to capture and share with the world.

"While hiking in the woods one summer's day in 2019, I was inspired to create this series—titled the Minnesota Series.

Minnesota has so much beauty to offer, and it's so easy as a resident to take these gifts for granted. From the wilderness of the boundary waters to the majesty of Lake Superior; from the glacial remnants of eastern Minnesota to the driftless area of the southeast corner of Minnesota; from the middle of Northfield to the corners of Mankato—Minnesota offers so much diversity in landscape, it is truly breathtaking. My photography attempts to capture natural moments with all the vivid beauty in which I experience them.



"My paintings capture the whimsical emotions of my connection with nature in a dream-like style.

"As you enjoy the artwork on these walls, take time to reflect on your own experiences in nature." Lindsey Beyer,

Art of the Earth (Instagram: @art.of.the.earth)

**Next Featured Artist:** Bend of the River Photography Club: Tombstones of Blue Earth County (July-September 2022)

## Historic R.D. Hubbard House

*Where 1900s History Comes to Life*

**GUIDED TOURS BY APPOINTMENT**

Friday - Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday 1 - 4 p.m.

**Memorial Day thru Labor Day weekends**

606 South Broad Street, Mankato

## **SPECIAL EVENTS**

**Nooks & Crannies Tour**, May 26, 6 p.m.

**Victorian Lawn Party**, June 11, 1-4 p.m.

**Medicine Show**, August 27, 1-4 p.m.

For Hubbard House updates and tidbits, follow "Hubbard House, Mankato" on Facebook



[BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Hubbard-House](http://BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Hubbard-House)

## *Twilight Garden Club Plant Sale*



**Saturday, June 4 & Sunday, June 5  
8 a.m.-12 p.m.**

**Historic Hubbard House Gardens**

606 South Broad Street, Mankato

*Rain or Shine*

# VOLUNTEERS MAKE HISTORY

Volunteers are truly the lifeblood of the Blue Earth County Historical Society. There isn't an aspect of work done at the History Center or Hubbard House that doesn't involve volunteers. **THANK YOU** to all past, present and future volunteers for your support.

## NEW VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### Board of Trustees

Open seat on Board of Trustees for a Blue Earth County resident with finance experience to serve as Treasurer. Seat is for three years beginning in July. To apply or for more information, please contact Jessica Potter, BECHS Executive Director at [Director@BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](mailto:Director@BlueEarthCountyHistory.com).

### History Center Gardeners

Seeking individuals to care for and maintain the flower beds on the Cherry Street side of the History Center. Mainly weeding and trimming as needed. Some tools and supplies are available; set your own schedule.

### Blue Earth County Fair

#### July 28-31, shifts vary

Seeking volunteers to tend the Heritage Building at the Blue Earth County Fair. Shifts will be in 3-hour increments. Sign-ups available July 5.

### Research Center Assistants

Seeking people to assist with the daily operations of the Research Center such as assisting researchers, fulfilling research requests and keeping the room tidy. Training will be provided and staff will be available to assist. Time commitment: Flexible, but a minimum 3-hour shift on a regular schedule would be preferred; Tuesday - Saturday.

Contact us if you are interested in these opportunities or volunteering in general. Visit [www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/volunteer](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/volunteer) to sign-up.



## ART of BLUE EARTH

Saturday, June 11, 2022

McGowan's Farm

\$250 per person

*limited tickets available*

[www.mankatoareafoundation.com](http://www.mankatoareafoundation.com)



BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Art of Blue Earth is an exclusive farm-to-table dining experience on the banks of the Blue Earth River. Rare blue earth clay is transformed though artist Jon Nibbe's exceptional ceramic skills into serving ware celebrating our collective history and the strength found in the collaboration between two of our most essential cultural organizations: Twin Rivers Council for the Arts and Blue Earth County Historical Society. A short program and entertainment will accompany a silent auction with Mahkato's historic landscape at McGowan's Farm as the backdrop. Up to 50 dining participants will receive a cup and bowl made by Jon Nibbe from this unique blue clay harvested on this same land.

## LOCAL HISTORY PODCAST

*Explore the history that surround us!*



New episodes air Saturdays at 11:05 a.m. on KTOE. You can find all previous episodes on our website at

[BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Podcast](http://BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Podcast)

AM 1420 · 102.7 FM  
**KTOE**  
NEWS · SPORTS · TALK

BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
INSPIRE. ENGAGE. CONNECT.

# BECHS DONORS, NEW MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

January 22 – April 22, 2022

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Kevin and Shelli Allen  
Ron Andersen  
Sue Baarts  
Helen Balcome  
Penny Banwart  
Hugh and Vail Belgard  
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Dr. Herbert and Mary  
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Richard Schulz  
Bonnie Sellner  
Florence Sheppard  
Shawn and Denise  
Simonson  
Mike and Kristy  
Sizemore  
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Smith  
Ron and Mary Smyth  
Evelyn Solo  
Emily Stark  
Ann Stewart  
Jean Stjernstrom  
Brett and Gretchen  
Taylor  
Ken Thompson  
Nancy Thurber  
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Jenny Wagner  
Don and Marti Weisgram  
Marnie Werner  
Greg and Donnette  
Wheelock  
Ken and Pam White  
Brad Wilmes  
Ken and Linda Wilmes  
Sue Wiltgen

*In Honor of Nik Proehl*  
Ted Krause  
John Just  
Ben Findley  
Emily Stark  
Mitchell Brown  
Crystal Dervetski

## MONTHLY DONORS

Dale Benefield  
Joel Botten  
Carol English  
David and Julie Ewert  
James Hummer  
Steve & Susan Jameson  
Mike Lagerquist  
Jack & Diann McGowen  
Marnie Werner  
Randy Zellmer  
Beth Zimmer

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Susan & Dave Bergmark  
Linda & Randy Berkland  
Rebecca Brooks  
Danelle Erickson  
Eugene and Roberta  
Ganske  
Daniel Groebner  
Jean Jackson  
Phillip Janzen  
Barbara Judd  
Courtney and William  
Kramlinger  
Greg Krummel  
Alex Langsjoen  
Eric Oleson  
David Phelps  
Jaymes & Amy Sorensen  
Ryan Sturgis  
Brandon Viland  
Dianne Walther

*Thank  
You!*

**IN MEMORY OF  
Kathryn T. Hanson  
1927 - 2022**



Kathryn was a long-time volunteer and supporter of the Blue Earth County Historical Society. She served on committees and the board, including as president, for several years. Kathryn was a dedicated Hubbard House tour guide especially for school tours. Every season she also assisted with training new tour guides. Kathryn led her last Hubbard House tour in 2019. Kathryn was also an active and influential member of the Betsy-Tacy Society. A combination of her two loves American History and Literature.

Aside from Kathryn's community involvement, she was a high school English teacher and is remembered fondly by students for her passion and devotion to her profession.

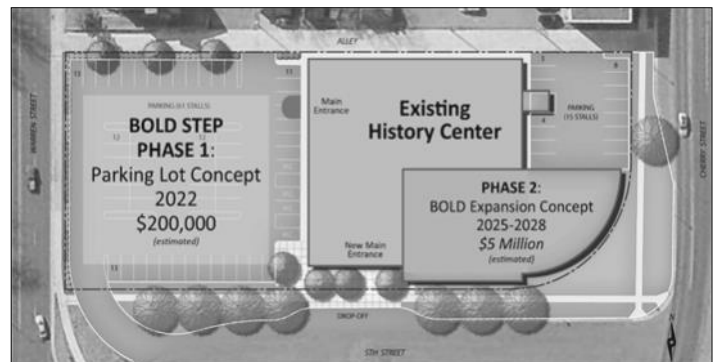
Kathryn's legacy will live on in the core values she imparted - her generosity of spirit, unwavering integrity, and lifelong pursuit of learning. Thank you Kathryn!

**BLUE EARTH HISTORICAL  
COUNTY SOCIETY**  
1901 • 120 YEARS • 2021

**\$240k | 120 Days | 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**  
**BOLD VISION, BOLD STEP, BOLD HISTORY HEROES**

On November 7, 2021, in honor of our 120th Anniversary, the Blue Earth County Historical Society Board of Trustees and Staff announced a BOLD vision to expand the History Center in the near future and launched a BOLD campaign to raise **\$240,000 in 120 days for our 120th Anniversary**. The campaign wrapped up on Sunday, March 6, 2022 with **\$240,133.29 raised in 120 days by 284 BOLD History Heroes!**

**NEXT STEPS:** We have been in conversation with the property owner of the house next to the History Center. Our plan is to acquire the house and deconstruct it, salvaging building components to support restoration projects for other properties. Then we can begin reconstruction of the Warren Street parking lot. As with any construction project, there are always more details to figure out before you can really dig in. So, we are working hard behind-the-scenes to get all of the details ironed out. Stay tuned for updates as they become available. Thank you to the History Heroes who are making this BOLD first step a reality!



PHASE 1: 2022 Exterior infrastructure improvements—BOLD first step. PHASE 2: BOLD expansion will take time and resources to fully develop the vision. This image is a concept only.

**IN MEMORIAM**  
*In Memory of Bill Webb  
Lonnie & Catherine Bristol*

*In Memory of Regina Sieberg  
Carol Jackson*

*In Memory of Byron Kunkel  
Eloise Layman*

*In Memory of Kathryn T. Hanson  
Eloise Layman*

*In Memory of  
Doris Backland Boyce  
Jim and Ann McGuire*

**Thank You for these memorial gifts to the  
Blue Earth County Historical Society**

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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May – August 2022

## MAY

- 26 **Nooks and Crannies Hubbard House Tour**, Hubbard House, 6 p.m.  
Take a closer look inside the Hubbard House and see some of the nooks and crannies not featured on a regular guided tour. \$10/adults, \$7/BECHS Members. *Tickets must be purchased prior to tour.*
- 27 **Hubbard House Opens for the Season**, Hubbard House, 10 a.m.—4 p.m.
- 28 **History Center Closed, Hubbard House Open Happy Memorial Day!**

## JUNE

- 4-5 **Twilight Garden Club Plant Sale**, Hubbard House Grounds, 8 a.m.—Noon, rain or shine
- 11 **Family Museum Day** History Center, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free museum admission and fun family-friendly interactive history activities throughout the day
- 11 **Victorian Lawn Party**, Hubbard House Grounds, 1-4 p.m. Free. Guided House tours available \$7/adults, \$3/children, Free/BECHS Members
- 11 **The Art of Blue Earth**, McGowen's Farm, 6 p.m. Exclusive farm-to-table dining experience celebrating our collective history through art. Limited tickets available
- 15 **History @ Home: Author Lydia Emma Niebuhr—*Under The Daytime Moon*** Hybrid Program, Noon, attend in-person at the History Center OR register to join via Zoom (either live or watch recording). Registration required for virtual attendance. \$7/adults, Free/BECHS Members
- 23 **Hidden Front Street Walking Tour**, 6 p.m. Take a closer look at what was once a busy area in Mankato. \$10/adults, \$7/BECHS Members. *Tickets must be purchased prior to tour.*

## JULY

- 2 **History Center Closed, Hubbard House Open Happy Independence Day!**
- 9 **Family Museum Day** History Center, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free museum admission and fun family-friendly interactive history activities throughout the day.
- 28-31 **Blue Earth County Fair**, Garden City. *See page 11 for volunteer opportunities.*

## AUGUST

- 13 **Family Museum Day** History Center, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free museum admission and fun family-friendly interactive history activities throughout the day.
- 27 **Medicine Show** Hubbard House, 1-4 p.m. Shows start on the hour with family friendly activities between shows. Free. Guided House tours available.

**For more event information or to register, visit [BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Events](https://BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Events)**



# MEMBERS MATTER

## Spring/Summer Membership Drive

Activities are more fun with friends and family and BECHS has several programs over the summer to enjoy together. Your membership supports fun events at the Hubbard House and History Center. So, share in the fun by inviting your friends to become members too! Not only will they get free or discounted rates for the programs, they will also be supporting the preservation of Blue Earth County history for future generations.

Membership dues run a full year and come with many benefits (listed to the right). Return the bottom portion of this page with a check or renew/purchase your membership online at [BlueEarthCoutyHistory.com/Membership](http://BlueEarthCoutyHistory.com/Membership).

## BECHS Member Benefits

- Free admission to the History Center, R.D. Hubbard House and Research Center, plus free or reduced admission to most BECHS events
- *The Historian*, quarterly publication, sent to your mailbox or inbox
- 10% off most items in the Gift Shop and Marian Anderson Art Gallery, in store and online
- One 30-minute Research Center search by Staff, a \$15 value
- Annual Member's State-of-the-Society meeting held in March
- The knowledge that you are supporting the Historical Society, providing for exhibits, programs, preservation and future expansion



## INDIVIDUAL AND HOUSEHOLD ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FORM

*Business and Organizational Partnerships also available. Call for details.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Gift for: \_\_\_\_\_

Include name and address

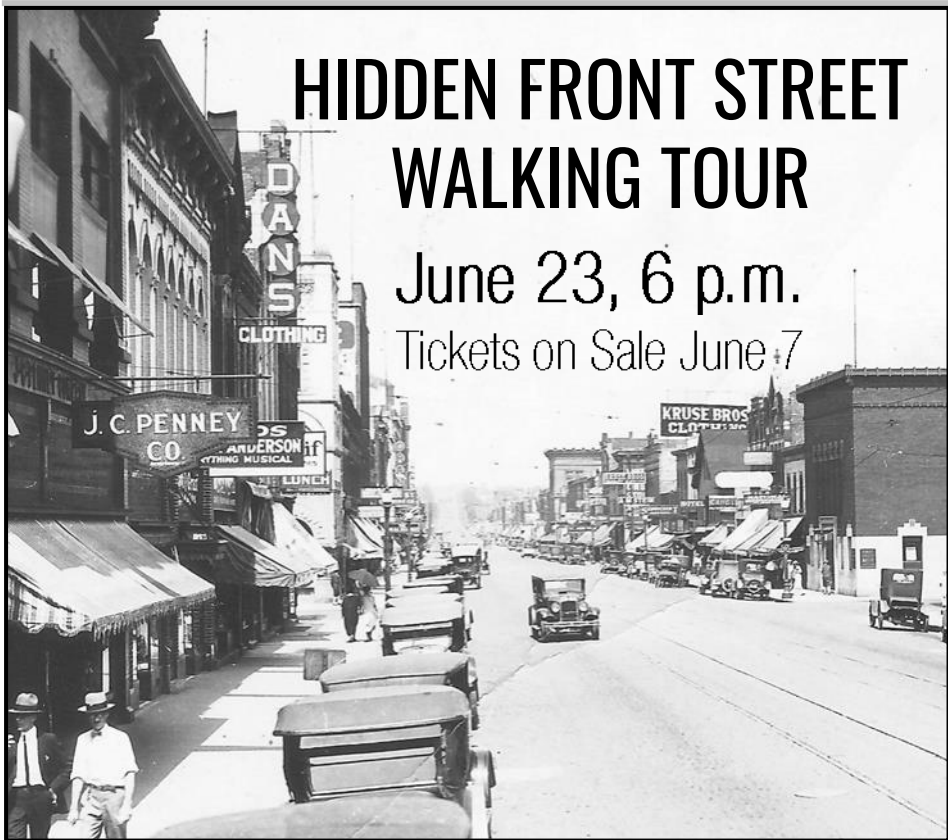
### Annual Membership Levels

- Senior \$35 1 adult, age 62+
- Individual \$40 1 adult
- Senior Household \$55 2 adults, 62+
- Household \$60 2 adults, kids under 18

***Membership Expiration dates can be found on your mailing label on the back cover***

Please return this form and payment to: BECHS Membership, 424 Warren Street, Markato, MN 56001  
You can also join or renew online at [BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Membership](http://BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Membership)





# HIDDEN FRONT STREET WALKING TOUR

June 23, 6 p.m.  
Tickets on Sale June 7

## EXHIBITS



Blue Earth  
County:  
120 Years,  
120 Stories

## ART GALLERY

Lindsey Beyer  
Art of the  
Earth  
*through  
June 2022*



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MANKATO, MN 56001

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