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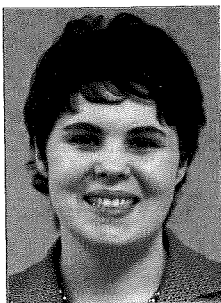


1890s skating attire



### **Minneapolis State Park Refreshment Stand, 1911.**

Minnie Hanson, shown second from the right, and friends in their Sunday outing attire enjoy a refreshment at the stand in Minneapolis State Park.



## *From the Executive Director*

2007 is off to a good start for the Blue Earth County Historical Society. Our organization continues to grow, evolve and encounter new opportunities around every corner. I am a true believer that everything happens for a reason, and what is happening at BECHS is no exception.

We ended 2006 and moved into 2007 brainstorming ideas for an improved facility. With the help of Paulsen Architects we are able to see past our walls and envision our current building with a major face-lift. See the President's column for a sneak peek or stop in the Heritage Center to see the floor plans. With all of the proposed changes in Mankato, it's exciting to be thinking about our future and how an improved and expanded facility can benefit both BECHS and the community. Please take time to complete the enclosed survey, we need to hear from our members on the future direction of BECHS.

Another "everything happens for a reason" opportu-

nity is staff changes. Sara Upadhyay was offered an excellent opportunity to further her curator skills at the Nicollet County Historical Society. However, this was a little bitter sweet. With her departure, we are now on the heels of hiring a new Archives Assistant. And thanks to a grant from the Carl and Verna Schmidt Foundation, we are also adding a Hubbard House Site Manager to our staff. This will be the first time we have had a full-time staff person dedicated to the Hubbard House. We are looking forward to expanded hours, more programming and a mini-museum store in the Carriage House. Also with the opening of the Emy Frentz Arts Guild near the Hubbard House, we hope to expand joint programming with both the Arts Guild and the Cray Mansion/YWCA. I encourage everyone to rediscover the Hubbard House this summer; it should be an exciting season!

In conclusion, I would like to take a moment to personally thank all of our incredible volunteers! I really can't put into words how special our volunteer corps is. I have had the opportunity to work side-by-side with some extraordinary people from many walks of life. Their past experiences have taught me so much. We are such a special organization to be



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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Donna Webb, Editor

## *The Blue Earth County Historian*

Spring 2007

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blessed with the time and talents of so many people. Thank you from the bottom of my heart! Please join us at the Volunteer Appreciation Event on Thursday, April 26<sup>th</sup> so we may honor you for all the big and little things you do!

*Jessica Potter,*  
Executive Director

## Recent Donations

### Up to \$25

Grundmeier, Win & Shirley  
Johnson, Marlyss  
Bartsch, Janet  
Ries, Carol & Charles

### Memorials

*In Memory of Shirley Davis*  
Tarjeson, Jane

### \$25-\$49

Famous Dave's  
Alliance Card  
Hewitt, Lester  
Madsen, Jack

*In Memory of M.J. Vandewege*  
Snilsberg, Lee and Loretta

*In Memory of Joe Wingen*  
Wingen, Carol

### \$50-\$99

Sheppard, Florence  
Lees, June

*In Memory of Wilfred Witz*  
Zimmer, Beth

### \$100-\$499

Burns, Inella  
(Publications Fund)  
McLaughlin, Tom & Theresa  
Hubbard, John Jay  
(HH Restoration Fund)

### In Kind

Carlson, William  
MSU, M surplus  
Jensen, Orville  
Tarjeson, Jane  
Zeno Glass &  
Forrest Vangsgard

### \$500 and up

Tarjeson, Jane  
(Coughlan Companies  
Volunteer of the Year)  
Jones Page Jacobson Family  
Foundation by Lyle & Kay  
Jacobson

### Grants

Carl and Verna Schmidt  
Foundation for a Hubbard  
House Site Manager  
position

## Annual Report and Audited Financial Report

2006 Blue Earth County Historical Society Annual Report and Audited Financial Report are available. Stop by the Heritage Center for your copy today.



## Message from the President

At our April 2006 Board Meeting I stated that my goal for the Board for 2006 would be the creation of a long-term plan for the Society. At that point I was referring to it as a Five-Year Plan. In retrospect, it was wishful thinking to believe that such a task could be accomplished in a year. I was also somewhat short sighted when I initially thought of just the next five years. And I was just plain foolish to believe that it would be possible to create a step by step procedure to accomplish this plan! As it turns out, there are so many issues involved that it is hard to know where to start. Over the course of a dozen Board meetings and scores of various committee meetings, what has started to take shape is not so much a five-year plan as the beginning of a new vision of what we want this Society to be. In reporting to you, our members, I find it unfortunate that I don't yet have something to point to as a physical embodiment of this vision. But I would like to call attention to what I consider two very significant results of our efforts during the past year.

Of all that we have done in 2006, I believe that our most significant accomplishment will prove to be the formation of an Advisory Council. This Council was formed to assist the Board in remaking and refining our vision. Because the Board is responsible for so much of the day-to-day business of the Society, it has always been somewhat difficult to stay focused on long term projects. We have been so busy figuring out how to deal with the next few months that we have sometimes forgotten to consider the next few years. This Advisory Council has been invaluable in helping the Board focus on big picture issues and will, I'm sure, become even more significant in shaping the future of the Society. It has already changed the way we talk about our future, and it will ultimately steer us into new ways of acting effectively to make the best use of our resources.

The second important development relates directly to our facilities. Although our vision is still somewhat blurry, one essential thing that we have known for a long time, and have been somewhat afraid of confronting directly, is the need to renovate and ex-



pand our building. Our 3,250 square feet of museum space is already inadequate to store and display the history of Blue Earth County. As we envision more and more interactive displays and programming, a multimedia conference/lecture space can be seen as a necessity along with storage and gallery expansion.

I must say that I always wondered why it took brother Tedd so long to become an architect, but now I know. Bryan Paulsen and Eric Lennartson from Paulsen Architects have spent many hours working with our newly formed (although somewhat informal) Building Committee, and have been invaluable in helping us figure out how to take our fairly vague ideas, put them together, and show us on paper how they might look. I hope you appreciate their efforts as much as I do.

In closing, I feel strongly that the next several years will prove significant for the Society. We find ourselves at a fortunate time to engage in long term planning. Many of you have no doubt read about, or even participated in, the various local efforts to eventually "revitalize" Mankato's downtown area. We don't know exactly when it will happen, or exactly what form it will take, but I believe we can feel comfortable that it will eventually happen. And

as it does happen, the Blue Earth County Historical Society will be there to take advantage of opportunities that are presented, to help create new opportunities, and to preserve the documentary and physical artifacts of this new commitment to Blue Earth County's future. We hope you will stay with us to provide insight, guidance, and direct support as we prepare ourselves for the tasks of preservation, protection, and presentation of our shared history.

*Todd Stromwold*, Board of Trustees President

## *Volunteers Are Always Welcomed*

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

*Tour Guides*  
*Museum Store attendant*  
*Committee members*  
*Research and writing grants*  
*Data Entry*  
*Research and writing for publications*



The proposed future home of the Blue Earth County Historical Society. This is our existing building with the main entrance on the Fifth Street side plus two new additions. Please stop in the Heritage Center today to see the proposed floor plan. Also, please take time to complete the enclosed survey and let us know what you think about the present and future of BECHS.

## Historical Clothing and Textiles

by Grace Keir

The belief that items that have historical value should be very old or have some special significance leads to a limited and incomplete view of an age past. Historical collections often suffer from a lack of "everyday" items that were at the center of a working society. We seldom see our own "stuff" as having any future historical significance and we then relegate many of our clothing and textile items to stores of good will rather than seeing them as an icon of today's history.

When you think of historic clothing and textiles, what comes to mind? Is it an old bridal gown, baptism dress or maybe a quilt? Historic clothing and textiles are more than just those items that were used for special occasions or made by your great grandmother. Items worth preserving should include things from all time periods that will tell us more about the era and the persons who used them.

When items are considered for donation to the Blue Earth County Historical Society (BECHS) they should have a connection to Blue Earth County, identify who used the item, and how it was used. This provenance is very important for future generations who will see these items or when they are used in a museum display.

In the BECHS collection we have many examples of clothing and textiles that tell us such things as: when and where the person lived, their occupation, what they did in their leisure time, their social status in the community, what organizations they belonged to and much more. When looking at clothing and textiles, we also learn more about the construction skills of the person who made the item or where an item was purchased. The following are some examples of items in the BECHS collection.

In 1893, Mr. Patrick Dennis Kelley purchased a black cape for his wife, Mary Louise Kelley at the World's Fair in Chicago. This must have been a very exciting time for Mr. Kelly. This fair, known as the Columbian Exposition, was attended by people from around the world. It is not known if Mrs. Kelly attended the World's Fair with her husband. This



1893 beaded cape.

cape is heavily beaded with jet black beads.

Brides in the late 1800's and early 1900's had to show that they had learned a variety of home-making skills needed as a wife. These skills included needlework such as embroidery, crocheting, knitting, and general sewing skills. A young woman would start practicing these skills at an

early age and by the time she became a wife she would have a collection of items to start married life. Minnie Hansen of Lake Crystal, the bride of Waldemar Scherer of Mankato, crocheted a handbag which she used at her wedding in 1911. She also had nightgowns and aprons trimmed with crocheted lace. Minnie's wedding dress, leather gloves, and the items previously mentioned are in the BECHS collection along with a newspaper article about her wedding. Minnie is also seen on the front cover of this newsletter in the Minneopa Refreshment Stand post-card photo. She is the second from the left in the photo.

Another garment with an interesting history is a children's dance dress worn by Muriel Kuebler. The dress is made of pink silk georgette and is covered with gold metallic flowers. When reviewing our archives, we learn that at the age of 12, Mary studied dance in New York along with her sister Alice. The November 10, 1925 *Mankato Free Press* had a front page article about "Studio of Sixteen Year Old Dance Instruc-



Muriel Kuebler's dance dress

tor" who was probably the youngest dance instructor in Minnesota. In addition to her dance talents she was also an accomplished violin player. In an August 10, 1920 *Mankato Free Press* article we read that Muriel was "accepted as a pupil in the master summer course of the Chicago Musical College under the instruction of the famous teacher of violin, Leopold Auer." She was the "youngest pupil he ever admitted in one of his classes." So the dance dress worn by Muriel Kuebler has more meaning when we know more about the person who wore it.

Skills learned by our ancestors continue to be passed on to later generations. Remember, not all items we have in the BECHS collection are old. For example, we have a lovely tatted doily made in 2006 by Dorothy Severson who is a master at tatting. In 2002, Mary Ann Jensen donated a doily she made which is decorated with Hardanger. Very few people today are passing on these skills to future generations so having examples of various forms of needlework is an important part of telling the story of Blue Earth County.

Quilts have always been seen as more than useful household textiles. Many of them have special meaning to the

maker or the owner. Early quilts, although utilitarian, gave the quilter an opportunity to be creative with color and design. An interesting quilt in the BECHS collection was made by Mary Lampert using silk ribbon convention badges. These



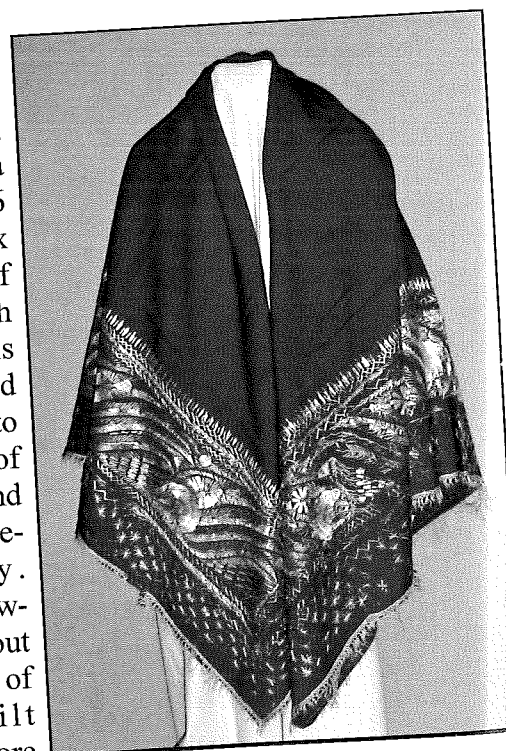
Early 1890s silk ribbon quilt.

ribbons were from National and Minnesota Woman's Relief Corps (WRC) conventions in the 1890s and early 1900s. A few ribbons were from Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) conventions.

We assume that Mary was a very active member of the WRC and GAR by her attendance at their conventions.

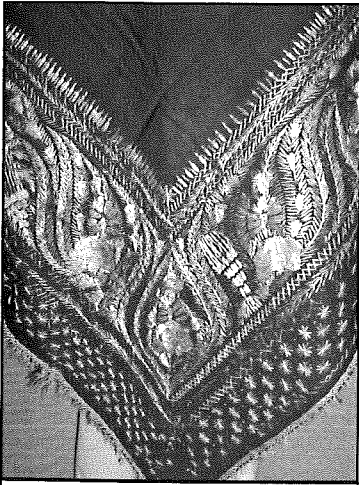
Another quilt with a special history is one made by Permelia L. Mills (Mrs. Samuel Titus Mills). The quilt dates from the early 1900s. It is a crazy quilt, a very popular style at this time, which is made with many pieces of different fabrics along with souvenir ribbons interspersed throughout the quilt. According to the book, *Reminiscences of Pioneer Life*, Permelia came to Blue Earth County in 1854 from Otsego, New York. In the chapter written by J. H. Baker in 1908, he tells about her life. Her early home was on a farm in Garden City Township, living in a hut until a log house was built by her husband. Except for two years, she lived on this farm for fifty-four years.

During this time she experienced two Indian wars, the Inkpaduta war of 1856 and the Sioux outbreak of 1862, each time the Mills family fled their home to the safety of Mankato and Red Wing respectively. Again, knowing more about the maker of this quilt makes it more interesting and useful.



A. J. Jewett family shawl.

For old timers in Blue Earth County, the Jewett family name probably reminds them of the 1865 murder of three members of the A. J. Jewett family and the hired man by a "half-breed" Sioux Indian. So finding a textile item that belonged to this family in the BECHS collection started a search for more information about this brutal event in the history of the county. The item which belonged to the Jewett family is a very large blue cotton shawl with ivory



Detail from Jewett shawl.

broidered decoration around the outer perimeter. The motifs of the embroidery appear to be something that would have been done in a country outside the United States. Also, the yarn used for the embroidery is a plant fiber, but not flax or cotton, so it might have been a fiber from the leaves of a plant grown in more tropical regions of the

world. However, no information as to the source of the shawl was included with the donation. For those unfamiliar with the murder, there are many resources available in the BECHS archives. In the May 4, 1915 *Review*, an article titled "Murder of Jewett Family 50 Years Ago" was published. The article gives details of the murders and subsequent hanging of the half-breed Indian. If you want to know more, just stop by the Research Center at BECHS. And if you want to see the shawl, you can make an appointment to see it as well.

Another benefit of having clothing and textiles from many time periods is that they serve as resources for dating photographs. On the cover of this issue there is a cabinet card photo of Mabel Davidson wearing a skating dress with fur trim, hat with feather, and fur muff. Although the photo was not dated when we received it, the clothing and hat help determine that it was taken in the late 1890s. The clothing worn helps us to date the photos and they can be compared to clothing items in our collection. So if you have undated pictures you would like to date, the clothing worn by persons in the pictures can help you do this. We have many old catalogs and historic clothing books that can be used to help you, too.

The BECHS clothing and textiles collection represents many decades and a wide variety of items, but there are some things that we would like to have that would give the collection more depth. We need swimwear that dates after 1950 and wedding attire from 1960 and later. We also do not have any women's bras and panties newer than the 1920's, but we have plenty of drawers (an early form of

women's underpants). If you have clothing and textile items that have special stories, these are especially desirable to BECHS.

If you are planning to make a donation to BECHS, please keep in mind that we like to have items in good condition, relatively clean, and free of insects and insect debris. Please include information about who used the item, when and where, special stories about the item, or articles related to it. Also, a picture of a garment being worn is a great addition to telling the story and the picture is preserved as well. A copy of the picture can be used instead of the original one if you wish to keep it.

If you have questions about how to care for a special treasure, feel free to give BECHS a call at 345-5566.

## **River Passages: Regional Author Series**

BECHS Heritage Center

**Saturday, April 21, 1-3p.m.**

Natalie Rosinsky

*Sarah Winnemucca: Scout, Activist and Teacher*  
Rosinsky will talk about Winnemucca's Making  
and Remaking History

**Saturday, May 19, 1-3p.m.**

Talk and book signing with  
Curtis Dahlin author of  
*Dakota Uprising Victims:  
Gravestones and Stories*

**Saturday, June 16, 1-4p.m.**

Maud Hart Lovelace Author Celebration  
Multi-Media Presentation  
Amy Dolnick, Carlienne Frisch,  
Julie Schrader

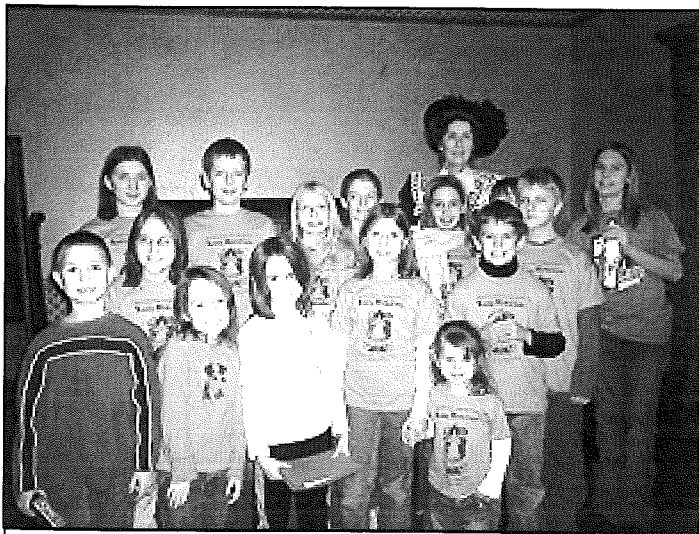
**Saturday, July 21, 1-3p.m.**

Paul A. Hadley  
*Chasing After the Wind and Winds Chased*

# YOUNG HISTORIANS

Young Historians has been having a lot of adventures in history during the last couple of workshops and club meetings. We toured the Hubbard House after learning about the Victorian times in January, then World War I was our next topic. During our last meeting, many of us worked together to put on a Great Depression living timeline for the rest of the group.

When our adventure in history was the "Turn of the Century," club member Connor Oldenburg shared his knowledge of coins and sports from this era, and even showed some coins from 1898 and 1900. I then demonstrated how people from this time period made greeting cards and we all had the chance to make some. Connor, Joshua Kloster and I all then led the group in Turn of the Century fun and games. For the club meeting, Jessica Potter spoke about Victorian calling cards and we each made two, one we kept, and the other we left at the Hubbard House when we went there on a tour. The tour, led by "Mrs. Hubbard" (aka Susan Hynes) was fabulous, and we even got to hold objects while we learned about



BECHS Member Susan Hynes gathers with the January Young Historians. Susan portrayed Mrs. Hubbard for an enlightening tour of the Hubbard House.

them!

For our next adventure in February, the Vice-President of the Young Historians Club, Joshua Kloster, gave a presentation about World War I

spies. Dressed as a spy himself, he told us of Mata Hari and several other famous spies. Joshua even gave us a quiz at the end (with candy prizes!) to make sure we were listening. We also learned about Women's Suffrage in February and made buttons or pins as women from this time would have done, and then wore them.

For our last adventure we learned about the Great Depression. Several of us volunteered and worked together to perform little skits in a living timeline, such as Black Thursday and Amelia Earhart, directed by Laura Garlow and Christina Shortall. For our snack we had Great Depression cake. Several club members and I shared our knowledge of the Great Depression. Club member Faith Beiswanger gave a presentation on Amelia Earhart, including photos and books. We played a button race where teams raced to see who could be the fastest at threading buttons – don't let the buttons fall off the back end! The club met Gwenyth Swain the author of *Chig and the Second Spread*. She spoke to us about her book writing and then signed our copies.

As you can see, the club members have really been helping to prepare for and present our adventures. When I have been responsible for sharing information with the group, it really comes to life for me. Join us to help make history come to life! 3rd-6th graders are welcome to join us. Contact Jessica Potter at (507)-345-5566. The Young Historians workshop is free and occurs on the second Saturday of each month during the school year from 10:00-12:00. Hope you will join us for our next adventure!

*Alex Oldenburg*

President, Young Historians Club



## 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.



## Meet Our New Board Members



**Paul E. Grabitske**

I'm an attorney and the managing shareholder of Eskens, Gibson & Behm Law Firm, Chtd., in Mankato. My law practice is primarily focused on business, estate planning, probate and civil litigation. I graduated with honors from William Mitchell College of Law in St. Paul and clerked for Judge Terrance Conkel before returning to Mankato in 2002. Prior to entering my legal career, I managed several cities in Minnesota and Iowa. I am also a graduate of Mankato State University, and Minnesota Valley Lutheran High School.



**Susan Hynes**

I am a lifelong resident of Southern Minnesota. I have lived in Mankato since 1968 when I moved here to attend college. (It was called Mankato State College at that time.) I have worked as a customer service agent for CenterPoint Energy for the past ten years. I have seen many changes in the city. I began visiting the Hubbard House in my early days here. I was very pleased to see the restoration completed. Through the years I've found that seeing reenactment makes history much more interesting to me. I have a particular interest in period clothing and costume. I enjoy exploring Southern Minnesota historical sites, acting as a costumed tour guide at the Hubbard House, participating in Ghosts From the Past, and Discovery Days presentations. I think these programs help to bring history to life and make it more accessible to people of all ages and walks of life.



**Andrew J. Thom, CPA, CFE**

I grew-up in Blue Earth, Minnesota on a hobby farm. We had horses and sheep when I was a child. In high school I played football, basketball, and ran track, graduating in 1997. After high school I attended Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall, MN. I graduated from SMSU in 2002 with a Bachelor's Degree in accounting and

business management. I have worked for Abdo, Eick & Meyers, LLP since graduating and have since earned my CPA license and CFE certificate. Currently, I live in North Mankato with my wife, Mindy, and our 20-month-old monster, who goes by the name Sam. We are expecting a baby boy on May 4th!



**Tricia Nienow**

My husband, Dick, and I have lived on our farm, "Pinehurst", for nearly 40 years. We have three adult children. For the most part, I am retired from a career in speech therapy, while Dick continues to operate our grain farm. We are licensed Marriage and Family Therapists and enjoy working as a couple with couples who are experiencing distress in their marriage. Our business is located on our farm in Mapleton. I have served on several local and community boards whose mission is enhancing the lives of Blue Earth County residents.



BECHS member, Emmett Smith, continues to produce and present *Mankato History This Month* on KMSU-89.7 FM, at 10 AM on the first Monday of every month.

All broadcasts since the Fall of 2003 are now archived online at [kmsu.org](http://kmsu.org) and may be heard anytime, at:

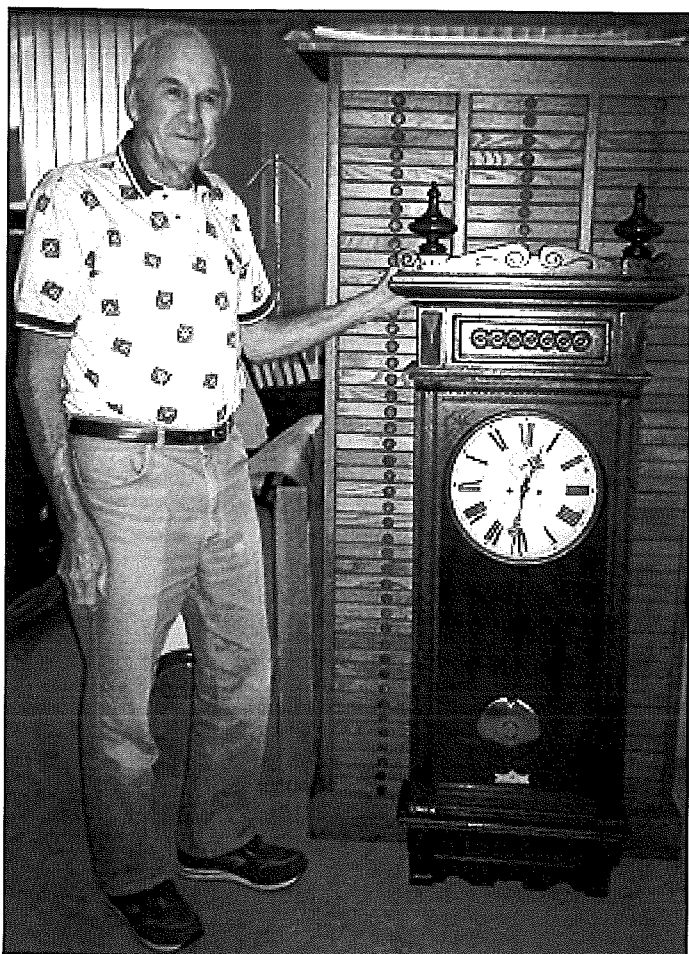
<http://www.mnsu.edu/kmsufm/archives.html>



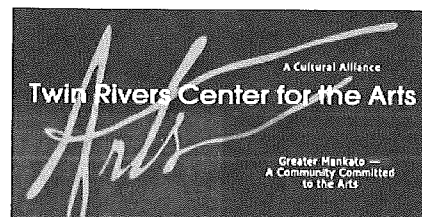
BECHS now **accepts** VISA, Mastercard, Discover and American Express. Credit cards will be accepted for Museum Store purchases, memberships and donations.

## Just like clockworks

This beautiful clock has hung in R.D.'s office at the Hubbard House for many years. Last summer, volunteers were surprised to find the clock on the floor; the wall screw just gave out. The glass and many of the fine wood details were broken. We sadly brought the clock back to the Heritage Center and there it sat in the office until Dean Meurer happened upon it. He was in to make a donation of World War II memorabilia and mentioned to Sara that as a hobby he fixed clocks. Dean took the clock home and began putting it back together. Dean donated his time and talents to the incredible transformation and Forrest Vangsgard of Zeno Glass donated the replacement glass. Under Dean's watchful eye, the clock will once again hang in R.D.'s office. Thanks so much, Dean!



Dean Meurer and the Hubbard House clock after he had completed the repairs.



The Blue Earth County Historical Society is a proud partner of the Twin Rivers Center for the Arts which will make its permanent home in the Emy Frentz Art Guild this spring. For more information check out [www.twinriverarts.org](http://www.twinriverarts.org).

## Minnesota Archaeology Week 2007

Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup>—Sunday, May 13<sup>th</sup>

**Tuesday, May 8, 2007, 6:00p.m.**  
**BECHS Heritage Center**

"A new look at Jeffers Petroglyphs and the Cultural Landscape of the Red Rock Ridge" presented by Tom Sanders, site manager of Jeffers Petroglyphs.

Jeffers Petroglyphs Historic Site is embedded in a cultural landscape that includes most of North America and covers 9,000 years of human interaction.

Free event, limited seating.  
Please call to reserve seating.

## Membership Renewal

It's that time of year. Reminder 2006-7 memberships will expire on June 30, 2007. Renew your 2007-8 membership today! Also, consider gift memberships or encourage a friend or family member to join. Please use the enclosed yellow form to renew.



*Notes from the  
Archives Manager*

We have been working on an exciting project in the archives. Actually one of our dedicated volunteers has been indexing our collection of Blue Earth County wills. The county filmed all of their probate packets onto microfiche, then they donated the wills from those packets to us. It was a wonderful donation with a lot of rich family history inside. The problem was that there were 5316 wills crammed into a filing cabinet without an index. It took two years, but now they are neatly organized, indexed and ready to be searched-Yeah! The index can be found in the Research Center and on our website <http://www.rootsweb.com/~mnbechs>.

The first will we have is Leander Sheppard's of Madelia, Minnesota Territory, dated July 1858. (You do have to remember that the date on the will is the date that it was filed, not the date of death.) He left to his brother Theodore, a student of Ministry in Rochester, New York, all his wearing apparel and to his brother-in-law his life insurance policy of \$500. Just look at all this fabulous information! By the way, we do have a small fee of \$10 per copy for the whole document:

The wills date from 1858 to 1973. I'm sorry to say that not all the wills filed in Blue Earth County are here. For a complete search, you will want to contact the county. They will have the complete probate packet which may include documents like Quit Claim Deeds, Guardianship Records or an Inventory of the Estate. Every probate packet is different, and everyone leaves something different behind. Also, if you think that your ancestor died without a will (intestate), the county may still hold valuable information on them as well. The county also charges a fee of \$5 per document, but it is a copy from microfiche.

One of the most interesting wills was the one where the man left his current wife the clothing of his first and second wives. Wasn't she a lucky woman!

*Shelley Harrison*

Archives Manager



*...at the Museum Store*

**Maud Hart Lovelace  
Author Celebration**

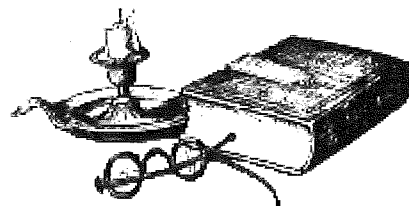
Carney Sibley of *Carney's House-Party* by Maud Hart Lovelace, that brown-eyed, dimple-faced girl of the crowd, was based closely on the real Marion Willard and letters written during her college years at Vassar. Writer Amy Dolnick was fascinated by this lesser known story and wrote the book, *Future in a Handbasket, The Life and Letters Behind Carney's House Party*.

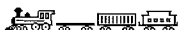
Through a donation from the Minneapolis based Maud Hart Lovelace Society, the Blue Earth County Historical Society acquired several copies. As the new Museum Assistant at the time I had to steal glimpses of the book and justified the time to myself as an education on an item I hoped to sell. The book lured me in by the pulse of those first years of women's higher education captured in letters and by Dolnick's wider knowledge of the history of Vassar and women's introduction to the world of the academy.

It took me several months to track Dolnick down, and guess what? She was delighted to come from out of state to be our guest author in June. Why not make a celebration of it and invite other Maud Hart Lovelace fans and fellow writers? Carlienne Frisch, author of *Betsy-Tacy*, *Deep Valley People and Places* and Julie Schrader, author of *Maud Hart Lovelace's Deep Valley*, will be teaming up to celebrate Lovelace through power-point, video and good chat! If you've ever come to an author event at BECHS, you know they are times well spent.

*Anna Larson*

Museum Assistant





## Rapidan Heritage Society

### President's Report on 2006, the Fifth Year

Another year older and still going strong! The year began with some special meetings and research on the preservation of the old Kunkel building, next to the town hall. We were all in agreement that the building should be preserved, but declined the project due to the great cost and labor that it would require.

At our February annual meeting we elected a new Vice-president, Doug Cutler, and re-elected board member Rich Garman. Our speaker, Jane Tarjeson, gave a very interesting presentation on the history of the Blue Earth County Poor Farm – located right here in Rapidan Township.

Four events were hosted in 2006: the Valentine Sleigh Ride, Memorial Day Program, a Bus Trip to Harkin Store, Fort Ridgely, Lower Sioux Agency, with the last stop at the Schells Brewing Company, and Christmas in Rapidan.

RHS also held two aluminum can collections, participated in the Non-profit Bake and Craft sale at the Madison East Mall, and helped with the Good Thunder Firemen's Dance at Rapidan.

RHS donated \$300.00 for the purchase of a banner, representing Rapidan High School, which will hang in the gymnasium of the new LCWM High School. It is red and white – the Rapidan school colors – and has the RHS logo on it.

Our Memorial Day event was quite successful, holding a good crowd all day. After the memorial service, we rededicated the depot on its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Enough of the interior work was complete on the depot to enable us to set up museum displays of Rapidan memorabilia, pictures and displays. The 2006 Redwing Stoneware piece, a half-gallon crock with lid depicting the depot 1906-2006, was offered for sale beginning Memorial Day. In the town hall, Dorothy McIntyre and Marian Bemis Johnson, authors of *Daughters of the Game The First Era of Minnesota Girls High School Basketball, 1891-1942* were signing books. Also honored were four

women, former high school basketball players from the late 1920s and early 1930s that were able to be present. Dorothy Washburn Peterson played for Rapidan High School; Geraldine Othoudt Johnson, Mary Champlin Tonkin and Emily Lee Anderson played on Lake Crystal's team. Each former player was presented with a rose and a trophy representing their contribution to girls' basketball. We served a noon lunch along with several other food vendors. In the afternoon BECHS' Traveling Troupe performed "From Quacks to Clinics." It was a great day and a very successful year for RHS.

In 2007, RHS will host some of the same events, and maybe something new. The 2007 bus trip destination will be announced at a later date. The Redwing stoneware for 2007 will be a 9" pie dish with the Rapidan High School pictured on it. We plan to have it available for purchase beginning on Memorial Day. Work will continue on the depot – there are a number of things yet to be done.

Rapidan Heritage Society would like to thank everyone for their contributions, time and labor in support of our mission. We also invite everyone to join and participate in our endeavors.

*Darryl Lachmiller*  
President

## Genealogy Day

Visit the Research Center the fourth Saturday of every month for tips and tricks on conducting your family research.

**"Ask the Expert"** your tough genealogy questions.

FREE Research Center Admission





## Fingerprints and Footnotes

Footnotes and Fingerprints, the history and genealogy club, is always growing and newcomers are always welcome. In February we discovered why we live in Minnesota and why our ancestor migrated here. This past March, we learned other ways to tell our family stories. Many wonderful examples and great creative ideas were shared. In April our curiosity got the best of us and we dumped out the content of pockets and purses. And did you know that the first purses were not carried by women! These and many interesting tidbits can be had at any of our meetings. If you have any ideas for topics or tours or if you have any interest in presenting a topic, please let Shelley know.

### Future Meetings:

May 8th - "A New Look at Jeffers Petroglyphs and the Cultural Landscape of Red Rock Ridge." Presented by Tom Sander, Site Manager of Jeffers Petroglyphs

June 12th - Marriage Rites and Customs

July 10th - The Quarry Industries in Blue Earth County

### Footnotes In History

April 22, 1911 (97 years ago)

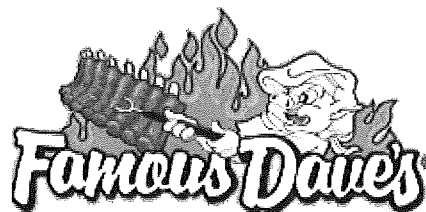
Governor Adolph O. Eberhart signed a law abolishing the death penalty in Minnesota.

Adolph Olson Eberhart came to America in 1881 and to Mankato 1896. In 1909 he became governor after the sudden death of Governor John A. Johnson, former St. Peter resident.



## January—March 2007 Artifacts & Archives Donations

Albrecht, Janet	Keir, Grace
Anonymous	Madsen, Jack
BECHS	Malzahn, Florence Minse
Blackley, Sandra	Nuessle, Ruth
Braun, Christopher	O'Brien, Ken
Burns, Inella	Quade, Henry and Ann
Dubke, Loren	Rapidan Heritage Society
Frederick, Michael	Rudquist, Sara
Furan, Rodney and Barbara	St. John's Episcopal Church
Gretz, Jeff	Steele, Stewart
Griffiths, Jane	Sugden, George
Grundmeier, Shirley	Tarjeson, Jane
Grundmeier, Win	VanVleit, Georgia Pengel
Humphrey, Mary	Vee, Harlan
Ireland, Patricia	Wersal, Jerry
Jacobs, Kathryn	
Jensen, Orville	
Jones, Ellis	



Pick up your FREE Customer Appreciation Card at Mankato's *Famous Dave's* Restaurant. Each time you dine in or out at *Famous Dave's* use your card. You will be rewarded a 5% cash rebate that goes on your card. You can use the accumulated cash value at any time at the restaurant to be applied toward your balance.

But best of all, *Famous Dave's* will match your 5% personal reward with the same amount donated to the Blue Earth County Historical Society. You can also choose to donate your cash rebate to BECHS. Since January we have earned \$26.61 from the Customer Appreciation program with only four loyalty cards directed to BECHS. Imagine what we could earn with 50 loyalty cards in use! This is a great program, please visit *Famous Dave's* today and ask for the Blue Earth County Historical Society Customer Appreciation Card!

## *History Mysteries*

1. The mystery continues...the question in a previous newsletter concerning the whereabouts of the brown wooden marker that was south of Vernon Center on Highway 169... It appears that there was an earlier *granite* marker placed in the area in 1931. The Feb. 6, 1931 *Blue Earth County Enterprise* had the following article:

"Through the efforts of the State Historical Society, the highway officials have put up a marker in Old Vernon. Inscribed on the marker are the words "Vernon Center Stockade - Early in 1863, Company K, Tenth Minnesota Infantry built a timber stockade about the hotel and store near this site and garrisoned it as one of the frontier chain forts erected during the Sioux outbreak. Several whites were killed by Indians in this vicinity during 1864."

What happened to this marker? Is there a Vernon Center historian that can help us with this mystery?

2. Two mill-related inquiries were received, the first seeking information on the Cable Mill by Good Thunder and the other on the buhr stone at the Blue Earth County Fairgrounds in Garden City - what mill did this come from? Watch the next *Historian* for answers to these 'grinding' mysteries of mills.

## WISH LIST

- Turn of the Century Glassware for the Hubbard House
- Turn of the Century punch bowl for the Hubbard House
- *The Land* on microfilm
- White cotton gloves
- Copy paper
- Mylar book covers
- LCD projector

## *Tour Guide Training*

Please join us at the tour guide training session to prepare for this spring and for the extended summer open hours and programs. After a short mandatory meeting where seasoned docents will receive the upcoming tour schedule and any updates, new tour guides will receive a full training session covering both the Heritage Center Museum Gallery and the Hubbard House.

To join our tour guide team, contact Anna at 345-5566 to sign up for a training session.

**Tuesday, April 24, 6 p.m.**

BECHS Heritage Center Meeting Room

**Saturday, April 28, 10 a.m.**

BECHS Heritage Center Meeting Room

We look forward to seeing you and getting our tour schedule back in full swing!

## Hubbard House

### Hours of Operation

#### May

Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Sunday 1-4 p.m.

#### June - August

Thursday 1- 4 p.m.

Friday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Sunday 1- 4 p.m.

Monday 1- 4 p.m.

#### September

Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Sunday 1- 4 p.m.

#### October - April

Saturday 1 - 4 p.m.

## BECHS Membership January—March

### Renewed Members

Andrews, Melodie  
 Barrett, Mary E.  
 Bartsch, Janet  
 Braam, Cindy  
 Bradshaw, Louise L.  
 Bursaw, Iona  
 Clause, David and Carolyn  
 Diamond, Sandy  
 Dorn, Kathleen and John  
 Evans, Brian  
 Goff, Harley and Janet  
 Hamer, Nancy  
 Jenkins, Margaret  
 Johnson, Marlyss  
 Just, Sr. John  
 Kamakahi, Katherine Frost  
 Kind, Arn and Margaret  
 Kohrt, Melinda and Jim  
 Krenik, Shirley A.  
 Llewellyn, Becky  
 McNear, Virginia  
 Neitge, Catherine  
 Owens, Helen  
 Palmer, John H.  
 Peterson, Jean  
 Peterson, Mary Helen  
 Pond, Patricia  
 Reich, Judy and Jerry  
 Ries, Chuck and Carol  
 Rottunda, John  
 Sassenberg, Karl  
 Sawina, James  
 Simonett, Patricia and James  
 Stromswold, Todd  
 Thiesse, Sylvan and Rosalin  
 Thompson, Jay and Darlene  
 Vetter, Willard and Dorris  
 Vosbeek, Judy  
 Wittrock, John and Eleanor  
 Wright, Lorraine  
 Zielske, Dan

### New Members

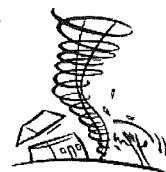
Brown, Joan  
 Burkhart, Sharon K.  
 Ewert, David and Julie  
 Miller, Jo and Elizabeth  
 Rasmussen, Howard  
 Schaffer, Jamie and Paul  
 Swenson, Benjamin James  
 Zumwalt, Patricia

### Business Level Memberships

Laurels Edge Assisted Living  
 Meyer and Sons TV and Appliance  
 Tire Associates  
 VINE Faith in Action  
 Voyager Bank



## DISCOVERY DAYS



Discovery Days is held the first Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 pm. The programs will feature hands on activities relating to history, the arts, literature, science and sociology. Families are welcome throughout the day for the on-going crafts and activities, as well as the scheduled storytelling or presentations. Past programs have included Winter on the Farm, Valentines, and Spinning. This free program includes admission to the gallery. Upcoming programs are:



**May 5<sup>th</sup>**

Archaeology Field School

**June 2<sup>nd</sup>**

"Storms"

with KEYC Meteorologist Mark Torello

**July 7<sup>th</sup>**

Vintage 1860s Base Ball  
 Game with Olmsted County!

*(This is how baseball was spelled in the 1860s.)*

## Volunteer Appreciation

Thank you to the 100 + people who donated over 7000 hours to the Historical Society in 2006. We could not achieve what we do without the valuable efforts of these dedicated people. Volunteers serve on our committees, assist with newspaper clipping and maintain our obituary books, and serve as tour guides at the Heritage Center and Hubbard House, just to name a few. Please give us a call if you wish to join our dedicated corps of volunteers.

In recognition of their service, BECHS will honor our volunteers on Thursday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at our Annual Volunteer Appreciation event. Join us at 5 p.m. for food, fellowship and fun. To RSVP, please call 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

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[www.rootsweb.com/~mnbechs/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~mnbechs/)

Expiration date

Preserving and sharing Blue Earth County's history since 1901