

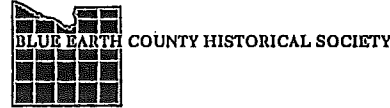
**From the Director's Rolltop . .**



**Denise Hudson**

The official governing year for the Historical Society began on April 11th with the Annual business meeting and the election of new officers and Board members. The Society should continue to make changes in order to become stronger and better able to serve the residents of the county.

A major change inaugurated on April 11th was the unveiling of a new logo design. It was created by Jan Gullo and represents the fact that we are the Historical Society for **all** of Blue Earth County. We are working on changing an outdated image and our logo is one step toward that goal.



A second change of late is the new look at the Museum. The entire staff worked out a plan which would create the most efficient use of existing space and hopefully the most efficient use of time. With assistance of Park Department employees from the City of Mankato, we moved exhibit cases, desks, file cabinets and other furniture to create a new reception area, shop, and offices. Do pay us a visit and see the new look!

The first major activity planned for this year is a full scale membership drive. May has been designated as "Membership Month" and we will be inviting many people to join us in preserving our history. We will need volunteers - to stuff envelopes, keep records, make phone calls, etc. If you would like to help for a couple of hours, call the Museum. If you know people who "should" be members of BECHS - invite them - or give us their names and we will invite them.

We're on the move in 1985, come join in on the excitement!

*Denise*

**AROUND THE COUNTY**



The Blue Earth County Historical Society is sponsoring a photograph-copying project, "Keeping The Image: Photographs in Blue Earth County. The project is designed to provide county residents with an opportunity to participate in documenting and preserving the history of their towns, townships, and families. The project will also enable the Historical Society to produce travelling exhibits that concentrate on the history of greater Blue Earth County area. The project will begin at the County Courthouse, Tuesday, May 21, 1985. The BECHS membership and county residents are invited to bring their photo collections and albums to be photographically copied at that time. All photos will be copied and returned while you wait.

\* \* \* \* \*

If you wish to submit an item for the "Around The County" section of the newsletter, please write or call Jan, 345-4154 before the 10th of the month preceding publication.

**Special Thanks . . .**

The following have made contributions to the Blue Earth County Historical Society during the past month:

- General Funds:
- From Townships**
- |             |        |          |
|-------------|--------|----------|
| Cambria     | LeRay  | Mapleton |
| Garden City | Shelby | Medo     |
| Judson      | Lime   | Rapidan  |
- Towns and Cities**
- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| Good Thunder | Madison Lake |
|--------------|--------------|
- Endowments:
- Eldon and Helen Jones
- To Ernest Hansen who provided us with corn and straw for school tour programs.
- To all our dedicated volunteers who have given so much of their time and energy this past year.
- To the Chicago and Northwestern Transportation Company Employees, 112 Pike St., Mankato, MN who provided us with coal for school tour programs.

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**Blue Earth County  
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606 South Broad  
Mankato, MN 56001

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**Blue Earth County  
Historical Society**

**May 1985**

**Calendar of Events**

- May 1 **Children's May Day Party**
- May 11 **"Tracing The History of Your House"** Workshop By - "The House Detective" Jim Sazevich
- May 18 **International Museum Day**
- May 18-19 **"History of Sibley Park"** Exhibit at People's Fair
- May 21 **"Keeping The Image"** Photo copying Project Kick-off at Blue Earth County Courthouse
- June 8 **"To A New Land"** Minnesota Chautauqua with folklorist John Berquist in Good Thunder.

\* \* \* \* \*

**New Members**

- Life Membership**  
Mr. & Mrs. L.W. Andreas (category change)
- Student**  
Patsy McTigue
- Couple**  
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Thompson  
Jerry & Delilah Keenan

\* \* \* \* \*

**Memorials**

From Mr. & Mrs. Garry Kiffe  
To  
Elizabeth Kiffe & Bonita Melody

## OUR PAST:

### Blue Earth County Historical Society

(condensed from society meeting minutes 1901-1938)

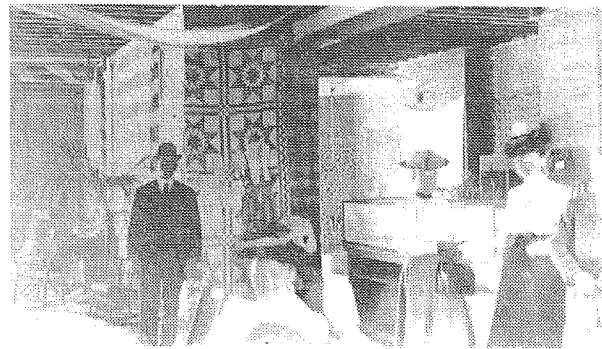
#### 1901

The first recorded organizational meeting of a historical society in Blue Earth County was on October 10, 1901. On November of that year a constitution was presented and 33 members signed as charter members. Judge Daniel Buck, prominent citizen of Mankato, was elected first president. Meetings were scheduled for the Board of Trade rooms at the City Hall. Two or more members were asked to prepare papers on historical subjects for each meeting and these papers were to be kept for future generations. The Society appointed a committee to cooperate with one appointed by the city to celebrate the semi-centennial of Mankato, a celebration to be held between June 30 and July 5, 1902. Thomas Hughes, who later wrote the "History of Blue Earth County" was a member of that group.

#### 1902

In addition to adopting a plan to write to men in each town in the county asking them to join the society, to prepare articles of history and solicit members, the society defeated a motion by J.E. Reynolds, who "in his usual dignified and strenuous manner moved that the bylaws be amended to hold meetings in the evening instead of afternoon." Mr. Wildes contended that would create a hardship necessitating many members to remain in the city overnight. A compromise was finally reached in which every third future meeting would be held in the evening. Membership fees of twenty-five cents yearly were also adopted. Six people paid their dues on the spot! At the April meeting of that year (1902) plans were laid to hear papers on "Early lawyers of Blue Earth County" by S.F. Barney and "Pioneer Preachers of Blue Earth County" by the Rev. J.W. Powell. The Hon. Judson James was also invited to give an address before the society as soon as convenient to himself on any topic he may choose connected with the early history of the Minnesota valley. In other business the president was authorized to appoint a committee of three to

investigate and consider the feasibility of erecting a suitable tablet or monument to mark the spot where 38 Indians were hung at Mankato on December 26, 1862.



Blue Earth County Historical Society Exhibits - 1902

#### 1916

Many of the minutes of the early years are missing as are parts of the collections — perhaps because again and again through the years society minutes speak of the need for a place to store and protect historical artifacts. The first collection of historical items was stored in the Odd Fellows Building and, in 1916, they were moved to be exhibited in the State Normal School where some were burned in the fire in 1922. In 1931 the exhibits were moved to the basement of the public library and, in 1938, they finally came to rest in Hubbard House.

#### 1927

In January 1927, W.H. Pay, president, appointed a committee to secure the site of the windmill, repair it, and produce a deed which would be turned over to the state.

#### 1930

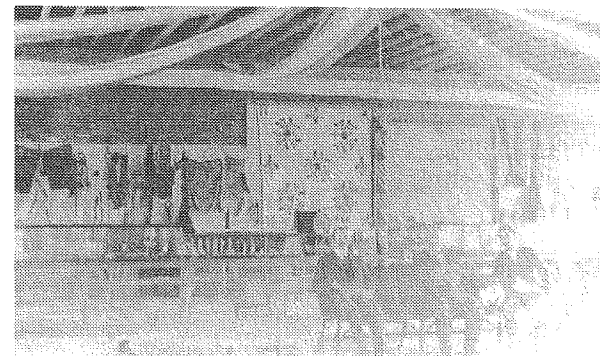
The annual meeting of 1930 reported that the deed to Seppman Windmill has been secured on condition that the mill would be repaired. A bill before the legislature would authorize acceptance of the mill. Some of the repair work had been done but the interior was not completed. Money to finish the project still had to be raised. That must have been exhausting because the report for the year 1931 contained this statement. "During the summer we discontinued meetings and got so entirely out of the habit that when fall came no further meetings were held during the next year."

#### 1932

Things were back on schedule in 1932 when C.A. Nachbar reported that the Ott cabin had been secured from the Strobel farm and had been placed in Sibley Park near the spot on which Sibley's trading post was formerly located. President Pay was authorized to purchase an immigrant wagon suitable to be displayed at the Sibley Park pavilion. The Society also called to the city's attention the fact that the Pioneer cemetery on Seventh Street was not being properly cared for. A committee viewed the Swain collection of Indian relics at Lake Crystal and recommended its purchase since the relics were mostly unearched in Blue Earth County and would be almost impossible to duplicate. The purchase price was \$600.

#### 1936

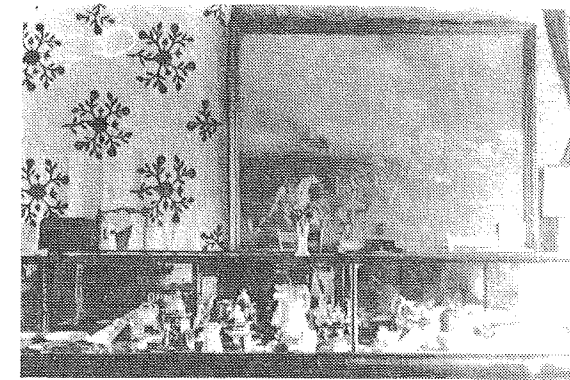
During 1936 the city granted the use of the entire building at Sibley Park to the Society. This was a great help in housing the collection. Discussion of a historical society building at Sibley Park was on the agenda; an architect was employed and plans were drawn. The matter did not go any further because of lack of funds. An architect's drawing of the proposed building was printed in the *Free Press*.



Blue Earth County Historical Society Exhibits - 1902

#### 1938

Two years passed and the home of R.D. Hubbard became available as part of an estate. Funds left the society by Judge Cray enabled the purchase at \$11,600 and the city agreed to provide care for the building and assume responsibility for its utilities. The city asked that the Society leave part of its collection in the Sibley Park site as a drawing card since concession stands needed that inducement to bring park visitors into the building.



Blue Earth County Historical Society Exhibits - 1902

The Society engaged a custodian for Hubbard House at a salary of \$50 per month and the use of certain rooms. The custodian's wife was also to have use of the dining room occasionally. The board voted to raise membership dues to \$1.00 per year. W.P.A. workers were secured to make repairs on the house.

After at last finding a home, the Society went about setting up exhibits, collecting its artifacts and becoming a cultural asset to the county.

Article submitted by:

Anita Stone, former president of the Blue Earth County Historical Society. Ms. Stone is the Director of Public Information at Mankato State University.

#### SOURCES:

Excerpts from the minutes of the Blue Earth County Historical Society meetings from 1901-1938.

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#### THE BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

is sponsoring  
A WORKSHOP

#### "TRACING THE HISTORY OF YOUR HOUSE"

Saturday, May 11, 1985

9 am - 12 noon

YWCA

603 South 2nd Street  
Mankato, MN 56001

Directly behind the Blue Earth County Museum

Cost per person \$5.00. Coffee will be provided.

Contact: Jan Gullo, 345-4154 Mon.-Fri., 9 am-5 pm