



the CROSSING

a publication of the Nicollet County Historical Society

Volume 9, Issue 2

July 2004

Let's Give a Warm Welcome

New NCHS Director Takes the Reins

After an extensive nine-month search process and interviews with a number of qualified candidates, the NCHS board has selected Ben Leonard of St. Paul as our new director. Ben will start work July 26.

He comes to us from the new Mill City Museum in Minneapolis where he has been School and Youth Program Associate since the opening of the museum, a project of the Minnesota Historical Society. Previously he was MHS's Historian in the Classroom, traveling the state to teach local history to schoolchildren.

Originally from Raleigh, North Carolina, Ben moved to the Twin Cities with his family in the eighth grade. He did his undergraduate studies in history at the University of Minnesota-Morris and received an MA in history from Arizona State University.

Ben and his wife, Amy, have two children, Nora, 4, and Jack, 1. They have already purchased a house in St. Peter and expect to move in shortly.



Ben Leonard, new NCHS director

New Director continued on page 9

"One really exciting thing about this area is that things that have happened here are a national story, not just local history, and I want to give the people here a sense of entitlement about the importance of their story."

And More New Faces at Three Sites

Gustavus student **Tom Hohenstein**, a former NCHS intern, is the new site manager at the Cox House. Tom, a senior at Gustavus Adolphus College majoring in history, is a graduate of Nicollet High School. His duties include conducting tours, working with the Cox House volunteer committee, planning programs and general upkeep of the house. He staffs the house every Thursday through Saturday to welcome visitors. In addition, on Tuesdays and Wednesdays he has been volun-



Tom Hohenstein



Jessica Hollerich

teering his time to help Bob Sandeen prepare the new exhibit on military artifacts.

Greeting visitors to the History Center and operating the museum shop now is **Jessica**

Hollerich. Jessica grew up

New Faces continued on page 9

CONTENTS

- Contacts **2**
- Director's Message **2**
- Lower Sioux Closed **3**
- Memorials/Gifts **3**
- Programs **4, 5**
- Museum Store **7**
- Harkin Dedication **7**
- NCHS at the Fair **8**
- Calendar **10, 11**
- NCHS Application **11**
- 1908 Fourth **11**

Memorials

received since the last newsletter:

In memory of
Alice Gilbertson

Given by
Carol Lind
Marilyn Robertz
Diana Lee Schaefer
Judith Scholl

In memory of
Burt Hoffmann

Given by
David & Arlyce Bussman
Helen Christianson
Duane & Brenda DeBlick
Stan & Mary Halvorson
Craig & Colleen Hanson
Janet Hoffmann
Eunice Holz
M. K. MacKenzie
Doug & Marilyn Miller
Barb & Don Olmanson
Herbert Poncin
William & Marilyn Robertz
Judith Scholl
Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Schultz
Cora Sjostrom
Agnes Stensby
G. Tostenson
Edwin & Beverly Wetherill

Donations

Picnic Table
for the Cox House
Given by
Martin Menk

the CROSSING
is a quarterly
publication of the
Nicollet County
Historical Society.
Subscription is
free with a Society
membership.

Contributors:

Ann Christenson
John Christenson
Eunice Holz
Eileen Holz

Executive Board

President, Marie Dranttel, St. Peter
Vice President, Garfield Eckberg, Nicollet
Treasurer, Nancy Meyer, St. Peter
Secretary, Judy Schultz, Nicollet
Historian, Brenda DeBlick, St. Peter

Directors

Lois Annexstad, St. Peter
Richard Beran, Kasota
James Brandt, St. Peter
Arlyce Bussman, St. Peter
LaVonne Craig, North Mankato
Bruce Davis, St. Peter
Chuck Eggert, St. Peter
Evie Swensen, Nicollet
Jane Swensen, Nicollet
Ed Wetherill, St. Peter

Contact Information

Executive Director, Ben Leonard
e-mail: tshc@hickorytech.net

Research Coordinator, Bob Sandeen
e-mail: nchs@hickorytech.net

Harken Store Manager, Opal Dewanz

Cox House Manager, Tom Hohenstein

**Receptionist/Museum Store
Manager**, Jessica Hollerich

Weekend Receptionist, Holly Jensen

Treaty Site History Center

1851 N. Minnesota Avenue
St. Peter, MN 56082
TSHC Phone: (507) 934-2160
TSHC Fax: (507) 934-0172
Hours: Tues.–Sat. 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
Sunday 1–4 p.m.
Archives: Tues.–Sat. 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

E. St. Julien Cox House

Site Manager, Tom Hohenstein
500 N. Washington Avenue
St. Peter, MN 56082
Cox House Phone: (507) 934-4309
Hours: June, July, August
Thurs.–Sat. 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Harkin Store

Site Manager, Opal Dewanz
P.O. Box 112, New Ulm, MN 56082
Eight miles northwest of New Ulm,
on County Highway 21
Harkin Store Phone: (507) 354-8666
Hours: May and September
Sat. & Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
June, July, August
Tues.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

From John

Interim Director's Message

It is a great pleasure to welcome Ben Leonard as our new NCHS Executive Director. Few people are aware of how hard our search committee worked. They began last February, meeting regularly on Thursdays at 7 a.m. to conduct a national search for an appropriate new director.

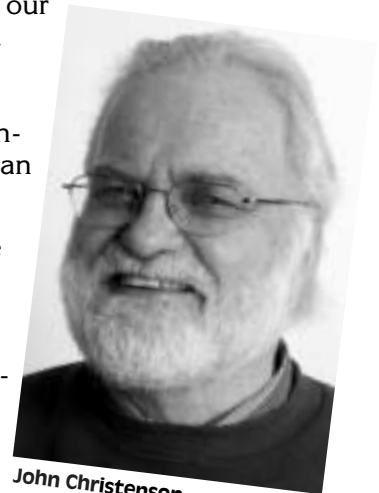
Committee members were President Marie Dranttel, board members Ed Wetherill and Arlyce Bussman, past board president Carl Aanonsen, and staff member Bob Sandeen. I was facilitator for the committee. We reviewed almost 30 applications and finally interviewed four outstanding candidates.

When I was hired as interim director, I knew that my priority would be to establish procedures and work with the search committee to hire a new director, but I did not foresee that I would also be advertising, interviewing and filling the positions of Receptionist/ Museum Store Manager, Weekend Receptionist, Cox House Manager, and Harkin Store Assistant Manager all at the same time!

With the help of a number of volunteers, including Arlyce Bussman, Ann Christenson, Stan Lindquist, Larry and Jo Zambino, Tom Hohenstein and volunteer hours donated by staffers Bob Sandeen and Ron Myers as well as the expert assistance of Marolyn Kleinert, a former Museum Store Manager, the museum and store were kept open and functioning until new staff could be up and running.

I've had a marvelous nine months as the short term administrator of the Society, challenges and all. That said, I am happy to be returning to the many projects I had planned to accomplish in retirement. Thank you all for your wonderful support during this interval. I will remain active as a member of the Exhibit Committee and Co-Chair of the Program Committee.

Please welcome Ben Leonard and his family to Saint Peter. We are fortunate to have a new director with his credentials. With your help, we should be able to make great strides in preserving and interpreting our Nicollet County history.



John Christenson

Lower Sioux Interpretive Center at Morton Closes

Excerpts from a Nick Coleman column, June 30, 2004, Minneapolis *Star Tribune*

Reprinted by permission.

The dumping down of Minnesota accelerates today with the closing of the only museum dedicated to understanding the most awful thing that ever happened here.

The Lower Sioux Agency interpretive center near Morton, Minn., is shutting down indefinitely today, closing the doors on the story of the Dakota Conflict, the bloody 1862 war that cost hundreds of lives, led to the banishment of the Dakota (Sioux) from their ancestral home and sparked 30 years of Indian wars on the northern plains, from the Little Bighorn to Wounded Knee.

Here's what happened: The Minnesota Historical Society, its state appropriation slashed by \$4.3 million, worked out a deal turning over the museum and its 242-acre site to the Lower Sioux tribe. The tribe donated \$85,000 to keeping it open last year and agreed to take it over. The proposed forfeit of a unique and important piece of the state's historic patrimony was bad enough, but then politics got involved. The Legislature wouldn't OK the transfer until lawmakers added a provision giving Redwood County and a township veto power over the deal.

The county, predictably, voted 4-1 against the deal last week. Some say county folks don't like the idea of the Indians getting more land to add to the 1,743-acre reservation. Others say folks just don't like the idea of Indians getting more. Period.

Attention Members

Board Sends Resolution to Minnesota Historical Society

At a NCHS Board meeting June 30, the board passed the following:

Resolution Concerning the Lower Sioux Agency

Whereas the Minnesota Historical Society's Lower Sioux Agency Historic Site Interpretive Center near Morton has been shut down as of July 1, 2004,

And whereas, the interpretive center taught about Dakota life and culture before the reservation era with creative exhibits and hands-on activities,

And whereas, the historic 1861 warehouse at the Lower Sioux Agency is essential in telling the history of the region and will also be closed to the public,

And whereas, all historic sites in Southern Minnesota relating to the Dakota culture including Fort Ridgely and the Treaty Site History

"We had a plan to keep the museum open," said tribal chairwoman Ann Larsen, "But they don't want us to do it."

"It's sad," says Gary C. Anderson, a history professor at the University of Oklahoma who is the author of several acclaimed works on the Dakota, including "Little Crow, Spokesman for the Sioux."

"How can people understand how an Indian person reacts to the world if they don't understand this conflict? And if you don't understand the conflict—and the crookedness by many of Minnesota's early leaders that led to it—how can you understand Minnesota?"

The irony here is that for more than a century Minnesota stubbornly ignored the story of its treatment of native people. Only in recent years did it become possible to look at past injustices and learn from them. Now budget cuts and politics are pushing those painful stories back into the closet.

Center will be diminished by the closing of the Lower Sioux Agency site,

Be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the Nicollet County Historical Society unanimously regrets the actions of the Minnesota Historical Society and the Redwood County Board of County Commissioners regarding the closing of the Lower Sioux Agency Historic Site Interpretive Center and the 1861 Agency Warehouse, and requests that there be a reconsideration of this action.

(Signed) Marie Dranttel,
President



Little Crow

*How can
people
understand
how an
Indian person
reacts to the
world if
they don't
understand
this conflict?*

~ Gary C. Anderson
Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
author of *Little Crow,
Spokesman for
the Sioux*

Burt Hoffmann Remembered

One of the Society's most loyal members, past president and constant volunteer Burt Hoffmann, will be memorialized at a dedication of "Burt's Potting Shed" at the Cox House on Saturday, July 17, at 2 p.m.

Two years ago, using salvaged lumber, Burt carried out a labor of love by constructing a much needed tool and potting shed for Mariah's Garden at the Cox House, assisted by his good friend and fellow volunteer Ed Wetherill. The two men built the large structure from scratch at virtually no cost using Burt's plan and donated materials.

Sadly, Burt died last April. He was known to just about everyone in Saint Peter through his decades of work at the Nicollet County Bank and his many volunteer activities. Now the Cox House committee plans to recognize his good works. The shed will be dedicated with a memorial plaque affixed to the building.

We hope you will all come out to honor our long-time supporter. Refreshments will be served.



Burt Hoffmann



A Walk on the Wild(flower) Side

If you haven't noticed the glorious display the wild prairie flowers are putting on around the Treaty Site History Center and Traverse des Sioux townsite, slow down as you drive by.

Better yet, plan to enjoy a guided tour on Wednesday, July 14.

You have your choice of two very popular and knowledgeable speakers: Jim Gilbert and Dean Pettis. Jim, Gustavus Adolphus College Linnaeus Arboretum director, will present an introductory talk in the History Center at 6:30 p.m. followed by a walking tour at 7 p.m. Dean, manager at Drummer's Garden Center, will give an introductory program inside at 7 p.m. with a walking tour at 7:30 p.m.

We've lined up two speakers this year because of the unexpectedly large turnout for this program last year. You may choose one or the other, but not both.

Admission for NCHS members and children 12 and under is free. For other adults there is a \$3 fee; for students 13-19, the charge is \$.50.

Now in Bloom on the Treaty Site Prairie Butterfly Weed *Asclepias tuberosa*

Milkweed Family / 12-24" high

We are asked about the conspicuous bright orange-yellow flowers in flat-topped clusters. They are butterfly weeds: leaves oblong; plant hairy, spreading, bushy. Seed pods about 4" long. No milky juice in this species. Blooms summer.

Little known facts:

- Butterfly weed stores food and water in a large taproot. This allows it to survive during the long dry summers.
- Because it is adapted to dry conditions butterfly weed is more likely to die from too much water than not enough. Too much water causes its roots to rot
- Butterfly weed is occasionally used by Monarchs as a caterpillar food plant but is not preferred because it contains too little poison!
- Legend has it that pioneers and native Americans used boiled butterfly weed roots to treat diarrhea, asthma and other respiratory illnesses. The down from milkweed seeds was spun to make candlewicks. The young seed pods were boiled with several changes of water and eaten like okra.



Wood Carving, Caning and Weaving Works at Cox House

If you've ever tried to carve a figure from wood, cane a chair or weave a cloth, you know how hard it is. Get some tips on these crafts and watch the amazing skills of three artisans at the Cox House on Saturday, July 24, 1-4 p.m.

Wood carving artist Richard Crumb of New Richland will demonstrate his expertise with knife on wood. Maggie Schwab of New Ulm will show her dexterity in the fine art of chair caning. And Joy Gerard of Courtland will illustrate her talent on the weaving loom.

Tom Hohenstein, site manager, will also give tours of the Cox House from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., as he does every Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Admission is free for NCHS members and children 12 and under, \$3 for other adults and \$.50 for teens.

Illustrated Program

World War II and the Harvest Brigade

In 1944, World War II was raging, and because manpower, materials and fuel were being dedicated to the war effort, millions of acres of wheat stood in fields across the middle of the country waiting to be harvested. The threshing machines in widespread use at the time took eight to ten people to run. Because many farmers were off fighting and fuel was short, the federal government



signed a contract with Massey-Harris for a fleet of 500 combines to cut the wheat crop from Texas to Canada. The use of the Massey-Harris combines helped get the

wheat crop harvested and saved about 500,000 gallons of precious fuel.

Society member Judy Hanson has become interested in this historic "Harvest Brigade" because of relatives who were involved with it. County Commissioner Hanson, a farmer herself, will present an illustrated NCHS program on Sunday, September 12, at 2 p.m. at the Lafayette Community Center. Do plan to attend in this 60th anniversary year of the invasion at Normandy.

Shadows at the Crossing

The ever popular "Shadows at the Crossing: Spirits of Old Traverse des Sioux" will feature a new cast of characters this fall. Come out to meet the people who populated Nicollet County in the mid-1800s. You'll have a great time and maybe learn a bit of history as well.

This ghostly event will be October 9 beginning at 6 p.m. with tours starting on the quarter hour until 7:30 p.m.

You'll meet some very interesting personalities. For example, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Williamson and his wife, Jane, Presbyterian missionaries, will greet you. Red Iron, chief of the Dakota in the Saint Peter area, and Asa Daniels, Saint Peter's first doctor, will tell their stories.

Three politicians will let you know politics hasn't changed much. E. St. Julien Cox, legislator, mayor and judge, John A. Johnson, newspaper editor and governor, and Charles Flandrau, army officer in the Dakota conflict and legislator, will give tales of Minnesota's early governments.

Two women pioneers, teacher Mary Riggs, wife of the Rev. Stephen Riggs, and Lizzie Harkin, daughter of the Harkin store proprietor, will round out the assembly.

Put "Shadows at the Crossing" on your calendar now and bring the kids.



Thomas Williamson



Red Iron



Asa Daniels



E. St. Julien Cox



John A. Johnson



Charles Flandrau



Mary Riggs

Photo credits: Williamson, Red Iron, Daniels, Riggs from *Old Traverse des Sioux*, Hughes, 1993. Cox and Flandrau, MHS Photo Collection. Johnson from *The Life of John A. Johnson: Three times governor of Minnesota*, Day & Knappen, 1910

Fire!

An unused pump shed behind the house adjoining the Harkin Store was destroyed in a fire of unknown origin earlier this summer. A southerly wind fanned the flames, starting a grass fire that moved into the woods above the store. The New Ulm Fire Department dispatched the blaze before further damage was done.

We Lose an Old Friend

Irene M. Heydon, a past board member of our county historical society, died June 23 at the age of 102. She was a long-time resident of North Mankato and represented that city on our board for many years.

“She was a very staunch member of NCHS,” recalled Marilyn Robertz. “She was a charming lady and very personable. She helped at the Cox House every Christmas and donated some of her husband’s World War I military items.”

Irene had no children. Her husband, Phillip, died in 1968.

Remembering Our Past in Wartime



A selection of uniforms await their place in the upcoming military exhibit at your Historical Society. Opening date is yet to be determined so watch for further details. We still need post-World War II memorabilia from all branches of the services. Contact Bob Sandeen if you have items to donate or loan.

Pieces of the Past: Societies Rely on Donations

- excerpted from the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, July 4, 2004

“It’s a wonderful thing when people donate history,” said Brent Peterson, the [Washington County] Historical Society’s executive director.

Not to mention necessary. Local historical societies, hamstrung by a lack of funding and stiff competition from antique stores and Internet auction sites such as eBay, are depending more than ever on private donations to bolster their collections.

Call it the “Antiques Roadshow” effect. The popular PBS-TV show ... has made more people aware of the sales potential for historic hand-me-downs.

“It encourages the notion there are treasures everywhere,” said David Driscoll, head curator of business and technology at the Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison.

Nearly as mistaken is the flip side of that notion: that the junk in the closets can’t possibly be of any interest to historians.

“The Scott County Historical Society ... recently accepted hats, purses and dyed-to-match shoes from a Savage woman that reflect fashions from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Instead of winding up in a garage sale, the items plugged some holes in Scott County’s collection.

Historical societies generally are private, nonprofit organizations supported by contributions, grants, revenue and public funding.

But government aid has declined in recent years because of new budget priorities, the economic slowdown and cuts in state aid.

Historical societies have three rules when it comes to adding things to their collections. The item must have a proven, significant link to the area they serve. It generally should be something they don’t already have. And no wedding dresses please. They’ve got plenty.

Marcia Anderson, head of museum collections for the Minnesota Historical Society, said that in deciding what to accept “the story is as important as the object itself.”

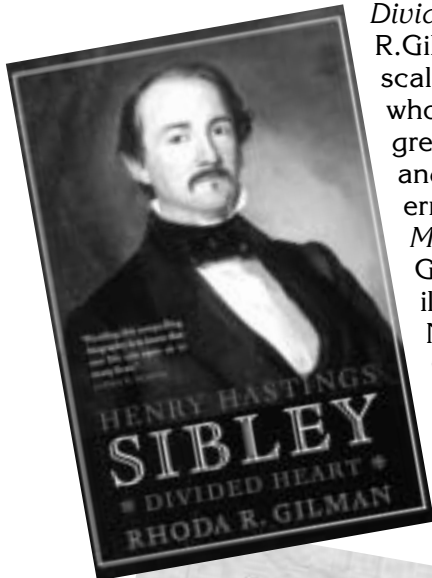
* * * * *

The Nicollet County Historical Society is in the same boat as all others. We need the stories you remember of Nicollet County and any items that go with them. Please keep us in mind before you clean out grandma’s attic or uncle’s garage. Remember, donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

New Acquisitions in the Museum Store

Three new titles published by the Minnesota Historical Society are now available in the Treaty Site History Center's museum store.

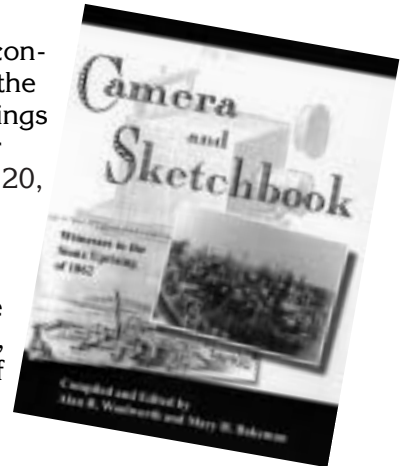
Henry Hastings Sibley: Divided Heart, by Rhoda R. Gilman, is the first full-scale biography of Sibley, who was fur trader, congressman, army general, and Minnesota's first governor. *Swedes in Minnesota*, by Anne Gillespie Lewis joins similar books about Norwegians, Irish, and Germans in *The People of Minnesota* series. *Little Crow Taoyateduta: Leader of the Dakota*, by Gwentyth Swain is a



clear and sympathetic telling of the life of the great chief for readers nine years or older.

Other new books for sale in the museum store include *Soft Gold: A Tale of the Fur Trade*, by Jim Reiley of Northfield. It is a fast moving historical novel about the fur trading business around the Great Lakes more than two hundred years ago.

Another book new to the museum store is the fascinating *Camera and Sketchbook: Witnesses to the Sioux Uprising of 1862*, by Alan Woolworth and Mary Bakeman, published by Park Genealogy Books of Roseville. The book is well illustrated with the August 1862 photographs of the Dakota conflict by Adrian J. Ebell, and the unique sketches and engravings made by Albert Colgrave for *Harper's Weekly*, December 20, 1862, and *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in June 1863. Also included are lists of white captives held by the Dakotas in September 1862, and biographical sketches of Ebell and Colgrave.



Alexander Harkin: Dealer in Dry Goods and Groceries, by Jeffery A. Hess, a 23-page pamphlet originally published by the Minnesota Historical Society in 1977, has just been re-printed under the direction of Opal Dewanz, manager of our Harkin Store Historic Site. It contains just about everything you'd ever want to know about the Harkin family, the little store overlooking the Minnesota River and the ghost town of West Newton. It is for sale at the Harkin Store and at the Treaty Site History Center for only \$4.50.

Harkin Store Historic Marker Dedication



Harkin Store site manager Opal Dewanz and Tom Ellig, regional site manager for the Minnesota Historical Society, speak at the 4th of July dedication of a new historical marker provided by the Minnesota Historical Society. The marker provides an overview of the store's history and its importance in our region's past. More than 50 people turned out to enjoy the afternoon, which included speeches, cannon volleys by New Ulm Civil War reenactors, and a sing-a-long performance of patriotic songs by the New Ulm Senior Center chorus.



••••• Meet Us at the Fair

County Fair Special

Take advantage of this great membership special offered by the Society. Between July 1 and December 31, individual membership fees are reduced from \$35 to only \$10. You can sign up at the Fair or at any of our three sites. If you only take advantage of four programs or sites during that time, you'll more than have paid for your membership.

Remember, the Nicollet County Historical Society preserves, interprets and collects our county's history. That's your history. We'll appreciate your support.

Since the tornado of '98 blew away our log cabin on the County Fairgrounds, taking away the Society's exhibit space, we are endeavoring to rebuild a presence at the fair.

Building on the activities of last year we'll present weaving, quilting and leatherworking demonstrations Thursday, August 5, on stage in the Johnson Building, at 7 p.m.

Alternating with the artisans will be some of the Spirits of Old Traverse des Sioux, reprising their appearances from last year's "Shadows at the Crossing" pageant. You can meet Capt. Dodd, founder

of St. Peter, Minnesota Governor and local editor John A. Johnson, and Dakota woman turned settler, Nancy Eastman, among others.

The next night, Friday, August 6, at 7 p.m., enjoy a reenactment of the first marriage in the area, the 1851 wedding of Nancy Winona McClure to David Faribault. Performed by Justice of the Peace Alexis Bailly, the wedding was part of the month-long celebration surrounding the signing of the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux.

Nancy was the 14-year-old daughter of Lt. James McClure of Ft. Snelling and a Sisseton woman. David was the 30-year-old son of Jean Baptiste, a noted Minnesota fur trader.

Our weaving, quilting and leatherworking demonstrators will be back Friday night as well.



Top: Horseracing at the Fair racetrack with Floral Hall on the left and the Grandstand on the right.

Middle: The original grandstand.



Bottom: Entries on display in Floral Hall (date unknown)



Quoting from the *St. Peter Herald*, Second Century Edition, "Records indicate 'county fairs' were held at different locations for a number of seasons prior to 1861. In 1870 the fair became 'official.' ... Nicollet hosted the fair in 1874 in unfinished, hastily constructed buildings. St. Peter has been its home since then." Floral Hall (top photo at extreme left), lost to the tornado in 1998, had been built in 1901 for a cost of \$1,522.25.

The Society Archives would welcome other Nicollet County Fair photos and memorabilia for its collection.

Nicollet County Fair scenes from the photo archives of your Nicollet County Historical Society.

New NCHS Director Takes the Reins continued from page 1

"I hope to continue to build on the success the Society has had," Ben said. "Saint Peter and Nicollet County communities care about their history."

"One really exciting thing about this area is that things that have happened here are a national story, not just local history, and I want to give the people here a sense of entitlement about the importance of their story."

Ben plans to present vibrant exhibits in the History Center and to expand outreach efforts to communities throughout the county.

"The leadership made a commitment 10 years ago to build this building [the History Center]," he said. "With this place, the Cox House and

the Harkin Store, we have three distinct places to tell our story in different ways. I want to create opportunities at each of those places."

Ben is encouraging people to come out and meet him at the county fair. He wants to meet all the members and to hear their ideas, stories, and concerns.

"It's a partnership—staff, board and members all working together to preserve history," he said.

Remembering the Poor Farm

The Program Committee has begun gathering information about the Nicollet County Poor Farm. We would appreciate any photos, articles, personal or family information you could share with the committee. Please see John Christenson at the Treaty Site History Center.

And More New Faces at Three Sites continued from page 1

on a farm between Waldorf and Pemberton. At Winona State she majored in recreation and tourism. She put her major to work at her previous job with the Winona Chamber of Commerce. Those skills will be valuable to NCHS as well.



Holly Jensen

Taking the weekend shift at the Treaty Center these days is **Holly Jensen**, daughter of the Harold Stoffregens on Highway 99. An alum of Nicollet High School, Holly also works full time at the Mankato Clinic during the week. This busy woman is the mother of three.

They're living with her parents while her husband is on a tour of duty

in Korea with the Air Force.

New assistant site manager at the Harkin Store is **Ruth Grewe** of Gaylord. Ruth formerly traveled the state as merchandise manager for 28 Dueber's Variety Stores for more than 10 years. Needing a job a little less



Ruth Grewe

physical for health reasons, Ruth enjoys working at the Harkin Store. "This is so cool," she said. "I'm getting to visit with so many interesting people."

Also new at the Harkin Store is **Ken Arsers**, tour

guide. Ken lives in New Ulm, where he retired to be near family after 20 years with the U.S. Navy. He has an interest in Civil War history.

Meeting the nice people who visit the site has made the job enjoyable for him, he said.



Ken Arsers

Calendar of Events:

- through August **E. St. Julien Cox House and Gardens** E. St. Julien Cox House
10 a.m.–4 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday. NCHS members and children 12 and under admitted free; adults \$3, students 13–19 \$.50. Also weekends in September.
- through July **Bridal Fashions** TSHC Exhibit Room
Featuring fashions from the 1850s–1990s from the NCHS collection and from the local Questers chapter. 10 a.m.–4 p.m. NCHS members and children 12 and under admitted free; adults \$3, students 13–19 \$.50.
- late summer **Military History of Nicollet County, 1861–1991** TSHC Exhibit Room
Date and time to be announced. We still have a need for post-World War II memorabilia from all branches of the services.
- Wednesday, July 14 **Walk on the Wild(flower) Side** meet in TSHC Audio Visual Room
Jim Gilbert and Dean Pettis give wildflower introductory talks and walking tours at Treaty Site History Center and Traverse des Sioux Townsite. 6:30 and 7 p.m. NCHS members and children 12 and under admitted free; adults \$3, students 13–19 \$.50. (see story on page 4)
- Saturday, July 17 **Burt Hoffman Plaque Dedication at the Cox House Tool Shed** Mariah's Garden at the Cox House
In memory of long-time NCHS supporter and past-president Burt Hoffmann, "Burt's Potting Shed" will be dedicated. 2 p.m. Refreshments. Free. (see story on page 4)
- Thursday, July 22 **Open House/Reception for John Christenson** TSHC
A thank you for his service as Interim Director. 1–3 p.m.
- Saturday, July 24 **Wood Carving, Caning & Weaving Works** E. St. Julien Cox House
Demonstrations by Richard Crumb, New Richland; Maggie Schwab, New Ulm; and Joy Gerard, Courtland. These three skilled artisans will share secrets of their trades. 1–4 p.m. NCHS members and children 12 and under admitted free; adults \$3, students 13–19 \$.50.
- Sunday, July 25 **Concertina Fest** Harkin Store
The Concertina Club from Glencoe will entertain at the Harkin Store. Any musicians who care to join in are welcome. 1–4 p.m. NCHS, MHS members, and children under age 13 admitted free, \$2 for adults.
- Sunday, August 1 **25th Annual West Newton Day** Harkin Store
The Harkin Store will celebrate the 25th anniversary of West Newton Days. There will be old time music, including Marvin Krause with his button box, and a treadle woodworking machine demonstration by Lance Sorenson, among other activities. 1–4 p.m. NCHS, MHS members, and children under age 13 admitted free, \$2 for adults.
- Thursday & Friday, August 5–6 **NCHS at the Nicollet County Fair** Johnson Building at the Fairgrounds
Weaving, quilting, and leather-working demonstrations. Spirits of Old Traverse des Sioux. On Friday, August 6, 7 p.m. Wedding of McClure and Faribault. (see story on page 8)
- Sunday, August 8 **The Dulcimer Club** Harkin Store
Musicians from the area will perform at the Harkin Store. 1–4 p.m. NCHS, MHS members, and children under age 13 admitted free, \$2 for adults.
- Sunday, August 15 **Chips Will Fly** Harkin Store
Two fantastic wood carvers will demonstrate their art at the Harkin Store. 1–4 p.m. NCHS, MHS members, and children under age 13 admitted free, \$2 for adults.
- Sunday, August 22 **Three Flats & a Spare** Harkin Store
Traditional old time music on fiddles, accordions and guitars. 1–4 p.m. NCHS, MHS members, and children under age 13 admitted free, \$2 for adults.
- Sunday, September 5 **Back to School** Harkin Store
Visitors will hear about one-room schools, a part of life that has all but vanished. Old school books and photos of rural schools will be on display and former one-room school teachers will be on hand to talk about what it was like to teach and go to school in the era which lasted into the 1950s. 1–4 p.m. NCHS, MHS members, and children under age 13 admitted free, \$2 for adults.

NCHS Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

(_____) _____
 Phone

E-mail _____

My check is enclosed Please debit my credit card

Account Number _____

Expiration Date _____

Authorized Signature _____

Yes! I would like to support my Nicollet County Historical Society in 2004 at the following level (please check one).

- | | |
|---|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$ 30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$ 45 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$ 75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$ 100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter/Business | \$ 200 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$ 500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member | \$1,000 |

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**

Calendar of Events continued:

Sunday, September 12

Preparing for Winter

Harkin Store

Visitors will appreciate today's modern conveniences as they watch demonstrations of food-drying, sauerkraut-making and other tasks necessary to ensure survival through the long winters of the 1870s, a time when the Harkin Store was the center of a farming community on the Minnesota prairie. The work was hard, but the activities provided neighbors the opportunity to socialize as they worked together. Quilters also will be on hand to demonstrate their craft. 1-4 p.m. NCHS, MHS members, and children under age 13 admitted free, \$2 for adults.

Sunday, September 12

Harvest Brigade

Lafayette Community Center

Nicollet County Commissioner and farmer **Judy Hanson** will give a presentation on the World War II "Harvest Brigade." 2 p.m. NCHS members and children 12 and under admitted free; adults \$3, students 13-19 \$.50. (see story on page 5)

Sunday, October 3

Henry Hastings Sibley: Divided Heart

TSHC

Rhoda Gilman, author of *Henry Hastings Sibley: Divided Heart*. This special program is being co-sponsored by NCHS and the J.R. Brown Heritage Center of Henderson. 2 p.m. NCHS members and children 12 and under admitted free; adults \$3, students 13-19 \$.50.

Saturday, October 9

Shadows at the Crossing:

Spirits of Old Traverse des Sioux

TSHC & Traverse des Sioux Townsite

This popular annual pageant will be back for the third year; featuring the re-embodiments of frontier folks and settlers at Traverse des Sioux and Nicollet County. Beginning at 6 p.m. with tours commencing on the quarter hour until 7:30 p.m. NCHS members and children 12 and under admitted free; adults \$3, students 13-19 \$.50. (see story on page 5)

October TBA

Native American Film Festival

TSHC Audio Visual Room

Watch for further publicity.



**Nicollet County
Historical Society**

1851 N. Minnesota Avenue

St. Peter, MN 56082

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage

PAID

Permit No. 9
St. Peter, MN

In Celebration of a much earlier 4th of July

July 4, 1908 • St. Peter



Celebrating July 4th in St. Peter is a long-standing tradition as evidenced in this postcard series by A. Kloss of Waseca, Minn.

Note the tight-rope walker crossing Minnesota Avenue in the view at left.

Photos from the St. Peter postcard collections of Bob Sandeen and Eileen Holz