



# *The Blue Earth County* **Historian**

A publication of the Blue Earth County Historical Society

Fall 2005



Lydia Ann  
Wolf, Civil  
War Veteran

Photograph  
property of the  
Blue Earth County  
Historical Society

In this issue:

## They Asked To Go: The Untold Story of Early Blue Earth County Women Veterans

***The Blue Earth County Historian***  
***Fall 2005***

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

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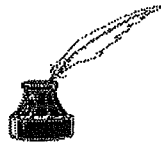
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**Blue Earth County Historical Society**  
**415 Cherry Street**  
**Mankato, MN 56001**  
**<http://www.rootsweb.com/~mnbechs/>**



***From the***  
***Executive Director***

Greetings, I recently returned from a trip to Bellingham, Washington with 90 delegates from the greater Mankato area. The goal of the Inter-City Leadership Visit was to compare Bellingham with our region. It was beautiful there and only rained one day. All of the heavy rain was back in Minnesota. We discovered that we have some similarities, some differences, some things we do better and some things they do better. However, one of the most important things I learned from the visit was not about Bellingham, but about Blue Earth County and the area. That we are a community! We are a group of people with common interests, ideas and goals. We want a great place to call home.

The group included long-time business people, community and government leaders and non-profits. We had a diverse occupational focus and background, but everyone's goal was to improve our community. I think of the pioneers that came before us and their goal was to improve where they called home, their community. For many, generations of family have chosen to call Blue Earth County home. We can look back at all they did to make this a great place to live for their generation and for the generations to follow. I hope we can do the same.

So, how can we continue to work as a community to preserve our past and enrich our future? One way is to take part in community surveys and meetings that will follow this visit. Another way, closer to home, is to invest in the past and future of the Historical Society. You can support BECHS by renewing your membership either at an individual, household or business level. Our membership support is a significant portion of our operating budget. That support helps us provide our everyday services like the Museum Store and Gallery, Research Center and Hubbard House. The next way is with contributions

**The Blue Earth County Historical Society's Heritage Center Gallery,  
Museum Store and Research Center are open  
Tuesday 10:00 to 12:00, 1:00 to 4:00 and 5:00 to 8:00  
Wednesday through Saturday from 10:00 to 12:00 and 1:00 to 4:00**

to special projects, programs or fund drives. Please attend our programs, visit the Hubbard House and Heritage Center, shop in the Museum Store and most of all tell your friends. Together we can keep our community a great place to live for generations to come.

Thank you for your continued support! It is sincerely appreciated!

*Jessica Potter*

Executive Director

***Run, Don't Walk to get your  
2005 Herberger's Community Day  
Coupon Book***

The **\$5 coupon book** is available from any Blue Earth County Historical Society staff or volunteer. All proceeds benefit the Historical Society. Each coupon book includes an instant \$5 to be used on **Saturday, November 19th** at the Herberger's Community Day Sale.

***Non-Profit Gift and Bake Sale***

Madison East Mall

November 19, 9 am to 5 pm

Support the Blue Earth County Historical Society and other community non-profits by buying goodies at the bake sale. All proceeds go to the organization you buy from. There will be not only homemade treats to buy but also to try. Craft and gifts for the holidays will be sold as well.

***Attention Christmas Shoppers  
Member's Sale***

**\$5 off a purchase of \$30 or more  
in the BECHS Museum Store  
415 Cherry St., Mankato**

Not valid on consignment items.  
See store for details.

Expiration date 12/31/05

***South Central Minnesota  
Genealogy Expo***

The 5th annual South Central Minnesota Genealogy Expo will take place on Saturday, November 5, 2005 at the MSU Centennial Student Union from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. A variety of workshops are being offered which include Probate Research, Military Records and Land Records.

In addition to workshops, participants can meet with area historical and genealogical societies including the Minnesota Historical Society and members of the Minnesota Genealogical Society.

The registration fee is \$20, \$15 if you sign up prior to October 28. For more information contact Jessica Potter at 507-345-5566 or check out the website at: <http://www.lib.mnsu.edu/lib/archives/expo/expo.html>

The Expo is co-sponsored by the Blue Earth County Historical Society and the Southern Minnesota Historical Center at MSU.

***Twin Rivers Center for the Arts***

The Twin Rivers Center for the Arts (TRCA) task force was formed in May 2002 as a collaborative venture of local arts & cultural organizations, individual artists, and community members who share a common vision for the arts in Greater Mankato.

Current partner organizations include: Betsy-Tacy Society, Blue Earth County Historical Society, Dance Conservatory of Southern Minnesota, LifeWorks/DreamsWork, Mankato Area Youth Symphony, Mankato Ballet, Mankato Children's Chorus, Mankato Suzuki School of Music, Merely Players Community Theater, Minnesota Valley Chorale, Minnesota Valley Sweet Adelines, Southern Minnesota Poets Society, YMCA After School Arts Program.

The TRCA project receives funding and in-kind support from its member organizations, the City of Mankato, and the City of North Mankato. Those who would like more information on the TRCA, can call Shannon Robinson at 507-385-1161.

## **They Asked to Go: The Untold story of Early Blue Earth County Women Veterans**

Melodie Andrews, Associate Professor of Early America and Women's History  
Minnesota State University, Mankato

Throughout our nation's history, whenever Americans have been called to arms, women have offered their services. And they have done so since the opening volley in the struggle for American independence. As a leading scholar of the American Revolution recently observed, Washington's army would not have survived without the essential contributions of women, including forgotten "daughters of liberty" like Sarah Osborn. During the last major engagement of the war, at Yorktown in 1781, this wife of a New York blacksmith brought food to American troops under fire because, as she remarked to Washington, "it would not do for the men to fight and starve too."

During both the American Revolution and the Civil War, women supported the military with many forms of assistance. They provided medical care for wounded soldiers, foraged for supplies, and served as cooks, seamstresses, saboteurs, spies and couriers. A few, like Revolutionary War veteran Deborah Sampson Garnett, disguised themselves as men and joined military units as soldiers. Garnett wrote an account of her service after the war and received a military pension in 1803.

When Abraham Lincoln led the nation to war in 1861 in order to preserve the Union, Minnesotans were among the first to join the campaign. And, in Blue Earth County, a young school teacher named Lydia Ann Wolf followed her heart and ended up caring for wounded soldiers at a federal army hospital in Louisville, Kentucky.

Lydia was the daughter of abolitionist parents who moved from Indiana to Minnesota in 1857. Four years later, at the age of 17, Lydia became a teacher at the Judson Village school. Her fiancé, James M. Wilson, enlisted in Company K of the Second Minnesota Regiment, on July 31, 1861. James wrote to Lydia from Fort Snelling to tell her that his regiment was about to move south. He asked her to come up to the fort to say goodbye. But when she arrived they decided to get married instead. The wedding took place the next day, on October 8, 1861, before the entire regiment and Lydia accompanied the troops to

Louisville.

Once the fighting started Lydia recognized that there were not enough nurses to treat the wounded and volunteered her services. In spite of her lack of training, Lydia performed so competently that she was soon made chief nurse. Over the next four years her many patients included her own husband, who contracted typhoid fever. She nursed him for three months while she continued to tend other wounded soldiers. Although he recovered, James was too incapacitated to return to his regiment. He was commissioned for hospital duty and served with his wife until the end of the war.

After their discharge from service in 1865, James and Lydia returned to Mankato and lived there until James's death in a railroad accident in 1881. Shortly thereafter, Lydia took five of her six children with her to North Dakota, where she claimed a homestead in Hamlin township. According to an account published in *The Free Press* after her death, "In a community of sod huts, she hired carpenters to erect the first two-story house, with the first brick chimney, on the prairie." When the home was completed, she furnished it with "the first carpets, curtains and organ for miles around."

Lydia married Gibson Patch ten years after her husband's death. She was widowed again in 1923 and eventually moved to California to live with her daughter. The government established pensions for Civil War nurses in 1892. Of the 655 Civil War nurses granted pensions, Lydia Patch was the youngest at the time she entered the service in 1861. She may also be the only woman from Blue Earth county who served as a nurse in the Civil War. After a long and very eventful life, she died in 1933 at the age of 90.

The armed services first recruited women in World War I. More than 35,000 women volunteered for duties ranging from nurses to telephone operators to clerks. This was also the first war in which women served overseas. A number of women from Blue Earth county heeded the call to service, most



Mary Cornish

becoming Red Cross nurses. Mary E. Cornish from Vernon Center volunteered in November 1917 and served as a nurse with American troops in France. She wrote letters home to her family that were published in *The Free Press* during the war. On November 25, 1918 she wrote her nieces, "I am sure we all have something to be thankful for this year, for we have the old kaiser on the run and now he is begging for mercy." She returned from duty in France in July 1919, but over 400 of her sisters in service never made it home, dying in the line of duty.



Emma Vogel, c 1919

Emma Elva Vogel carved out her own field of service during World War I, which she continued into World War II. She was born in Mankato in 1889 and graduated from the Mankato Normal School. In 1918 she resigned from a teaching position in Idaho, joined the Red Cross, and became one of the first students enrolled in Reed College's physical therapy course conducted under the supervision of the surgeon general of the Army. She

remained at the Portland, Oregon college as an assistant instructor to help train subsequent classes in this new field.

In 1919, Emma became administrative head of the physical therapy department at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C. Three years later she helped establish the first post-war physical therapy course in the United States at Walter Reed. She served as technical supervisor of this course until 1942 when, having attained the rank of army major, she was promoted to superintendent of physiotherapy aides in the office of the Surgeon General. She was the first woman to hold this position.

Emma was appointed the first director of physical therapists in the Army Medical Department in 1943. She organized the physical therapy branch of the Army, and formulated administrative policies and regulations. She also established training courses for physical therapists at nine other army hospitals. In



Emma Vogel c 1944

1946 she received the Legion of Merit Award from the Army for her pioneering efforts in the field of physical therapy. A newspaper article chronicling her accomplishments noted, "In peace times many of her students carried the principles which she taught them into the constantly expanding field among crippled children all over the United States and even into foreign countries."

After a 32 year career, Vogel retired as a colonel in the U.S. Army. When she died in 1981 at the age of 91, she was buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

More than 350,000 women served in World War II. They joined the Women's Army Corps and ferried aircraft as Air Force Service pilots. This was the first war in which women served as officers. Georgia Neubert Davis was another local woman who served her country during this conflict. She was born in North Mankato in 1918, graduated from Mankato Teacher's College Campus High School and from the St. Peter State School of Nursing. She enlisted in the army in July 1941 and became a M.A.S.H. nurse in the Second Auxiliary Surgical Group, one of the most decorated medical units of the war. She served in four battle theaters with the Fifth Army in North Africa and Europe.

Georgia's medical unit landed shortly after the American invasion force at Anzio beachhead in 1944. Field hospitals were generally within range of enemy artillery fire. She described her front line experiences at Anzio in a *Free Press* article published September 7, 1945: "At first, I figured I'd sleep above the ground," she said. "Then an enemy shell came so



Georgia Neubert and other nurses at Anzio, 1944

close it scared me stiff. I had my own 'grave' --foxhole--dug the next morning." When the commanding officer told Georgia and the other nurses they could leave their dangerous position and pull back, they all refused. "We could have left," she recalled, "but not one of the nurses spoke up. We couldn't go off and leave those wounded men there." Six army nurses died from hostile fire at Anzio beachhead. Before the war was over, 470 women made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

Georgia left the army in 1947 and returned to the Mankato area. After her marriage to William Davis in 1949, she continued to work part-time as a nurse until her retirement in 1983. She was awarded the Bronze Star in 1986 and earned over a dozen other medals and commendations for her military service. She also became a charter member of the Women in Military Service for America Memorial in Washington, D.C.

In her later years, Georgia spoke to community groups about her experiences during the war and wrote articles for *The Free Press* dealing with veterans issues. Georgia said that she inherited a sense of patriotism and service from her father, Frank Neubert, an early mayor of North Mankato.

Actions some people might describe as heroic Georgia considered "nothing more than the line of duty" for herself and her fellow nurses. "We were afraid," she acknowledged in a 1981 *Free Press* article, "but we had

committed our lives to God and country. We weren't like the GIs," she continued. "They went where they were sent. We were going as volunteers. We had asked to go."

Today women comprise about 15% of the active duty, reserve and guard units of the United States Armed Forces. Although they are not assigned to combat by law, women ferry fuel, food and troops into combat areas. Whenever their services are needed, women continue to go into harm's way on behalf of their country. Yet this long history of heroic sacrifice remains largely untold and has never received the attention it deserves.

If you are a Blue Earth County woman veteran or have one in your family, the BECHS and I would like to preserve your story. Early next year a group of MSU students under my supervision will be conducting oral history interviews and gathering materials for the BECHS research archives. If you would like to be part of this project, please contact me by email at [melodie.andrews@mnsu.edu](mailto:melodie.andrews@mnsu.edu) or by phone at either 507-389-2814 or 507-389-1618. You can also contact Donna Webb at BECHS.

I would like to thank Donna Webb and Helen Sofchalk for their research contributions to this article.

Sources:

Gary Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution*, New York: Viking Press, 2005, p 421.

*Mankato Free Press*, October 2, 1933, p 9.

Photos of Georgia Neubert reprinted from the *Mankato Free Press*, May 25, 1981.

Photos of Emma Vogel, property of BECHS

Photo of Mary Cornish reprinted from *Blue Earth County, Minnesota, in the World War*. Mankato, Minn. The Free Press, 1920.



Georgia Neubert



Readers are invited to listen to *Mankato History This Month* at 10 am the first Monday of every month on KMSU 89.7 FM. Join with us for readings and interviews about history and our own remembered past here in the Blue Earth County area.

Interested readers are invited to contact us about recording for broadcast their memories of the 1930's! You may call (507) 787-2653, or email [pombereales@hotmail.com](mailto:pombereales@hotmail.com).



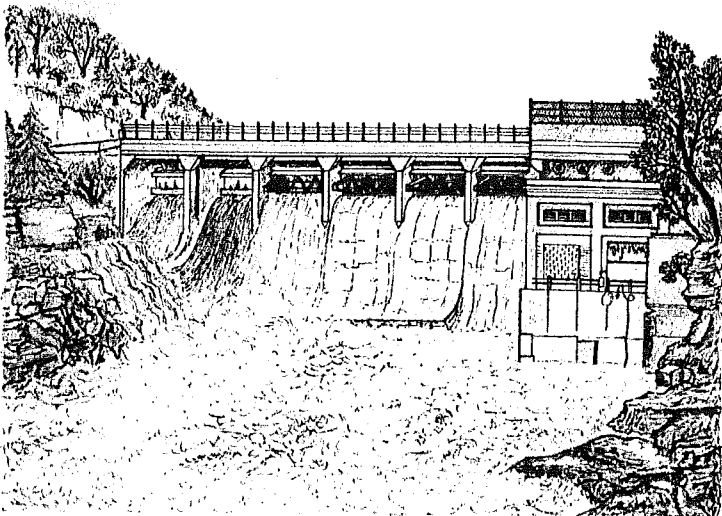


## Rapidan Heritage Society

Thanks to all that joined us for "Day at the Dam" held at the Rapidan County Park on September 24<sup>th</sup>. The event was held to celebrate the history, aesthetics, and engineering of the Rapidan Dam. A photo tour of the dam was on display along with other photos and artifacts concerning the dam.

Whether it was the desire to learn more about the dam or the lure of homemade pie from the Dam Store, the morning rain did not dampen the spirits of the people attending. By noon the rain had stopped and a large crowd of people were enjoying the park, exhibits and an afternoon of relaxation and visiting. Memories were shared - tales of the old swimming hole (swimming trunks optional), the school bus going up the dam hill, and fishing below the dam.

Artist Marcia Carlson signed prints of her Rapidan Dam sketch. The Rapidan Dam print is now available in the Museum Store. Proceeds from the sale of this sketch will fund a student scholarship at the Minnesota State University, Mankato Water Resources Center



Many groups participated in this event, RHS would like to especially thank the Water Resource Center, BECHS and Blue Earth County Parks for this event to appreciate the dam and the nearby park. A beautiful fall drive is on Highway 66, then west on county road 9 to the Rapidan Dam and Park and as a bonus you can

order a piece of pie at the Dam Store! With the changing of the seasons our thoughts turn to...Santa! RHS would like to invite everyone to the Rapidan Depot on Saturday, Dec. 3, to help Mrs. Claus greet Santa as he arrives in Rapidan at 1 P.M. Young and young at heart are invited to visit with the jolly couple and receive a complimentary picture with Santa and goodie bag from Mrs. Claus.

*Jane Tarjeson*  
Secretary

## *Ghosts of the Past*

**Saturday, October 29, 5-9 p.m.  
Bierbauer House at 703 N. 6<sup>th</sup> Street**



Come, join us, to hear stories about the Bierbauer family, house and brewery.

## *Collector's Corner*

**SPOTLIGHT  
ON**

A new exhibition has been added to the Heritage Center. It's called the Collector's Corner and features collections that belong to BECHS members. Currently on display is a sample of Mary Ann Jensen's teapot collection. Mary Ann has over 200 teapots and 14 are currently on display. To have your collection in the Collector's Corner, contact Sara at 345-5566.



## History Essay Contest Winners

6th Grade: Abby Vomery



### How Prospect Park lost the town title to Madison Lake.

In 1876, Chauncey Austin and his wife Albertine bought land from Andred Ulven on the shore of Madison Lake. Mr Austin built a house and a store and then he called the area Austin Park first, and later Prospect Park. He worked on the shore and made it nice for swimming and boating. Madison Lake was a very small town. Mr. Austin got the government Post Office because he wanted to have Prospect Park be the major town of the area. Madison Lake didn't become a town until 1892 when it was only a 26-year-old village. Point Pleasant was settled about 1860 by Joe Wright. The Barclays bought Point Pleasant from him. They planned on it being the town of the area. The hotel at Point Pleasant as built in 1882. So we have Mr. Austen at Prospect Park and Mr. Barclay at Point Pleasant and the Madison Lake town site, which was registered in Mankato January 17, 1885, all competing to be a town.

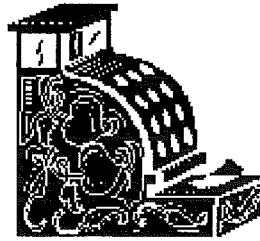
When Madison Lake got the post office then that was the end of Prospect Park and Point Pleasant becoming towns. Another reason Madison Lake finally became the main town is because the railroad went through Madison Lake in 1884. Colonel Barclay said he'd never have sold 75 acres for \$20.00 an acre if he would have know the railroad was going through that land. G. W. Allyn came to town to cut timber. He was disgusted that Madison Lake had no post office. The post office was at Prospect Park, a mile southwest of Madison Lake. Mr. Allyn kept pressing Mr. Austin to give up his post office.

It took a year but Madison Lake finally got the post office 1885. That was the end of Prospect Park becoming the town. Mr. Austin who ran a shoe store in Mankato, sold his lake property to Frank Hoehn on December 27, 1900. He and his family moved to San Diego, California. He died in 1908. Today, Prospect Park is owned by Vi Hoehn. She and her husband ran the farm for years. Mr. Austin's granddaughter was Maude Hart Lovelace who wrote the Betsy-Tacy

books about her early life in Mankato. Her mother and father were married in front of the bay window of the house overlooking the lake.

#### Sources:

*Atlas of Blue Earth County Minnesota*, Midland Atlas Company, 2000 Edition, p. 8 and 11  
*Deep Valley*, Minnesota Heritage Publishing, 2002, by Julie A. Schrader, p. 137, 297, 299  
*History of Blue Earth County*, by Thomas Hughes, p. 243-245  
*Maud Hart Lovelace*, Abdo and Daughters Publishing, 1994, p 8  
*The Heritage of Blue Earth County*, by Julie Hiller Schrader, 1990, p. 149-159.



### ...at the Museum Store

As the new Museum Assistant at BECHS's Heritage Center, I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to learn about local history not only through exhibits and merchandise but from visitors and the people who have written and created many of the historical and artistic books and gift items we carry. This is a perfect place to support local historians who have devoted countless hours to the research and production of a needed book, map or artistic print.

Recently, at the Museum Store, Myrtle Westphal visited us for a book signing of her book *Years of Memories, The History and Memories of McPherson Township & St. Clair, Minnesota, 1855-2005*. Signed copies of Westphal's *Years of Memories* are still available. This would make a wonderful gift for anyone interested in the experience of growing up in a small, rural town.

Marcia Baer has donated the last 31 copies of *Those Barracks Babies*, a collection of remembrances from the people who lived in the relocated Algona, Iowa, barracks at Mankato State College. In these letters readers come to know the quality of character these Barracks Babies exhibited through their spirit of excitement for life after WWII, their sense of humor, ambition and clarity of reflection.

I'm happy to report one smart customer taking a look at *The Frederick Manfred Reader*, edited by John Calvin Rezmerski and say, "that's going on my wish list." This is another treasure not to be left unopened. *The Frederick Manfred Reader* may be just the book



you've been looking for and will likely lead you to Manfred's complete works in the future!

All purchases in the Museum Store help to fund the society, museum exhibits and programs. Thank you for your continued support.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Anna Larson  
Museum Assistant

## WISH LIST

- Glassware for the Hubbard House
- Step stool for Museum Store
- Copy paper
- *Maple River Messenger* on microfilm
- *Lake Crystal Tribune* on microfilm
- *Mankato Free Press* on microfilm

## Recent Donations

### Up to \$100

Schultz, Jo  
Zimmer, Beth

### Memorial

For: Phil Forrey  
From: Richards, Marcia

### \$500 and up

Madsen, Jack  
Grundmeier, Winston  
and Shirley

### In Kind

Keir, Grace  
Jensen, Orville  
Madsen, Jack  
Wilson, Bernie  
Zimmer, Beth

**Thank you all very much!**

## Christmas at the Hubbard House



## Wonders of Christmas

Sunday, December 4, 1:00-4:00

Monday, December 5, 5:00-8:00

Weekends 10th-11th and 17th-18th, 1:00-4:00



## DEEP VALLEY BOOK FESTIVAL

### A Celebration of Authors, Books & Reading

Celebrate Minnesota's rich literary tradition at the second annual Deep Valley Book Festival, which will take place from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on November 12 and 13 at the Midwest Wireless Civic Center in Mankato.

The Festival will feature dozens of Minnesota authors, publishers and literary societies, as well as two full days of programming and events geared to children, adults and families. There will be live music, activities, and a chance to interact with writers from across the state. Books will be available for sale, but there is no admission fee for the public. Among the writers who will be present at the Festival are novelists Faith Sullivan and Rebecca Fjelland Davis, children's book authors Terri DeGezelle and Judy Beiderman and poet John Rezmerski. For a complete list of participating authors and scheduled events, visit: [www.deepvalleybookfest.com](http://www.deepvalleybookfest.com).

**July - September 2005  
Artifact & Archives Donations**

Affolter, Ronald	Madsen, Tim
Bartholdi, Roberta	Marcotte, Joe
Blasing, Randel	McComb, Mary
Buchanan, Don	McLaughlin, Theresa
Childs, Mrs. Darrell	Menne, Barb
Christenson, John	Meyer, Paul
Dawson, Norm	Miller, Yvonne
Dittrich, Bob	Mortenson-Klimpel,
Dooley, Mary	Candence
Dunlop, Donna	Natural Resources
Eick, Gerald	Conservation Services
Ekgren, Carolyn Hicks	Neilsen, Arlene
Flemming, Sandra J	Quade, Henry and Ann
Frederick, Mike	Rapidan Township
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Grundmeier, Win & Shirley	Schaub, Shirley
Heers, Frances Gilman	Schmitz, Joan
Herbst, Gordon	Schultz, Georgia
Humphrey, Mary	Seewald, Ronald
Keir, Grace	Shibilski, Bob
Kenward, Robert	Swenson, Deanna
Larson, Bruce	Tarjeson, Jane
Lavitschke, Jo-an	Vee, Harlan
Layeux, Tim	Webb, Donna
Lehnert, Marilyn	Ziegler, Ken
Lieferman, Jerome	Zimmer, Beth

**Thank You** once again to the Twilight Garden Club whose volunteers plan, plant, water, mulch, and maintain the beautiful gardens at the Hubbard House.

Bade, Mary	Klein, Cheryl
Beck, Sister Mary	Kortuem, Amy
Bennett, Marilyn	Kortuem, Karen
Bill, Kathleen	Krenik, Rebecca
Broadwell, Linda	Kuster, Ruth
Burgess, Gail	Miller, Mary Ann
Edwards, Nellie	Mountain, Judy Ringler
Ellis, Tami	Natvig, Marsha
Elmqvist, Sharon	Nelson, Joyce
Erdman, Evie	Petersen, Vicki
Fitterer, Marge	Petry, Rita
Frost, Diane	Plotz, Harriet
Gast, Pat	Rademaker, Martha
Gabriel, Diana	Shumway-Schultz, Kim
Hankins, Joyce	Sik, Jean
Hansen, Pat	Skadahl, Phyllis
Herbst, Gordon	Swenson-Stock, Karna
Hoppe, Judy	Suskovic, Sarah
Hottinger, Mimi	Waltman, Maureen
Jensen, Terri	Welle, Mary
Johannsen, Cindy	Woods, Darlene
Johnson, Jan	

**July - September 2005  
Volunteers**

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Broadwell, Don	Marti, Paula
Burns, Inella	Marti, George
Burton, Ronnie	Norman, Beth
Carey, Elizabeth	Nui, Dana
Coleman, Mary	Nussbaumer, Linda
Dooley, Mary	Ohlenkamp, Ora
Evans, Barry	Peterson, Leslie
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Kinney, Robin	Wright, Lorraine
Lagerquist, Mike	Young, Katy
Lamson, Barb	Ziegler, Ken
Lavitschke, Jo-an	Zielske, Dan
Lundin, Gary	Zimmer, Beth
McComb, Mary	

*Volunteers Are Always  
Welcomed*

If you have some time to spare to help us preserve history, please give us a call. Some examples are:

*serving as tour guides  
participating on committees  
doing data entry for Archives indexes  
indexing census or newspapers  
researching and/or writing*

## *Notes from the Archives Manager:*

If you haven't been to the Research Center lately, you'll see someone new there. Sara Sanders the Collections Assistant is now at the research desk to help you. I'm still here, I'm just back in the stacks and I'd like to tell you about one of the valuable resources we have there, the city directories.

City directories are like telephone books, but these books were around before the telephone was invented. They are a valuable tool in any research. The directories are usually a year-by-year listing of businesses and residences in the city and county. They can give you a good look at a business or a family over a period of time. These books were published for businesses and gave the names and addresses of potential customers. They were also used to gauge the amount of credit given to individuals, because if you appeared in the directory you were employed and usually a responsible and upstanding citizen - which is why most immigrants wanted to appear in directories. It also gave the creditor a full name, address and employer - a place to send the bill. The first Mankato Business Directory is 1871-72, the first Blue Earth County Directory was 1881. They are still being published today.

Each directory is an alphabetical listing by name, but you can also learn whether someone owned their home, if they rented, lived over their business, farmed, or were tenant farmers. Occupations and employers are listed. There are interesting occupations such as "collector" and "trimmer". Women were also listed if they were single and employed or if they were widowed, but it wasn't until the late 1920s that wives were listed. Post-secondary students appear as early as the 1890s. There are classified business listings, so if you're looking for a particular type of business, like a candy maker in town, but don't know the name, you can search under candy makers and see who was in business in any year. Included in these books is information like population, brief histories of the cities and villages, city officials and organizations.

No two directories are alike, in the early years publishers changed back and forth. Each year they sent out canvassers to collect the information. They didn't just "update" last year's issue, which is why each

directory is different and information is located in different areas within the book. They are invaluable research tools for those doing historical research. Because they were done each year, they are considered primary sources.

Some directories listed the death dates of those that had passed away within the last year. In Blue Earth County these appear throughout the 1930s and 1940s. You can, in some years, find a listing of a person's new location when they have moved. There are also reverse directories included in the directory. This section is a listing of residences in order by street and house number. This is very helpful when doing business or house history research. Reverse directories for Mankato started in 1932.

City directories also help to fill in the gaps left by the destroyed 1890 Federal Census; we have directories for 1892 and 1895. There is a lot of valuable information in these sometime overlooked books.

So, stop by, say hello to Sara, and if there is something I can help you with, just ask for me.

*Shelley Harrison*  
Archives Manager




## **ARCHIVES WEEK OPEN HOUSE**

**Tuesday, October 25, 2005**

Join the Blue Earth County Historical Society on Tuesday, October 25, 2005 from 5-8 p.m. at the Heritage Center for the third annual Archives Week Open House. BECHS is celebrating how historical records enrich the understanding of the past, present and future. Events that evening include free admission to the Research Center and Museum Gallery and 10% discount on Archival and Genealogy supplies in the Museum Store.

For more information, please contact Shelley or Sara at 507-345-5566.



## *Through the Research Center Door:*

Let me introduce myself...

My name is Sara Sanders, and I am the new Collections Assistant. I am very excited and honored to become a part of the historical society. For those of you that I have not met, I will tell you a little of my background. I have been a part-time Minnesota resident for many years and permanent resident for the last five years. I grew up in Indiana, but spent my summers in Minnesota. My father was the blacksmith at Historic Fort Snelling and every summer my brothers and I spent our time in the historic year 1827. I was basically born into the museum world and inherited the love of history.

In 2001 I graduated from Ball State University and took a position at the Lower Sioux Agency Historic Site where I worked until it closed last summer. In June my fiancée was offered a position at James Tower in North Mankato, which brought me to this area. It was perfect timing because the Collections Assistant position opened up and helped me continue my career in museums.

Now here I am, very excited about my new adventure. You can usually find me in the research center eager to help with all your research needs. My other duties include taking in the donations. So if you have a research question, have an item to donate, or just want to say hello, come see me!

*Sara Sanders*  
Collections Assistant

## THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS

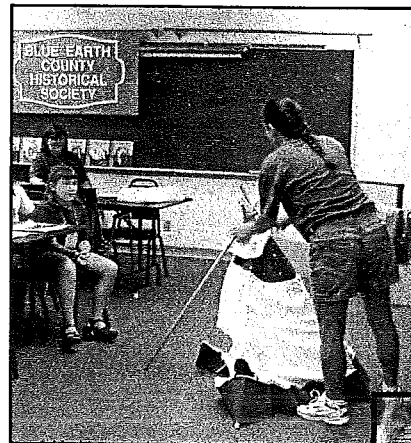
A special *Thanks* to the Hubbard House volunteers who helped with the tours and programs this summer.  
We had a successful season!!

## YOUNG HISTORIANS

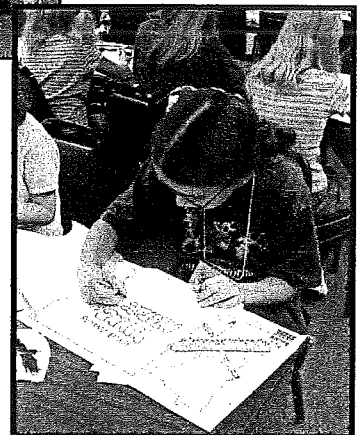
Young Historians is a monthly program at the Blue Earth County Historical Society for students grades 3-6. The topics range from Native American history to World War II. Young Historians workshops are the second Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to Noon through the school year. They are free and open to anyone interested in hands-on history. A parent or grandparent is encouraged to attend, but it's not mandatory.

Another branch of Young Historians is the YH Club. Students grades 3-6 can join the Club for \$10. They receive a t-shirt, membership card and access to the special monthly Club meeting. The Club meets either before or after the workshop. The Club takes part in special tours, craft projects and a book club. This year's Club project will be to make a lap quilt. Each club member will decorate a quilt square for each Young Historians workshop. By the end they will have nine squares each which will result in a 9 square quilt.

For more information about Young Historians - how to get involved either as a student or an adult, contact Jessica at 345-5566.



*Young Historians coordinator Christina Shortall teaches the kids how to put together a Native American teepee at the September workshop.*



*Club member Kyla Powers works on her first Young Historians Quilt square.*

## New and Renewed Members

Andrews, Melodie  
Apitz, Darell & Lucy  
Baerg-Vatndal, Steven & Anita  
Barber, Eddice  
Barber, James & Edith  
Bartsch, Janet  
Belgard, Hugh & Vail  
Birbeck, Marilyn  
Bishop, Mary Louise  
Bliese, Brianna  
Boroski, Betty  
Bowen, Patrick  
Bradshaw, Louise  
Bursaw, Iona  
Carstensen, Vernon & Norma  
Casella, Dr. Donna  
Clause, David & Carolyn  
Clements, Tom  
Compton, Harlan & Nancy  
Cramer, Robert  
Cramer, James  
Diel, Doris  
Eick, Aileen  
Eng, Jane Frink, Brian & Denise  
Erikson, Glenn & Helen  
Farnham, Joseph & Malda  
Frederick, Carol  
Frederick, Michael  
Freyberg, Lynette M.  
Friday, Mona  
Gawtry, Douglas  
Habein, Dr & Mrs Harold  
Halstead, Sharon  
Hamer, Nancy  
Hansen, Norma  
Heers, Francie  
Hendrickson, Carol  
Hesse, Norla  
Heyer, Monty & Julie  
Higginbotham, Marla  
Hodapp, Francis  
Hollingsworth, Alice  
How, Mary Ellen  
Howard, Don  
Huettl, Richard

Humphrey, Mary  
Hustoles, Paul & Mary Jo  
Hynes, Susan  
Ireland, L. H. & Patricia  
Jansen, Steven  
Johnson, Douglas & Patricia  
Johnson, Marguerite T.  
Johnson, Marlyss  
Jones, Eldon & Helen  
Kamakahi, Katherine  
Kanyusik, John & Carolyn  
Kenward, Robert  
Kind, Arn & Margaret  
Krause, Dolores  
Lagerquist, Mike  
Lang, Candace  
Leeman, Harold  
Llewellyn, Becky  
Lund, Kay  
McLaughlin, Tom & Theresa  
McLean, Edward  
McNear, Virginia  
Manthe, Lois  
Masberg, Rita  
Medalen, Ethel  
Merkert, Karin I.  
Mohr, Harley & Ruth  
Morgan, Verna  
Mortier, Mary  
Neumiller, Robert  
Niu, Dana  
Norman, John & Beth  
Nuessle, Ruth  
Oehler, Dick  
Palmer, John  
Pennington, Charles  
Piehl, Charles & Kathleen  
Pierce, Glenn & Donna  
Phelps, Dean  
Pond, Patricia  
Quade, Henry & Ann  
Radichel, Dorothy  
Ries, W.C.  
Ringheim, Marilyn  
Rose, Robert & Luella

Ryan, Thomas  
Sardella-Ayres, Dawn  
Schaub, Shirley  
Schmitz, Joan  
Schmitz, Leora  
Schrader, Julie  
Simonett, James & Patricia  
Smith, Roger & Anne  
Snilsberg, Lee & Loretta  
Sofchalk, Helen  
Sontag, Leola  
Stemper, Donald  
Stetina, Renata  
Strobel, Judith  
Swanson, Kevin & Jody  
Swenson, Helenrachel  
Tacheny, Leon & Delores  
Thomas, Joanne  
Thomas, Ryan  
Thompson, Mary  
Vetter, William & Doris  
Vosbeck, Elizabeth  
Voss, Judy  
Ward, Mary  
Webb, Donna  
Westphal, Myrtle  
Williams, Vee  
Wilson, Bernadette  
Wolff, Gerald  
Wright, Lorraine M.

### **Business Members**

Fischer Group Commercial Realtors  
Goodrich Construction  
MSU Urban Studies  
The Mankato Free Press  
Meyer & Sons TV & Appliance  
MSU History Department  
Saint Peter & Paul Jesuit Community  
Survey Services Inc.

*Please support our  
Business Members*

Thank you to all of those who joined or who renewed your memberships this year  
and an additional thank you to those who renewed at a higher level!



## Fingerprints and Footnotes

The Fingerprint and Footnotes Club is growing. We now have 30 members and newcomers are always welcome. We had adventures to both the Decoria Cemetery and the LDS Family History Center recently and realized how much information and resources are available in our own backyards. Club members have helped to keep the volunteers at the LDS Family History Center busy since our visit there. We would like to thank those at the Center for their time.

It was great to see those of you who ventured out for the cemetery tour on such a hot September day. We walked and talked about the different types of markers as well as heard the history of the cemetery from the sexton, Mr. Raether. We also learned about all the details you can find when doing newspaper research. The meetings were full of lively discussion and refreshments rounded out the evenings.

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

### Future Meetings:

- November 10 : Recap of the South Central Minnesota Genealogy Expo
- December 8 : Family Traditions
- January 13: History of Quilts

*Finger Tip* - Try to get the data for a family from as many census years as possible. Record all the data concerning the family for each census year. Separate the information from each year by a line drawn across the paper. By observing the multiple census records, you will see changes in the family during the intervening years: births, deaths, marriages, job changes, moves etc. Besides these obvious changes that one will observe, you will sometimes see various names by which an individual was known. By knowing other names by which the individual went, other data can be searched again to find new information.

*~provided by Beth Zimmer*

## EXHIBIT UPDATE



### ***Down on the Farm:***

The Agricultural Story of Blue Earth County

### ***HickoryTech: A Centennial Business***

Explore a timeline of communication history on display through May

### ***Korean Conflict Display***

Hallway display case

### ***Model Ships and Steamboats***

Hallway display cases

### ***Teapots***

Collections display case



## **“Lincoln Lives”**

### **His Life, His Legacy**

**November 19th at 1:00**

**BECHS Heritage Center**

The year 2005 marks the 140th anniversary of Lincoln's assassination, an event whose effects linger to this day. Local author and Lincoln historian, Bryce Stenzel will be exhibiting a significant portion of his personal collection of Lincoln mementos at the Blue Earth County Historical Society during the months of November and December. This collection includes statues, busts, photographs, books and period artifacts representative of the Lincoln era.

A special program highlighting the Gettysburg Address will be held on Saturday, November 19 at 1:00 pm. to kick off the grand opening of the exhibit. President Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address on November 19, 1863 on the battlefield near Gettysburg, PA. Copies of Stenzel's recent book, *Lincoln for the Stages* will be available for sale.



**Blue Earth County Historical Society  
Annual Membership Levels**

Membership runs July 1, 2005 June 30, 2006

**Basic \$20-49**

- Subscription to the quarterly Newsletter *The Historian*
- 10% discount in the Museum Store
- Free Admission to the Heritage Center Gallery, Hubbard House and Research Center

**Basic Levels**

- ☐ Individual Student/Senior \$20
- ☐ Individual \$25
- ☐ Household \$35

**Contributor \$50-99**

All the Basic Household Membership benefits plus:

- \$10 gift certificate to The Museum Store
- Listing in our Annual Report (optional)

**Booster \$100-499**

Basic and Contributor benefits plus:

- Your choice of one of the gift items (A-D) listed below

**Sponsor \$500-999**

Basic and Contributor benefits plus:

- Your choice of two gift items (A-D)

**Benefactor \$1,000-4999**

Basic and Contributor benefits plus:

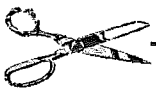
- Your choice of three gift items (A-D)

**Patron \$5,000 +**

Basic and Contributor benefits plus all four gift items (A-D) and bonus gift.

**GIFT ITEMS**

- A - BECHS Logo Coffee Mug
- B - BECHS Logo Tote Bag
- C - BECHS Logo T-shirt
- D - Powwow Compact Disk



**THANK YOU!**

I Would Like to Contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

☐ New ☐ Renewal

☐ Please do not send me a gift. I want my full contribution to support BECHS.

☐ I would like my contribution to be anonymous.

**Membership Levels**

- ☐ Basic
- ☐ Contributor
- ☐ Booster - Gift Choice \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Sponsor - Gift Choice \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Benefactor - Gift \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Patron - Gift Choice A-D

Membership fees and donations cover a growing part of our annual operating budget. Thank you for your support now as we preserve and protect the past for the future!

**Please return this form to:**

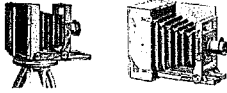
BECHS Membership

415 Cherry Street, Mankato, MN 56001

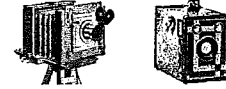
**Notice**

Please note our new membership levels and added great gifts for joining at a higher level. Effective immediately, all memberships will run from July 1 to June 30. If you have already renewed your 2005 membership, it will carry over until June 30, 2006. If not, your membership has now expired. Please renew at your earliest convenience. If you have questions, please feel free to contact any Board, Staff or Development and Marketing Committee member.

**And, remember BECHS when considering giving a memorial or in your estate planning.  
This a wonderful way to preserve your family heritage.**



## "Minnesota Reflections"



The first project of the Minnesota Digital Library, "Minnesota Reflections", brings more than 5,000 photographs, postcards and stereographs of Minnesota from before 1909, contributed by more than 50 cultural heritage organizations, to people around the world. Each picture in the collection is a digital copy of an image from the early days of the state, accompanied by information about the image. This collection is now open for public viewing at: <http://reflections.mndigital.org>.

The Blue Earth County Historical Society was one of the first organizations to contribute to the project. To view BECHS' images, click on "contributing institution" then "Blue Earth County Historical Society". You can also access the "Minnesota Reflections" website by visiting our website at [www.rootsweb.com/~mnbechs](http://www.rootsweb.com/~mnbechs).

Visitors to the "Minnesota Reflections" website may do basic or advanced searches on all the collections or browse a collection from a contributing institution. Visitors may also browse images by topic or region. They may read profiles of the contributing institutions and learn more about the Minnesota Digital Library initiative.

To order a print of an image found at "Minnesota Reflections", just contact the participating institution. If it is a BECHS image, contact Shelley or Sara in the Research Center.

Library Services at Minnesota State University, Mankato will be hosting Freedom: A History of the US: a traveling exhibit from the Gilder Lehrman Institute. This free exhibit is open to the public and will be in the Memorial Library during the month of November 2005. The exhibit documents and illustrates critical figures and events while tracing the evolving concept of freedom from the founding of the United States to 1868. Questions contact Leslie Peterson at (507) 389-2290 or [leslie.peterson-1@mnsu.edu](mailto:leslie.peterson-1@mnsu.edu)



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

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