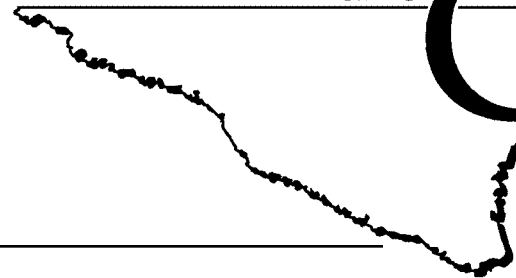


the Crossing

a publication of the Nicollet County Historical Society



Volume 7, Issue 3 / December 2002

Annual Meeting to be held on January 19, 2003

Registrations are now being taken for the Nicollet County Historical Society Annual Meeting and Banquet to be held on Sunday, January 19 at the Gustavus Adolphus College Campus Center Banquet Room. The per-person cost will be fifteen dollars. The afternoon will begin with a brief business meeting starting at 3:30 p.m. Dinner will follow and featured speaker Julie L'Enfant will conclude the evening with a talk about her book *The Gág Family: German-Bohemian Artists in America*, which explores the life and work of Anton Gág (1858–1908) and two of his children, Wanda Gág (1893–1946) and Flavia Gág (1907–1978). Published by Afton Historical Society Press in 2002, the book begins with an account of Anton's peasant forebears in German-Bohemia, documents

his family's emigration to America in 1873, and describes his early years as an aspiring artist in St. Paul, Minnesota.

This book traces Anton's subsequent career in New Ulm, Minnesota, as a painter, photographer, and decorator of churches. It also explores his marriage to Elizabeth Biebl, the mother of his seven children. Diaries, letters, and family memoirs inform this account of the Gág household and the extended family that fostered the children's abundant talents.

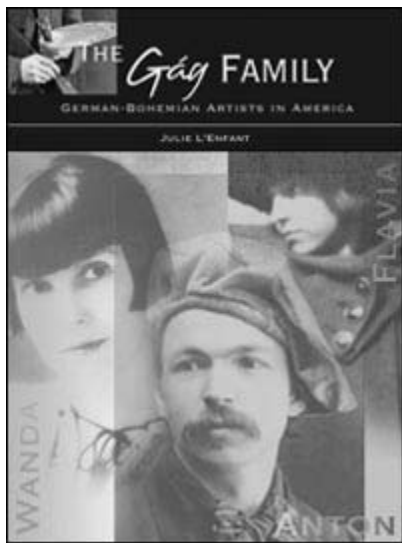
The Gág Family chronicles the struggles of Wanda and her youngest sister Flavia to become artists despite the poverty endured by the family after Anton's early death in 1908. Their migration to New York continued the efforts of this enterprising family to find opportunities for remunerative work and artistic expression. With a fresh point of view from Flavia's letters and diaries, the book examines the development of Wanda's unique style and the role of the family in her success. Wanda's renown as a printmaker and author of children's books, followed by Flavia's steady success as an illustrator and author, culminates this family saga that is also a significant cultural journey with much to tell us about being an artist in

late nineteenth and early twentieth-century America.

Julie L'Enfant was born in Louisiana and holds a Ph.D. in English and American literature from Louisiana State University and a Ph.D. in art history from the University of Minnesota. She has written on various artists and writers, including Dora Maar, Edith Wharton, and Virginia Woolf. Her previous books are *The Dancers of Sycamore Street* (1983), a novel, and *William Rossetti's Art Criticism: The Search for Truth in Victorian Art* (1999). She is an associate professor of art history at the College of Visual Arts, St. Paul, Minnesota.

We are looking forward to seeing you at the 2003 Annual Meeting and Banquet, and ask that you send in your registrations as soon as possible. Remember that this is a good time to also send in your membership registration if you have not already done so. Memberships at Patron and higher levels receive set numbers of free tickets to the Annual Banquet—something to keep in mind when considering your chosen membership level.

(See the annual meeting registration form on the insert.)



Comments from the Director... *by Mark Morrison*

With another holiday season upon us it is a fitting to give special thanks to our volunteers who are such an important part of the Society. Among the busiest volunteers over the past year were those who contributed to the Cox House operation. We have really needed their efforts during the past two years and they have really come through for us in a big way! The St. Peter Questers are once again doing an excellent job of organizing and carrying out the ever-popular Christmas at the Cox House, and this year's event promises to be one of the best ever.

Many volunteers also helped out with the busy programming schedule at the Harkin Store in 2002. The Harkin Store enjoyed

wonderful attendance again this year and Site Manager Opal Dewanz often states that her dedicated volunteer work force is critical in being able to successfully conduct programs and operate the store.

Numerous individuals spend a lot of hours helping the historical Society through participation on committees and with a whole host of other volunteer efforts. I would like to give special thanks to the Programs Committee, which is made up of some of the most dedicated volunteers with which I have ever worked. Our full schedule of quality programs that were enjoyed by hundreds of people throughout 2002 was made possible by their efforts.

In 2002 we have had many student volunteers and interns working at the Historical Society. Volunteers like Erick Hoberg and Gary Kaunonen have contributed long hours assisting us in the collections, and in doing a complete inventory of the Cox House artifacts. We look forward to working with many more student volunteers in the coming year.

There are far too many NCHS volunteers to mention all of the names in this space, but the Board and staff of the Society would like to thank you all!

I bid you a happy holiday season!

2003 Membership Drive Underway

In November NCHS began its membership drive for 2003. To date we have seen an excellent response from our regular members, in addition to many new membership registrations. The membership dues rates for 2003 are the same as in 2002, with memberships starting at \$30 for individuals. We have introduced several new membership benefits in 2003 for those contributing at Sustaining and higher levels. Included in the new benefits are the NCHS/WCCO produced video *Spring Twisters of 1998*, and limited production Traverse des Sioux peace medals. As in

2002, we will be offering the limited edition Marian Anderson prints *The Crossing* to Business and higher level members.

One of the most popular membership perks for those contributing at Patron and higher levels is free admission to the 2003 Annual Meeting. The 2003 meeting will take place on Sunday, January 19, and will be held at Gustavus Adolphus College. This year's annual meeting speaker will be Julie L'Enfant who will talk about her recently published book on the famous Gag family of New Ulm.

Your membership is critical to our ability to carry on the obligations of the Historical Society. We ask that you review the membership materials found elsewhere in this newsletter, choose a membership plan that is right for you, and mail in your application and dues today. A registration form for the 2003 Annual Meeting on January 19 is also included in this newsletter and we ask that you also fill it out and mail it in as soon as you can.

Many thanks for your continued support of the Nicollet County Historical Society!

Membership Opportunities

Basic membership benefits (for all levels)

- Subscription to *The Crossing* Newsletter
- 10% discount in the Museum Shop and on archival services
- Invitations to programs and special events
- Free admission to NCHS museums

Sustaining level and above receive the basic package plus additional listed benefits.

Individual **\$30.00**

Family **\$45.00**

Sustaining **\$75.00**

- Video: *Spring Twisters of 1998*

Patron **\$100.00**

- Video: *Spring Twisters of 1998*
- One Traverse des Sioux Commemorative Peace Medal
- One free admission to 2003 Annual Banquet
- Name on Supporting Circle Plaque

Supporter/Business **\$200.00**

- Video: *Spring Twisters of 1998*
- One Traverse des Sioux Commemorative Peace Medal
- Two free admissions to 2003 Annual Banquet
- Name on Supporting Circle Plaque
- Limited Edition Marian Anderson Print *The Crossing*

Benefactor **\$500.00**

- Video: *Spring Twisters of 1998*
- Five Traverse des Sioux Commemorative Peace Medals (your choice of years)
- Four free admissions to 2003 Annual Banquet
- Name on Supporting Circle Plaque
- Limited Edition Marian Anderson Print *The Crossing*

Life **\$1000.00**

- Video: *Spring Twisters of 1998*
- Full Set of Traverse des Sioux Commemorative Peace Medals (1991–2001)
- Six free admissions to 2003 Annual Banquet
- Name on Supporting Circle Plaque
- Artist's Proof Marian Anderson's *The Crossing*

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

Yes! I would like to support my Nicollet County Historical Society in 2003 at the following level (please circle).

Individual	\$ 30.00	Supporter/	
Family	\$ 45.00	Business	\$ 200.00
Sustaining	\$ 75.00	Benefactor	\$ 500.00
Patron	\$100.00	Life	\$1,000.00

My check is enclosed Please debit my credit card

Account Number _____

Expiration _____

Authorized Signature _____

Please make checks payable to:

Nicollet County Historical Society

Membership applications should be mailed to:

Nicollet County Historical Society

1851 North Minnesota Avenue

St. Peter, MN 56082

Telephone: (507) 934-2160

Annual Meeting Registration Form

Enclosed is my/our check made out to the Nicollet County Historical Society in the amount of \$_____ for _____ reservation(s) to the 2003 Annual Meeting and Banquet. The event will be held at the Gustavus Adolphus Campus Center Banquet Room on Sunday, January 19, and begins at 3:30 p.m. I am also enclosing \$_____ to cover my NCHS membership dues for 2003 (this is a good time to sign up for your 2003 membership if have not already done so; please review the membership information in this newsletter).

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____



*Wishing you and yours
happiness this holiday season
and all the best
in the coming year.*

*The Staff
of your
Nicollet County
Historical Society*

In the Museum Shop...

by Renee Schmidt

*From historical books and crafts
to children's books and toys,
shopping at the Treaty Site History Center
offers every level of giftgiving and
Christmas cheer.*

Shop at the History Center...For the children we have things like totem power stones, arrowheads, rabbit pelts, children's crafts and coloring books. Children's books include: State Bird and Flower coloring books, Vikings, Little Pioneer Girl paper dolls and Indian Boyhood Crafts. The adults can choose from prints, postcards and peace medals to licorice pipes, videos, t-shirts, hats and bonnets. Also, for the history buff there are many books from which to choose in subjects ranging from the Vikings and Grand Portage to Minnesota Territory and native Dakota history.

—there's something for everyone at the Nicollet County Historical Society. Maps and posters are some of our other popular gift items. Among the items you will find are:

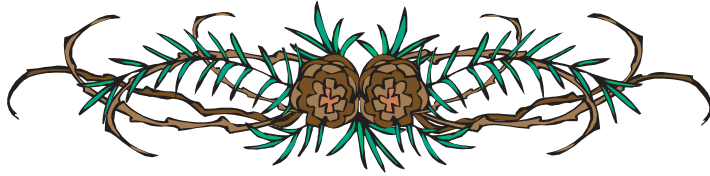
Scenes from the Past

1. **St. Peter, Minnesota, 1870** 17.5" x 22.5" \$2.00
2. **Seth Eastman Print** 22" x 17" \$12.00
3. **The Crossing** by Marian Anderson 22" x 29"
Limited Edition Prints \$75.00, Artist Proof
Prints \$125.00
4. **Treaty of Traverse des Sioux, 1851** by
Irvin Shop 9.5" x 25" \$10.00

Maps

1. **Map of the Territory of Minnesota, 1849**
John Pope
MHS collections, 27 x 32, M-45, \$15.00
2. **Hydrographical Basin of the Upper
Mississippi River, 1843**
Joseph N. Nicollet
MHS collections, 41 x 34, M-24, \$15.00
3. **Minnesota and Dacotah in 1860**
S. Augustus Mitchell, Jr.
MHS collections, 16 x 20, M-65, \$10.00
4. **Official Railroad Map of Minnesota in 1886**
MHS collections, 38 x 27, M-75, \$15.00

Remember to take advantage of your membership privilege and ask for your discount. **Happy Holiday Shopping!!!**



December 7–8 and 14–15 A Heritage Christmas at the Cox House

Christmas decorations from foreign lands will be featured at the Cox House when the holiday opening takes place on two December weekends. These special displays by the St. Peter area Questers will represent Sweden, Norway, Germany, England, Scotland, and the Czech Republic.

Continuing last year's new feature, the Cox House Committee and the Questers will again be selling home-made candies and cookies as a fundraiser.

Another tradition that continues is inviting all second graders from St. Peter Schools

to have a free tour of the Cox House. They will also be treated to cider and cookies.

Each year our beautiful Victorian House is decked out in a different decor. Holiday music by local musicians and home-made treats in the kitchen make your visit memorable.

The dates and times for Christmas at the Cox House are December 7 and 8 and December 14 and 15 from 1 to 4 p.m. The public is cordially invited. Bring your friends and family. Admission is free to NCHS members and children 12 and under, \$3.00 to non-members.



Memorials

Memorials since the last edition of *The Crossing*

In memory of Sara Beran

Given by
Richard Beran

In memory of Mike Hyduke

Given by
Judith Scholl

In memory of Eugene Conlon

Given by
Marian Babcock/Gretchen Gilbert

In memory of Ann Hager

Given by
Cora Sjostrom

In memory of Naime Bergquist

Given by
David & Bernice Breitungl

In memory of Marlin Amos

Given by
Marian Olson Babcock

In memory of Eleanor Moore

Given by
Ilene Wettergren

Electronic Notification

Would you like to be notified by e-mail of program dates and topics? The Program Committee is currently sending last minute reminders of programs to members who have expressed their desire to be on our e-mail list. If you would like to be added to that list, please notify Brenda DeBlicek at **bdeblic@mnich.net**.

Nicollet County Historical Society

1851 N. Minnesota Avenue
 St. Peter, MN 56082

Non-Profit Organization U.S. Postage PAID Gustavus Adolphus College

2002 Board of Directors and Staff

Executive Board

President	Marie Dranttel	St. Peter, MN
Vice Pres.	Sam Gault, Jr.	St. Peter, MN
Treasurer	Robert Bruns	St. Peter, MN
Secretary	Judy Schultz	Nicollet, MN
Historian	Shari Brostrom	St. Peter, MN

Directors

Lois Annexstad	St. Peter, MN
Richard Beran	Kasota, MN
James Brandt	St. Peter, MN
Arlyce Bussman	St. Peter, MN
Kevin Byrne	North Mankato, MN
Bruce Davis	St. Peter, MN
Brenda DeBlieck	St. Peter, MN
Garfield Eckberg	Nicollet, MN
Jane Swenson	Nicollet, MN
Edi Thorstensson	St. Peter, MN

Immediate Past President Herb Poncin Nicollet, MN

Staff

Executive Director

Mark Morrison

Research Coordinator

Bob Sandeen

Administrative Aide

Renee Schmidt

Maintenance Coordinator

Ron Myers

Visitor Services

(weekends)

Ceil Headlee

Harkin Store Site Manager

Opal Dewanz

Harkin Store Guide

Rex Hendley

Harkin Store Guide

Carl Nelson

the Crossing is a quarterly publication of the Nicollet County Historical Society. Subscription is free with a Society membership.
Newsletter Coordinator Mark Morrison
Newsletter Print Designer Eileen Holz
 ©2002 Nicollet County Historical Society, St. Peter, Minnesota