

Blue Earth County Historical Society



Hubbard House
606 S Broad St.
Mankato, Minn.

Volume 6, Number 3

NEWS LETTER

October, 1977

COMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 15 - 16 (Sat.-Sun.)

HUBBARD HOUSE AFTERNOON MUSICAL (PIANO PROGRAM)
TIME: 1:30 - 2:30 pm (Museum open 1 - 5 pm)
PLACE: FRONT PARLOR, HUBBARD HOUSE
YWCA LONG-AGO CRAFTS FAIR
TIME: Saturday 10 - 6 pm. Sunday 11 - 5 pm
PLACE: YWCA - 603 South 2nd Street
(Demonstrations-Sales- Home-cooked Meals)

OCTOBER 27 (Thursday)

WORKSHOP on the HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY
JOHN TEISBERG, MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
TIME: 7:30 - 10:00 pm
PLACE: YWCA ATTIC 603 South 2nd Street

Sponsored by the BLUE EARTH COUNTY HISTORICAL
SOCIETY. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

DECEMBER 18 (Sunday)

CHRISTMAS PARTY for SOCIETY MEMBERS & FAMILIES
TIME: 2:00 - 4:00 pm
PLACE: HUBBARD CARRIAGE HOUSE

OUR NEW BROCHURE

The new information leaflet, which replaces the one we have been using since 1973, came out just in time for the Carriage House Opening. The format, designed by DM Printing, Inc., is a single sheet which opens out in five panels. New photographs by Ron Andersen show the exterior of both our buildings, as well as particular features of the Hubbard House mentioned in the description of the Museum and its displays. Also included are information on visiting hours and tours, a description of the Historical Society's activities and program, and a membership application form.

NEW MINI-EXHIBITS at the HUBBARD HOUSE

SECOND FLOOR: FANCY HANDWORK.

A display of bobbin lace, hairpin lace, crochet, embroidery and tatting, prepared by Marion Hoffman, MSU Art Department Intern.

BASEMENT: FOOTWEAR OF BY-GONE DAYS.

Shoes of various shapes and sizes, appropriately displayed in a showcase from the Pluto Shoe Store (Mankato, 1898 - 1962). Prepared by Holly Ahern, Museum Staff.

A BACKWARD GLANCE

Society members and other readers who attended know that the Carriage House Opening came off in gala style. We trust they will not object to a recapitulation of the event. Describing it in retrospect for those who were not there gives us the opportunity to thank again the many people who contributed to the success of our celebration.

Bert and Inella Burns headed the committee of Society members, officers and staff who planned the program. Members were Coralie Chevalier, Ogden W. and Marcia Confer, Mike Eigen, Esther Emmel, Kathryn Hanson, Marge Meredith, Dean Pettis, Sherri Scheurer and Marcia Schuster.

Palmer Centennial Place, the Hubbard Milling Company's beautiful landscaping of the Museum and Carriage House grounds, provided the perfect setting for the outdoor festivities. And - miraculous good fortune! - the sun shone on the green of new sod and the brilliant pinks and reds of petunias, geraniums and begonias, the contribution of the Mankato Council of Garden Clubs to the front gardens and a tribute to the help of Hilltop Florists and Green Thumb Garden Center.

Inside, the Museum was practically turned into a garden by the dozens of plants and bouquets brought by the Twilight Garden Club - Marge Meredith (aided by sons Don and Bruce), Lil Homolka, Evelyn Schmanski, Ann Heimark, Anita Owens and Lu Edquist. They brightened every room in the building. The roses on the library table would surely have won a prize at any show! There were floral arrangements in the Carriage House as well, again the work of the Twilight Garden Club. Dean and Peggy Pettis (Mankato Floral) gave the bouquet which decorated the bandshell platform, and also provided corsages for the ladies on the program. The centerpiece on the refreshment table was sent by Buell Brothers, the landscape contractors.

Thanks to the Mankato Park Department, we had not only the use of the bandshell, but also a large number of park benches. The YWCA loaned us additional chairs and tables. (Incidentally, without the Park Department's help, exhibits for the Carriage House would not have been ready. It furnished the manpower and equipment to move our carriages from the county garage.)

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A LOOK FORWARD

The extent of interest in the Museum and the Carriage House has astonished us. Before the formal opening, dozens of people stopped to ask to be let in; and in the eight days after the opening, there were 227 visitors. The Hubbard House had 907 visitors during August, in addition to attendance on Opening Day.

Now prime attention is directed to the development of an integrated program of interpretation for both our museums.

Plans have already been worked out with our long-time patrons, the schools of District 77. A workshop visit for third-grade teachers was held August 30 - 31. By their choice, a tour of the Carriage House will be an alternative to the Hubbard House tour in the third-graders' social studies program. As at the Hubbard House, a regular tour guide will conduct the children through the building and explain the various displays.

Work continues on additional displays. Mike Eigen, assisted by Geoffrey Roche, is busy constructing display cases, platforms and backdrops. Here a thank-you to Mankato business firms which have aided! - Madsen's Valu Center and Brett's for donations of building materials, and Lloyd Lumber, for a discount on purchases.

Displays on the main floor will emphasize transportation by horse-drawn vehicles and crafts associated with it. Exhibited here will be more artifacts from the Schmidt Saddlery collection, and blacksmith's, farrier's and wagonmaker's tools now displayed to less advantage in the Hubbard House basement. Interpretation of these artifacts will be through photographs as well as explanatory labels.

Mike plans a display on "Medicine on Horseback" and one on early farming technology. He wants to use the dog-house under the stairs as a special feature to amuse children visiting with their families. It has already proved to be an irresistible attraction to young visitors at the Opening!

Information on the Carriage House itself is available to visitors in the new brochure and from receptionists and tour guides. In addition, a series of 80 slides on the restoration can be viewed on request. Our present audio-visual equipment limits this

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A LOOK FORWARD (Cont'd.)

to being a silent show, but Mike is working on a tape program to accompany it.

Besides Geoff Roche (MSU student and CETA employee), we have a number of part-time staffers to maintain our schedule of visiting hours for the two museums. Mary Pongratz will be back as a volunteer receptionist on weekends. Also returning are former MSU interns Janice Krueger and Melanie La Duke. New receptionists will be MSU students Cindy Bartell and Sue Monk, the latter an intern under the direction of Michael Scullin. Another intern, Carol Eilenfeldt, is working on an Independent Study Project directed by Nancy Luomala, MSU Art Department. We still need more people to be guides for group tours, particularly on week-days!

The Editor

THINK CHRISTMAS !

Marion Harten has generously consented to organize our Members and Families Christmas Party again this year, with Sherri Scheurer as co-chairman. The Carriage House will be the center of activities. There will be sleigh rides, and a photographer to take pictures of you and the family in the sleigh. If we have the right kind of snow, there will be a snowman-making contest. Whatever the weather, Santa Claus will be there; and there will be carol-singing around the Christmas Tree and winter holiday refreshments !

Sunday, December 18 -- 2 to 4 pm

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS !!

Historical Society Annual Membership -- \$5.00

Historical Society Life Membership -- \$25.00

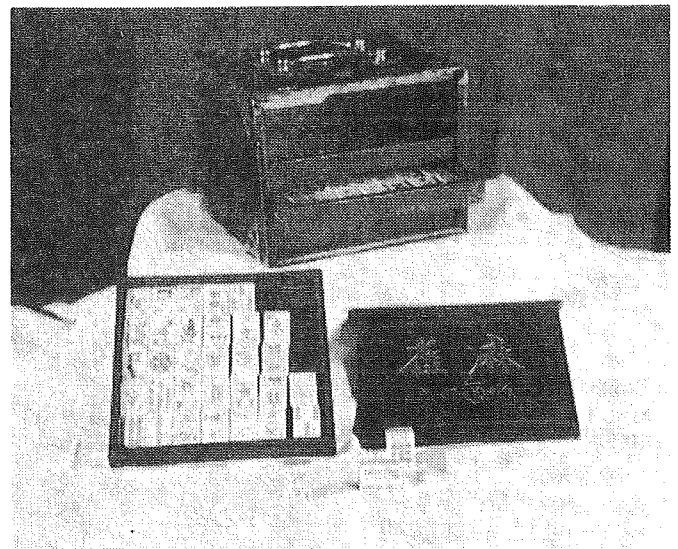
THINK SPRING !!

Co-chairmen Howard Williams and Audrey Annis are planning a Society Benefit Auction, to be held next spring.

They ask members and friends to save items to donate for this project. Contributions are tax-deductible.

Details in our next Newsletter !

A HUBBARD FAMILY POSSESSION



The MAH-JONGG SET pictured above came back to the Hubbard House on the day of the Carriage House opening, brought in person as a gift from Dr. Ed Pfau. It once belonged to the Hubbard family. Mrs. Jean Ervin Fitz Gerald (R. D. Hubbard's granddaughter) recognized it immediately, and said it was kept in the "back parlor", (the room presently used as the Museum library.)

The game Mah-Jongg is Chinese in origin. It is similar to dominoes, and is usually played by four people. The pieces (144 in number) are called tiles, which are divided into four suits. The Hubbard set has a drawer for each suit. Two tiny dice fit in a separate box about an inch long. It sits in the fifth, bottom drawer. The box which contains the set appears to be teakwood or mahogany. It has brass corner plates and a double brass handle on top. The front panel slides up, and must be removed completely to allow the drawers to be opened. The tiles are bone, with a back of bamboo wood. They are marked with Chinese characters and various symbols, but some are also marked with a Roman letter (E, N, S, or W); and all have an Arabic numeral, the range being one through nine.

The Historical Society is delighted to have a genuine Hubbard family possession added to its collection. The hope is that others may come to light and become available to re-furnish the Hubbard House as authentically as possible.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Dahm, Mankato (Life)
Mr. & Mrs. Norman Fitz Gerald, California (Life)
Lawrence H. Fowler, Mankato (Life)
Dr. J. J. Heimark, Mankato
Mrs. David J. Holzapfel, Aurora, Colorado

Gary Hugeback, Mankato
Mr. and Mrs. Rollin Lander, Madison Lake
Roger C. Leas, St. Paul
Mary Ellen Neitge, Mankato
Mrs. Marion D. Tolbert, Honolulu, HI (Patron)

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Society President Kathryn Hanson, Betty Cords and Marcia Schuster attended the September 10th meeting of the First District Historical Assembly at Kenyon, Minnesota.

Several Museum staff members will go to a two-day workshop on the care and preservation of manuscript materials, to be held October 21-22 at Mankato State University. The workshop is one of ten (statewide), organized by the Archives and Manuscripts Division of the Minnesota Historical Society and the Social Welfare History Archives of the University of Minnesota, and funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. It is designed specifically to assist county and local historical societies with the care and management of various kinds of historical records. Registration is limited, so we feel privileged to be allowed four participants, because the meeting is being held in Mankato, and also because the Blue Earth County Society has a large and varied collection of materials.

Marcia Schuster has applied for a special workshop on Museum Administration organized by the American Association for State and Local History, to be held in November in Nashville, Tennessee, and hopes to be admitted.

ACTIVITIES IN LAKE CRYSTAL

The Lake Crystal Historical Society met Monday, September 26, to elect officers and make further plans for reconstruction of the Farm Home.

Encouraging progress has been made on the building project: back-filling of the foundation has been completed, so the porches can now be put in place. Additional contributions have been received for the construction of steps.

Officers elected for the coming year
are: President: Jim Zwickey
Vice-President: Mrs. Val (Vera) Wigley
Secretary-Treasurer: Mrs. John Norman

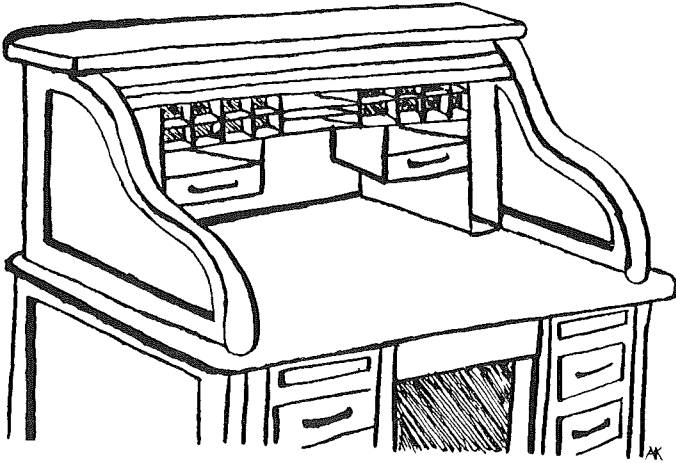
MANKATO OVERALLS AND BUTTONS

Mankato recently received some notice on the state level, in the Minnesota Historical Society's exhibit, "The Clothes Off Our Backs", which opened September 18. It was reviewed in the Mankato Free Press of September 15.

We were pleased to have the Free Press call on us for research service, to supplement the information supplied from St. Paul about Lester's overalls and the buttons on them, supposedly made in Mankato. Of course, as the Free Press article tells, it was the overalls that were made in Mankato by the Hugo Shirt Company. It was customary for clothing manufacturers and tailors also to use buttons stamped with their name on the garments they produced. An example is the Minnesota National Guard uniform of Gustaf Widell, in our collection. The metal suspender buttons on the trousers are stamped "J. Nelson - Mankato". The uniform was made to order by John Nelson, one of Mankato's "merchant tailors", who had a shop at 206 South Front Street from 1903 to 1922. Needless to say, the buttons on General Widell's uniform coat were not stamped with the tailor's name.

 NEWSLETTER
 of the
 BLUE EARTH COUNTY
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 Published four times a year by the Blue
 Earth County Historical Society, at
 606 South Broad Street, Mankato, MN 56001
 Editor Jeanne D. Kress
 Free to members of the Historical Society
 Annual Subscription (4 issues) - \$3.00

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S ROLLTOP



With the Carriage House opening and dedication behind us - and such a success it was ! - we look forward to a quieter time here at the Museum.

"First Place for Publications" was the decision of the judges in the First District Historical Assembly competition at their annual meeting September 10, in which our newsletter was entered ! Congratulations to Jeanne Kress for all the hard work she has done to make the newsletter topnotch.

We are honored to have as Consultant, sponsored by the American Association for State and Local History, Dr. Marion Nelson, director of the Norwegian-American Museum in Decorah, Iowa, and also director of the Department of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Nelson will spend

the day here October 24. He will identify and date our Scandinavian artifacts, and also give us a critique of the Hubbard House and Carriage House museums.

We are looking forward to joining with our good neighbors at the YWCA for a "block party". They are sponsoring a "Long Ago Craft Show" on Saturday and Sunday, October 15 and 16. In the afternoon of those two days we will have our first musicale, to show off our Museum piano, newly restored through contributions to the Harry Heidel Memorial Fund. Mildred Miller will play on Saturday afternoon. The pianist for Sunday has not yet been confirmed.

The last two trees of the Palmer Centennial Place landscaping project were planted September 23. They are fifteen-foot walnuts, which will eventually provide us with shade which we lost when the elms had to be removed. Buell Brothers nurserymen also planted crocus bulbs and replaced some shrubs which had died. In a week or so, Marge Meredith of the Twilight Garden Club will plant tulips and daffodils, to assure us of color this coming spring. We have had ever so many compliments on our gorgeous summer flower beds. We're very grateful to the Man-kato Council of Garden Clubs and to the Green Thumb and Hilltop Florists, whose combined efforts made the gardens so splendid!

Marcia T. Schuster

TOUR GUIDES NEEDED

To interpret the Hubbard House Museum and Carriage House to school and other groups by appointment. Training provided; small remuneration. Call Holly Ahern or Marcia Schuster, at 345 - 4154.

CLEANING PERSON NEEDED

The Director is looking for a regular part-time employee, to do cleaning one to two mornings a week. Any information leading to the discovery of such a person will be greatly appreciated !
Call Marcia Schuster, 345 - 4154.

NEW IN THE MUSEUM SHOP !!

SANDON HISTORICAL SERIES PLATE No. 3
SCENE: THE BIERBAUER BREWING COMPANY
Handcrafted - Limited Edition - \$10.00

The first two plates of the series are still available. Price \$12.
A brochure by artist DONNA SANDON, describing the history of the series and the places depicted, is also available. Price \$1.00.

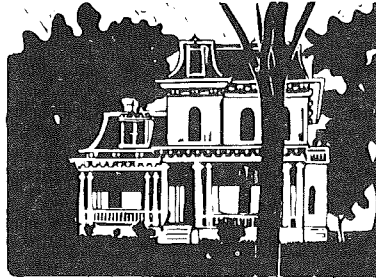
NEW CHRISTMAS GIFT ITEMS in NOVEMBER. SPINDLE TOPS are BACK IN STOCK!

ATTENTION
SOCIETY MEMBERS!
COME HEAR
our
MUSEUM PIANO

OCTOBER 15 - 16

SEE PAGE ONE

NEWSLETTER
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Historical Society
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A BACKWARD GLANCE (Cont'd.)

As master of ceremonies, Bert Burns conducted the formal program with wit and dispatch; and the speakers (admittedly in the case of Russell Fridley, State Historical Society director) vied with each other in making their congratulations brief. A high point of the ceremonies was the presentation of a Carriage House brick (decorated by Donna Sandon with a drawing of the cupola and suitably inscribed) to architect Foster Dunwiddie, Messrs. Robert, Jon and Lee Carlstrom, the contractors for the restoration, and Fred Arnoldt, construction foreman.

Two interludes of songs by the Mankato Sweet Adelines, directed by Carol Grimmer, rounded out the program. It concluded with the cutting of the Kate Hubbard Birthday Cake (the contribution of Doris Berger of The Bakery) by Mrs. Jean Ervin Fitz Gerald. The one flaw in this ceremony was that the otherwise agreeable summer breeze prevented the candles from lighting. The Sweet Adelines made up for this by singing "Happy Birthday", with many members of the audience joining in.

After the program, a carnival air prevailed. Inella Burns, assisted by Marcia Confer and Cherryll Eigen, served birthday cake and punch to well over 400 people. (Again the YWCA came to our rescue with more cups, when our supply ran out!) Jan Siebrass, Dan Wett and Janet and Harley Goff were in charge of games, which got under way in earnest at various locations on the grounds.

Croquet on the north lawn had players up to the very end of the afternoon; and hoop-rolling and hopscotch drew numerous participants. The Mankato Music Association Band, directed by Robert Northenscold, played throughout the afternoon. Board member Bruce Paradis, Jo Ann Paradis and Mary Pongratz continued to hand out pink balloons (the contribution of First Federal Savings and Loan Association) to the young and the young in heart alike.

Both before and after the program, the Carriage House and the Museum were thronged by visitors. The Museum register was signed by 271 guests; the Carriage House book had 398 signatures. Many people, we know, visited both buildings, but there were many others who did not sign. So we estimate that about 500 people came to the opening. Altogether, thanks to beautiful weather, willing helpers and the participation of so many citizens, it was a glorious occasion!

The Editor

RECENT ACCESSIONS

Since the last issue of the Newsletter appeared, a total of twenty gifts has been added to the Museum collections. They represent a wide and interesting variety; and as space will not allow us to list them all, we are waiting until next time to describe them.