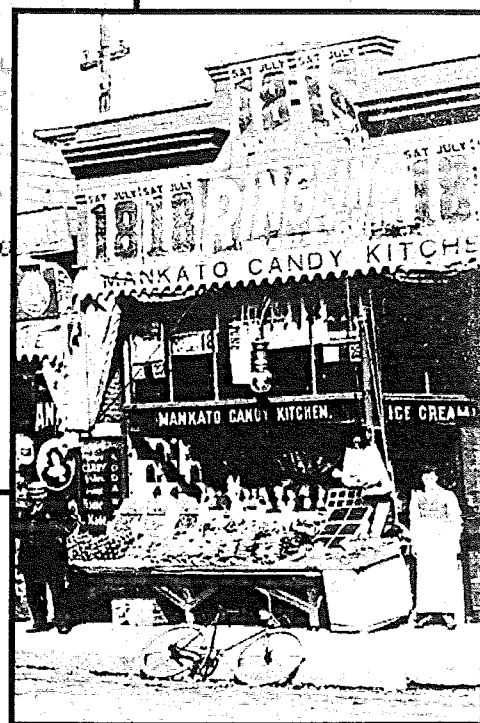




The Blue Earth County **Historian**

A publication of the Blue Earth County Historical Society

Winter 2006



In this issue:

Greek Immigration to Mankato

The Blue Earth County Historian
Winter 2006

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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Please contact us at: 507-345-5566 or by e-mail at:

Jessica Potter:	bechs@hickorytech.net
Shelley Harrison:	bechsrc@hickorytech.net
Sara Upadhyay:	bechscsco@hickorytech.net
Anna Larson:	bechsms@hickorytech.net

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



*From the
Executive
Director*

Greetings!

2005 was a very exciting year for BECHS. We had the opportunity to work with new staff, develop new programs and meet new members. The gallery welcomed a new exhibit—*Down on the Farm*. A new bathroom and limestone retaining wall were built at the Hubbard House. And we had new opportunities around every corner.

So, what are we looking forward to in 2006? A lot! Anyone that has come into the Heritage Center in the past few weeks has noticed that we have been sprucing up the place. The Research Center has switched locations with the Orientation Room. This will allow all of our public spaces to be near the front doors. What a great no-cost solution to our building challenges. In addition, the move will allow the Orientation Room to be used more by volunteers and staff when it is not reserved for a meeting. We are also working on cleaning up the hallway. We want to put our best foot forward when people come to visit, so we are repainting and reorganizing. And that's not all—the Museum Store will receive a much-needed facelift this winter. We are waiting to hear from a funding source as to the extent we can remodel. But funding or not, we will update the look of the Store. Watch for a re-grand opening in the spring!

Then there are all of the great programs scheduled for 2006! Take a peek at the Programs Schedule and always watch the website for updates. Mark your calendars - the Annual Meeting is right around the corner. This is a great time to meet the Board of

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

Trustees, staff and other members. We will be hosting the Annual Meeting on March 20 at Old Main Village. We always need help planning and implementing programs, so if you have an idea, please pass it along to a staff member or Programs Committee Chair John Rezmerski.

Oh, and the finished limestone retaining wall and wrought iron fence at the Hubbard House. How could we forget the anticipation to see that completed. We are working with the City of Mankato to install a new sign on the corner of Broad and Warren Streets. It should be another great season at the Hubbard House, so watch for an upcoming list of *Sundays with the Hubbards*.

Can you tell we are all excited about the opportunities ahead of us? I hope you feel the excitement and continue to support BECHS with your time, talents and contributions. We couldn't accomplish all we do without the great support of our members! Thank you and may your new year be as exciting as ours!

Jessica Potter
Executive Director

Don't Miss This Deal!

The 2006 Herberger's Community Day Coupon Book

Pick up your **coupon book** from any Blue Earth County Historical Society staff or volunteer for just \$5.

All proceeds benefit the Society, and better yet, each coupon book includes an **instant \$10 coupon** for you to use on **Saturday, March 4th** at the Herberger's Community Day Sale!

Thank you to all who contributed to the last Herberger's Community Days Coupon Sale and to the Madison East Holiday Bake Sale. Both events were well supported by our members and were successful events for BECHS!



Fingerprints and Footnotes

The Footnotes and Fingerprints, the history and genealogy club, has over 30 members and newcomers are always welcome.

The Club has been busy; we've reviewed the South-Central Minnesota Genealogy Expo and taken a tour of the Southern Minnesota Historical Center. We had a wonderful discussion in December sharing family traditions. We had stories about making homemade ice cream on Christmas Eve or even during snowstorms—brrr! We then tried to warm up with the History of Quilts. As always, the meetings were entertaining as well as educational, and a delightful time was had by all.

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

Future Meetings:

- Thursday, February 9th: Blizzards - Armistice Day and Others
- Thursday, March 9th: House History Research
- Thursday, April 13th: Oral Histories, How To's

Finger Tip—Not so long ago - In 1984, from February 2nd to 5th, a snowstorm with 80 mile-per-hour winds and severe wind chills created a wall of white in southern Minnesota. Sixteen people died.

From The Minnesota Book of Days

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*

Greek Immigration to Mankato

E. Winston Grundmeier
BECHS Volunteer

In the Winter 2005 issue of the *Blue Earth County Historian* I presented an account of the immigration to Mankato by a group of Mediterranean people, the Lebanese. These people constituted part of what were called "New Immigrants," those who arrived after the "Old Immigrants," i.e., peoples from northern and western Europe. In this issue I wish to feature the other sizeable Mediterranean group who followed close on the heels of the Lebanese, the Greeks.

The immigrants from Greece left a homeland that, though free of the oppressive Turk, was hardly wealthy and could not support a large population. By 1914-1915 there were more than a dozen Greek names listed in the Mankato City Directory: Apostolis, Boosalis, Kalos, Kapas, Patroklos, Stamos, Zotalis, Canellos, Pafiolis and Scordakis. Some of them stayed but a short time and moved on, seeking work elsewhere. No particular geographic region of the city that became a "Little Greece." Integration into the Anglo-Saxon community was gradual, and the Greeks never seemed to experience the hostility that was sometimes vented upon the Lebanese. The restaurant and candy manufacturing businesses seemed to attract most Greeks.

The Greek families maintained close allegiance to the Greek Orthodox Church. This necessitated travel to Minneapolis and St. Paul to attend the cherished traditional worship, though, several of the Greeks in Mankato also worshipped in St. John's Episcopal Church and even maintained dual membership.

The Agnew family, distant relatives of former Vice President Spiro Agnew, appears to have been the first Greek family to settle in Mankato. Elihu H. Agnew was born in Illinois on December 9, 1856. He came to Mankato in 1905 and took residence with his wife and family at 227 State Street and later at 412 Willard Street. For most of his life he was janitor at Mankato High School, but during 1908 clerked at Mankato Fruit Company where his son Ray held a position as teamster for the firm at the

tender age of 14. Child labor laws were different then. For most of his life Ray served the Railway Express in Mankato. He served in the Army in France from 1918 to 1919.

George Pafiolis was born in Greece in December 1891 and came to America as a very young man. After working in Massachusetts, Kansas and Minneapolis, he arrived in Mankato. George started the Olympia Candy Kitchen in 1916 at 114 South Front in the Commercial College building next to the Saulpaugh Hotel. One of the earliest ventures of the new candy kitchen was a very attractive display in the front window – a facsimile of the new concrete bridge across the Minnesota River at Main Street, next to Saulpaugh Hotel. George operated the Olympia for almost 40 years. He died in July 1962 in Mankato.

The first member of the Canellos family to reach Mankato was Peter P. Canellos, in 1910. Peter came to America as a young man, after being an instructor in a school in Greece. From 1910 until his death in 1930 he was proprietor of the cigar and bookstand located in the Saulpaugh Hotel. John Canellos, the brother of Peter and the partner of George Pafiolis in the Olympia Candy Store from 1917-1930, was also proprietor of the Saulpaugh Cigar Stand and Pool Hall. Peter Canellos died suddenly in April 1930 and was buried in Glenwood Cemetery. His brother, John, joined him in death after a lingering illness in March two years later. Both brothers' funerals were conducted by a Greek priest from Minneapolis. Their descendants lived in Mankato for many years.

The fortunes of two of Mankato's other candy stores is intimately tied up with two immigrant Greek families. The Mankato Candy Kitchen and the American Beauty store are associated chiefly with the Zotalis family and to a lesser extent with the Boosalis family. As early as November 1903 Chris John Zotalis leased the room previously occupied by Benack's Hardware on South Front. He intended to open a candy kitchen. Chris was born June 24, 1884, in the ancient town of Sparta in Greece. Chris and brother James moved about with their father John in the 19th Century. Educated in Romania, Chris clerked in his uncle George's store in that country from 1898 to 1900. By 1901 Chris, John and uncle George came

to New York, then moved to Minneapolis, Duluth and Fargo where they engaged in a number of retail businesses – floral and candy chiefly – until 1903.

Closely connected with Chris in the Candy Kitchen venture of 1903 in Mankato was Charles Mitchell, a non-Greek. The candy store was christened Mankato Candy Kitchen and proved to be a great success. In fact, Mitchell and Zotalis branched out in January 1909 by purchasing the large retail confectionary and fruit stand at the corner of Seventh and Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis. Mitchell took over operations in Minneapolis and Zotalis installed a handsome new 20-foot onyx ice-less soda water fountain in Mankato. Later, ices, sherbets and sodas joined ice cream to satisfy Mankato's sweet tooth.

In August 1916 Chris Zotalis purchased the north half of the Paris Block, a large building on South Front just south of the Mankato Commercial College (now the Martin Building). For Chris, this was a good investment in property. The occupant of the Paris Block was Peter Canellos. Some legal difficulties between Chris Zotalis and Peter Canellos arose over alleged gambling operations in the building. Chris went on in December 1918 to lease the M. Jost store building at the corner of Main and Front, formerly occupied by the Corner Café. Chris intended to convert this space into a large candy and fruit store.



Born in Niata, Greece, on April 26, 1890, Gus A. Boosalis came to America as a young boy and located initially in Chicago where he worked as a newsboy and sold bakery goods from a sled. He learned candy making and soda fountain operation in Minneapolis, and then came to Mankato, where he was employed in a combination candy kitchen and soda fountain. He founded the Sweet Shop and Model Bakery in Mankato. In September 1914, Boosalis expanded his operations to form the Fairmont Candy Kitchen on the leased ground floor of a new building in that community. Boosalis intended

to continue his Sweet Shop in Mankato, and had even helped Chris Zotalis in the Mankato Candy Kitchen at 219 South Front Street during the latter's illness.

In May 1932 Chris Zotalis and Pete Boosalis dissolved their partnership, begun in 1919, in the candy business. Chris moved from the Mankato Candy Kitchen to the American Beauty shop and Peter made the opposite move. The partnership had existed since 1919. Pete completely remodeled the Mankato Candy Kitchen with new fixtures in April of the next year. An entirely new front to the store was constructed by Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company. By January 1938 Chris Zotalis was back at his old stand after buying out the Mankato Candy Kitchen and closing the American Beauty.

Peter Boosalis retired from business in Mankato at the American Beauty candy store on Front and Main around 1935. Since his mother, sister and extended family were living in Niata, Greece, Peter and his family yielded to the call from the old country and returned to Niata. After the German occupation of Greece in 1941, the next of kin in Mankato, the Dovolass family, lost communication with Peter Boosalis. After the war ended in 1945, letters began again from Greece saying the family had survived the ordeal "all right."

When the Italians of Benito Mussolini struck their mother country in late 1940, the Greek community of Mankato joined with their compatriots throughout America to come to the aid of their homeland. While his sons, Cly and Eros, served in the Army, Chris Zotalis was appointed chairman of a committee to solicit funds for Greek relief. Various Mankato businessmen came to the aid of Zotalis to get this drive underway.

In the early days of the Mankato Candy Kitchen, practically all of the "goodies" were made manually with lots of labor. Ice cream was frozen by the old method of using ice and rock salt and turning the crank by hand – no electric motors. Chris Zotalis sold his Candy Kitchen in November 1951 to his three sons, John C., Cleanthes or "Cly", and Eros. Chris Zotalis passed away January 12, 1952, after operating the store for 49 years.

In the postwar era only the Mankato Candy Kitchen remained of the Greek candy-making establishments. The three Zotalis brothers each had a hand in the candy kitchen. Later Cly went into real estate and Eros moved to Sacramento, California. Their brother John was elected Mayor of Mankato in April 1951 and held the post until his sudden death from a heart attack in July 1953.

Nick Dovolos joined the Mankato Free Press in 1940 and took time out to serve in the Army Combat Engineers in Italy. He earned a field commission as Second Lieutenant and later served in the Philippines. Returning to Mankato after the war, Nick again worked at the Free Press, reaching the position of Vice President and Advertising Director. He died suddenly in 1967. Nick's wife was a Mankato Greek girl, Thespo Canellos.

One of the true American heroes of World War II was Pfc Janetos "Jerry" Poulimenos, who made the supreme sacrifice. Before the war Janetos, born in Greece on January 15, 1916, made his home with his sister Mary and her husband Theo "Mike" Marinis at 319 Washington Street in Mankato and later 335 Nicollet Avenue, North Mankato. Mike ran the Metropolitan Café on South Front Street. Jerry enlisted in the Army in March



1941, before America became involved in the Pacific war. He was sent to the Philippines. After Pearl Harbor and the immediate Japanese invasion of the Philippines in December 1941, American and Filipino forces, totally overwhelmed by superior air, sea and land power from Japan, slowly retreated down the Bataan Peninsula onto Corregidor Island in spring 1942. By May the forlorn defenders, including Jerry Poulimenos, could no longer defend our far-off outpost and they were forced to surrender. Mary Marinis, who had already lost a brother fighting in the Greek Army against Italian invaders in Al-

bania, inquired of the Red Cross concerning the whereabouts of her brother Jerry. Finally in early 1943 she learned that he was held in a Japanese prison camp in the Philippines. Jerry was reported to be "doing well." As the Americans pushed the action westward back to the Philippines in 1944, Japan began moving its prisoners to safer keeping. Jerry was shipped first to Formosa (Taiwan) and then onto a prison ship bound for Japan. When the war ended in September 1945, Mary heard nothing about her brother. Finally in December 1945 word was obtained from the Japanese that Jerry had died of malnutrition while on the ship to Japan. A memorial service was held in May 1946 in his memory at St. John's Episcopal Church.

Professional wrestler and wrestling promoter Harry Kamatchus was born in Paleokipos on the Greek island of Metilene in 1899. Harry's father brought him to America as a boy. He became a professional wrestler when he was a young man and won a junior heavyweight belt. Harry was the world middleweight wrestling champion in 1934. In 1917 his father returned to Greece. In 1921, while fighting in the Greek Army as an officer against Turkey, he was killed in battle. When the Allies liberated Greece from the Nazis in the fall of 1944, Harry Kamatchus sent a letter to his mother in the old country. Having lost contact with his family since 1937, Harry learned from a sister in Greece that his mother had died in 1943. In addition to being a wrestling promoter for professional matches held at the Mankato Armory, Harry operated the Town Talk Cafe on 225 South Front and Harry's Bar-B-Q near Cleveland, Minnesota. Harry died in July 1967.

Today the Greek community is not in evidence in Mankato as it once was. Mankato has no Greek restaurants – something it had in one form or another for nearly 100 years. None of the original Greek names appear in the current *Mankato City Directory*. One or two new Greek names, e.g., Pappas, appear. Thus, the rich contribution of this ethnic group seems to have come to completion.

Sources:

Mankato Free Press, various issues
1914-1915 *Mankato City Directory*
BECHS Archives Collection

The Grand Old Opera House

Ron Gower

In the last half of the 19th century, the opera house was the cultural and social center of most American communities. Any "respectable" town had an opera house, and the term was used to differentiate it from the theater, which was "only" entertainment and therefore morally suspect.

The community opera house, whatever its size or configuration, reflected the 19th century moral climate, and was primarily a place for edification. There were operas performed, but the house hosted plays, speakers, musicians and often community activities as well. Many served several functions; a number were also skating rinks and town meeting halls between performances. These performances ranged greatly, but all were facilitated by the vast network of the new railroads, which could take touring companies or performers almost anywhere, even to the hinterlands of the Midwest. The larger houses would often get the latest Broadway hits, like *Ben Hur*, or *Quo Vadis* and the great stars like Ethel Barrymore, Henry Irving, Mme. Modjeska, and Otis Skinner. Besides these, there were touring stock companies (in 1901-02 there were over 300 combination companies and 30 stock companies), and even smaller towns could support productions of "classics" like *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *Ten Nights in a Bar Room*, *The Katzenjammer Kids* or *Our New Minister*. In addition there were countless vaudeville, opera and minstrel companies, as well as lecturers and individual performers.

Besides the imported entertainment, the opera house was the center for high school and hometown productions, local lecturers and musicians, dances, town meetings, and basketball and wrestling matches. In what was still largely a frontier society, the opera house was the center for culture and a diversion from the daily struggle for survival, as well as a place for moral and intellectual uplift. One writer, Everett Dick in *The Sod-House Frontier*, notes that much of the support for these activities came from the women in these communities. As one speaker in the book notes, "Art has nothing to do with the realities of life and should be left to women. The men are too busy." Nonetheless, "At the Opera House Tonight!" attracted most small-town residents, men as well as women, and much of small-town America

was entertained and/or "improved" by events at the opera house.

In Minnesota, there is at present no complete list of the opera houses that existed in their heyday, or that still stand. However, a study of Iowa houses lists 300 that still exist in one form or another, and estimates that there were probably twice that number originally; certainly Minnesota must have had at least as many. The Minnesota Historical Society does have photos of many of the original buildings; there were "Grand" opera houses in several locations, that were truly grand: those in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth and Stillwater were particularly massive and ornamented.

In southern Minnesota a few still exist, although most are no longer used for performance. The Fairmont Opera House, the jewel-like Lake Benton Opera House, and the Mantorville Opera House continue to give live performances, ranging from Mantorville's classic melodramas to Lake Benton's mix of older dramas, children's theatre and musical shows, to Fairmont's very professional and wide-ranging program. The Sheldon Theatre in Red Wing also has a generous offering of various entertainments, although it is not, strictly speaking, an "opera house." The St. James Opera House houses a gift shop and a new cafe on its ground floor, and the upper stage area is in the process of renovation.

Blue Earth County, as far as the records indicate, has no opera houses in operation, or indeed in existence. Those records do show that there were houses in almost every small town. Mankato had two in operation into the 20th century, and Amboy and Mapleton each had very active opera houses from an early date. An article in the Mapleton *Enterprise* in 1938 is a recounting of productions of *The Mikado* in 1887—and a lament that "local" drama was dying out because all the theaters were gone. There undoubtedly were others as well but again no comprehensive list exists and now indeed most of the theaters are gone.

I would like to at least begin such a listing, and would be interested in any information you might have concerning opera houses in southern Minnesota or the entire state. Please contact Ron Gower at ragower@hotmail.com or at 15400 Hubbell Ln., Good Thunder, MN 56037; or call 507 278-3408.

... at the

Museum Store



The books at BECHS' Museum Store continually surprise and delight me. I would like to promote the following titles. I wish there was space to share more!

Amy Dolnick's *Future in a Handbasket: The Life and Letters Behind Carney's House Party*, offers readers uncensored letter exchanges between Marion Willard and her friends and family during her time at Vassar, the first exclusively women's liberal arts college in the nation. The subsequent rise in validation and interest in women's higher education at the time makes this book a part of the pulse of the times. Through these letters Willard looks to the past and the future wishing to grow intellectually as well as to gracefully and fully participate in the prescribed roles of her sex.

Mae Buckeye's book, *The House of Hiram*, is a treasure of family memories that naturally understands the curiosity of the modern reader. Mae has the sort of memory we so admire in our grandparents and older generations. What's more, she shares memories passed down by her Grandmother Ireland and her mother capturing scenes in fine detail. *The House of Hiram* is her Rochester birth home back in 1896. The dust jacket briefly states her wish to share her recollections with her children and grandchildren. It is my opinion that *The House of Hiram* should satisfy a much wider audience.

This year, I received as a gift, the cookbook of my Grandmother's church. This truly gives me a touch of home, of childhood. Consider the value of such a gift firmly rooted in place and community. Cookbooks with a local flavor are a treat for anyone with an interest in creative home-style recipes and the community from which they come.

The cookbook: 1870-1995 — *First Congregational United Church of Christ, Mankato, MN*, contains a compilation of recipes from a congregation that spans over 130 years. You'll find a thorough table of

contents including a bit of the history of the church. *Farm-Family Food, a Family Cookbook*, includes family recipes collected by Janelle Schull Imm. The book opens with a personable introduction capturing the excitement, pride and work behind the seasons' accompanying family meals. You'll enjoy smiling family photos throughout.

Anna Larson
Museum Assistant



October – December 2005 Volunteers

Affolter, Ron
Batalden, Sandy
Belgard, Vail
Braun, Kim
Burton, Verona
Coleman, Mary
Cords, Betty
Frederick, Mike
Frisch, Carlienne
Garlow, Laura
Geister, Dave
Geister, Pat
Gekke, Sue
Griffith, Helen
Grundmeier, Shirley
Grundmeier, Winston
Gullickson, Jim
Hanson, Kathryn
Herbst, Gordon
Hopman, Edith
Howieson, Bob
Hugg, Corey & Bob
Hynes, Susan
Hynes, Emily
Hynes, Elizabeth
Insty Prints
Jensen, Orville
Jensen, Mary Ann
Keir, Grace
Keir, Richard
Kenward, Robert
Kind, Arn
Kubicek, Joe
Lamson, Barb

Lagerquist, Mike
Lavitschke, Jo-An
Leverenz, Jane
Lundin, Gary
Madsen, Jack
Marti, Ben
McComb, Mary
McLaughlin, Theresa
Natysin, Rhonda
Niu, Dana
Ohlencamp, Ora
Oldenburg, Alex
Peterson, Leslie
Powers, Delana
Powers, Bethel
Powers, Kyla
Quade, Henry
Rezmerski, John
Sassenberg, Eunice
Schultz, Jo
Shortall, Christina
Sizemore, Daardi
Sofchalk, Helen
Stenzel, Bryce
Stromswold, Todd
Tarjeson, Jane
Tollefson, LaDonna
Webb, Donna
Weisz, Karen
Wilson, Bernie
Zeigler, Ken
Zielske, Dan
Zimmer, Beth

October – December 2005

Financial Donations

Up to \$25

Mathiason, Renee
Zielske, Dan

\$25-\$49

Cummiskey, June
Freyberg, Lynette: *In honor of Gerald Hicks*
Kearney, Elizabeth
Klugherz, Catherine
Lang, Candace
Lees, June
Marks, Thomas
Medalen, Ethel
Niu, Dana
Sassenberg, Eunice
Schulte, Pat
Tacheny, Leon & Delores
Torgerson, Allen & Jane
Vosbeck, Elizabeth: *In honor of John Just*

\$50-\$99

Blume, Darwin
Boben, Louis
Brown, Perry and Jolene
Buck, Margaret
Cramer, Donald
Keir, Grace & Richard
Salsbery, Tom
Taylor, Brett & Gretchen
Wells Fargo Downtown Branch
Wilson, Bernadette

\$100-\$500

Barrett, Mary
Bergemann, Gail: *In honor of the Helen Wiedenheft*
Burton, Verona
Fischer, Eldena
Fuess, Billings Sibley Jr.
Hanson, Kathryn
Hillegas, Marcella
Jensen, Orville & Mary Ann
McComb, Mary
McLaughlin, Tom & Theresa

Miller, Julie

Rezmerski, John

Roscoe, Don: *In honor of Bert Burns*

Schultz, Jo

Schumacher, John & Elizabeth Franklin: *In honor of Elizabeth Confer*

Tarjeson, Jane

Zimmer, Beth

Over \$500

Andreas, Lowell
Dooley, Mary
Grundmeier, Win & Shirley
Hubbard, John J: *In honor of Jay Hubbard Jr.*
Mary S. Gray Trust

In Kind

Dolentz, Lillian
Jensen, Orville & Mary Ann
Keir, Grace
Madsen, Jack

Memorials

In memory of Milton Prange
By: Delmar Prange

In memory of Rick Rosenberg
By: Marcia Richards

In memory of Martin Tonn
By: Marcia Richards

In memory of Arnulf Ueland, Jr
By: David & Ginger Caywood

Grants & Other Funding

HickoryTech Foundation
MacPherson Fund
Coughlan Company
Minnesota Humanities Commission
Mankato-Kasota Stone

New and Renewing Members

Ahlness, Janice
 Bartholdi, Roberta
 Boubel, John
 Broadwell, Donald
 Coleman, Mary
 Cotton-Franks, Marcia & Glenn
 Craig, Nancy
 Davis, Shirley
 Diamond, Sandy
 Dubke, Duane
 Falenczykowski, Lona
 Halverson, Mark
 Herrmann, Crystal
 Hill, Evelyn
 Hoffman, Carole
 Hotz, Margaret
 Kalvig, Ann
 Kerkhoff, Don
 Kilanowski, Nicole
 King, Michael
 Kurkowski, Mary
 Marks, Tom
 Ovrebo, Diane
 Peterson, Leslie
 Pommerenke, Marlene
 Radichel, Dorothy
 Schroer, Tim
 Smoley, John
 Steele, Ramona & Richard
 Story, John & Sue
 Stromswold, Todd
 Tarjeson, Jane
 Weinandt, Barb
 Wenner, Gerald & Kristine
 Zielske, Dan

Business Members

Brennen Construction Company
 Fisher Commercial Realtor
 Insty Prints
 MSU Department of History
 Paulsen Architectural Design Inc.

Thank you to Orv and Mary Ann Jensen for our beautiful new donation box hand-painted to look like the Hubbard House!

WISH LIST

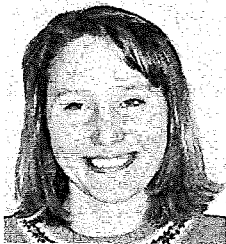
- Two-drawer filing cabinets
- Legal size hanging folders for vertical files
- Copy paper

WISH LIST FULFILLED

- Thanks to the Mary S. Gray Trust, Beth Zimmer and the Madison Lake Area Historical Society we are now able to purchase all area newspaper microfilm up to 2004. Look for these new additions to the Research Center in early 2006.
- Thanks to Jack Madsen for a new stepstool in the Museum Store!

October – December 2005 Artifacts & Archives Donations

Ahlness, Janice	Jenson, Orville
Brown, Susan C.	Madsen, Jack
Burger, Nancy	Marshall, Polly
Disney, Ardis	Mohr, Ruth
Ekgren, Carolyn Hicks	Molberg, Lindsay
Erickson, Helen	Oehler, Dick
Frederick, Mike	Osdoba, Donna
Freie, Kenneth	Peters, Elvera
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Valley Library	Quade, Henry
Grundmeier, Winston	St. Paul's Evangelical
Gulden, Jerry	Lutheran Church
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Haefner, Kevin	Tarjeson, Jane
Herbst, Gordon	Vee, Harlan
Hesse, Norla	Water Resources
Hill, Evelyn	Center, MSU
Holzinger, Ray	White, Lucille
Hugg, Corey	Ziegler, Ken



Notes from the Archives Manager

Did you know that February 25, 1918, was the first day of the State's "Alien Registration"? The Registration was required by the Minnesota Commission on Public Safety, which was established soon after the United States declared war on Germany.

The Commission required all aliens living in Minnesota during World War I to register. Failure to register would result in internment and possible deportation. All aliens 14 years or older were required to register and children under 14 had to register with a guardian. Males filled out "Registration Affidavit of Alien Enemy" and females filled out the "Registration Affidavit of Alien Female." Because of the War, aliens with German nationality were particularly of interest, but all aliens in Blue Earth County registered. Something interesting to note: if a husband was an alien, but his wife was a citizen of the United States, she also had to register with him.

The forms asked thirty-five questions including these:

- * Name
- * Country of Allegiance
- * Date and Port of Arrival into the United States
- * Occupation and Current work
- * Names and Ages of Living Children
- * Relatives Participation in the War
- * Have you ever taken out First Paper of Naturalization

In Mankato, all aliens registered in Duke's Addition, which is now the Tourlelotte Park area, the West Mankato Hose House, and City Hall. Forty aliens registered on February 25th.

Between February 25 and March 1, over 225,000 aliens registered throughout the State of Minnesota. Other states like Kansas and Arizona also required Alien Registration.

The Minnesota Historical Society microfilmed all of

the Minnesota Alien Registration Forms in 1996. We are fortunate enough to have had the Alien Registrations Forms for Blue Earth County donated to us recently. There is a lot of family history within those forms. Just think of the questions for which you might find answers.

Shelley Harrison
Archives Manager

Reprinted from the Mankato *Free Press*, 25 February 1918.

Registering the Aliens

But Few Came Out During the Morning: All Swear By the United States

Today, was the first of the three days for the registration of aliens in the state of Minnesota, with the exception of male Germans. The registration went on in Mankato at the Duke's addition and West Mankato hose houses and at the city hall. Most of the registration that was done this morning took place at the city hall, where thirty-eight were registered. These were mostly men and mostly Scandinavians, with some Swiss. Every one returned the same answer to the question where he considered his allegiance due. Every one avowed allegiance to Uncle Sam. The registration was carried on at the city hall by Charles T. Taylor and J. J. Waddell. At the Duke's addition fire station only two were registered up to noon today. These were two German girls. They likewise avowed allegiance to America. Here E. M. Zuel and A. C. Edwards were the officials. At the West Mankato fire station, where L. H. Lillie and W. B. Falancer conducted the registration, it was more active than that.

The registration officers will make their reports at the close of day to City Clerk Bates.



Through the Research Center Door

The last quarter has been very busy for me in the Research Center and collection room. In the collection room we began receiving a large, single donation that now has amounted to over 450 objects. This was a great opportunity for me to learn the collection process. Not only have I learned the steps to accessioning the objects, but I am also learning the proper object terms. Being from Indiana, I have found that we call things by different names. Everyone had a good laugh when I brought an object to the Collections Committee and called it a temperature gauge. I guess to Minnesotans, thermometer is the proper term. Soon I hope to be fluent in Minnesotan.

In the Research Center I have been learning what resources we possess and where to find them. Researchers request many different subjects from family histories to businesses of Blue Earth County. I recently had a request for information on the Norwegian Leather Waterproofing Company of Mankato. I looked high and low in the city directories, card catalogue, vertical files and even asked volunteers if they had heard of it, but no luck. Finally I decided to "Google" the company, where I found it online in the phone directory. The phone number is no longer in service; so if anyone knows anything about the company, please let me know.

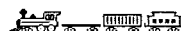
Also if you haven't been in lately, come and see what we have been doing. The Research Center has received an overhaul. We are now located across from the Gallery, which allows all of our public areas to be at the front of the building. You will still have access to all the same resources; they will just be in a different place. Please come and visit us and see all the changes we have made.

Sara Upadhyay

Collections Assistant

(Same Sara, different name. I just got married and, don't worry, we're not moving away.)

Ray Bradbury has said: "Without libraries what do we have? we have no past and no future." We would add Archives to that statement.



Rapidan Heritage Society

Traffic was slow on County Road 9 going through Rapidan on December 3rd, but a small group of children (and some adults) kept a faithful watch on the road for an important visitor. Mrs. Claus was pacing the depot deck—Santa was late! But then, from far off came the magical sound of sleigh bells. Santa had found his way to Rapidan! Everyone enjoyed visiting with the Clauses in the depot and refreshments in the town hall. Thanks to Rapid Thunder Carriage for providing Santa with horse-drawn transportation.

RHS asked Santa for lots of snow for the 3rd Annual Valentine's Sleigh Ride scheduled on February 11th from 4 to 7 p.m. Bring your valentine and enjoy an old-fashioned horse-drawn sleigh ride through the beautiful Rapidan countryside and warm your hands at the bonfire. Refreshments will also be served in the town hall.

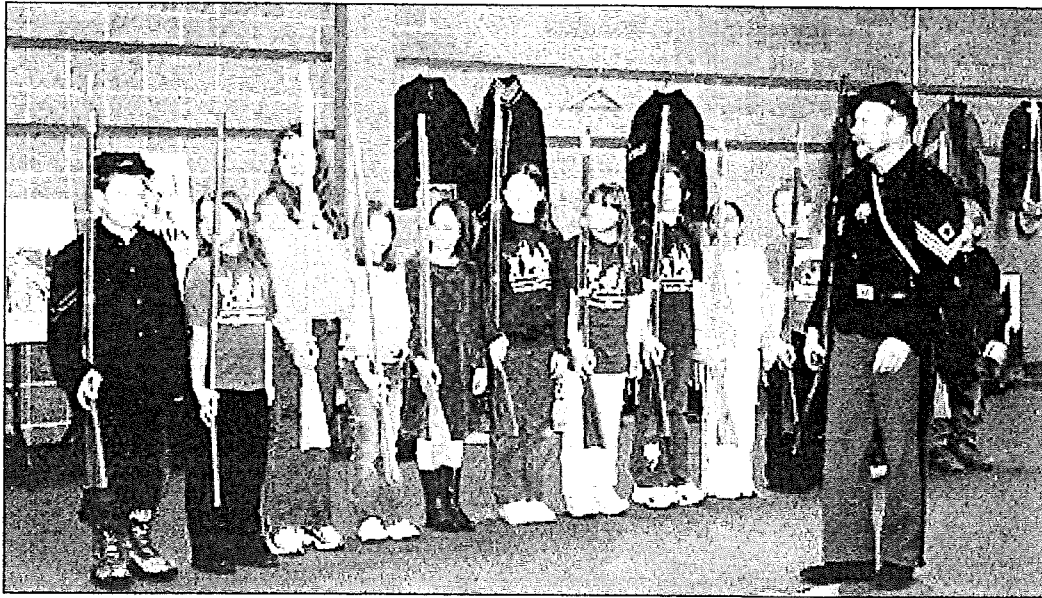
On March 14th and May 29th there will be a trailer parked by the depot for aluminum can collection. Proceeds from these collections will be used to help fund community events, such as Christmas in Rapidan. Santa asked that everyone do their part by recycling cans to help keep the countryside clean.

Memorial Day, May 29th, will be observed in Rapidan with a Memorial Service, Depot Centennial Rededication and Book Signing of *Daughters of the Game, The First Era of Minnesota Girls High School Basketball 1891-1942*. Featured in this book is Aileen Just, Rapidan High School's star basketball player.

Santa assured us that RHS wishes for an exciting and productive 2006 will come true if we work hard and follow our dreams!

Jane Tarjeson
Secretary

YOUNG HISTORIANS JOIN THE CIVIL WAR



Civil War Sergeant Arn Kind calls Troop Young Historians to attention. The kids learned what it would have been like to be a soldier during the Civil War. They tasted hardtack, learned how to load and fire a rifle and march like a soldier.



Franklin Elementary School teacher and BECHS member Arn Kind teaches Civil War history through hands-on lessons to Young Historians on December 10th

Young Historians are free, hands on history workshops for kids grades 3-6. For more information, contact Jessica at 345-5566.

Upcoming Young Historians workshops

February 11 - World War I
March 11 - Great Depression
April 8 - World War II



Sergeant Kind suits up Young Historian, Nathan Clobes, as he demonstrates what a Civil War soldier would wear.



Upcoming BECHS Events

Please mark your calendar and join us!

Thursday, January 26

Return of the Winnebago
Documentary Release
Heritage Center – 7 p.m.

Sunday, January 29

Prairie Stories and River Rhymes
Old-Fashioned Romance
Cambria Town Hall – 2-4 p.m.

Thursday, February 9

Fingerprints and Footnotes
Blizzards—Armistice Day and Others
Heritage Center – 6 p.m.

Friday, February 11

Old Minnesota: Song of the North Star
Musical Performance of Minnesota History
Mankato West High School Auditorium—7 p.m.

Saturday, February 11

Young Historians
World War I
Heritage Center – 10 a.m.

Saturday, March 4

Herberger's Community Day Sale
Pick up your Coupon Booklet
At the Heritage Center

Thursday, March 9

Fingerprints and Footnotes
House History Research
Heritage Center – 6 p.m.

Saturday, March 11

Young Historians
Great Depression
Heritage Center – 10 a.m.

March

BECHS Annual Meeting
March 20—6 p.m.
Old Main Village

Sunday, March 26

Prairie Stories and River Rhymes
Irish Immigrants
Cambria Town Hall – 2-4 p.m.

Saturday, April 8

Young Historians
World War II
Heritage Center – 10 a.m.

Thursday, April 13

Fingerprints and Footnotes
Oral Histories—How-to's
Heritage Center – 6 p.m.

Saturday, April 22

Heritage Dinner
Honoring Blue Earth County Veterans
Eagle Lake American Legion – 6 p.m.

Those interested in any of the above activities,
please contact BECHS at (507) 345-5566
for questions or for reservations

ANNUAL MEETING of the Blue Earth County Historical Society

Monday, March 20th.
Old Main Village
Dinner: 6 p.m.
Meeting and program: 7 p.m.

Watch for further details in February.



Collector's Corner

The Collector's Corner features collections that belong to BECHS members. Currently on display is a sample of Mary Ann Jensen's teapot collections. Mary Ann has over 200 teapots and 14 are currently on display. To share your collection in the Collector's Corner, contact Sara at 345-5566.

**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.**

EXHIBIT UPDATE



Down on the Farm through Spring 2007
The Agricultural Story of Blue Earth County

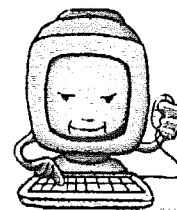
The Legacy of Lincoln through Spring 2006

Interested in learning more about Blue Earth County's Century farms?

Then watch for the Blue Earth County Historical Society's new book on those farms forthcoming in July 2006!

If you or anyone in your family is or was involved with a Century Farm in Blue Earth County, we would like your help! If you would like to contribute information or photos, email us at sng3@mnsu.edu.

The Blue Earth County Historical Society will now provide e-mail alerts to programs and upcoming events. If you would like to be on our e-mail notice list, please contact Anna at 345-5566 or bechsms@hickorytech.net.



Your address will not be used for any other purpose.

Attention!!

Be sure to check your mailing label for your membership expiration date. Memberships runs from July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006. If you have not yet renewed for the 2005-2006 time period, this will be your last issue of the *Historian*



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

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

Expiration date

Preserving and sharing Blue Earth County's history since 1901