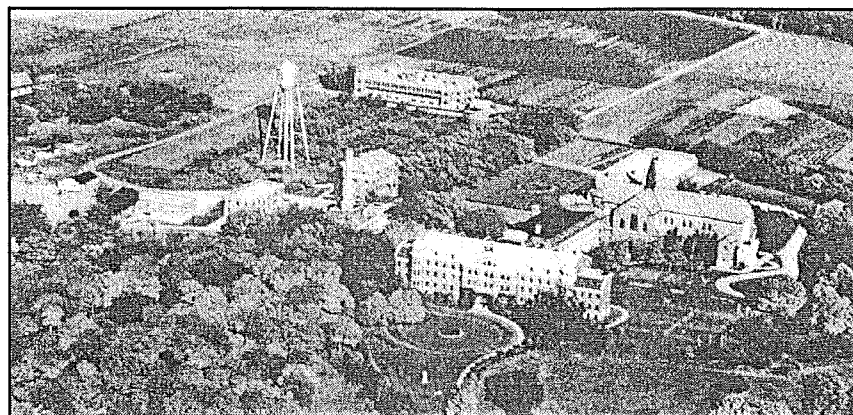


# The Blue Earth County Historian

Blue Earth County Historical Society Fall 2000



Airplane view of Good Counsel Hill

## MANKATO HIGH SCHOOLS - PART TWO

By Shirley Grundmeier

*This is part two of a three-part series on the high schools of Mankato. Shirley has researched these schools in the archives of the Blue Earth County Historical Society. The first installment dealt with the development of the public schools. The second and third installments will deal with the private schools and charter schools. We hope that you enjoy these articles. -Editor*

It's October 2000, and Homecoming time again. All over the country graduates of high schools, public and private, have been returning to their Alma Maters. Last year BECHS brought you "East Side, West Side", giving the history of the two public high schools in Mankato. This year, we will highlight the other Mankato high schools, one of which was public and state-operated, and the others, parochial and private.

### GRACE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Until recently there were several small Christian high schools operating in Mankato, including Trinity Christian, Faith Christian, and Grace Christian schools. Of the three, only Grace continues to be active, with classes for students in kindergarten through grade 12 now in session.

Back in 1979, the *Mankato Free Press* featured an article entitled: "Parochial schools: an ever-present Christian atmosphere." Citing the similarities among Baptist, Catholic and Lutheran schools in Mankato, *Free Press* staff writer Jon Holten noted that all begin the day with prayer and have chapel periodically. However, the schools differ in the amount of correlation religion has with secular subjects.

At Grace, said Pastor Frank Workman; "We try to interweave secular subjects with the word of God. Students at Grace memorize Bible verses, which stress discipline and morals. None of the Grace students smoke, drink or use drugs.

Three years later, a second *Free Press* article featured Pastor Workman as he left with 15 students for a national Christian school contest in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The students had earned the right to go by scoring first or second at the regional Accelerated Christian Education contest held earlier. The team of 15 was a record for the school, at that time 9 years old.

Grace Christian students numbered 70 and were secure in what Workman called "that country school atmosphere...The younger learn from the older, and vice versa. (and) all the students have an opportunity to express themselves." Apparently Grace has found the formula and continues strong after 29 years.

### IMMANUEL LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL

As schools began to prepare for the opening of the 1986-87 school year, a notice appeared in the *Mankato Free Press*. It stated, "One of Mankato's oldest school systems, serving children for 119 years in grade school and 27 years in high school" was open for registration.

The school noted that it was "Christ-centered, personalized, filled all State requirements in English, mathematics, social studies and sciences, offered business and computer courses, and enrichment/specialized classes through Mankato State University, East High School and District 77 programs.

Mankato High Schools continued on page 3

***The Blue Earth County Historian***  
***Fall 2000***

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

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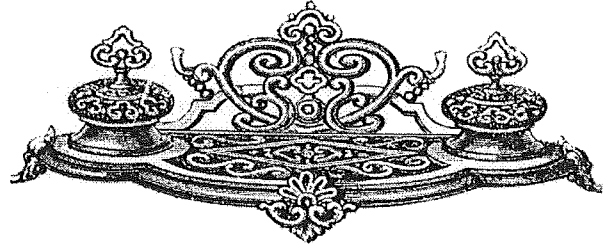
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**From the Executive Director**

My, how the summer went by fast. It seems as though it was just last week that we were opening up the Hubbard House for weekend tours and now the summer season has turned to fall. Several hundred people visited the Hubbard House and Exhibit Gallery during the summer season. We hope to get more volunteers to be able to open the house more during the year.

A new face has joined the ranks of the Blue Earth County Historical Society. John Hedstrom, recent MSU graduate, was hired as our Collections Manager. This position had been eliminated about a decade ago, but the need for someone to design exhibits and care for our collections was so strong the Board of Trustees authorized the position again. John is originally from New England, and has been in Mankato for several years. In his first month on the job he has already helped develop new exhibits and is diving into our records keeping us up to date. Many thanks to Win Grundmeier and Orv Jensen for all the hours they have spent working as volunteer curators over the years. They especially were very pleased to see the arrival of John. Welcome John, we hope you enjoy your position at BECHS.

Over the past few months, BECHS has been very busy with exhibits and programs. We prepared some displays for the Blue Earth County Fair, Rainbow Foods, and created a new exhibit on City Hall for our Exhibit Gallery. The Diorama and Vietnam Veteran's exhibits that went in earlier this year have been receiving many good comments. I encourage those of you who have not been to the gallery recently to plan a visit to see the changes.

This fall BECHS is restarting the popular Young Historians Program. We hope to see many children take advantage of the variety of programs we will be planning over the next year. We are looking forward to having between 4 and 6 events per year. The program is open to families with children from grades 3-6. Our first event was held in September. Look for future events listed in our newsletter, flyers and local papers.

Our annual "Ghosts from the Past" event has seen some changes as we moved the location to the R. D. Hubbard

and Lorin Cray homes. Having the YWCA as a neighbor affords many possibilities for us and we are pleased to be able to cooperate on events. While the temperature outside was unseasonably cool, the different skits kept people warm inside.

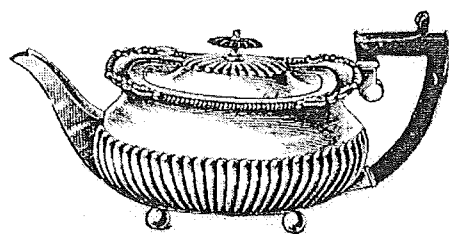
The photo book of Blue Earth County has been finished and was sent to the printer. Soon we will have a book of over 200 photos showing the images from daily life throughout the county. If the book is as successful as we think it will be, we will do a second book of photos from the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. The book will be available before Christmas and will sell for around \$20.00.

Earlier this year I was asked to join the Board of Directors of the Minnesota Alliance of Local History Museums (MALHM). This organization is dedicated to helping smaller museums, especially those in Greater Minnesota, improve their ability to operate museums in a professional manner under the too often limiting budgets. I am very pleased to announce that MALHM has been given a grant to create a statewide video conferencing network to allow museums to work together for the improvement of all. The grant will allow the program to run for several years.

We have many other projects and programs that the staff, Board, and committees are preparing. We hope that you will be able to enjoy them in the coming months.

As always, if anyone has an interest in volunteering with any of our projects or committees, please give us a call and we will provide you with the necessary training.

James C. Lundgren



Mankato High Schools continued from page 1

German Lutherans had begun teaching their children in a one-room grade school in 1867, the same year that Union School was built on the site of the first public school in 1855. The German Lutheran brethren expanded their school over the years and began a high school in 1959. The Immanuel Lutheran Church and School celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1963 at its present location at 421 North Broad Street. Prior to 1963, the synod high school had been operated in Mankato by the Church of the Lutheran Confession Synod, who moved its operations to Eau Claire, Wisconsin as part of Immanuel Lutheran College.

Before its move to a new home, the school had been located in a building at Third Avenue and Harper Street, in what the *Free Press* called "less-than-sumptuous quarters". Principal Gene Schreyer was candid in his comments about his school of 33 students when once asked if the school would be able to "make it another year". His answer: "We've been 'making it' for 16 years. We put it in the Lord's hands. If the Lord intends that we go on, we go on."

Schreyer also commented about the school's benefits in being small, citing an instance where a male student had been injured in a diving accident and was paralyzed from the neck down. He was visited often in the hospital and students assisted in his care later, encouraging him constantly. When the school presented a play, the students wrote a part for him and carried him onto the stage in a throne built for a king.

Not all students at Immanuel are from the same Lutheran fellowship, although the school's doctrine and philosophy is to "present the Bible as we see it". If a person of another faith is interested, "we let people know where we stand on this."

Academically, Immanuel's reputation for scholarship is high. Its students routinely are named for honors such as National Merit Scholarships and Science Talent grants and, as in most smaller schools, "just about everybody is involved in everything," allowing for much personal growth.

Following its move from the "prairie", the high school was housed in the basement of the church and in sections of the elementary school. Then, in the early '90s, a new Multi-purpose addition was erected on the church-school grounds, to include a laboratory, classrooms and "for the first time in the school's 100-plus-year history, a regular gymnasium".

So today, as this Lutheran body continues to educate its pupils in the new century, after more than 130 years of service in Mankato, it continues to offer a school where "individual attention, close contact with parents and a goal-setting approach to learning" is achieved in a Christian atmosphere.

#### BETHANY LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL

Bethany Lutheran College, now the home of a burgeoning four-year college, as well as the home of a fine Evangelical Lutheran Seminary, was for many years a high school, then a four-year high school and junior college combined, and until recently a junior college. Before it was a high school, Bethany was a Ladies' Seminary, opened in 1913, high on the hill where it still stands overlooking Mankato.

Back in 1909, the Evangelical Lutheran Association covering several northwest and middle west states, decided that Mankato, Minnesota would be the future home of a new ladies' seminary and conservatory of music. The site finally chosen was McMahan hill, located directly east of St. Joseph's and Immanuel hospitals, fronting on Sixth Street. A "fair road" already ran to it parallel and north of Main Street.

This site was nearest to the heart of Mankato. Another, just half a mile north and on the same bluff, with an equally good view of the city, was the site owned by L. G. M. Fletcher and originally home of the Goodyear nursery. A third site suggested was Highland Park, already owned by the city and a fourth near the Windmill greenhouses on the Eagle Lake road.

Until the new Christian school was completed, Bethany leased space in the old Mankato High School. Dedication ceremonies took place with 3,000 in attendance on June 16, 1913, as the school for young ladies to continue their education was launched. However, the following years were ones of constant struggle. Enrollments were small, there was no sustained support from any organized synod, World War I and the growth of public schools all spelled the end of finishing schools for young ladies.

Bethany was near bankruptcy in 1926 when members of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, spearheaded by Dr. Sigurd C. Ylvisaker, formed an association to buy and operate the property. And so, in the fall of 1927, Bethany began operation as a co-educational liberal arts junior college and high school. And in 1930, Dr. Ylvisaker became president of the new school, a position he held for twenty years.

He was highly respected and innovative both as administrator and teacher. As a child, he had been changed to use his right hand rather than the left, and he would occasionally entertain a class by writing legibly on the blackboard with both hands at once. He was the daily speaker at morning chapel, and if a student's behavior were unseemly, he would pause and stare at the offender until the disturbance ceased.

Trained as a scholar and a pastor, he was zealous in his support of Christian education. He constantly reminded parents that Bethany's mission was to educate young people in a "truly Christian and Lutheran environment and spirit" and that children's Christian education was not finished at their confirmation but should continue through their high school years.

Every year he saw enrollments and financial support both increase, even during the Great Depression. He extended credit, provided jobs on campus and reduced fees so parents could afford to send their children to Bethany. He also worked to secure accreditation, with

the result that in 1932 Bethany High School was on the fully accredited high school list. As well, both high school and junior college achieved higher status "in the minds of the lay people".

Bethany's academic program was second only to its emphasis on Christian training. The school stressed the liberal arts program, with considerable emphasis on foreign languages and "a strong music department", which it continues today. It is no accident that the Ylvisaker Fine Arts Center is named for the man who felt that Christian education should include "the appreciation of what is noble, pure and beautiful (and) enriches our whole life".

Bethany's high school enrollment began to decline after Dr. Ylvisaker's era. The Missouri and Wisconsin synods began to offer their own high schools and public schools could offer bus transportation and lower costs to educate children. The high school at Bethany closed in 1969; however, students still come from around the world to attend the junior college and adjoining seminary.

Today, Bethany is well on the way to becoming a major liberal arts institution, offering four-year degrees in music and mass communication already and adding facilities and offerings at a rapid rate. It has indeed come far from its humble beginnings, "high among the trees" of McMahan hill, where it sought to fill young "hearts and minds with truth".

#### CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOLS AND GOOD COUNSEL ACADEMY

In 1997, the School Sisters of Notre Dame celebrated 150 years of serving the cause of education in the United States. Mother Theresa Hardinger who, with her group, traveled to small towns and villages establishing schools for poor young women founded the teaching order in Germany in 1833.

In 1847, Mother Theresa and other sisters came to America, choosing Milwaukee as headquarters, and in 1847, three sisters came to Mankato and opened SS. Peter and Paul School, the first Catholic school in Southern Minnesota. In 1908, Sr. Mary Isidore added two high school classes at SS. Peter and Paul. Then Mankato was chosen to be the site of the motherhouse and girls' school for the Sisters of Notre Dame. In 1910, a gift of land in Dukes' Addition and other purchased property were ready for landscaping and erection of buildings.

The *Mankato Free Press* noted: "This tract is composed largely of two hills (and) will make a most beautiful site, provide ample room, and allow buildings to be erected where they can be seen from any part of the city. It will have a commanding view up and down the Minnesota

live at Good Counsel. The Education Center would continue as a facility for the 700 School Sisters of Notre Dame of the Mankato Province, as well as offer extended education programs and services to the people in the surrounding area.

This would not be the end of the high school education on Good Counsel hill, but first, the Loyola story.

#### CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN MANKATO: LOYOLA

In March 1927, one of the biggest fires in Mankato history destroyed SS. Peter and Paul's school at Main and Fifth Streets, leaving 750 elementary pupils and 50 high school students without housing. Cause of the blaze was never pinpointed, but only seven months later, the cornerstone of the new, separate, Loyola High School was laid. Loyola had existed intermittently since 1880 and as a classical high school since 1920. Now Loyola and SS. Peter and Paul's would have two new buildings.

At the dedication ceremonies in 1982, Bishop Francis Kelly of Winona lauded the two schools as "a testimony to the lively faith of the parish, a tribute to Christian education and a valuable addition to Mankato life".

Until 1934, Loyola was an all-boys secondary school; the first co-educational class graduated in 1938. 83 girls from Good Counsel enrolled in 1937, with 12 of them graduating the next year.

In 1945, the Loyola Crusaders won the state Catholic basketball championship to become the first team in Mankato history to win a state title. Their coach, Paul Weides, worked 40 hours a week at Northern States Power Company, taught physical education and was Loyola's coach.

By 1958, Loyola had outgrown its facilities and the new DeSmet Hall, across Fifth Street served both SS. Peter and Paul's parish and provided facilities for classrooms, gymnasium, theater and lockers for Loyola. By 1965 the enrollment of 436—142 girls and 294 boys—meant the freshmen and sophomores were schooled at DeSmet, while the two upper grades were in the older "Loyola building".

In both 1967 and 1969, Loyola's newspaper, *The Loyolan*, received the top All-American Honor rating given by the National Scholastic Press Association. In 1970, Loyola won its fifth consecutive Independent Schools State Debate Tournament. And in 1970, the original Loyola building became Fitzgerald Middle School and the two upper grades of Loyola moved over to DeSmet.

New in 1974 were shared-time classes at Mankato East High School for Loyola grades 9-12. Then, in the face of

enrollments rising after several years and extensive renovation to existing facilities, came a major change. It took a year of discussion, but in 1981, the decision was to end the one-year vacancy at Good Counsel and move Loyola to the modern educational complex there. The School Sisters of Notre Dame offered a lease on the academy for a token \$1 a year for 99 years.

For the first time, Loyola would have an impressive science layout, with, as the *Free Press* stated, "the finest laboratories of any high school in town." It would also have "outstanding music rooms and spacious art facilities" plus beautiful surroundings. Loyola would retain its own name, just change the address to Good Counsel Hill.

Loyola joined the computer age in 1985, in a unique parish-school link called "a first in the nation". A bargain-basement price from AT&T allowed a system for use by classroom, administration and parishes, and set-up as a demonstration site for both software and hardware.

A new principal had taken over at Loyola for the 1981-2 school year, Thomas Tacheney. He had graduated from Loyola in 1956, and returned as associate principal in 1979 to the new quarters on Good Counsel Hill. In October 1983, Tacheney penned an article for *The Loyolan* titled, "Homecoming is where the Heart is." He remarked that, "People cannot help but return to something which was significant in their lives," and that "Loyola is a family, a community where a spirit exists that will not die...one has to 'come home' every once in a while to see if it's still there."

In the summer of 1992, 400 Loyola alums returned for the first all-school reunion as Loyola High celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The theme was, naturally, "Coming Home," and alums were invited to tour all three homes of Loyola that were still standing. Noted at the time was that of Loyola's 3,702 alums, 1,671 still lived in the Mankato area.

Although the preceding years had been of high standard (Loyola had set state records in Minnesota Class A Speech Tournaments in both 1986 and 1987), Loyola was suffering enrollment declines and rising costs. Restructuring of the Catholic school system in both Mankato and North Mankato was underway. Tom Tacheney, by now superintendent of both Loyola and Fitzgerald, felt centralization of administration was the only answer. It took five years, but by the fall of 1990, the five Catholic elementary and secondary school were joined under one administration, MACS.

Tacheney, who had been principal of Loyola and administrator of both Loyola and Fitzgeralds from 1979 to 1998, became Superintendent of the Mankato Area Catholic Schools (MACS) in August 2000. Shelley Schultz became Loyola's new principal. Still in the future

Valley." The new site would be called Good Counsel Hill.

"The first building to be erected will be both a day school and boarding school, all for ladies, as well as motherhouse for novitiates who wish to become teachers in the parochial schools. Other buildings will be erected soon and it is predicted that it will be the largest educational institution in the city."

The school and motherhouse opened in September 1912, and have remained headquarters of the Mankato Province. While girls were being taught at Good Counsel, Catholic boys of high school age were taught in part of SS. Peter and Paul School as a parish high school. Though not a separate building, the high school section was named Loyola High School, and it graduated its first senior class in 1922.

While for a short time, Good Counsel also maintained an elementary school on the hill, its focus was mainly on the high school. New buildings were added over the years, including the beautiful Romanesque chapel of Our Lady of Good Counsel in 1926. Its reputation was such that its enrollment included many non-Catholic girls from Mankato and the surrounding area. Some Catholic girls began attending Loyola in the late 1930s.

Enrollment continued steady at Good Counsel through the war years, and the Class of 1950 was the largest in the school's history, with 96 graduating. Recently, this class celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, proud to be among the 4,000 girls who graduated during the school's existence from 1912 to 1980. Comments from returnees were that the school "fostered a homey atmosphere that stressed academics, sports and spirituality, without the 'distractions' of coed schools."

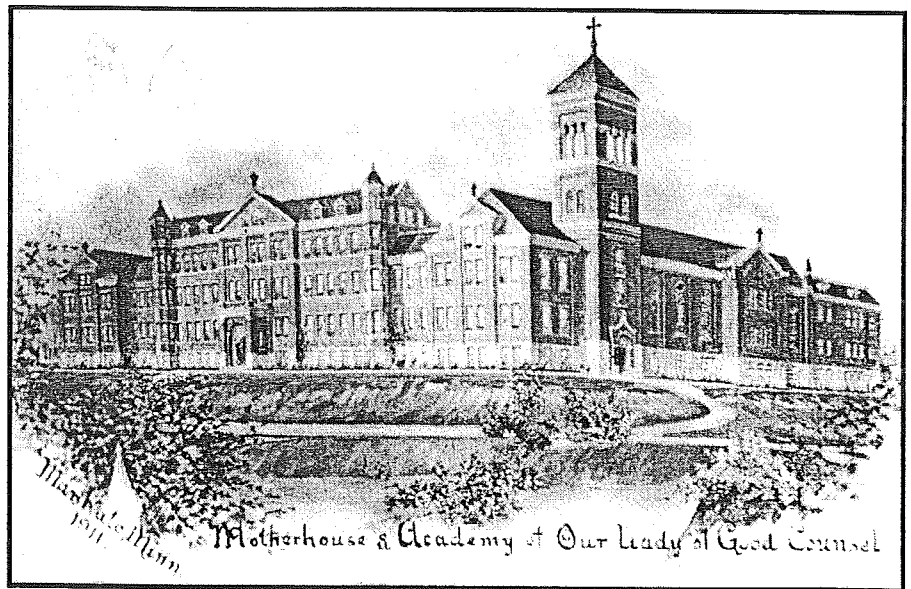
In 1965, plans were announced for a brand-new educational complex of its own for the high school, after 53 years of sharing their facilities with the convent and college in one building. The new complex, to be built on land once used for the academy farm, would have a three-story residence section, two-story academic section, and one-story dining area, large enough for 600 students (present enrollment was 425).

The *Free Press* article pointed out some advantages of attending an all-girl school, including some activities usually handled by boys, better study habits, success in subjects such as debate: Good Counsel's all-girl unit had won first-place at the state Catholic debate meet the year before. Boys from Loyola were often on campus to

take part in plays and Good Counsel girls could do limited dating, although no steady dating was allowed.

The \$3.8 million complex with its own chapel in the center was ready for the fall term in 1966 with its record enrollment of 440 girls. Over the next few years, some minor changes took place, such as exchange of faculty between Loyola and Good Counsel, and certain classes being taught at only one school, but with both girls and boys attending, such as chemistry at Good Counsel and driver education at Loyola.

By 1972, several other Catholic schools in Minnesota had been forced to close, with Good Counsel the only all-girl academy south of St. Cloud still in operation. Nation-wide, all schools—public and private—were experiencing a decline in enrollment. In 1977, the



Our Lady of Good Counsel Motherhouse & Academy

closing of Mankato State's Wilson Campus School and a dozen new international students was the impetus for a new class in Intercultural Studies.

Pope John Paul II's visit to Des Moines in 1979 found an entire class from Good Counsel right up in front of the crowd of 130,000 waiting to see him. Accompanied by several teachers, the students sat quietly taking a test in Old English. The group had been studying the pope's writing for several weeks and closely following his trip to the United States, and certainly, a test was nothing compared to being where they were.

Only a few months later, in February 1980, the announcement came that Good Counsel would close its doors in June, after several years of declining enrollment. Most students would probably transfer to Loyola, although those in residency could continue to

may be the day when all five schools that make up the system will be together in one location, possibly up on Good Counsel Hill where it all started.

\*\*\*\*

Look for the final installment of the history of Mankato high schools in the winter issue of *The Historian*.

### New and Renewed Members

Anderson, Judy  
Anderson, Lester  
Birbeck, Marilyn  
Boyce, Dave & Doris  
Carstensen, Vernon & Norma  
Cole, Allen & Marilyn  
Debke, Duane  
Dorn, Kathy & John  
Dunlop, Donna & David  
Fairchild, Cheryl  
Francis, Pat  
Friday, Mona  
Garlick, Russell  
Harter, Philip  
Hedstrom, John  
Holbrook, Viola  
How, Mary Ellen  
Jensen, Orv & Mary Ann  
Kind, Arn & Meg  
Klosowski, Jean  
Kraft, Frank & Judy  
Kubicek, Joseph  
Lee, Elaine  
Lundblad, Larry & Karen  
Masberg, Rita  
McGregor, Karen  
McLaughlin, Tom & Theresa

McLean, Mr. & Mrs. Edward  
McNear, Virginia  
Mohr, Harley & Ruth  
Neitge, Catherine  
Norland, Roger  
Nuessle, Ruth  
Palmer, John  
Phelps, Dean  
Piehl, Chuck  
Ries, Chuck & Carol  
Ringheim, Marilyn  
Roberts, Craig  
Roscoe, Don  
Rose, Luella & Robert  
Schmoke, Stan & Susan  
Schrader, Ken & Julie  
Steinberg, Dale  
Swanson, Ken  
Tacheny, Leon & Delores  
Van Lanen, Mrs. William  
Vosbeck, Elizabeth  
Voss, Judy  
Ward, Mary  
Webb, Donna & Gerald  
Wieland, Mavis  
Zwart, Ted

### Reprint Available!

#### *The Heritage of Blue Earth County, MN*

The past preserved as a treasure for the future

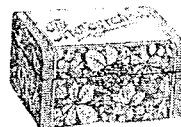
This book would make a wonderful gift this holiday season.

Reprint edition now available in limited quantities.

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Blue Earth County is rich in historical background and these facts. Traditions, memories and photographs are preserved in this book. Through words and pictures, the book brings to life, the places and events that shaped the lives of our ancestors. This beautifully hardbound county history book contains over 950 pages, 750 biographies and hundreds of photographs, maps and illustrations. Not sold in bookstores. Contact Julie Schrader at 507-625-8056 or email: jschrade@mctc.net.

### New photo book on Blue Earth County.



The Publications Committee of the Blue Earth County Historical Society has been working on a photo book of historical images from Blue Earth County. The committee has been collecting previously unpublished photos from throughout the county. It has been quite a bit of work, but we are pleased with the results. The final proofs went to the publisher in September and we expect the books in time for Christmas gift giving.

The book will be available at the Heritage Center Museum Store as well as other local book stores and gift shops. A portion of each sale will go towards BECHS financial needs.

Be sure to pick up your copy!

### Young Historians is Back!



The next Young Historians event will be held in November. Program details were not available at presstime. Please call the Heritage Center for details.

*Congratulations to L. Brown whose name was drawn for the 16" Huffy Bike drawing at the Blue Earth County Fair. Thanks again to C & S Supply for the donation of this item. Proceeds from this drawing will be used to purchase more items for resale in the Museum Store.*



**Recent Financial and Equipment  
Donations were made by:**

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Wiedenheft, Jane

**Thank You All Very Much!**



**Travel Like Bert #5,  
In the Footsteps of Lewis and Clark.**

Travel Like Bert, to take the back roads and see the wonders of nature and of man. The unusual - to see what is around the next bend of the road. We were about to embark on our journey.

After leaving Mankato, we observed the fall colors along highway 68 to New Ulm, where we stopped in Milford Township to admire the imposing Milford Monument.

Reading the names of the settlers killed there in 1862 caused us to pause and reflect on that turbulent time. On to Lake Benton, where we observed a different kind of turbulence – wind turbines! Rows upon rows of wind turbines slowly twirling their majestic arms – is this the future of producing electricity? In Brookings we walked the paths in the beautiful McCrory Gardens, around each corner was a different flower, grass or tree, all in the height of their beauty. Thousands of plants - I'm glad I don't have to weed that garden!

Taking the back roads south to Sioux Falls, we suddenly came upon a large complex of buildings in the middle of bean fields. EROS! We observed satellite photos of Earth as we had not seen before. If that didn't impress you, the huge revolving globe (cost \$27,000 in early 1980's) was sure to catch your attention. Next stop, the Oscar Howe Art Center in Mitchell. Art centers are not among the places I would normally visit, but this proved to be very interesting and the paintings done by Oscar Howe, a Yanktonai Sioux artist, truly impressive. Closing time came and we were on our way again. Our first day was coming to an end and time to find our hotel and dinner.

Highlights of the following days were touring the St. Joseph Mission School, the Baer's sing a-long (when was the last time you sang "Jimmy Cracked Corn"?), South Dakota State Historical Society, the state capitol, dining at the Cattleman's Club, Oahe Dam, stepped back in time at the Prehistoric Indian Village on Lake Mitchell, Blue Mound Park, the Frederick Manfield home, Pipestone National Monument and the last stop of our trip at Jeffers Petroglyphs.

The most memorable part of the trip for me was getting up early on Sunday morning to stand with eleven other adventurers atop Blue Mound at the mysterious 1250-foot row of stones that are lined up exactly east and west atop to align with the sunrise/sunset at the equinox. We were there to watch the beautiful sunrise and marvel that the rocks and sun are aligned on the equinox. (We missed the equinox by one day, but the sun and rocks still lined up).

But best of all, we laughed together.

Would I take another Travel Like Bert trip? Well, let's just say the seat on the bus 5 rows back on the left has my name on it.

Jane Tarjeson  
BECHS President

BECHS sponsors regular Travel Like Bert Trips. Please contact the Heritage Center office for information on upcoming trips. We hope that you will travel like Bert.



## ARCHIVES AND ARTIFACT DONATIONS

July-September 2000

**Martha Backhaus, Mankato, MN:** Immanuel Lutheran Church memorabilia.

**Everel Bartsch, Mankato, MN:** Glass medicine bottles from Mankato drug stores.

**Dave Boyce, Mankato, MN:** An ice pack, Tite Rite jar rings, and a 1937 booklet *Instructor's Outline for First Aid Courses*.

**Becky Brennan, North Mankato, MN:** 1962 *Atlas of the State of Minnesota*.

**Betty Cords, LeSueur, MN:** Autobiography of Florence Poling Deter and funeral card.

**Henry Evans, Mankato, MN:** 1895 map of Mankato.

**Mike Frederick, Madison Lake, MN:** Two purple plastic glasses advertising the Vikings and KEYC-TV/the River Hills Mall Food Court, c1993.

**Win Grundmeier, Mankato, MN:** Book, *The Wounded Knee Massacre*.

**Jesse Hanson, Mankato, MN:** Booklet, *The Rediscovery of Kerns, Belgrade Township, Nicollet County, Minnesota*.

**Alice Jenkins, Mankato, MN:** 1952 Mankato Centennial *Free Press* special edition and a 1900 High School Echo from Lake Crystal.

**Judy Joecks, New Richland, MN:** Two copies of *The History of Cream, Minnesota (1890-1911)* compiled by the donor.

**Joe Kubicek, Garden City, MN:** Book, *They Chose Minnesota*.

**Larry Norland, North Mankato, MN:** 1937 book, *Household Searchlight Homemaking Guide*.

**Dean Pettis, Mankato, MN:** Glass bottle advertising the Weed Drug Store.

**Ora Ohlenkamp, Mankato, MN:** Student Handbook 1944-45, MSTC; Service of Prayer & Song on Day of Victory, May 1945; MTC letter from Dean of Women, 8/28/1943, assigning off-campus housing; "Suggestions for Cooperative Living [for off-campus women]."

**Carla Rusten, Good Thunder, MN:** Wooden rake, handmade yoke, plasterer's screen and color photos of the Wiedenheft family graves.

**Joan Schmitz, Mankato, MN:** 1912 Mankato Commercial College catalog and a color postcard of Immanuel Hospital, c1916.

**Jane Tarjeson, Good Thunder, MN:** Book *The Official Autobiography of Sal Frederick* and a 1918 Chautauqua program, Lake Crystal.

**Gertrude Walters, Lake Crystal, MN:** Family history entitled, *Keeping Up With the Joneses, The Story of Margaret and John D. Jones (Oshkosh), Pioneer Settlers, South Bend-Judson Area, 1854*.

**Myrtle Westphal, Janesville, MN:** Church history *St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, St. Clair, MN, 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, 1869-1994*.

**Thanks to all our donors for your help in preserving the history of Blue Earth County!**

## BECHS Volunteers since the last issue

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Bensch, Mary Ann  
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Burns, Inella  
Burton, Ronnie  
Cords, Betty  
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Francis, Pat  
Frederick, Michael  
Ganzel, Margaret  
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Wright, Lorraine  
Ziegler, Ken  
Zielske, Dan  
Zimmer, Beth

## Wish List

These items are currently needed at the BECHS Heritage Center. Please let us know if you can provide any help.

- Copies of Windows 97 and Microsoft office for our new computer network.
- 3x5 index cards for the research center card catalog.
- Hanging folders, legal and letter size.
- Phillips and regular screwdrivers assorted sizes.
- Collapsible wheelchair for the Heritage Center.
- New members!

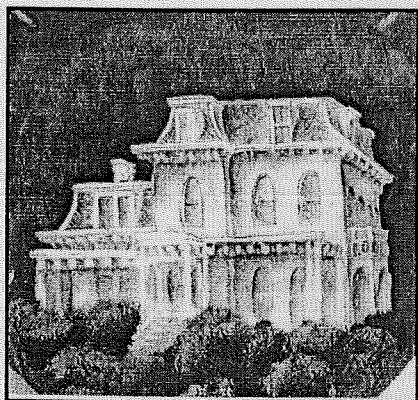
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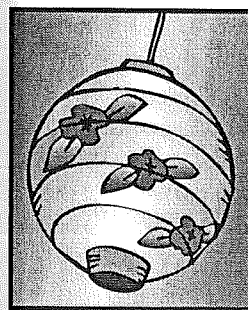
The Blue Earth County Historian



### ***Drawing!***

This slate is one of fifty slates saved from the restoration of the Hubbard House roof. They are available in the Heritage Center Museum Store. This one will be given away at a drawing held during the Christmas at the Hubbard House event. Each ticket is a \$1.00 donation

***Drawing on December 5<sup>th</sup> at the  
Victorian Christmas at the  
R. D. Hubbard House***



## **Christmas Is Coming!**

Please think of the  
BECHS Museum Store  
and Marian Anderson prints  
when doing your gift shopping

Many new items available this season, look  
for the catalog we will be mailing soon!

# The Blue Earth County Historian

Blue Earth County Historical Society Winter 2001

## MANKATO HIGH SCHOOLS - PART THREE

By Shirley Grundmeier

*This is the final installment of a three part series on the high schools of Mankato. Shirley has researched these schools over the past two years in the archives of the Blue Earth County Historical Society. We hope you have enjoyed these articles. -Editor*

### MANKATO NORMAL SCHOOL; TRAINING SCHOOL; TEACHERS COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL; WILSON CAMPUS & COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The only other "public high school" in Mankato before the recent development of the Charter school, was (or had been) connected with a state teacher training school. When Mankato Normal School first opened in 1868, it was in temporary quarters, first in a church and later in a store. In 1870, the school moved into a new building on the site of the present Old Main at Fifth and Jackson Streets.

It was a three-story structure with four "model" (the terms "laboratory" and "campus" would come later) school rooms on the first floor, and a single "high school" room on the second. "High school" at that time included only 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. A few private or parochial students only would go on further.

Anna M. Wiecking, long-time teacher in the Training Department of the Normal School, wrote later: "From the very beginning in the Normal School, provision was made for practice (later termed "student") teaching. Daniel Buck (State Legislator and proponent of education) pointed out that Model classes serve the same purpose for a Normal School that a hospital does for a Medical School.

Back in 1909, preparation for teachers continued only through eighth grade...In 1930 the kindergarten through sixth grade were organized into the College Elementary School and 7<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> into a Junior High."

In 1921, a Legislative Act had changed the name from Mankato Normal School to Mankato State Teachers College, and in 1929, a four-year curriculum had been adopted to train teachers for a full senior high, beginning in 1931 with a 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Each year a grade was added and the first 12<sup>th</sup> grade class graduated in the spring of 1935. Children from all over the Mankato area attended the Training School, including rural students who were bused in.

Teachers College High School boasted some kind of record in 1934 when, among its 134 students there were five sets of twins, two fraternal and three identical! A

local physician estimated that only one out of every 80 persons was born a twin.

From the beginning, the new high school's aim was two-fold: to "sell" the school to the people of Mankato and surroundings, and to point out that "this institution will serve as a leader in developing educational ideas and methods." Under the leadership of Principal Lee O. Garber (1933-1941), it did just that.

As well as a full academic program, including Industrial Arts for both boys and girls, athletics, music and drama involved most of the students, with every child in the six-year junior and senior high in some chorus or glee club or participating in a play. A "Dancing Club" met early on Monday morning taught by college phy ed majors. Each student attending paid one cent to cover the cost of music for the piano player.

Principal Garber's philosophy was that "learning of facts is important but the development of understanding is of far greater significance". He set up an activities program for the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders for the last hour of the day, outlining activities. Students who needed more time for study were to participate in two of those activities; those who didn't need study time could participate all five days.

In the first year alone, there were four main activities: a recognition banquet, senior prom, junior banquet given for seniors and a senior reception. "The change in pupil behavior is remarkable...this program has done more than any 'class work' to bring about social development." (Teacher consensus)

The last class graduated from Teachers College High School in 1941. A new feature that year was an "Annual"—The Cardinal. It would be a first and a last. Money to run the school was scarce, less than 10% per student to operate than comparable schools in Illinois and Indiana. The Annual Report noted: "A high school in a Teachers College should be even better than that of the average city school...no attempt should be made to reinstate the high school until a new building is available and adequate support guaranteed."

Retired *Free Press* reporter Ken Berg was a sophomore at College High School the year the last class graduated, on May 29, 1941. There were 535 graduates from Mankato's five public and parochial high schools that year, with College High contributing 26. On May 19, faculty and students gathered in Old Main to hear the announcement that lack of funds and shortage of facilities would mean the upper three grades would have to go.

Schools Continued on page 3

***The Blue Earth County Historian***  
***Winter 2001***

The Blue Earth County Historian is published quarterly for the members of BECHS. 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 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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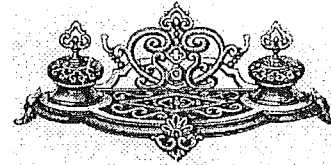
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Make checks payable to BECHS and return with this form to  
415 East Cherry Street, Mankato MN 56001.



***From the Executive Director***

Happy New Year to all our members, volunteers and donors. We hope that the upcoming year will be a healthy and prosperous New Year for you all. BECHS has been reviewing the year 2000 and we are pleased at what we have accomplished.

Several new exhibits went in to our Exhibit Gallery and traveling exhibits were put up at the fair and Rainbow Foods. We held a number of very interesting events. Our Museum Store did very well with the addition of new inventory. We helped many people learn more about their ancestors in our research center. A more complete review will be available at the Annual Meeting coming up in March. Please look for the flyer and join us for our recap and program.

We have another couple of events coming up before the annual meeting. The Young Historians will be having an event on January 27<sup>th</sup> on bookbinding. Participants will be able to see how books used to be bound by hand and make one of their own to keep.

The Young Historians meet every other month. These are generally FREE programs that are open to students from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> grade and their families. In March, the program will be on Betsy Tacy. The May program will likely be on Mankato history. The July program will be on antique toys. Please call the office for details or suggestions for possible Young Historian programs.

In February, BECHS will be hosting a workshop from the Minnesota Historical Society Conservation Department. This will be a chance for participants to get professional suggestions for keeping their family treasures for future generations. This program is FREE! Please call the office, as registrations are limited. The dates and times are listed on the back page of the newsletter.

The upcoming year should be another successful year for BECHS. We are working on the next phase of the Hubbard House restoration. The basement will be prepared to house new exhibits. The Vietnam Veteran's exhibit will be moving on to a new museum at the end of 2001. It has been a wonderful exhibit. We will be making plans for what will replace it in the exhibit gallery.

It has been a pleasure to work for a Society with such a rich history and so many dedicated volunteers. I hope you all have a chance to come see what we are working on throughout the year.

James C. Lundgren