

BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

May/June 1994

Blue Earth County Historian

THE TWILIGHT GARDEN CLUB:

Thirty-One Years of Service

Michelle Maack Friederichs

The Twilight Garden Club volunteers their time to maintain the beautiful gardens surrounding the Carriage House, next to the Hubbard House in Mankato, Minnesota. Besides planning, planting, and tending the gardens, this organization tours gardens and educates themselves on their craft.

This club began in 1963. Since they met at night, they called themselves the "Twilight Garden Club." Their first work project was caring for a garden at Sibley Park. Besides the usual responsibilities of planning, planting, and tending the garden, the women had to bring in water. In 1977, they moved their project to the Carriage House.

Marge Meredith was instrumental in getting the Carriage House garden project started. Because the area in front of the Carriage House was built over an old street bed, the garden did not have very good drainage. One problem the group faced was creating a garden that could withstand these conditions. The club began with planting four old-fash-



Judy Hoppe at work in the Carriage House garden.

ioned rose gardens and hedges in front of the house. In the mid-eighties, these plants were torn out to create a new garden plan.

On the fourth Tuesday of each month, the Twilight Garden Club holds its meetings. Between November and March, the club focuses on educating and planning the following year's gardens. April through October are the gardening months, where the women plant the gardens. Each of these monthly meetings is held at the

Carriage House gardens, where the women break into groups to care for the specific gardens. Working with partners, they take turns watering, dead-heading, and providing any other care that is needed.

In order to prepare for the endeavor, the members read gardening magazines, attend seminars, and learn from each other. The club has many members with many different levels of gardening expertise, including



Blue Earth County Historian

The *Blue Earth County Historian* is published bimonthly by the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

The Blue Earth County Historical Society is a non-profit organization and has been collecting and preserving artifacts of historical value to the people of south central Minnesota since 1901.

BECHS is the only organization or institution entirely dedicated to the collection, preservation and exhibition of Blue Earth County History.

Blue Earth County Historian Staff

Editor **Michelle Maack Friederichs**
(Mankato State University Intern)

Newsletter Committee:

Lucille Fitzsimmons
Dr. Bert & Inella Burns
Lona Falenczykowski
Marge Oelerich
Gail Palmer
Linda Henry

Please direct any inquiries or submissions to the Newsletter Committee:

Blue Earth County Historical Society
Heritage Center
415 Cherry St.
Mankato, MN 56001

BECHS also operates the historic R. D. Hubbard House. Built in 1871 by Rensselaer D. Hubbard, founder of Hubbard Milling Company, the elegant mansion and nearby brick carriage house contain many displays and artifacts which are open to the public.

The Hubbard House is owned by the city of Mankato and has been operated by BECHS since 1938.

The Hubbard House is being readied for restoration and is listed on the State Historical Record, as well as the National Register of Historic Places.

Hubbard House
606 S. Broad St.
Mankato, MN
Closed for Restoration



Georgia Hemenway and Gretchen Foudray prune flowers in a Carriage House garden.

seven Master Gardeners.

The garden contains many flowers and herbs. The perennials include peonies, Siberian iris, day lilies, bulb lilies, phlox, shrub roses, delphiniumns, and yarrows. The annuals are alyssum (for the border), nicotianas, marigolds, geraniums, ageratum, begonias, ornamental kale, and zinnias. The herb garden, located in the back of the Carriage House, features many herbs, such as lavender, lemon balm, sage, camomile, chives, thyme, oregano, basil, mint, and parsely. The members invite people to touch and taste the herbs, but ask that people do not cut them.

Flowers for the gardens come

from a variety of sources. Plant materials are donated by the Hubbard Milling Company, the City of Mankato, and club members. Membership dues provide cash to buy additional flowers and herbs, which are purchased from local nurseries and greenhouses.

For those thinking about creating a Victorian garden, the Twilight Garden Club recommends planting flowers that will do well in Mankato's climate. When selecting flowers, keep in mind that repetition and color themes were important during the Victorian era.

Continued, *Twilight Garden Club*, page 4.

Native American Awareness

A Tale of Two Chiefs

June 9 - 7:00 PM

The history of Good Thunder is long and varied, beginning with its first settler in 1854. The following year, the Winnebago reservation occupied these lands. The village was named Good Thunder, in honor of a tribal chieftan.

On June 9, at 7:00 PM, at the Heritage Center, John Christenson, former mayor of Good Thunder, will present *A Tale of Two Cities*. Admission is free, but reservations are needed. Call 345-5566.



Ojibwe Family Tradition

June 23 - 7:00 PM

American family traditions and values are constantly changing. Rosemary Christensen's presentation, *Ojibwe Family: Seasons of Tradition and Change*, focuses on the ways in which Ojibwe family traditions and values have been affected by contact with cultures different than their own.

Christensen will be traveling from Duluth to deliver this presentation. This promises to be an interesting discussion. Admission is free, but reservations are needed. Call 345-5566.

Little Crow - A Mdewakton Chief

In 1862, Little Crow was considered the strongest Dakota warrior.

Coming to Terms with the Past: The Dakota Conflict of 1862

June 16 - 7:00 PM

In observance of the 125th anniversary of the Dakota Conflict, 1987 was promoted as the "Year of Reconciliation" between Native Americans and Whites. Today, there is still widespread misunderstanding and last bitterness on the part of

both groups. These attitudes can be attributed to either a lack of accurate information or a lack of objectivity when discussing the subject. Bryce Stenzel's lecture and audio-visual presentation will provide a balanced interpretation of the events leading up to and continuing through this tragic period. An emphasis will be placed on how the conflict affected Blue Earth County. Admission is free, but reservations are required.

Twilight Garden Club, continued from page 2.

The Twilight Garden Club has some special plans for the upcoming summer. Using a variety of flowers, they will create a blue, yellow, pink, and white theme this year. They will prune and rejuvenate the shrubs, develop a hosta glade that houses day lilies behind the Hubbard House, and plant flowers in the inner garden area.

The Blue Earth Historical Society would like to thank all of the Twilight Garden Club members for volunteering their time in planning, planting, and caring for the gardens. Many thanks to Twilight Garden Club members Candy Bell, Linda Berkland, Sue Bowe, Margaret Brewer, Margaret Burman, Beth Christensen, Jane Confer, Joyce Corley, Sharon Elmquist, Marge Flitter, Gretchen Foundray, Georgia Hemenway, Mary Hollingworth, Judy Hoppe, Mimi Hottinger, Dawn Hubmer, Ann Keenan, Karen Kortuem, Dorothy McIntyre, Linda Milow-Riedell, Joyce Nelson, Pat Norris, Harriet Plotz, Marsha Qualset, Lisa Ray, Cathy Rieff, Jan Rozeboom, Karna Swenson-Stock, Patti Thiem, Ardie Thompson, Lori Thro, Cyndee Tovsen, Kay Ulrich, and Becky Valenta. The club is always looking for new members. If interested please call the club president, Becky Valenta, at 345-1316.

***Annual Plant Sale**



May is an exciting month, full of colors and new life. Many of us are eager to get outside, and enjoy the outdoors. Before purchasing plants for your garden, come and see what is available at the Blue Earth County Historical Society's Annual Plant Sale. The fund-raising event will be held on Saturday, May 7, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on the Hubbard House grounds, 606 South Broad Street, Mankato. We will offer a wide variety of annuals, perennials, vegetable plants, hanging baskets and a limited number of potted evergreens.

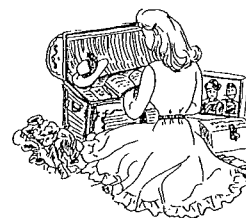
Members of the Twilight Garden Club and Blue Earth Country Master Gardeners will also be available to answer questions.

For further information, please call 345-5566.

*** Grandma's Attic and Bake Sale**

BECHS will sponsor Grandma's Attic and Bake Sale on Saturday June 25 from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. If you have items to donate please bring them to the Heritage Center before June 15. We are also in need of workers for this event. Please call Linda at 345-5566 for further information.

Mother's Hope Chest



In July, the Heritage Center Gallery will host a display of beautiful handcrafted items, such as quilts, doiles, pillows, and dresser scarves. If you would like to loan items for this display, please contact Linda, at 345-5566 before June. 10.

Women are often overlooked by historians. BECHS would like to remedy this situation in our community.

Biographies of the men who helped create the county are abundant but those of respective women are lacking.

Women assumed many roles in the community. They weren't just homemakers but often worked as journalists, midwives, teachers, lawyers, dressmakers and farm wives, to name a few.

Now more than ever, it's recognized that women's roles need to be included in the study of history before that history is gone.

BECHS needs your help in the endeavor. The Society asks you to share your knowledge, artifacts and anecdotes so that women's roles in our county's heritage can be thoroughly represented at the Heritage Center.

Family Research Class



Are you working on a family history? Have you always wanted to, but didn't know where to start? The Family Research Class can help.

We have had many requests to repeat the classes, taught by Pam Brunfelt last February. On Thursday, May 12, she will again present "Documenting a Family Genealogy" and on May 19, "The Preservation of Family Documents and Photos." Both programs start at 7:00 PM and will be held at the Heritage Center. Cost is \$10.00 per class. Payment is required in advance.

Brunfelt is an experienced historian. A 1979 Mankato State University graduate, she has a degree in history and minors in mass communications and political science.

Brunfelt spent ten years as an archivist and historian for the Ottertail Historical Society. During her time there, she taught county history to school groups and adult organizations.

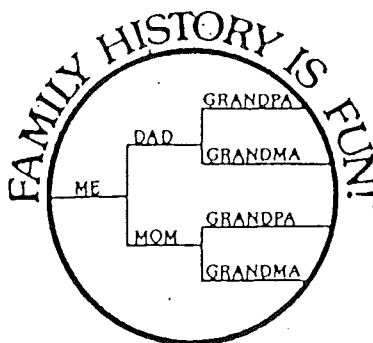
Among many other projects, Brunfelt also has done research for major exhibits and set up a newspaper indexing system.

Between 1989 and 1992, Brunfelt served as executive director of the Crow Wing County Historical Society. At Crow Wing, she continued her previous work while creating a working partnership with four other historical agencies in the county. She successfully obtained several grants for the Crow Wing Historical Society.

Currently a graduate student at Mankato State University, Brunfelt is majoring in Minnesota History and minoring in American literature.

She has made scores of presentations--similar to the two she will present to BECHS in May--to various historical society and academic groups. She has also testified before various Minnesota House of Representatives committees on behalf of history and humanities related topics.

Brunfelt's presentation should be informative to anyone interested, whether they're a serious historian or a novice. Hope to see you all there!



Thank You for Your Donations

Mary M. Balcerzak
Glenn E. Bartsch
John D. Burton
Cambria Township
Lloyd & Elsie Davis
Curt Fisher
Lucille Fitzsimmons
General Mills Foundation
Harley & Janet Goff
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Grams
Mrs. Herbert Handel
Kathryn T. Hanson
Fyrne Haugen
Viola Holbrook
Edith Hopman
Mr. & Mrs. L.H. Ireland
Orv & Mary Ann Jensen
Charles C. & Barbara Johnson
Dr. & Mrs. R.W. Kearney
Mr. Wilbur J. Kraus
Lois M. Kvitek
Tom Marks
Ms. Marilyn Ringheim
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth L. Thompson
Medo Township
R.J. Nuessle
Jo Schultz
Alma Severson
John L. Thro
Miss Helen A. Wiedenheft
Dean C. and Ruth Wykoff

Former State Representative Carl M. Johnson Remembers Gus Johnson

Note: the following is a transcript of an interview.

"I'm going to spend a little time trying to recap some of the things that I remember about Gussie Johnson.

First of all, I certainly do remember him as an excellent legislator. I first got to know him when I went to the legislature, and that was of course, shortly after the election. He wasn't in our caucus and he wasn't in the other caucus. At the time there were Conservatives and Liberals, but he wasn't either one. He was an Independent and the only one that served there without some kind of caucus affiliation--but, that's what made him valuable to both sides. Everybody knew that when Gus spoke it came from strong belief, not from party affiliation... and that was a real asset when he would make a presentation or become involved in a debate. His debating skills were excellent. He was an extremely capable orator and you didn't have to wonder what he said when he sat down. He used some care in picking his issues and was never up, other than when he thought it was important.

I got to know him certainly as a fellow who had done fairly well in life, but had never forgotten the little guy.... [he told] me about

his most enjoyable time of the year. That was when he would look through the accounts and, knowing the customers he had, he'd send them a card marked PAID at Christmastime.... He was just such a kind and gentle man, at least as I got to know him he was.

When it comes to the legislature, he was quite a guy. We all remembered him as the little fellow who was often times told to stand up when he already was standing up. Being small in stature myself, I could relate to that, but he would often times be kidded in that regard....

He was such a gentleman--I say this with all kinds of respect--because this was just something that was part of his nature. He loved to smoke, and they allowed smoking in the Chamber back in his day. One time he happened to throw a cigarette, or else some ashes fell, into the wastebasket that he and I shared in the Chamber. And it started to burn! We had to do something and he was quick to find a solution. He just stood up and stamped in the wastebasket until the fire went out, but of course everybody knew by the time because there was a lot of smoke in the air and ordinarily you didn't see a person stamping in the wastebasket in the middle of a legislative session.

I guess though, that I remember Gus most by his ability to debate and his ability to just always remember the little guy. It was represented in his discussions on all sorts of issues--certainly the garnishment of wages. In certain cases, I didn't know anything about most of the issues he spoke on because he was an attorney and I was a farmer. I do remember that there was one thread that followed him through his life, it was his keen ability to remember that little people have problems too. That's the way I'm going to remember Gus."

Young Historians

Young Historians is a monthly program developed for third through sixth grade students. In May, Young Historians will meet at the Heritage Center on Saturday, May 28, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM. Come learn about the lifestyles of the pioneers. Refreshments will be served.

Bring a white T-shirt for the Saturday, June 18 meeting. From 2:00 to 4:00 PM, participants will design and paint their shirts.

Programs are free to members of the Society and \$1.50 for non-members. Call 345-5566 during business hours to register.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May

May 7

Plant Sale - 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM
Hubbard House grounds

May 10

Cemetery Project - 9:00 AM
Calvary Cemetery

May 12

Genealogy Class - 7:30 p.m.
Heritage Center

May 19

Family Photograph and Document
Class - 7:30 p.m.
Heritage Center

May 28

Lifestyles of the Pioneer
Young Historians -
2-4 p.m.
Heritage Center

June

June 9

The Tale of Two Chiefs
Lecture by John Christensen
7:00 p.m. - Heritage Center

June 14

Cemetery Project - 9:00 a.m.
Finish Glenwood and move to Pilgrims
Rest

June 16

The Dakota Conflict
Lecture - 7:00 p.m. Heritage Center

June 18

T-Shirt Painting
Young Historians 2-4 p.m.
Heritage Center

June 23

*Ojibwe Family; Season of
Tradition and Change*
Lecture by Rosemary Christensen
7:00 p.m. Heritage Center

June 25

Grandma's Attic & Bake Sale
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Membership News

*Thank you to the new and
renewing members*

Elaine Anderson
Lester & Shirley Anderson
Hugh Belgard Family
Iona Bursaw
Elizabeth Butler
Joseph M. Dobie
Lucille A. Fitzsimmons
Tom & Julie Frederick
Katherine Frost
G.M. Hoxie
Lyle & Kay Jacobson
Suzette Johnson
Robert T. Junge
Jerry & Delilah Keenan
W.A. & Barbara Maher
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Marshall
Dallas G. McColley
Karen McGregor
Mr. & Mrs. Robert McTigue
Mrs. Garnet Nelson
Mr. & Mrs. John Norman
Palmer Bus Service
Dr. & Mrs. R.A. Sanford
Mr. & Mrs. Ken Thompson
Helen Wiedenheft

Cemetery Project 9:00 a.m.

May 10 - Calvary
June 14 - Glenwood Cemetery
Pilgrims Rest
July 12 - Pilgrims Rest
August 9 - Woodland Hills
September 13 - Woodland Hills

Volunteers are once again needed
to help with the transcription of the
above cemeteries. Those interested
should meet at 9:00 a.m. at the
specified cemetery.

Blue Earth County Historical Society

Board of Trustees

Tom Weight
Betsy Winn
Tom Salsbery
Jo Schultz

President
Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary

Glenn Bartsch
Lona Falenczykowski
Harley Goff
Elmer Goodrich
Suzette Johnson
Winston Grundmeier

Gwen Griffin
Tom Hager
Peg Ganey
Nancy Solle
Jacki Lageson
Stanley Steel

Staff

Linda Henry
Carol Oney
Bryce Stenzel
Betty Henry

Director
Archives Aide
Museum Aide
Museum Aide

Heritage Center

415 Cherry St., Mankato
(507) 345-5566

Exhibit Gallery

1-4 p.m., Tuesday - Sunday

Research Center

1-4 p.m., Tuesday - Saturday

Hubbard House

Closed for Restoration

Blue Earth County Historical Society
415 Cherry Street
Mankato, Minnesota 56001
(507) 345-5566

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Mankato, MN
56001
Permit No. 343

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Published bimonthly by the Blue Earth
County Historical Society.
Design and layout by Michelle Maack
Friederichs
©1994 Blue Earth County Historical Society