



the CROSSING

a publication of the Nicollet County Historical Society

September 2006 • Volume 11 / Issue 3

Archives Receives Fantastic Gifts

The NCHS Archives housed at the Treaty Site History Center recently received two tremendous gifts. An anonymous donor has generously donated \$3,800 toward the purchase of microfilm. The City of St. Peter has graciously donated the microfilmed *St. Peter Herald*, storage cabinet, and a microfilm reader/printer. We are incredibly indebted to our anonymous donor and the St. Peter City Council for realizing the importance of a strong archives.

Both of these generous donations represent a sea-change for the NCHS archives. We will more than double our current holdings. Every county newspaper current to the last few years will be available along with census rolls, naturalization records, and military service lists. Two microfilm reader/printers will provide more access and better service.

You will notice some of the changes right away, but others may take until the end of the year. The Society has applied for a grant from the Minnesota Historical Society using some of the recent donation as matching funds. If successful we'll be able to purchase even more microfilm, including issues of the *Mankato Free Press*, not currently available anywhere in the county.

High School Veterans Project comes to the Treaty Site

St. Peter High School Social Science teacher Marcia Applen has been working with her classes to document the experiences of local veterans. Thanks to her ingenuity and energy, the hard work done by students, and a grant, the Treaty Site History Center will soon host a touch-screen kiosk where visitors can learn about St. Peter soldier's experiences in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

The kiosk will allow TSHC visitors to see and hear the history of World War II not from textbooks, but straight from local heroes who were there. Each story will be accessed directly by visitors through a touch screen—in any order, at any time, during their museum experience. The



Whether you've been here before or just thought about doing research—it's worth the trip more than ever. Have questions? Talk to Research Coordinator Bob Sandeen at research@nchsmn.org.

Recent donations to the NCHS archives have vastly expanded our collection of local newspapers on microfilm.

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Memorials

received since the last newsletter:

In Memory of
Della Mines

Given By
Arlyce Bussman

In Memory of
Jeff Pyan

Given By
Arlyce Bussman

In Memory of
Joe F. Volk

Given By
Arlyce Bussman

In Honor of
Mr. & Mrs. Malcolm Mackenzie

Given By
Mrs. Zita Rohlfing

Donations

received since the last newsletter:

Anonymous
John Iverson
Minnesota Hardwoods
United Way

Members

received since the last newsletter:

Renewed

Paul Bresnahan – Individual
Charles Eggert – Family
Craig Nelson – Individual

New

Kathy Corey – Family
Roger & Lois Currier – Family
Terry & Sandy Gappa – Family
Ray & Liz Jacobson – Family
Ray Olson – Individual

Executive Board

President, Garfield Eckberg, Nicollet
Vice President, LaVonne Craig, North Mankato
Secretary, Evie Swenson, Nicollet
Treasurer, Herb Poncin, Nicollet
Historian, Marie Dranttel, St. Peter

Directors

Richard Beran, Kasota
Arlyce Bussman, St. Peter
Bruce Davis, St. Peter
Brenda DeBleick, St. Peter
Chuck Eggert, St. Peter
Thorild Nelson, Nicollet
Sujay Rao, St. Peter
Diane Stenson, St. Peter
Jane Swenson, Nicollet
Ed Wetherill, St. Peter

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Cox House Site Manager, Kati Young

Harkin Store Site Manager, Ruth Grewe

Harkin Store Asst. Site Mgr., Ross Gersten

TSHC Museum Assistant, Brian McDonald

TSHC Maintenance, Ron Carlberg

Ft. Ridgely Site Manager, Nancy Zempel

Ft. Ridgely Asst. Site Mgr., Randy Kvam

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.

General information via e-mail:
museum@nchsmn.org or
research@nchsmn.org

Website: www.nchsmn.org

E. St. Julien Cox House

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

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: September and October 15
Fri.–Sun. 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
June, July, August
Tues.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Fort Ridgely

72404 County Road 30

Fairfax, Minn. 55332

Fort Ridgely Phone: (507) 426-7888

Website: ridgely@nchsmn.org

Hours: Memorial Day–Labor Day
Fri.–Sun.: 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
September–October 15
Sat. & Sun.: 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Director's Report

Minnesota has over 500 historical organizations across the state. Add to that larger museums, arts centers, Heritage Preservation Councils, libraries and affinity organizations and you've got a huge community of professionals and volunteers. As Director here in Nicollet County it is a pleasure working with colleagues from across the region, state, and country. I've been lucky enough to have several opportunities to do so.



Ben Leonard

In September I will be traveling to Phoenix for the American Association for Local History annual meeting. I will be part of a panel discussion on museum collections with Leslie Kesler, Curator of Political and Socioeconomic History at the North Carolina Museum of History and Jim Gardner, Associate Director for the Smithsonian's Office of Curatorial Affairs. For the past two years I have been the State Awards Chair for their national awards program. I'm pleased to see Minnesota leading the nation this year with eight of the 84 total award winning projects. Among them was Scott Hosier whose accomplishments included his work at the Harkin Store.

As a member of the Minnesota Association of Museums planning committee I was very excited with their decision to hold the 2007 annual meeting in St. Peter next April. This will give us an excellent opportunity to introduce other museum professionals to NCHS and St. Peter. MAM's diverse membership includes county museums, the Minnesota Historical Society, and other big institutions like the Science Museum of Minnesota, Walker Arts Center, and Minnesota Childrens Museum.

Our work in Nicollet County is paramount, but participating in statewide projects and organizations is a great way to raise NCHS's professional profile and benefit from collaborative efforts.

A stylized, handwritten signature of Ben Leonard in black ink.

Ben Leonard
Director

NCHS Endowment

Through recent generous donations the Society has been able to start an endowment. Our endowment will allow us to build a reliable source of ongoing funding without expending the principal. Many county societies, including Blue Earth and Brown Counties, have well established endowments already.

Our endowment represents a huge commitment by the Society, our Board, and our members. It takes a lot of discipline to invest funds for long-term pay-back rather than expending them all at once for short term gain. While most of our dollars will still go toward general operations and special projects, setting aside a little for the future is our key to increased financial security and long-term viability.

We really need member contributions to continue. Current endowment income is earmarked for general operations, but specific funds for Education, Exhibits, Programs, Collections, Cox House, Harkin Store, Fort Ridgely, or other endeavors are available. Contact Ben Leonard at 507-934-2160 or ben@nchsmn.org for information on how to name or contribute to one of these funds.

NCHS Participates in Regional Grant

The Bush Foundation has announced a grant to the Minnesota Historical Society for \$999,709. The purpose of the grant is to increase public access to Minnesota's cultural heritage resources and upgrade technology infrastructure. It will be used over a three-year period to transform the management of MHS collections and delivery of this content to users across Minnesota, the Upper Midwest and around the world through the Minnesota Historical Society web site. This transformation will include cultural content belonging to other entities in our region. That's where we fit in.

The Nicollet County Historical Society will be a key partner along with the State Historical Societies of North and South Dakota, as well as the Blue Earth, Anoka, and Olmsted County Historical Societies.

It is an honor to be among the few organizations to assist the State Historical Society in this groundbreaking work that will be seen as a model all over the country. Hopefully this grant results in more of our unique collections being available on the Internet. Our participation in the Minnesota Digital Library Coalition's online visual resources database *Minnesota Reflections* has been a huge success and we look for more of the same with the Bush Grant.

Busy Fall at Cox House

We had some great events this summer at the Cox House—But wait! There's more!

For the kiddos, we'll have another playhouse day on September 30. The more the merrier, if you like creative kid stuff, please volunteer. It's a huge hilarious mess of paint, refrigerator boxes and fun.

On Sunday October 22 from 1 to 4 p.m. we'll open the house for Cox-Tober Fest! Brewing Families in the River Valley. Paula and George Marti will come from New Ulm with stories of the Schell's Brewery (George's family) and will bring samples of their latest recipes and—best of all—SONGS and an accordion to play them on. As a special local treat, we will have the opportunity to walk through an historic St. Peter brewery building! Shorty of Shorty's Tire One (down there by the former Hardee's) will open his building and let us have a walk through time. You can still see the big hall, a mural on the wall, big old beams and get a whiff of history.

We'll be looking for people to help with spooky Halloween House Tours and activities in the yard on Saturday, October 28 from 5 to 9 p.m. A junior Cox House Committee is full of scary ideas for the tours and ready to go. Maggie Nelson and Alina, Chloe and Avery Bachman have been at the house brainstorming songs, activities and costumes. Ingrid and Kierstin Karlsrud will be helping too.

All three fall events are listed in the Community Education brochure. Call the Treaty Site and leave your name with Jessica if you'd like to help with any of these special events.

Society Bits

Leonard to visit Fort Collins with ICLV

In October Ben Leonard will again be headed on the Inter City Leadership Visit organized by the Greater Mankato Economic Development Corporation. He will be among around 90 delegates traveling to Fort Collins, Colorado. Ben is able to participate because of a generous scholarship provided by the GMEDC. We sincerely appreciate their desire and financial commitment to have non-profits included in regional planning. It's a wonderful opportunity to give museums a voice and work directly with regional governments and business leaders.

Society Wish List

The rug in the Family Parlor at the Cox House is badly worn and in need of replacement. We are looking for an Oriental style appropriate to the house, with muted/neutral colors, in approximately 9' x 12' size. If you are willing to donate or have suggestions concerning this request for a replacement rug, please call Jan Hoffmann (507-934-2498), Barb Olmanson (507-934-2828) or Bev Wetherill (507-934-4417).

The Harkin Store is a wonderful setting for bird watching and a great habitat for a variety of birds all year round. We would love anyone willing to donate bird feeders, houses, or seed to help us create an even better bird watching spot out there.

We are in desperate need of a new(er) lawn-mower at the Treaty Site History Center.

If you would like to donate any of these please contact Jessica at 507-934-2160.

Log Cabin Gets Facelift



Work continues on the massive reconstruction of the cabin.

If you haven't seen the 1860s cabin on the Treaty Site History Center's grounds lately it probably looks a lot different. Society Board members Garfield Eckberg, Herb Poncin, Torrey Nelson, and Ed Wetherill have been working hard along with Terrasol Construction of St. Peter.

The latest challenge was to replace sections of rotted timber that would jeopardize long-term preservation of the structure. The Terrasol crew, who donated much of their time, worked tirelessly to brace the cabin, remove bad logs, shape, and replace damaged sections. Logs from another New Sweden area house were used along with new white oak and ash logs to stabilize our cabin. The Society thanks Minnesota Hardwoods from Courtland for three new seventeen-foot timbers.

Much work remains. Plans require chinking between the logs, new windows and doors, a new roof, protective exterior finish, foundation work, and interpretive signage. Remaining restoration is estimated to cost \$6,500. In the coming weeks we will be seeking funds so that we can keep continue towards completion. Please think about contributing. Contact Director Ben Leonard for details.

A Living Memorial ... by Janet Hoffmann

A red oak tree was planted and a garden was developed this summer beside the log cabin at the Treaty Site. It is hoped that other people may be interested in contributing to this small area surrounded by a split rail fence. This could be developed nicely into a lovely little memorial park. Traverse des Sioux Garden Center can be helpful in choosing appropriate heritage plants. Contact Ben Leonard at 507-934-2160 or ben@nchsmn.org for details.



Fascinating Additions to Archives

It has been a busy place here in the Archives! We have added some extremely interesting items to our collection.

Bob Wettergren donated, among a number of other items, the historic Nutter family table around which so many famous people have been entertained since the mid-1800s. It is now in the dining room at the Cox house.

Jennifer Powers, a descendent of E. St. Julien Cox, donated clothing that was worn by Cox's wife, Mariah. She also donated a number of other items relating to both the Cox and Gault families.

Ruth Klossner donated CDs containing many of her excellent photographs of Nicollet's 150th anniversary celebration as well as aerial views of Nicollet and Lafayette. While Ruth retains all reproduction rights to these images, we are happy to show them to visitors.

Jim Derner brought in a wonderful photo album for us to examine that covers the period from 1935 until about 1960. It belonged to his grandparents, Herman and Mary Hoehn, who lived next to the Oshawa elevator. We are scanning the best of the images, which show a very wide variety of farming activities, including many field scenes. The images are fascinating to see!

The video tapes from the St. Peter "Know Your Community" programs that were shown from September 1992 through February 2001 have been donated to the archives. Many interesting people and subjects are featured on the tapes.

Steve Alinder donated many original records from St. Peter's Company I (1883-1893) and Company K (1908-1917), both of which were units of the Second Infantry Regiment of the Minnesota National Guard. Company I included among its members future Minnesota governor John A. Johnson, who rose from First Sergeant to Captain. Company K was sent to the Mexican Border in 1916 to protect Americans from raids by Pancho Villa. Records from additional military units based in St. Peter are also found in the collection.

ROSTER of CO. I, 2d REG'T, N. G. S. M.
July 12, 1883

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Captain J. C. DONAHOWER. | Privates GAULT ANDREW |
| 1st Lieut G. S. IVES. | " GRESHAM E. E. |
| 2d Lieut. G. W. DRYER. | " GRESHAM W. H. |
| Serg'ts JOHNSON JNO. A. | " HENSEL GUST. |
| " CARPENTER C. W. | " HOLMBERG C. G. |
| " SPORING HERM. | " JOHNSON E. S. H. |
| " DODD J. V. I. | " KENNEDY J. B. |
| " COLLINS D. B. | " KNOLL THEO. |
| Corps. JOHNSON C. F. | " KRUPP GUSTAVE. |
| " DONAHOWER F. M. | " LAUMAN C. |
| " HAESSACKE PAUL | " LAUMAN Wm. |
| " BLOCK J. H. | " LEHR Wm. |
| " DAVIS A. Y. | " LIVINGSTON FRED |
| " FRENCH A. B. | " LUDCKE HERMAN |
| Privates AITON E. B. | " MALMO E. E. |
| " AMUNDSON A. E. | " MODINE EDWARD |
| " ANDERSON A. J. | " MOLL HENRY |
| " ANDERSON M. A. | " NUTTER W. E. |
| " BENSON C. A. | " PETERSON ALBERT |
| " BLACKISTON JNO. | " PETTIS ALLEN |
| " BLOMBERG GUS. | " QUANE JAS. |
| " BURKE C. B. | " RANDALL H. B. |
| " COX W. S. | " ROGERS J. M. |
| " DANBY JAS. | " SACKETT H. A. |
| " DANIELS J. W. | " SCHUMACHER E. F. |
| " DELANEY JAS. | " SIMONS MEAD M. |
| " DUNHAM H. E. | " SNYDER LEON |
| " DUNNING W. W. | " SWAGLER W. S. |
| " ESSLER H. J. | " VOLK FRED |
| " FELDMAN C. W. | " WALTERS JNO. |
| " FRICKE F. W. | " WILKINSON F. W. |

MUSTERED IN MARCH 14, 1883.
Total 62

Above: While the example above is a printed record from the Company K and Company I records donated by Steve Alinder—many others are handwritten rosters. Several include height, weight, hair

and eye color and some include the occupation of the member.

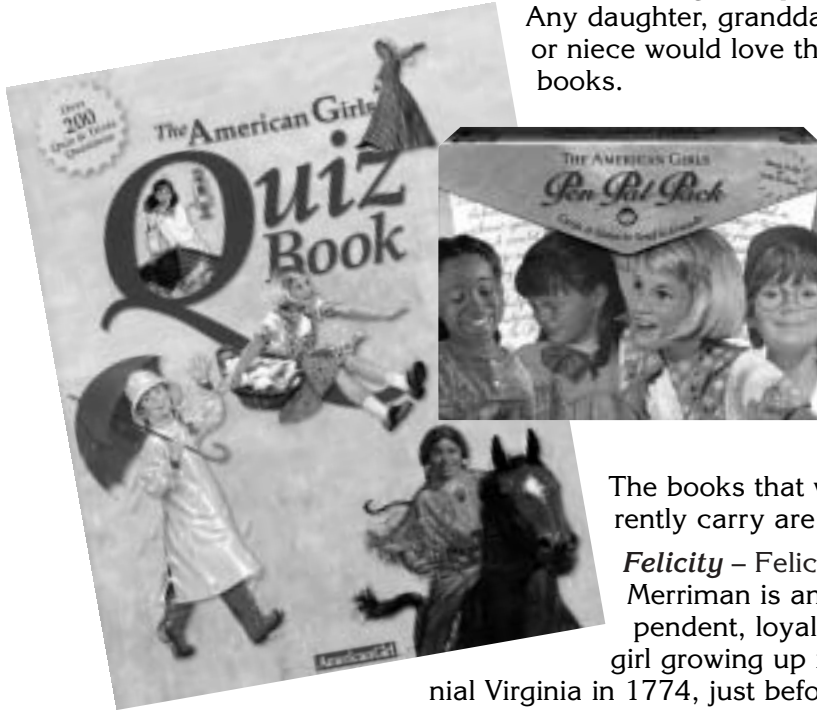


Below: A military unit rides through downtown St. Peter. Taken from a photographic glass plate in the collection.

Museum Store ... by Jessica Hollerich

In addition to the American Girl books our Museum Store also carries fun items such as the AG Pen Pal Pack, Quiz Book, puzzles and paper doll kits

If you have ever heard of the American Girl Collection, you know what I am talking about. These are books that talk about each girl's era and the hardships, friendships, and adventures based on historically accurate information about each era the girls represent. Any daughter, granddaughter, or niece would love these books.



The books that we currently carry are:

Felicity – Felicity Merriman is an independent, loyal, spirited girl growing up in colonial Virginia in 1774, just before the

Revolutionary War.

Kaya – Kaya is a daring, adventurous Nez Perce girl living in 1764.

Kirsten – Kirsten Larson is a brave, steadfast pioneer girl growing up on the Minnesota prairie in 1854.

Addy – Addy Walker is a courageous, strong girl growing up in 1864, during the Civil War.

Samantha – Samantha Parkington is a bright, compassionate, generous girl being raised by her

wealthy grandmother in 1904, during a time of great change.

Kit – Kit Kittredge is a clever, resourceful, inquisitive girl growing up in 1934, during the Great Depression.

Molly – Molly McIntire is a lively, lovable, patriotic girl growing up in 1944.

To learn more about each of these girls, come and check out the books at the Treaty Site History Center, the Harkin Store, or Fort Ridgely. We also have a variety of other items for sale in our gift shop. Come and check us out to see if we have anything to offer you. If we don't have what you are looking for, we will be happy to order it for you.

Also remember that you can now shop online at www.nchsmn.org and get the items that you need or a unique gift. Visit us at the Treaty Site History Center in St. Peter, the Harkin Store, or Fort Ridgely

Remember, all the members of the Nicollet County Historical Society receive a 10% discount on all purchases from any of the gift shops. If you are not a member, perhaps this would be a good time to consider joining the Society.

Divorce records usually contain:

- names of husband and wife
 - date of marriage
 - date of divorce
- and may contain:
- ages and/or birth dates of husband and wife
 - current residence for husband and wife
 - property of the husband and wife
 - names and birth dates, place of residence of children
 - reasons for divorce

Genealogy Corner: *Researching Divorce Records*

Although genealogists many times hunt for probate records in their search for clues to an individual or family, an often overlooked group of public records are divorce records. Admittedly there may not be many of these records in your family but they could prove to be a valuable source for the genealogist.

Divorces before the twentieth century were uncommon and in some places illegal. If found they are considered **primary source records** for the information on property, living children, age of husband and wife and date of divorce. Divorces are administered in the court systems,

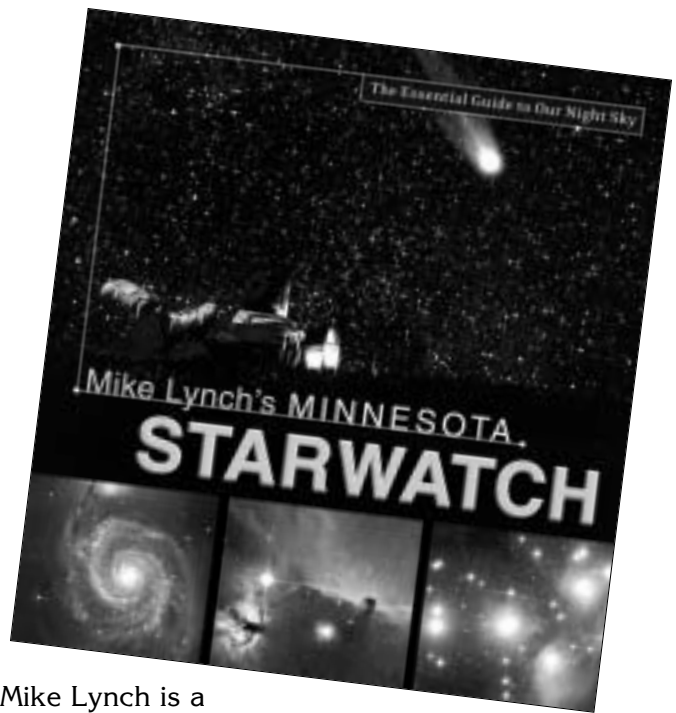
so the process of obtaining a divorce and the location of the ensuing records will vary.

Divorce records are usually not considered as a valuable resource by governments so you will not often find them indexed and may have to do some real digging to locate a record. They are, however, still quite a valuable record to add to your family history files.

Make the Stars Your Old Friends

Make the stars your old friends as we watch the great celestial show in the skies over St. Peter. Please join NCHS, St. Peter Community Education, and Mike Lynch at the Treaty Site History Center from 7 to 9 p.m. Tuesday, October 10th. This is a very special event with limited space. Please call 507-934-3048 to reserve your spot. Tickets are \$15 or \$30 per family. Feel free to bring your own lawn chairs!

This night with the stars, constellations, planets, star clusters, galaxies, and nebulae starts off with an indoor orientation followed by quality time outside under the heavens. Get to know the constellations such as The Big Bear, Cassiopeia, Pegasus, and some of their great stories behind them. We'll also use large reflecting telescopes, including a giant 20" reflector, one of the biggest mobile telescopes in Minnesota, for close up views of planet Mars making another close approach to the Earth. We'll get close and personal with star clusters, nebulae, galaxies and other wonders in our autumn skies. You'll get a great handout and package with user-friendly star maps and constellation charts maps, web-sites, a telescope-buying guide, and more!



Mike Lynch is a meteorologist at WCCO Radio and has been teaching astronomy classes for over 35 years. He also writes a weekly stargazing column for the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* and has just completed his first book, *Mike Lynch's Minnesota Star Watch*.

Mike's newly published book will be available for purchase at a discount during the program.

Your universe is waiting!

Harkin Store



If you haven't been out to the Harkin Store yet this year your opportunities are slipping away! The Store is open weekends through October 15th. There are programs every Sunday until the end of the season. (Please see upcoming Harkin events on the calendar on page 11.)

The site's been hopping this year – attendance is up a whopping 34 percent over last year. Over 6,000 visitors so far have come from 45 states and 13 countries. Hurry to see what all the fuss is about. The fall colors will make the drive a nice bonus.

End of Season Sale and Program

Come enjoy this season's last program and a heckuva great sale on Sunday, October 15th at the Harkin Store. While the Harkin Store originally closed its doors in 1901, we'll be back as usual next season. Come learn more about how riverboats, railroads, and grasshoppers contributed to the store's demise over one hundred years ago.

Remaining gift shop merchandise from the Society's stores at Harkin, Fort Ridgely, and Traverse des Sioux will be on sale. Books, clothing, and gift items will all be priced to move.

Music and refreshments begin at 1 p.m., but the sale will be on all weekend.

Immigrant History Project

... by Jamie Pederson

Thanks to a grant from Higher Education Consortium on Urban Affairs (HECUA), NCHS was able to hire Jamie Pederson (below) for the immigrant project. Jamie is now back attending classes for her senior year at Gustavus.



Below: The Gong family. One of several recent immigrant families who generously shared their life-stories with Jamie during her summer internship project collecting the oral histories of these new members of our communities.



I can't believe how quickly this summer and my project have passed. For the past three months I have worked on creating a book dedicated to the experiences of Somali, Sudanese, and Hispanic immigrants in Nicollet County. To achieve this I met with various members from these immigrant communities to hear their stories.

Collecting oral histories has truly been a rewarding and eye-opening experience; I am grateful to everyone who participated in the creation of the final book. Furthermore, my work will not end at the end of this summer; the research will serve as a foundation for further use in exhibits and collections at the Nicollet County

Historical Society. I am honored to have been chosen to work as an intern for such a reputable and important project. My experience in this position will be irreplaceable as I look to my future and a career in social justice and activism.

From Jamie Pederson's interview with Patricia Mensing

Lead Instructor.

English as a Second Language
Mankato Adult Basic Ed Program
The Lincoln Community Center

In my opinion the immigrant communities positively impact St. Peter and the surrounding area. Along with the economic benefits, our schools and neighborhoods are enriched when immigrants share their new culture including food, music, art, clothing and customs. Also, new immigrant communities tend to bring out the best in others. Many people who live around the St. Peter area are active in volunteerism and want to learn more about other countries and cultures. They help immigrants learn English and our ways of life through tutoring English and assisting with a variety of life experiences such as shopping, filling out job applications, sewing or working in the community garden. Change always takes time but over the years I have seen progress made in diversity efforts. There are more festivals and community get-togethers along with on-going programs that recognize the immigrant communities and their needs. Non-profit organizations, schools, businesses and churches are offering support in housing, jobs and education. However, the bulk of what is done depends on resources and funding from state and federal agencies so it is crucial that the public and policy makers understand and recognize the contributions of immigrants.

Artifact Donors & Donations since April 2006:

- Robert J. Sandeen: copies of the St. Peter High School yearbooks for the classes of 1964 and 1966; various issues of the *Peter Patter* published at the St. Peter High School between 1962 and 1966; 1896 Nicollet County Directory; two Nicollet, Minn. 150th anniversary postcards; ten postcards of receipts for the City of St. Peter, ranging from 1886 to 1899
- Michael Frederick: assorted Nicollet County memorabilia
- Ruth Klossner: four photographs of members of the various Nicollet Sesquicentennial Committees and a photograph of Nicollet leaders; CDs of photos from the Nicollet, 150th anniversary; CDs of photos of the 2006 Nicollet County Fair [NOTE: RUTH KLOSSNER RETAINS ALL REPRODUCTION RIGHTS TO THESE IMAGES]
- Beverly Woods: Declaration of Intent of Oleus Pederson in 1868
- Donald Olmanson: representing Dr. Anna Rotramel: papers and photographs belonging to Dr. Anna Rotramel
- David W. Schmit: family history book *Julius Schmit and his wife Margaret Morson*
- Gordon Dey: stereophoto: *Ruins of Insane Asylum at St. Peter, February, 1881.*
- McLeod County Historical Society: postcard of the Holiday House outside of St. Peter, four scenes in color, photo by Folke Person, #68406
- Rev. Craig Ferkenstad, representing the Norwegian Grove Lutheran Church in Sibley County: booklet celebrating the 125th anniversary of the church
- Jennifer Powers: clothing worn by Mariah Cox, the wife of E. St. Julien Cox, and documents of Lillian Cox Gault; photos featuring the Cox and Gault families
- Jeffrey Domras: representing Bolton and Menk Engineering: CD of the history of the storm sewer system in St. Peter, by Pell Johnson (this is copyrighted); maps of St. Peter, showing the water system, the storm sewer system, and the sanitary sewer system (each of the three maps is in a large, rolled format and is also reproduced as a 11 x 17 inch map)
- Steve Alinder: documents and ledgers from both Company I and Company K in St. Peter, MN, as well as documents from other military organizations that were based in St. Peter
- Robert Wettergren: Church of the Holy Communion in St. Peter, photographs and information; Wettergren Dairy price list; Masonic trowel of E. St. Julien Cox; medical instruments of Dr. Fred P. Strathern of St. Peter; Wettergren Dairy calendars; cigar stand; cigar stand matchbox holder of George Nutter of St. Peter; Wettergren Dairy pencil; 1893 photograph of 19 eligible bachelors from St. Peter; table and chairs (below) once owned by George Nutter and his father, both St. Peter residents; the book number *16 Life of John A. Johnson* by Day and Knappen, signed by Mrs. John A. Johnson.



A Case in Point One man's junk is another's treasure

The Company I and K records, mentioned in the donations at the left and in the archive's article on page 5, were found in a dumpster by Steve Alinder while he was attending an estate sale. But for his eagle eye these incredibly valuable records would have been lost to history.

While your local historical society neither wants nor can it accept everything from your attic or your parent's basement please do consider the historical significance of that bundle of postcards or that local cigar box. A brief call to NCHS could answer your question "Could this fit into the collection?"

.....
Bob and Rene Wettergren (left) at the table in their home prior to their (and its) move to different quarters. (John Cross photo)

The table, donated by the Wettergrens, dates back to the 1850s. Guests from the Mayo Brothers and Governor Orville Freeman, to Bishop Whipple and Carl Pohlrad all gathered at the table over its long history. The table now resides at the E. St. Julien Cox House.

Also found in dumpsters across the nation:

A photograph of an 1847 Massachusetts school which helped with the restoration resulting in it being placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Discarded records from the Department of Interior containing pertinent information to Indian Trust accountability including genealogical records, which are used to determine ownership of land and assets.

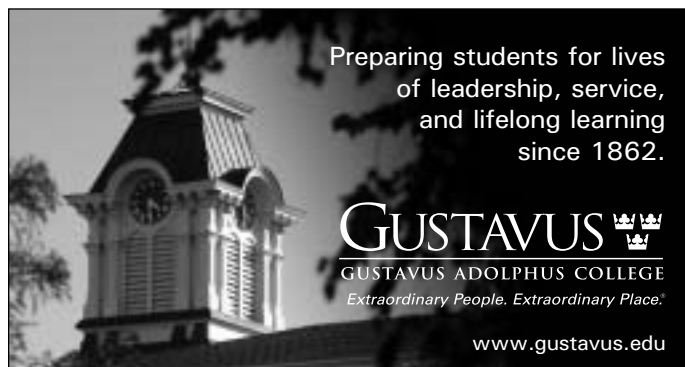
\$20,738.88 in savings bonds returned by the homeless Detroit man who found them to their rightful owner — he was rewarded with cash and a job.

Behind-the-scenes footage from the set of "Little Annie Rooney" (1925) showing Mary Pickford with both cast and crew.

52 stolen Academy Awards Oscars



NCHS especially thanks the St. Peter United Way for 2006 general operating support.





The Oshawa Township Hall between Nicollet and St. Peter was destroyed by a tornado August 24th. Ironically, this hall replaced one demolished by the 1998 tornado that decimated St. Peter. Some of the township's historic documents were also lost with the building in 1998. Luckily many remaining records were then transferred to the NCHS archives. The Society sends our thoughts and best-wishes to all those affected by last month's severe weather.



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Ridgely Report ... by Nancy Zempel, site manager

As I write this article it is hard to believe that the summer season is almost over. Many visitors have made the same comment of “where did the summer go?” and “can you believe school will start soon?” The season at Fort Ridgely has gone fast and has had many changes during the season.

One of the most exciting events this summer has been the location of an ancient firepit on the golf course. The ring has been dated to have been active from 3,000–8,000 years ago. Other information will be forthcoming from the archeologists to also expand the story of the Fort Ridgely military site.

The golf course project will be bid on August 29 after many delays. The hope is that bids will be finalized quickly and construction will be started this fall. The historic site misses the golfers who usually stopped to visit and purchase items at the gift shop.

The new cabin at the horse camp is now ready for campers. The campgrounds will be open for reservations through October 22.

The American Music program by the duet of Noting History was well attended on Aug. 27. The

participation by the visitors during the program sounded great.

Marble Mania on September 3rd was the last program of the season. Tom Fletcher shared his love and skill of playing marbles—just for fun or tournament play. Did you ever think of Abe Lincoln playing a game of marbles at the White House? More information will be published by the Park Staff about a program by Ron Bouldan on Oct. 21. Ron will share his interest in the Minnesota River Valley with a slide show presentation. We truly do live in a historical area of the state, and it's always beautiful, especially in the fall. Fort Ridgely Historic Site will be open Saturdays and Sundays from 10–5 the weekend after Labor Day until Oct. 15. Stop in and visit us at the Commissary Building or walk the parade grounds and enjoy Fort Ridgely.

Our Apologies:

We wish to apologize for some misinformation published in the two previous issues of *the Crossing*. We told you, twice, that the prairie at the Traverse des Sioux townsite would be burned this Spring and to be watching for the burn and the subsequent “rebirth”. Due to weather circumstances, that burn did not take place this year. Hopefully the weather will cooperate in 2007.

Calendar of Events:

- September 10 Patriot Day** Harkin Store
Enjoy an afternoon of old favorites and patriotic music. Find a spot on the porch or spread out a blanket on the lawn for an afternoon of music. 1–4 p.m. NCHS, MHS members, and children under age 12 admitted free, \$2 for adults.
- September 17 Preparing for Winter** Harkin Store
Watch demonstrations of what needed to be done to prepare for winter more than a century ago. 1–4 p.m. NCHS, MHS members, and children under age 12 admitted free, \$2 for adults.
- September 24 Spinning & Weaving** Harkin Store
West Newton was a sheep-raising area when the town thrived more than a century ago. Area spinners and weavers will showcase their talents and the New Ulm String Ensemble will play during this afternoon which brings that time to life. 1–4 p.m. NCHS, MHS members, and children under age 12 admitted free, \$2 for adults.
- September 24 Twins and Multiples** Treaty Site History Center
 1–4 p.m. NCHS, and children under age 12 admitted free, \$4 for adults. Twins FREE.
- September 30 PeeWee Playhouse Day!** E. St. Julien Cox House
It was so fun the first time, we have to do it again! We'll get the fridge and stove boxes and paint them white (with many thanks to Don's Appliance and Ace Hardware). You'll come in your old clothes and bring old paint brushes and markers and glitter and stickers and make your own fabulous play house to take home. It works best if each participant brings along a helper or friend to inspire and encourage them (at no extra charge). We'll create our play village in the back yard at the Cox House and have a tour of the old house while the paint dries on the new ones. 10 a.m.–1 p.m. \$12. Register with Community Education 507-934-3048.
- October 1 Farrier** Harkin Store
Watch local farrier R.J. Gurske make horse shoes and shoe a horse and chat with the costumed guides at this 19th-century general store. 1–4 p.m. NCHS, MHS members, and children under age 12 admitted free, \$2 for adults.
- October 8 Old Time Games** Harkin Store
Join in old-fashioned games popular in the late 19th century, when the Harkin Store was the center of West Newton. 1–4 p.m. NCHS, MHS members, and children under age 12 admitted free, \$2 for adults.
- October 10 Mike Lynch Minnesota Starwatch Class** Treaty Site History Center
Co-sponsored by NCHS and St. Peter Community Education. See story on page 7. 7–9 p.m.; \$15, \$30 for families. Register with Community Education 507-934-3048.
- October 15 Music Jamboree** Harkin Store
Local musicians are invited to bring their instruments and join in an afternoon of music to mark the closing of the Harkin Store for the season. 1–4 p.m. NCHS, MHS members, and children under age 12 admitted free, \$2.50 6-16 years old, \$4 for adults.
- October 17 Family Treasures** Best Western in North Mankato
Bob Herskovitz, from the Minnesota Historical Society, will tell and show us how to preserve our greatest family treasures. 2 p.m. NCHS, and children under age 5 admitted free, \$2 for adults.
- October 22 Cox-Tober Fest: Brewing Families in the River Valley** E. St. Julien Cox House
Did you know that the building housing Shorty's Tire One was once the town brewery? Shorty has a collection of artifacts from the beer-making Engesser family and a mural left on the wall from those days. Come learn all about it and enjoy the company of a current beer-making family in the valley as well. We will welcome Paula and George Marti from Morgan Creek Vineyard and Schell's Brewery of New Ulm. George promises to bring his accordion to play and sing a selection of songs that traditionally accompany the brew. 1–4 p.m. Register with Community Education 507-934-3048.
- October 28 Tiptoe Flashlight Tours, Victorian Halloween Party, Bobbing for Apples** E. St. Julien Cox House
Come in costume and bring a flashlight! We'll have songs and spooky stories and old-fashioned games. Can you imagine your life without electric lights and big buckets of candy? How did they do it? For all ages (under 10s please bring a parent — it might get scary!) You'll learn about lamps, lanterns and candles and try to contact the ghosts of the Cox House. 1–4 p.m. \$5. Register with Community Education 507-934-3048.
- December 2 & 3, 9 & 10 Victorian Christmas at the Cox House** E. St. Julien Cox House
Teddy Bears, music, house tours and refreshments. 1–4 p.m. NCHS, and children under age 12 admitted free, \$3 for adults.

NCHS Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

My check is enclosed Please debit my credit card

Acct. Number _____

Expiration Date _____

Authorized Signature _____

Yes! I would like to support my Nicollet County Historical Society in 2005 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 | \$ 200 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Benefactor | \$ 500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Life Member | \$ 1,000 |

Business Memberships

call or
e-mail
for info

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

the CROSSING

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

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