

125th Anniversary of the Dakota Conflict, 1862

The year 1987 marks the 125th Anniversary of the Dakota Conflict in Minnesota. Many groups throughout the area are commemorating this year with special programs, lectures, exhibits, and events. Below is reprinted the text of the proclamation issued by Governor Perpich for the anniversary year.

PROCLAMATION

Whereas: The year 1987 marks the 125th anniversary of the Dakota Conflict in Minnesota, an event which resulted in great suffering and loss of life; and

Whereas: The anniversary of this tragic conflict offers an opportunity for Minnesotans to learn more about the life and culture of the Dakota people; and

Whereas: A ceremony in Mankato on December 26, 1986, will mark the beginning of a year's activities in which the Dakota people will join with others in appreciation of cultural diversity and human understanding;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Rudy Perpich, Governor of the State of Minnesota, do hereby proclaim the year 1987 to be

YEAR OF RECONCILIATION

in Minnesota.

The BECHS will commemorate the year in several ways. Some events are still in the planning stages. The following are those which are set:

March 10 Luncheon program by Mary Van Voorhis with emphasis on the effects of the Conflict on Women. 12:00 noon at the Museum, bring your lunch.

March 10 Exhibit opening, "An Uncertain Future". Photos of Dakota women from the Minnesota Historical Society collection. The theme is again in the effect of the Conflict on the women.

April and June (arrangements tentative). Two lectures as part of a series funded by the Minnesota Humanities Commission to the Minnesota Historical Society. We are serving as the local host.

Welcome . . .

to the following businesses who have become Patron Members:

Mankato Free Press
Pfau Companies
Frost-Benco Electric
Arthur J. Petrie
Reichel and Sons
Johnson Fishing, Inc.

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Women's History Week March 8-15

Schedule of Events by sponsor (for more specific details, call the Museum, 345-4154).

Blue Earth County Historical Society

Tuesday, March 10 at 12:00 noon at the Museum, lecture and discussion by Mary Van Voorhis. Topic: The effects of the Dakota War on women. Bring your own lunch to the Museum.

Also, March 10 at the Museum
Exhibit opening, "An Uncertain Future" photos of Dakota women from the Minnesota Historical Society collection.

MSU History Department

Program: "American Women's Rights: Then and Now"

Wednesday, March 11 at 4:00 p.m. at the Minnesota Valley Regional Library. Phyllis Abbott speaking on "Women and the Constitution."

Thursday, March 12 at 4:00 p.m. at the Minnesota Valley Regional Library. Panel Presentation on "Nineteenth and Twentieth Century American Women's Rights Movements."

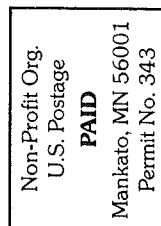
(Note: the program is tentative; contingent upon funding)

MSU Women's Center

A full week of lectures, exhibits, and special programs in the Centennial Student Union at MSU. The theme will be women's issues pertaining to the Dakota Conflict and the Year of Reconciliation.

* * * *

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the special meeting on February 17, 1987 at 7:30 p.m. at the Summit Center!!



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BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

February 1987

Calendar of Events

- February 16 *President's Day*
- February 17 *Informational Meeting about Facility Plans*
7:30 p.m. at the Summit Center (see insert)
- March 8-15 *Women's History Week*
- March 10 *Luncheon Program and Exhibit Opening at the Museum (see inside for details)*

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From the Director . . .

As this newsletter goes to press, I am in the process of completing a few final tasks before I leave my post as the executive director. I have decided to make a major career change and raise a family on a full-time basis. A replacement will be chosen during February and the Society will continue to function smoothly during the transition.

It is difficult to believe that I have been with the BECHS for a little over four years. Time definitely flies when one keeps very busy!

There are many new projects on the horizon for the Society in 1987 . . . and beyond. It will certainly be an exciting time for a new director to begin work with the BECHS!

Denise

Growing Up In Judson Part 2

The Judson Valley School District No. 6 provided education in grades one through eight in a one-room school on the Gustafson farm about a mile east of Judson Village. It was the greatest day of my young life when Mother packed lunches for brother Lawrence and me, which we carried in one-gallon Karo syrup pails. More important, we had a pencil box, a tablet and a slate.

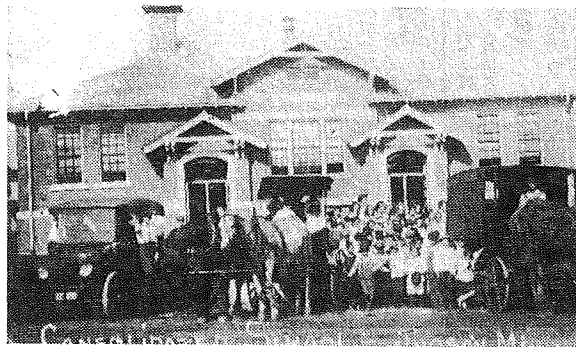
Miss Ethel Korsell, the only teacher, sat at her desk at the front of the room with blackboards across the end wall behind her. To her right stood the round-bellied stove with its metal protective shell that proved body-and-heart warming on the cold days; and in the back of the room was our drinking fountain, a large stone crock placed on a stand. Our outer garments were hung on rear wall hooks, and boots and rubbers were kicked off in the entryway beyond. Outside, a shed stored wood and coal, and well behind the schoolhouse were the separate "two-holers," one for the girls and one for the boys. On cold and stormy days one asked for the privilege of leaving the room only if absolutely necessary.

Each school day started with our recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, and the singing of one or more stanzas of "The Star Spangled Banner" or "America." Every morning before she rang the bell, the teacher would write a proverb, a precept or a verse of scripture on the blackboard. She never called attention to the few words, nor did she comment on them. During the school day, we younger kids learned as much from listening to the recitations and readings of the upper classes as we did from our own lessons. Although some were able to keep pace with those a grade or two above them, no one advanced faster than his peers.

The highlight of each week came on Friday when Miss Korsell conducted a spelldown. Any pupil, regardless of age or grade could line up in the front of the room and participate. Pupils who misspelled their words had to sit down, and the last pupil standing without a miss was roundly applauded as champion of the week.

The red letter day on the school calendar each year was the day of the official visit from W.H. Detamore, the Blue Earth County Superintendent of Schools. For a week or two before the visit, the teacher drilled us in spelling, reading, and arithmetic until we approached perfection. We eagerly awaited the opportunity to show off, and invariably all went well with very few goofs. For that important visit most of the students came

dressed in their Sunday clothes, rather than overalls or casual everyday garb. A few parents also made their appearance for Mrs. Detamore's scheduled arrival.



Seventy-six pupils reported at the new Judson Consolidated School, September 2, 1919. Some were transported by district and state aid funds. Isreal Johnson drove the Model T Ford, and William Johnson and Arthur McCarger drove the horse-drawn rigs.

When the weather was favorable, we enjoyed eating our lunches outdoors. Those of us who used a syrup pail or brown bag to carry our lunches envied the pupil who had a genuine lunch box with a Thermos bottle for hot chocolate or cold milk. Most of us carried our noon beverage in a pint-sized Mason jar with its rubber sealing ring and cover screwed on tightly.

In winter even snow didn't keep us indoors. After eating our lunches at our desks, we hastily donned cold weather gear and hurried outdoors. The schoolhouse stood at the top of a gentle slope, providing a fine area for coasting or skiing when conditions were right.

After each fresh snowfall we made angels in the snow, creating a heavenly host until they were obliterated by drifting snow or vandalous feet. Another favorite after a new snowfall was the game of Fox and Geese. After the older kids tramped what resembled a huge wagonwheel in the snow, the "fox" in the rim tried to catch the "geese" as they tried to slip out of the hub along the spokes.

Noon recess was a happy time with outdoor games in the fall and spring. Baseball was the game we boys liked best, but there weren't enough boys for two full teams, so the older boys resorted to games for lesser numbers, such as Work Up, in which field players moved up in a specified order as each batter was out, or Five Hundred, in which any fielder accumulating 500 points by catching balls could replace the batter. Other games that were popular included Pump Pump Pullaway, Run Sheep Run, King of the Hill, and Ante Ante Over.

Many of the students lived in the village of Judson, so walking that mile or so to school each day along the railroad tracks or the country road was fun in itself. Boys

tested their arms and accuracy by throwing rocks at telegraph poles while the girls ran safely ahead or behind. In the wintertime snowballs replaced the rocks, and girls as well as the poles became targets, so they taunted us from a safe distance. Occasionally four boys could hitch a ride on a section crew's handcar as they went over the tracks checking for repairs. We would pump the handles that propelled the vehicle down the tracks while the crewman rested and relaxed. On a very few occasions, we boys even got to ride in the caboose of a freight train to our schoolhouse.

The last day of school in the spring was a happy one, as we looked forward to a summer of fishing, swimming, and hiking after our daily chores were done. As we bounded down the hill, after Miss Korsell bade us goodbye, we shouted, "No more pencils, no more books, no more teacher's ugly looks," but in my heart I didn't really mean it during those years in the one-room school.

INVENTORY OF LIBRARY AND OTHER APPARATUS.

1. No. of Volumes in Library,	186	Value,	125 00
2. Dictionary,	worn out		
3. Good set of maps			10 00
4. 1 map of Minnesota			2 00
5. 1 Globe			2 25
6. 2 Charts			3 75
Total value of apparatus.			\$143 00

Signed *Lizzie S. Martin*

Teacher.

A copy of the May 1915 inventory of library materials from School Textbook Record used in the Judson Valley School District No. 6.

Because many of the adults in the community were immigrants or first generation Americans, very few had more than an eighth grade education, and they wanted better things for their children. This started talk of a new school, spurred by the wave of consolidation of school districts made possible under a new state law which provided financial aid for bus transportation.

The outcome was consolidation of three adjoining common school districts, two in Blue Earth County and one just across the river in Nicollet County. The magnificent new building would have three classrooms, a home economics room, and library on the upper floor, and space for manual training and toilets on the lower level where the central heating plant was located. There was no provision for a lunchroom or gymnasium, but according doors between the two largest classrooms could be

folded to open a space for assembly of the entire student body or for community gatherings. The new structure was built in 1918 by Eric A. Carlstrom Construction Company of Mankato, with Maurice J. Nelson, Industrial Arts Instructor at Mankato State Normal School, as inspector. It was a glorious day when we started classes in the new school. What a contrast to the one-room school of previous years! While there wasn't a room for each grade, no teacher had more than three grades so kids who needed more help than others got it.

It was anticipated that two teachers could handle the pupil load, but when enrollment was completed the number was so large a third teacher, Miss Inghor Solberg, was hired. I wound up in her room and promptly fell in love with her. She captured our earnest attention, stimulated our imaginations, and instilled in us a desire to learn.

While sports had no place in the curriculum, one unscheduled lower floor became a rough-and-tumble physical education room. "Rassling" took place on the uncovered concrete floor, and for basketball the floor was cleared except for a bench or desk placed across each of two diagonally opposite corners. A cap, rubber, or overshoe was the "basketball" and the triangular spaces behind the desks or benches were "baskets." There were no rules — no finesse, no dribbling, but sometimes passing if it was a means of getting the ball into the basket.

In spring we played basketball, a little more sophisticated than at the old country school, and in the fall we played a crude version of football. We didn't know one position from another or rules of the game — only that we were supposed to carry the ball across the goal line, and that was about it until our antics drew the attention of one of our heroes, Ivan Roberts, who had played real football on the Mankato High School team. Ivan stopped frequently to coach us and his feats with the football were prodigious. Later, when we became more aware of the facts of life, we realized that Ivan's interests were more with Miss Solberg than with the boys, for she became Mrs. Ivan Roberts, and some of us old pupils were privileged to attend their golden wedding celebration in the Jerusalem church near Judson.

Those were happy years, and although I was too young to know it, the Judson environment instilled in me those ideals of patriotism and morality which have influenced my entire life.

Vernard Lundin

NOTE: Vernard Lundin is a former mayor of Mankato, and continues to serve the community in a number of civic organizations. The above article is adapted from *As the Twig is Bent: Growing Up in the Minnesota River Valley*, a manuscript he is in the process of revising for publication.