

Sunday on Broad Street, cont. from front

discussing their histories. No values will be estimated in this mini-seminar. There will be a charge of \$5.00 for items identified. If you have more than one item, the first will be \$5.00 and subsequent items will be \$3.00 each. All proceeds are being donated by Mr. Swiggum to BECHS.

The Country Store will be tucked by the "outdoor room" at the north side of the Carriage House. Buy your dried flowers, baked goods, and other items. The dried bundles sell quickly so be here early in the afternoon to get the best pick.

Food Sales, on the grounds, of "Heritage Beans" (our own special recipe), muffins, and beverage. Stop by for a snack or the first course of Sunday dinner.

The Homestead Players will perform in the Carriage House. Relive tales of the earlier days of Blue Earth County through Reader's Theater and song. A free will offering will be taken.

Demonstrations of spinning, woodworking, and basket making in the Museum.

Plus, the Museum building will be open. There will be antique cars on Broad Street and performers near by.

(In case of rain, we will move our activities in doors!)

House Tour

We have begun working on a tour of homes for later this Fall (a change from our original date of September 28). We have talked to several people who think the idea is super and think we should definitely host a tour. In order to make this super idea a super tour we need some assistance—we are taking the addresses and owners' names of possible homes to include in the tour. The homes should all date from the period 1850-1920 and should fall into one of the following categories:

1. Be a home that has been completely restored
2. Be a home that has undergone rehabilitation, not restoration
3. Be in process of restoration
4. Be of architectural merit
5. Be of historical merit

Any information you can provide would be helpful. Call Barb at the Museum with details.

* * * * *

Improvements at the Museum

The hallway of the museum has undergone a slight face lift this past month. The wall covering was removed, the plaster patched, and a fresh coat of paint was applied to walls and ceiling. The change is quite dramatic!

The County Quilt has been moved to a new place of honor at the top of the stairs to allow for better viewing.

The most exciting thing that occurred in the painting process was that a piece of wallpaper and some stenciling was discovered under the layer of paper that was removed. We believe that this paper and stencil dates from the turn of the century as they appear to match a photo dating from 1899.

Before any work was done in the hall, photos were taken to document the paper and the display area. Additional photos were taken of the c. 1899 paper to aid in reproduction some day. Samples were kept of the wallcovering which was removed. Documentation is essential in the stages of restoration and renovation!

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Editorial Staff: Inella Burns, Audrey
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September 1986

*Sunday
on
Broad
Street*

Do not miss out on the fun of "Sunday on Broad Street"! Remember Sunday, September 28 from 12-5 p.m. from Main Street to Warren Street on Broad Street in Mankato for an afternoon of activities for the entire family.

In case you did not realize, the group planning the festival is Sunday on Broad Street, Inc. There are no other sponsors—only participants! The non-profit corporation was established due to concerns of liability and ease in planning.

The Historical Society will participate by having special activities in the Museum buildings and on the grounds. All funds raised on our site will be used by BECHS for its own programs and activities. Please, as members and friends, visit us and help support your Historical Society. The activity schedule is listed below. Exact times will be posted that day.

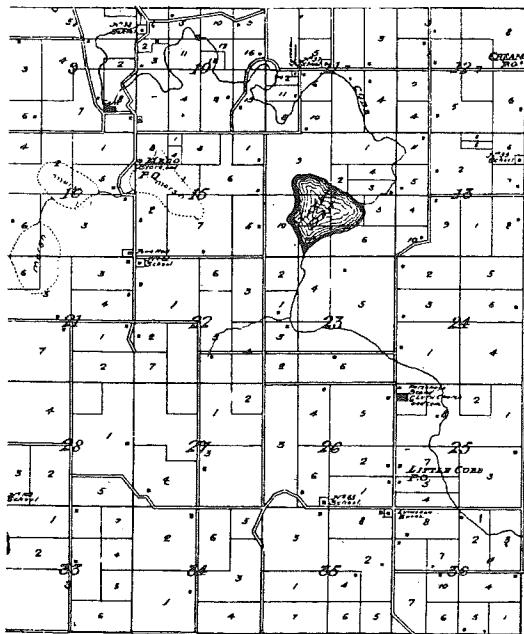
SUNDAY ON BROAD STREET

Henry Swiggum, certified appraiser, will be on hand to identify and discuss your antiques and "unknown" heirlooms. He will assist in dating your pieces and identifying origin, plus

cont. on back side

The Settlement of Medo Township

Medo, an Indian word meaning *small potatoes*, is what the Winnebago Indians called the area that now comprises Medo Township. The township was part of the Winnebago Reservation established in 1855, but the Indians left the area in May 1863. As the white man moved in, the village of Medo became a center for the pioneers. The settlement was later known as Faley's Store and included a post office, general store, blacksmith shop, and feed store. The stagecoach delivered mail from Minnesota Lake.



Map of Medo Township from 1895 Atlas of Blue Earth County.

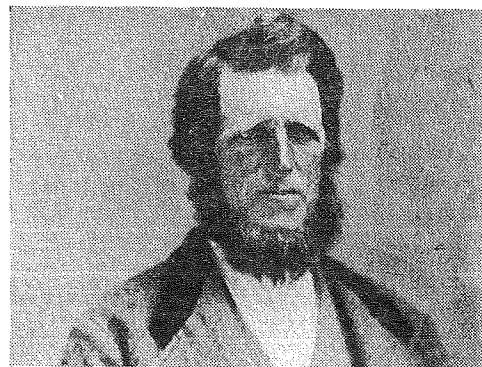
Among the early settlers of Medo Township was Lars Severson, who purchased land from the Winnebago Indian Agency in 1866 for three dollars an acre. The original land grant, signed by President Andrew Johnson, was in the Norwegian settlement and was the ideal place for Lars Severson to bring his bride Betsey Lee from Cambridge, Wisconsin, to start their married life in 1867. On that homestead nine sons and two daughters joined the family.

Also early pioneers were Sjur and Herberg Vieg, who gave land for the Medo Lutheran Church and cemetery. For many years only Norwegian services were held there, but the younger members wanted to be Americans, so the "Norsk" language was replaced by English. Some of the older

members were very disturbed and said, "How can it be Lutheran if it isn't Norwegian?" On Christmas Eve one can still hear "Jeg Er Sa Glad Hver Julekveld," which translates, "I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve."

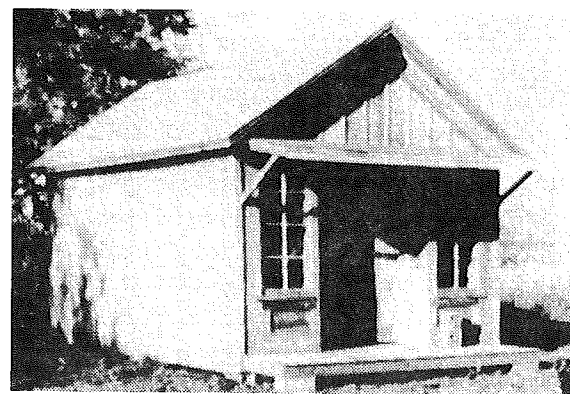


Severson Family



Sjur Vieg

In 1907 when the Alphabet Railroad from Albert Lea to St. Clair chose Pemberton for its station, the settlement of Medo or Faley's Store faded into history. A replica of the Faley Store, built from the original lumber, is now on the Lawrence and Evelyn Rathai homestead.



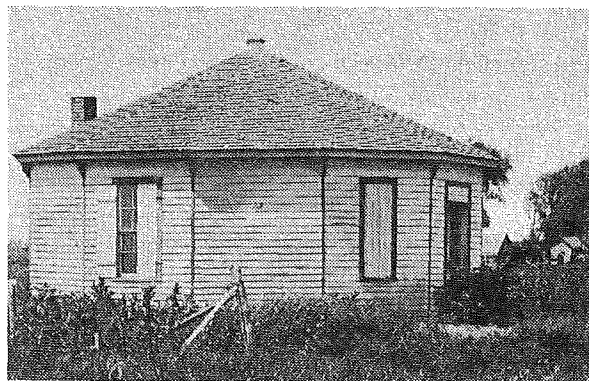
Replica of the Faley Store. The replica was built to scale from original lumber on the Shaw farm, shown here, but was moved to the Rathai farm.

One half mile south of the Medo Lutheran Church was the Little Cobb Post Office, established in 1875 and also served by stagecoach from Minnesota Lake. The Little Cobb settlement, lasting fewer years than Medo, became a memory after July 1904.

A third community called Cream was organized in 1894 in the southeast corner of the northeast quarter of Section 12 in Blue Earth County. As the town grew, its business spread into Waseca County since the town site was on the county line between Blue Earth and Waseca counties. In 1905 a post office was opened in Cream along with a creamery, cheese factory, general store, barber shop, box car depot, the Modern Woodman Hall, which was the popular spot for dances. Long-time resident Elmer Severson, now in his 99th year, recalls, "For a dime or a quarter, you could dance and have lunch."

Simon Berentson had a store in Cream where customers could barter their eggs and home-churned butter for flour, sugar, and other necessities. When they didn't trade out their total products, Mr. Berentson paid the balance. The butter was stored in barrels, sealed, and sunk in the ground under the store floor. He took the butter to Janesville along with the eggs, and he brought back groceries and general merchandise for the operation of his store. From Janesville, the butter was sent to Chicago where it was re churned and sold as reconstituted butter.

Mr. Berentson sold groceries to the workers on the Alphabet Train crew because they were Czechs and Poles and couldn't speak English. Mr. Berentson spoke Norwegian and could communicate with them. But the train didn't come to Cream because of its county line location. It was the death blow to Cream and the birth of Pemberton, a mile and a quarter west of Section 1. Plotted in 1907, Pemberton remains today the only village of pioneer days.



Round School House

Several country schools were established in Medo Township. The first school was the Round School House in District 63. It was located on what is Lindeland's farm on County Road 21. It was later moved to the corner of Lindeland's farm where it was used for a Norwegian School by the Medo Lutheran Church. Still later it was moved to the first farm south of Medo Lutheran Church.

In time the country schools were consolidated and a school was built in Pemberton. It served the community from 1921 until it merged with Waldorf in 1960. The elementary school, kindergarten through sixth grade, remained at Pemberton and the junior and senior high school moved to Waldorf. Today Waldorf-Pemberton has the distinction of being the smallest school to participate in the State Basketball Tournament. Their concert and stage bands, under the direction of James Kopetski, have many trophies to prove they can compete with the bands of larger schools in the United States and win first place.

What is in store for the *small potatoes* Medo township is unknown, but as family roots grow deeper, the past will be retained by the descendants of pioneers who agree with Christian Metz: "Behold the mark of the old. Let heritage not be lost, but bequeath it as a memory, treasure and blessing. Gather the lost and hidden and preserve it for thy children."

Elvina Severson Lewis

NOTE: Elvina Severson Lewis and family are descendants of Medo Township pioneers mentioned in the above article. She is the granddaughter of Lars and Betsey Severson and the daughter of Elmer and Ruth (Oftedahl) Severson from Little Cobb and Medo. Her husband, Alvin Lewis, is the grandson of pioneers Sjur and Herberg Vieg and the son of Herman and Emma (Vieg) Lewis from Cream and Little Cobb.

SOURCES

Thomas Hughes, *History of Blue Earth County*; Information contributed by Alvin Lewis, Elmer Severson, Sonja Swanson, Catherine Swanson, Dorothy Berentson, and Blue Earth County Commissioners.