

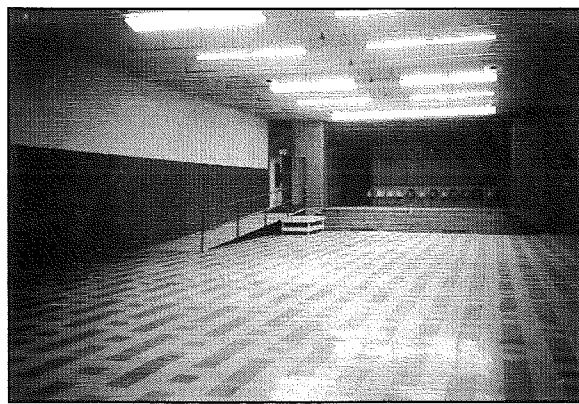
The Blue Earth County

# HISTORIAN



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Newman Center auditorium 1987 -



— now Heritage Center Museum

Our Mission: To collect, preserve, and promote the history of Blue Earth County for present and future generations.

# Historian



## Blue Earth County Historical Society

415 Cherry Street, Mankato, MN  
507-345-5566  
www.bechshistory.com

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## *The Blue Earth County Historian* Winter 2009

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## *From the Executive Director*

As I sit here on the eve of a new year, I am reflecting on the incredible year we have had at the Blue Earth County Historical Society. Early in 2008 the Board of Trustees and staff met for four Saturdays and worked on a Strategic Plan for the Society. We introduced this at the Annual Meeting last March. It is meant to be a working document that will evolve as the Society evolves. I recently reviewed the plan for our 2008 goals and we achieved many of those goals, such as a new website – www.bechshistory.com, new brochures and print materials, a new brand for BECHS and the promotion of business memberships. We now have 21 business members with ten at the membership level for advertising in our newsletter. We had over 15,000 hits to our website and over 12,000 people used our services or attended our events in 2008. We still have a lot to work on, but it is encouraging to see that we now have a stronger infrastructure.

The new year promises to be just as fruitful for BECHS. We are celebrating our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at the Heritage Center this year and it promises to be an exciting year. The Annual Meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup> will kick off a new publishing year with the release of *Unique Mankato* by Daniel Vance. We anticipate publishing three other books in 2009 featuring the Mankato carp industry during WWII, the story of the Hubbard House and a new collective volume of *Historian* feature articles. In the Spring, final touches will be put on the Hubbard House exterior restoration projects – 3 years in the making – and we are going to celebrate! Watch for details. The Blue Earth County Fair is celebrating their 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this summer; we can't wait to bring some old-time favorites to the Fair. And we anticipate rounding off the fall with our annual Old-Fashioned Barn Dance, Ghosts from the Past and Christmas at Hubbard House.

It may seem like ambitious goals for 2009, but the strong Board of Trustees, staff, volunteers and members that make up BECHS are ready for the challenge. Thank you all sincerely for your support in the many ways you give – your time, your financial contributions, your estate planning, your moral support and your pride in this organization! Happy New Year and Happy 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to the Heritage Center!

*Jessica Potter,*  
Executive Director



## BECHS On the Air

Listen to KTOE 1420 AM the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 4:10 for a BECHS update with Trish.

## Historical Society 1988 to 2008: 20 Years of Progress

by Winston Grundmeier

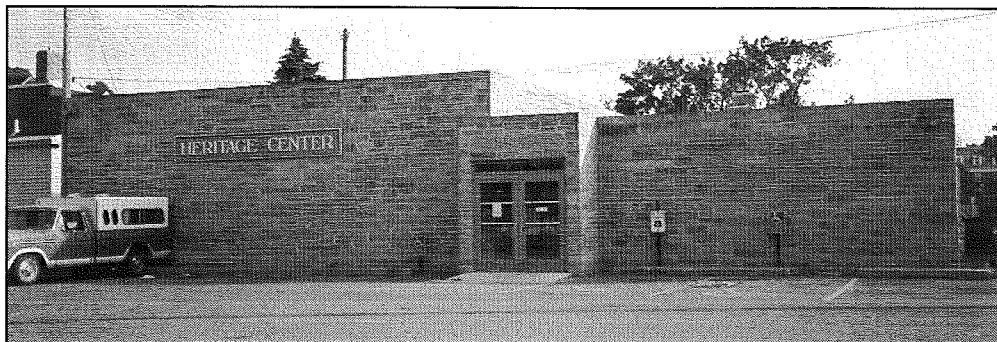
The Blue Earth County Historical Society had its origins in the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the City of Mankato. The Society functioned on an ad hoc basis from 1902 until 1916, when it received its first registration with the Minnesota Secretary of State. But the Society still was an orphan until 1938, when it got its first real home at the R.D. Hubbard House. It had to call the basement of the Carnegie Library its home for the seven years prior to 1938; and it had to store its artifacts at Sibley Park pavilion, as well as various other places around the county. Then for 50 years, from 1938 to 1988, BECHS lived at Hubbard House with a museum, gift shop and archives and artifact storage. The house is owned by the City of Mankato and operated by BECHS.

In November 1986, BECHS received a \$50,000 donation from the Mary Schultz Gray estate to be used for construction of a new building for the Society or for general operations. The opportunity to fulfill the dream of restoring the Hubbard House to its Victorian glory and, at the same time, to provide additional much-needed space for BECHS operations came about in 1987. The Newman Center, a Catholic Student Center on South Fifth Street, owned by the Diocese of Winona, had largely ceased to be a viable location for a student center after Mankato State University moved onto upper campus in the late 1970s. The vacant facility was offered to the Mankato Area Senior Citizens, Inc., also known as Summit Center, for its use in the mid-1970s. Nearly a decade later, it became financially difficult for Summit Center to operate the building alone.

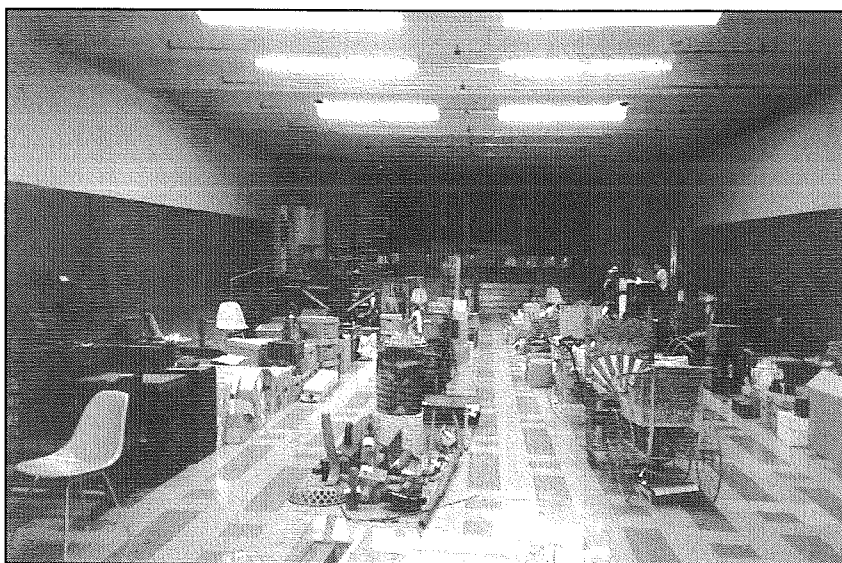
In February 1987, during the term of BECHS President Chuck Piehl, a partnership between Summit Center and the Society was worked out for the joint use of the building by the two organizations. In order to buy off

the mortgage held by the Diocese of Winona, a total of \$260,000 was needed; the Diocese later agreed to forgive \$100,000 leaving \$160,000 for the two organizations to raise. The Summit-Heritage Foundation assumed the building title on August 1, 1987 after the two organizations raised a combined \$175,000.

In 1987, Susan Monk became BECHS' Executive Director and Ann Christenson was hired for six



months as Development Director. It was Ann's job to lead a capital fund drive, the first such drive that BECHS had ever mustered. A figure of \$695,000 was the goal (\$213,000 for providing suitable quarters on the second floor of the old Newman Center, now the Heritage Center; \$270,000 for Hubbard House renovation; \$100,000 for an operating endowment; and \$112,000 for staffing, program and campaign costs). The Confer and Koehler families pledged to donate \$150,000 if the Society could raise \$545,000 by November 16, 1988. A series of generous donations, allotments and grants, coupled with some magnificent work in fund-





raising throughout Blue Earth County, helped BECHS make the deadline on November 15, 1988. A grand sum of \$775,000 was now available for three goals: to restore the Hubbard House, to improve the new Heritage Center and to start an endowment.

Vast changes at BECHS were not long in coming. As early as January 1988, plans had been set to move the artifacts and archives from the Hubbard House to the Heritage Center. Volunteers from across Blue Earth County joined to help in a three-phase move packing, carrying, and loading and unloading cars, pick-ups and moving trucks. The Society's office and museum remained at Hubbard House during the move. The archives and research library closed to the public for only 5 weeks in February and March as staff and volunteers moved the collection.

The brand new Heritage Center opened to the public



in phases from March 1988 to August 1990. The Archives/Map Room opened to researchers in March 1988. In July 1988 BECHS kicked off the Capital Fund Drive with an open house at the Heritage Center featuring a band concert, viewing of the new museum, barbershop singers and food. In 1989 the Society's offices moved to the Heritage Center, the collection storage room was setup and the newly remodeled Archives/Map Room, conference room and gift shop opened. A new entry to the building was built of Mankato Stone donated by Coughlan Company in 1990, followed by the grand opening of the exhibit gallery on August 21, 1990.

By early 1991, financial woes hit the Society. The remainder of the 1990s was spent rebuilding the organization from financial accountability to staff. In the 1990s the Society saw six Executive Directors come and go. James Lundgren was hired in 1999; he would continue to lead the growing organization until 2005. Under his direction, Jessica Potter was hired as the Collections Manager (now Executive Director) and Shelley Harrison was hired as Archives Assistant (now Archives Manager).

During the 1990s and 2000s, the R.D. Hubbard House has been under restoration to restore it to a house of 1905. Projects included work on the heating and plumbing systems, plaster work, roof and foundation repair, and interior decoration in each room, such as wall coverings, light fixtures and painting. The most recent projects were completed in 2008 and included exterior painting and porch restoration.

In 2000 the exhibit gallery has its first transformations since it opened in 1990. One-third of the original exhibit was taken down to make room for the exhibit titled "Together Then Together Again". The exhibit was created by the Minnesota Historical Society and made possible at BECHS by the Vietnam Veterans of Southern Minnesota. From that point forward, this section of the gallery was to host changing exhibits.

More changes occurred at the Heritage Center in 2006 when the museum store was remodeled to accommodate a work space for the Museum Assistant and a more inviting gathering space for visitors. At this time the Archives/Map Room (now known as the Research Center) was moved to the front of the building into the former conference room. The idea was to move all of the Society's public spaces to the front of the building. The former Research Center was then used as the new meeting/program/conference room.

In the fall of 2007 BECHS acquired the remaining room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the shared Heritage Center/Summit Center building still occupied by Summit Center. The additional space (2,000 square feet) was remodeled into a meeting/program room and storage

for archives and collections. The former meeting/program room is now used as a volunteer workroom for the dozen volunteers that use that space on a weekly basis.

Twenty years at the Heritage Center has been monumental for BECHS. As the Society continues to grow, it also is beginning to look at expanding services and possibly expanding locations. Who would have thought 20 years ago, that BECHS would fill the newly acquired 10,000 square feet and accomplish major restoration of the Hubbard House back to a house of 1905. What will the next 20 years hold for the Society?

### **What Unsettled the Old Settlers!**

January 25, 2:00-4:00 p.m.  
Cambria Town Hall

This Prairie Stories and River Rhymes  
program is open to the public  
See page 18 for details.



### **Call for Hubbard House Volunteers**

The Blue Earth County Historical Society is always on the lookout for a friendly face to conduct tours of the Hubbard House. Generally, school tours for the Hubbard House are scheduled April and May and other groups come year around. It is not an everyday commitment, but we do need to build up our list of guides to call on. During the summer, we are also looking for guides and store attendants to help out.

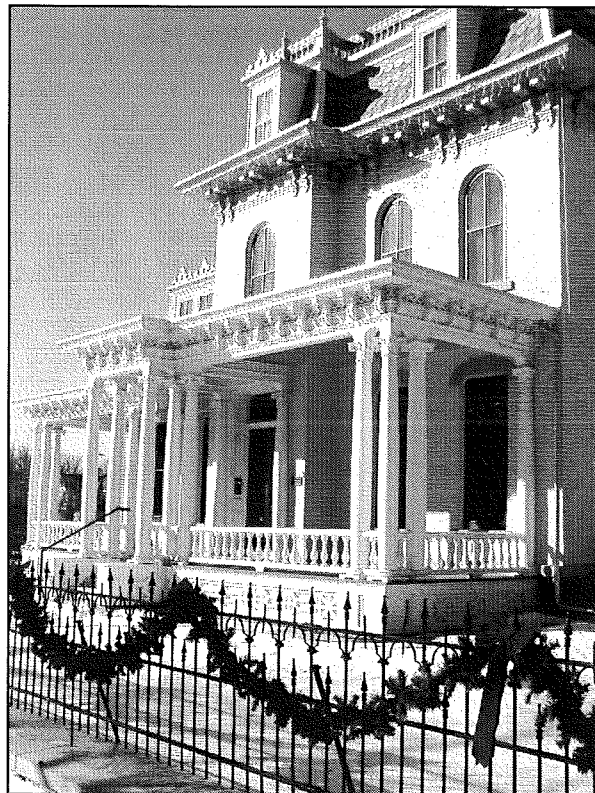
If this is something that might be of interest to you, we are planning a **training session** for **March 24<sup>th</sup>** from **2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** at the Hubbard House. Staff and volunteers will be on hand to help guide and teach others about the history of the Hubbard House. An email to our members will be sent out as a reminder about the date and time. If you would like further information please contact JoLynn at (507) 345-5566 or by email at [bechsms@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechsms@hickorytech.net). Also, if you would like to remain on our tour guide list but are unable to attend, please contact JoLynn.

### ***Hubbard House restoration up-***

The R.D. Hubbard House has been transformed since the last issue of the *Historian*. In October, the porches were braced with 2x4s and much of the architectural details of the porch were missing. We are happy to report that everything has been replaced and this phase of restoration has been completed.

In 2008, the house saw quite a facelift – tuck pointing, painting, repairs to the bay window, installation of a brick driveway, new storm windows, and restoration and repairs on all three porches. All of these projects were made possible by a grant from the Minnesota Historical Society matched by the City of Mankato, a generous anonymous donor, John Jay Hubbard and many other individual donors.

When the weather warms, the final touches of paint will go on the porches and window trim. We look forward to celebrating the transformation in late spring; watch for details. Thank you to all that made these projects possible!



# Financial and In-Kind Donations October-December, 2008

## Up to \$50

Anderson, Elaine  
Anderson-Morgan, Verna  
Berg, Marilyn  
Boubel, John  
Carstensen, Norma  
Coleman, Mary  
Cords, Betty Lou  
Dunlop, David and Donna  
Hoehn, William  
Johnson, Marlyss  
Jones, Ellis and Janet  
Just, John Sr.  
Kalvig, Ann  
Madsen, Richard and Ann-  
*In Honor of Jack Madsen*  
Mathiason, Renee  
McComb, Mary  
Moravec, William and Marilyn  
Norman, Beth  
Ohlenkamp, Ora  
Robinson, Luke and Shannon  
Sassenberg, Eunice  
Sawina, James  
Schulz, Roy and Velma  
Voyager Bank

## \$51-\$100

Anderson, Mary V.  
Belgard, Hugh and Vail  
Brady, John  
Burkhardt, Mike and Jean  
Buscher, Robert and Marilyn  
Carroll, Patrick  
Frederick, Sal  
Jensen, Orville and Mary Ann  
Madsen, Jack  
Madsen, Kristin  
Olson, Robert and Susan  
Richards, Marcia  
Schultz, Jo  
Taylor, Brett and Gretchen  
Zellmer, Randy and Sandy

## \$101-\$500

Lamont, Earl and Sally  
McLaughlin, Tom and Theresa

## Over \$500

Grundmeier, Win and Shirley  
Zimmer, Elizabeth Cooper

## Collections/Exhibits Fund

Barrett, Mary  
Keir, Richard and Grace  
Mankato Music Club

## Young Historians Fund

Madsen, Jack

## Hubbard House Restoration Fund

Dooley, Mary  
Fredericksen, Dennis and Joan

## Memorials

*In Memory of Dr. John Eusterman*  
by Ogden Confer

*In Memory of Dick Oehler*  
by Kelly and Kenneth Aquino  
Bruce and Karen Ochu

*In Memory of Helen Sofchalk*  
by Joel and Maureen Botten  
Charles and Mary Draper  
Stan and Agnes Eichten  
Helen Griffith

Win and Shirley Grundmeier  
Norma Hansen  
Gordon Herbst  
Bruce Larson  
Gordon and Audrey Madson  
Betty Ann and Lee McAllister  
Dave and Judy Nass  
Thomas Olson  
Jo Schultz  
Beth Sofchalk  
Donna and Jerry Webb  
Elizabeth Zimmer

*In Memory of Francys Wigley*  
by Lois Davis

## In-Kind

Hugg, Bob and Corey  
Jensen, Orville & MaryAnn

# OLD PHOTOGRAPHS AND THE SECRETS THEY HOLD

## PART 2:

### PHOTOGRAPHY

1900-1930

by

Grace Keir

*In Part Two, I examine the introduction of amateur photography which provided a broader look at our ancestors lives. Instead of posed photographs taken in a photographer's studio while dressed in more formal attire, we see our ancestors at home, at work and at play. We learn a lot about our ancestors lives by taking time to date the photographs in that old album or by organizing loose photos by family and date. Although this article does not deal with proper archival storage of photographs, I hope the readers will find resources to help them learn how to save photographs for future generations.*

As we enter the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the types of photographs found are varied. Cabinet cards, tintypes, and carte de visite photographs continue to be used. Sources vary on when each was last used, but their use dwindled after 1900. To date these three types of photographs in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, you may have to depend more on the clothing and appearance of the people in the photographs.

Until the 1880s, photographs were mostly produced by professional portrait photographers. In 1888 amateurs could buy a complete camera containing a 20-foot roll of paper, enough for 100 2.5 inch diameter circular pictures. This camera was developed by the Eastman Company. Little is recorded about these photographs. The following year a Kodak® camera using a roll of film instead of paper was introduced.

The invention that dramatically changed photography for everyday use by amateurs was the Kodak® Brownie box roll-film camera introduced by Eastman in 1900. Now “snapshots” of smiling people in informal settings appeared in family albums. In 1907, the first commercial color film was manufactured in France. The colors were very delicate and available only in photo studios. It wouldn't be until after 1935 that amateur photographers would have color available with the introduction of Kodachrome® film.

Have you ever found an old photograph that was entirely in shades of blue? I found several in my family photographs. These are called cyanotypes and were seen around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. They were images made on thin, light-sensitive paper in a process similar to “blueprints” used to reproduce maps and plans. It was not a widely accepted photographic process and if you have any, be aware that they are easily damaged by moisture.



Postcard: Mapleton, MN—Lucas Troendle home interior.  
View—Aunt Anna's bedroom

A photograph on a postcard often shows up in old family photos. The earliest were called “private mailing cards” used from 1898 to 1901. Postcards were 3.5 x 5.0 inches and had the word “postcard” on the back. If the cards were mailed, a postmark can be used for dating the photograph. These early cards did not allow writing, but only the address on the blank side. From 1907 to 1915, the postcards had a divided back with the address on the right half and the message written on the left half of the card. From 1915-1930, a white border was added to the photograph.

With the advent of the Brownie camera, many more photographs were taken by our ancestors. About half the photographs in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century were still done in

professional studios, but the rest were taken by amateurs and can be found in our family albums and boxes of photographs. To assist in dating photos, we also need to depend on the clothing and appearance of the persons in the photographs.

### Female Clothing and Appearance 1900-1930

The period between 1900-1910 is often called the Edwardian Era after Queen Victoria's successor, King Edward VII. In the Edwardian era, new influences and a changing society began to challenge the stiff formality that had prevailed earlier. Styles for women included the shirtwaist blouse often referred to as a "waist". Usually it was white and worn with a darker gored skirt that created an elongated trumpet bell shape. This created an hourglass, mono-bosomed silhouette typical of the period. Another silhouette during this period was an S-shaped one with the bodice front being longer, but held up with a shorter lining. A very high lace collar reached right under the chin.

Most dresses during this period were in two pieces. For a more formal look, the waist and skirt could be of matching fabrics. With the advent of motor cars, women could be seen wearing a "traveling suit", a face veil with their hats and even goggles. Long hair pulled up or back is often seen with large hats often decorated with large bows, lace, bird wings or plumes of feathers.

During the early 1900s we see more white wedding



Wm Tinker (bride's uncle), Mirian Tinker, Bert, Mr Simpson rector, Florine Martha Tinker, Dick Lidyard (a friend), c 1916

dresses, but the styles will reflect that of other dresses worn at the time. Because white was not a practical color, we see more of these garments passed down in families. It is wonderful to have a wedding picture and the actual dress to go with it. White dresses for daywear in the summer were also becoming more common around 1910. These were referred to as "lingerie dresses", because the fabric used was the same fabric seen in undergarments.

Periods of upheaval are often a catalyst for social change including change in fashion. This is true of the 1910s. World War I influenced women into more comfortable, practical clothes. Skirts were shortened by a few inches and became straighter, and tailored suits took on a more masculine appearance as women replaced men in the workforce. Sober colors were worn as the war dragged on.



Claudie (Veigel) Sieberg

During the wartime period, hair was shorter and worn closer to the face.

Permanent waves were introduced and became accepted. Hats became smaller and were sometimes worn with face veils.

The transition from the war years into the 1920s continued with the straighter silhouette. In the early 1920s, waistlines were at the waist, but they gradually dropped to hip level by 1924. Skirt lengths at the beginning were long, but they gradually moved upward. By 1927 they were 16 to 18 inches from the floor. The one-piece dress and the middie blouse

were popular styles during the 1920s. Tailored suits had matching jackets and skirts, with the jackets ending at hip level. Belts were placed at hip level on both dresses and jackets. Many garments were fastened with buttons as compared to the previously used hooks and eyes.



Eleanor Theissen and Marie Mahowald, c 1926.

Women's hair styles of the 1920s were shorter than ever seen before. Bobbed and shingled



hair made for a more masculine look for women. With the hair short, hats that fitted close to the head included the popular “cloche” style. Shoes became a focal point of fashion with pumps, crossover straps, and t-straps being some of the popular styles.

From 1900 to 1930 was a transition period for children’s clothing. Children’s clothing was often a mirror image of the adults, but changes that related to their special needs are becoming recognized. Girls dresses included a pinafore placed on top of other dresses to protect them. Skirt lengths were about knee length for younger girls.

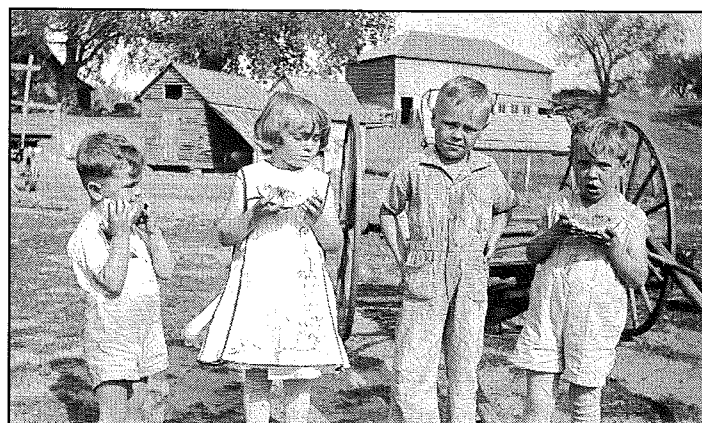
### Male Clothing and Appearance 1900-1930

Dating photographs of men becomes harder in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, because men’s clothing styles are repeats of styles seen earlier. However, some changes in details are evident. From 1900 to 1930, men wore one or three button frock coats, or single or double-breasted “sack” jackets. Vests were generally light colored in the early 1900s, but then matched the jacket and trousers later on. High collars were worn with the shirts and neckwear included bow ties, the “four-in-hand”, or ascots. Sweaters issued to soldiers became popular for men after the war, especially for sports.

In the 1920s we see the introduction of clothing for active sports. Polo shirts made of knitted fabric were worn with white flannel trousers, and golf clothing included shirts, sweaters or jackets with knickers during this time.

Hair was generally short and the war helped diminish the popularity of beards and moustaches. Men controlled their hair with glistening hair dressings. Hats did not change much from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Top hats were for formal occasions, a homburg or derby for casual use. Straw hats called a “boater” and “panama” hats were popular in the summer.

In the early 1900s small boys were still dressed in skirts, sometimes until the age of four or five years of age. Older boys were dressed like the adult male in a three piece suit with knickers. Young boys in the next decade were dressed in rompers and then as they got older, in knickers. Long trousers were reserved for older boys. In the 1920s, young boys wore



Wilder Farm 1934,  
left: Con Birr; 2nd from right: Dale Sheehan

romper suits; both one and two-piece were common. Instead of knickers, boys wore shorts in the summer. Jacket styles during the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century included the sailor, Eton, and Norfolk styles.

In closing, it should be remembered that clothing styles didn’t change exactly on the date specified and that people continued to wear older fashions even when new styles appeared. You may often see older women in older styles in the same photograph with younger women in the newer styles.

#### References:

“Dating Old Photographs 1840-1929” from *Family Chronicle*, (2000)

“Dressed for the Photographer” by Joan Severa (1959)

“Unlocking the Secrets in Old Photographs” by Karen Frisch-Ripley (1991)

#### Websites:

[www.phototree.com](http://www.phototree.com)

[www.yesteryearmemories.com/photography-the\\_beginning.asp](http://www.yesteryearmemories.com/photography-the_beginning.asp)

<http://photo.net/history/timeline>

<http://photosmadeperfect.com>

## History of Blue Earth County

**Recycle your newsletter!**

Pass it along to a friend,  
neighbor or family member!





## ***Madison Lake Area Historical Society***

The Madison Lake Area Historical Society enjoyed new energy and had a busy year in 2008. A used projector was purchased and has enabled all present at meetings to enjoy the photo collection as it is displayed on the wall. As the City of Madison Lake has constructed additional offices and storage space in the meeting room, and our space for the historical displays is limited. A "Then and Now" photo display is shown in the Community Center entry showcases.

In May, members took a tour of the Woods Beach and Hotel at Lake Washington and saw a beautiful sunset over the lake. Gordon Herbst talked to us about Minneopa State Park in June. Our Paddlefish Days parade entry displayed farm equipment of days gone by and members wore tee shirts with our logo on them. Brochures for the Blue Earth County and our local Historical Societies were handed to parade watchers along the route.

July came and the club had a potluck at the Kortuem log cabin. The Kortuem guys shot off a homemade cannon. Steve Kortuem showed how the wooden shingles were chopped for the cabin roof. Larry Kortuem enlightened members about early buildings made without nails and how square nails are made. The Cleveland Historical Society hosted our August meeting. They have an impressive collection in their museum. Our club had a display at the Blue Earth County Fair.

September came and the members observed all the work done at the original Kortuem homestead. Their original log cabin has been restored. The Marysburg one-room log cabin school where Grace Kortuem taught has been moved to the Kortuem homesite. The original smoke house still stands in good shape.

Howard Vetter came to the October meeting and explained the history of the quarry stone business, which is now international.

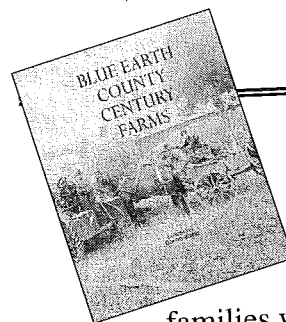
Activity in November at the Society's home at 525 Main Street recreated the atmosphere of a one-room school house of days gone by. Ann Manske, who had taught at the school, again became the guest teacher. We bobbed for apples and had a spelling bee.

About 40 members came to a December Christmas party, at the Community Center, catered by The Boat Landing. Ted Roemer, a founding member of the club, was present at 98 years of age. We were entertained by the Madison Lake Paddlefish Queen candidates before a gift exchange.

Looking forward to 2009, members can expect to hear from Steve Ulman about his books and a visit from the Cleveland Historical Society.

Madison Lake Area Historical Society, with a membership of about 50 members, meets at 7 p.m.. monthly on the first Wednesday of each month. Officers are Gerald Frederick, president; Mary Busckowsky, secretary; and Shirley Schaub, treasurer. Dues are \$5 annually.

*Gerald Frederick*  
President



### **Blue Earth County Century Farms**

The story of the development of agriculture in this county through the eyes of the farm families who lived it.

Between 1876 and 2004, 178 farms in our county became registered Century Farms. These farms have been owned and operated by members of the same family for at least 100 years, some of them for 150 more years. Through the pages of this book, meet these families, read their stories, learn about their lives and farms, and about their successes and failures, joys and sorrows.

Step back into history with us, see this book and many other item at the Museum Store..



## Notes from the Archives Manager

If you haven't looked at our new website, [www.bechshistory.com](http://www.bechshistory.com), you should! First, it has a brand spanking new look – fresh and exciting! And it's filled with

interesting and practical information. Did you know you can find the last issue of the *Historian* on the website? On our home page we have a very convenient search window, with the most popular search terms being Mankato, Uprising and Hubbard. From this page you can click on any of a number of pages from Museum and Research to Photos. The store catalog is under the Museum page and it's constantly being updated as new items are added, such as the new American Girl Collection, the Century Farm book and the Cemetery books. Volunteer information can be found on every page. (Volunteer is the second most searched word on our website.)

All of our indexes are still there and can be found under Research and Resources. There are also new indexes, such as Social Notes. These are articles consisting of "gossip" or social brevities of the day, including from Beauford, in the 1940s, an article titled, "Woman Employs Pitch Fork to Save Husband from Bull." So this isn't the typical genealogy fact, there is a lot of social history too. The most often viewed page is our Indexes page. No surprise here, there's a ton of useful information. The research department would like to remind you

that this is meant to be just the tip of the iceberg, there is much, much more if you come in and visit us. By the way, 313 people visited the website in December, but in November we had 486 people look us up. We have people from the Netherlands and Germany visiting us, and even someone from the United Arab Emirates, *a'Arabi* (that's hello in Arabic). They may have taken the virtual tour of the Hubbard House (found under the Hubbard House page).

The Education page contains information on our Speakers Bureau, History-To-Go Kits and Tour Information. The Event page holds the Calendar page which has some nifty functions. You can select the filter function and just find all the *Tidbits in Time* (those little interesting facts about Blue Earth County history.) You can also get all of the current information on our programs and events. This would be a great page to bookmark. Under the Collections page, you can get a peek at the backrooms of the Heritage Center. Membership, Volunteers and Giving also have their own pages and forms. I bet you would never guess that Wednesday is our highest traffic day on the website. The Photos and Links pages are always changing as things are always being added – so stop by and check us out, even if it's from the comfort of your own computer.

*Shelley Harrison*  
Archives Manager

**BECHS has moved to a new address on the  
world wide web – check us out at  
[www.bechshistory.com](http://www.bechshistory.com).**

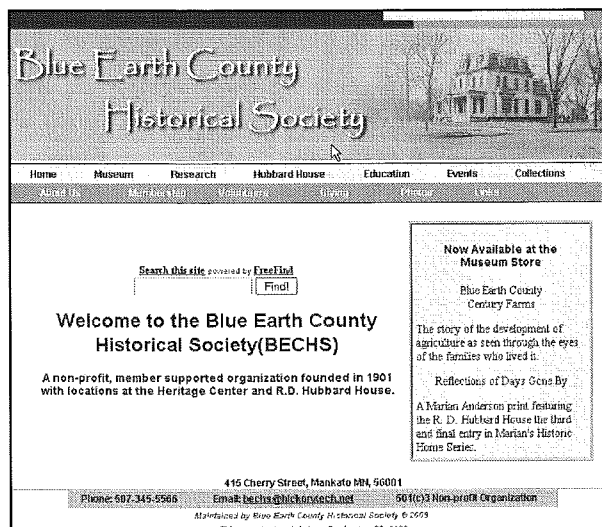


## Spring Community Day Sale

Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup>

Coupon booklets available today!

\$5 from the sale of each coupon book will support BECHS' publications budget to publish and print our upcoming books. Coupon booklets can be purchased at the Heritage Center until February 27<sup>th</sup>.



## WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

We all leave our own unique mark on this world; through our families, work and the organizations we believe in and support. We celebrate these legacies at BECHS – after all, they are the heart of the history we preserve every day.

Although we are in the business of preserving the past, we do this with an eye toward educating and enlightening future generations on the history of life in Blue Earth County. If you are also thinking about the future, please consider our Endowment Fund or a legacy gift, also known as a planned or estate gift, to help ensure BECHS has the resources to preserve and present the history of Blue Earth County for many years to come.

To learn more about giving opportunities, contact Jessica Potter, Executive Director at 507-345-5566 or Todd Stromswold, President at 507-387-9395.

Please support the following Blue Earth County businesses that have supported BECHS with a Business Membership ranging from \$100-\$500

DEDICATED TO BOLD DESIGN

 **PAULSEN ARCHITECTS**

[www.paulsenarchitects.com](http://www.paulsenarchitects.com)

507.388.9811  
Mankato, Minnesota

### 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, list of prepared topics or to volunteer for our Speakers Bureau, please contact Jessica at 345-5566.

### Burkhardt & Burkhardt


A Professional Association  
Certified Public Accountants

(507)387-1338  
215 Carroll Street  
Mankato, Minnesota 56001

*PATHSTONE*  
*LIVING*  
SIBLEY PARK

718 Mound Ave.  
Mankato, MN  
507-345-4576

\*Assisted Living \* Nursing Home \* Memory Care  
\*Rehabilitation Services \* Home Care  
\*Adult Day Services \* Spiritual Care  
\* Gourmet Apron Catering & Cafe

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



## October- December 2008 Volunteers

Affolter, Ron  
Baures, Lisa  
Belgard, Hugh  
Belgard, Vail  
Benefield, Dale  
Beverly, Jackie  
Bouma, Jana  
Brennan, Mike  
Bunde, Margo  
Carlson, Bruce  
Carlson, Carla  
Clement, Jeri  
Clobes, Abby  
Clobes, Joshua  
Clobes, Nathan  
Cords, Betty  
Coleman, Mary  
Crowe, Jody  
Dam, Robert  
Darling, Brad  
Doyle, Preston  
Engelsud, Ernest  
Engh, Jane  
Frisch, Carlienne  
Garlow, Laura  
Garlow, Sandi  
Geibel, Roger  
Goff, Harley  
Grabiske, Paul  
Grundmeier, Win  
Hugg, Bob  
Hugg, Corey  
Hugg, Leslie  
Hugg, Nathan  
Hynes, Susan  
Jackson, Colleen  
Jensen, Mary Ann  
Jensen, Orville  
Keir, Grace  
Kloster, Jeremiah

Kloster, Joshua  
Kloster, Rebecca  
Kloster, Sarah  
Kloster, Troy  
Krassin, Sara  
Lagerquist, Mike  
Lavitschke, Jo-an  
Madsen, Jack  
McComb, Mary  
Morness, Logan  
Morness, Shelby  
Nelson, Pat  
Nienow, Patricia  
Ohlenkamp, Ora  
Oldenburg, Aiden  
Oldenburg, Alex  
Oldenburg, Connor  
Owens, Dean  
Peterson, Leslie  
Quade, Ann  
Quade, Henry  
Reichel, Jason  
Reinbold, Bianka  
Rezmerski, John  
Sassenburg, Eunice  
Schaub, Shirley  
Schultz, Jo  
Sinn, Baerbel  
Sinn, Gunter  
Starcher, Sarah  
Steinhauer, Bernie  
Straka, Stacey  
Stromswold, Todd  
Tarjeson, Jane  
Thom, Andrew  
Ulman, Ida  
Ulman, Steve  
Webb, Donna  
Zimmer, Beth

## ...at the Museum Store

The museum store has many beautiful Marian Anderson prints for purchase, and there is something for everyone, no matter where your interests lie. The *Historic Home* series featuring the Hubbard House, Cray House and the Schmidt House are available in already framed prints to unframed prints to note cards. The Blue Earth County *Century Farms* book has been popular, and it would make a great birthday or anniversary gift for a trip down memory lane.

The American Girl books and paper dolls are always favorites of the young girls, and we have several new items to check out in the museum store. One is the story collection book, which has all six paperback series books inside one hardbound book. The other is a cooking studio book that contains recipes, a cookie cutter, reusable place cards, character inspired parties, and table talker cards on how to start a conversation. This is a very unique book, and if you have a special young girl who is into the American Girl collections, this might be something you would like to check out. If you happen to be out and about on a cold winter day stop at the museum store to see if we have something to peak your interest for some indoor -and-staying warm winter weather reading!



***In Memory***  
***of our dedicated and valuable volunteer***  
***and dear friend, Helen Sofchalk.***  
***Helen lost her battle with cancer***  
***December 8, 2008.***  
***She will be missed.***  
***Our sincerest condolences to***  
***her family and friends.***





## History's Mysteries

Around the 1870s, burial laws were implemented. These included where a person could be buried, how deep the hole had to be, how to handle the burial of people with contagious diseases, etc. Before these laws were created, people disposed of bodies where and how they could. As a result, when you are wandering through rural fields or woods, you might now make the fascinating discovery of a lone headstone.

This is what a gentlemen discovered recently when walking through his woods. He had heard from the previous owner that there was a grave in the woods but he had always been too busy to go and look. Recently retired, he remembered the story and went looking. He found a headstone with this engraving:



Judson S. Ferguson  
Died  
Oct. 22, 1865  
Aged 28 yrs 8mo's

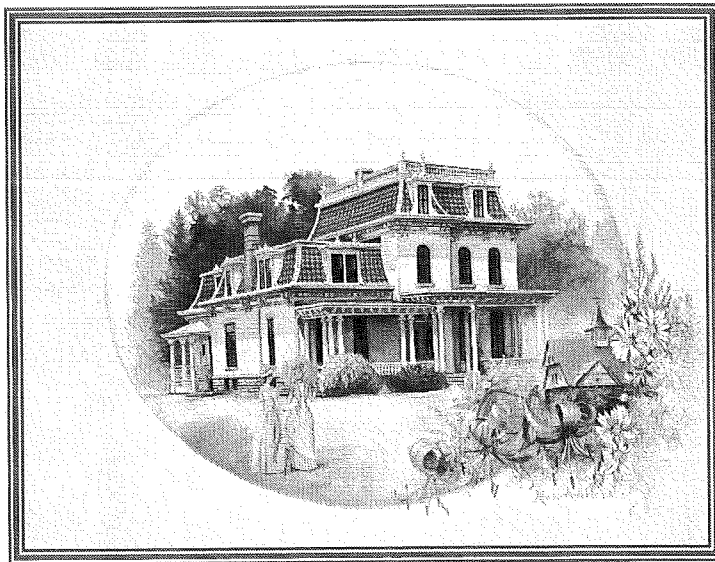
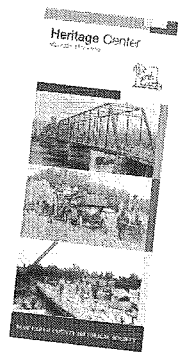
He brought the headstone to BECHS and wanted to know if we had any information on Mr. Ferguson. We found nothing

about him in our card catalog. We next looked through our microfilm and found an obituary in the *Mankato Union Weekly* dated October 27, 1865. The obituary contained this information:

Death: We regret to announce the death of J.S. Ferguson an old resident of Mankato and late of the town of McPherson. His disease was typhoid fever. His funeral took place on Tuesday last. Mr. Ferguson taught school in this city for two winters past and was an accomplished scholar and penman. He was the chairman of the supervisors of McPherson and an ardent and hard working republican. In his death the people of McPherson sustain a loss not easily compensated.

We also found a record of him, with his wife Carrie and sons Phlen and Byron, in the 1865 census for McPherson Township. We were unable to find any further information on the family of J.S. Ferguson in any later census or other records. Question: does anyone know anything about Judson S. Ferguson or his family? If so, please contact Gaby at 345-5566 or at [www.bechsrc@hickorytech.net](mailto:www.bechsrc@hickorytech.net).

BECHS is proud to  
unveil our new  
brochures featuring  
the Heritage Center  
and Hubbard House.  
Pick up your copy  
today.



**NOW AVAILABLE IN THE MUSEUM STORE**

***Reflections of Days Gone By***  
by Marian Anderson

Featuring the R.D. Hubbard House  
Third and final of Marian's Historic Home Series  
\$150 Artist Proof  
\$75 Main Edition  
*All proceeds benefit*  
*BECHS Capital Improvement Fund*

*The Artisan Gallery, located at 1235 Caledonia Street in Mankato, will donate 10% to BECHS for all Hubbard House prints framed at their store.*



## ...JoLynn's Wanderings

It is wanderings time again and I must confess I did not wander far with our winter weather setting in much too soon as far

as I was concerned! I think we have been rather spoiled for the last two winters, but this one is well on its way for making up for it.

For those of you who participated and also attended *Christmas at the Hubbard House* it seemed like a magical time, especially on Monday night when the storm blew in. Even though the school children left early due to the bad weather, folks still persevered and trekked through the snow to visit the Hubbard House and its living history characters. Most would admit that even the weather couldn't put a damper on the spirits inside the House. Outside, the snow was gently falling to put the finishing touch on the top of the house which complimented the beautifully decorated home on the inside. Thanks to our wonderful volunteers, history came alive in the Hubbard House. You could visit with R.D. Hubbard, Frank Hubbard, Katherine or Mary Esther (the sisters), one of the two servants or the cook. Each had their own interesting tale to tell and to share with the visitors moving throughout the house. There were treats, crafts, the story of "*Twelve the Night before Christmas*" and the School Christmas Program set up at the Emy Frenz Art Center, which people enjoyed on Sunday. The treats were the only draw on Monday due to the weather. Thank you to everyone who helped to make "Christmas at the Hubbard House" a memorable one.

Another fun event that did not require a long distance trip was our Volunteer and Staff Holiday Potluck. Quite a few attended (about 30 people) and a delicious variety of food, from main dishes to goodies, was brought for everyone to try. The table center pieces were Victorian crackers that everyone got to pop open at the end of the meal. Some of us required

assistance to enjoy the sound of the popping noise, but everyone got to participate. Inside was a surprise, plus a little paper crown hat! See what fun it is to be a part of the Blue Earth County Historical Society. If you are thinking of volunteering and want something new to try this year, why not contact us here at the Heritage Center and we'll find a spot for you. We have tour guide training scheduled for March 24th from 2:00-4:00 pm at the Hubbard House, if you are interested. Come on in from the cold and give us a try. Just don't ask the gals in the research room about the cold (we have had some heating problems this fall).

JoLynn Crowe  
Museum Assistant



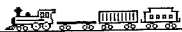
2008 Volunteer and Staff Holiday Potluck

## WISH LIST

*Items or financial donations will be gratefully accepted.*

- Step stool—3 ft
- Copy Paper
- *The Land* on microfilm
- Mylar book covers
- New tables and chairs for meeting room (need approximately \$5000)
- Office Max Gift Cards

\*Wishes fulfilled by Corey and Bob Hugg -  
B/W Laser printer and CD rack



## Rapidan Heritage Society

On a cold Friday evening, Santa Claus made his visit to the Rapidan Depot; but the blustery wind did not bother the young, and not so young, as they chatted with Mr. & Mrs. Claus. Mrs. Claus handed out small brown bags containing peanuts, candy and an apple to the children (and the parents said – “I remember getting that as a child!”); and RHS’s photographer, Tim Madsen, merrily snapped pictures of each visitor with Santa. Christmas magic was in the air as Liz Madsen produced a colorful photograph for each child to take with them as a remembrance of this special visit. Coffee, cider and cookies were enjoyed by all.

February 19<sup>th</sup> is the RHS Annual Meeting. Our guest speaker will talk about the Civil War and Minnesota/Blue Earth County’s volunteers who served in it. The meeting will be held at the Rapidan Townhall at 7 P.M. All are invited.

Although our little 1939 Milwaukee caboose is still pink, it has generated a lot of interest. In answer to some questions, the following facts are from the “Milwaukee Road’s Rib-Side Caboose” by Jeff Kehoe.

- They have been called waycars, cabins, crummies, vans, hacks, brain boxes and a dozen other names. The caboose has had more nicknames than any other piece of railroad equipment.
- When a railroad designed and built its own cabooses, they became that road’s signature. No cabooses were more instantly identifiable with the railroad that built them than Milwaukee Road’s “rib-siders.”
- All cabooses built for CMStP&P by the road’s Milwaukee Shops had wooden exteriors until 1929.
- In May 1939, plans were drawn up for a new kind of caboose incorporating the successful bay-window design, but including the distinctive ribbed sides already being used in its passenger and freight cars. 75 rib-siders were built in 1939.
- The caboose interior was of plywood. The walls and ceiling were painted a light gray with the area below the windows and the floor painted dark gray.
- The outside of the caboose was painted with

Milwaukee’s orange paint. Trucks, steps, platforms and ladders were painted black. Lettering on the car was done in maroon.

- No rib-sider originally came with electricity. A coal stove and kerosene lighting served just fine, along with a small toilet compartment whose “dry hopper” featured “straight-to-the-tracks” plumbing. Other accessories were: a Dayton reversible seat for each bay, cushions for the side bunks, a conductor’s desk with three drawers, an ice box and a sink with a small galvanized water tank above it.
- All rib-siders measured slightly over 35 feet long. The car interior measured 28 feet long by 8 feet wide.
- Through 1951, Milwaukee built 315 bay-window rib-sided cabooses.

*Jane Tarjeson*  
Secretary



Marian Anderson prints and postcards are now available at the Heritage Center Museum Store. BECHS will be the in-town source for Marian’s art. Check out her website at [www.mariananderson.com](http://www.mariananderson.com) to view her art or stop in the Museum Store.

### October-December 2008 Artifacts & Archives Donations

#### Amboy Area Community Club

Baer, Marcia  
Carr, Margaret  
Carstensen, Norma  
Dauk, Leo P  
Delcomyn, Nancy  
Fischer, Harold  
Fonda, Dr. & Mrs.  
Frederick, Mike  
Garlow, Darrell and Sandi  
Grundmeier, Win  
Hilden, Mary Holly  
Johnson, Clifford G  
Keir, Grace

Koblas, John  
Lavtschke, Jo-an  
Lawrence, Bud  
Llewellyn, Becky  
Miller, Julie Ann  
Nienow, Richard  
Preston, Cindy  
Roy, Mary  
Rue, Barbara A. Smith  
Sather, Nancy  
Schmidt, Jerome  
Sorenson, Norton  
Tarjeson, Jane  
Wickstrom, Terri  
Wright, Lorraine





## Fingerprints and Footnotes

Fingerprints and Footnotes had a rousing fall. In November we celebrated Election Day with a plethora of exciting facts and trivia, such as, "do you know how many former Vice-Presidents are living?" Thank you to all who attended the political party. In December we were lucky to have Nancy Sather speak to us about the landscape of the area, described through personal accounts of those who settled here. In January we discussed why those same individuals would choose to live in this frozen tundra when we conversed about the lure of the land and other captivating facts that can be found when researching land records. As always, the meetings are entertaining as well as educational and an enchanting time was had by all. Remember, newcomers are always welcome.

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

### Future Meeting

**February 3rd** – Norwegian American Women and rural women's history, by Lori A. Lahlum

**March 3rd** – Wood, Concrete, Stone, and Steel: Minnesota's Historic Bridges, by Denis Gardner

**April 7th** – Farmers, tenants and others who worked the land

## Footnotes In History

Did your ancestor file to become a citizen? The census records of 1900, 1910, 1920 or 1930 state whether he was naturalized or an alien. Once you have the year, you can file for the naturalization papers of your ancestor. These papers are valuable sources of personal data concerning the individual and his family.

- Provided by Beth Zimmer

**The Answer to the question:** How many former vice presidents are living? Five: Mondale, Bush, Quail, Gore, and Cheney.



## Through the Research Center Door...

One of the research tools that people find the most useful, when doing family research in the Research Center is our cemetery books. The information in these binders was gathered by volunteers

who went out to each cemetery in Blue Earth County and wrote down the name, and any other information, on every headstone and footstone they found. They also drew maps for the general layout of each cemetery. This information was used to create a binder which includes these transcriptions for every grave and also an index of the names of everyone buried in Blue Earth County.

We have recently begun putting this information into book format and making the books available for sale. These books contain a map and directions to the cemetery, a map of the cemetery grounds, transcriptions of all of the legible stones, and an index of the names in that cemetery. Books currently available are: Calvary Mankato, Calvary Madison Lake, Chase, Glenwood, Jerusalem and Vernon Center. These books are printed on request and orders will be taken in the Research Center. If you are interested in a book for a cemetery not listed, contact us and we can discuss development time and cost.

As helpful as our cemetery books are, it has been a few years since they were last updated. One of our volunteers, Corey Hugg, has taken it upon herself to update our cemetery books. She, along with her group of helpers (her family), have been walking the cemeteries again to update the information. In addition to adding this information to our current cemetery records, she has been creating new and enhanced versions of our cemetery books. She has gone to great lengths to find any tidbit of information on the person whose name is on the headstone or footstone; and to add these to the books. Walking the cemetery takes a long time; and therefore, it will be a while before the new style books are created for all 74 cemeteries. Thus far, she has completed books for Decoria-Morrow and Oak Hill cemeteries, and she is currently working on Cambria. You are welcome to come to the Museum Store and purchase any of our cemetery books.

*Gabriela Rodriguez*  
Archives Assistant

## BECHS Membership October-December 2008

### New Members

Bartsch, Nancy  
 Bashour, Mrs. Val Imm  
 Brugman, Douglas  
 Bunde, Margo  
 Freiberg, Kenneth  
 Gordon, Don and Kathryn  
 Huebsch, Timothy  
 Klammer, William and Kait  
 Lewis, Charles  
 Murphy, Ann  
 Myhre, Carol  
 Rohwer, Gwen and Dennis  
 Strand, Ron and Linda  
 Wisniewski, George and Pat

### New Business Members

I & S Group  
 Pathstone Living

### Renewed Business Members

Brennan Companies

### Renewed Members

Bassett, William  
 Brandel, Ruth  
 Burton, Ronnie  
 Clements, Tom  
 Dooley, Mary  
 Ewert, David and Julie  
 Hanson, Kathryn  
 Hines, Eileen  
 Keenan, Jerry  
 Lamont, Earl and Sally  
 Landsteiner, Steve and Cheri  
 LaTourelle, Mary  
 Leeman, Harold  
 Meyer, Rich  
 Penhiter, Judith  
 Peterson, Glen and Leslie  
 Pietsch, Tim  
 Smith, H. Roger  
 Swenson, Helenrachel  
 Vermeersch, Michael and Patricia  
 Williams, Vee and Jerry  
 Wittrock, Eleanor

## Prairie Stories and River Rhymes

### What Unsettled the Old Settlers

A program of music, history and poetry will be presented at the **Cambria Town Hall** from **2-4 p.m.** on **January 25**. The program is part of the ongoing series sponsored by The Blue Earth County Historical Society and Morgan Creek Vineyard.

This presentation will give a detailed picture of many of the difficulties immigrants were likely to deal with during their lifetimes. What could go wrong with a marriage on the frontier? What did people eat when crops failed? How did people pull themselves up by their bootstraps when their boots were falling apart? Everybody knows a little about the big disasters that posed dangers for immigrants in 19th-Century Minnesota, but there were also a lot of common things that could go wrong for individuals and communities--including sickness, accidents, financial problems, crime, and school or church disputes. Volunteers from the Historical Society will present readings, songs, and discussions of both material, individual, and social problems. Members of the audience will be invited to share information about difficulties in the histories of their own families and families of acquaintances.

Prairie Stories and River Rhymes is open to the public. A free-will offering is appreciated.

## DISCOVERY DAYS

Discovery Days is held the first Saturday of each month. Free admission to the Heritage Center Museum all day long! The museum hours are 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Come discover what timeless treasures the museum holds for you! Pack up the car with family and friends for a great opportunity to explore a local attraction.

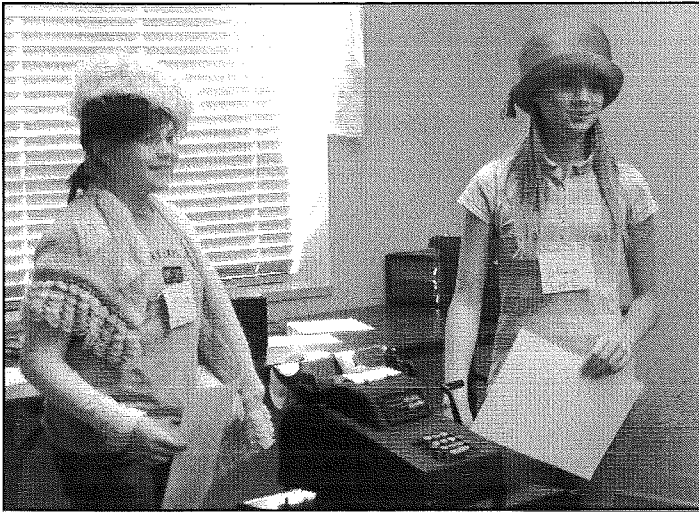


## YOUNG HISTORIANS

In December the Young Historians topic was the Industrial Revolution. We learned it was a time of many inventions. We found out about many of the things Americans

invented. We made water wheels out of pretzels and marshmallows for snack. We worked in pairs to try and sell some "new products" that were made in that time period for an activity.

Young Historians have been active outside of our regular monthly meetings. On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, we hosted the bake sale portion of the booth at Madison East Center's Holiday Expo. We had a lot of baked goods donated by Young Historians. We donated our leftover goodies to Christmas at the Hubbard House. Proceeds from the sale will be used for a mid-year Young Historians party in January. Several of the Young Historians volunteered at Ghosts from the



Young Historians Breigha Kotulski and Olivia Lippert "sell" their new adding machine at the December workshop.

Past and Christmas at the Hubbard House. Please watch for us at upcoming events.

The Junior Historians' project this year is to help and thank our local veterans. I have already visited the Mapleton VFW meeting and helped at their annual Veterans dinner. I helped with decorations and served food. I have also been donating items and making thank you cards for soldier boxes that our church sends out. Other Junior Historians have

invited a veteran to dinner.

Young Historians meets the second Saturday of each month (September through May) at 10 a.m. For more information, contact Jessica at 345-5566 or [bechs@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechs@hickorytech.net).

*Laura Garlow*

Junior Historian 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

## *Volunteers Are Always Welcomed*

If you have some time to spare to help us preserve history, please call JoLynn at 345-5566 or [bechsms@hickorytech.net](mailto:bechsms@hickorytech.net).

Some examples are:

*Tour Guides—Hubbard House  
and Heritage Center  
Antique car maintenance person  
Research and writing for publications  
Grant research and writing  
Data Entry  
Hubbard House gift Shop attendant  
Hubbard House Assistant  
Archives Volunteer  
Manuscript Volunteer  
Collections Volunteer*

## Hobbies and Collectibles

This program is held the third Saturday of each month and admission to the program is free. Each month a different topic is chosen to learn and share about. The program runs from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and visitors are always welcome to stop during these hours and check out the program.

**February 21<sup>st</sup>**  
Postage Stamps

**March 21<sup>st</sup>**  
Enamelware

**April 18<sup>th</sup>**  
Coke or Pepsi?



## Blue Earth County Historical Society

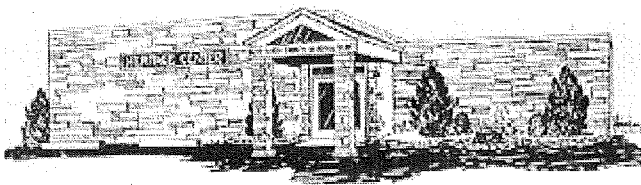
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[www.bechshistory.com](http://www.bechshistory.com)

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



### Blue Earth County Historical Society

### Annual Meeting

Sunday, March 8, 2009

Heritage Center

- 1 p.m. Behind-the-Scenes tour of the Heritage Center
- 2 p.m. Business Meeting
- 2:30 p.m. Speaker: Local author and publisher Daniel Vance featuring the debut of his new book *Unique Mankato* – published by the Blue Earth County Historical Society

Refreshments will be served

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The Blue Earth County Historical Society's  
Heritage Center Gallery, Museum Store and

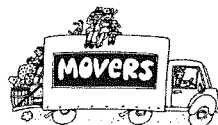
Research Center are open

Tuesday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Wednesday through Saturday

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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**Moving?**  
**Please let us know!**

If you are moving to a different address, please let us know. Our newsletter is sent at a non-profit bulk rate and cannot be forwarded or returned to BECHS with the address change. Please help the Society reserve our funds for educational exhibits and programs and assure that you get your copy of the *Historian*, by notifying us of your new or winter address or letting us know to suspend mailing your newsletter if you are going to be away for a long period. Your help is appreciated.