

The Blue Earth County Historian

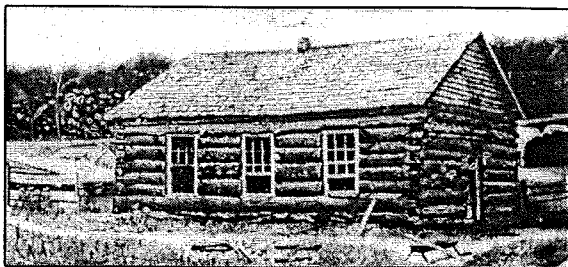
Blue Earth County Historical Society. Fall 1999

East Side West Side Public High Schools in Mankato

By Shirley Grundmeier

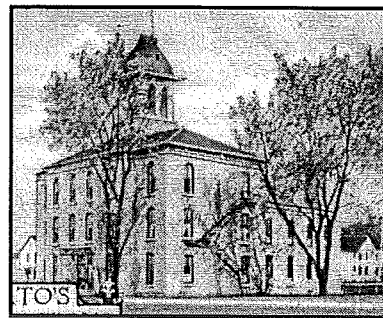
It's October 1999. And homecoming time again. All over the country graduates of schools, both public and private, high school and college, have been returning to their alma maters. Mankato is the destination for two of our schools, West High and East High, the focus for the 50 and 25 year graduates as they reunite with classmates who share their memories. Few of the Mankato returnees realize how lucky they are; that one hundred years ago there was no high school, and forty years before that no school at all.

In 1855, Mankato was only three years old. The early settlers were typical in that once they had housing, churches and schools came next. So in 1855, a few children went to the first school built specially for that purpose, a log cabin on the site where Union Square is (formerly Union School.) Thirty-seven children attended, about one third of all children in Mankato, and many of these could not come regularly. There was only one teacher, L. G. M. Fletcher, and by 1857, he was teaching sixty-seven students. In 1859, he finally had an assistant and together they taught ninety-seven in all grades and all subjects from "primary A-B-C's" to an adult class in civil engineering. By now, rented rooms in the community were full as well as the log cabin.



The old log school.

In 1867, the new Union School was built on the log cabin site, at a cost of \$15,000, and there were now seven teachers. In 1876, the first official high school classes began, and in 1855, nine students were members of the first high school graduation class. As they still do today, these students came from all over Mankato, North Mankato and nearby rural areas.



"Old" Union School

With increased enrollment came the need for separate elementary schools, and in 1871, the Pleasant Grove School was built on the corner of Byron and Pleasant street (later Lincoln School) and housed primary school children from the west side of town, as well as 7th and 8th grades. Franklin Elementary School followed in 1874, and in 1885, the West Mankato School (now Roosevelt) was built. Many children of the era finished their education with the 8th grade, but now there was room for more at the high school level.

East Side, West Side continued on page 3

BECHS Hires New Executive Director

In August, James Lundgren began as the new Executive Director for the Blue Earth County Historical Society. Read the article from the Executive Director to learn more about James. Welcome to the BECHS James!

The Blue Earth County Historian
Fall 1999

The Blue Earth County Historian is published quarterly for the members of the BECHS. The BECHS has the mission of collecting, preserving and publishing material relating to the history of Blue Earth County.

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Join Us!

Please consider joining the BECHS. Members receive free admission to the Heritage Museum, free access to the research center, free admission to the R. D. Hubbard House non event tours, reduced admission for special events, quarterly newsletter, discount on many items in the museum shop, and the ability to help preserve the heritage of Blue Earth County!

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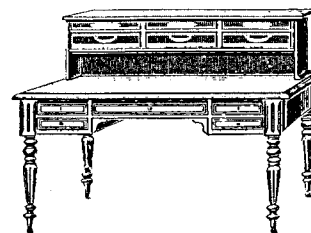
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Make checks payable to BECHS and return with this form to 415 East Cherry Street, Mankato MN 56001.

Thank You!



From The Executive Director.

Greetings. My name is James Lundgren and I began serving as the Executive Director in August. I have met some of you and look forward to meeting more in the months and years ahead. I would like to take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about myself. I was born and raised in Minnesota and as I travel around the United States, I have yet to find another state that is so diverse and pleasurable to be in.

I have always enjoyed history and when I started going to college decided that I wanted a career in historic sites and museums. My degree is from the University of Minnesota. I had a double major of American History and American Indian Studies, with an emphasis on Minnesota in both areas.

I have worked as a seasonal guide for the Minnesota Historical Society, as the Program Manager at Murphy's Landing in Shakopee, and most recently was the Executive Director of the Rice County Historical Society in Faribault.

During my travels, visiting large and small historical sites and museums is always on the agenda. I am also a reenactor of history. I volunteer for sites to help educate people on the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes fur trade and the War of 1812. When I am not working at the museum I can often be found visiting or volunteering at other sites.

I was very impressed with the Blue Earth County Historical Society and the R. D. Hubbard house. I am enjoying my new position as I learn more about the history of this county and look forward to the various projects and programs of the Society.

I would like to thank the Board Members, Staff, and Volunteers who have made me feel very welcome. They should also be thanked often for all that they do to keep the society up and running. You will find them listed throughout the newsletter. Thank you all and if anyone is interested in becoming a volunteer, please call the Heritage Museum for more information. We need people for little jobs, big jobs, tours and committees. Even if you have just a few hours a month, we can use the help and I'm sure we can set you up with a task you will enjoy.

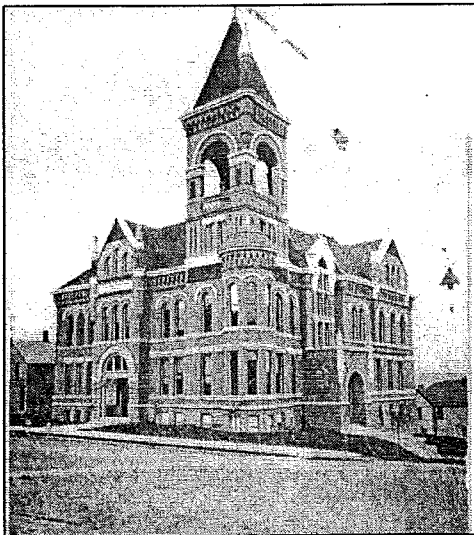
James Lundgren

East Side, West Side, continued from page 1

By 1889, the High School Library numbered 680 volumes, including the classics such as Shakespeare, Dickens, Scott, Thackeray, Cooper, Irving and Tolstoy. There were also 50 volumes on English history, 10 on "The lives of the Lord Chancellors," while only 2 of the "History of Civilization" and 6 on United States History. Other titles were "Mother Goose for Grown Folks," "The Philosophy of Eating," "Light Science for Leisure Hours" and "Dropped from the Clouds." "We Girls" sat next to "What to Do" and Never Too Late to Mend."

This is not to say that the students received a poor education; on the contrary, the 1883 Commencement program contains a speech given in Latin, orations and essays, piano and vocal selections. One of the orations was "The State versus the Railroads" and another, "Let There be Light." In 1892, an oration explored "The Power of the Press;" in 1893, seniors dealt with "Home Influences" and "American Humor," as well as "The Marble Lies Waiting."

There were also activities for the students; in 1885 the first school club was started and in 1889, the first football game was played on the prairie in back of Franklin School—and the MHS players beat Mankato Normal School (make that 'college.')



First High School

The long-awaited Mankato High School opened in 1894, on the corner of Fifth and Hickory streets, across from the Courthouse on one side and Mankato Normal on another. For the first time, the high school had its own principal, as did a separate junior high section. Space was at a premium from the beginning, and in 1911 an adjoining addition on the Hickory Street side opened. The school could now offer a 12-week short course for farm boys, advanced industrial arts and manual training, home economics and physical education for the girls, and more training in music and art. Starting with an enrollment of 311 in 1894, it was felt there was now plenty of room the school had a capacity of 550. Two more firsts: in 1914 the first summer school classes were held, and the first school newspaper was published.

Barely 13 years later, in 1927, the high school was bulging with 790 students: 516 in the high school and 274 in junior high. And the school itself was neither modern nor fireproof. Some classes were being held in the basement, which had few exits, and there was growing fear that "any fire might result in terrible loss of life." Lincoln School, on the site of the older Pleasant Grove School, had opened in 1923, with separate sections for grade school and junior high students from the west half of Mankato.

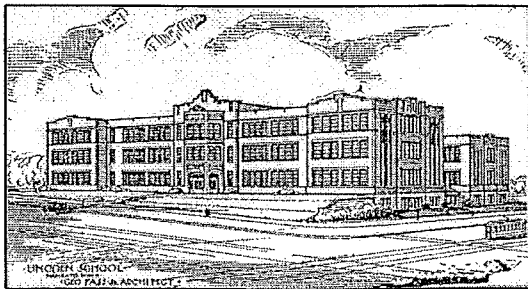
Luckily, Franklin Junior High opened in 1928 to house the junior high pupils still at the high school. The Great Depression of 1928 would put a stop to any other new buildings, and emergency repairs to the high school in 1930 would have to do.

High school students themselves were, for the most part, unaware of their elders' problems as they continued to enjoy more firsts: the first Homecoming in 1928, the first dance, and the beginning use of the term "Scarlets" as team nickname. That was also the year Mankato became a charter member of the future Big Nine Athletic Conference.

The old high school creaked through the '30s, barely staying ahead of repairs. That was all that could be done, even after the state fire marshal condemned the building in early 1939—other than pulling down the steeple on the bell tower, felt to be a hazard. No crystal ball could predict that two years later, fate would intervene.

On Friday, July 18, 1941, six weeks of summer school ended, and at 11 a.m. on Saturday, students came to pick up their report cards. One hour later, fire was discovered in the basement walls and it quickly spread throughout the old wooden interior. Heroic tales were later told of efforts to save records, band uniforms and books, but most was lost, and it took all available firemen 29 hours to get the blaze under control. Even as rumors of arson spread, Free Press editor Franklin Rogers called for clear heads and stressed that "The important consideration now is how to house 680 high school students during the coming year and, secondly, where and what kind of new building the district is to erect."

First, they addressed the housing problem. It was decided to place senior high students in the junior high section of Lincoln. The displaced Lincoln students occupied half of the Franklin building while Franklin's junior high students occupied the other half. By September 2nd, all students were in new, crowded quarters, coping as best they and their teachers could.



Lincoln School

The high school students now at Lincoln used lapboards as desktops as they studied in the auditorium and those with sack lunches ate

them there. The Cafeteria seated only 80, so others with sack lunches lined the walls of the gymnasium as they ate. In the classrooms, 6'2" seniors sat with both legs extended out into the aisles as they occupied desks normally filled by 7th graders. But everyone coped; there was a hefty \$200,000 fire insurance settlement, more people were back at work, and the city was ready to float a new bond issue for a new school as soon as a site was chosen—it wouldn't be long. Meanwhile, we kids found it all exciting, and we could handle being crowded as long as it didn't last!

Excitement reigned when a site was chosen; the new building would be erected partly on the site of the old school and would stretch from Fourth to Fifth streets, between Jackson and Hickory. It would take a million dollars to build and equip, but it would double the capacity of the old school and feature an auditorium seating 2,200! The architect's sketch, with its 4 stories on the Fourth Street level and 3 on the Fifth, appeared in the October 30th Free Press, and voters would go to the polls on December 16th.

At 12 noon on December 8th, I was in the Lincoln auditorium, one of the 680 students who filled every inch, standing shoulder to shoulder. The lucky ones, like me, had Study Hall there just before, and got seats. We all listened intently to loudspeakers as President Roosevelt spoke to the Congress in person and the nation on radio: "Yesterday, Sunday, December 7th, 1941, a day that will live in infamy, the United States was suddenly and deliberately attacked . . ." We were at war—many of the young men in that room would never have a Homecoming.

We all hoped the war would be over in a few months. The bond issue went to a vote, and passed easily, and the ruins of the old school were razed in preparation for the day we could build. But hopes were dashed when, in March 1942, the War Production Board decreed that, although we were in desperate need, "The use of available iron and steel in ships, guns, tanks

and planes will be of far more benefit in keeping our enemies away from our shores.”

The war finally ended in August 1945 and “school” talk began. There was controversy from the start, after a city councilman proposed a different site: Memorial Field, the infamous ‘slough’ to the townsfolk, subject to yearly springtime flooding. At one time the Free Press had even carried a photo of someone rowing a boat from Van Brunt to Front Street through water five feet deep.

The “battle” over a site would last two and a half years. The school board called for an engineering survey; engineers said 42’ pilings would be needed to reach solid limestone under the slough, and they suggested an alternate site at Main and Division streets. Free Press polls in early 1946 found 38% of residents favored the Main/Division site and high school students were 57% in favor. So the board went on record for the hilltop site in the summer of 1946.

Then, the school board waited until November to order an election. The board said it was for “public opinion only,” and they wouldn’t be bound by the results. For weeks before the election, controversy raged, with one group taking out a full-page ad in the paper: “Is it fair to ask our children to go to school in a swamp?”

When the vote was counted, the “swamp” won; now the board called for a mandate election, and the date was set for January 1947. This time, the slough site was chosen by voters by an even greater majority. Well, the board decided, maybe if we condemn the higher ground in the area bounded by Marshall, State and Van Brunt streets and build our school there, we could use the slough for an athletic field. When the new election was held, in November (ten months later!), voters decided they could not order 27 private homes to be demolished, what with housing materials still so critical. The high school students had now had enough.

Up at Lincoln one day, 500 of them, including Historical Society volunteer Win Grundmeier, walked out “on strike” and gathered in front of the school. The principal was sympathetic but called police. The police came, listened to the spokesmen’s complaints, and then formed an escort all the way to the Free Press office. There, the group was met by the superintendent of schools, who also was sympathetic but ordered the group to return to school. This was on a Tuesday, and with the Thanksgiving break, everything was put on hold until the following Monday. Perhaps due to the uproar this caused, the board now set another election for January 1948. Strangely, they offered the same proposal that had been defeated in November, and again, “NO!”

Then, finally, a new proposal was announced, one that included a hefty bond issue but would place the new school in Memorial Field. Voters, probably tired of the whole thing, voted in favor. The slough would be filled in, the school built, the price tag a whopping \$2 million, twice the cost of the new school in the fall of 1941.

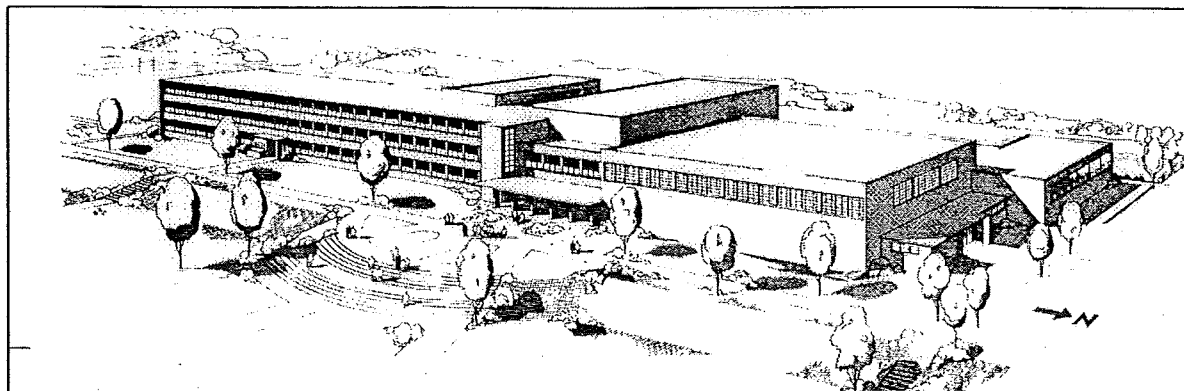
The troubles weren’t over; it would be three more years before students could occupy a new school. Yes, there was a flood, in the spring of 1951, that delayed construction. But, happily, the Class of 1951 was able to receive their diplomas on the auditorium stage of their new school. And the formal dedication in October 1951 was attended by the new senior class, the first after ten years to have enough “elbow room.”

And, yes, there were some who said, “I told you so” when a disastrous flood in spring 1952 found much of Mankato and North Mankato under water, and again in 1965, before the Army Corps of Engineers could finish a new \$10 million dike. There was some repairable damage both times, covered by insurance, but thanks to the dike; a major floor in 1969 never touched the twin towns.

In 1951, high school enrollment was 690, but 'baby boomer' projections indicated more room would be needed, so a wing was added to the high school in 1959. And it was needed; by 1965, there were 1,175 students in the three high school grades. A citizens' advisory committee recommended that a second high school be built on the east edge of Mankato, to be ready for occupancy in 1971. The school board election included funds for a second high school, and voters passed it handily.

present school would now be West High School.

With West's remodeling, the school would be comparable to East, and the two schools would have similar programming and scheduling, with nine-period days so that students would have time for independent research. West, too, would house ninth-graders. As of August 1973, the combined enrollment of the two high schools would be 2,300.



Mankato West

In July 1968, the opportunity came to purchase 38 acres of land near Kennedy School, part of the Stockman farm now owned by a daughter. She offered the land at half the price of comparable property with only one stipulation; the library in the new school be named in honor of her parents. The board quickly agreed on both counts, and the Stockman Media Center at East is now home to all forms of archival materials.

Soon a bond issue passed which provided for a new high school, an elementary school, and remodeling of the existing high school. A record number of voters bought the package, in spite of its \$11 million price tag, \$9 million to be for the high school alone. The completion date was set for 1972, for a complex to house ninth-graders as well as the three upper grades. The state-of-the-art modular school would have an Olympic-sized swimming pool, an all-weather track and playing field, a spacious theater with a huge stage and descending tiers for the audience, a planetarium, etc. etc. It would be named East High School, and the

East finally had its first "senior class" in the fall of 1973 (more on that later) and both schools would be overcrowded when 7th and 8th graders were moved in. (Over the next twenty years, the Dakota Middle School would open and East would also press for a middle school.)

Part of the overcrowding came from the needs of new programs, particularly with new technology such as use of computers. In 1993, East High had become the first general high school in the nation to have a CIM, Computer Integrated Manufacturing system. Technology education classes at East saw an enrollment jump in girls, from 4% to 15% in six years. And at West, interactive television, allowing students in Mankato to chat with students in Fairmont, St. Peter and New Richland, was well underway by 1997.

All was not just 'cracking the books' in either school and never had been. From the very early days, students and teachers alike participated in extra-curricular activities. Besides the "firsts" mentioned earlier, there were language clubs, Yell Club, FFA and FHA,

Saturday Morning League basketball, Girl Reserve units, Civic Club (and later Youth in Government,) Student Council, and many more. In 1990, of the 1,290 senior high students, 800 were on one or more athletic teams. 526 participated in choir, band and orchestra, and uncounted hundreds were involved in plays, speech and debate tournaments.

Fostering school spirit since 1926 have been the well-known logos, crests, school hymns, and rousers (fight songs.) If returning graduates from years past remember nothing else, it's usually one or more of these. In the late 1970s, West changed its time-honored crest with a growling grizzly. It had been the school's symbol since 1957, although it was never the school's 'official' mascot. The term "Scarlets" had been honored since 1926. West's new crest featured a torch with an M over W logo and the word "Scarlets" on its stock, with education itself well represented.

East High's crest features its cougar mascot guarding the East Pride logo. Rousers of both schools urge their teams to "Fight for Mankato!" while the hymns bring lumps to the throats of graduating seniors. When these seniors return for their Homecoming 25 or 50 years later, they may have forgotten most of what they studied so long ago, but they respond to the logos and, with a little help, sing the songs as lustily as they ever did.

And now it's October 1999 and Homecoming time again. The Classes of 1974 and 1949 have been back in the old home town, celebrating in high style with banquets, lunches, brunches, assemblies, parades, Queen coronations, and

football games. This year is different for one of the classes: the East High School Class of 1974. Back in the Fall of 1973, the senior class had been split into two according to attendance boundaries. The class members were assigned to either East or West.

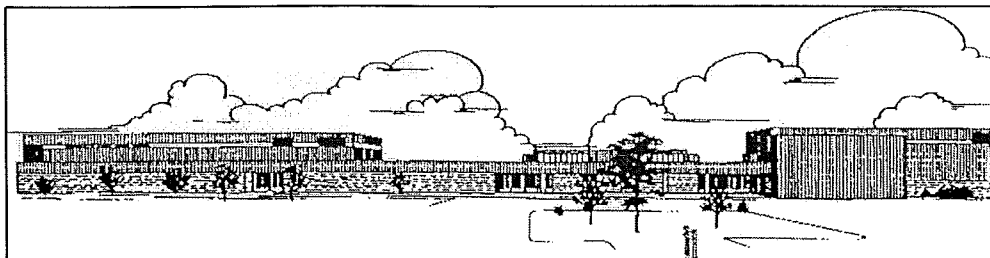
But different schools could not separate them. These seniors—all 520 of them—had gone through school together until this year. By the next year, with two years spent in different schools, there would be no problem: school pride and rivalry had been in earnest.

Thus, the East High School Class of '74 still considers itself a part of West, and has cheerfully attended Homecoming celebrations at both West and East, held on different weekends. But that's not all; this class, which has held its own reunion every five years since graduation, is having its own Joint Reunion in mid-October. There will be much socializing; members will attend the East-West football game, there will be a Saturday alumni scrimmage with an alumni band to help in the cheering, and culminating will be a glorious "Class Reunion Party" at the Mankato Golf Club.

This year, our returning high school classes have been treated to great weather (one minor snowfall . . .) to enhance their reunions. October 1999 will be, indeed, a Homecoming Time for them to remember. —

Shirley Grundmeier is a long time volunteer for the BECHS. We would like to thank her for all her work preparing this article.

Mankato East



***Charitable Giving Tax Relief Act
Becomes Minnesota Law.***

Another First for Minnesota happened earlier this year. The legislature passed a bill for a state level tax deduction for non-itemizers. Legislators included the Charitable Giving Tax Relief in the 1999 Tax bill and it is now a permanent part of the Minnesota Tax Code. Two years of energetic efforts on the part of nonprofits led to this landmark legislation.

Minnesotans give generously because they believe in the work that nonprofits do in our communities. Now donors really do get a tax deduction for their contributions even if they are non-itemizers and use the short form when filing tax returns.

What does this mean?

The tax code provides a 50% tax deduction for nonitemizers for charitable contributions over \$500.00. After a non-itemizing individual or couple donates over \$500 in money or goods to any combination of charities, additional contributions are eligible for the 50% deduction.

Which non-profits are eligible charities?

Any 501 (c)(3) is an eligible organization.

What do taxpayers need to do to claim the deduction?

Taxpayers should save receipts for goods and monetary contributions. Tax forms for 1999 and all subsequent years will include instructions and a line where nonitemizers can report their charitable giving for the year. Add up all donations and follow directions for reporting the amounts to adjust taxable income.

Nonprofits appreciate the strong legislative support that this measure has had in Minnesota. The nonprofit sector worked together for this victory and shares great pride in this public policy change. Now organizations have a significant opportunity to encourage increased giving and raise resources that strengthen our ability to provide programs and services in a wide range of areas that touch people's lives

and strengthen communities: human services, arts, education, health, environment, and civic participation.

Passage of the bill demonstrates what nonprofits can accomplish when we take a stand. Thanks to all who helped with this effort and who are prepared to continue to work on initiatives that keep our organizations and our communities strong.

If anyone cares to take advantage of this new law by donating to the BECHS, please let us know!

BECHS Volunteers Since the Last Issue.

The following people have generously donated their time this summer and early fall. We very gratefully acknowledge their efforts, as we could not accomplish our goals without their help. Thank you very much!

Volunteers	
Apitz, Darrel	Jansen, Steve
Baer, Marcia	Jensen, Orv
Baer Jim	Keenan, Delilah
Baird, Jane	Kettner, Jodi
Bartsch, Glenn	Kubicek, Joe
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Bertholdi, Bobbi	Lavitschke, Jo-an
Bisch, Cres	Lavitschke, Dean
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Boyce, Doris	Lundblad, Larry
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Burton, Ronnie	Norman, Beth
Christenson, John	Norman, John
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Cramer, Mike	Oney, Gary
Crogg, Tyler	O'Sullivan, Mary
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Dooley, Mary	Ries, Bill
Falenczykowski, Lona	Ries, Marge
Falgren, Jed	Salsbury, Tom
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Garlick, Russ	Shultz, Jo
Goff, Harley	Tarjeson, Jane
Griebel, Roger	Walker, Jeff
Grundmeier, Win	Webb, Donna
Grundmeier, Shirley	Wittrock, Eleanor
Hagen, Tom	Zimmer, Beth
Hansen, Kathryn	

**ARCHIVES AND ARTIFACT
DONATIONS
JULY -SEPTEMBER 1999**

The BECHS Board of Trustees would like to thank the following people for their generosity in adding to the collections of the Society.

Mrs. Gretchen Becker, Mpls., MN: Photos of the Mahowald family and Mahowald Hardware Store, Mankato, MN.

Rick Hanna, Mankato, MN: Family history of Thomas and Mary Purves.

William F. Appel, Mpls. MN: Twelve framed portraits of the Class of 1909, Mankato High School, Mankato, MN.

Dr. Karl Hans Berzdorf, Maria Laac, Germany: Reproduction of a daguerreotype of Gerhard Lulsdorf.

BEC Land Records Mapping Department: 30 atlases and maps of Blue Earth County.

All Seasons Arena, Mankato, MN: Display case.

Polly Marshall, Mankato, MN: Floral dress (c1920s), little girls' dresses and gloves, hand held hair dryer, card shuffle, and baby bib.

Ann Christenson, St. Peter, MN: Photos of the Good Thunder Pork Feed Parade (c1977), the Tractorcade of 1978, John Krieger and his obelisk, and the Pintail Club.

Bonnie Hill, Emmett, ID: Lifetime Memories book from the funeral of Benjamin Harrison Burmeister and framed group portrait of the Class of 1909.

Norma Blaisdell-Baack, Mapleton, MN: 18 yearbooks from the Waldorf-Pemberton High School, covering the years of 1961-1977, 1979-1980.

Mrs. Orva Sorensen, Albert Lea, MN: American Red Cross First Aid Instructor patch and Red Cross Roll Call pin formerly belonging to Johanna Weblemoe.

Bernard & Roberta Griebel, Winnebago, MN: Leather-bound family photo album formerly belonging to George Griebel.

William R. Harmer, Austin, TX: Minnesota in the Civil War and Indian Wars, 1861-1865.

Doris Hoffman, Salem, SD: Matchbook size sewing kit advertising the A.W.Welter Co., John Manville Contractors from Mankato, MN.

Mary Dooley, Mankato, MN: Book The Source; A Guidebook of American Genealogy, 1997.

Beverly Pierce Strobel, El Dorado Hills, CA: Family genealogy, "Pierce Pages; the Story of an American Family, 1874-1999".

Thomas E. Ross, San Diego, CA: Family History of John and Dorothy (Franz) Minse.

Robinson Appraisal, Mankato, MN: 6-drawer filing cabinet containing a multitude of negatives depicting buildings or homes in Mankato, North Mankato, St. Peter and other towns (not BEC) as well as rural, lake areas, and smaller communities.

Dorothy Good, Mankato, MN: Several books from the c1894-1901 era (Cram's New Century Atlas of the World, Advanced Geography, World's Congress of Religions, and The Means of Grace) and the 1924 calendar photo of the interior of St. Matthew's Church of Vernon Center, MN.

H. Roger Smith, Mankato, MN: numerous black & white photos of Old Town homes and businesses, c1969-1970s

Roger Norland, North Mankato, MN: Magazine "Military Images", July-August 1999.

Sean Hanson, Mankato, MN: 1941 page form the Mankato Free Press (pressed vinyl mold for printing page).

Paul Hadley, North Mankato, MN: scale models of the steamboats HENRIETTA and THE BLACK HAWK.

Donna Webb, Mankato, MN: 1950s era film projector.

Shirley Kysilko, St. Paul, MN: Various sheet music ranging from the modern to the classical.

Glenn Bartsch, Mpls., MN: Photos depicting the Bartsch Garage, Rapidan, MN, and the 1903 Cadillac owned by Ed Tarjeson.

BECHS Financial Donors

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Blue Earth County
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BECHS Past Events

The Blue Earth County fair was a busy time for the staff and volunteers of the BECHS. Exhibits were prepared and brought out to the fair grounds. The Fire Engine experienced some mechanical difficulties. The truck has been brought in for repairs. The problem was identified and has been fixed.

The Preservation Alliance of Minnesota brought in its exhibit on the ten most endangered properties of Minnesota. The Alliance picks ten properties each year to focus attention on, and to improve the efforts to preserve them. Five properties from Blue Earth County were nominated for 1999, but were not selected for the top ten. They are J. C. Marlow barn in Lime Township; First Baptist Church in Mankato; Mansonic Temple in Mankato; First

National Bank in Lake Crystal; and the Rapidan Dam in Rapidan Township.

The Anthony Wayne Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) celebrated its 100th Anniversary. They held a tea at the carriage house and took tours of the R. D. Hubbard House in September.

The Annual Ghosts From the Past program was held October 9th and 10th at the Heritage Center. Six interesting skits were performed on the Scandals and Dirty Deeds of Blue Earth County.

It can never be said enough, so once again, THANK YOU to all the volunteers who helped plan and carry out the programs of the BECHS. More help can always be used. Please call us if you are interested.

From the President

The long search for an Executive Director is over, and James Lundgren was selected as our new Executive Director. James brings valuable experience and new ideas to BECHS. We look forward to working with James. Our thanks go to Kandi Demaray for serving as Interim Director during this transition period. Kandi did an excellent job of keeping us on track and moving forward.

Jane Tarjeson, BECHS President

New in the Gift Shop

Those Barracks Babies. The story of the lives and times of Veterans turned students in Mankato during the years following WW2.

Brackett's Battalion, Minnesota Cavalry 1861-1866. This book relates the history of a Minnesota Cavalry unit.

The Frederick Manfred Reader. An introductory reader on the works of this Midwest author.

New and Renewed Members

Anderson, Leroy & Judy
Baerg-Vatndal Steve & Anita
Baird, Jane
Borrett, Mary
Davis, Cindy
Epple, Mrs. Damis
Fairchild, Cheryl
Farnsworth, Maureen
Fisher and Lidstrom
Frederick, Michael
Frost, Katherine
Habein, Dr. & Mrs. H. C.
Hamer, Nancy
Hansen, Norma
Hayeman, Edith
How, Mary Ellen
Ireland, Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence
Jackson, Ray
Johnson, Irene
Klosowski, Jean
Koeble, Earle
McLaughlin, Tom & Theresa
Meredith Foundation
Mohr, Harley & Ruth
Neumiller, Robert
Nuessle, Ruth
Payton, Katie
Peterson, Joan
Philps, Dean
Prechel, Clare
Reich, Judy & Jerry
Ringheim, Marilyn
Severson, Alma
Smilsberg, Mr. & Mrs. Lee
Steinberg, Dale
Swanson, Ken
Van Lanen, Ruth
Whitney, Edyth
Wieland, Mavis Day
Wright, Lorraine
Zelin, Robert
Zimmer, Beth, & Jim

Travel Like Bert News

The Blue Earth County Historical Society tour program, called "Travel Like Bert", were designed as a salute to Bert Burns who loved to travel the out of the way places and share his experiences with students and friends. Our "classroom on wheels" has completed three trips that have offered history, geography,

sociology, and geology along with fun and good times.

The first trip, TLB#1, concentrated on the history and development of Southeastern Minnesota, the bluff country. That trip was in the Fall of 1998. In the Spring of 1999, TLB#2 found us following the red river trails to the headwaters of the Minnesota River and then North along the Red River to pembina and Winnipeg with a return over the lake of the woods to Grand Rapids and home. On TLB#2 we concentrated on the influence of the mixed blood people of the area as it developed. We have recently returned from TLB#3 which dealt with the history of Southwestern Wisconsin and the Wisconsin River Valley. We made contact with the history of the HoChunk (Winnebago) native people and tied that to the Blue Earth County stay for the Winnebagos.

TLB#4 and TLB#5 are on the drawing board with plans to extend our visit to Wisconsin on TLB#4. We plan to visit the Eastern side of Wisconsin along the Fox River Valley, Green Bay, and Door County as we trace the early routes of people like Marquette, Joliet, Raddisson, Groseilliers, Father Hennepin, and Joseph Nicollet. This trip is planned for Mid May of 2000.

TLB#5 will follow the Dakota and Settler battles of 1862 to the west and into South Dakota to the area of Ft. Thompson and Pierre where the Dakota and HoChunk peoples were resettled after the conflict. This trip will run from September 21st through the 24th of 2000.

Itineraries and costs will be available shortly. We invite all of you, members and others to join us. It is appreciated if those who are interested indicate by contacting the Committee. We also look forward to your questions and suggestions. Please let us hear from you.

TLB Committee

Blue Earth County Historical Society
415 East Cherry Street
Mankato MN 56001

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BECHS Upcoming Events

October 23 & 24 Setting Pretty

The BECHS is joining the YWCA and Marian Anderson to display lovely collections of place settings, unique decorating ideas, and Marian's new release "A Time Remembered." The Hubbard and Cray Homes provide the background for the settings and will be open for tours both days.

November 23 Barnes & Noble Book Fair.

Get some Christmas shopping done while supporting the BECHS. Shop on the 23rd for books and use the coupon found inside this newsletter. The BECHS will receive a donation for each purchase recorded during those hours. Additional vouchers may be picked up from the Heritage Center prior to the event.

December 4th 1999
Annual BECHS Bake Sale

Please come to the Madison East Center and support the BECHS by buying baked goods and items from the Museum Store. The event runs from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Baked goods are also needed for this event. Please contact the BECHS for further information.

December 6 & 7
Christmas at the Hubbard House.

The R. D. Hubbard House will be open for holiday tours. Experience the Victorian mansion decorated for Christmas. Wander through the historic rooms where costumed guides will explain the distinctive furnishings and clothing from the turn of the century.