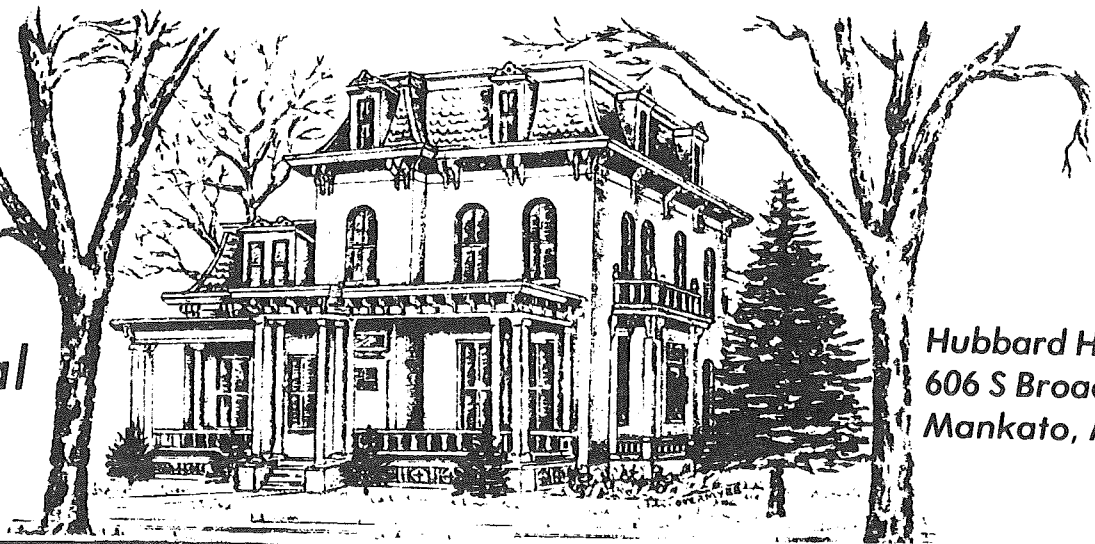


Blue Earth County Historical Society



Hubbard House
606 S Broad St.
Mankato, Minn.

Volume 8, Number 2

NEWS LETTER

July, 1979

COMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

- SEPTEMBER 8 (SAT.) SOUTHERN MINNESOTA HISTORICAL ASSEMBLY
ANNUAL MEETING
PLACE: Red Cedar Inn, Austin, MN
TIME: All-Day Program
Registration: 9 am
Luncheon and Business Meeting: 12:30 pm
Tour of Mower County Historical Center: 2:30 pm
- SEPTEMBER 29 FALL TOUR: SCENIC AND HISTORIC POINTS EAST
or PLACES: Faribault, Kenyon, Red Wing, Frontenac
OCTOBER 6 (SAT.) SCHEDULE: Tentative. See Director's Rolltop, Page 6.
- OCTOBER 14 (SUN.) KATO HIKING CLUB BUS TOUR to STILLWATER, MN
(See Information Below)
- NOVEMBER 4 - 11 MUSEUM SHOP ANNUAL BAZAAR
TIME: Sunday, November 4 through Sunday, November 11
PLACE: The Hubbard House - 606 S. Broad Street, Mankato

NEW OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

At the Annual Meeting, April 18, 1979
the following officers were elected:

President: Ernest Hansen
Vice-President: Michael Scullin
Secretary: Kathryn Hanson
Treasurer: Vernon L. Hanson

New Board Members, to serve 1979 - 1982,
are:

Mary Dooley
Marilyn Goplin
Dean Pettis
Barry Van Sickle

Margaret Williams, out-going Board
Member, was elected to fill out the unex-
pired term of Michael Scullin, who was
elected Vice-President.

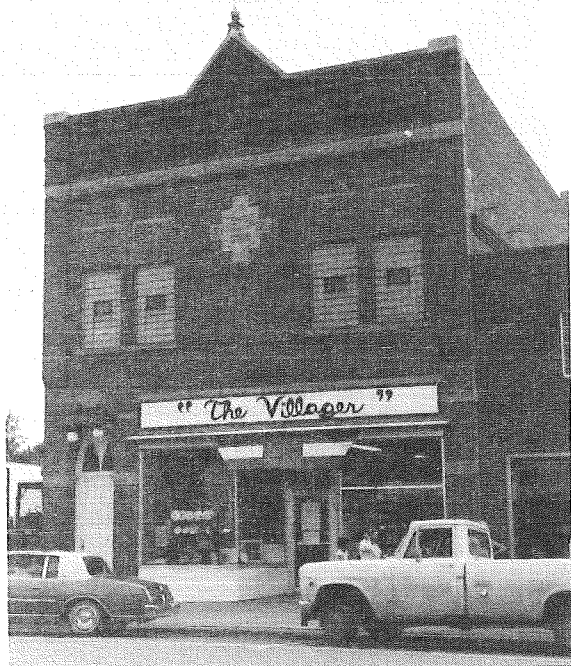
FOR SALE

Two sets unique garden lights. (Nine
lights per set.) Variegated green aluminum.
Height 17½ inches. Transformer included.
Original cost \$270. per set of nine. Make
us an offer. Call Museum at 345-4154.

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TOUR TO STILLWATER

The Kato Hiking Club invites Historical
Society members and their friends to ac-
company them on their bus tour to Still-
water, MN, Sunday, October 14. For fur-
ther information, call Mrs. Dell Anderson,
388-3878; or Miss Berniel Weigt, at
387-4174 (home) or 388-3416 (work).



I O O F BUILDING - 1895

The City of Amboy, younger than most, but mid-way in point of size among the county's incorporated cities, marked the 100th anniversary of its formal establishment with a three-day celebration, June 8 - 10. The event was the culmination of more than a year of preparation, in which not only the citizens of Amboy, but people from the entire southwestern corner of the county participated.

To your editor, who has lived here a mere twelve years, this has been the least known area of the county, largely because of its remoteness from Mankato. However, articles about Amboy in the Free Press and The Land had made me aware that it was a very lively place, with a strong sense of its own identity. The Centennial celebration presented the best possible opportunity to learn more about the community. As a semi-professional historian, I was most interested in the work of the Amboy Area Farm Wives organization, the group which provided the inspiration, the leaders and the core of workers who prepared the major historical feature of the centennial celebration. Last week I had the pleasure of talking with three of the leaders: Sue Peterson, Lois Dethloff and Kelly Reuter.

The Farm Wives' initial project was to produce a multi-media program on the history of the Amboy area, to be presented during the centennial celebration. They obtained a grant from the Minnesota Historical Society to finance the production; and consulted the director and staff of the Southern Minnesota Historical Center at Mankato State University for help with research. Larry Randen of Le Sueur was the technical coordinator of the project. The final production is an audio-visual program two hours long, of some 1,800 slides, shown by three projectors used simultaneously with an accompanying tape recording. In keeping with the Centennial slogan, "A Heritage Rooted in Rural America", the program is entitled: "Days of Planting; Years of Harvest". It was shown three times during the centennial celebration, and was viewed by a total audience of some 2,000 people. A copy of it has been presented to the Minnesota Historical Society, and another is being made by the Southern Minnesota Historical Center for its resource collection.

(Continued on Page 3)



MAIN STREET'S NORTH SIDE
1979

The committee's work in preparing the program has led to two further contributions of historical research. One was the investigation to identify century farms in the Amboy area. It has resulted in the compilation of a list of 22 such farms cited for recognition during the centennial celebration. The owners presented written histories of their farms to the committee. Many of these were published in the Amboy Herald during the past six months, and are thus permanently recorded.

Another outgrowth of the Farm Wives' project is a general history of the Amboy area being written by Kelly Reuter. According to other members of the committee, she did the greatest amount of research



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - 1961



RESIDENTIAL STREET south of MAIN

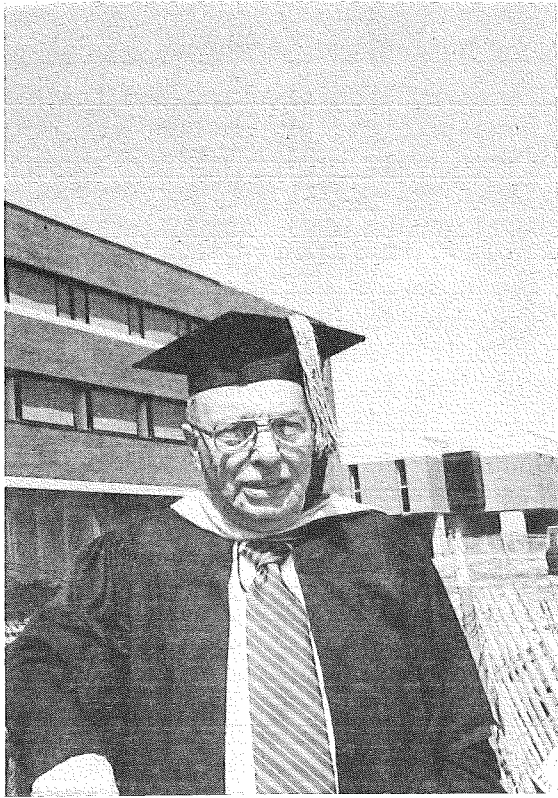
upon which the multi-media program was based. She has now nearly completed the composition of a history organized on a topical rather than a chronological approach, which includes much additional research. She hopes to find a publisher soon.

The Amboy Farm Wives and all the people who worked with them should be thanked for these three projects, inspired by their centennial observance, which represent an impressive contribution to the collection and preservation of Blue Earth County's history. We look forward to the publication of Mrs. Reuter's book!

Jeanne Kress



METHODIST CHURCH - 1900



EARLE WIGLEY

(Photo Courtesy of the Free Press)

"Wig's" long career as teacher, coach and administrator at Mankato State ended with his retirement in 1970. Besides being honored by the university, his influence there and in the community was further recognized this spring by the Mankato Sertoma Club's Service to Mankind award for 1979.

His contributions to the Historical Society are as numerous and varied as they are inconspicuous - indeed, in many cases intangible. It is "Wig" who helps us with repair and restoration of furniture, and who identifies unknowns in our collection of antique tools and other artifacts. In addition, he is a fascinating and seemingly inexhaustible source of facts about people, places and events in Blue Earth County's past - a live historical encyclopaedia, with a sense of humor!

The Society is indeed fortunate to have members like "Wig" and Emma.

Jeanne Kress

MUSEUM'S COSTUME COLLECTION TO BE STUDIED

The Museum Director is pleased to inform the Society that Susan Smith, faculty member of the Mankato State University Department of Theatre Arts, is beginning a study of our clothing collection.

Mrs. Smith, whose specialty is costume design, inquired last April about using our collection as resource material for an MSU Faculty research project. Her interest matched ours. As Director Marcia Schuster explains:

"This large and varied collection has been accumulated over a long period of time, but because of limited finances and staff, the Historical Society has only recently been able to make an inventory of it. The same limitations have prevented us from undertaking any real study of the collection, or even a systematic classification of it.

"We consider our collection a valuable resource for the study of American costume. Our opinion was confirmed by Mrs. Dorothy Duncan, Museums Advisor of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, Province of Ontario, Canada, who commented particularly on the extent and unusual character of the collection in her evaluation of our holdings, made in 1976.

"At present this resource is not being utilized. We therefore would welcome a serious investigation of it."

Mrs. Smith has received an Associate Faculty Lectureship grant to finance her study. She will work on women's and children's clothing of 1860 to 1900.

Jeanne Kress

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

KUDOS TO SOCIETY MEMBERS

Members of the Blue Earth County Historical Society join in congratulating two of their number recently honored by Mankato State University for their achievements and their contribution as faculty members of that institution. At Commencement ceremonies June 7th, the former Wilson Campus School building was designated the Wiecking Center, in honor of Emma Wiecking, college librarian from 1922 to 1959, and her late sister, Anna Wiecking. At the same time the new administrative services building was named for professor emeritus Earle Wigley.

Besides taking pleasure at the recognition accorded to the professional achievements of these three remarkable people, we recall with gratitude their long record of active help and support as members of the Historical Society.



ANNA WIECKING (Before 1956)

Retiring from the MSU faculty in 1956 after a career of almost forty years there in the field of elementary education, Anna Wiecking continued to work in education and history until her death in 1973. She was an active member of the Society and served as member of the board for a number of years. She also contributed to preserving and interpreting the history of Blue Earth County. Her numerous articles and her two books for school-age children represent the major historical work done on the history of Blue Earth County since Thomas Hughes.



EMMA WIECKING
(Photo Courtesy of the Free Press)

Emma Wiecking's unflagging interest in the Society has matched her sister's and has enriched us with many gifts. Among these, the large collection of toys which belonged to Emma and her sisters and brothers is probably the most distinguished and the most valuable, both intrinsically and historically. A refrigerator for the Hubbard House is undoubtedly the most useful!

BETSY - TACY at THE MUSEUM SHOP

At long last we have received the reprint editions of two Maud Hart Lovelace stories in the Betsy-Tacy series, promised for months by Harper Trophy Books! They are:

Betsy and Tacy Go Over the Big Hill
and

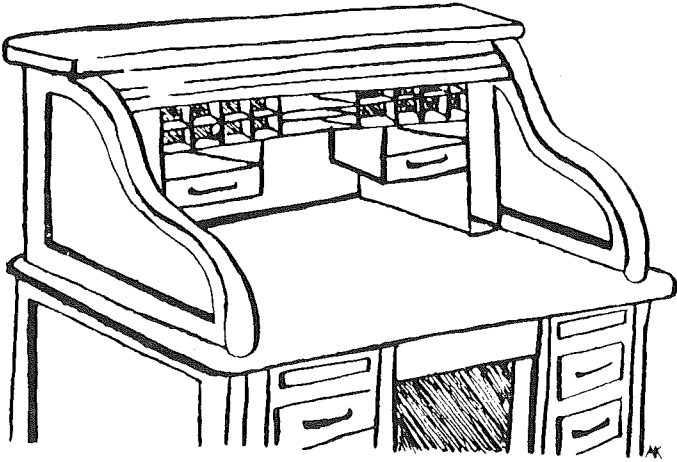
Betsy and Tacy Go Downtown

Price: \$1.95 each

Also available are the first two stories in the series:

Betsy-Tacy and Betsy-Tacy and Tib

Price: \$1.45 each



The all-consuming concern here at the Museum is the progress of the electrical re-wiring project. From what we've seen of some of the old wiring, we are indeed fortunate not to have had a fire long before this. The mess has been hard to cope with at times, but in the end we know it will all be worth it. We will also have our longed-for attic fan, which will help our summer temperatures considerably. We extend our apologies to all those persons who have been denied access to parts of the building, temporarily made inaccessible by the electrical work.

Our June 2 rummage sale was a whopping success, due in large part to the splendid organizing abilities of Karen Sundstrom, without whom we never could have done it. We thank the other volunteers who gave us their time and their expertise: Mildred Zeno, Marion Harten, Janice Krueger, Marcia Richards, Kathryn Hanson, Evelyn Schmanski, Mildred Gunnink, John Burton, Paul G. and John Schuster. And of course we thank all the people who bought! To date, receipts have been \$526.26. This will make up about one quarter of our budget deficit..

The Society Fall Tour will take in scenic and historic sights in Faribault, Kenyon, Red Wing, Frontenac and other points east. It is scheduled for the last week of September or the first week of October. Bert Burns, our genial tour director, will have more details, and we will be getting notices out to you in August or early September. Please invite your friends to go along - these tours are NOT limited to Society members. Hopefully the date set will coincide with the fall foliage at its

best. No guarantees, though.

Emma and Anna Wiecking and Earle Wigley, long-time Society members and active supporters, were honored at the recent Mankato State University commencement exercises. Buildings on the upper campus were named in their honor. Chairing the committee to select the honorees was Bert Burns, representing the emeritus faculty. Larry Schnoor of the Society Board was appointed by Acting President McMahon to represent the Historical Society.

Staff members Jeanne Kress and Carol Kvale attended a Minnesota Historical Society workshop in Waseca recently. Jeanne also attended another workshop in Madelia at the Watonwan County Historical Society.

Your director attended a five-day AASLH workshop in Columbus, Ohio, on the subject of fund-raising techniques for the local historical society. Touring the Ohio State Historical Society and one of their state sites, Adena, the home of Governor Worthington, were high spots of the trip. One of the best features of any workshop is the opportunity to meet with others in the same field and to compare notes about their problems and how they are handling them.

On a recent vacation trip I visited the Allen County - Fort Wayne, Indiana Historical Society. (I had met their director at the Columbus workshop.) Their main offices are located in an old mansion (not as fine as ours!), in a city park, but they are making a museum out of the old city hall, which is a fine old stone building in downtown Fort Wayne. They have hired a professional exhibit designer and the building is being equipped with proper humidity and temperature controls, and also window covers to screen out ultra-violet light, which is so harmful to fabrics and paper. They plan to document extensively the growth of industry in Fort Wayne, in their new quarters. They were certain that they had a "Made in Mankato, Minnesota" triphammer among their artifacts! These were manufactured by the Mayer Brothers Foundry, now the Dotson Company.

The Carriage House roof has now been insulated on the inside. The original plan of insulating between the roof and the slate had been discarded because of the

(Continued on Page 7)

BRIDGE RELOCATION AND HISTORIC PLACES IN MANKATO

Changes in our urban landscape - the potential effects of the unavoidable relocation of the bridge between Mankato and North Mankato - has been much in the news in recent weeks. Public attention and controversy have focussed on the Main Street bridge and the fate of the old-time business and residential districts on either side of the river: Washington Park and Old Town in Mankato, and lower North Mankato. The Lincoln Park Association has expressed concern about the Range Street - Pike Street location for the Main Street bridge replacement. Its members fear that increased traffic on Warren Street will have an adverse effect on the historic residential area south of Warren Street, which they are working to protect.

At the Hubbard House, the staff has attempted to keep informed about the whole situation. We are continually called upon by various researchers for data needed in the preparation of environmental impact assessments, as well as by concerned citizens. We also are interested because the Range Street - Pike Street bridge, by increasing traffic on Warren Street, would affect the Hubbard House quite directly.

From a more general point of view, we have tried to keep track of places of historic interest which might be affected by the rebuilding of the highway and railroad bridges over the Blue Earth River. This project entails a massive rebuilding of U.S. Highway 169, of which very little notice has been taken. We were relieved



IRVING (McDONALD) HOUSE

to learn that one structure of historic note is apparently not threatened with destruction, as some people had feared. This is the Irving House, located at 320 Park Lane. (See photograph above)

Built very soon after the Hubbard House (before 1874), it is a fine example of the same French Empire style in American architecture. It has been continuously lived in and maintained over a hundred years by only three occupants: the builder, William Irving, who settled in Mankato in 1856, his daughter, Jessie B. Irving, and presently Miss Harriet McDonald, Miss Irving's friend and companion, who has lived there since 1925. Miss McDonald has allowed Mrs. Carol Eilenfeldt to make an extensive study of the house. We hope to publish the results of her research in a coming issue of the Newsletter.

Jeanne Kress

DIRECTOR'S ROLLTOP (Cont'd.)

cost. The actual work was done by the Circle K Club at Mankato State (Kiwanis Club), which thus had an opportunity to earn money for its club projects. This will keep us cooler in summer and warmer in winter, besides conserving on the use of gas for heating. It will also greatly improve the environment for the vehicles which are on display there.

We want to sell the garden lights from the Outdoor Room. Sad to say, they were easy targets for vandals. They will be replaced by a halide light mounted on the arbor, so that the Outdoor Room will be lighted at night.

Don't forget about our fall bazaar, scheduled for November 4 through 11, with a Members' Tea on the 4th. You should be working on your handmade craft items now. Co-chairwomen will be Holly Ahern and Karen Sundstrom. Does anyone want to volunteer to take charge of the tea ??

Again we applaud the Twilight Garden Club for their efforts in maintaining our flower beds - a real community bright spot!

Marcia T. Schuster

ATTENTION
SOCIETY MEMBERS!
BE CREATIVE

MAKE THINGS TO CONTRIBUTE

TO THE
MUSEUM SHOP BAZAAR
in
NOVEMBER

(See Director's Rolltop)
(Page 7)

NEWSLETTER
BLUE EARTH COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
606 South Broad
Mankato, MN 56001



Address Correction
Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE PAID
Mankato, MN. 56001
PERMIT NO. 343

RECENT ACCESSIONS - April - June, 1979

1. Clothing from the Family of Charles A. Chapman, including: a) Fur Coat. Belonged to Charles A. Chapman. b) Linen Table Cloth made by Harriet Brown Chapman, 1829. c) Cotton Sheet, embroidered 1894. d) Paisley Shawl, 1817. e) Baby Shoes (green kid). Belonged to C. A. Chapman. Also caps, scarfs, dresses, etc. Gift of Mr. & Mrs. Charles B. Chapman, Mankato. (Grandson of Charles A. Chapman)
2. Tools: Ball peen Hammer; Blacksmith's Pincers and Clamp. Gift of Mrs. Myrtle B. Porter, Duluth (By R. B. Porter, Mankato).
3. Footed Compote. Souvenir of Mankato. Red Flashed Glass. Gift of Mrs. Ernest Hansen, Garden City.
4. Logger's Push Pole. Found in the Blue Earth River, 1970 or 1971. Gift of Donald P. Christ, Clear Lake, IA
5. Soft Drink Bottle - Rich Petersen Co., Mankato. 6½ fl.oz. Gift of Betty Cords, Lake Crystal.
6. Child's Dishes - Tea Set & Extra Pieces and Aluminum Flatware. Gift of Mrs. Franklin C. Kunze, Paoli, PA. (Niece of Emma Wiecking, daughter of Martha Wiecking Woodworth.)
7. Old Photograph Postcards of Mankato. Gift of Roy N. Holmes, Gilford-Laconia, N.H.
8. Photographs of Mankato Churches. Gift of Larry C. Randen, Le Sueur.
9. Amboy Centennial Memorabilia: Centennial Celebration Button; Cookbook: A Century of Good Eating; Centennial Calendar, 1879 - 1979. Gift of Jeanne Kress, Mankato.
10. The Amboy Herald (22 Numbers, Jan. - June, 1979. Gift of Amboy Herald Publishers, Shel and Joyce Hiscock.
11. Amboy Centennial Program of Opening Ceremony; Report to the Minnesota Historical Society, etc. Gift of Sue Peterson and Amboy Farm Wives Centennial Committee, Amboy, MN.
12. Secretary's Record Book (1970-78) and Scrap Books (4) of the Mankato Branch of the A.A.U.W. (1950-1968). Histories (2) of Minnesota Division, A.A.U.W. Gift of the Mankato Branch, A.A.U.W.
13. China Urn or Jardiniere. Semi-porcelain. Belonged to Elizabeth Kuehne Beckwith, daughter of F.A. Kuehne, founder of Kuehne Carriage Works, Mankato. 1884). Gift of Mrs. Carl Kuehne, Mankato.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S THANKS
for
FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS RECENTLY RECEIVED

FROM: CITY OF MADISON LAKE
CITY OF ST. CLAIR
JUDSON TOWNSHIP
LIME TOWNSHIP
EMMA WIECKING
