

# THE BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORIAN

Winter 2019

A Blue Earth County Historical Society Publication

Vol. XXV No. 1



Rooftop of the Pemberton School, 1931

## “... AND AN AIRPLANE LANDED ON THE ROOF OF THE SCHOOL”

By Tim Pulis

A few years ago my wife's parents were living in a senior housing residence in Mankato. They often dined with a local woman named Loretta Larson. She had actually been a neighbor of mine growing up and one of her daughters was a classmate in grade school. Loretta loved to tell stories of her upbringing in Pemberton. She often spoke fondly of having been a cheerleader in high school and most interestingly of how one day an airplane landed on the roof of her school. My in-laws passed away a few years ago and soon after Loretta did too, but the amazing idea of a plane landing on the roof of a school was lodged permanently in my brain.

Recently, I visited John Hallman who has been very helpful with research I've conducted for some articles. One article was on the history of streetcars in Mankato and the other was on local early

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### History Center & Museum

424 Warren Street, Mankato, MN  
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### R.D. Hubbard House

606 South Broad Street, Mankato  
507-345-4154  
CLOSED for the season  
Open weekends May-September

### The Blue Earth County Historian

Winter 2019

The Blue Earth County Historian is published quarterly for the members of the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

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## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Jessica Potter, Executive Director

Happy New Year! As you can see by this issue of *The Historian*, there's a new look for the Blue Earth County Historical Society in this new year. It was a time for a refresh of our logo and our public "face," if you will.

This past year, the organization worked with a marketing consultant to re-evaluate who we are and the key services we offer. Here's a look at BECHS:

**Our Reputation:** We inspire lasting connections between the past and the present.

**Our Core Purpose:** We provide a modern approach to preserving and sharing history about Blue Earth County. We bring history to life, inspiring all who interact with us to personally and intimately connect to this county's rich heritage.

**Our Core Values:** Inspire. Engage. Connect.

## BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Through this evaluation, we determined it was time for a refreshed logo and website. We chose a new color palate of autumnal blue, green and burgundy. The swooping lines in the logo represent a river and the inter-connectivity between the past and the present. "Historical Society" is weighted more than "Blue Earth County" simply because that is primarily how we are known to locals. On the back of the newsletter, you will see a secondary logo using "BECHS," the nickname our family and friends call us.

You will start to see all of this come together from *The Historian* and our letterhead, to monthly E-news and new website. Speaking of website, we are excited for you to check out the new [www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com). Look at all the pages. Let us know what you think (and if you see anything that isn't working). As our family, you are invited to be the first people to see the new website!

We hope you enjoy BECHS' refreshed look. Watch for some refreshed programs, events and exhibits in the year ahead, too.

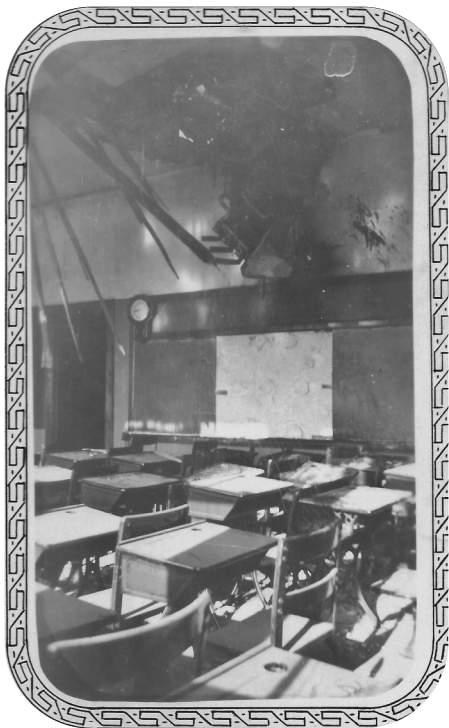
As I wrap up, I want to express my deep appreciation to everyone who supported BECHS in 2018! Your donations, memberships, event participation and gift shop purchases made a huge difference in the work done every day. Please share your love for BECHS this year and invite someone new to a program, exhibit or to join as a member. And thank you for your continued support in 2019!

## “... AND AN AIRPLANE LANDED ON THE ROOF OF THE SCHOOL.”

Continued from page 1

aerial photography. This time Hallman said he had four photos he found in a box that belonged to his late father. Hallman said he had no idea of where they had been taken. Two were of a plane that had apparently nosedived into the roof of a building. A second was a photo of a classroom full of desks with what looked like the nose of an airplane sticking through the ceiling. The third photo was the remains of a small airplane resting in the front yard of a house.

Hallman was surprised when I told him I had an idea of just where these photos were from, but I needed to make a small field trip to confirm it. I took the photos home to scan into my computer and printed some copies. That afternoon my wife and I headed to Pemberton, located about 20 miles southeast Mankato. It is a small town of 240



A view of the wreckage from inside the classroom.

people, with just a few businesses. We slowly drove up and down the streets looking for an old school building to compare it to the building in the photos, but had no luck. Finally, we spotted the City Hall building and decided to stop and see if someone could answer my questions.

As I approached the building, a gentleman was just leaving. His name was Doug Baer, the mayor. Baer said the school I was looking for had been torn down about ten years before and a plane had indeed crash landed into its roof many decades before. My theory on the photos

was looking good. Baer said the person I should talk to lives across the street from City Hall and he would call him to come over. After waiting just a few minutes, 87-year-old Darrel Schubbe, lifelong resident of Pemberton, walked quickly into the room.

Schubbe knew quite a few details of the crash and even knew of Loretta Larson, whose maiden name was Kruse and graduated from Pemberton in 1940. A few years earlier, the town of Pemberton had a city-wide celebration and had put together photo boards among which were some photos of the tragic plane crash. After comparing these photos with the ones I had gotten from Hallman, there was no question I had hit the jackpot. I thanked Schubbe for his time and before I left he told me how he had seen me drive into town and slowly cruise the streets. At that point he said he kept a real close eye on our car and was relieved I was just on a history jaunt and not casing the town. I was beginning to take a liking to Pemberton, where neighbors keep an eye out for trouble and graduating classes, like Loretta's in 1940, had just eleven graduating seniors. It was definitely different than growing up in Mankato, as I did, and had a graduation class numbering 485.

I had found what I was looking for, but I wanted to know more about the incident that happened in the early 1930s. To do this, I headed to the Blue Earth County Historical Society (BECHS) and the Research Center. I told the staff what I was looking for and was directed to the Pemberton Social Notes binder. Newspaper clippings and other historical trivia were laid out in chronological order and it didn't take me long to find the date of the plane crash. It was June 5, 1931. With this knowledge, I could now go to the *Mankato Free Press* and Mapleton newspaper microfilms for that date and perhaps a week past to find out the details.

The headline in the *Free Press* the day after the incident was big and bold, “**Plane Crashes on Pemberton School.**” The plane had three passengers including pilot George Helminen, who suffered the most serious injuries and his life hung in the balance. The other two passengers, George Nelson, 17, and William

Kauffman, 27, were taken by ambulance to the hospital in Mankato, but were not seriously injured. Nelson, of Pemberton, had graduated from high school the week before. Ironically, it was from the school the plane had crashed into. Prior to the flight, Kauffman had asked his five-year-old daughter if she wanted to come along. After what had occurred, Kauffman was relieved she had refused.

Apparently, the plane went into a dive from 1,000 feet up and then clipped a fence at ground level just south of Pemberton. At that point, Helminen tried to recover control of the plane and reached 100-foot elevation before heading nose first into the roof of the school. Young George Nelson was able to exit his seat in the plane and started yelling from the edge of the roof for help. The newspaper article goes on to say the only thing not damaged on the plane was the tail. (More on that later.) The two passengers were in the front cockpit which actually was embedded into the roof. Helminen, the pilot, was in the rear cockpit and was the most severely injured as he was pinned under broken controls and other wreckage. It was necessary to break away the debris before he could be released. He remained unconscious for a week with a cerebral contusion and possible skull fracture along with internal injuries. He was finally released from the hospital three weeks later. Dr. W. C. Stillwell of Mankato said he would likely retain a "flighty" mental condition for some time. It is unknown if the doctor was aware of the pun he had used.

Art Manthe of Pemberton was an eyewitness to the crash and was able to give details of the plane's erratic behavior leading up to the crash. Victor Oftedahl, Bud Cook, C.C. Bruss, John Davis and John Swartz assisted in extricating the injured men from the plane and into an ambulance for a trip to Immanuel Hospital in Mankato.

Davis was the custodian at the school and in

1970 book *Waldorf-Pemberton "Memories of Fifty Years,"* his wife reminisced about the day of the accident. "We lived across the street from the school and one Friday evening in June, 1931 as we sat at the supper table, I saw an airplane dip down low over the school yard and one wing hit the fence, it skipped along the play yard heading for our house, but as it neared the street, it suddenly veered up and flipped back and landed on top of the schoolhouse. It lodged in the roof and the engine hung down into the fifth and sixth grade classroom, gas and oil running everywhere. John had just finished cleaning that room, varnishing desks and floor in preparation for the fall term, and needless to say there was a big job of cleaning to do, but we felt so fortunate that the plane didn't hit our house."

The owner of the plane was Ted Oftedahl of Pemberton, who ironically had never flown his own American Eagle brand plane. Oftedahl had purchased the plane just a year before from L.J. Sohler of Mankato. Oftedahl stated the pilot, Helminen, who was a minority owner of the airplane, was always a careful flyer of the aircraft. Helminen worked on the farm northwest of Pemberton of his foster parents, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Carlson.



The plane after it had been removed from the school roof.

The collision left a ten-foot hole in the roof of the school. The engine of the plane had to be



chained to prevent it from falling further into the school. In removing the plane from the schoolhouse, the motor was taken down through the building while the balance of the wreckage was lifted off and let down from the roof with the aid of six-by-eight inch timbers and block and tackle. It was deposited in Oftedahl's parents' front yard where some pieces were kept for souvenirs and the rest was scrapped.

The plane crash was considered one of the three most exciting things to happen to Pemberton in its long history. The other two events were a 1922 bank robbery and the 1957 basketball team that made it to the state tournament. This was back when only eight teams in the whole state made it to the state tournament. In fact, Pemberton set a record for having the smallest school enrollment of any tournament-bound school. With more and more schools consolidating, it is a record that will never be broken.

A few days after visiting the Research Center at BECHS, I was back trying to tie up some loose ends on the story. As soon as I walked into the room, staff member Heather Harren excitedly told me the day after my last visit, volunteer Mary McComb mentioned someone had donated a history pamphlet on the 50-year celebration of Pemberton. In it was mentioned the story of the plane crashing into the school roof. This little-known historic event had suddenly been shared with BECHS from two different sources (this newly donated book and my research) in just two days!

Another coincidence was about to occur. As I talked to McComb about the plane crash, she mentioned her cousin, Judy Ledwein, was Oftedahl's daughter, the owner of the airplane. The next day, I called Ledwein to see if I could interview her, and we set up a day for me to stop at her house in West Mankato. Ledwein has put together some remarkable scrapbooks on her family history. Included in one were several photos of the plane crash and of her father standing next to his plane before the crash.

My history adventure was about to take one more very amazing turn. As I was talking with

Ledwein at her dining room table, she excused herself and said she had to get something from the living room. A couple of minutes later she reappeared with an incredible artifact. In her hands was the vertical section of the tail of the plane that had crash landed into the school roof! As I held it, I was surprised by how light it was and the reddish-orange color.

Ledwein went on to say that even though her father, Ted, was not responsible for the damage to the school, he and his brother Pete spent the rest of the summer repairing the damage that was done to the school. It was his airplane and thus he figured it was his duty to make things right.

Just two weeks earlier I had been looking at photos of a plane that had nosedived into the roof of a building trying to figure out what I was looking at. That day at Ledwein's house I was holding the tail of the plane that was involved in the crash almost 90 years earlier. With some persistent research, help from local resources, such as the Blue Earth County Historical Society, and maybe some chance encounters along the way, you too can solve your own history mysteries.

#### Sources:

Airplane photographs courtesy of John Hallman

Various articles from the *Mankato Free Press*

*Janesville Argus*, June 11, 1931

Ledwein, Judy interview

Pemberton Social Notes and microfilm resources from the Blue Earth County Historical Society

Waldorf-Pemberton "Memories of Fifty Years," 1970



Judy Ledwein holds the tail from plane that once belonged to her father.

# BECHS SPECIAL PROGRAMS

## A Closer Look at *Why Treaties Matter*

Saturday, January 19, 1 p.m., History Center  
Learn more about the creation of this exhibit from Curator/Archivist Shelley Harrison. The program will include a short video and an in-depth look at this powerful exhibit. Free.

## Young Historians

Second Saturday, September – May  
10 a.m.-Noon, History Center

*Young Historians* is a free, monthly, hands-on history workshop for school-age children. This year's theme is "Explore the Dakota." Over the months, we will learn about the historical, practical, political, cultural and economic highlights of the Dakota from the past and present. Free.

## Upcoming Topics

February 9 - Dakota Traditions

March 9 - Why Treaties Matter

April 13 - Ingenious Indigenous Americans

Special thanks to MinnStar Bank N.A. for their support of Children's Programming in 2019.

## GENEALOGY CLASSES at the History Center



January 26 Beginning Genealogy

February 23 Preserving Documents & Photos

March 23 DNA for Beginners

All classes held at the  
Blue Earth County History Center, 10 a.m.

\$10/Adults, \$7/BECHS Members per class

Questions? Contact Heather at  
507-345-5566 or

[Research@BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](mailto:Research@BlueEarthCountyHistory.com)

## Remember When Coffee Club

First Tuesday, 10 a.m., History Center  
Love history? Love to swap stories of the good old days? Looking for a place to connect with other history enthusiasts? Come to the History Center for *Remember When Coffee Club*.

There is no formal program, just a conversation topic to get the group started. Coffee, tea and light refreshments are provided. Free.

## Upcoming Topics

February 5 - Favorite Childhood Book

March 5 - Your Allowance

April 2 - What Sparked Your Interest in History?

## BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## 2019 ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, March 3, 2019 @ 2:00 p.m.

Blue Earth County History Center

424 Warren Street, Mankato

State-of-the Society  
Member's Business Meeting  
followed by

Presentation by Martin Case  
Author and a developer of  
*Why Treaties Matter*

History Center opens at 1 p.m.  
Visit the exhibit *Why Treaties Matter*  
before the meeting.

BECHS Members Free  
Non-members \$7/Adult, \$3/Child

Please RSVP by March 1 to 507-345-5566  
or [Museum@BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](mailto:Museum@BlueEarthCountyHistory.com)

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# BECHS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Erin Kragh, Board Member

## New Year, New Opportunities!

A new year brings not only resolutions and new possibilities, but also retrospection. The need to preserve and remember our past is at the heart of the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

As I think back to the last new year, I recall my excitement as I stepped into my new role as a Member of the Blue Earth County Historical Society Board of Trustees. As a Board Member, I am honored to move the work of BECHS forward, alongside the talented and dedicated staff. Our role as the Board of Trustees is to provide governance and ensure BECHS meets the needs of our community. It has been an exciting year of signature events, exhibits, and building community connections and visibility.



Kragh and fellow Board Member Dale Benefield

To me, January is an especially appropriate time for recruiting new history heroes to serve on the Board since we've all just finished a round of the holiday song bidding us to remember "Auld Lang Syne" (*times gone by*). Accordingly, it gives me great pleasure to say that applications to join the Board in 2019 are now open!

**How do you know whether an opportunity to join the BECHS Board is right for you?** What are the benefits of becoming a Board Member? Are you a good fit? When deciding, these are a few key factors to consider:

**Believe in the Mission** Do you see the importance of "collecting and promoting Blue Earth County's history to ensure its presentation for the enrichment and benefit of present and future generations"?

**Leadership & Growing the Organization** Are you ready to step up as a community

leader and help lead the expansion of BECHS services and facility in the coming years? Are you looking for opportunities to use and develop your skills in fundraising and development, marketing, facility development, and/or nonprofit management?

**Expand Your Community Network & Connections** Are you looking for ways to increase your network of dedicated professionals and community members while giving back to Blue Earth County?

**Next Steps** If you answered "yes" to any of the above, consider joining the BECHS Board of Trustees. BECHS is looking to fill 3 to 6 seats on the Board to serve March 2019-March 2022. Monthly meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. Applications are due **January 31, 2019** and are available at [BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](http://BlueEarthCountyHistory.com) or contact our amazing Executive Director, Jessica Potter. Join us – it's an exciting time to be involved!

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## HUBBARD HOUSE

Thank you to all of the visitors, staff and volunteers who made 2018 at the Hubbard House a great year!

The house is closed for the season, but will re-open in May. There will be the return of some favorites including the Victorian Lawn Party (June 8) and the Gaslight Series during the summer.

If you are interested in helping at the House, either as a tour guide or costumed character, please contact us at the History Center. BECHS is also looking to hire two seasonal staff, May – September 2019. Applications will be accepted until March 15.



# COLLECTIONS & EXHIBITS

Shelley Harrison, Curator/Archivist

The Blue Earth County Historical Society is thrilled to announce a new hands-on opportunity exclusively for our members called *Behind the Scenes*. Go beyond the average program or tour and take a peek at the Society's collections, exhibitions, and some of the everyday—and extraordinary—things that happen behind the scenes!

Yep, that's right. I'm going to take you into BECHS' collections like you've never seen before. You may get a glimpse at



Come and explore behind the scenes at BECHS!

what we keep in those archival boxes or experience the working environment of our talented volunteers and staff. We might even handle historical artifacts and documents that tell a story of the county's history – while wearing gloves, of course – let's not go crazy.

The first of these special tours will be on **Thursday, February 7 from 6-8 p.m.** at the History Center where you can **"Be the Curator."** With only about ten percent of the Society's collection on display at any given time, this tour will highlight the hidden gems safely stored in our three-dimensional collection storage. Besides touring collections, you will discover what goes into the acquisition of each object including how we decide what to accept plus storage and care for these precious objects.

Then join us on **Tuesday, March 19, 6-8 p.m.** for **"Be the Archivist"** with a hands-on look at Archives storage and view some incredible historical documents with amazing stories to share.

The cost is \$20 exclusively for BECHS members only and includes the tour, hands-on

experience, light refreshments and time with your favorite BECHS staff. (*Not a member? See page 15 about how you can join!*) All proceeds from the tours will benefit the preservation of collections at the Historical Society. Because of space, each tour is limited to 15 adults and pre-registration is required. Attendees should wear comfortable shoes as we will be on our feet for the majority of the tour.

There will be a variety of Behind the Scenes tours this year with changing themes. Watch for more information to come. These unique tours will broaden your understanding of what really goes on behind the scenes.

To register, please call the History Center at 507-345-5566.

# Why Treaties Matter

**Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations**

Explore how Dakota and Ojibwe treaties with the U.S. government affected the lands and lifeways of the Indigenous Peoples of the place now called Minnesota and why these binding agreements between nations still matter today. Free.

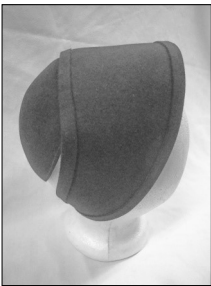
**December 8 - March 9, 2019**

**Blue Earth County History Center**  
424 Warren Street,  
Mankato

    **Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian**

# EVERY OBJECT HAS A STORY...

At the Blue Earth County History Center, the objects preserved here tell the varied stories of Blue Earth County's past and present. Every object has a different story—who used it, how it was made, where it came from. But sometimes, an object's story is unknown. **Here are three objects from BECHS' collection whose exact purpose is a mystery to the BECHS staff and volunteers.** Maybe you can help us solve a mystery or maybe it will provoke the detective nature and curious traits in us all.

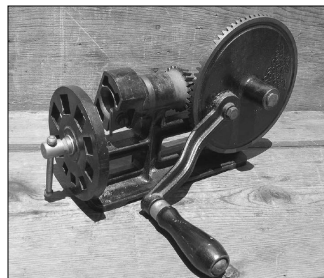


## Blue Wool Hat

This unusual hat has no brim and the sides wrap around to fasten at the base of the neck. Might it have been used for the military or another organization?

## Cast Iron Tool

This cast iron tool has an eggbeater-type mechanism, along with a front wheel that has varying size squares.



## Fire Alarm Register

Inside this wooden box, about 2.5 feet long, is a complete mechanism with moveable brass parts, all located behind a beveled glass window. The inscription reads "The Peak Trip made by John H. Clay Co. 1320 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia." The John H. Clay Co. provided supplies to fire departments, but the exact use of this box remains unknown.



## HISTORY CENTER ART GALLERY

### UPCYCLED TREASURES

by Kathy Black

January 4 - March 30, 2019

Kathy Black has been making a wide variety of art all of her life. Watercolor portraits, mixed medium pieces, acrylic paintings, and painting and/or restoration of statues have been her focus as of late.

Kathy graduated from MSU-Mankato MN, a non-traditional student, Summa Cum Laude with a BFA in Fine Arts and Humanities; she focused much of her studies on Studio Classes and Art History.

Kathy writes, "This bead and doily art began with a piece I made for my mother, inspired by a framed Christmas tree made of felt and jewelry that I saw when I was very young. I welcome the problem solving process that is required in making these unique treasures. I love creating 'one of a kind' pieces. I participated in Art & Craft shows, as well as festivals throughout Southern MN for a number of years. I hope you enjoy the display and I welcome any custom work you may envision for yourself."



*Geometric*

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October–December 2018

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# BECHS VOLUNTEERS MAKE HISTORY HAPPEN

Looking for something new for the New Year? Consider volunteering with BECHS! There are many ways you can get involved. Call or visit the History Center to learn more. Or sign-up online at [www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/volunteer](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/volunteer) to get started.

## Volunteer Opportunities

**Tour Guides** are needed for tours at the History Center and/or Hubbard House. Let BECHS know if you would like to be added to our Tour Guide Team. Schedule varies and you can sign up to lead only the groups and times that you prefer. Training is provided.

**History Writers** to research and write articles on local history. Resources are available in the Research Center and topics are often left open to the writer.

**Archive Processor** to catalog and number items such as photographs. Must have small, precise handwriting. While the hours are flexible, BECHS asks you commit to a minimum of 2 hours a week for at least six months.

**Technology Assistant** for 5-15 hours per week to help at the History Center with computer maintenance and problem solving. Experience with hardware and software, Windows 10 and Windows Server 2016 is preferred.

**Speakers Bureau Presenters** bring historical information to a variety of groups. Use one of BECHS topics or develop your own. Some training can be provided. Schedule varies.

**Rental Hosts** to assist meeting room evening and weekend rentals, stay on-site during the event and lock-up when done. Schedule varies.

**Visitor Services Attendant** to tend the front reception desk, greeting visitors and answering general questions. Training is provided.

**Hubbard House Assistants (2)** are paid positions, May—September 2019. Assistants give tours, help with events and more. Applications accepted until March 15.

**Additional volunteer opportunities include:**  
Exhibit Research and Design  
Graphic Design  
Light Construction  
Photography

## In Memoriam and Tribute

*In Memory of  
Dorothy Cassett*  
Jane Haala

*In Memory of  
Kathryn Cramer*  
Sandi & Darrell Garlow

*In Memory of  
Mary Dooley*  
Grace and Richard Keir

*In Memory of  
Dennis Just*  
Randy Zellmer

*In Memory of  
Dixie (Lundin) Ortle*  
Pat Brunner and Joan  
Busch

*In Memory of  
Doug Paape*  
Randy Zellmer

*In Memory of  
Judy Vosbeek*  
Anne Smith

Thank you for memorial and tribute gifts to the  
Blue Earth County Historical Society.

## BECHS WISH LIST

A few things BECHS could use, new or used or cash to purchase.

- **Animal pelts** for activities in Discovery Lab
- **Blue Earth County Yearbooks** for BECHS archives—specifically all Mankato East or 1980 and newer from any school
- **Solid white or black cotton sheets** to use for covering historic objects in storage

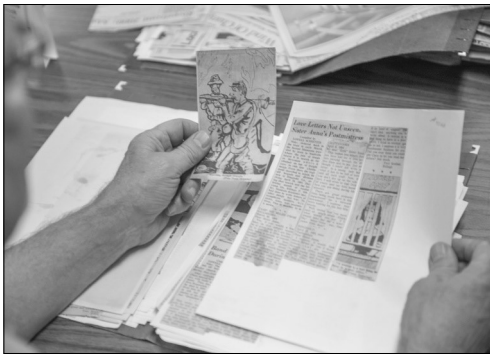
## CALL FOR ARTISTS

BECHS has openings for local artists to be featured at the History Center Art Gallery. All mediums are welcome; work must be able to be hung on a wall and be family-friendly to be considered. Contact Shelley at 507-345-5566 or [Archivist@BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](mailto:Archivist@BlueEarthCountyHistory.com).

# RESEARCH & GENEALOGY CENTER

Heather Harren, Communication & Archives Manager

Happy New Year! To those who visited the Research Center last year, thank you! For those who haven't, 2019 is a great time to take advantage of your membership and dig into your Blue Earth County family history or to learn more about your community or local business. The best place to start for information on a community or business is to check the vertical files in the Research Center. Through the hard work of many volunteers, we have newspaper clippings on many topics related to Blue Earth County. Spanning nine four-drawer filing cabinets, these files contain a great starting point for much of Blue Earth County's History. Subjects



range from businesses and schools to politics and town histories.

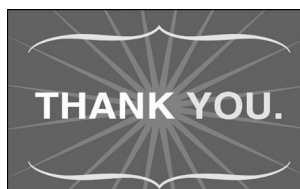
To compliment the subject drawers are four filing cabinets of biography clippings. Inside these files are a treasure trove for genealogists, as the information contained shares more about what a person was like, rather than just the overview given in an obituary. Chances are, if you have ever made the newspaper, you are in our files, too!

## Genealogy Classes

This winter, the Research Center will once again host genealogy classes. Each year we strive to cover new topics and this year we will have a class on preserving your family documents and photographs and a beginner's DNA class. There is more information about these class, including dates and times, on page 6. You can attend one or all three of the classes being offered this winter.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR LOCAL MEDIA PARTNERS

Watch KEYC News 12 at Noon the first Thursday of each month for "Throwback Thursday with BECHS" and at 6:45 a.m. on the third Tuesday for "History To Go."



Listen to KTOE 1420 AM Pete Steiner's Talk of the Town the 4th Thursday for an update with BECHS

Check out The Free Press for regular updates including Sunday's *Glimpses of the Past*.

## Visit BECHS re-designed website!

BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY



INSPIRE. ENGAGE. CONNECT.

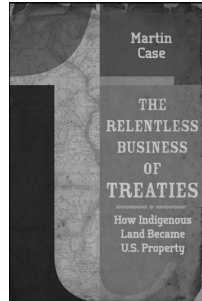
[www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com)

Same address, new look!

# GIFT SHOP & ART GALLERY

Danelle Erickson, Operations Manager

In the History Center Gift Shop, one of the most recent additions is a book titled *The Relentless Business of Treaties: How Indigenous Land Became U.S. Property*. The author, Martin Case, was a key participant in the development of BECHS' current exhibit, *Why Treaties Matter*.

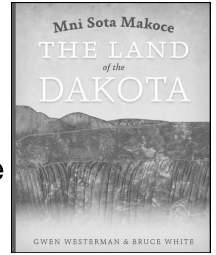


As Case puts it, "The book is an examination of the interests — commercial and cultural — that drove U.S. expansion through those treaties with indigenous nations." Acknowledging the past isn't enough. Instead, Case writes so the reader can understand the impact of these treaties, often using Minnesota as an example. (\$17.95.)

BECHS is excited to welcome Case to our annual meeting on March 3. See page 6 for details.

Additional exhibit-related titles available in the Gift Shop include the popular book

*Everything You Wanted to Know about Indians but Were Afraid to Ask* (\$17.95) and *Mni Sota Makeoce: The Land of the Dakota*, written in part by Minnesota State University, Mankato professor Gwen Westerman (\$24.95).



*Marian Anderson*  
Fine Art Prints

Artist Marian Anderson is recognized for her diverse subjects that come from a natural ability not only to create a beautiful painting, but to breathe spirit and soul into her work.

Marian Anderson Fine Art Prints are available at the History Center and online at [www.MarianAnderson.com](http://www.MarianAnderson.com). All sales benefit BECHS.



*Winter: A Time of Wisdom*

## AROUND BLUE EARTH COUNTY

### Rapidan Heritage Society

The Rapidan Depot Museum is closed for winter and will reopen on Memorial Day. Thank you to all who supported RHS in 2018!

On December 7, friends of all ages visited Santa and received a goodie bag and a special toy. Speculation abounded that the Depot was either Santa's house or his workshop!

Also that night, RHS received a donation of a 1931 Flo Brothers of Rapidan calendar. Carl and Amund Flo formed their firm in May 1907. It included a lumber yard, grain elevator and coal and cement business. Although Flo Brothers dissolved after the end of World War II, several buildings still stand, namely the cement and coal sheds (by the elevator) and two lumber storage sheds. One of the lumber sheds was remodeled and is now the Rapidan Town Hall.

### Madison Lake Area Historical Society

The Madison Lake Area Historical Society has 87 members and meets the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at All Saints Church Hall. Dues are \$10 annually. All are welcome to attend the meeting, program and lunch.

Looking back on 2018, some of the many program topics included a look at the Civil War, the Industrial Revolution, the music of the 1960s, the Kensington Rune Stone, antique tools and the streets and businesses of Madison Lake, just to mention a few!

Officers are Mike Peters, President; Albert Weinandt, Vice President; Mary Buschkowsky, Secretary; and Colleen Meagher, Treasurer. Board members are Laura Busch and Michael Frederick.

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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January–April 2019

## JANUARY

- 19 Why Treaties Matter: A Closer Look, 1 p.m., History Center, Free  
24 Tune in to KTOE 1420-AM at 1 p.m. for BECHS Update on *Talk of the Town*  
26 Genealogy Class: Beginning Genealogy, 10 a.m. History Center \$

## FEBRUARY

- 5 Remember When Coffee Club: Favorite Childhood Book, 10 a.m., History Center, Free  
7 Watch KEYC News 12 at Noon for “Throwback Thursday”  
7 Behind the Scenes: Be the Curator, 6 p.m., History Center, BECHS Members Only \$  
9 Young Historians: Dakota Traditions 10 a.m., History Center, Free  
16 Dakota 101 with Megan L. Schnitker A family-friendly presentation on Indigenous Culture including history, heritage, and contemporary issues. 10 a.m., History Center, Free  
19 Watch KEYC News 12 This Morning at 6:45 a.m. for “History To Go”  
23 Genealogy Class: Preserving Documents and Photographs, 10 a.m., History Center \$  
28 Tune to KTOE 1420-AM at 1 p.m. for BECHS Update on *Talk of the Town*

## MARCH

- 3 Annual Meeting, State-of-the Society Member’s Business Meeting followed by a presentation by author and historian Martin Case, 2 p.m., History Center, Free for BECHS members  
5 Remember When Coffee Club: Your Allowance, 10 a.m., History Center, Free. *First Tuesday*  
7 Watch KEYC News 12 at Noon for “Throwback Thursday”  
9 Young Historians: Why Treaties Matter, 10 a.m., History Center, Free  
9 Why Treaties Matter exhibit closes  
19 Watch KEYC News 12 This Morning at 6:45 a.m. for “History To Go”  
19 Behind the Scenes: Be the Archivist, 6 p.m., History Center, BECHS Members Only \$  
23 Genealogy Class: DNA for Beginners, 10 a.m., History Center, \$  
28 Tune in to KTOE 1420-AM at 1 p.m. for BECHS Update on *Talk of the Town*

## APRIL

- 2 Remember When Coffee Club: What Sparked Your Interest in History? 10 a.m., History Center, Free. *First Tuesday*.  
4 Watch KEYC News 12 at Noon for “Throwback Thursday”  
6 Preservation Alliance of Minnesota Repairing and Restoring Wood Windows, Noon-4 p.m., History Center, for more information and to register visit [www.mnpreservation.org](http://www.mnpreservation.org)  
13 Young Historians: Ingenious Indigenous Americans, 10 a.m., History Center, Free  
16 Watch KEYC News 12 This Morning at 6:45 a.m. for “History To Go”  
26 Surrounded By History: A Night at the Speakeasy, 6 p.m., The Capitol Room, St. Peter. Tickets on sale March 1. \$

### Three easy ways to stay up-to-date:

- Check out [www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com) for full event details and updates!
- Sign-up for our free monthly e-news to receive updates between *Historian* issues at [www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Contact](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Contact)
  - Follow BECHS on Facebook and Instagram

\$=Admission Charged

# MEMBERSHIP MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Thank you Members! Thank you for sharing and supporting Blue Earth County history.

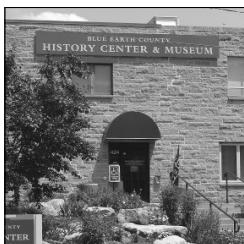
You make everything BECHS does possible, not only with your financial contributions, but by attending events, sharing your stories and telling other people about the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

This is YOUR Historical Society! We invite you to come and see the history you are saving and sharing for today and tomorrow! We hope to see you at the Annual Member's Meeting on Sunday, March 3 at 2 p.m.

**Not a member? See below and join today!**

**Member Referral Program** - One of the best ways members help BECHS grow is by telling family, friends and neighbors about the Historical Society. Now, when current members refer a new member, you will both automatically receive 2 extra months added to your annual membership!

Share a copy of *The Historian*, bring someone to an event or personally invite them to become a member. All they need to do is include the name of who referred them and you both get two additional months of membership.



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## BECHS Annual Membership

The Blue Earth County Historical Society is a member-supported, non-profit organization. Membership dues make up a growing portion of the annual operating budget. Thank you for your support.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

I'm a new member referred by \_\_\_\_\_

### **Membership Levels**

Individual Senior (62+) \$30

Individual \$35

Household \$50

Contributor \$75

Supporter \$100

Booster or Business \$250

Advocate \$500

Benefactor \$1,000

Please send this form and check to:

**BECHS Membership**  
424 Warren Street  
Mankato, MN 56001

**OR**

Complete your membership form online at  
[www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/membership](http://www.BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/membership)

*Affiliate Membership levels are available for Groups or Organizations, call for details.*

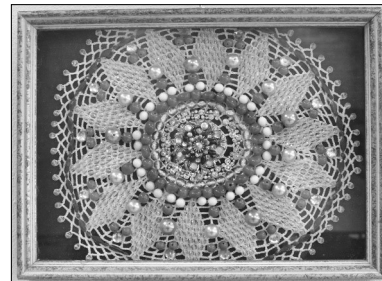
**SURROUNDED BY HISTORY**  
**A NIGHT AT THE SPEAKEASY**

Friday, April 26 | The Capitol Room  
[BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Speakeasy](http://BlueEarthCountyHistory.com/Speakeasy)

**CURRENT EXHIBITS**

**Why Treaties Matter**  
Now through March 9

**Art Gallery**  
*Upcycled Treasures*  
Now through March 30



*Crystal #1* by Kathy Black

**BECHS**  
BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
424 WARREN STREET  
MANKATO, MN 56001

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Membership  
Expiration Date