

The Blue Earth County HISTORIAN



In commemoration of our Civil War veterans.



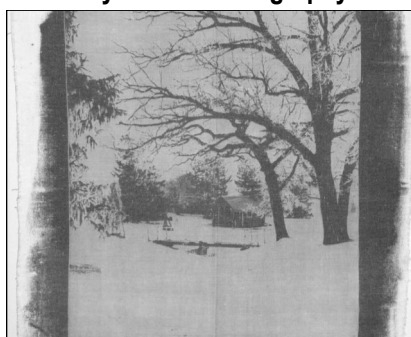
The Alex Wilkin Post of the Grand Army of the Republic erected a bronze statue of a soldier in Lincoln Park around 1893 in commemoration of local Civil War veterans. A cannon was later added but, both were "recycled" for metal needed during World War II. For more on the statue, see page 18. For more on the Civil War, see page 9.

Meet us at the Fair



Join us at the Blue Earth County Fair in Garden City, July 28-31, see page 11 for details.

Looking Back: 10 years of Photography



New exhibit featuring Denise Woller's photography, see page 15.

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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 (May-December)

Tuesday - Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Thursday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

R.D. Hubbard House

606 South Broad Street, Mankato
507-345-5566

Hours:

May and September: weekends 1-4 p.m.
June-August: Friday- Saturday 10 am-4 pm,
Sunday 1-4 p.m.

The Blue Earth County Historian

Summer 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

Summer is in full swing at BECH. The Hubbard House welcomes people every weekend, visitors from all over the country are stopping by the Heritage Center Museum and Research Center, the Mankato Baltics have been playing old fashioned base ball and we are gearing up for the Blue Earth County Fair. This is one of the busier times of the year for us with more visitors, more programs and more opportunities. You don't have to drive hundreds of miles for your summer getaway; be a tourist in your own backyard and check out all of the things right here in Blue Earth County (especially your Blue Earth County Historical Society)!

We recently conducted a survey to get a better idea of how the Historical Society is perceived and valued. I was overwhelmed by the response – more than 200 people took time to complete the survey and gave us insight on what we do well and areas we could improve. Wow!

The survey is part of the Museum Assessment Program in which BECHS is currently involved. The program is administered through the American Association of Museums. The overall goal of the assessment is to evaluate our level of community engagement, perception and value. It has been an excellent opportunity for us to really take a look at the organization and identify growth potential. The first question in the survey was, "When you hear 'Blue Earth County Historical Society,' what is the first thing that comes to mind?" My "favorite" response was, "boring...sorry, I really like history and the work you do, but the name or perception isn't fun/exciting/outgoing." I know that may seem odd that this is my "favorite" response, but it really hits home. I love what we do, what we offer the community and BECHS is our legal name, but does it really encapsulate all we do to make history come to life and serve as the keeper of the past through our exhibits, programs, research center, Hubbard House, Marian Anderson Art Gallery? That is why this is my "favorite" response: it gets us thinking. So, don't look for any major name change or radical shift in our services, but look for new and exciting ways that we will make ourselves more visible in Blue Earth County. Any suggestions?

After we have completed the self-assessment portion of MAP, which included the survey, we will be visited by one of our peers in the museum community who will give his/her own assessment of the different aspects of BECHS. By November, we should have our completed self-assessment and peer review. Then we will begin short and long-range planning.

If you didn't have a chance to take the survey, but are interested in having your voice heard, please contact me at your convenience. We are always open to ideas, comments and suggestions! The BECHS staff needs and appreciates the support (comments, encouragement, financial, time) that we receive from our donors, members and visitors. Thank you!

Board of Trustees



Mike Lagerquist
Board of Trustees President

On Father's Day this year, I found myself emerging from the woods with several other uniformed players onto a baseball field. I couldn't help but say to the guy next to me: "Is this heaven?" I was disappointed when he didn't respond with, "No, it's Iowa."

The reference to the movie "Field of Dreams" was lost on those within earshot, but it stuck with me through the next weekend when the Mankato Baltics took to the Land of Memories field against the La Crescent Apple Jacks and Arlington Greys in our team's Inaugural 1860s Base Ball Tournament. And the lasting impression is that something need not be stuffy, boring or directed toward senior citizens to be considered "historical."

Since being introduced to the Blue Earth County Historical Society by Rapidan's Pat Ryan a few years ago when one game was played, 1860s base ball has grown each year in interest, participation and support. Already this year, the team — with promotional base ball cards in hand and sponsor backing — has appeared at a St. Paul Saints game, a Mankato MoonDogs game, a tournament at The Landing and in its own tournament. Still on the schedule are appearances at the Blue Earth County Fair on July 30, in Lake Elmo for the Washington County Fair on August 7, and a couple more possible dates in September. Visit www.bechshistory.com for details.

Most exciting to me is the organizational support it has gained from former BECHS board member Vail Belgard, and her daughter and son-in-law, Ariane and Brad Hawker. Because Brad has brought in players from his men's softball team and uniforms and caps have been provided, a sense of cohesion and professionalism has emerged. The team has truly become a family affair, with games regularly attended by players' parents, spouses and children.

Come to think of it, there may be another reason nobody finished my "Field of Dreams" quotation. Many of them were less than 10 years old when the movie hit theatres in 1989! But maybe that's a good thing!

CELEBRATING 55 YEARS OF ART

Marian Anderson
Art Gallery

1560 Adams Street, Mankato

Please Join Us

Fall Open House

Saturday, October 1, 2011

1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

1560 Adams Street, Mankato

Enjoy refreshments, a special appearance by Marian Anderson with an opportunity to have your Marian Anderson art print autographed.

Gallery Hours

1st Saturday of each month 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

3rd Thursday of each month 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

The Marian Anderson Art Gallery is a partnership between Marian Anderson, Meyer Financial & Consulting and the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

meyer FINANCIAL&CONSULTING,LLC



MARIAN ANDERSON ART GALLERY

Thank you to everyone who attended the Marian Anderson Art Gallery Grand Opening on May 14 and 15. Everyone enjoyed visiting the new gallery and visiting with Marian. The grand prize winner of the *Mankato: The First 150 Years* framed print was Flossie Shepherd. Congratulations, Flossie!

A new addition to the Gallery is the Minnesota State University, Mankato commemorative painting titled *Journey*. The original will be on display in the Gallery until September 15, when it will be moved to the MSUM Centennial Student Union. Prints will continue to be available at the Gallery. Marian will be on hand to greet visitors and sign autographs at the Fall Open House on Saturday, October 1 from 1-5 p.m. at the Gallery.

BECHS's Social Network

Cami Hiller

Communications/Archives Assistant

Social networking has become one of the latest trends to hit the digital world in which we live. There are hundreds of social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, and millions of people use them daily. These sites are a way for friends and family to stay connected and for organizations to stay connected to their clients.

When I started at the Historical Society in February, BECHS had already jumped on the Facebook bandwagon. Using the site, we are able to upload pictures and videos, and update our fans about what is going on at BECHS. Currently, we have more than 190 people who follow the BECHS Facebook page, and this has been steadily increasing.

Another social networking site BECHS uses is Twitter. Twitter is similar to Facebook in that it helps BECHS get the word out about events, announcements and activities. Being on Twitter opens the door to the more than 200 million users and allows us to connect with another audience.

FourSquare is the most recent social networking site which BECHS has joined. Those who have a GPS-enabled device can find businesses that are on FourSquare and reveal any special offers or discounts being offered by the participating business. For example, first time visitors who check-in to the Heritage Center on FourSquare will receive 10 percent off any purchase in the Museum Store. People use this as a way to let others know where they are and to write reviews about the places they've been.

Social networking is constantly evolving, and it is important and beneficial for BECHS to stay connected to those using these sites.

So, next time you are on your favorite social networking site, remember to "Like us" on Facebook, "Follow us" on Twitter and "Check-in" on FourSquare!

YOUNG HISTORIANS

Laura Garlow and Alex Oldenburg

Even though the Young Historians meetings occur just during the school year, members are still active with BECHS all year round. Giving tours at the Hubbard House, taking part in the vintage base ball games and helping in the school house at the Blue Earth County Fair are just a few of the ways that the youth from Young Historians stay involved with BECHS and the community throughout the summer.

Last fall, Young Historians members decided to raise money to buy new tables and chairs for BECHS – items that we use at all of our meetings and which desperately need to be replaced. During the school year, we sold Herberger's coupon books, made crafts and goodies for the Non-Profit Craft and Bake Sale at the Madison East Mall and raised some funds online. We raised \$1600 but we still need \$2400 to reach our goal. Please help us with our fundraising project by donating today.

In June we had our end-of-the-year party! Our outdoor picnic at the Hubbard House was changed to an indoor picnic and tour of the museum because of the cold weather. We all got a tour of the museum from Jessica and got to go on a scavenger hunt. Afterwards we enjoyed a picnic lunch of hotdogs in the meeting room, a great way to end the year.

This summer we are again running a story time at the Hubbard House. Every Friday at 10:30 we become the Hubbard Girls—Katherine and Mary Esther—and along with a few friends read some stories and help the kids out with a fun craft. The families who visit are able to enjoy one of the only outdoor story times in the area and be exposed to local history at the same time. We hope you can come!

This year was a great year for the Young Historians, even though we had to cancel two meetings because of the bad weather. We are excited to still be a part of BECHS activities this summer and look forward to another great year starting in the fall. Keep an eye out for Young Historian volunteers at the next BECHS event you attend and help us reach our goal by donating today.

Follow us on:



...at the Museum Store

JoLynn Crowe, Museum Manager

Help us celebrate the area farmers and the summer season by joining BECHS this year as we travel to the Blue Earth County Fair, July 28 through the 31. BECHS will have many larger items on display in the Historical Building, plus a variety of merchandise from our museum store to purchase. Most of the BECHS publications will be available at the fair including, “*The Remarkable Men of Garden City*” and “*Blue Earth County Century Farms*”, just to name a few. BECHS would gladly welcome volunteers to help us at the fair, since we operate both the store and the schoolhouse. The schoolhouse brings back a lot of memories for many folks and, if you feel so inclined, we have notebooks there for you to jot down your memories of those times. It does make for a good read! Yes, girls did get their pigtailed pulled and dipped in the inkwell! If you are interested in volunteering, please contact JoLynn at 507-345-5566 or by email at bechsms@hickorytech.net.

School will be “in session” every day for a couple of hours at the one room schoolhouse, with early dismissal on Saturday, July 30 to cheer on the Mankato Baltics at 3:00 p.m. The Mankato Baltics have been enjoying a season of games and will be

ready to take on another team during the game at 3:00 p.m. at the Wellcome Memorial School! It is just a short walk from the fairgrounds to cheer the team on to victory!

Speaking of the fair and the blue ribbon produce,

currently at the museum store there are two new cook books, *Food Will Win the War* and *Minnesota Lunches*. And, of course, several of our favorites, *Recipes & Memories* by Donna M. Hood (some of you fairgoers might recognize her name) and *Recipes from THE LAND Vol. III*. Yum!

We have expanded on the many different types of Marian Anderson

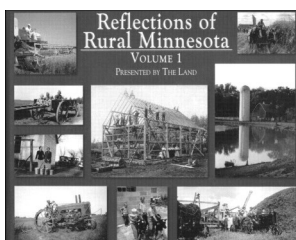
note cards available in the museum store including the Mankato series, wildlife and mountain men. Stop in at the museum store and see what we have to offer. The note cards are now sold in packages of six for \$9.50. Also, the Marian Anderson Art Gallery is open the first Saturday of the month from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and the third Thursday of the month from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Our website at www.bechshistory.com is a great way to browse through what the museum store has to offer while beating the heat from the comfort of your own home. Enjoy!



Featured Local Books Available at the Museum Store

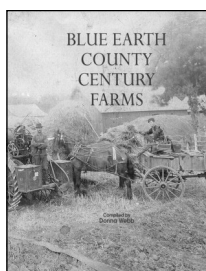
Reflections of Rural Minnesota



The Land magazine presents this collection of more than 300 photographs capturing life in rural Minnesota. The photos and stories come from *The Land*'s readers who opened their family scrapbooks and memories about the early days of agriculture

through modern times. The purpose of the book is to capture the rich heritage of rural Minnesota through the travails and successes we all share. Hardbound, \$39.95

Blue Earth County Century Farms



Featuring the story of agriculture in Blue Earth County through the eyes of the farm families who lived it. Between 1876 and 2004, 178 Blue Earth County farms became registered Century Farms. These farms have been owned and operated by the same family for at least 100 years, some of them for 150 or more years. Through the pages of this book, meet these families, read their stories, learn about their lives and farms, their successes and failures, joys and sorrows. Hardbound, \$39.95



R.D. Hubbard House

Hubbard House Welcomes Summer Staff and Events

The Hubbard House has opened for another summer season and has welcomed two new seasonal staff: Heidi Bjerketvedt and Lauren Post. This local historic treasure gives visitors a glimpse into what life was like for the Hubbard family in 1905.

Heidi (pictured on the left) grew up in northwestern Minnesota near Battle Lake. She is currently a graduate student in the College Student Affairs program at Minnesota State University, Mankato.



Lauren Post is from Mendota Heights, Minnesota, located in the Twin Cities area. She recently graduated from Minnesota State University, Mankato with a bachelor's degree in History and a minor in Art History.

In May, the Hubbard House welcomed local third graders for their annual school field trip. Volunteers as well as seasonal staff helped to present the history of the Hubbard House.

The annual Victorian Lawn Party was held on June 4 with costumed characters, refreshments, lawn games, and tours of the house. The weather was lovely and the event was enjoyed by people of all ages.

Story Time with the Hubbard Girls also began in June. This event is held every Friday at 10:30 a.m. on the Hubbard House front lawn. Katherine and Mary Esther Hubbard come to life through our costumed volunteers (Alex Oldenburg, Laura Garlow, and Alaena and Therese Klages), who entertain the children with stories, crafts, and games. The program runs now until August 26 and is free and open to the public.

On Saturday, July 23, Meet the Hubbards through a living history experience featuring the Hubbard family members as well as their servants.

Refreshments and crafts will be available.

Looking ahead to August, join us for a lovely Victorian Wedding on Saturday, August 20th. The wedding party will be in full Victorian costume and the ceremony will be held in the garden area with the public audience as the guests. Music and refreshments will follow the ceremony. Watch for details at www.bechshistory.com.

The Hubbard House staff and volunteers are looking forward to presenting these wonderful events to the community as well as continuing to welcome visitors to the Hubbard House! If you are interested in assisting with any aspect of the interpretation of the Hubbard House, from interior details to living history programs and historic house tour guides, please contact JoLynn at bechsms@hickorytech.net or 507-345-5566.



Join the fun—Story Time with the Hubbard girls every Friday at 10:30 a.m. through August.

Hubbard House Hours

June - August

Fridays 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Saturdays 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Sundays 1 - 4 p.m.

September

Saturdays and Sundays 1 - 4 p.m.

R.D. Hubbard House Comes Alive

Linda Nussbaumer

For many years, the Hubbard House has attracted visitors—individuals, families, and tour groups. It teaches them about a family and a time period through the building and its furnishings. Currently this perfect arrangement does not teach about activities in which its inhabitants would participate. Thus, the next step for the Hubbard House is to create a “lived-in” look—one that looks as though a family member just stepped out of the room.

To make the house come alive, each room will have activities including an entertaining activity for enjoying music and a cup of tea with guests in the parlor; writing, reading, and sewing activities in the library; preparing fresh flowers and tea for the guests in the dining room; a baking activity in the kitchen; and others.

To decide how this will occur, Grace Keir, Linda Nussbaumer, and Shelley Harrison walked through the house and made a list of needs. Using this list, Grace and Mary McComb began searching the collection for towels, musical instruments, ink pens and much more. Grace and Linda also located fabric for pillows, which will be placed on the settee to give a softer and home-like atmosphere in the Library.

Though some items were found in the collection, many were not and are still needed. So, using activities for each room, a wish list of ideas was developed. Here are some examples of items needed.

Library: *writing, reading, and sewing activities*

ink well, pen, a letter, stationery, and

dictionary stand

sewing table or work table

pillows on the settee with an open book and

spectacles

repair and cushion for writing desk bench

Dining room: *providing a Turkish corner*

Fern stand

Dining room: *arranging fresh flowers and*

preparing a tea service

floral vase and silk flowers

serving tray with tea pot and cups

Kitchen: *making bread*

large wood mixing bowl and spoon, fake

partially kneaded bread, kitchen towels, and

cookbooks

Office: *making entries in a ledger and displaying typical office equipment*

attaché case, coat rack, ink well, pen, and ledger

Master Chamber: *preparing for work*

Men's' jacket, shirt, or other men's' clothing

Jay's Chamber: *visiting family*

suitcase and walking shoes

Girls' Chamber: *participating in personal activities*

writing desk, ink well, pens, and stationery

adult dresses, hair pieces, and shoes

Though not a complete list of needs, it explains ways to make the house come alive. If you have an item from the 1900s or earlier that could be used at the Hubbard House or if you would like to assist in any way with this project, please contact Shelley at 507-345-5566.



Example of a Victorian fern stand that could be used in the dining room.



Example of a Victorian sewing table that could be used in the library.

Speaking of History...

Shelley Harrison, Archives Manager

Is your group or organization looking for a guest speaker who can address a topic about history? Perhaps we can help you. The Blue Earth County Historical Society is pleased to offer the services of our Speakers Bureau for your organization meeting. This service is for business and professional groups, neighborhood associations, senior centers, religious institutions and other organized groups throughout southern Minnesota. Bring the rich history of Blue Earth County to your workplace or community group. Speakers from the Historical Society will open a window to our county's past through lectures with PowerPoint presentations.

We have more than 30 dynamic programs, developed by staff and volunteers. By using our archives, research center and photographic collections, our modern storytellers share the pages of our past. Programs represent a wide range of historical and family history topics that share the relevance of history and insight to our communities. Check out our list of topics at www.bechshistory.com/education/speakers-bureau.

The BECHS Speakers Bureau includes local historians, community members, storytellers and museum professionals, who have generously and enthusiastically agreed to share their interests and expertise with the community. Doesn't this sound like fun? We need you! We are looking for volunteers to join the Speaker's Bureau team. All you need is a passion for history or storytelling, a couple of hours per month and the willingness to use a laptop and multi-media projector. BECHS currently provides programming to four assisted living facilities each month. We want to continue offering this service, but we don't have the volunteers to keep it going.

If you are interested in joining BECHS's Speaker's Bureau or if you would like to request a program for your business or service organization, please contact Shelley at bechsam@hickorytech.net or 507-345-5566.

Speaker's Bureau on the Road



A partnership of the Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums and the Council of Regional Public Libraries

brings BECHS programs like *Demystifying Family Photographs* to communities throughout Minnesota. On June 27, Speaker's Bureau visited the St. Michael Public Library (top) and the Upsala Public Library (bottom). This program is made possible through money from the Arts and Cultural Heritage funds. Special thanks to the BECHS Speaker's Bureau: Win Grundmeier, Grace Keir, John Rezmerski and Shelley Harrison.

GHOSTS FROM THE PAST

*Draped in Black:
Victorian Mourning Customs Unveiled*

Friday, October 14, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday October 15, 5 p.m.

Historic R.D. Hubbard House



Tickets

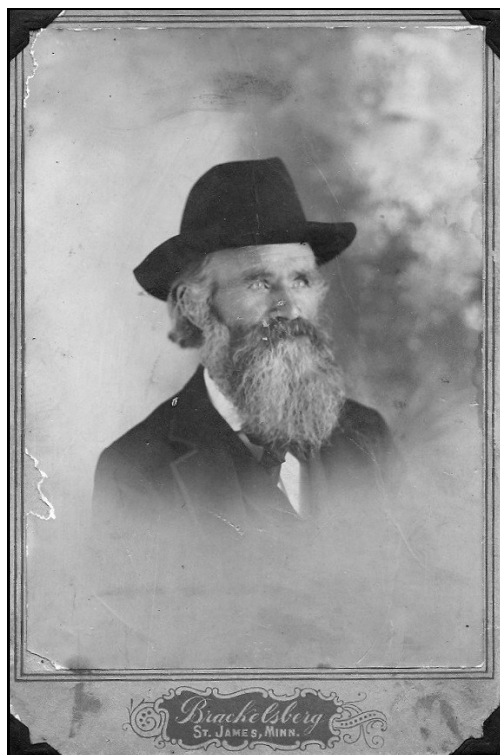
Adults \$7.50

Children \$5

Under 5 Free

BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Visit www.bechshistory.com for more details



Gustav Brackelsberg

These Blue Earth County Roots of Mine

Chris Oldenburg

There was something hauntingly familiar about the stories I was reading about the involvement of Minnesota families during the Civil War. It was as if someone had blown the dust off of a book, and the cover unearthed was my family tree. The very first obituary card I read at the Blue Earth County Historical Society (BECHS) told me I was about to discover that history has a way of reaching out to us and grabbing hold, if only we take a moment to listen to the stories.

My grandmother had long told me that our family did not have involvement with the Civil War because at that time the attention of people from this area was too focused on conflicts with Native Americans. With the approach of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, I began to hear stories that resonated with me, of families from the area who had ties to the Sioux Uprising as well as the Civil War. Even though I had never heard of a relative who served in the Civil War, I began to ask myself a question: Is it possible that any of my family from Blue Earth County was involved in the historic military

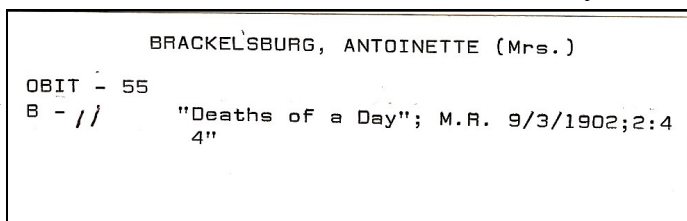
events of the Civil War?

I turned to my cousin who lives in northwest Minnesota and who loves genealogy to start my quest, and sent her a simple email asking if she knew of anyone in our family who served in the Civil War. My heart thumped as she soon replied with a name – Gustav Brackelsberg – my paternal great-great-grandfather. However, from my information the paternal side of my family did not come from Blue Earth County. My cousin didn't have much information on him other than his name, so I headed to the files at BECHS to see if there were any Brackelsbergs from the area.

The obituary cards in the Research Center at BECHS are simple notations of lives much more complicated than those of the few words written on them. It is here where my search began. I could only find one entry, for Antoinette Brackelsburg, with a notation that her death was of unusual circumstances. Shelley, researcher extraordinaire at BECHS, quickly steered me to more

information. Fortunately, there was also an obituary on record in their files that helped begin my historical adventure. In the "Deaths of a Day" (*Mankato Review*, 9/3/1902: p2 c4), it was noted that Mrs. Brackelsberg died suddenly at 453 North 6th Street in Mankato on September 3, 1902, apparently from heartbreak resulting from the funeral she was in town to attend of her niece. Other such "heartbreak" deaths recently in the family were also noted. Two things surprised me about this find. The first was that I had paternal relatives in Mankato at that time, even though everything I had ever heard said they came from Watonwan County. The second was how quickly I could find this information – literally within 20 minutes of walking through the doors at BECHS.

What does all of this have to do with the Civil War? I couldn't piece it together until pouring through more files that led me to the connection. My great-great-grandfather Gustav married Antoinette in 1860, just after arriving in the United States from Germany. Only a year after his move to Minnesota, he enlisted as a sergeant on February 13, 1862, in Blue Earth County's Company D, 5th Infantry Regiment. The Research Center at



BECHS obituary card for (Mrs.) Antoinette Brackelsburg.

All of those times when I read books, watched movies, and heard other people's stories, I never imagined that I had family ties to such a significant time in history. My story is not full of heroism or romantic notions of a drummer boy making his way back to Minnesota and his family. My story is that of a 32-year-old immigrant farmer who enlisted to serve a country he had called home for less than 2 years. My search has not yielded dramatic results, just conflicting reports so far that he deserted on January 5, 1863 and returned to farming in the area, and another that he is listed as having a record of distinguished service and receiving a pension. In 1874 Gustav was sworn in as a naturalized citizen of the United States of America. I was also able to find a picture of him in old family files as a man staring off away from the camera lens. I can't help but wonder what those eyes saw during the Civil War.

[illegible]

Jane and I still chuckle over our incidental finding of relations and our shared heritage in the county.

10

the uprising because of unwanted attention to her flaming red hair. These stories were collected in books passed down through my family. By using the Research Center at BECHS, I am able to trace the names and vague locations to actual events and landmarks in Blue Earth County. For anyone who has heard of the theory of 6 degrees of separation, I know that it has to be true. Sifting through the records from BECHS and other sources on my search for answers kept leading me to another name, the same last name of a dear friend, Jane Krummel, whom I met just five years ago. I called her one evening and soon learned that Gustav's brother Richard married her great-aunt Mary Krummel in 1867 in Blue Earth County. The Krummel family has strong roots in the first settlements of the county, Mankato in particular, and ties to the Civil War as well.

Celebrating the 35th Anniversary of the Mankato Farmers' Market

We mark the passage of time with birthdays, anniversaries and celebration's. The Mankato Farmers' Market will do the same this year. For 35 years the market has been a link between rural and urban living. Bringing fresh food, friends and community together has been the backbone of their success. Thirty-five years ago the farmers that met at the market formed the Mankato Area Growers Association. From that time on they worked for democratic principles that helped everyone find a way to support local micro-businesses.

Local living, farming, and sound stewardship of our resources, are all great reasons to frequent your local farmers' market. The rewards come in a cascade of flavors, colors, sights, and smells that will delight your senses.

You can find "What's Ripe Mankato" and "Locavore Living, Mankato Style" at www.mankatofarmersmarket.com a production link to YouTube, our blog, Facebook, and Twitter. We hope by helping you reverse-engineer your meal you will find health and a deeper connection to your roots. Everything local from a 40-mile radius of Mankato could be your new footprint, reflected in the deep blue earth that makes up our river valley!

Caroline Wood 507-327-5502
Mankato Farmers' Market Manager



Open May – Oct
Sa 8 am – Noon
Tu & Th 3:30-6 pm
Now on
Facebook & Twitter!

Everything Local Within 40 Miles!!!

1400 Madison Avenue (507) 420-8711
Web: www.mankatofarmersmarket.com
Email: mankatofarmersmarket@gmail.com

BLUE EARTH COUNTY FAIR

July 28 - 31

Blue Earth County
Fairgrounds
Garden City

Historical Society Building

Browse our Gift Shop featuring daily BECHS author book signings. Be sure to see the Historic Fair Photograph Exhibit, the enlarged 1874 Blue Earth County map and the Historical Vehicles Show featuring a replica 1896 horseless carriage, the Civil War ambulance wagon and a rockaway carriage. There will also be activities for children.

Schoolhouse

School will be in session afternoons with lessons of the 3 R's and special children activities.

Mankato Baltics Base Ball

The Baltics will play Saturday, July 30 at 3 p.m. at Wellcome Memorial School field.



Blue Earth County Fair, Garden City around 1932. Photograph courtesy of Jack Madsen.



The Front Street Project has entered the next phase: Exhibit Development. And we need you! The themes for the exhibit have been determined and now we need to find

the objects, photographs and memorabilia to bring it to life. Exhibit themes include department, clothing and shoe stores, hotels, specialty shops, restaurants and bars, hangouts and ethnic influence of Front Street (Greek, Lebanese, Asian). The time period represented will be the 1930s-1960s.

Components of the exhibit will include Front Street building facades, an interactive audio and visual gathering place, a two and three-dimensional timeline and a hands-on children's area.

We are actively seeking items to be on loan for the exhibit from photographs to menus to clothing to signs to architectural details. Did your family have a business on Front Street? Do you have a piece of memorabilia from a business that closed? Check the attic and basement for signs, posters, etc. whatever you can think of to help us tell the story of Front Street. Items can be temporarily loaned to BECHS or donated for the permanent collection.

We also need volunteers to aid with construction, including stripping display units, painting storefronts to building, developing of interactive audio/visual

components, graphic design, researching and writing. All skill levels are needed and will be greatly appreciated.

In addition, financial support is still needed.

Through support from individuals, the HickoryTech Foundation and the Mankato Area Foundation more than \$6500 has been raised to date to fund the exhibit and book (which is on hold until 2012). It is estimated that this interactive exhibit will cost \$10,000 to construct. Business, family or individual sponsorship of the exhibit will be greatly appreciated. All donors will be recognized in the exhibit for their contribution.

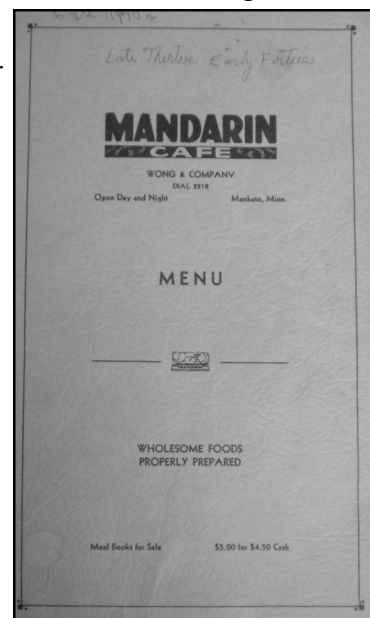
Exhibit construction will begin in August with an anticipated opening date in late 2011/early 2012.

This all depends on the support of volunteers, financial donors and items coming forward to tell the story of Front Street. Help us spread the word by telling your family and friends about this great community project to reconnect the present to the past.

If you have an item for the exhibit or you would like to volunteer, please contact Shelley. For questions about financial sponsorship, please contact Jessica at 345-5566.



Cash register from the Saulpaugh Hotel, formerly 102 South Front Street.



Menu from the Mandarin Café, formerly 126 South Front Street.

The Front Street Project Partners



The Free Press



The Mankato Baltics season is in full swing! The players and their families participated in the Night of the Minnesota Museums event held at Midway Stadium on Monday, May 23rd. The players dressed in uniform and greeted fans at the entrance to the stadium. BECHS and other historical societies had display tables as well. The Baltics played an exhibition game against the St.

Croix Washington County Club, the reigning champion Minnesota Vintage Base Ball Club. The gentlemen gave viewers a taste of 1860s play.

The Baltics challenged the experienced St. Croix team but lost 4-3. The Baltics very own Vern Simpson was chosen as the "player of the game" to



sit in right field where he nearly caught a home run that would have landed him \$10,000! He now has the nickname "Fingertips".

On Sunday, June 5, the Baltics made an appearance at the Mankato MoonDogs game. The players handed out their base ball cards, mingled with fans and showed them the type of bat and ball used for games. We also had a video showing footage of various games and photos, which sparked some great questions. Brad "Hotstepper" Hawker threw out the first pitch and the players led the crowd in singing "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" during the 7th inning stretch. It was a beautiful evening for both old-fashioned and today's baseball.

Father's Day was celebrated at The Landing in Shakopee on Sunday, June 19. The Baltics had an impressive win over the Quicksteps and were awarded a trophy ball but fell to the hard hitting Rochester Roosters in their second match. Rochester then went on to beat the Quicksteps in the final match of the day.

The Inaugural Mankato Baltics Base Ball tournament was held at Land of Memories Park in Mankato on Saturday, June 25th. The La Crescent



by Brad and Ariane Hawker

spectators that wanted to try 1860s base ball. Despite the rain, spectators and families came to enjoy 1860s base ball plus the food, kids games and crafts.

After having traveled to Lake St. Croix Beach on July 16th to play the Afton Red Socks and La Crescent Apple Jacks, the Baltics will be back to our home grass (since we play on grass instead of a typical baseball field) on Saturday, July 30 at the Blue Earth County Fair, Wellcome Manor Field in Garden City at 3:00 pm.

Special thanks to our sponsors:

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Every object has a story...

The two-dimensional artifacts in BECHS's permanent collection consist of more than 31,000 photographs, papers, books, etc. Most of the objects in our collection are donated by individuals and families; people who want to make sure Blue Earth County's story and their own is never forgotten. Your grandfather's World War II letters and your aunt's graduation photo can be as important as a rare piece of 19th century furniture. Anything that can help BECHS preserve the memories and experiences of Blue Earth County's diverse people is valuable. Here is a glimpse into our collections.

This is a premium list from the 1881 Blue Earth County Fair. Premium books contain the items you could bring to the fair, the rules and regulations for exhibitors and the daily schedule. Did you know that in 1881, the fair was held on Tuesday, September 13 - Thursday, September 14 and the price for admission through the gate was 25cents?



This is a washing machine was made by the Brammer Manufacturing Company of Davenport, Iowa in 1888. It is a wooden rotary washing machine. This was the first machine that removed and washed away dirt from clothes. This style of machine was also the first designed for convenient use in the home.



Both of these objects were donations by Garden City residents and made at the Blue Earth County Fair. You never know what you will find at the fair or who you will meet! If you are interested in donating a piece of Blue Earth County history, please contact Shelley Harrison, Archives Manager.

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

Gift Shop Attendant

Help needed at the Heritage Center, Hubbard House and Marian Anderson Art Gallery. Schedule varies.

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.

Gardening

Seasonal Heritage Center garden maintenance.

Historic Vehicle Committee

Looking for individuals to assist with maintenance of BECHS's historic vehicle collection.

Handy Work

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

Photograph Book Project

Volunteers need to lead a book project by selecting and organizing photographs and writing captions.

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

BECHS Donations

April-June 2011

Beauford Township
Belgard, Vail and Hugh
Botten, Joel
Cambria Township
Doyle, Preston
Garlow, Sandra and Darrell
Gunnink, Mildred
Hanson, Kathryn
Hollingsworth, Alice
Home Economists Club
Leonard Street and Deinard
Medo Township
Peterson, Leslie
Schulz, Richard
Zellmer, Randy

MEMORIALS

In Memory of Delmar Cords
Cords, Betty Lou

In Memory of Patrick Flynn
Boudreau, William and Diann

*In Memory of Gerald and
Lorraine Frederick*
Grundmeier, Winston & Shirley
Lavitschke, Jo-an
Loeffler, Tom
Sodeman, Verna
Tarjeson, Jane
Zellmer, Randy

In Memory of Emmet Iverson
McGregor, Byron & Karen

In Memory of Elizabeth Kearney
Richards, Marcia Jones

In Memory of Verne Preis
Tarjeson, Jane

In Memory of Edgar Wenkel
Tarjeson, Jane

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Multi-media Projector
Hadley, Paul

IN-KIND

Fairchild, Cheryl
Garlow, Sandi
Keir, Grace
McLaughlin, James
Red Door Creative
Schultz, Jo
Yeske, Lori

Looking Back: 10 years of Photography

FEATURED ARTIST

Denice Woller's new exhibit at the Heritage Center features 33 photographs taken over the course of these past 10 years. The photographs were taken with a film camera and then the images processed according to various methods including cyanotype fiber, metallic digital print, tintype, and gelatin silver print. The photo shown at the left is a salted paper print from a collodion glass plate negative. The exhibit will be on display at the Heritage Center through September.

Next Exhibit:

Terri DeGezelle
ABC of Nature
October-December 2011



Photography Back Then

Around Blue Earth County



Rapidan Heritage Society

A part of the Memorial Day services held in Rapidan was the recognition of the Civil War veterans who lived in the Rapidan area. Rapidan was not yet a township when the war started, but at least 29 veterans settled in the area afterwards. The most well-known was Colonel James Heaton Baker, whose farm was southwest of Rapidan. He served two terms as Secretary of State, resigning at the outbreak of the Civil War to accept a commission with the Tenth Minnesota Volunteers.

After the war, he went on to serve other offices and authored several notable works including *The Sources of the Mississippi*, *History of Lake Superior* and *The Lives of the Governors of Minnesota*. Although his farm was in Rapidan Township, he is buried in Glenwood Cemetery in Mankato.

Two veterans buried in local Rapidan cemeteries are Carl Mieschke in St. John's Cemetery and John Roland in Holberg Cemetery.

Holberg Cemetery is a peaceful parcel of land tucked on a hillside. It was once part of the Olaf Holberg farm. In October 1878, diphtheria struck the Rapidan area and two daughters of Olaf and Bertha Holberg, Mary, age 6, and Cora, age 8, were victims. They were buried on a hillside that was part of their father's pasture. In November, four children of Olaf Anderson also died of diphtheria and were buried on the same hillside.

The Rapidan Cemetery Association was formed in 1879 to care for this cemetery. For 132 years the



small white limestone headstone for Mary and Cora stood under a towering pine tree, undisturbed. But vandals, "thieves in the night" have now destroyed it. If you witness vandalism being done in any

cemetery, please report it to local authorities.

Rapidan Depot is open Sundays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. for visitors until Labor Day.

In Memory

*of the Madison Lake Area
Historical Society's long time
president and his wife.*

*Gerald and Lorraine Frederick
Died: May 24, 2011.
Our sincerest condolences to their
family and friends.*



Madison Lake Area Historical Society

Upcoming Events

- August 3: Potluck picnic
- Dec. 7: Potluck Christmas Party

For more information regarding the society or its events, contact: Mary Buschkowsky 507-243-3755.

Coming in the October issue of *The Historian*:

"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.

In our next issue, author Jane Tarjeson takes a look back at some of the monuments that existed in Blue Earth County and are now lost and gone.

BECHS Membership

April-June 2011

New Members

Ashley, Darcy
Baker, Susan
Begalka, Rev. Del
Brosnan, Grace
Compart, Joan
Conrad, Paul
Croswell, Kathleen
Danberry, Lyle and Cheryl
Gatchell, Audrey
Hagen, Georgia
James, Bill and Margaret
Lachmiller, Daryl and Lynn
Matzke, Mark and Darci
O'Brien, Richard
Peterson, Jim
Ricketts, Susan
Simonson, Audrey
Schickling, Janet
Westberg, Mary
Wilmes, Ken and Linda

New Business Members

Community Bank Mankato
Meyer Financial & Consulting-Rod Meyer
Old Main Village
PUB 500

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Fingerprints and Footnotes

Fingerprints and Footnotes had a hair-raising, spine-tingling spring. In May we had an excellent program with Dr. Ronald C. Schirmer, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology at Minnesota State University, Mankato. We discussed all the various archaeology collections at MSUM. There are some great mysteries!



In June, we met with Louisa Hoyt Humphrey (aka Susan Hynes) as she presented a woman's perspective on the Civil War. Women documented their lives in letters and diaries, providing an excellent window into daily life during the Civil War.



Just this month the club had an outing to Lincoln Park. We helped to support the effort to get the Civil War soldier's statue (see the cover photograph) that had been removed from the park during WWII

replaced in the park. What great way to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War and celebrate the Fourth of July!

If you have any ideas for discussion topics or an interest in presenting a topic, please let Shelley know and, as always, newcomers are welcome.

Future Meeting:

August 2 – Neighborhood Night Out with Rapidan Heritage Society in Rapidan

September 6 – The Polio Epidemic

October 4 – *Letters of Brent Olmanson* by Keith Olmanson, a Union Solider in the Civil War 1861-1865

Footnote in History

Want to find out if your ancestor fought in the War Between the States? Check the 1910 census. If found, check the Veteran and Dependent Pension records for details. These records provide genealogical data about the soldier, his wife and children.

-Provided by Beth Zimmer

SPECIAL PROJECTS WISH LIST

The Front Street Project Exhibit - \$5,000

The Front Street Project exhibit is currently under development and funds are needed for construction, interactive components and graphics. See page 12.

Heritage Center Landscaping Phase 2 - \$3,000

Last year through generous financial contributions and in-kind labor, we were able to enhance the landscaping at the Heritage Center. Phase 2 is underway, additional plants and five large 4' x 8' trellises for climbing vines are needed.

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). In 2010, BECHS's Young Historians began fundraising for this project and to date have raised \$1,600; cost of tables and shipping.

Heritage Center Signage – \$1,000

The goal is to enhance the current signage and add colorful banners to attract visitors.

*These special projects 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. If you have any questions about these projects, please contact Jessica at 345-5566. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!***

Calendar of Events July – October 2011

JULY

- 21 Third Thursday Gallery Walk**
Heritage Center Art Gallery and Marian
Anderson Art Gallery Open 5-8 p.m.
Artist's Reception: Denice Woller
- 22 Story Time with the Hubbard Girls**
Hubbard House, 10:30 a.m. Fridays
June 17 – August 26
- 23 Meet the Hubbards**
Hubbard House, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- 26 Tune in to KTOE 1420-AM at 4:10 p.m.**
- 28-31 BLUE EARTH COUNTY FAIR**
- 30 Mankato Baltics at the Blue Earth County
Fair, Garden City, 3 p.m.**

AUGUST

- 2 Fingerprints and Footnotes**
Rapidan Night Out, 6:30 p.m.
- 6 BECHS at the Mankato Farmer's Market**
- 6 Marian Anderson Art Gallery Open 1-5 p.m.**
- 7 Mankato Baltics vs. St. Croix Base Ball
Club**
Washington County Fair in Stillwater, 1 p.m.
- 9 Tune in to KTOE 1420-AM at 4:10 p.m.**
- 18 Third Thursday Gallery Walk**
Heritage Center Art Gallery and Marian
Anderson Art Gallery Open, 5-8 p.m.
- 20 Victorian Wedding**
Hubbard House, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- 26 Story Time with the Hubbard Girls last day**
Hubbard House, 10:30 a.m.

SEPTEMBER

- 3 Heritage Center and Marian Anderson Art
Gallery Closed**
- 6 Fingerprints and Footnotes**
The Polio Epidemic, Heritage Center, 6 p.m.
- 10 Young Historians**
Heritage Center,
10 a.m. Young
Historians is a
program for kids in
grades 3-12. It
meets the 2nd
Saturday of each
month September -
May.



- 15 Third Thursday Gallery Walk**
Heritage Center Art Gallery and Marian
Anderson Art Gallery
Open 5-8 p.m.

- 16 Lake Crystal Pub
Crawl**
Historic Walking Tour
with a Twist, 6 p.m.
Watch for details
online!

- 17 Mankato Baltics at
Arlington Greys
Tournament**
Arlington, 11 a.m.

- 25 Last day of Hubbard
House season**



Lake Crystal Pub Crawl
stop at Dina's on Main.

OCTOBER

- 1 BECHS at the
Mankato Farmers' Market**
- 1 Marian Anderson Art Gallery Fall Open
House 1-5 p.m.**
- 4 Fingerprints and Footnotes**
Keith Olmanson, Heritage Center, 6 p.m.
- 8 Young Historians**
Heritage Center, 10 a.m.-Noon
- 14 Ghosts from the Past**
*Draped in Black: Victorian Mourning
Customs Unveiled*, Hubbard House,
7:30 p.m.
- 15 Ghosts from the Past**
*Draped in Black: Victorian Mourning
Customs Unveiled*, Hubbard House, 5 p.m.
- 20 Third Thursday Gallery Walk**
Heritage Center Art Gallery and Marian
Anderson Art Gallery Open 5-8 p.m.
Artist's Reception: Terri DeGezelle

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

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

Become a BECHS Facebook Fan
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