

The Blue Earth County

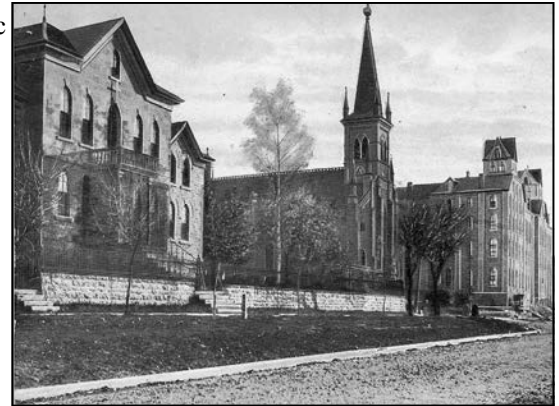
# HISTORIAN



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SS Peter and Paul Catholic Church, Mankato. See "Researching Parish History" on page 11 for more information. Photograph property of the Blue Earth County Historical Society.



Snow plow on county road 1 (now State Road 66), approximately 6 miles north of Good Thunder after snowstorm in February, 1936. See Rapidan Heritage Society report on page 19 for more information on this snowstorm. Photograph taken by Emil Bartsch and hung in the Bartsch Garage in Rapidan.

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

## Historian



### Blue Earth County Historical Society

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

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### *The Blue Earth County Historian*

Winter 2010

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

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# Board of Trustees



## Vail Belgard

Board of Trustees Outgoing Secretary

Wow! I find it difficult to believe that six years have passed since I was elected to the BECHS Board of Trustees. It has been a wonderful experience in many ways. I have met so many wonderful people who are passionate about BECHS and many have become friends. These people have led me to have a greater passion for this organization and I will continue to be involved on committees with BECHS. I have learned so much about the organization by being on the Board and being able to see how everything works. If you would like to be more involved with BECHS, I would suggest that being on the Board is a wonderful way to do that.

We have had some rocky roads to follow with the recession but we have held true to our goals. We are working to build a very solid financial base so BECHS will stand tall and strong as the years pass.

It has been a lot of fun to be “in on the ground floor” of the 1860’s Base Ball program. If you don’t know much about this group, please watch the newsletter for an upcoming tournament that we hope to hold this summer with our team playing some area softball teams. It is very different from today’s baseball but everyone who has played in one of the games tells us they loved it and would like to participate again. If you are interested in this program, please give JoLynn a call at BECHS and she will get your names and phone numbers to me.

We have also worked very hard to establish a Museum Store Committee to help JoLynn run a more efficient and productive store. This will be a way to help BECHS financially in the future. I really appreciate Tricia Nienow’s work in having a satellite store setup in Mapleton at the Plaid Piper. She has worked very hard on this. We hope that this will be the beginning of more satellite stores in other Blue Earth County towns. We want to make sure that there is as much local access to BECHS in towns throughout Blue Earth County as possible. Satellite stores are an easy way to do that.

I would like to thank all the current and former Board members who I have worked with throughout the past 6 years. I have learned from all of you and enjoyed your friendship.

I wish BECHS the very best in the future and look forward to continuing my work with the committees that I enjoy so much. I wish you all a wonderful New Year and future with BECHS.

## WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

Please consider the BECHS Endowment Fund or a legacy gift, also known as a planned or estate gift. To learn more about giving opportunities, contact Jessica Potter, Executive Director at 507-345-5566

# Director's Notes



**Jessica Potter**  
Executive Director

As I reflect on 2009, I am overwhelmed by the generosity of the members, donors and supporters of the Blue Earth County Historical Society. It was a challenging financial year for many, but you all continued to support your local non-profits including the Historical Society. We really can't adequately express our appreciation enough for your support.

Just to give you a little idea what it means to us, let me tell you about our annual operating budget expenses: our building rent, payroll (3 full-time and 1 part-time staff), programs, services and general office expenses. Half of the operating budget is covered by our generous allocation from Blue Earth County, and the rest is made up by donations, membership dues and service fees such as admission and research center fees. That means that with your support, we raise close to \$80,000 a year to meet our annual operating expenses. To make all of that possible in 2009 1,500 people used our services through the Research Center, over 2,700 visited the Heritage Center and Hubbard House, over 7,000 took part in one of our programs or speakers bureau presentations, over 16,000 visited our website and new shopping cart and we had 60 new BECHS members.

Perhaps you now have an idea of why I am so overwhelmed by your support. Our dedicated staff and volunteers can do so much everyday for the promotion and protection of Blue Earth County Historical Society because of people like you. Simply said - Thank You!

So, what do we have planned for 2010? First of all, a huge thank you to Blue Earth County for continuing to support BECHS at the same level for

2010. Local Government Aid from the State of Minnesota has been cut, but Blue Earth County is able to maintain their support to BECHS and other local non-profits. Now, it is our job to do the most we can with this continued support. So, to start we are looking for interested people to assist on Historical Society committees, which provide the backbone of what we do everyday. Each committee will be looking for members to move the Society forward. Committee openings are available on the Board of Trustees, Collections, Development, Exhibits, Finance, Hubbard House Restoration, Membership, Museum Store, Outreach, Publications and Website Committees. If you have an interest or any questions about committee work, please feel free to give me a call or drop me an email at [bechs@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechs@hickorytech.net).

I am looking forward to the new opportunities that fresh ideas and perspectives will bring to our existing committees as well as initiative brought by new committees like Membership and Website. I hope you will have time to support BECHS with your talents in 2010 as well as with your continued gifts. Sincere thanks from the entire BECHS staff!



THE BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY INVITES YOU TO THE

## 2010 Annual Meeting

featuring Dave Engen  
*creator of The Front Street Project*

**Sunday, March 7, 2009**


**1:00 - 3:00 p.m.**

**Blue Earth County Historical Society**

415 Cherry Street, Mankato, MN

- 1 p.m.** BECHS Member's Business Meeting and President's Message
- 2 p.m.** *The Front Street Project* by Dave Engen
- 3 p.m.** Behind-the-Scenes Tour of Heritage Center

Preserve Our Past, Protect Our Future



**BECHS On the Air**

Listen to KTOE 1420 AM the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month 4:10-4:40 p.m. *BECHS update with Trish.*



# Museum Store

JoLynn Crowe  
Museum Assistant

We are also excited to have available the newly revised BECHS publication *“The Remarkable Men from Garden City”* which has an updated look with even more information and a new book cover!

If you’ve been thinking about purchasing the Mankato Montage, now is a great time. Come into the museum store to check out the wonderful sale

price. It’s a great deal!

Another print (copy of a photograph) we carry is entitled *“Sleigh Ride,”* a beautiful scene of winter with the sleigh being pulled by two draft horses. It makes you think of the hot chocolate at home waiting for you after a frosty sleigh ride.

One of the *unique* items the museum store

carries is the painted slates that were originally roof slates to the Hubbard House. Several different artists painted these slates, featuring the Hubbard House, Carriage House and Seppman Mill.

As winter whistles and blows throughout the coming months, the museum store will be warm and dry, and your feet won’t get cold while you are browsing through our book selections and other store items! Stay Warm!

Be sure to stop by and have a look around the museum store. Our Marian Anderson note cards are beautiful, with some wonderful winter scenery

printed on them and let’s face it; winter is going to be around for a while yet. We may as well embrace the season. We also carry many other Marian Anderson prints, including the beautiful Hubbard House print, the third in the series of her historic home prints.

In our museum store, we offer many John Cross prints for sale, both unframed and framed. If you haven’t had a chance to stop by and see the exhibit of his photographs, please be sure to do so. We are very happy to be able to offer this opportunity to see the display, as well as having some of the prints for sale in the store that you are simply going to love. The museum store has different 8" X 10" prints with either a black or white matt surrounding them. The framed prints come in a variety of sizes and prices.



**Heritage Center Museum and Store Hours:** Tue. 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m., Wed. - Sat. 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Closed Sunday & Monday

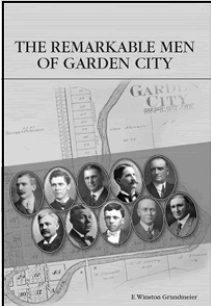
**Museum Admission:** \$3 adults, \$1 students (age 5-17); BECHS Members and children under 5 Free

**Members receive a 10% discount on most items available in the Store.**

# Featured Museum Store Items

## The Remarkable Men of Garden City

By E. Winston Grundmeier



Did you know that southern Minnesota had its own crop of captains of industry? This book highlights 10 remarkable men who had their beginning in the village of Garden City, Minnesota, population of 400 in 1900. It was this select group of ten gifted, ambitious and remarkable men that went on to be significant

contributors to modern day industry giants like Piper Jaffray, Archer Daniels Midland and GlaxoSmithKline. Paper \$12.95

## American Girl Series



One way to warm up the house with a little extra heat is by baking. The museum store has a selection of American Girl Cooking Studio books that are very interesting and after you make a recipe, you can sit back and read an American Girl book with your daughter or granddaughter. What a way to spend a cozy afternoon!

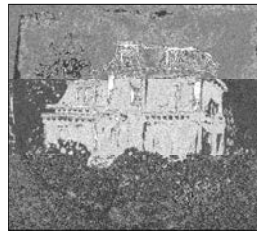
American Girl Cooking Studio Book \$15.95  
American Girl Story Collection Book \$29.95

## Mankato/North Mankato Montage



Discover something new in this print every time you look at it! Many local businesses, historical places and people are featured. If you have been holding off getting this print, now is the time to purchase. We are having a great sale! \$9.95

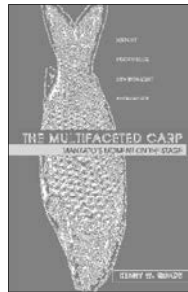
## Hand-painted Hubbard House Slates



No two are the same, yet they are strikingly alike. That's what makes the original slates from the roof of the Hubbard House so unique! Various artists have each painted their own interpretation of the Hubbard House, Carriage House, or Seppman Mill. \$49.95

## The Multifaceted Carp Mankato's Moment on Stage

by Henry W. Quade



Mankato had a "moment on stage" as the result of local entrepreneur Armin Kleinschmidt's idea that canned carp could provide a delicious and valuable food source during WWII. Once a popular immigrant food source, today carp is considered by some a valuable recreational and food source and by

others a pest and a danger to the environment. Here the author gives us a historical perspective on carp, and discusses the environmental impacts and entrepreneurial ventures regarding carp today. Paper, \$12.95

## Note Cards

Winter is hard upon us! Now is the time to sit down with pen and card to send a cheery note to someone! There is a large selection of note cards to choose from and the prices range from \$1.50 for one to \$9.00 for a package of six.



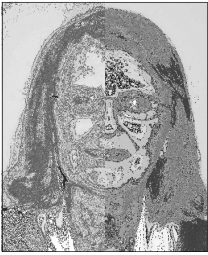
## State of Minnesota Paperweight



The State of Minnesota stone paperweight was crafted with care using a 55,000 psi water jet cutting system and Minnesota Stone that was formed nearly 480 million years ago. Minnesota Stone is quarried by Vetter Stone Company. The paperweights are available in two sizes ranging in price from \$4.95 to \$19.95.

**BECHS accepts the following credit cards for store purchases, membership dues or donations.**





# Research Center

Marsha Heinze  
Archives Aide

I would guess that everyone is glad that Christmas is over. We spend so much time preparing the goodies, finding that special gift and putting up all those decorations but it is a time that family memories are made and to see the smiles on the little ones' faces when they can finally open those gifts makes it all worthwhile.

Did you know that the Research Center has files on Christmas? The Research Center is not only a place to find a lost ancestor, it is filled with facts that are waiting to be discovered. With Christmas not too far from our minds, let's see if you know some of these facts.

**Question:** When did the Christmas tree come to America?

**Answer:** In 1850 a man named Rev. Schwann introduced the Christmas tree in Cleveland, Ohio. It was the first appearance of the Christmas tree in that city, but in the entire country. It was an old German custom transferred to us.

*(Mankato Review 12/24/1904; 3:2)*

**Question:** Where did the chiming of church bells Christmas Eve come from?

**Answer:** According to Johannes Guddal, the custom came from Norway. The bell ringing would start at 6 p.m., and continue for an hour. At that time the Christmas program would begin at the church.

*(Mankato Free Press 12/29/1989; 4:1 "Medo Lutheran church—A Christmas Memory" by Alvin H. Lewis)*

**Question:** When did carol singing become wide spread?

**Answer:** Carol singing first became widely spread in the 15<sup>th</sup> century; the earliest printed collection was published by Wynkin de Worde in 1521.

*(Daughters of the American Revolution magazine, December 1927 "Superstitions and Customs of Christmas" by Katharine Calvert Goodwin)*

**Question:** Who is Louis Prang and what connection does he have with Christmas?

**Answer:** Louis Prang was an emigrant from the German Revolution who perfected the Chromolithograph Process in this country and was a pioneer in the manufacturing of greeting cards.

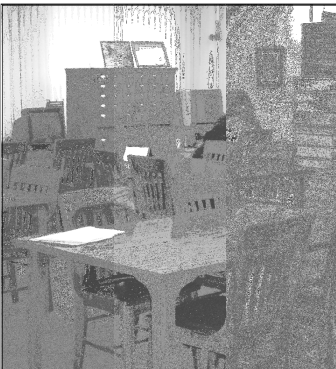
*(Daughters of the American Revolution magazine, December 1927 "Superstitions and Customs of Christmas" by Katharine Calvert Goodwin)*

**Question:** What is a "nisse" and where did it come from?

**Answer:** A "nisse" is a little troll spirit and every Danish house had one. About 4 p.m. on Christmas Eve a bowl of rice pudding, cream and butter would be taken out to the barn. If the "nisse" ate it, he approved of you.

*(Mankato Free Press 12/24/1982)*

Did you know these facts are available here at the Research Center? There is so much to be found in our files, microfilm and even biographies. Come in and search for your facts. There are many answers just waiting to be found.



## Research Center Hours:

Tue. 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m., Wed. - Sat. 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.,  
Closed Sunday & Monday

**Admission:** \$5 adults, \$1 students (age 5-17); BECHS Members Free

*Genealogy Day 4th Saturday of each month - Free Admission*

**Research Fees:** Copies 25¢,  
Contracted Research \$15/half hour





## History's Mysteries

In March, 2009, we received two old photographs from Brent Peterson of Stillwater, Minnesota. He had purchased them at an area antique store. I was able to find the connection to Blue Earth County with one of the photos.

Hence my mystery question...what connection, if any, does this second photo have to Blue Earth County? The photo is of a young man, on the back is the name Curtis Dart, Vernon Center, Minnesota with the date 1878.



We did have old settlers with the Dart name, the dates are close so I think he may be related. Anyone having a connection to the Dart family from Vernon Center may have my answer. Anyone with any information please contact me either by phone (507) 345-5566 (ask for Marsha) or e-mail at [bechsrc@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechsrc@hickorytech.net)

Thanks for all the response on the grocery store in Garden City...the mystery was solved. The Garden City Grocery Store was owned by the Ray family in 1855 and around 1864-65 they sold the store to Thomas Nelson Boynton.



## Fingerprints and Footnotes

The Fingerprints and Footnotes Club had an excellent 2009, with an exciting spring and adventurous summer and, in November, author Pell Johnson gave an outstanding presentation of his book, *Fowl Stories: Outdoor Adventures about Swan Lake*.

In December Beth Zimmer shared with us a wonderful collection of Civil War letters. It's amazing how something like family letters can tell us about our past.

We started 2010 off on the right foot by going back to the basics. We shared helpful tips, compared notes and brainstormed new topics that may lead to great discoveries in the New Year! As always the meetings are entertaining as well as educational and a delightful time is had by all. Newcomers are always welcome.

If you have any ideas for discussion topics or any interest in presenting a topic, please let Shelley know.

### Future Meetings

February 2<sup>nd</sup> - *The Orphan Trains and Newsboys of New York*: a presentation and book signing by Renee Wendinger

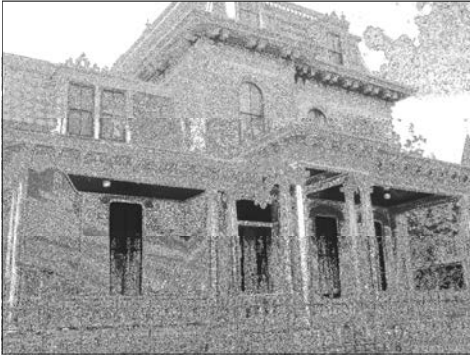
March 2<sup>nd</sup> - "The History of Aprons" by Grace Keir

April 6th - Decoding Lincoln's Legacy: The Gettysbrug Address

## Footnotes In History

The "Marital State" has been a thing of interest through the years. In the 1860 Federal Census individuals who had married within the year were checked. The 1870 Federal Census asked individuals who had married within the year to state what month.

-Provided by Beth Zimmer



# R.D. Hubbard House

## *Christmas at the Hubbard House*

### **Hubbard Milling Company Display**

A new exhibit is on display in the Hubbard House Carriage House featuring the Hubbard Milling Company. "The Hubbard House Restoration Committee has spent nearly 20 years interpreting the Hubbard family story of the Hubbard House. The house did not lend itself easily to telling the story of Hubbard Mill as well," notes Executive Director Jessica Potter. Display cases were recently donated



from the Nicollet County Historical Society, moved by Piepho Moving and Storage and South Central Glass and installed in the Carriage House. The new exhibit tells the story of Hubbard Mill through artifacts and photographs donated to the Blue Earth County Historical Society. The exhibit is open during regular hours of the Hubbard House. The property is closed for the season and will reopen in May, 2010.



Christmas at the Hubbard House was enjoyed by over 200 guests in December. Volunteers

portrayed the Hubbard family (above), different ethnicities (right) and Hubbard family servants (below). Special thanks to all the volunteers who made this event a truly living history experience.



### **Hubbard House and Carriage House Gift Shop Hours:**

Closed for the Season - Reopens May 1, 2010

**Admission:** \$3 adults, \$1 students (age 5-17); BECHS Members and children under 5 Free



# Blue Earth County Pioneer Parishes

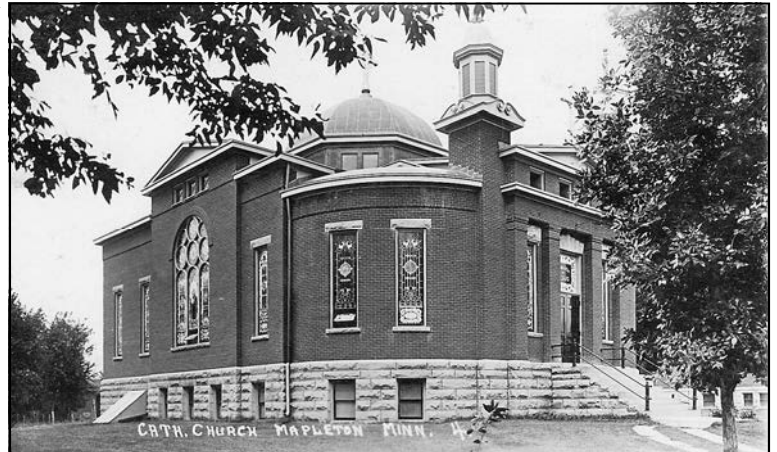
Winston Grundmeier

Land was a prime factor in the flow of people into Blue Earth County. This flow became a flood by the early 1850s. Most settlers came here with their countrymen in ethnically-related groups. One of the first things the people did was to form a parish consisting of their members. A parish church was one of the first buildings to go up in many communities.

The Welsh and Germans seem to have led the race to settle Blue Earth County. The first group of German settlers was Catholic. In 1854 German Catholic settlers, coming from St. Charles, Missouri, took the first steps to establish a Catholic church in Mankato. They acquired land between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets and, in 1855, Father Augustin Ravoux, pioneer missionary, celebrated the first Catholic Mass there. Within 20 years other Catholic churches were founded by Father Valentin Sommereisen, the zealous missionary priest, who worked in Mankato and later in rural Blue Earth County and beyond.

The first Catholic families settled in Danville Township east of Mapleton around 1857. In 1876, the first brick church was built at the present site, and land for Calvary Cemetery was purchased in 1878. The church had been enlarged by 1902, and a new sanctuary, sacristy and bell tower were added by 1922.

In these early days, Lutheran missionaries were busy looking for Lutheran immigrants who had settled in Mankato, Madison Lake, Good Thunder and Willow Creek. Many immigrants had fled Germany after the repressive measures taken against the revolutionists of 1848. The prospects of owning land in America also encouraged many a young German, as well as many other ethnic groups, to leave the old country where the rule that only the eldest son



St. Theresa Catholic Church, Mapleton. Photograph property of the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

could inherit prevailed. Reluctance to provide compulsory military service, which in some European countries ran upwards of 240 days per year, was another primary reason for emigration.

The early history of the St. John's Lutheran congregation in the Good Thunder area began in 1867 when Pastor Renieke traveled to the area, visited and served the families there. Good Thunder's first Lutheran Church was established by 1870. Services were held in the public school house until its first church building was erected in 1876. This lovely wood frame church served the



St. John Lutheran Church, Good Thunder. Photograph property of the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

congregation until 1895, when the current brick church was constructed.

The impetus for emigration from Norway centered on over-population, the notoriously poor and stony soil and the rigid structure of the Lutheran state church in Norway. The Norwegians came to Blue Earth County a little later than the Germans and Welsh. Mankato's first Norwegian community began in 1867. Three Norwegian Lutheran parishes organized in Mankato area, each built its own church, but all were in the Norwegian Lutheran Synod. Later these three parishes merged to form Bethlehem Lutheran in Mankato. Within three years beginning in 1867, Norwegian Lutheran parishes had spread across Blue Earth County, especially at Medo, Butternut Valley, Lincoln, Decoria Townships and Lake Crystal.

The first meeting of what would become the Medo Lutheran Church took place in 1868. In 1870, the Medo Norwegian Evangelical Church was incorporated. A building was begun in 1875. Times were hard and there was little money, but the framework of the building was erected and rough benches used for seats. A tornado in 1870 swept away the little church. The congregation began to plan and in 1890 a new church was dedicated. Various improvements were made over the years and an annex was added in 1932. A fine new church was dedicated in 1969.

Welsh settlers came to Blue Earth County early – in 1854-1855—from Wisconsin and points east. In 1855 a wagon train of Welsh immigrants came across southern Minnesota to the Minneopa area. When they stopped at the ridge here, they laid to rest one of their members, a young girl from the Roberts



Altar of the Medo Norwegian Evangelical Church. Photograph property of the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

family, who had died. She was the first burial in what would be Minneopa Cemetery. The northwest corner of Blue Earth County proved attractive to the Welsh who established several communities here – Lake Crystal, Judson, Cambria, Butternut Valley and South Bend.

In 1856, the first Methodist religious services were held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robinson in Lake Crystal, led by the Methodist circuit rider, Reverend C. C. Kidder. The Methodist Episcopal



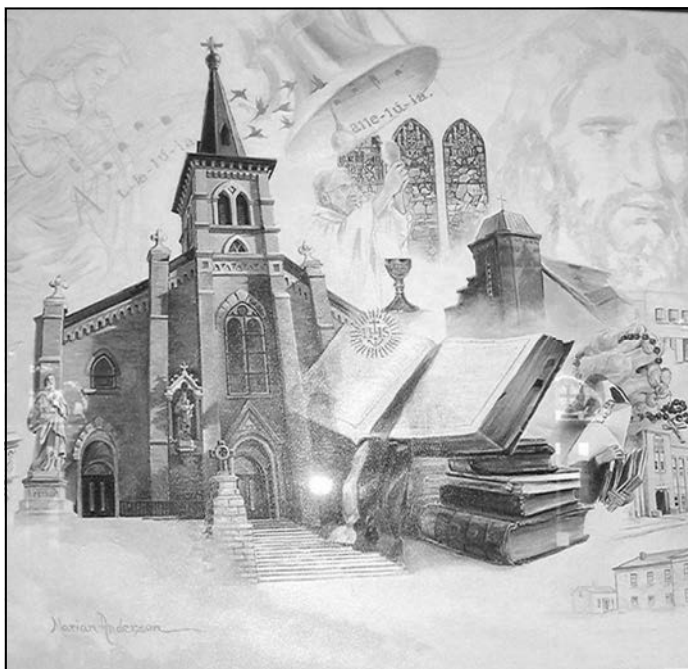
Lake Crystal Methodist Episcopal Church. Photograph property of Blue Earth County Historical Society.

Church was organized in 1870 and, having no building, met in homes for four years. The church's first building was erected in 1874. The congregation soon outgrew this building and a larger church was built in 1880. This newer church, although remodeled and upgraded over the years, is still in use.

Each community quickly organized a parish and built a church. Some of the pastoral leaders of these early parishes were: Jenkin Jenkins, T.G. Jones, William Powell, Humphrey Jones and William Williams. The Welsh followed the Calvinist theology strictly, but named their churches in various ways: Congregational, Baptist, Calvinist Methodist, Presbyterian, etc. Many of these fine old churches have disappeared from the scene, but if you look in the nearby churchyard, you can find the names of these pioneers on tombstones.

## Researching Parish History: Spotlighting the Heritage Center at SS. Peter and Paul's Church

Fr. Ted Hottinger, S.J.



SS. Peter and Paul's Catholic Church Centennial print  
Photograph courtesy of Fr. Ted Hottinger, S.J.

*The author of this article Fr. Ted Hottinger, S. J., now a retired priest, grew up among the many Catholic families surrounding SS. Peter and Paul's Parish. He entered the Society of Jesus after graduation from Loyola High School in 1950 and was ordained priest in 1963. In 1988 he was assigned as an associate pastor at SS. Peter and Paul's where he served till June 2008. He continues to live in Mankato continuing his pastoral work wherever needed.*

Among the lesser known centers of parish history is the Heritage Center at SS. Peter and Paul's Church in Mankato. Frequently changed display cases along the second floor of Xavier Hall, by the church offices display photographs and artifacts from the parish's 155 years of history. The corridors of the third floor and the heritage room display banners, religious artifacts, vestments, furniture, and yes, even the baptismal font where this author received the new life of Christ in the waters of

Baptism. In the parish office are the baptism, wedding, confirmation, funeral and Calvary Cemetery records for over 150 years of parish history.

The parish started with a lament after the Christmas of 1854 by a small group of Catholic men that they had no service on Christmas. They decided to approach the Bishop in St. Paul and a priest was assigned. The first Mass was celebrated in 1855 and the first pastor assigned in 1856. Meanwhile the founding members were given a log cabin on top of Agency Hill (Main Street) in Mankato to use as a church. When they obtained the land on the 100 block between fifth and sixth, the cabin was moved to that site. A stone church was then built on 5th and Main Street. This soon became too small, and the current Church on 5th and Mulberry was dedicated in 1873.

Education was key to the plans of the early parishioners, and in 1865 the School Sisters of Notre Dame were brought in to teach. Since most members were German immigrants education and preaching



Photograph courtesy of Fr Ted Hottinger, S.J.

were in German until the 1920s. In 1874, German speaking Jesuits (Society of Jesus) were invited in as missionary pastors and remained till June 2008 when priests of the Institute of the Incarnate Word (IVE) became the current pastors.

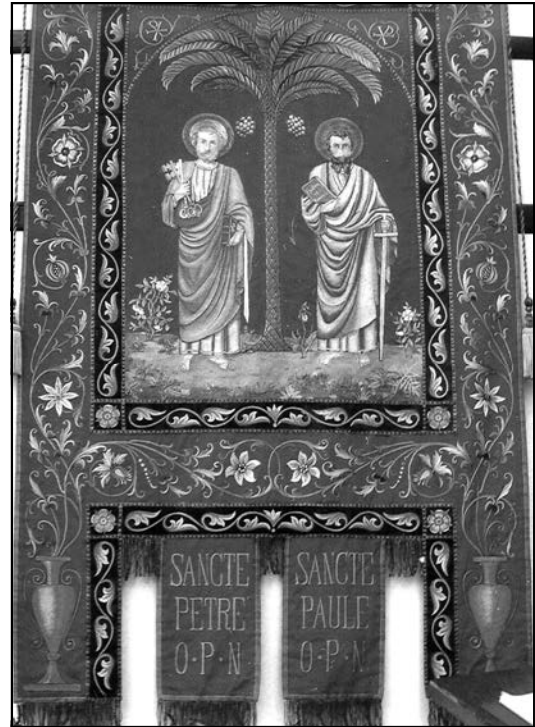


Photograph courtesy of Fr. Ted Hottinger, S.J.

At the time of the 50th anniversary of the parish Father Wilhelm von Festenberg-Pakisch, S.J. wrote a history in German that is now available in an English translation entitled: *The History of SS. Peter and Paul's Parish Mankato, Minn. 1854-1899*. It tells the story of the foundation and growth of the parish. Names still familiar to Mankato natives can be found in the parish lists like Thro, Ziegler, Huettl, Fallenstein, Dauk, Butzer, Bohnert, Hagen, Hodapp, Zellmer, Korth, Masberg, Lamm, Goettl, Landkamer, Sontag, Hund, Schulte, Borgmeier and the list goes on of the early settlers of Mankato. This book can be found at the BECHS Heritage Center Museum Store and the SS. Peter and Paul's Heritage Center.

One aspect of the 1862 uprising finds the Baptismal record of the Native Americans hanged on December 25, 1862, listed in the parish records. A photocopy can be seen in the Heritage Room and in the above history.

One story not told in this book is how in 1865, the pastor prevented the lynching of John L. Campbell, a mixed blood, accused of massacring the Jewett family near Garden City. The angry mob broke into the jail on Sixth Street the next day and



Photograph courtesy of Fr. Ted Hottinger, S.J.

lynched the accused. There are many other tidbits of information on our parish life at Fifth and Main Street found in the book and other archive material stored in the Center.

If you happen to be at SS. Peter and Paul's Church for a service or event take a walk down the second and third floor corridors of Xavier Hall to view the displays. As you visit older church communities, you might enjoy any heritage items they have on display. It is always my delight to check them out. Church history is an important part of the development and growth of southern Minnesota and throughout the world.

The Heritage Center Room 306 in Xavier Hall (formerly Loyola High School and now a parish center) is open Wednesday from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. For an appointment call the parish office at 388-2995. A tour led by a parish guide is available for both the Heritage Center and the church - an example of Gothic church architecture that has been admired by many guests to the Parish.



For more information, visit the Blue Earth County Historical Society's Heritage Center or [www.bechshistory.com](http://www.bechshistory.com).

# BECHS Donations

October– December 2009

## Up to \$49

Balcome, Helen  
Belgard, Hugh and Vail  
Benefield, Dale  
Boubel, John  
Cords, Betty  
Crowe, JoLynn  
Havelka, Karen  
Hoehn, William  
Howard, Don  
Madsen, Ann and Richard  
Madsen, Timothy  
Mathiason, Renee  
Nordgren, Lee and Donna  
Nuessle, Ruth  
Ohlenkamp, Ora  
Peterson, Leslie  
Ryan, Thomas  
Sassenberg, Karl  
Schaub, Shirley  
Schulte, Pat  
Sizemore, Daardi  
Tarjeson, Jane

## \$50-\$99

Belgard, Hugh and Vail  
Bomier, Robert and Angie  
Cariveau, Yvonne  
Church, Barbara  
Dunlop, Donna and David *Collections/Exhibits*  
Frydendall, Karen and Merrill  
Howard, Don  
Jensen, Orville and MaryAnn  
Jones, Ellis  
Kenward, Robert and Ann  
Kunkel, Mike and Denise  
Owens, Catherine  
Peterson, Leslie  
Potter, Brad and Jessica  
Quade, Henry  
Sassenberg, Eunice  
Sawina, James

## \$100-\$499

Anonymous  
Bassett, William  
Burkhardt, Mike and Jean  
Buscher, Robert and Marilyn  
Grundmeier, Win *Collections*  
Hadley, Paul and Alice *Exhibits*  
Hustuft, Dean and Carol  
Lamont, Earl and Sally  
Madsen, Jack  
McComb, Mary  
Mortier, Mary  
Nienow, Richard and Patricia  
Olson, Robert and Susan  
Preska, Daniel and Margaret  
Rezmerski, John  
Schultz, Jo  
Smith, H. Roger  
Taylor, Brett and Gretchen  
Voyager Bank  
Zelenka, Gena  
Zimmer, Beth

## \$500-\$1000

Anonymous  
Dooley, Mary *Hubbard House Restoration*  
Jones, Eldon and Helen  
Keir, Grace and Richard  
McLaughlin, Tom and Theresa

## Memorial

*In Memory of Orville Jensen*  
Roberta Bartholdi  
Norma Carstensen  
Betty Cords  
Win and Shirley Grundmeier  
Grace and Richard Keir  
Jack Madsen  
Mankato Area Lifelong Learners  
Mary McComb  
Bruce and Shirlee Ruble

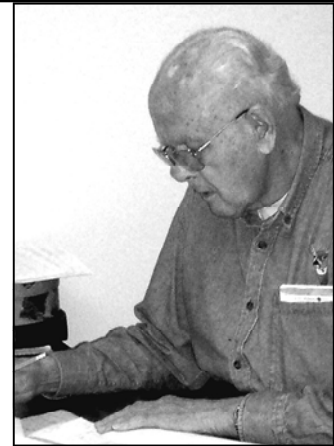
Jane Tarjeson  
many others through the family

*In Memory of Helmer and Jane Engh*  
By June Cummiskey

*In Memory of Steve Weimert*  
By Paul and Kathryn Durenberger

## In-Kind

Herbst, Gordon *Office Paper*  
Hugg, Bob and Corey  
*Laptop Computer*  
Quality 1 Hour Foto  
*John Cross Exhibit*  
Red Door Creative *Design Services*  
South Central Glass *Glass Moving*  
Eunice Sassenburg *Tissue paper*



## *In Memory*

*of our dedicated and valuable  
volunteer and dear friend,*

***Orville Jensen***

*December 7, 2009*

*He will be missed*

*Our sincerest condolences to  
his family and friends.*



# BECHS Volunteers

October-December 2009

Affolter, Ron	Kloster, Rebekah
Bartholdi, Roberta	Krassin, Sara
Baures, Lisa	Lagerquist, Mike
Beiswanger, Joshua	Lavitschke, Jo-an
Belgard, Vail	Lloyd, Ken
Benefield, Dale	Lundin, Gary
Botten, Joel	Madsen, Jack
Botten, Maureen	McComb, Mary
Bouma, Jana	Nienow, Dick
Bunde, Margo	Nienow, Tricia
Burns, Inella	Ohlenkamp, Ora
Carlberg, Ann	Oldenburg, Aiden
Carlson, Bruce	Oldenburg, Alex
Carlson, Carla	Oldenburg, Connor
Clobes, Abby	Olson, Paul
Clobes, Joshua	Olson, Phyllis
Clobes, Nathan	Peterson, Leslie
Coleman, Mary	Quade, Henry
Cords, Betty	Quam, Brandon
Crowe, Jody	Reinbold, Bianka
Doyle, Preston	Rezmerski, John
Frisch, Carlienne	Rockne-Semkow, Kallista
Garlow, Laura	Rodriguez, Gabriela
Garlow, Sandi	Sassenburg, Eunice
Goff, Harley	Schaub, Shirley
Gruenstein, Sandy	Schevers, Paula
Grundmeier, Shirley	Schultz, Jo
Grundmeier, Win	Shortall, Christina
Hanson, Kathryn	Smith, H. Roger
Heaney, Kelly	Starcher, Sarah
Herbst, Gordon	Steil, William
Howieson, Bob	Straka, Stacey
Hugg, Bob	Straub, Don
Hugg, Corey	Stromswold, Todd
Hundstad, Patrice	Tarjeson, Jane
Hustuft, Carol	Webb, Donna
Hynes, Susan	Webb, Grace
Jensen, Mary Ann	Wendt, Bob
Jensen, Orville	Wilker, Lin
Johnson, Mary H.	Wilker, Roger
Kapadia, Ajay	Winter, Jamie
Keir, Grace	Zeigler, Ken
Kind, Arn	Zimmer, Beth
Kloster, Josh	Zwickey, Nancy

***Thank you for your time and talents!***

## Volunteer Opportunities

**Tour Guide** for the Hubbard House and Heritage Center  
(training provided)

**Committee Member** openings on all Committees - Board of Trustees, Collections, Development, Exhibits, Finance, Hubbard House Restoration, Membership, Museum Store, Outreach, Publications and Website

**Writer** for BECHS publications and the quarterly newsletter

**Research Center Aide** Tuesday Nights

**Plus Many Other Opportunities**

Please contact JoLynn at 345-5566 or [bechsms@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechsms@hickorytech.net).

## Wish List

*Items or financial donations will be gratefully accepted.*

- Past Perfect Virtual Exhibit Software \$350
- Tabletop Photo Studio used or new (\$150)
- Landscaping for the Heritage Center
- 4-drawer legal-size filing cabinet (new or used)
- 3 ft. Step stool for Hubbard House
- Cordless Drill
- Computer monitor (good working order)
- New tables and chairs for meeting room (need approximately \$5,000)
- Office Max or Que Computers Gift Cards





# Collections & Exhibits

Shelley Harrison  
Archives Manager

One of something is an item, two is a pair, and three is a collection. We have an exhibit case in the Heritage Center called Collector's Case. While the Blue Earth County Historical Society collects the items and objects that tell the stories of Blue Earth County, we know that some of you are collectors. We have been inviting our volunteers and members to share their collections with us and display them here at BECHS. Some of those shared have included collections like M&Ms, thimbles and Pepsi memorabilia.

Right now we have a display on turkey collectibles. The really fabulous thing about this



collection is that it is tied to a local business here in Blue Earth County, the Hilger Turkey Farm located near Eagle Lake. From 1931 until 1976, Ed and Ivalue Hilger produced the main item on most people's holiday tables. The display tells their story and displays some quirky items like turkey earrings. This is a great opportunity to showcase a collection and a small family business. Did you know that turkeys had their own insurance?

So what do you collect? It can be anything from picnic baskets to tea pots. Every collection has to tell a story. Share your passion for collecting by sharing it with the public and those that visit the Historical Society. Contact Shelley if you are interested in reserving the Collecotr's Corner for your collection.

## Artifacts & Archives Donations October-December 2009

Anderson, Barry	Lavitschke, Jo-an
Anonymous	Lindemann, Coleen
Bartels, Denise	Madsen, Jack
Berg, Marilyn	Marshall, Polly
Blue Earth County	McComb, Mary
Bouma, Jana	Nix, Robert
Brady, Lora	Norman, Beth
Brandrup, Marie	Ohlenkamp, Ora
Burton, John	Peterson, Brent
Colakovic, Kenneth	Quade, Henry
Cords, Betty	Rice County Historical
Dakota Discovery Museum	Society
Doring, Jim & Betsy	Schaub, Shirley
Edwards, William. L.	Schmitz, Leora
Fischer, Harold	Schutt, Donna
Flachsenhar, John Jay Jr.	Schweitzer, Jon
Frederick, Mike	Smith, Dr. H. Roger
Ganske, Maxine	Strand, Vivian
Hayman, Eloise C	Sugden, George
Heinze, Marsha	Tarjesson, Jane
Herbst, Gordon	Traphagen, Esther
Higginbotham, Shirley	True, Robert
Hughes, June	Warner, Wayne
Johnson, Gorden C	Wendt, Robert
Kenward, Robert	Westgate, Dale and
Kenward, Todd	Audrey Estate
Kottke, Jeanne H	Williams, Lee
Lamson, Barbara	

## BECHS Annual Tour Guide Training

**Tuesday, April 6, 10:00 a.m.-Noon or  
Saturday, April 10, 2:00-4:00 p.m.**

Whether you are new or a returning tour guide, please contact JoLynn to confirm your interest in assisting with tours in 2010.

507-345-5566 or [bechsms@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechsms@hickorytech.net)

Please support the following Blue Earth County businesses that have supported BECHS with a Business Membership ranging from \$100-\$500

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# Historic Front Street Pub Crawl

Friday, March 12, 2010, 6 p.m.

Mankato Place Mall

\$15 for Historical Society members

\$20 for non-members

Space is limited! Call BECHS today to reserve your spot! 507.345.5566

**Walking Tour with a Twist ~ Appetizers ~ Great Drink Specials ~ Souvenir Glass**

Ticket price does not include the cost of drinks. Drink purchases are not required to participate. Attendees must be over 21 and show photo I.D.



# YOUNG HISTORIANS

Young Historians have been busy this fall. In October we learned about Pioneers and about the different houses they had in different areas of the United States. We talked about these houses and how they were made.

The Industrial Revolution was our topic for November. The Junior Historians led the meeting and told us about agriculture, inventions, steamboats, factories, mills, the Minnesota State Fair and many other things. We learned Morse code and had fun writing messages in code to each other.



In December our favorite historian Arn Kind came. We learned all about the Civil War from him including the soldiers' food, clothing, weapons and belongings and how they lived. He told us about the flags of the Confederacy. We also had drill practice as Civil War soldiers.

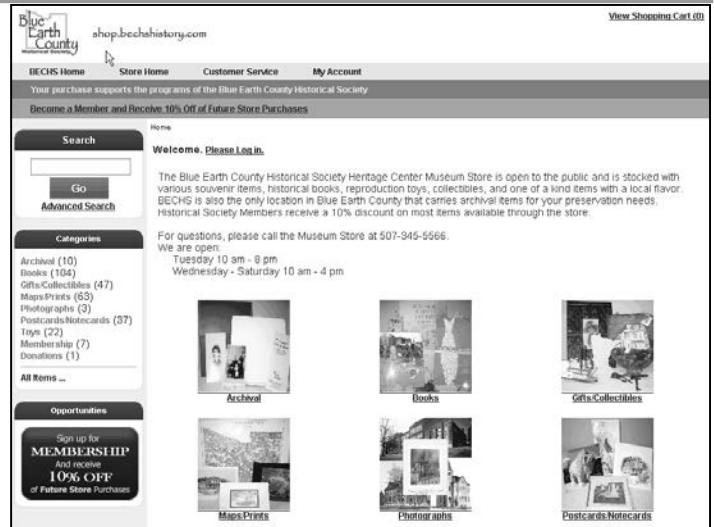
For Young Historians Club we made items to sell at the Madison East Holiday Expo in November. We made these items as a fundraiser for our big trip to the Minnesota Historical Society in May. We did very well at the sale. In October we were at Barnes and Noble for the book fair, raising money for our upcoming field trip, too.



You may have spotted a lot of our Young Historians helping at Society events this year like Ghosts of the Past: The Brandrup Saga, Christmas at the Hubbard House and at the Book Fair at the Historical Society.

Keep an eye out for us at upcoming events.

*Laura Garlow*  
9th Grade,  
Maple River High School



## BECHS Website Resources

Exciting changes for the BECHS website in the last month - we launched our new, secure online store and shopping cart.

Visitors from across the U.S. have already taken advantage of our virtual store. Prior to Christmas we sold items and memberships to visitors in Virginia, Arkansas, Pennsylvania, Oregon and Minnesota. This has been an exciting venture for us.

If you live in Blue Earth County, you may be asking yourself, "Why would I use this online store?" Well, this is more than a virtual store. Membership and donations can now be processed by credit card online—they are both items that you can simply put into the shopping cart. In addition, you can set up an account with us (no information will leave BECHS) for an e-newsletter. We hope in the near future not only to make it possible to send a digital version of this newsletter for those who no longer want paper copies, but we also hope to send out regular updates about events or opportunities at BECHS. Many of you are currently receiving emails from us about updates; we are looking at a more efficient process with these new online tools.

This project was made possible through funding by the Carl and Verna Schmidt Foundation and the hard work of the web design staff at Que Computers of Mankato.



**Recycle your newsletter!**

Pass it along to a friend,  
neighbor or family member!

# BECHS Membership

October - December 2009

## New Members

Anderson, George  
Anderson, Mavis M  
Bosin, David W.  
Bosin, William A.  
Braun, Steve  
Degner, Micah  
Durenberger, Paul and Kathryn  
Fors, Brian and Deborah  
Hamborg, Daphne  
Heller, Deena  
Indorf, Michael  
Lee, Carol and Ross, Dave  
McGuire, Jim and Ann  
Nere, Mary  
Norland, Dick and Kris  
Piper, John and Tracy  
Rehome, Steve and Dona  
Rockne-Semkow, Kallista  
Shortall, Daniel and Christina  
Swanson, Audrey Howard  
Warner, Tom

## Renewed Members

Anderson-Morgan, Verna  
Birr, Linda  
Brown, Joan  
Clements, Tom  
Cramer, James  
Fasnacht, Bill  
Fleming, Dan  
Frederick, Tom and Carol  
Halstead, Sharon  
Heller, Barbara  
Huebsch, Tim  
Jacobson, Lyle and Kay  
Lamson, Barbara  
Lennartson, Eric and Amy  
Murphy, Tim and Lois  
Madsen, Kristine and Considine, Jack  
Penhiter, Judith  
Pomeroy, Leigh  
Reich, Jerry and Judy  
Ruble, Bruce and Shirlee  
Steil, William and Zwickey, Nancy  
Stromswold, Todd and Tracy  
Vee, Harlan  
Westphal, Myrtle



## **Congratulations to the two sites in Blue Earth County that were added to the National Register of Historic Places 2009.**

The National Register is a listing of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects considered to be worthy of preservation. There are now 282 Blue Earth County properties listed on the National Register.



**Dodd Ford Bridge**  
**(Bridge No. 1461),** County  
Highway 147  
over the Blue Earth River,  
Shelby Township (vicinity  
of Amboy)



**Mapleton Public Library,**  
104 First Avenue NE,  
Mapleton

# Around Blue Earth County



## Rapidan Heritage Society



Milwaukee train north of Rapidan after the snowstorm in Feb. 1936. Photo taken by Emil Bartsch and hung in the Bartsch Garage in Rapidan

The snowstorm over the Christmas holidays brings back memories of blizzards past. In 2009 the snowplow drivers worked thru the storm, ensuring the roads were clear and passable - but this had not been the case in past snowstorms.

*The Good Thunder Herald* article "Blizzard Isolates Good Thunder as Plows Battle to Open Roads" describes the Feb. 8-10, 1936 blizzard.

Two big trucks worked to open county road 1 (now State Rd 66) from Good Thunder to Mankato. In two days the trucks had cleared 4 miles of road north of Good Thunder. The county then stopped clearing this road and had the big caterpillar plow finish opening the road – "as soon as the caterpillar is repaired."

With roads and the railroad closed, Good Thunder was isolated for about a week. "Farmers from all the country roads had difficulty getting into town. They had to make their way thru fields and wherever the snow permitted [with teams of horses]. Groups of from 3 to a dozen came together and not only chose their paths carefully but all had to do their share of shoveling."

Supplies ran low. Bread and baked goods were the first to sell out and the yeast supply ran low when women began to bake bread. Coal was rationed.

The Depot Museum is closed for the winter.

*Jane Tarjesson*  
Secretary



## Madison Lake Area Historical Society

In January, 2009, Steve Ulman talked about his book, "Revenge of Little Crow." February brought Larry Kortuem to speak about forensic history. He showed us how to date a photo. Founding member, Ted Roemer, was present at the meeting. At the March meeting, Howard Vetter showed Indian artifacts he has found. Missy Woods spoke in April about her uncle, Earl Woods.

In May Michael Eckers gave an interesting talk about the Civil War. June attendees went to Kasota to visit Hall Mark Glass. Mark Hall talked about making stained glass windows and other pieces. The Cleveland Historical Society visited us at the Madison Lake Community Center. It was time to update our brochures and we handed them out at Paddlefish Days parade at Madison Lake. In August a potluck picnic at the Gegan Cabin in the hills northeast of Madison Lake included Larry Kortuem's instructions on using antique tools to build a log cabin. Frank Kortuem demonstrated making wooden shingles and fired off the cannon made by the Kortuem brothers. The Fingerprints and Footnotes Club of Blue Earth County Historical Society joined our members at the potluck. We took our display to the Blue Earth County Fair.

September brought us to the Heritage Center and Curtis Dahlen's book signing. We displayed old tools at the Marysburg Parish Festival. Larry Kortuem gave a tour of interesting facts of the Immaculate Conception Church of Marysburg's Cemetery.

Jerry Schaefer hosted the Club at the house he built on Lake Madison. Jerry talked about Indian artifacts and restoration of old photos. Members brought old photos to share at the November meeting. Finishing the year in December a Christmas Party at the Community Center catered by the Boat Landing was enjoyed.

Officers of the past year are Jerry Frederick, President; Mary Buschkowsky, Secretary and Shirley Schaub, Treasurer. Dues are \$5 annually and paid at the beginning of the year.

*Jerry Frederick*  
President



## Blue Earth County Historical Society

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### Preserving and sharing Blue Earth County's history since 1901

The Blue Earth County Historical Society's  
Heritage Center Gallery, Museum Store and  
Research Center are open

Tuesday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
Wednesday through Saturday  
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

The Hubbard House and  
Carriage House Gift Shop

Closed for the Season  
Will Reopen May 1, 2010

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Help the Blue Earth County Historical Society continue to collect, preserve, protect and present the history of Blue Earth County. The GiveMN.org website makes donating easy and quick. Just visit us at [www.bechshistory.com](http://www.bechshistory.com) and click

**DONATE NOW**



***Moving? Snowbird?  
Please let us know!***

If you are moving to a different address, please let us know. It costs over \$1 for each returned newsletter that could not be delivered. Please help the Society reserve our funds for educational exhibits and programs and assure that you get your copy of the *Historian* by notifying us of your new or winter address, or letting us know to suspend mailing your newsletter if you are going to be away for a long period. Your help is appreciated.