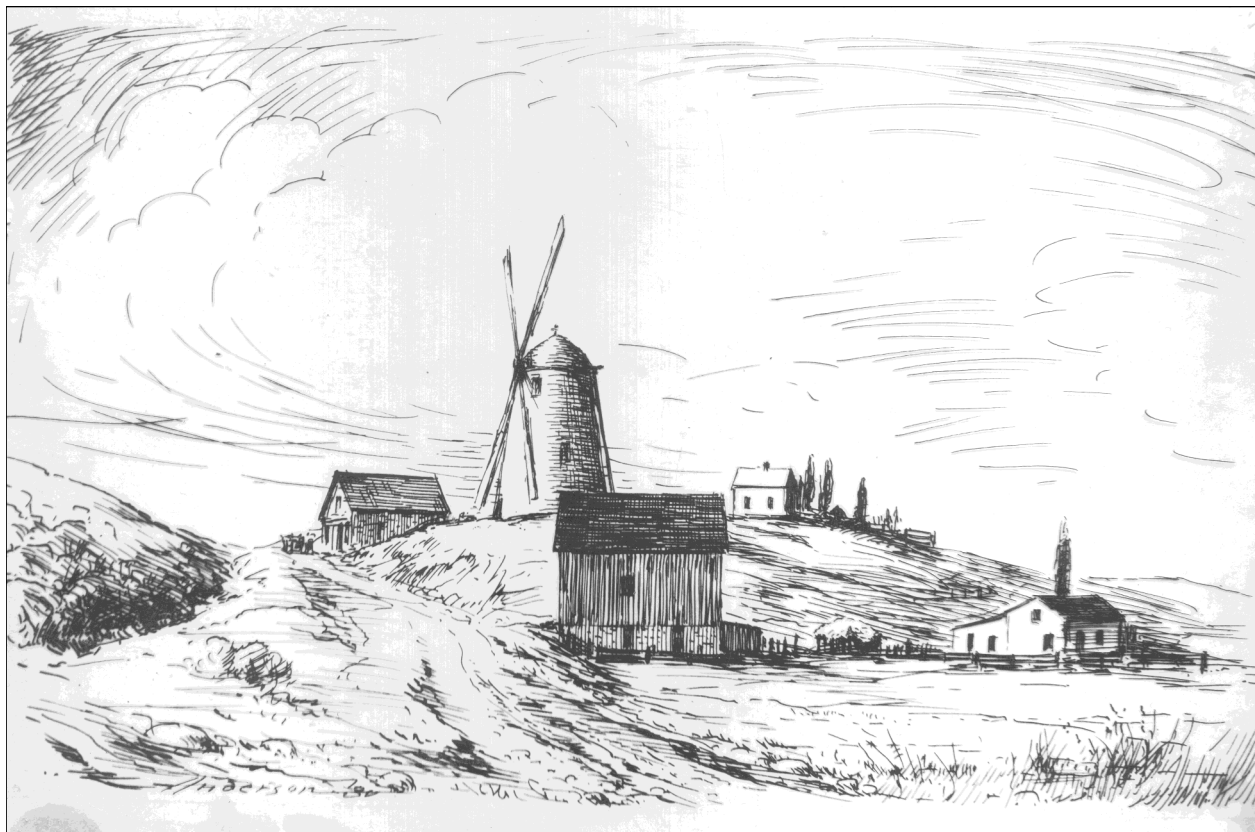


The Blue Earth County HISTORIAN



This wonderful sketch of Seppman Mill in its early days was done by A.A. Anderson, a well-known local artist. The sketch, part of the BECHS collection, helps to tell the story of the monument that still stands in Minneopa State Park. Read more about local monuments and marker's starting on page 9.

Ghosts From the Past: The Fox Sisters



As seen at Ghosts From the Past on October 14-14, Alex Oldenburg (Kate Fox), Laura Garlow (Maggie Fox) and Grace Webb (Leah Fox).

Happy 110th Anniversary BECHS

This chair was part of the display of relics at Mankato's Semi-Centennial celebration in 1902 and has been part of the BECHS collection ever since. Learn more on page 7 and join us December 2-5 for our anniversary celebration weekend.



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Our Mission: To collect, preserve, and promote the history of Blue Earth County for present and future generations.

The Blue Earth County Historian



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Heritage Center

415 Cherry Street, Mankato, MN
507-345-5566
www.bechshistory.com

Hours

Tuesday and Thursday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Wednesday, Friday and Saturday
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

R.D. Hubbard House

606 South Broad Street, Mankato
507-345-5566
Hours
Closed for the season

The Blue Earth County Historian

Fall 2011

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

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Director's Notes

Jessica Potter
Executive Director

On October 10, 1901, a cool and rainy autumn day, community members gathered to discuss the future of the past. As this group looked back at the early history of Blue Earth County, they felt compelled to establish an organization focused on collecting the "good historical material lying around loose" and make it available for future generations. (*Weekly Ledger*, October 15, 1901) That organization officially became known as the Blue Earth County Historical Society on November 7, 1901 with the filing of the organization's constitution.

As I sit here 110 years later on a warm and windy autumn day, I am amazed at their foresight and determination to collect and preserve the past for the future. I feel so fortunate to be part of an organization that has weathered many changes over the past century and I can't help but feel excitement for what is ahead. Here are a few facts about BECHS:

1916 – Articles of Incorporation filed after 14 years of inactivity
1938 – Museum opened to the public at the Hubbard House, also first employee hired
1987 – Society outgrows the Hubbard House and enters into an agreement with the Mankato Area Senior Citizens, Inc. to share the former Newman Center. The new Society building which houses the museum, research center and collections storage is named the Heritage Center.
1990 – Exhibit gallery and gift shop open at the Heritage Center
1995 – Restored R.D. Hubbard Historic House opens for tours
2010 – Marian Anderson Art Gallery opens after generous gift from Marian of her entire inventory

Today, restoration work continues at the Hubbard House, three-dimensional artifacts exceed 24,000 and the Society has expanded to a third location – the Marian Anderson Art Gallery

What does the future hold for BECHS? The possibilities are endless; just as they were 110 years ago. As they wrote that first chapter, did they ever imagine the organization would operate three sites? Did they ever imagine paid staff would be in place for daily operation and long-range planning? Did they ever imagine the organization would continue to grow at such a rate that expansion is being discussed after 24 years in the Heritage Center? This is an exciting chapter in BECHS's history as we look ahead to growth and expansion.

Help us write that next chapter by investing in the future of the past

and support our Year-End Giving Drive which kicks-off November 1st. The goal is to raise \$15,000 to cover the 2011 deficit (due in part to a decline in memberships and overall donations and increase in expenses) and provide for an increase in operations for 2012. An additional \$25,000 annually would allow for us to hire staff focused on educational programming in area schools, facilitate new exhibitions in the museum and maximize our opportunities with the Marian Anderson Art Gallery.

You can invest in the future of the past by supporting BECHS in your year-end giving or make a pledge for 2012 giving so we can use your support in our 2012 budget planning. Also, consider being a BECHS ambassador and share the value of preserving history with your friends and family. Ask them to consider making a donation or becoming a member. Check with your business, does it have a corporate giving program? Or include BECHS in your estate planning. There are many ways you can help BECHS as we move toward another year and another chapter.

Board of Trustees



Mike Lagerquist
Board of Trustees President

History on two-way streets gains prominence

On the last weekend of September, Brad Pitt's movie "Moneyball" opened in theatres. In it, he plays Oakland A's general manager Billy Beane who, when confronted with diminishing payroll possibilities, changes the way baseball scouts rate players and therefore changes the way the game is played.

That same weekend, two long-time one-way streets in Mankato—Cherry and Warren—were switched back to two-way streets. This, too, forced a change in perspective.

Just as I did when Broad and Fourth streets reverted to two-way streets a couple of years ago, I drove Cherry street that first morning. It was

incredible to me to see how this street that I drive nearly every day takes on a completely different look when traveled the "wrong way."

Buildings that simply blend in when traveling *down* Cherry Street gain new significance when traveling *up* Cherry Street, while other landmark buildings seem to fade away. And the Hubbard House on Broad Street greatly gains prominence from the new angle on Warren Street. This same change in prominence happened with the ballplayers Beane was evaluating. Change the framework within which something is seen and you alter the value placed on it.

The Blue Earth County Historical Society will be affected similarly with this street change. While in the past there were only two (one-)ways to get to our Heritage Center building on Cherry Street, we'll now have four ways: both directions on both Cherry and Warren streets. While we lose drive-by traffic on Fifth Street, which is now a cul-de-sac, we can gain from the creation of a more park-like atmosphere around us.

Overall, these changes will benefit BECHS. Because the alley behind the building was also rebuilt, the pathway from Warren Street to our parking lot can be traveled without the use of four-wheel-drive. And because the City of Mankato sees our location in this gateway to City Center as vital, we can expect to see more signage and attention brought to our building.

Now it's up to us as an organization to take advantage of these improvements. The Board of Trustees has been exploring ways to do so and we hope to be bringing something forward soon. If you have any ideas, please feel free to contact me at 345-5566

A Gift of a Lifetime

Consider including BECHS in
your estate planning.

Two recent estate gifts are
in memory of
Leora Schmitz and June Lees.

At the Book and Gift Shop

JoLynn Crowe, Museum Manager

Fall is here and with it comes a plethora of Holiday Bazaars and special suppers, can anyone say Lutefisk?

Speaking of Holiday Bazaars, the Heritage Center Book and Gift Shop will be at the Madison East



Mankato Bazaar 1916

Holiday Bake and Gift Sale. The event is Saturday, November 19 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and there is always a wonderful selection of

goodies and craft items! BECHS is asking our friends to donate items for the event. Last year thanks to all of the generous donations, BECHS was fortunate enough to raise over \$300.

Here are some suggestions of items BECHS is looking for: **Baked goods** such as, cookies, bars, breads and holiday treats, particularly if they are Thanksgiving related. Please bring any food related items packaged and ready to be sold, perhaps a paper plate inside a large zipped baggie or any other see through wrapping. **Crafts:** Handmade jewelry, quilted items or knitted hats, mittens and scarves.

Holiday items: Thanksgiving decorations, Christmas tree ornaments, cloth holiday napkins or Christmas wreaths. **Woodworking crafts:** bird houses, bird feeders, and trellises. Just a few ideas, but the possibilities are endless! Items for the event need to be dropped off at the Heritage Center by 3:30 pm on Friday, November 18 or at the Madison East Center on Saturday, November 19 before 8:30 a.m., and please, all items need to be pre-packaged and priced.

Volunteers are always appreciated for the day of the event. You can contact JoLynn at 507-345-5566 if you are interested in helping. If you are not able to donate your time or talents with donated items, we hope to see you there to check out the awesome

choices we will have and, of course, we will have some gift shop items along as well.

Following our fall holiday events, we swing into December. Be sure to mark these dates on your calendar. This year, the gift shop will be hosting a Holiday Open House. Look for some great *SPECIALS* in the Book & Gift Shop on Friday, December 2 from 4-7 p.m. and Saturday, December 3 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. BECHS members can take advantage of a 15% discount on most items these two days only. Join us for refreshments, door prizes and your holiday shopping.

We hope to see you at several of our events. Embrace the Season!

Holiday Gift Shop Open House

Marian Anderson Art Gallery and
Heritage Center Book & Gift Shop

Friday, December 2
4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, December 3
1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

BECHS Members

Receive 15% discount*
for two days only!

*Some exclusions may apply.

TWO LOCATIONS

Blue Earth County Historical Society
Heritage Center Book & Gift Shop
415 Cherry Street, Mankato

Marian Anderson Art Gallery
1560 Adams Street, Mankato

Refreshments and Door Prizes



Marian Anderson Fine Art Prints
Books • Gift Items and More



BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Visit www.bechshistory.com for more details or call 507-345-5566.



R.D. Hubbard House

Guests enjoyed another season at the Historic R.D. Hubbard House which closed at the end of

September. The summer season was filled with weekly story time with Katherine and Mary Esther Hubbard, Katherine's wedding reception and the annual Victorian Lawn Party.

Fall is a new season for the historic house. Not only is it time for fall chores like staining the porch decking, touch up painting and putting the flowers to bed for the winter, but it is also an exciting time of change for the house. In September, BECHS became aware that furniture originally belonging to the Hubbard family is now available. The local family that purchased the furniture from the Hubbard auction in 1938 had no need for the items and was working with Antique Warehouse in Mankato to sell them. After looking at the pieces and discussing the opportunity with Hubbard House supporters Ogden Confer, Richard P. Confer, and Harley and Janet Goff, BECHS was able to purchase the furniture and return it to the house. In late October, the furniture will be moved in and be used as part of the redecoration project currently underway.

A bedroom set including a bed and three dressers will create a young adult look in the girls room. In 1905-1910, the time period represented at the

historic house, Katherine and



Mary Esther were young women. Now their bedroom will reflect that rather a young girl's bedroom as it currently depicts.

Another room to see




changes will be one of the servant's bedrooms which currently is set-up as a sewing room. With a shift in furniture, this bedroom will now tell the story of a second live-in servant.

Besides the addition and rearrangement of furniture, the house will be transformed into a true living history experience with a more lived in feel. Each room will have items added to show the daily activity that would have happened there such as writing, reading and sewing activities in the library and baking in the kitchen.

We hope to have many of the changes in place when the house opens for the holiday season with Christmas at the Hubbard House on December 4-5.

Volunteers are being sought for moving furniture, hanging art, arranging all the small details in each room and some light cleaning. If you are interested, please contact Shelley at 345-5566.



Christmas At the Hubbard House

An Annual Mankato Holiday Tradition

A Hubbard Family Christmas

Sunday, December 4
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.


Monday, December 5
5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

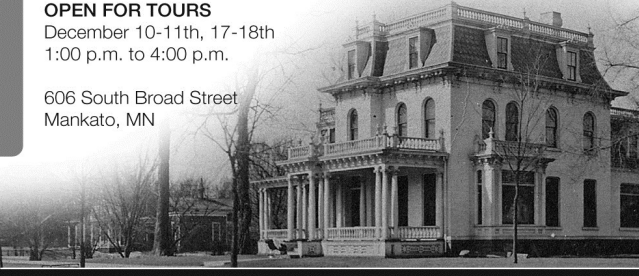
*Turn of the Century Costumed Guides
Holiday Gift Shop • Refreshments*

Adults \$7.50 / Children 5-17 \$5
BECHS Members and under 5 are FREE

OPEN FOR TOURS
December 10-11th, 17-18th
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

606 South Broad Street
Mankato, MN





BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Visit www.bechshistory.com for more details or call 507-345-5566.

Collections and Exhibits...

Shelley Harrison, Archives Manager

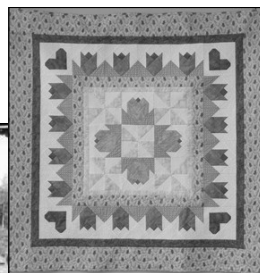
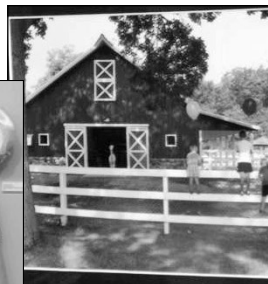
The Blue Earth County Historical Society hosts rotating exhibits featuring the work of area artists, students and clubs. Our mission is to increase public awareness of the visual arts by providing a setting for exhibition and education. Many Blue Earth County artists, both past and present, are represented in the Society's collections. BECHS wants to establish, support and encourage contemporary local artists by offering a welcoming venue for the exhibition of their work in a unique and historic setting.

It started with the Third Thursday Gallery Walk, which is a Twin Rivers Council for the Arts and City Center Partnership collaboration with several galleries and sites for the public to visit works of art. There are eight locations involved in the Third Thursday Gallery Walk: the Blue Earth County Historical Society Heritage Center, the Emy Frentz Art Guild, the 410 Project, the Carnegie Art Center, the Landkamer Building, the Fillin' Station, Raydiance Salon Gallery and the Coffee Hag.

The Heritage Center provides local artists with a venue to display their artistic creations. The exhibit showcases works by regional artists in a variety of mediums including oils, acrylics, air brush, lithography, photography and fabric. At first glance, it's a quilt, a photograph, a fairy princess dress but, if you look a little closer you see inspiration, passion,

and history.

Past exhibits have featured quilts done by the Deep Valley Quilters, photographs from the Bend of the River



Photography Club and some multi-dimensional

pieces with a historical twist from photographer Denice Woller.

Art is an integral part of learning, specifically art that provokes interest in diverse cultures and artistic forms. The Historical Society's aim is to make art accessible to the public in a way that creates connections and collaborations to advance cultural learning. We really want to connect with anyone, anywhere!

The space is open to all local artists, groups or organizations that live and/or are located in Blue Earth County. Artists interested in submitting artwork to be considered for future exhibits should contact Shelley at bechsam@hickorytech.net.

Jefferson Good People Award

Win Grundmeier, longtime BECHS volunteer, Board member and supporter, was honored on September 10, 2011 at Kato Ballroom for his outstanding service to the community as a 2011 Jefferson Good People Award Recipient.

The Jefferson Award for public service was started in 1972 by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis who with others founded the American Institute for Public Service to create a Nobel like prize for public and community service. This is the twenty-sixth year that KEYC has held the Jefferson Good People Awards and the third consecutive year that a BECHS volunteer has received the award. Past recipients with BECHS ties included Alex Oldenburg, Laura Garlow and Susan Hynes.



L to R: Shirley Grundmeier, KEYC's Dion Cheney, BECHS's Shelley Harrison, and Win.

Every object has a story...

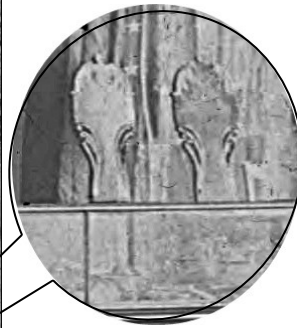
The Society's permanent collection includes paintings, textiles, posters, photographs, books, letters and ephemera from the middle of the 19th century through the 21st century. Here is a glimpse into our collections.

During the week-long festivities in 1902 to celebrate Mankato's first fifty years, the newly created Blue Earth County Historical Society hosted a relic room. Some of those "relics" might not exist today had the Historical Society not preserved and protected them for all these years. Here are just a few of those relics from the Mankato Semi-Centennial that remain in our collection today.



This photograph was taken in 1902 in The Relic Room located in the B. D. Pay & Son's livery barn on Front Street. There were over four hundred relics on display many dating 75 to 100 years -old. The men in the photograph are: H.D. Diamond, John Diamond and Thomas L. Hughes.

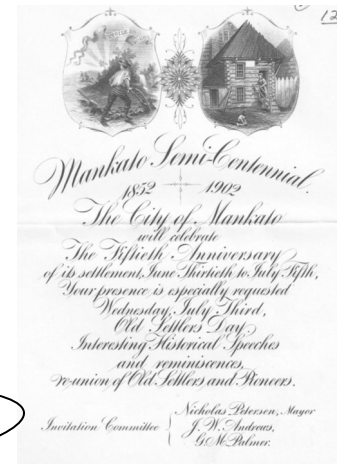
These chairs were made from a black walnut tree on Fourth Street here in Mankato. The chair was placed on display in the relic room by Mrs. B.D. Pay and donated to the Society by Mrs. Mary Pay Johnson, her granddaughter.



July 7-1902

Mrs. B. D. Pay, coverlet, chair, chair 65 years old, knife and fork 66 years old, pitcher 65 years old, 4 chairs made from black walnut tree grown in this city, bed spread, sugar bowl 81 years old, revolver presented to B. D. Pay by Col. Smith, candle stick 50 years old, and irons 125 years old, Cole Younger's coverlet, hand embroidered handkerchief 50 years old, fire bell.

This clipping, from the July 7, 1902, *Mankato Free Press*, described items contributed to the Relic Room display including the walnut chairs above.



This invitation belonged to Mrs. James Baker along with a ticket to the Old Settlers History Day, and a Semi-Centennial Official Programme. They are all pieces of the past from 100 years ago. Her husband General James Baker was chairman of the executive committee for the 50th Anniversary.

These objects were donated from members and people in the community. If you are interested in donating a piece of Blue Earth County history, please contact Shelley Harrison, Archives Manager at 345-5566.



The Front Street Project began in 2009 with the goal to reconnect people to the once thriving, now hidden, Front Street in downtown Mankato. Through the time and talents of Dave Engen, numerous oral histories have been collected; in addition, many written recollections have also been donated to BECHS. The Front Street Project's next phase is a three-dimensional exhibit at the Heritage Center and a photograph based book with memories. We are excited about this next phase, but our efforts have been delayed by too many pulls on staff's time and the need for a volunteer project leader to move the exhibit forward.

We hope to work on the exhibit over the winter months and open in the spring with the book to follow. How can you help? BECHS is looking for volunteers to help with design, construction, painting, research and writing. We are also looking for items that tell the story of Front Street to be used in the exhibit.

If you are interested in assisting with the exhibit or the book or have an item to share, please contact Shelley at 507-345-5566. Thank you to our partners who have made the Project possible thus far: HickoryTech Foundation, Mankato Area Foundation, The Free Press and including many personal financial donations.

INSTY-PRINTS

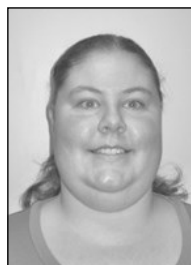
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Research Center



Hello, my name is Heather Harren and I am the new Archives Assistant. I grew up near St. Cloud, and came to Mankato in 2006. I completed my undergraduate work at Minnesota State University, Mankato in 2009, graduating with a Bachelor's degree in History. I am

currently working on my Master's degree in History, also at Minnesota State University, Mankato and I plan to graduate this December. Outside of BECHS, I am also the Graduate Assistant in the Archives on the MSU campus. History has always been an interest of mine, and with my degrees and experience, I hope to continue to work in archives. I started at BECHS in late August, and have been working hard at helping Shelley with different projects and to learn about the different resources available for researchers.

After my first week at BECHS, I started helping with different projects for the Research Center. One of the first projects I did was to put together the "I Remember Mankato" resource. This series consists of different prominent Mankatoans and their recollections of early Mankato. These articles were a part of the centennial celebration of the city. Most of the recollections are two pages long, but share a wealth of information. This collection is a great way for people to learn about the history of Mankato, and to see how other people saw the area in 1952.

Another project that I have been hard at work on is the Historical Preservation reference collection. This collection has great information about different ways to preserve historic buildings, ways to make downtown more presentable and *The Old-House Journal*, which discusses different ideas on how to renovate and maintain older houses. Also included in this collection are Sanborn Fire Insurance maps and a book listing the different historic sites throughout Minnesota.

Both of these collections have indexes online and are available in the Research Center. Stop in to check out these resources. I look forward to meeting you!

Blue Earth County Monuments and Markers

Jane Tarjesen

“I know it was just here!” Where are some of the markers, monuments and landmarks that we remember or heard stories of? Gone! Why? Did they really matter? Mankato and the surrounding Blue Earth County have lost monuments and markers throughout the years. Some have been controversial; others have disappeared silently into the past.

Monument? Marker? What is the difference? Ken Berg in his Dec. 4, 1970 column defined them as: “a monument is a testimonial to something, and usually to something good or endearing. A marker, however, is simply just that – calling attention to an event or a site of some historical significance without necessarily judging any philosophical overtones.”

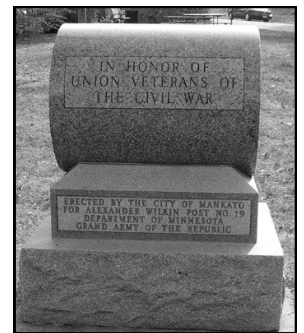
Lincoln Park in Mankato, a small triangular park, was the site of a splashing fountain, a Civil War soldier statue, a Spanish cannon and the majestic Lincoln Elm.

In the late 1890s many cities across the nation were building monuments to the veterans of the Civil War. Mankato joined this patriotic wave and the Alexander Wilkin Post G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) made plans to build a fitting monument to the boys in blue.

In an article about the 1893 dedication, the *Mankato Free Press* states: “Water was turned on in the beautiful Memorial Fountain in Lincoln Park. The fountain is a most beautiful one. It rises from a stone basin and represents a soldier at “position rest” looking toward the setting sun. He wears a regulation uniform overcoat. He stands on a wide circular pedestal, beautifully embossed, which rises out of the water of the basin. The stature and pedestal are both bronze and fine artistic work. The fountain cost is over \$1200 and is a magnificent gift to the city. The water shoots up from the edge of the pedestal four feet or more and also shoots out of the mouths around the rim of the pedestal.”

The soldier’s rifle was broken off in 1894 by a “miscreant” trying to pry it off and it was damaged again in 1911, after which a \$100 reward was offered for the “maliciously inclined person” that damaged the statue and fountain. Wind storms toppled the soldier several times. The bolts holding the statue upright rusted, and the statue of the soldier was removed. The fountain was removed in 1927 over concerns that children were using the fountain as a wading pool. A replacement memorial was promised as a memorial to the soldiers of the Civil War.

A new memorial of granite, mounted on a concrete base, was erected just inside of the rim of the old memorial fountain in 1935. The inscription on the stone reads, “In Memory of Union Veterans of the Civil War.” The granite was from the old Mankato State bank building. During the building’s renovation, a round column of polished red granite was removed from the corner entrance to the building. This granite was used to create the memorial. Because of its shape, newspaper columnists referred to it as the “jelly-roll” monument and repeatedly asked when a proper monument would be erected.



A cannon was placed in the park in 1900. Fired by pranksters several times, the cannon received the most damage on July 4, 1910. A load of 25 pounds of blasting powder shook the town shortly after midnight and 324 windows shattered in the explosion. The cannon barrel was later filled with concrete. The cannon was donated for scrap metal during World War II.

The Lincoln Elm was a natural monument. The gigantic elm tree, perhaps the largest in the state, was a landmark for the city. In 1852, when Mankato was first settled, the tree was 187 years old! The Lincoln Elm was damaged in 1929 when a tornado uprooted another tree and blew it into the elm. The tree required \$1,000 worth of “surgical work”. In 1935, after Truman and Fairmont both claimed to have the largest elm tree, the Lincoln Elm was measured. The circumference at the base was 19 ½ feet and it had a spread of 107 feet, proof that the Mankato Elm was the largest tree in the state. It died after contracting Dutch Elm disease at the

age of 315 and was removed in 1980.

Washington Park also contained a fountain, but there is no information on file as to when it was built or what happened to it.

What is known as the “Indian Monument” is the most controversial marker. From its dedication on December 26, 1912 to the date it was quietly removed in October, 1971 the marker has been the center of much criticism and debate.

“Here Were Hanged 38 Sioux Indians, December 26, 1862.” But why was this marker erected?

Back in 1912, Judge Loren Cray formed a committee that included 15 people who were present at the execution. They met, walked the area and located the spot where the scaffolding had stood. The marker was placed on the grounds of the C. & N. W. Ry. Co. with their consent

Made of gray St. Cloud granite, the marker measured six feet high, four feet six inches wide and sixteen inches thick. It rested on a stone base five feet long, two feet wide and fourteen inches thick. It weighed almost 10,000 pounds.

In the dedicatory address Judge Cray wished to have it understood that the monument had not been erected to gloat over the death of the Indians, but simply to record accurately an event in history.”

Controversy swirled about the marker. In May of 1969, unknown people smeared red paint on the monument. A man placed wood around the marker in August of 1971, drenched it with fuel oil and lit a match. Flames reached nearly six feet. But it was urban renewal that brought about the marker’s removal in 1971. The marker was last seen by the public in the city’s storage yard at Sibley Park, before it was hidden under a pile of sand.

The marker’s whereabouts today is unknown. Speculations abound that it has been buried in the dike or secreted out-of-town in the dark of night by a former mayor.

Judge Cray and his fellow committee members marked the location for future generations – for us. The removal of the marker did not erase from the history books that the hanging of the 38 in Mankato remains the greatest single mass execution in U.S. history. What it did erase was the exact location of



where it took place.

The granite marker erected by Lyra Township in 1970 along the Maple River, a short distance from Good Thunder, is more diplomatic: “900 Ft West of this marker is the site of the Good Thunder Forde. In the years of the 1800s pioneers and Indians used this Maple River crossing peacefully. Let all men settle their differences, God willing, and forever travel in peace.”

Markers do not have to be of granite or molded in metal. The marker for the West Lawn Flag Station between Good Thunder and Mapleton is a simple wooden sign telling the history of the West Lawn Flag Sub-Station. In anticipation of the Milwaukee Railway, stations were built along the Wells line – Rapidan, Good Thunder and Mapleton. A sub-station was created on the West Lawn Farm where cattle and hogs could be weighed and loaded and passengers board the train. In 1896, the fare to Mapleton was 11 cents and to Good Thunder 13 cents.

But what to do when no organization shows an interest in placing a marker? Bud and Millie Wrucke felt strongly enough about the marking of this sub-station that they took on the project themselves. After meeting all the requirements, they placed this simple marker in 1998.



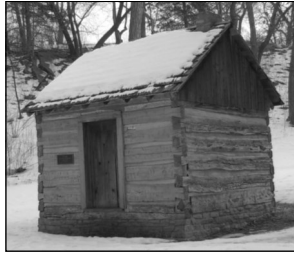
It can be seen along County Road 39 near Mapleton.

Sibley Park has lost several memorials. Two German 105 mm howitzer field guns, captured in World War I by the U.S. 1st Division, were displayed from 1926 until World War II when they were donated for scrap metal in the war effort. The small plaque remained in Sibley Park noting the history of the guns. However, when a new pavilion was built on the Great Lawn near the entrance, the plaque was removed.

But some memorials do come back. This original plaque will be part of a new marker scheduled for placement in the park later this year. Included on the marker will be a picture of the howitzers.

Relocated to Sibley Park was the Ott Cabin, what better monument to the pioneers in this area than a dwelling built and lived in for many years by a

pioneer family. Erected in 1857 by George and Mary Ott in Mankato Township, the logs were from trees cleared from their land, the boards for the floor and roof sawn at the Tivoli sawmill. Often neighbors gathered at the Ott cabin to discuss the prospects of the times. Visit the Ott Cabin, walk around it and be amazed at the perseverance of the pioneers who settled this county.



Disappearing from Sibley Park were the original 1874 French burr millstones from the Cable Mill near Good Thunder. In 1931 the millstones were mounted on a concrete platform by the grape arbor – but when did they disappear?

Fortunately there are other monuments standing to the milling industry. The first is Seppmann Mill in Minneopa State Park, a monument to pioneer milling days when wind was power. The second is the Hubbard Milling smokestack. Erected by R. D. Hubbard for his mill in 1878, for years this was a functioning smokestack with a steam whistle at the top. The whistle signaled the start of the work day at 6 a.m. and again at the end of the work day. It was also used as a community alarm - blown as a fire alarm and joyously to signal the end of the war. The steam whistle was removed when the mill was electrified in 1952 and presented to the Blue Earth County Historical Society. Now mute, the chimney is a silent testimony to the milling industry in Mankato.

There are many markers still standing throughout the county. A chance to read a small snippet of history of that particular area, and an opportunity to learn why someone, at some time, thought this was noteworthy and worthy of preservation.

The Cairn of Peace is a monument that commemorates the 19th World Plowing Contest, held at Vernon Center September 15-16, 1972. The Cairn contains a stone from each of the countries that participated in the plowing contest.

Some other markers that have disappeared: the wooden Old Vernon sign that used to be on State Road 169 south of Vernon Center, the wooden sign marking the Winnebago Agency, the Lake Crystal WW II veterans sign and the Vernon Center veteran

sign. These are but some of the markers that are gone from the county.

Unfortunately, monuments have a way of “disappearing” in the night - never to be seen again. We may agree or disagree with what the marker represents, but it is our responsibility to preserve existing markers and to continue erecting markers for future generations. Without markers, the importance of places and the history behind them will be lost or forgotten.

“Boy in Blue” Memorial Project

Bryce O. Stenzel, M.A.,
Historian and Project Director

The American Civil War began on April 12, 1861, with the firing on Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. In four years of bloody fighting, 629,000 American lives were lost on both sides; the Union of states was preserved and slavery was abolished. Out of a total population of approximately 31,000,000 in 1860, almost a quarter of it had perished by war's end in 1865, leaving countless widows, orphans, sisters and sweethearts behind to pick up the pieces of their shattered lives and begin life anew. After the fiery passions of the war itself had cooled, there emerged an earnest desire, coupled by a concerted effort by individuals throughout the nation to memorialize their Civil War dead by convincing their communities to build war memorials to the fallen heroes. In this way, the wartime sacrifices of the dead would never be forgotten, the living could commune with the dead, and lessons of the past could be passed on to a new generation.

Mankato's *Boy in Blue* was just such a memorial. In 1885, twenty years after the guns fell silent at Appomattox, ladies auxiliary members of Alexander Wilkin Post, Grand Army of the Republic, persuaded the City of Mankato to purchase the triangular block of land, owned by W.H. Shepard, at the intersection of Broad, Grove and Lincoln Streets in Mankato, for the express purpose of erecting a Civil War veterans' memorial. In 1892, the memorial was built on the site; the following year, it was dedicated on Memorial Day, May 30, 1893.

The *Boy in Blue*, representing a Union infantry soldier stood 7'-8' atop a cast iron basin, which in turn stood 6' above a octagonal pool. The basin or fountain portion of the monument, as well as the cornices at each corner of the pool beneath it, were decorated with images of rams heads symbolizing war, and goats heads symbolizing determination. It is worth noting that even though the park was named in honor of President Abraham Lincoln, his likeness was not chosen to grace the apex of the monument. Rather, it depicted an ordinary soldier—the common man who had given his “last, full measure of devotion,” to preserving the American Union and its ideal of “all men are created equal.” This is proof that the original intention of the statue/fountain’s promoters was for it to be a war memorial. Lincoln himself would not have objected; for him, the common soldier embodied the highest ideals for which the war had been fought—preservation of the Union and freedom for all. In the midst of the Civil War, Lincoln himself had journeyed to Gettysburg to memorialize the dead and remind the living of their obligation: “...that from these honored dead, we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last, full measure of devotion...”

Sadly, the *Boy in Blue* did not remain on active duty guarding his park very long. In 1894, vandals broke off the musket he was holding. This happened again in 1911, when the musket was completely broken and the soldier’s fingers were pried off the statue, making it vulnerable to damage from corrosion caused by moisture. A windstorm toppled the figure and it was not repaired. Exposure to the elements and neglect continued to take their toll. By 1922, citizens were asking for the fountain’s removal. In 1927, that was done. A granite monument was installed in 1935 to replace the statue/fountain.

Mankato’s once-proud Civil War veterans’ memorial had passed into history—that is, until very recently. A dedicated group of local researchers were able to discover the name of the original company (Mott) that had constructed the cast-iron basin or “bottom bowl” portion of the fountain, as well as its modern successor (Robinson). Further investigation revealed that statues similar to the “*Boy in Blue*,” had been erected in other American cities, including Forest City, Iowa, and Cape

Girardeau, Missouri. An experienced artist, Alan Gibson was contacted, and asked to submit a bid to re-create the “*Boy in Blue*.” On July 5, 2011, the Mankato Area Community Band hosted a concert of patriotic music in Lincoln Park with the intention of attracting visitors to the site of the original statue/fountain. Over 300 people attended the event, and witnessed the historic announcement that efforts were now underway to form a coalition of community organizations and individuals committed to raising the necessary funds to return the *Boy in Blue* to his post. Since then, the following organizations have stepped forward to support and promote this important cause: Anthony Wayne Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Betsy-Tacy Society, Blue Earth County Historical Society, City of Mankato Department of Public Works (Parks, Streets, Utilities), Lincoln Park Neighborhood Association, Mankato Area Community Band, Mankato Area Foundation, and Minnesota Heritage Publishing.

This project is an ongoing, grassroots community effort. Any interested individual or organization that wishes to contribute toward the successful re-creation of the “*Boy in Blue*,” is encouraged to contact www.mnheritage.com for project or follow us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/BoyinBlueProject. It will cost approximately \$100,000 to rebuild the memorial. But as Lincoln believed, “trust the people,” and great things will happen.

We are looking for old photographs of the monument. If you have any that you would be willing to share with us, please let us know. We are also now accepting monetary donations. Please make checks payable to: Mankato Area Foundation with “Boy in Blue” in the memo line. Mail to:

Boy in Blue Memorial Project
c/o Blue Earth County Historical Society
415 Cherry Street
Mankato, MN 56001

Help Bring History Back To Life!



Discover the Dakota Culture & Heritage

An Educational Series Celebrating the Dakota People

In recognition of the U.S. - Dakota War 1862 Sesquicentennial

First Saturday of each Month
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
January - December 2012
Free • Open to Public

SERIES SCHEDULE*:

January

The Tradition of Storytelling

February

Language: Spoken and Sign

March

Dakota Crafts: Basket Weaving, Beading, Quillwork and Sewing

April

Music and Dance

May

Dakota Games

June

Arts by the River Festival: Dakota Artisans

July

National Eagle Center Traveling Program

August

Unveiling of Heritage Plaque at Reconciliation Park

September

40th Anniversary Mahkato Wacipi Traveling Exhibit

October

Food Storage and Preparing for Winter

November

Film Showing: "Dakota Conflict of 1862"

December

U.S.-Dakota War of 1862 Traveling Exhibit

* Schedule and topics are subject to change.



BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Visit www.bechshistory.com for more details or call 507-345-5566.

BECHS Membership

July-September 2011

New Members

Duffey, Danielle
 Green, Emily and Daniel Dinsmore
 Greiner, Wendy
 Hedlund, Dale and Marilyn
 Krosch, Carol
 Madrigal, Claudia
 Mathews, Edward
 Mueller, Keith and Bobbie
 Purvis, Will and Paula
 Witherell, Larry
 Woodward, Laurie

New Business Members

R & E Enterprises of Mankato

Renewing Business Members

Burkhardt & Burkhardt, Ltd
 Goodrich Construction, Inc
 Insty-Prints of Mankato
 Morgan Creek Vineyards

To our new and renewing members,
THANK YOU for your continued support.

**Give the Gift of a
 BECHS Membership this
 holiday season.**



We've moved!

We have opened our new office at 115 East Hickory Street in downtown Mankato.

This move provides our clients easy access and shows our continued support for the City Center, Mankato, and Greater Mankato Area.

For more information, please check out www.is-grp.com

YOUNG HISTORIANS



Laura Garlow

Young Historians have had a very busy summer! Although our regular meetings ended in May with our History Day reception, we had a picnic in June and many Young Historians members continued to volunteer at events throughout the summer.

Alex Oldenburg and I ran Storytime at the Hubbard House again this summer. We also had Alaena and Terese Klages help! It was another fun summer and we hope you can come join us next year. Many of our members are also involved in 4-H. A lot of us took our History Day projects to the county fair and Connor Oldenburg took his project on John F. Kennedy to the Minnesota State Fair.

Young Historians also helped at the Victorian Lawn Party, the Meet the Hubbards event, and the Victorian Wedding Reception. At the Blue Earth County Fair, members volunteered at the school house and after school went over to the Old Fashioned Base Ball Game to watch or play.

In September our regular meetings started again. This year our theme is "They Chose Minnesota". We are discussing the different immigrant groups and settlers who traveled to Minnesota. Our September meeting was about the Dakota and Ojibwe tribes, their culture, and life style. October featured our favorite historian, Arn Kind, and his lesson about the French Voyageurs.



This year for a project we are learning more about our genealogy. To begin we have a worksheet to complete about our parents and grandparents. Throughout the year we are going to dig and uncover even more secrets and mysteries about our families. We will share what we learn about our family's heritage and traditions with the group. At the end of the year we will present what we learn at Family Day (watch for more details).

We still need help to reach our goal. Last year we worked hard to raise enough money to buy new tables and chairs for the meeting room, which is used by us, as well as many other groups. The tables and chairs are in bad condition. Despite all our efforts last year, we still need help to reach our goal! Check out the details in the Wish List on page 15. Watch for more news on our other fundraising efforts. Please donate today.

Keep an eye out for Young Historian members at upcoming Historical Society events. We will be volunteering at Ghosts From the Past and Christmas at the Hubbard House.

110 Years of Support!

For 110 years BECHS members and donors have supported the business of collecting, preserving and presenting the history of Blue Earth County with their generous monetary contributions. Join us this 110th year for the BECHS Year-End Giving Drive and help us raise \$15,000 to cover 2011 expenses and prepare for growth in 2012. Every donation stands on a century-long tradition of giving.

Watch your mailboxes for details on how you can participate.



Burkhardt & Burkhardt

A Professional Association

Certified Public Accountants

(507) 387-1338

215 Carroll Street

Mankato, Minnesota 56001

MARIAN ANDERSON ART GALLERY



The Marian Anderson Art Gallery greeted guests on October 1st for the Fall Open House. Marian was on hand to autograph pieces of her work: old and new.

Special thanks to Eide Bailly for inviting BECHS to display 20 pieces of Marian's work at their community art gallery space. The exhibition will be on display at the Eide Bailly headquarters located at 1911 Excel Drive, Mankato through November 11.

Join BECHS at the Art Gallery for the Holiday Gift Shop Open House on December 2 from 4-7 p.m. and December 3 from 1-5 p.m. This will be a great time to do your holiday shopping and BECHS members can take advantage of a 15% discount these two days only. Marian Anderson Fine Art Prints make lovely holiday gifts. Images of the full inventory are available at www.mariananderson.com.

The gallery will continue to be open the first Saturday of each month and the third Thursday through 2011. Hours could expand in 2012 if there are more volunteers available to cover shifts. If you are interested in volunteering at the gallery or assisting with the business side of the Marian's generous gift, please contact Jessica at 345-5566.

Marian Anderson

Fine Art Prints

Marian's paintings are not just an illustrated subject but within each a story is told. With each brush stroke a breath of life sets her art apart. As you immerse yourself in the depths of her painting, you will see the beauty of a lifetime of experience.

The subjects featured in Marian's work include Canine, Native American, Nostalgia, Diversity & Landscape, Wildlife and Western/Mountain Man.

As a living legacy gift, Marian has donated her entire inventory of fine art prints to the Blue Earth County Historical Society; 100% of all print sales now benefits BECHS.

Fine art prints are available for purchase at the Marian Anderson Art Gallery and online at www.mariananderson.com



WISH LIST

Flip Video Camcorder with Tripod - \$150

A digital camcorder could be used by BECHS to record events or speakers and then make presentations available online.

Heritage Center Signage – \$2,000

The goal is to enhance the current exterior signage

Meeting Room Tables and Chairs - \$3,400

The Society is in need of new tables and chairs to replace the well-worn 20+ year old equipment. Cost of project: 6 folding tables \$950, 75 chairs with caddy \$3,400 (+\$650 shipping). To date \$1600 has been raised, cost of tables and shipping.

These special projects and items are not within BECHS's annual operating budget. If you are interested in fully or partially supporting one of these projects, please indicate your wishes on your check. Please contact Jessica at 345-5566 with any questions about these projects or other opportunities.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

BECHS Donations

July-September 2011

Balcome, Helen – Welsh Archives
Bergerson, Ruth
Bishop, Mary Louise
Browne, Suzanne
Confer, Ogden
Confer, Richard P.
Diel Family
Fitzloff, Shirley
Freiberg, Kenneth
Goff, Harley and Janet
Greiner, Wendy
Hadley, Paul - Technology
Jensen, Mary Ann
Joyce, Ron
Karow, Linda
Kunkel, Denise
Lagerquist, Mike
Mathews, Edward
McGowan, Jack & Diann
McLaughlin, Tom & Theresa
Myers, George

Peterson, Leslie & Glen
Pommerenke, Marlene – Front
Street Project
Ries, Chuck and Carol
Ryan, Thomas
Sassenberg, Eunice
Schmitz, Leora Estate
Snilsberg, Lee & Loretta
Svendsen, Sigvald
Torgerson, Allen & Jane
Voss, Leo & Judy
Williams, Jerry & Vee
Zimmer, Beth

MEMORIALS

In Memory of Ken Huettl
Lavitschke, Jo-an & Dean

In Memory of Beatrice McLean
Boehne, Pat

IN-KIND

Garlow, Sandi - Mapleton Chamber
Membership
GreenCare - Heritage Center
Landscaping
Nussbaumer, Linda - Lake Crystal
Chamber Membership
Red Door Creative
Resner, Donna

In Memory of

Paul Hadley

*Longtime BECHS friend and
supporter*

Died: August 31, 2011

*Our sincerest condolences
to his family and friends.*

BECHS FEATURED ARTIST



Terri DeGezelle **ABCs of Nature**

October-December 2011

Once upon a time, Terri DeGezelle was walking in the woods with her camera and saw a tree that looked like the letter "A" thus beginning her journey to find all the letters of the alphabet in nature. Enjoy the show!

Next Exhibit:

January-May 2012

Margie Larson with Gerry Tostenson
"Blue Earth Plein-Air"

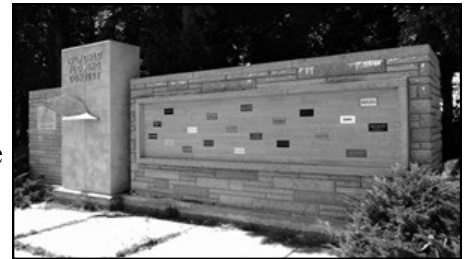
Around Blue Earth County



Fall is here and what a perfect time for a drive in the country to see the changing leaf colors.

An interesting route for an afternoon drive would be to take State Highway 66 through West Mankato and south out of Mankato. Immediately after crossing over County Road 90, to your right is the marker for Fort LeHuillier. Continue on 66, approaching the LeSueur River to the Red Jacket Bridge. Check out the pier which Blue Earth County is having rebuilt for the Red Jacket Trail Bridge. Continue on 66, as you approach Good Thunder, Chief Good Thunder will be watching you from the elevator! Turn right to go into Good Thunder. On your left will be the bell-tower from the old school and a memorial to all the local men who served in WWII. Continue up the street to the elevator to get a close-up of the area's history - painted as a mural on the elevator! Continue south out of town on County Road 1, at the Vernon Center sign turn right on County Road 10. Enjoy the fields

of golden corn and cliffs of the Watonwan River. In Vernon Center turn right on State Highway 169. Just outside of town on the left is the Cairn of Peace erected to commemorate the World's Plowing Contest held here. Drive north



on 169 to County Road 9 (at the Rapidan Dam Park sign). Turn right and shortly you will be at the Rapidan Dam Park. Check out the Rapidan Dam, a hydroelectric dam that is still producing electricity - 101 years after it was built! Continue on County Road 9 into Rapidan. On your right is the Rapidan Depot and RHS's pink caboose! A left at the stop sign onto County Road 33 will take you back into Mankato.

Please be watchful of slow-moving farm trucks and large equipment. Harvest is a busy time for area farmers. Enjoy the scenic drive in Blue Earth County!

The depot is closed for the winter.

Join the Fun! Join the Team! Make History Happen! Volunteer Today!

Speakers Bureau

Looking for individuals to assist with monthly speaking engagements in Blue Earth County.

Tour Guide

Lead large and small groups through the Hubbard House and Heritage Center Museum.

Handy Work

Help needed with light construction, painting, repairs and various projects including Front Street Project exhibit and Hubbard House.

Gift Shop Attendant

Help needed at the Heritage Center Book and Gift Shop and Hubbard House Gift Shop.

Photograph Book Project

Volunteers needed to lead a book project, selecting and organizing photographs and writing captions.

Marian Anderson Art Gallery

Looking for individuals to assist with the operation of the gallery and an individual to assist with the business and marketing side of this venture.

Contact JoLynn for details: 345-5566 or bechsms@hickorytech.net

Since the last issue, we have welcomed Larry Kortuem and John Larson as volunteers working on our historic vehicles. They have contributed countless hours of expertise to maintenance and repairs. Thank you!



Fingerprints and Footnotes

The Footnotes and Fingerprints, the history and genealogy club, is always growing and newcomers are always welcome. In August we had an exciting adventure with the Rapidan Heritage Society. They hosted “National Night Out” in the township garage and we had a



Poster: “Children under the age of 16 not allowed to enter this town.”

wonderful potluck. It was a fun time with just a little bit of history sprinkled in. In September, we discussed the fear that changed America. We had some outstanding and interesting personal accounts of the polio epidemics here in Minnesota. It was perhaps the most feared disease known in the first half of last the century. This month we invited Keith Olmanson to discuss his book: *Letters of Brent Olmanson, a Union Soldier in the Civil War 1861-1865*. We had a great crowd.

These and many interesting tidbits can be had at any of our meetings. If you have any ideas for topics, tours or if you have any interest in presenting a topic, please let Shelley know.

Future Meetings:

November 5 at 1:00 p.m. (note the date and time change) Roger Norland presents “Boys in Blue” Blue Earth County in the Civil and Indian Wars 1861-1865

December 6, John Rezmerski – Examining a holiday classic: The Night Before Christmas for Grownups.

January 4, 2012, Dr. Charles Lewis presents *Wise Decision: A Frontier Newspaper’s Coverage of the Dakota Conflict*

Fingerprints and Footnotes is held the first Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the Heritage Center. Program admission is \$5 per program or free with the \$10 annual Club membership



History’s Mystery

This photograph of a factory workroom was taken by John R. Snow, a local photographer, some time in the 1940-50s. Can you help us identify the location or any of the people in the photograph? The original photograph is an 8x10. We have several other shots of the same location. If you think you can be of help, contact Shelley Harrison at 507-345-5566.

Footnote in History

October 24, 1911, 100 years ago

President William Howard Taft’s campaign for re-election, stopped in Mankato on October 24, 1911. His special train arrived at 11:28 a.m. from Omaha, Nebraska, at the Milwaukee RR depot. Besides the President, there were United States senators and congressmen, judges of federal and state courts, military men and those prominent in private life. Thousands greeted the President despite the uncooperative weather—it was a heavy downpour. At the opera house on Second Street, Taft delivered an hour-long address chiefly dealing with his two main themes: world peace and anti-trust action. At 12:30 p.m. the President was driven to the Elks Club where he was the guest of the Mankato Commercial Club at a luncheon. Taft departed for St. Peter and Shakopee at 2:30 p.m. to continue his tour.

Calendar of Events October 2011 - January 2012

OCTOBER

20 Third Thursday Gallery Walk

Artist Reception for Terri DeGezelle
Heritage Center Art Gallery and
Marian Anderson Art Gallery open 5-8 p.m.

NOVEMBER

1 Year-End Giving Drive begins

5 Marian Anderson Art Gallery open 1-5 p.m.

5 Fingerprints and Footnotes

Boys in Blue by Roger Norland, Heritage
Center, 1 p.m.

11 Unveiling of World War I Memorial at Sibley Park, 11 a.m.

11-12 Herberger's Community Day Sale

Pick up your coupon
book from a BECHS
representative today.
All proceeds benefit
table and chair fund.



12 Young Historians

They Chose Minnesota: New England Yankees
Heritage Center, 10 a.m. Pre-registration
required.

16 Give to the Max Day at www.GiveMN.org

Minnesota's one day non-profit fundraising
campaign



17 Third Thursday Gallery Walk

Heritage Center Art Gallery and
Marian Anderson Art Gallery open 5-7 p.m.

19 Madison East Holiday Gift Sale

Accepting donated baked goods, gift items and
gift baskets. All items need to be packaged and
priced. Contact JoLynn for details about
donating items or to volunteer.

24-28 Heritage Center Closed

Happy Thanksgiving

DECEMBER

2-5 BECHS 110th Anniversary Celebration

Visit all three BECHS locations for gift shop
specials, refreshments and holiday surprises!

2 Holiday Open House - Marian Anderson Art Gallery and Heritage Center Book & Gift Shop, 4-7 p.m.

3 Holiday Open House - Marian Anderson Art Gallery and Heritage Center Book & Gift Shop, 1-5 p.m.



4 Christmas at Hubbard House, 1-4 p.m.

5 Christmas at Hubbard House, 5-8 p.m.

6 Fingerprints and Footnotes

The Night Before Christmas for Grownups by
John Rezmerski, Heritage Center, 6 p.m.

10 Young Historians

They Chose Minnesota: Irish
Heritage Center, 10 a.m. Pre-registration
required.

15 Third Thursday Gallery Walk

Heritage Center Art Gallery and
Marian Anderson Art Gallery open 5-7 p.m.

24-January 2 Heritage Center Closed Happy Holidays

JANUARY

3 Fingerprints and Footnotes

*Wise Decision: A Frontier Newspaper's
Coverage of the Dakota Conflict*
by Dr. Charles Lewis, Heritage Center, 6 p.m.

7 Discovering the Dakota: Storytelling

Heritage Center, 10 a.m.

14 Young Historians

They Chose Minnesota: English, Welsh &
Scottish, Heritage Center, 10 a.m.

**Check out www.bechshistory.com
for full event details and updates!**

**Sign-up for our new e-news to
receive regular monthly updates!**

Follow us on:





Blue Earth County Historical Society

415 Cherry Street
Mankato, MN 56001

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Membership
Expiration

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 _____

Membership Levels

Individual Senior (62+) \$20

Individual \$25

Household \$35

Contributor \$50

Supporter* \$100

Booster* \$250

Advocate* \$500

Benefactor* \$1000

*denotes Business Member levels

Please send this form and check to:

BECHS Membership
415 Cherry Street
Mankato, MN 56001

OR

Complete your membership form
online at www.bechshistory.com

Preserving and sharing Blue Earth County's history since 1901