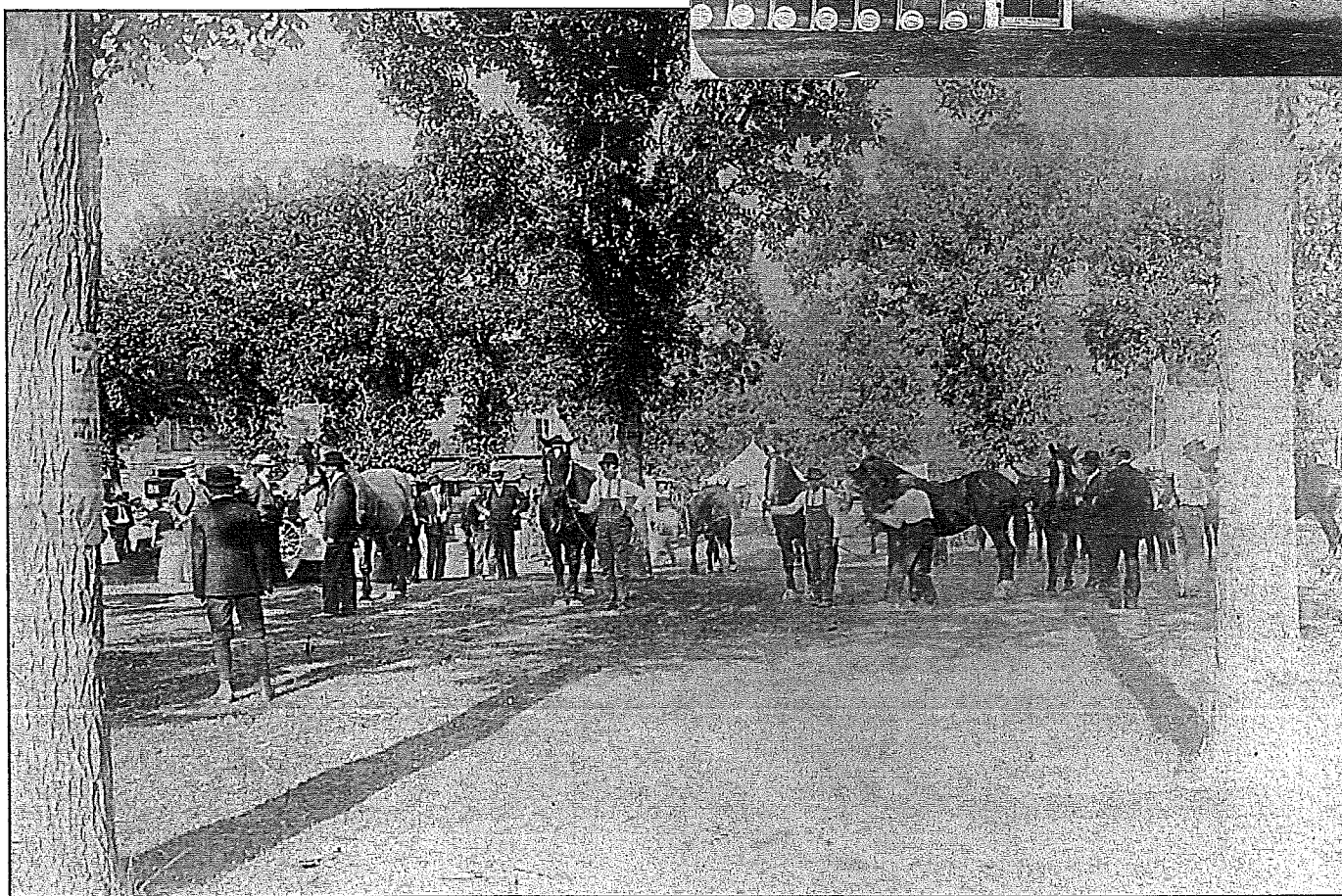


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Special rest porch for mothers at the Blue Earth County Fair,  
Garden City, c1915



## See you at the Fair!

Horse Show at the Fair in Garden City, c1909. To learn about the history of the Blue Earth County Fair see the Summer 2000 *Blue Earth County Historian* available for viewing in BECHS Research Center or for purchase at our booth at The Fair in August.



## *From the Executive Director*

Summer is flying by. As you are reading this, BECHS is preparing for another year at the Great Blue Earth County Get-together – the Blue Earth County Fair. We are

excited about some new opportunities this year. BECHS will operate the schoolhouse at the Fair. We will have turn-of-the-century schoolhouse activities and lessons for children of all ages (1-99). We will continue to have our traveling store in the arcade building, and we are planning an old fashioned pie and ice cream social with a showing of BECHS' original production, *Medicine Show: From Quacks to Clinic* on Sunday afternoon. Please consider joining us at the Fair, either as a visitor or as a volunteer. This is a great opportunity to help BECHS and to meet your Blue Earth County neighbors.

This has been a busy summer for BECHS. Since May we have hosted nearly 30 programs or events. Our programs range from Fingerprints and Footnotes and Diner's Club (both monthly programs) to the Cambria Eisteddfod and Pilgrim's Rest Cemetery

Tour (both one time only events). We also added a new program focused on local authors. Each month we will host a book discussion and author signing. And with summer comes the old-fashioned pie and ice cream social. We have taken part in three of them already this summer, with the Lake Crystal Municipal Band concert coming up on July 26<sup>th</sup>.

An exciting reward to all of these programs and events is the different people we meet and enlighten about what BECHS has to offer. As staff, volunteers and members, we are excited to share BECHS' services and opportunities with everyone. If you haven't taken the opportunity recently, please attend a program or event, visit the Hubbard House or Museum or spread the word to a friend and family member that BECHS is a great organization with many opportunities for all ages!

Please remember that without our members and dedicated volunteers we wouldn't have the incredible organization that we have today. I thank you for your continued support and commitment to helping this organization grow!

*Jessica Potter*, Executive Director



## **Blue Earth County Historical Society**

415 Cherry Street, Mankato, MN 56001, 507-345-5566

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~mnbechs/>

BECHS mission is to collect, preserve and publish materials relating to the history of Blue Earth County.

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Jessica Potter, Executive Director  
[bechs@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechs@hickorytech.net)  
Shelley Harrison, Archives Manager  
[bechsrc@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechsrc@hickorytech.net)  
Sara Upadhyay, Collections Assistant  
[bechscs@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechscs@hickorytech.net)  
Anna Larson, Museum Assistant  
[bechsms@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechsms@hickorytech.net)  
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## ***The Blue Earth County Historian***

Summer 2006

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# ASK BECHS

A new feature in the BECHS *Historian* will be a section titled "Ask BECHS." The Staff, Board or volunteers will answer questions from our membership. It can be a question about BECHS or the history of an event, place or mystery in Blue Earth County. We'll start this out by answering two general questions.

## Why do we need a county historical society?

"To collect, preserve and promote the history of Blue Earth County for present and future generations." This is the mission of the Blue Earth County Historical Society. Since 1901 BECHS has collected over 18,000 objects including Bill Carlson's first printing press and Maud Hart Lovelace's high school scrapbook, over 10,000 photographic images and thousands of stories and memories. These stories and memories are what make the objects and images come to life. In essence, BECHS collects the life of Blue Earth County. The Society preserves history not only through proper storage and handling procedures, but also by encouraging the life of a family to be passed on to the next generation. And how does BECHS promote history? Through our Research Center, Museum, R.D. Hubbard House, programs, newsletter, tours, staff, volunteers, and members. We, as the stewards of history, have a big job to preserve the past and protect the future, and this is why we need a county historical society.

## What year was the R.D. Hubbard House built?

The house was built in 1871 for Rensselaer D. Hubbard, founder of the Hubbard Milling Company. The house is a French Second Empire style. It is constructed of brick and wood on a basement of cut stone. The main house is three stories with a Mansard roof with colored slate shingles.

The Hubbard House was remodeled in 1888. The servants' quarters, fireplaces, a bay window, and an office were added, and all the woodwork was replaced. Various species of wood were used: oak, cherry, maple, and pine. The house was described as one of the finest homes in Mankato. It had the first telephone, indoor plumbing, electricity, and the most modern conveniences of the time.

In 1905, Bradstreet of Minneapolis was hired to re-decorate the house. At this time, silk wall covering, ceiling paintings, Tiffany and Quetzal lamps and art glass windows were added. The house is currently being restored to the grandeur of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

To "Ask BECHS," just call, write, or email your question to Jessica Potter. Questions will be answered in the next newsletter.

## Recent Donations

### Up to \$25

Abraham, Richard  
Buck, Margaret  
Davis, Shirley  
Kearney, Elizabeth  
Kraft, Judy  
Ringheim, Marilyn  
Straka, Stacey  
Wigley, Francys  
Wilson, Bernadette

Madsen, Jack  
McLaughlin, Tom and Theresa  
Rezmerski, John  
Roscoe, Don  
*In honor of Bert Burns*  
Sofchalk, Helen  
Steil, William and Nancy  
Zwickey  
Timm, Robert

### Over \$500

Grundmeier, Winston and Shirley

### Blue Earth Co. Townships

Cambria Township  
Medo Township  
Mapleton Township

### In Kind

Blue Valley Sod & Landscape  
Coleman, Mary  
Confer, Richard & Ogden  
Garlow, Sandi  
Jensen, Orv  
Kenward, Robert  
Richtsmeier, Scott

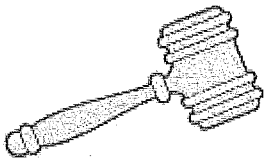
### \$25-\$99

Anderson, Mary V.  
Bishop, Mary Louise  
Coughlan, T. William  
Craig, Nancy  
*In honor of Joshua and Martha (Hughes) Norman*  
Cramer, Donald  
Hollingsworth, Alice  
Nuessle, Ruth  
Sassenberg, Eunice  
Taylor, Brett

### \$100-\$500

BENCO  
Burton, Verona

BECHS has received \$735 toward our \$1000 matching donation. When we reach \$1000, a donor will match that with another \$1000. Please help us reach our goal. A heartfelt thanks to all who have made donations and renewed their memberships.



## *From the President*

In this, my second column as President, I want to address an issue that our Board of Trustees has been focusing on very closely for the past several months, that being the long-term future of the Blue Earth County Historical Society.

As those of you who actively volunteer at BECHS know, we have made some excellent progress in the recent past. Our membership is on the rise. We have recently renovated our Museum Store. We have expanded our programs schedule. In short, things are going great.

As a Board I believe that we are in unanimous agreement that there are even greater things in store for BECHS! Some of you have no doubt heard of the Envision 2020 project, the goal of which is (in very short summary) the creation and implementation of a vision for the long-term development of the Greater Mankato area. You may also be familiar with the Twin Rivers Center for the Arts project, the long-term goal of which is (again in summary) to create a center within the community to house Greater Mankato organizations involved in arts and culture. Various members of our Board have been, and continue to be, involved in both of these projects.

But the real question is what do these initiatives mean for BECHS years down the road? To be perfectly blunt, at this point no one is precisely sure. How are we addressing the issue? First, many of you have participated in the recent "brainstorming" sessions and given your views and ideas as to what you would like to see in the future, and for that I thank you. Your opinions will definitely not go unheeded! Second, to assist BECHS in our own long-term planning we have requested the assistance of various civic leaders to sit on an Advisory Council, the purpose of which will be to help us develop our own vision of where we want BECHS to go.

I want to give a very special thank you to the following individuals, who have all agreed to serve on this Advisory Council. They are:

Marian Anderson      Mike Kearney

Kristin Duncanson  
Sal Frederick

Margaret Preska  
George Sugden

Over the course of the next several months, I am sure I will be making additional reports on where these efforts lead us. In the meantime, if you have any special thoughts or concerns, please feel free to contact me or Jessica at any time. Believe me when I say that as a Board, we are very cognizant of the fact that we exist to serve our members and the community.

At the same time we are thinking about where we want to be 10 or more years into the future, we cannot afford to forget about the present. We all know that BECHS is something we can be very proud of. Why not share it? I want to let you all know that the members of our Board of Trustees have each taken on the challenge of bringing on 5 new members over the course of the next year. A lofty goal! And we would like your help. I'd like to make a special request that our members challenge themselves to help us promote BECHS to friends, family, business associates, et cetera. Why not consider a gift membership? Or a visit to our museum (and newly renovated Museum Store) with a friend? As you know, our Society becomes stronger the more we share it with others. Increasing our membership will allow us to expand our programs and services in the short term – something I'm sure that everyone would like to see. At the same time, it helps us to become more well-known and visible in the community – something that will definitely assist us in our goal of long-term growth. I hope that you'll take up this challenge and assist us in insuring healthy membership growth for the year.

*Todd Stromwold*

Board of Trustees President.

### **Speakers Bureau**

BECHS Speakers Bureau is available for informative and entertaining programs for service clubs, organizations, church groups or nursing/assisted living homes. Topics range from History of Blue Earth County to the History of Hats. To request a speaker, a list of prepared topics or to volunteer for our Speakers Bureau, please contact Jessica at 345-5566.



# The Literary Heritage of Blue Earth County

by  
John Calvin Rezmerski

Authors. Books. Poetry. Fiction. Non-fiction. Essays. Memoirs. Histories. It's an awful problem to write any kind of history of authors, books, etc., in Blue Earth County. There's just too much, and the first thing you have to do is to figure out what categories you're going to exclude; then you have to figure out what authors you're going to include. It's an awful thing to be confronted with the simple fact that an unadorned list of the authors' names would exceed the word-limit that's available in the newsletter. A bibliography of all the titles would require a book. So here's the deal: As Kant wrote his *Prolegomena to Any Future Study of Metaphysics*, I am composing prolegomena to any future study of literary activity in Blue Earth County.

First, let me state that I am excluding literary correspondence, sermons, religious pamphlets, articles in church newsletters and church magazines during the first half-century of Blue Earth County's existence, it seems, almost all ministers and many a church secretary at least occasionally published their thoughts on salvation, temperance, modest dress, and the paucity of donations. While some of these articles were eloquent enough to bear the label of Literature, they were essentially ephemeral. For similar reasons, I am mostly excluding journalistic writing, though I am reluctant to omit local newspaper columnists and feature writers like Ken Berg, Robert Girouard, Tim DeMarce, and a more recent crop including those who were newspaper employees like Joe Tougas, or who currently work for *The Free Press* like Brian Ojanpa, or are freelancers like Ron Gower.

I am also excluding many fine writers who wrote textbooks, organizational histories, family histories, and other works with very specialized audiences. Most newsletter writers and editors are omitted, too, though *The Corresponder*, which characterizes itself as a "Fan Letter on Minnesota Writers," begun in 1978 by Robert Wright, continued by Ron Gower, and now edited by Tyler Corbett, must surely be included as a significant literary force in Blue Earth County, serving to connect us with contemporary

Minnesota literature generally. It circulates widely beyond the county, has featured reviews by many local writers (mostly associated with MSU Mankato), and consistently reports on publications by local writers.

It is disgraceful to leave out Maud Hart Lovelace, but so much has already been written about her (some of it published in this newsletter), that I am merely mentioning her. Mentioning her, however, brings to mind another inclusion/exclusion problem: by what criteria do we determine who is a BEC author and who is not?



Lovelace, of course, is a native of the county, and wrote about Mankato. But her husband Delos, also an author, never lived here and never wrote about BEC. Is he a BEC author by marriage? John Christgau never lived here, but wrote about the Sioux-Dakota war in *Spoon*, partly set in Mankato. Philip Bryant never lived in BEC, but was published here.

Many writers have come from outside the county to enroll in the Master of Fine Arts program at MSU Mankato, then left after completing their degrees. Some people grew up here, then moved elsewhere before becoming writers. While living here, I have edited and published books by other poets, though the official address of my press was in Lyon County—do those books count as Blue Earth County literature? Are all of Capstone Press's many books, many by authors from other jurisdictions, to be considered as Blue Earth County literature?

What are the criteria for inclusion? How about memoirist Nicole Helget, not a BEC native, who studied in Mankato and worked in Mankato, but who lives in North Mankato? Are there any grumps who would say that novelist Terry Davis, who has lived and taught here for many years, should be excluded because he doesn't write particularly about BEC? John Koblas has written a good deal about the county, even though he's not a resident (however, he's a frequent visitor, and has made abundant use of the

BECHS archives). A good many local writers have actually lived in neighboring counties though they have been part of Blue Earth County's "literature scene." Henry David Thoreau passed through and included a few remarks in his journal. Sinclair Lewis worked on *Main Street* while on a visit to Mankato. Mankato is mentioned by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Do they thereby become BEC writers? It seems no set of criteria is adequate. Therefore, this article is about literary writers and writings that fit this standard: *More or less connected to Blue Earth County.*

No, let me restate that—it's not so much about the writers and writings themselves as it is about *literary activity*, which comes in many forms, not all in print. Perhaps the outstanding example is the Good Thunder Reading Series, begun in 1981 at MSU Mankato. The current and long-time director of the series is Richard Robbins, who recently received The Kay Sexton Award, presented annually by the Minnesota Humanities Commission to an individual or organization involved in fostering books, reading, and literary activity in Minnesota. A previous Mankato winner of this award was Doris Pagel, long associated with Friends of the Library and the Betsy-Tacy society, and editor of *Authors and Illustrators as Program Resources*, who won it in 1992. Several BEC authors have won Minnesota Book Awards, and several more have been nominated. Others have won awards such as Loft-McKnight fellowships, National Endowment for the Arts fellowships, State Arts Board fellowships, and Minnesota Voices awards. MSU Mankato has its own awards programs: the Robert Wright Award for outstanding student writers, and the Eddice Barber Visiting Writer program. Another award independent of MSUM is the Maud Hart Lovelace Award for children's literature.

Other literary activities include KMSU's programs *The Weekly Reader* and *Writers in Transit*. CCTV has sometimes featured literary programming, including readings connected with the Bothy Folk club's concerts, and independently produced programs like a reading by the late Mary Lofstrom. Readings have also been featured at other schools outside the University. Beginning in the early 1970's readings and workshops have been held in various local schools, both independently arranged and through the Writers in the Schools program. Re-

cently, Rasmussen College hosted a day-long program of readings by local writers, and South Central Technical College has added a creative writing course. Churches, especially the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship, have occasionally featured poetry readings in their services. Readings and book signings have taken place at several local coffee houses, most notably at the Coffee Hag, which has accommodated a monthly reading by the Southern Minnesota Poets' Society.

The Southern Minnesota Poets' Society was founded in 1976 by Patricia M. Johnson and others. The organization soon became a chapter of the League of Minnesota Poets, founded in 1934. Johnson, and the Society's current president Susan Steven Chambers, and I have all served in the office of Poet Laureate of LOMP. Chambers has also been president of the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, whose current president, Doris Stengel of Brainerd, last month was chaired as a bard at the Cambria Eisteddfod, co-sponsored by BECHS, LOMP, and Morgan Creek Vineyards (Does Stengel thereby become a Blue Earth County writer?).

That *eisteddfod*, part of the Prairie Stories and River Rhymes program held quarterly at Morgan Creek, is a revival of a Welsh literary tradition observed in BEC from 1891 till sometime in the 1950s.



*Eisteddfodau*, of which there are hundreds around the world every year, feature literary and musical competitions for children, adolescents, and adults, and culminate in a ceremony in which the victor in a competition for recital of original poems is awarded an oak chair. The first such competition in BEC (Mankato, 1891) was won by James D. Price of

Cambria. The eisteddfod frequently brought competitors from as far away as Chicago, though in later years, it seems to have attracted only competitors of Welsh descent from the local area. The Welsh settlers of the northwestern part of the county produced quite a number of writers and poets. In later years, however, non-Welsh residents of the area (like Joe Kubicek of Lake Crystal) also published fine poetry.

The 1891 gathering should not be supposed to be the beginning of literary activity, either in the county or by the Welsh communities. In 1871, the first 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration at Cambria featured a poetry competition won by none other than James D. Price, then only 15 years old. Literary societies (similar to today's book groups), were common in Cambria, Judson, Lake Crystal, and Mankato. Churches often sponsored essay contests. Fourth of July celebrations sometimes featured oratorical competitions. Newspapers (commercial, ethnic, and fraternal) published poems by local residents.

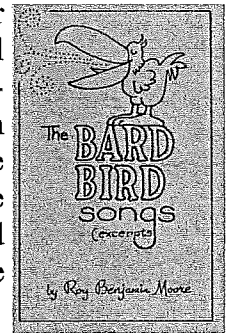
Blue Earth County has been well-represented in magazines and anthologies over the years. In what might be the first such anthology published in the state, *The Poets and Poetry of Minnesota*, edited by Mrs. W. J. Arnold (Harriet N. K. Arnold) in 1864, we find two BEC poets: Brig. Gen. Stephen Miller (who had been in command of Camp Lincoln and at Mankato following the 1862 Dakota conflict, and who supervised both the execution of the 38 condemned Dakota and the subsequent removal of the residents of the Winnebago Agency), and Col. J. H. Baker of Garden City.

In the various editions of *Minnesota Skyline*, published in the 1940s and 1950s, BEC is represented by the poems of Blanche Huntzicker, Mary Salinda Foster (whose book *Verse After All* was published in 1950), and Edith Foster Chase.

Perhaps the most famous of Mankato's early poets was Helen Hughes Hielscher, who in 1915 rendered the Psalms into metrical verse under the title *Songs of the Son of Isai*. In 1936, her collected poems were published under the title *Miscellaneous Poems of Helen Hughes Hielscher*. She was also a pioneer in obstetrics and pediatric medicine, and a founder of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Since that time, BEC has seen the publication of many books of poetry, fiction, and nonfiction by local authors and former residents, among them Susanne Bunkers, David Brunet, Cathy Callaway, Becky Davis, Monica Toohey Haack, Antony Oldknow, Roger Sheffer, John Otis, John Solensten, and Cary Waterman. A good many literary magazines like *Oxygen* have come and gone over the years, and some, like *Mankato Poetry Review*, have stayed. The fate of newcomers like *Static*, we hope, will be prosperous.

Book publishers have not been so numerous here, though one of them is a very big one, Capstone Press, specializing in books for schools. Minnesota Heritage Publishing specializes in historical books, mostly of local interest, and the press's publisher, writer Julie Schrader, is also the guiding energy behind the Deep Valley Book Fest. Throughout BEC's history, most books by BEC authors have either been published by presses outside the county, or outside the state. Many have been privately printed and published, like those of J.H. Baker in the years following the Civil War, or those of Mary Salinda Foster in the 1950s, Roy B. Moore in the 1960s, Charles Waterman in the 1970s, or a couple of my own in the 1990s. Some have been published by winning competitions, like those of Ed Micus and Candace Black.



Over the decades, Blue Earth County authors have shown a stronger orientation toward poetry than toward other literary genres, though fiction has been growing (probably because of the influence of MSU Mankato's creative writing program, which in my judgment is the best such program in the state). Local nonfiction is also on the increase, just as in the nation generally. It is quite clear that our county has grown enormously in the production of literature over the past thirty years or so, and that it is at its most productive (and at its highest quality) right now. What is needed more than anything else is a larger and more attentive audience. If you'd like to study the literature of Blue Earth County—a worthy enterprise—you can start at the beginning with the travel journals of Nicollet and Featherstonehaugh and work your way up to next year's Good Thunder readings. Or do it in reverse—just wander about in

the library and start looking up the names mentioned here. Or go to the Minnesota room at the MSU Mankato library, and work out a plan. Head on up to Barnes & Noble, or down to the Once Read bookstore. Attend a meeting of Southern Minnesota Poles. Visit the Deep Valley Book Fest. Or make some inquiries at the Heritage Center.

Literature is an important part of our history, a place where we learn not names and dates, but how and why we are what we have been and what we are becoming. It doesn't just exist here; it is an important part of what we do here. Literature is a community of which we can all be citizens with a common history.

## Advisory Council

The Blue Earth County Historical Society is proud to announce the members of the newly created BECHS Advisory Council. Members include Marian Anderson, Kristin Duncanson, Sal Frederick, Mike Kearney, Margaret Preska and George Sugden.

The Advisory Council will help BECHS further its vision and mission by helping to secure resources and develop programs, public relations and marketing. The Council was established by the BECHS Board of Trustees led by Trustee Henry Quade. If you have questions about the Advisory Council or the Board of Trustees, feel free to contact Board President Todd Stromswold at 387-9395.



## R. D. Hubbard House Open Hours

June—August  
Friday-Sunday 1 to 4

May and September  
Saturday-Sunday 1 to 4

See calendar for upcoming events.

## YOUNG HISTORIANS



Joshua Kloster and Grace Anderson proudly display their Young Historians Club Quilts. During the year, Club members designed a quilt square to represent each time period in history they learned about. The quilts follow a timeline



from Native Americans to World War II. After the quilts squares were completed, they were assembled by the volunteers of the Deep Valley Quilters—Jill Hansen, Grace Keir, Lynn Turbes, Barb Turner, Mary Ann Vogel and Mary Westburg.

Young Historians is a workshop series for grades 3-6. It meets the second Saturday of each month September – May. The Workshops are free due to the generosity of the Grace Jefferson Fund. For more information about the workshops or Club, contact Jessica at 345-5566

### Young Historians 2006-2007 Schedule

September 9, 2006—Native Americans  
October 14, 2006—Pioneers  
November 11, 2006—Frontier Artists  
December 9, 2006—Civil War  
January 13, 2007—Turn of the Century  
February 10, 2007—World War II  
March 10, 2007—Great Depression  
April 14, 2007—World War II  
May 12, 2007—Post WWII Boom

*COME, JOIN US!!*





## Through the Research Center Door:

I need your help solving the mysteries of the research center. We have wonderful resources that have been donated, re-

searched, organized and indexed by many dedicated volunteers over the years, but we cannot always answer every question asked of us. So we ask you to help solve these mysteries.

### Mystery Solved Almost...

In the last newsletter we asked for help determining what happened to the *New Era* Steamboat of Lake Crystal. We have found some information, but are still searching. So if you can add to the story, please contact us.

The *New Era* was designed and built by W. L. McLaughlin, who brought the steamboat to Lake Crystal from Iowa in 1893. McLaughlin was born in Ohio in 1856 and spent his youth in Iowa studying business and mechanics. In 1890 he constructed the 10-ton pleasure boat that was powered by steam. His plan to move the boat from Iowa to Lake Crystal was postponed due to delays in arrival of building equipment and the weather. When the *New Era* finally arrived in Lake Crystal, it was met by many townspeople excited about the first steamboat on Crystal Lake. The *New Era* met more delays when it was discovered that the wrong boiler had been installed and had to be replaced. Finally, on June 29, 1893, the steamboat was launched and completed a trip to the middle of Crystal Lake. It spent almost 20 years on Crystal Lake, but this is where the mystery begins.

We have located two sources that say the steamboat sank about 1912 during a thunderstorm. We still have not been able to locate an exact date or any other information about the sinking of the *New Era*. According to a *Mankato Free Press* newspaper article from 1975, a Boy Scout group of scuba divers had been searching for the *New Era* for more than a year. We have not been able to determine whether or not they found the steamboat. We are still searching for more information on the sinking and rescue of

the *New Era* Steamboat.

### New Mysteries

Where was Baf's Café located? What year and by whom was the wall of Sumner Hill built?

### Unsolved Mysteries

Who was Dr. Arleen? I am not sure if this is a first or last name. The doctor was referred to in a 1929 newspaper article.

If you have any information on Dr. Arleen, *New Era* Steamboat, Sumner Hill, or Baf's Cafe, please contact Sara at 345-5566 or [bechsco@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechsco@hickorytech.net).

Sara Upadhyay  
Collections Assistant

## Meet the Author

BECHS *Meet the Author* program series invites you to the writer's desk. From lectures, slide shows, good chat and book signing, meet a new author every third Saturday of the month at BECHS.

### John Koblas

Author of *Robbers of the Rails* and *The Sontag Boys of Minnesota*.

Saturday, August 19

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

### John Calvin Rezmerski

Editor of *The Frederick Manfred Reader*.

Saturday, September 16

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

### Dorothy McIntyre

Co-author of *Daughters of the Game*.

Saturday, October 21

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

## April - June Volunteers

Bartholdi, Roberta  
 Belgard, Vail  
 Brennen, Mike  
 Broadwell, Don  
 Burton, Ronnie  
 Coleman, Mary  
 Cords, Betty Lou  
 Frederick, Mike  
 Frisch, Carlienne  
 Garlow, Laura  
 Garlow, Sandi  
 Graham, Joan  
 Griffith, Helen  
 Grundmeier, Shirley  
 Grundmeier, Win  
 Hansen, Jill  
 Hanson, Kathryn  
 Haugh, Tom  
 Herbst, Gordon  
 Horn, Caleb  
 Horn, Isaac  
 Horn, Sara  
 Horn, Sheri  
 Howieson, Bob  
 Hugg, Bob  
 Hugg, Corey  
 Hynes, Susan  
 Jackson, Colleen  
 Jensen, Orv  
 Keir, Grace  
 Lagerquist, Mike  
 Lamson, Barb  
 Madsen, Jack  
 McComb, Mary  
 McLaughlin, Theresa  
 Niu, Dana  
 Ohlencamp, Ora  
 Peterson, Leslie  
 Powers, Bethel  
 Powers, Brenna  
 Powers, Delana  
 Powers, Karis  
 Powers, Kyla  
 Quade, Henry  
 Rezmerski, John  
 Sassenberg, Eunice  
 Schrot, Kate  
 Schultz, Jo  
 Shepherd, Julianna

Shepherd, Laura  
 Shepherd, Mary Anne  
 Shortall, Christina  
 Sofchalk, Helen  
 Stoufer, Chad  
 Stromswold, Todd  
 Tarjeson, Jane  
 Thorleifson, Julie  
 Turbes, Lynn  
 Turner, Barb  
 Vogel, Mary Ann  
 Webb, Donna  
 Weisz, Karen  
 Westburg, Mary  
 Williams, Karen  
 Wilson, Bernie  
 Zimmer, Beth

**The Cambria Eisteddfod was a success thanks to the generous contributions of time, talent and resources of the following:**

Affolter, Ron  
 Bouma, Jana  
 Cambria Presbyterian Church  
 Cambria Town Hall  
 Caldwell, Lisa- The Kilties  
 Chambers, Susan- Poetry Finalist  
 Donovan, Charmaine Pappas  
 First Presbyterian Church of Lake Crystal  
 Grundmeier, Shirley and Win  
 Gymanfa Ganu Association  
 Kildegaard, Athena  
 Kortuem, Amy  
 Krekelberg, Emily  
 Lake Crystal Historical Society  
 The League of Minnesota Poets  
 LeSueur County Museum  
 McGowan, Jack  
 Madsen, Jack  
 Marti, Adam  
 Marti, Ben  
 Marti, George  
 Marti, Paula  
 Mattheson, Elise  
 Morgan Creek Vineyard  
 Perlman, Jim- Holy Cow Press  
 Rafness, Lorna  
 Rezmerski, John  
 St. David's Society  
 Stengel, Doris- Bard  
 Stoll, Kenneth and Dianna- Heartstrings  
 Upadhyay, Samar



## Notes from the Archives Manager

One of our best collections at the Blue Earth County Historical Society is our Photograph Collection. We have over 7000 photographs.

We have Daguerreotypes, Tintypes Cabinets, Postcards and even some Polaroids. One of our oldest photographs in our collection with an original date written on the back is a photo of Minneopa Park in 1857. One of the most recently donated photos is that of the Shari Candy Company Building. It's our first even though the building and the company had been in Mankato for 60 some years.

We have some of the most interesting photographs that capture a split second in time. There is one where a boy who appears to be no more than twelve has a small round container in his shirt pocket. It makes one wonder if that was appropriate for 1930 and if his mother knew? All photographs tell stories. It may surprise you to learn that we have holes in our photograph collection. For example if you were to search for a photo of any building on Madison Avenue we probably don't have it. Growth on Madison Avenue didn't really take place until the 1960's and most don't consider that historical yet. A lot of the collection is now available for you to view from the comfort of your own computer online at [www.reflections.mndigital.org](http://www.reflections.mndigital.org).

This photograph looks very festive, a party of some kind, maybe a birthday or family reunion. We will never know – there is nothing



on the back of this photo – it's unidentified. Please identify your photos! If you want help preserving your memories, we carry photograph preservation information and supplies in our Museum Store. Please remember the only way this or any of our collections grow is through your donations.

*Shelley Harrison*

Archives Manager



## ...at the Museum Store

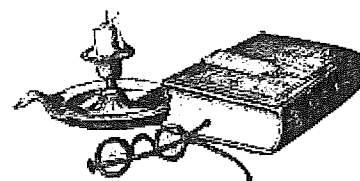
The museum store has established itself as officially open and inviting since the remodeling and beautification. A recent customer and friend exclaimed, "people should know about this place! It has something for everyone!" If only I had a tape recorder to share her live commercial. Our charm in part is due to our noncommercial feel, but we certainly want people to share in the intimate treasures of the Heritage Center and the County at large. People will find antique year books, decorative magnifying glasses (perfect gift for a researcher), pioneer replica wood crafts, archival photo albums and books on Blue Earth County and beyond.

A recent excitement around here is the *American Girls* series in book sets, large hard-cover books and paper dolls. I've now sold American Girls books to a child as young as five years old and a woman in her 80's. The woman actually received it as a birthday present and was thrilled to see so much information and so many visuals chronicling her 1930's childhood. *Welcome to Kaya's World* begins the collection in 1764 and continues up to 1944 with *Molly, An American Girl*.

Our most recent book produced by a collaborative team of BECHS volunteers is the *Blue Earth County Historian, 2001-2005*. As you might have guessed, this book is a collection of all the primary articles in each issue of our newsletter from the winter of 2001 through the fall of 2005. A defining characteristic of this re-edition of *The Historian* is its "diversity of ethnic backgrounds, knowledge, culture, education, and occupation. All of these and more are reflected in this little book, from articles on innovations in teaching to biographical sketches of some remarkable people, to accounts of the development of local industry, to stories of immigration from all parts of the world." Do not miss out on this little flavor-packed book!

*Anna Larson*

Museum Assistant





## Rapidan Heritage Society

### From the boardwalk of the Rapidan Depot...

Memorial Day in Rapidan was a day for looking back, recalling by-gone day's and ways. The day started early for the RHS crew – 7 a.m. for final preparations for the days events. We needed pick up the buns (almost like Mom's homemade buns), set out the picnic tables, pick up the pies (Dam Store pies!), setup the refreshments and the food line in the town garage, hang the girl's basketball uniforms in the town hall, and make sure the depot was ready for its grand 100-year rededication. Exhibits in the depot focus on the Rapidan area, railroad, school, dam, and farming. Did you see the 81-year old wedding cake??? Sorry, no samples were given out.

Daryl Lachmiller, RHS President, gave a brief history of the Rapidan depot and the restoration of it. The present depot was built in 1906 and used until 1958. It then was moved to a nearby farm and used as a granary. In 2002 RHS moved it back to its original location in Rapidan and began restoration. We hope you enjoy the restored depot! A time capsule will be placed in the interior wall at a later date.

Special thanks to Dorothy McIntyre and Marian Johnson, authors of *Daughters of the Game*, and former high school players, Dorothy Peterson, Mary Tonkin, Emma Anderson and Geraldine Johnson for sharing their experiences. These women were the



Photograph courtesy of Tim Madsen

original "daughters of the game" of girl's basketball, playing for Rapidan and Lake Crystal High Schools.

The Good Thunder Fire Department gave rides on

the fire truck to the kids and did a great job demonstrating fire safety in the home.

The day's events concluded with BECHS play *From Quacks to Clinics* and yes, we did have some 'quacks' plying their trade on the streets of Rapidan! Dr. Schlesselman, Good Thunder physician and resident of Rapidan Township, was represented in the play by Jack Madsen.

Need to get away for a day? Once again RHS will be offering a one-day bus trip on Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>. Destination: Lower Sioux Agency and other sites. Walk the paths of history and learn of the events that shaped this area's history. Fee includes all admission costs, ride in air-conditioned coach, coffee breaks, and a sumptuous picnic lunch. For more details, contact Jane at 278-3738.

*Jane Tarjeson*  
Secretary



*Madison Lake Area  
Historical Society*

The Madison Lake Area Historical Society lost a good friend and Treasurer with the death of Bill Ries, former Madison Lake banker. Bill was also a volunteer at BECHS. A rose bush was planted in Lindburgh Park in the Historical Society's planter in memory of Bill.

The speaker on June 21 was Carl Jordan who has left Mesabi Airlines and is now beginning work at Southwest Airlines. He lives in Madison Lake and told us how he became a pilot. As a youth he wore glasses and everyone told him he could never be a pilot. "Never give up," he said. "Look at me, I'm flying! He is also a Cub Scout leader. It was an interesting evening. Our annual picnic will be Wednesday, July 19, 6:30 pm at the Community Center. The potluck will have good food and conversation.

*To Schultz*  
Secretary





# Fingerprints and Footnotes

Fingerprints and Footnotes had an exciting spring. In May there were two programs: David Laskin's book signing and Ethnohistory of Jeffers Petroglyphs program. We also celebrated our first-year anniversary with a drawing and the winner was: ....Marcia Cross. *Congratulations to her.*

In June we had a delightful discussion on how to get the whole gang together and create a wonderful and memorable family reunion. In July the club motored out to Minneopa State Park, and we learned all about its long and rich history. As always the meetings were entertaining as well as educational and a delightful time was had by all. Newcomers are always welcome.

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

## Future Meetings:

- August 10<sup>th</sup> – Genealogy and DNA
- September 14<sup>th</sup> - The History of Rapidan Dam
- October 12<sup>th</sup> – Oktoberfest

## Finger Tip-

Jeffers Petroglyphs offers some wonderful opportunities to learn about Southern Minnesota. Here are a few of their events and programs:

- July 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>—Starry Night/ Prairie Night
- August 12<sup>th</sup>—Geology Discovery Day
- September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup>—Prairie Discovery Days

For more information on any of these events please visit [www.jefferspetroglyphs.com](http://www.jefferspetroglyphs.com)

There is no better time than summer to have a great adventure and discover something new.

## April—June 2006 Artifacts & Archives Donations

Affolter, Ron	Landwehr, Frances M.
Anonymous	Layman, Eloise
Bartholdi, Roberta	Leiferman, Jerry
Bartsch, Glenn	Madsen, Jack
BECHS	Mankato Fire Dept.
Colakovic, Kenneth	Marble, Dean
Coleman, Mary	McComb, Mary
Confer, Richard & Ogden	Munger, Angela
Cords, Betty	Neilson, Gerald
Dooley, Mary	Nelson Gourley, Deb
Edwards, Joyce	Paegel, Monica
Engstrom, Ruth Ann	Powers, Mariella
First Congregational	Rapidan Heritage
Church United Church	Society
of Christ	Rasmussen, Gordon
Fischer, Harold	Rosenberg, Mary Jane
Flanders, Nicholas	Schultz, Jo
Frederick, Mike	Shimmel, Bill
Giantvalley, Eleanor	Snider, Howard
Grams, Marcella	Snilsberg, Lee
Greta, Jeff	Tarjeson, Jane
Grundmeier, Winston	Thomas, Joanne
Hess, Norla	Thompson, Adele
Hicks, Evelyn	Tollefson, LaDonna
Hoehn, William	Torgenson, Allen
LaFavor, Lyle	Utermohler, Robert
Lahti, Alfred	Waseca County
	Historical Society

## WISH LIST

- Glassware for the Hubbard House
- White cotton gloves
- Copy paper
- Digital camera
- Mylar book covers
- *Mankato Free Press* on microfilm
- LCD projector

## BECHS Membership April-June

Ahlness, Janice  
 Allan, Rae E.  
 Allen County Public Library  
 Anderson, Mary V.  
 Apitz, Darell and Lucy  
 Bartholdi, Roberta  
 Birbeck, Marilyn  
 Bishop, Mary Louise  
 Bursaw, Iona  
 Carlson, Bruce and Carla  
 Carstensen, Vernon and Norma  
 Christensen, David and Jill Evans  
 Cummiskey, June  
 Daly, Mike  
 Davis, Shirley  
 Diamond, Sandy  
 Dobie, Joseph M.  
 Doran, Ann  
 Dorn, John and Kathleen  
 Dubke, Duane  
 Dunlop, Donna J.  
 Eick, Aileen  
 Erikson, Glenn and Helen  
 Frederick, Carol  
 Frederick, Michael  
 Frisch, Carlienne  
 Gage, Kelton and Dorothy  
 Habein, Harold  
 Hansen, Norma  
 Hesse, Norla  
 Higginbotham, Marla  
 Higginbotham, Jack and Shirley  
 Hinrich, William  
 Hodapp, Francis  
 Hollingsworth, Alice  
 How, Mary Ellen  
 Huettl, John  
 Huettl, Richard  
 Humphrey, Mary  
 Hynes, Susan  
 Immanuel Evangelical Church—  
 Pastor Nolting, Men's Club Crew  
 Ireland, Lawrence and Patricia  
 Jansen, Steven  
 Johnson, Douglas and Patricia  
 Jones, Eldon and Helen  
 Joyce, Ron  
 Keir, Grace and Richard

Kerkhoff, Donald  
 Kilanowski, Nicole  
 Kraft, Judy  
 Kubicek, Joseph and Sylva  
 Lund, Kay  
 McComb, Mary  
 McGuire, David  
 McLaughlin, Theresa  
 Madsen, Jack  
 Manthe, Lois  
 Mathiason, Renee  
 Merkert, Karin  
 Mohr, Harley and Ruth  
 Mosher, Clayton  
 Neilsen, Gerald  
 Norman, Beth  
 Nuemiller, Robert  
 Nuessle, Ruth  
 Nussbaumer, Linda  
 Ohlenkamp, Ora  
 Parks, Sandra  
 Paulson, Carol  
 Pond, Patricia  
 Preis, Judith  
 Quade, Henry and Ann  
 Resner, Donna  
 Ringheim, Marilyn  
 Roberts, Craig  
 Rollings, Donald C.  
 Roscoe, Don  
 Ryan, Thomas  
 S.S. Peter and Paul Jesuit Community  
 Salsbery, Caroline E.  
 Salsbery, Tom and Cindy  
 Sassenberg, Eunice  
 Sassenberg, Karl  
 Schaub, Shirley  
 Smith, Anne and Roger H.  
 Smoley, John  
 Snilsberg, Lee and Loretta  
 Sofchalk, Helen  
 Spriggs, Jim  
 Suserud, Rose Marie  
 Swanson, Jody and Kevin  
 Swenson, Rachel  
 Thompson, Kenneth and Irene  
 Thompson, Mary E.  
 Torgerson, Allen and Jane  
 Webb, Donna  
 Wilmes, Brad  
 Wilson, Bernadette  
 Wolff, Gerald  
 Zimmer, Beth and Jim



**BECHS is proud to  
unveil our updated logo**

A special thanks to Liz Madsen for  
her help designing the new look.

### Members Renewed at Higher Level

Anderson-Morgan, Verna  
Davis, Judy  
Duane, Susan  
Engh, Jane  
Fasnacht, William  
Hoehn, William C.  
Hustoles, Mary Jo and Paul J.  
Jackson, David and Colleen  
Phelps, Dean  
Schmitz, Joan  
Svendsen, Sigvald  
Tarjeson, Jane

### New Members

Bellig, Daniel  
Carpenter, George R.  
Erickson, Helen E.  
Fallenstein, Fay  
Guentzel, Cheri  
Hauch, Thomas  
Hunter, Janice  
Jackson, Judy  
Johnson, Jason  
Karow, Linda  
Krueger, Lori  
Lamont, Earl and Sally  
Lites, Jerry and Arden  
McGowan, Jack  
Rice, Carrie and David  
Schimmel, William and Stacy  
Steil, William B. and Nancy Zwick  
Straka, Rick and Stacey

### Business Level Memberships

Beans Plus, Inc.  
The Family Writer  
Financial Consultant, Bernadette Wilson  
The Mankato Free Press  
Paulsen Architect  
Red Door Creative, Inc.  
Survey Services Inc.

### Medicine Show: *From Quack to Clinic*

A One-Act Play Performed by the Terrific Traveling Troupers around Blue Earth County chronicling the medical history of the county. The next public showing will be Sunday, August 6<sup>th</sup> at the Blue Earth County Fair.

Special Thanks to the Cast:

Ron Affolter	Barb Lamson
Betty Lou Cords	Jack Madsen
Laura Garlow	Bethel Powers
Sandi Garlow	Brenna Powers
Shirley Grundmeier	Delana Powers
Winston Grundmeier	Karis Powers
Kathryn Hanson	Kyla Powers
Tom Haugh	Julianna Shepherd
Gordon Herbst	Laura Shepherd
Caleb Horn	Mary Anne Shepherd
Isaac Horn	Chad Stoufer
Sara Horn	Julie Thorleifson
Sheri Horn	Samar Upadhyay
Susan Hynes	

### *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  
helping to research and write grants  
doing data entry for Archives indexes  
indexing census or newspapers  
researching and/or writing*

## **VISIT BECHS AT THE FAIR**

**Thursday, August 3-6  
Blue Earth County Fairgrounds**

Traveling Museum Store in the Arcade Building  
Turn-of-the-Century Schoolhouse activities in the schoolhouse  
Showing of "Medicine Show: From Quack to Clinic" at 1 p.m. Sunday  
with a pie and ice cream social beginning at 12:30

Please visit us at the Fair, but please also consider volunteering for the Fair. We need volunteers for all of the areas above during all of the open hours of the Fair. To volunteer, contact Anna at 345-5566

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**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**

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**Blue Earth County Historical Society**

**415 E. Cherry Street**

**Mankato MN 56001**

Visit us on the web:  
[www.rootsweb.com/~mnbechs/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~mnbechs/)

**Non-Profit Org.**

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Mankato MN

56001

Permit No. 343

Expiration date

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