

the CROSSING

a publication of the Nicollet County Historical Society

September 2010 • Volume 15 / Issue 3

September 16–18

Cox House Antique and Collectibles Sale

The second annual antique and collectibles yard sale will take place on the grounds of the Historic Cox House, 500 N. Washington Avenue, St. Peter, September 16–18th (Thursday, Friday, 9 a.m.–6 p.m. and Saturday 9–12 a.m.). Several local antique and private dealers plus the Cox House Committee will present their wares on the lawn. Proceeds from the sale will be used to benefit the House.

The 2009 event raised over \$500 for the Cox House. Special gratitude is due to the hardworking committee members who work long hours setting up, managing sales, and taking down the tables and tents each day. This event is a great partnership between the Society and local antique businesses.

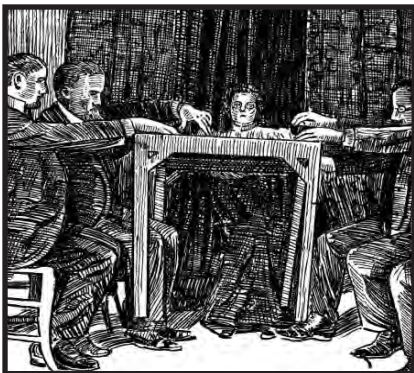


Ben Leonard. “We’ll be able to stretch our donations at the event that much further. Now every dollar will be even more important. Please support the Society and know that your dollar will be pulling double-duty that day.” Funds raised at the sale and matched by Thrivent will go towards programs and interpretation at the Cox House.

The Society would like to thank the St. Peter Chapter of Thrivent for Lutherans with their help in this event. Thrivent has generously offered to match funds raised at the sale up to a \$500 donation from Thrivent! “We couldn’t be happier,” says Director

Antique Sale continued on page 13

Victorian Séance and Mourning



Please join the Cox family in mourning the dead October 21st through the 23rd. The Cox House will be filled with Victorian era mourners, a medium, and all the lavish trappings of an early 1900 era séance.

will find Mariah Cox and her remaining immediate family in mourning over the loss of her beloved husband, E. St. Julien Cox. Mrs. Cox’s grief has guided her to employ, under contract, a traveling spirit medium. He has agreed, for a price, to make all earnest efforts in coaxing a personal spirit guide into the premises,

Séance continued on page 12

For these three evenings, as the month of October fades to a close, guests to the home

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Memorials

received since the last newsletter:

In Memory of
Ardella Hulke
Given by
Lorraine & Harold Olson

In Memory of
Dick Larson

Given by
Martin & Carol Menk

In Memory of
Ilene Nelson-Wettergren

Given by
Dorothy Anthony
Janet Anthony
Glen Annexstad
James & Maxine Holm
Robert & Kay Moline
Judy Scholl
Richard & Janet Wettergren

Monetary Donations

received since the last newsletter:

Cambria/Davisco
Christy Martin

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Ruth Grewe
Eileen Holz
Ben Leonard
Bob Sandeen
Nancy Zempel

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Vice President, Jeremy Freeman, St. Peter
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Treasurer, Herb Poncin, Nicollet
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Rachel Larson, St. Peter
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Harkin Store Site Guide, Ann Koch

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Allen McBride, Hannah Skinner

TSHC Maintenance, Wayne Passon

Ft. Ridgely Site Manager, Nancy Zempel

Ft. Ridgely Site Guides, Ashley Hamre,
Charlotte Nack, Dorothy Polesky,
Melinda Somer, John Taylor

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
Fri.–Sun. 1–4 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: June, July, and August
Tues.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
September through October 15
Fri.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Fort Ridgely

72404 County Road 30
Fairfax, MN 55332
Fort Ridgely Phone: (507) 426-7888
Website: ridgely@nchsmn.org
Hours: Memorial Day–Labor Day
Fri.–Sun.: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
September–October 15
Sat. & Sun.: 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Director's Column

Fall means back to school for lots of Nicollet County folks. It's time for me to hit the books as well. Every year we do a budget for the next. It's never easy, but the 2011 budget will be one of the most important we've ever done.

That's why I really need to do my homework on this one.

We play close attention to our finances here at NCHS. Our Office Manager Jessica Brockberg has a degree in accounting and keeps great track of the numbers. Jeff Ruble, Judy Bruns, and others at Johnson and Hoehn help us a great deal too. But these days it's not just about watching expenses and earning income. NCHS, and organizations like ours, have to get innovative and creative if we want to continue to succeed.

NCHS staff and board members need to look at every aspect of our operation. What works? What doesn't? What can we do better and/or differently? How can we continue to deliver the services we want in the economic climate we have?

Some things will have to change. NCHS will have a smaller 2011 budget than we did in 2010 or 2009. But hopefully we can make changes that minimally impact our members and visitors. Some changes will likely bring in new revenue, while others might help us expend funds more efficiently.

I think NCHS has made great strides over the past decade. We serve more people now than we ever have. I don't see our economic climate as an excuse or a stumbling block. But it is a fork in the road. Decisions made now will definitely affect us down the road. We want to be sure we make the best informed choices we can for today and tomorrow.

Thanks!



Ben Leonard, Director



Ben Leonard

Cambria & Davisco hit a home run for NCHS

This generous gift is sure to generate some excitement. Cambria and Davisco have given four seats to two games (8 total) to raise funds for the Society. Getting tickets to a game at Target Field is a great experience—and these are not ordinary tickets. Sit behind home plate and experience major league baseball in Minnesota like few have before. All the fantastic food and beverages you want are included.

This is a truly unique opportunity available to very few and not to be missed. We sincerely thank Cambria and Davisco for putting the fun in our fundraiser. This is a great way to have a once-in-a-lifetime experience and support NCHS at the same time. Obviously space is extremely limited

and the tickets are expected to go fast. We still had a few tickets available at press time, but that may no longer be true. If you're interested in learning more, please contact Ben at 934-2160 or ben@nchsmn.org.



Lights...Camera...Ancestry!

The Society and Nicollet County Recorder's Office have been working with producers from Brigham Young University Television (BYU TV). An episode of *The Generations Project* will be shot at the Courthouse, Historical Society, and State Hospital Museum, later this year.

The show takes people on a journey to learn about their ancestors and in the process hopefully find unexpected answers to questions about themselves. They travel to the places their ancestors called home, meeting with relatives and experts to uncover family mysteries and experience, hands-on, the lifestyle, culture, and history that made up their ancestors' lives. The participants learn that one of the best ways to know who they are is to learn whom they came from. Learn more at: <http://www.byutv.org/thegenerationsproject/>.



Another County Fair is History



Top: Aspiring rabbit raisers get tips from the judge during the rabbit show.

Bottom: Senior Citizen awards program. Left: Kathryn Wilking accepts for her father Ellery Peterson, and right Sally Webster both received Outstanding Senior Citizen Awards and Mary Myhra, center, received the Distinguished Service Award.

The Society thanks all our loyal volunteers who helped to meet and greet visitors to the Nicollet County Historical Society's booth at the fair this year.

Films on First Thursdays

The Nicollet County Historical Society, St. Peter Community and Family Education, St. Peter Food Co-op, Arts Center of Saint Peter, St. Peter Senior Center, St. Peter Public Library, and St. Peter Recreation Department have teamed up to bring you another documentary film series. Join us the first Thursday of every month from September through May at 7 p.m. at the St. Peter Community Center. Some films are serious, some are amazing, and a few are just plain weird. Bring your own popcorn and beverages. Everyone is welcome for this totally free series, though some films aren't suitable for kids.

Thurs., September 2, 7 p.m. *No Impact Man*
Colin Beavan decides to completely eliminate his personal impact on the environment for the next year. It means eating vegetarian, buying only local food, and turning off the refrigerator. It also means no elevators, no television, no cars, busses, or airplanes, no toxic cleaning products, no electricity, no material consumption, and no garbage. No problem—at least for Colin—but he and his family live in Manhattan. So when his espresso-guzzling, retail-worshipping wife Michelle and their two-year-old daughter are dragged into the fray, the No Impact Project has an unforeseen impact of its own.

90 minutes, Not Rated

story is told through two of these entrepreneurs—Sam and Rhonda—battling the might and tactics of Corporate America. We witness their struggle to achieve their American Dream in an industry dominated by powerful corporations unwilling to cede an inch. 89 minutes, Not Rated



Thurs., December 2, 7 p.m. *Man on Wire*

Philippe Petit captured the world's attention in 1974 when he successfully walked across a high wire between New York's Twin Towers. This Oscar winner for Best Documentary explores the preparations that went into the stunt as well as the event and its aftermath. Obsessed with the towers even before they were fully constructed, Petit sneaked into the buildings several times to determine the equipment he needed to accomplish his daring feat. 94 minutes, PG 13

Thurs., January 6, 7 p.m. *Death of the Dream*

Twin Cities Public Television presents *Death of the Dream: Farmhouses in the Heartland*. This film about the rural past was inspired by photographer and essayist William Gabler's beautiful book of classic farmhouses, *Death of the Dream*, published by the Afton Historical Society Press. Part celebration and part bittersweet elegy the film provides a window towards the past, while looking towards the future. The film examines who we are today, reflects on how the family farm has



Film Series continued on page 6

Thursday, October 7, 7 p.m. *Food, Inc.*

We have bigger-breasted chickens, the perfect pork chop, herbicide-resistant soybean seeds, even tomatoes that won't go bad, but we also have new strains of E. coli—the harmful bacteria that causes illness for an estimated 73,000 Americans annually. We are riddled with widespread obesity, particularly among children, and an epidemic level of diabetes among adults. *Food, Inc.* reveals surprising—and often shocking truths—about what we eat, how it's produced, who we have become as a nation and where we

are going from here. 91 minutes, PG



Thur., November 4, 7 p.m. *Beer Wars*

Director Anat Baron takes you on a no holds barred exploration of the U.S. beer industry that ultimately reveals the truth behind the label of your favorite beer. Told from an insider's perspective, the film goes behind the scenes of the daily battles and all out wars that dominate one of America's favorite industries. *Beer Wars* begins as the corporate behemoths are being challenged by small, independent brewers who are shunning the status quo and creating innovative new beers. The



Active Archives

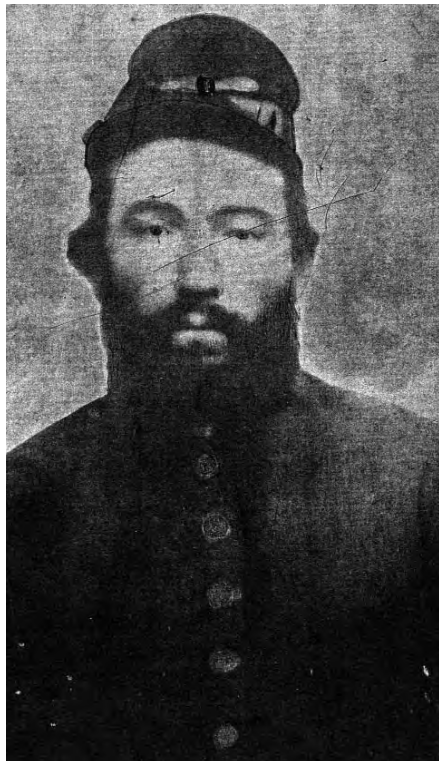
by Bob Sandeen, Collections Manager

I never know what to expect here in the Archives from day to day. Recently, the phone rang and I found myself talking to Ruth L. Rose, a woman from the west coast. She told me about an



ancestor who had been stationed at Fort Ridgely during the Civil War. Ruth said that her ancestor was a soldier at the fort, and that he had been a cook for the other soldiers. She told me that her family had passed down the rolling pin that he had used from one generation to the

next, but that she was willing to donate it to us. Because she knew the story behind the rolling pin, I told her that we were willing to accept it as a donation. When it arrived, I saw that she had included a photocopy of the cook, Valentine Mantel, and of his wife, Emeline (Chapman) Mantel. Valentine is shown in the image wearing his uniform as a member of the 9th Minnesota Infantry Regiment. He served in Company F, and was a soldier from August 20, 1862 until November 14, 1864. Valentine



This tin type photo of Valentine Mantel shows him in his Army uniform when he worked at Fort Ridgely as a Hospital Cook, during the Civil War. He was born in Bavaria. He homesteaded quite a bit of land and was a successful farmer as he built a frame house. He died from pneumonia at 58 years in Fort Ridgely, Minnesota.

and Emeline remained in Nicollet County after the war. They and two of their children were buried in St. John's Lutheran Cemetery, about four miles east of Fort Ridgely. Valentine was born in Bavaria in 1827, married Emeline in

Rochester, Minnesota, and farmed nearly 160 acres in section 2 of the eastern part of Ridgely Township until his death from pneumonia in 1885. He and Emeline were the parents of four girls and three boys. We have access to addition information about the Mantel family as well. So, if I show you our newly acquired rolling pin, you will know that there is quite a bit of information to go along with it. The stories that are associated with the artifacts that we acquire make the artifacts much more interesting.

Changing subjects, two men, Dave Goodell and Mike Lamb, with backgrounds from the Judson and Nicollet Township area are researching the Hebron area of Nicollet Township and the ghost towns of Eureka and Dakota City. Eureka and Dakota City were along the Minnesota River, close to Judson, but on the north side of the river. Hebron was in section 27. If you have photographs, stories, or information about these places, please contact me at the museum. I can be reached by phone at 507-934-2160 or by e-mail at bob@nchsmn.org. We would very much like to borrow photographs for a few minutes in order to make copies of them on our computer. If you wish, we will not only return your original photos, but we will make digital copies of them for you to use on your computer. So far, we have added nice photos of the Hebron Methodist Church and the Hebron Cemetery to our collection of digital images, but we are still looking for additional images of both, as well as any other images from that area.

Donations

accepted into our collections since our June 2010 *Crossing*:

Marlin Peterson: book titled *The Life & Times of J. Victor Peterson and Florence M. Wright* and a 5 cent token issued by Alf. L. Wendinger in Klossner.

Diane Stenson: two pullover shirts with texts referring to the March 29, 1998 tornado in St. Peter.

Kimberly Dorn, representing HickoryTech: two copies of the Atlas and Farm Directory of Nicollet County, Minnesota.

Marilyn J. Robertz: St. Peter Drum and Bugle Corps clothing from the first corps in 1927; hat from the World War Two Construction Battalion organization known as the "Order of the Cooties", GAC first Nobel Conference documents.

Lorraine Pedersen: photo of the Bernadotte Band members in their uniforms; second from left is Myrtle Lund (Mrs. Carl Lund) with her French horn. Myrtle Landahl married Carl Lund in Sibley County on March 23, 1921.

Ruth L. Rose: rolling pin used by Valentine Mantel at Fort Ridgely during his time of service in Company F of the Fifth Minnesota Infantry from August 20, 1862 to November 14, 1864.

Film Series continued from page 4

changed, and explores where we are going as we near the end of the millennium. As eminent historian William Cronon says, "So much of who we are as a nation is linked to that rural vision that one can't help feel both a sadness and sense of dilemma of what the role of rural America should be." 60 minutes, Not Rated



Thurs., February 3, 2011, 7 p.m.

Who the @#! is Jackson Pollack?

When Teri Horton bought a painting in a thrift shop for five dollars, she was stunned when a friend told her that it looked like an original Jackson Pollock and could be worth millions. Working with a leading forensic scientist, Teri learned that a fingerprint on the back of her canvas matched a fingerprint found on a can of paint in Jackson Pollock's studio. More research showed that paint on the floor of Pollock's studio matched the paint on

Teri's canvas. Realizing that a Pollock painting the size of hers was worth upwards of \$50 million, Teri thought she had won the lottery. "Not so fast," the art establishment answered, proclaiming her painting worthless. This documentary captures the 15-year debate between the world's most prestigious art collectors, authenticators and experts and the feisty, 73 year-old grandma who would not give up. 74 minutes, PG 13

Thurs., March 3, 2011, 7 p.m.

King of Kong: Fistful of Quarters

A middle-school science teacher and a hot sauce mogul vie for the Guinness World Record on the arcade classic, Donkey Kong. Steve and Billy engaged in a cross-country duel to see who could set the high score and become The King of Kong. Along the way, both men learned valuable lessons about what it means to be a father, a husband, and a true champion discovering that you don't always need to win to be a winner. 79 minutes, PG 13

Thurs., April 7, 2011, 7 p.m. *I.O.U.S.A.*

I.O.U.S.A. boldly examines the rapidly growing national debt and its consequences for the United States and its citizens. Burdened with an ever-expanding government and military, increased international competition, overextended entitlement programs, and debts to foreign countries that are becoming impossible to honor, America must mend its spendthrift ways or face an economic disaster of epic proportions. Throughout history, the American government has found it nearly impossi-

ble to spend only what has been raised through taxes. The film follows former U.S. Comptroller General David Walker as he crisscrosses the country explaining America's unsustainable fiscal policies to its citizens. Pointedly topical and consummately nonpartisan, *I.O.U.S.A.* drives home the message that the only time for America's financial future is now. 85 minutes, PG



Thurs., May 5, 2011, 7 p.m.

Which Way Home

2010 Oscar Nominee for "Best Documentary Feature."

"*Which Way Home* follows the stories of several children attempting to illegally cross the Mexican border into the United States by way of riding on the tops of trains. ...From the boys and girls riding the trains to the kids who've already been caught and are on their way back home, the film brings us everything we'd expect from a solid, well-made documentary-injecting passion, honesty and heart into a topic that certainly needs more attention drawn to it.

Which Way Home is a truly captivating documentary that doesn't carry an agenda; it doesn't ask for you to adopt a Mexican teenager or send money to help these kids cross the border. It simply drops itself into the middle of a growing issue in Mexico, documents every square inch of the situation and leaves you to carry on the rest of your day." NR, not suitable for viewers under 17

~ Eric Davis, *Cinematical*


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New Exhibit Opens Soon at Mankato Clinic – Daniels Health Center

Asa Daniels in St. Peter

"It has been a life spent with and for the public, and scarce a household here but one time or another has felt the beneficent efforts of his presence."

— St. Peter Herald, May 16, 1902

Asa Daniels left the Lower Sioux Agency for St. Peter in 1861. He lived on Washington Avenue where he and his wife Emma (Evans) Daniels raised seven children. In later years he practiced medicine from the house with his son, Jared Waldo Daniels, named after Asa's brother.

Being a rural frontier doctor was dangerous business. In 1862 Dr. Bullom, a partner of Daniels, was thrown from his sleigh as he returned from a house call. The fall complicated his existing tuberculosis and he died within a year. Daniels himself was caught in the infamous blizzard of 1873 and nearly lost his life. Despite the risks, doctors like Daniels continued to travel great distances to care for the sick.

In 1908 Daniels relocated to Palmdale, California to live with his widowed daughter. He left St. Peter as the oldest and longest-tenured doctor in Minnesota. He died of bronchitis in Palmdale at the age of 94 in 1923.

The Mankato Clinic, in business since 1916, opened a new clinic in St. Peter in 2003. It was named the Daniels Health Center in recognition of Asa Daniels fifty years of service to the community.

Source:
The History of Health and Lower Daniels, Wilbur Gustafson, Redwood Falls, Minn. and Company, 1916.
St. Peter Herald, May 16, 1902.
St. Peter Herald, April 23, 1902 Edition/27, 283.



Asa Daniels at the California Coast, 1910, from the collections of the Nicollet County Historical Society.



Daniels Family (left to right) Asa Daniels, 81; his granddaughter Florence Isabel Daniels, 5; his son Jared W. Daniels, 43; his granddaughter Karen Emma Daniels, 4 months, August, 1916 from the collections of the Nicollet County Historical Society.



A. W. Daniels' House, St. Peter, 1870. Minnesota Historical Society collection.



The Daniels Health Center, located at the corner of Highway 109 and Highway 22, is named to honor one of St. Peter's first physicians, Dr. Asa Wilder Daniels.



Mankato Clinic's Daniels Health Center in St. Peter will soon have a historical exhibit in its lobby. It will feature Dr. Asa Daniel's medical cabinet, medical tools and supplies from the late 1800s, and interpretive panels on the life of Asa Daniels.

Asa Daniels first came to Nicollet County in 1853. Though he was the first Euro-American to practice medicine in Nicollet County, Daniels left shortly after to serve as surgeon at the Lower Sioux Agency outside Redwood Falls. Daniels returned to St. Peter in 1861, and was instrumental treating the wounded during the U.S./Dakota War of 1862.

We are thankful for the Clinic's partnership in this exhibit and our area's important past. Next time you find yourself at Daniels Health Center don't reach for that magazine—pick up some local history instead.

"It has been a life spent with and for the public and scarce a household here but one time or another has felt the beneficent efforts of his presence." The *St. Peter Herald* remarked on Daniel's long career in its May 16, 1902 issue.

Members

Thanks to the following new and renewing members of NCHS since our last newsletter.

New Business Members:

Nicollet
Conservation Club, \$500
Priced Right Medical, \$200
ProGrowth Bank, \$200

New Family Members:

Wayne & Theresa Bjorklund
Kyle & Andrea Krenz
Rachel Larson

New Individual Members:

Dale Himmelman
Edward McLean
Wade Olsen
JoAnn Schmidt

Renewed Business Members:

Arts Center of Saint Peter, \$200

Renewed Patron Members:

West Newton Township

Renewed Family Members:

John & Julianna Allerson
Roger & Lois Currier
Terry Gappa
Ray & Liz Jacobson
Tom Hynes & Elizabeth McGraw

Renewed Individual Members:

Eunice Amos
Shirley Bishop
Jackie Feldman
Mike Haeuser
Jan Holte
Carol Jackson
Willie Lindquist
Craig Nelson
Ray Olson
Wood Lake
Battlefield Preservation

Museum Store Musings

by Ben Leonard

October Surprise! I don't expect it to sway the election, but NCHS merchandise from all our sites will be on sale all September and October long at the Harkin Store. Find great deals on books and other great gifts. Sale items will be 20% off and members get their 10% discount on top of sale prices.



Having a class reunion in Nicollet County? Why not celebrate that history at the Society? Our historic sites are available at reasonable rates. Give your classmates a real trip down memory lane. Ask us about extras like yearbook, artifact, and document displays. We're here to help.

St. Peter to host Smithsonian exhibit in 2011

New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music



The Society and Arts Center of Saint Peter are excited to announce a new partnership. We have been chosen by the Minnesota Humanities Center to host the traveling Smithsonian

Institution's exhibit, *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music*. The exhibit will be on display in the Art Center's Moline Gallery from April 30th through June 11th 2011. Special programs and events will take place at the Arts Center, Treaty Site, and other St. Peter locations throughout April, May, and June 2011.

Through a selection of photographs, recordings, instruments, lyrics and artist profiles, *New Harmonies* explores the distinct cultural identities of gospel, country, blues and other forms of roots music as they record the history of the American people and set the foundation for many musical genres appreciated world wide today.



Minnesota musicians, courtesy of the Library of Congress

Listen to America's music and hear the story of freedom. It's the story of people in a New World places they have left behind, and ideas they have brought with them. It is the story of people who were already here, but whose world is remade. The distinct cultural identities of all of these people are carried in song—both sacred and secular. Their music tracks the unique history of many peoples reshaping each other into one incredibly diverse and complex people—Americans. Their music is the roots of American music.

The music that emerges is known by names like blues, country western, folk, and gospel. The sounds are as sweet as mountain air, and as sultry as a summer night in Mississippi delta country. The instruments vary from fiddle to

banjo to accordion to guitar to drum. But a drum in the hands of an African sounds different than one in the hands of a European. And neither is the drumbeat of an American Indian. Yet all the rhythms merge, as do the melodies and harmonies, producing completely new sounds—new music. The musics merge because this is America. New waves of music ride ashore in the hearts and heads of new immigrants and they create still new sounds from what they have brought with them and what they find here. And nothing expresses the tensions—or the triumphs—of this journey into democracy quite like the music that it spawns.

The main beat of the exhibition is the on-going cultural process that has made America the birthplace of more music than any place on earth. The exhibition provides a fascinating, inspiring, and toe-tapping listen to the American story of multi-cultural exchange. The story is full of surprises about familiar songs, histories of instruments, the roles of religion and technology, and the continuity of musical roots from *Yankee Doodle Dandy* to the latest hip hop download.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for our organizations and community," said NCHS Director Ben Leonard. "We couldn't have done this without the Arts Center. I think our partnership was a big reason we were successful. The blend of music, arts, and history is a perfect fit. It really includes something for everyone in our community to enjoy."

"Working with Ben on this project has been a real pleasure," said Arts Center Director David Goldstein. "This unique partnership has allowed us to combine our resources and expertise to offer the community an all-encompassing arts and culture experience that incorporates historical and contemporary perspectives. The programs and events that will develop from this opportunity will appeal to a diverse audience and be enjoyable to all."

The nationally traveling exhibit is part of Museum on Main Street, a unique collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES), state humanities councils across the nation, and local host institutions. To learn more about *New Harmonies* and other Museum on Main Street exhibitions, visit www.museumonmainstreet.org.

Smithsonian
Institution



New Harmonies has been made possible in St. Peter, Minn. by the Minnesota State Humanities Council.

New Harmonies is part of Museum on Main Street, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and the Federation of State Humanities Councils. Support for Museum on Main Street has been provided by the United States Congress.

Harkin Happenings

by Ruth Grewe, site manager

The Harkin Store has been busy not only on week-ends but also throughout the week with visitors are from many states and also some distant countries.

We have some interesting things going to happen on our Sunday programs. September 5, John Koblas, author of Jesse James books in Minnesota and cowboy ballad singer and yodeler, Lonesome Ron will be our program. September 12, our Grandparents (parents) Activity Day, with activities for them to do with their grandchildren or children. September 19, kids love this one, Snakes, Snakes, Snakes with Tom Jessen; he brings a variety of snakes and talks about them. Our next program has been one we have done for a long time and seems to be still of interest, Preparing for Winter, on September 26. We have a display of the things that they did to get ready for the long, hard winter. October 3, brings R.J. Gurska to Harkin with his horseshoe making equipment, kids receive a hand-made horseshoe. October 10, tells us that winter is just around the corner with the program, Sheep-Wool-Quilts, a display of the wool industry and quilts will be out for viewing. And our last program for the season and probably most enjoyed is the Music Jamboree with Lonesome Ron leading the jam session.

Our programs are on Sunday afternoons from 1 to 4 p.m., our store and gift shop hours are from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you haven't been to the Harkin this year yet, there is still time. We are open weekends in September and in October, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday until MEA week-end, with October 17th being our good-bye for the season.

The gift shop will be having a sale from September 11th to October 17th, so if you need anything come and shop for that unusual gift.

sale-sale-SALE

NCHS merchandise from all our sites will be on sale all September and October long at the Harkin Store. Find great deals on books and other great gifts. Sale items will be 20% off and members get their 10% discount on top of sale prices.

The Harkin is open in September and October on week-ends from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday afternoons from 1-4 are the programs.


Lots of rain and steamy conditions led to great prairie growing conditions this season at the Traverse des Sioux State Historic Site. The big bluestem grass seen here reaches seven feet tall. We plan to burn the prairie in the spring as part of our management agreement with the Minnesota Historical Society.

Big Bluestem Grass
Andropogon gerardi
The monarch of the prairie grasses, it was largely responsible for the formation of the famous prairie sod. Stems have bluish to bronze cast in late summer, hence the common name. In late August it produces its distinctive three-parted seed heads, resembling a turkey foot. First frost changes lush green summer color to a reddish-copper color. Grass Family - 3' to 8' high.






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Letters to Home

The following excerpt is from *Letters of Bernt Olmanson: A Union Soldier in the Civil War 1861–1865*. Bernt, a St. Peter resident, served in the 2nd Minnesota Volunteer Regiment, Company E. He served with both E. St.



Berndt Olmanson

Originally compiled and translated from the Norwegian language by his son, Albert Olmanson, the collection contains over 70 letters.

The Olmanson family website states: "The original letters are still around somewhere. My uncle has a copy of them, and is in the process of retranslating them, Albert apparently left out some things which dealt with the farm back in Minnesota. He is also planning to add information, gleaned from other sources, to fill in some of the gaps left by the letters."

Julien Cox and Asgrim Skaro. He fought at Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, and marched with Sherman to the sea. His letters are well written and insightful. Anyone interested in local history and the Civil War should read them. Keith Olmanson republished the book in 2008. There are copies for sale at the Treaty Site. We are gracious to Keith and the Olmanson family for letting us republish Bernt's July 5, 1862 letter here.

July 5, 1862
Camp near Tuscumbia, Alabama

We remain at the same place. How long is uncertain. On July 3rd a little skirmish with some cavalry took place 15 miles from here. One dead and 2 wounded on our side. Our men were exposed on the advance and on the return. I know nothing to write about concerning the war. Richmond, Virginia, and Charleston, South Carolina, are the chief cities but we hear nothing for certain of the action there.

In the place we have marched through before, we have always seen the Union flag and white handkerchiefs waving by every house. That we do not see here in Tennessee and Alabama. Here sour looks greet us as we march through, although we put a guard over every place so their property should not be destroyed by our soldiers. But still they do all the mean things they can to us. Our soldiers would rather burn their property than guard it. A person's life is in danger here when a short distance away from the camp. The local residents here have shot many Northern soldiers from ambush.

Last evening our whole brigade was in town to listen to our generals and others make speeches to the people of the community and to us. We marched in with 17 large flags. The speakers invited the people there back to the North, if they wanted to go.

The speeches were, "We have until now marched through your land as friends, not as enemies. All your property has been safe. We have treated you as brothers and sisters, but you have done just the opposite in return." They were told that this kind of treatment would come to an end. If they kept up their kind of treatment toward us, then

orders will be given the Northern soldiers to burn their fields and murder the whites, let the black ones loose, and declare the inhabitants to the enemies wherever we go forward. It sounded good to our ears.

At present we cannot complain about hard times. We drill one hour a day. The weather is comfortable, not too hot. The nights are still cold enough to sleep under a blanket, and we have exceptionally good water from a spring. A couple of days ago, O.P. Renne and I were to town. We bought four pounds of butter at 25 cents a pound. I had intended to buy a pair of light-weight trousers, but one that cost \$1.50 in St. Peter cost \$3–\$4 here. Plain shirts cost from \$2–\$4. The apples are too green to eat yet.

Peder has not yet returned to the company, but I heard from him a short time ago. He was better and was thinking of returning. The Norwegians who remained behind when we left Corinth, Mississippi, and on the way here because of illness, were N.C. Rukke, Nils Johnsen, Ole Hendrikson, Ole Lofthus, P. Pederson and the Swede, Jonas Nelson, who is from the Settlement [Oshawa Township]. He was very sick. I believe Jonas was sent to Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee.

Even greets you and says that he is in good health today. Tomorrow it is not certain. There are about 30 of us from Company E who are healthy and a few who are sick. I have heard that we shall soon leave here and go five miles southeast.

I have not yet had the opportunity to send money home by safe means or express. Many have sent money by letter in

Letters continued on page 13

Ridgely Report

by Nancy Zempel

Hot enough for you? How many times have we heard that question this summer? The visitors to Fort Ridgely commissary enjoy the cool air in the building and spend time in the AV room to relax and cool down during their visit to the site.

The parade ground signs tell the story of the buildings that were used during the time the fort site was active in the 1850 and 1860s. Inside more of the story is told with the video program and the diorama in the exhibit room. Kids, young and old, have enjoyed the uniforms and clothing that are available in the Sibley tent. Families take pictures that will become part of their summer of 2010 trip and memories for a life time.

Programs at the site have been popular, though the heat may have kept a few visitors away but those that do make the trip enjoy the information shared by the presenters.

The three programs on August 22 presented by John Labatte and John Fritsche were well attended by visitors of all ages. A shelter tent near the monument helped to keep visitors a bit cooler and out of the direct sun.

Upcoming programs include: Curtis Dahlin on Sat., September 4 at 2 p.m. Curtis will share his rare photos in a PowerPoint program of Dakota and area settlers during the years before and after the U.S. Dakota Conflict. He will have his two books available for purchase the day of the event.



Curtis Dahlin, an independent historian specializing in the Dakota Uprising of 1862 in Minnesota, has spent thousands of hours and driven many thousands of miles researching and writing about the subject. In 2007, he published *Dakota Uprising Victims: Gravestones & Stories*. Previously, in 2001, he participated in compiling and writing Joel E. Whitney, Minnesota's Leading Pioneer Photographer, and in 2008, he wrote an essay for *Trails of Tears: Minnesota's Dakota Indian Exile Begins*. He and his wife, Gay, live in Roseville, Minnesota.

- amazon.com

On Sunday, September 26, Stephen Osman will present a PowerPoint program about the U.S. Dakota War of 1862. The title of the event is "Minnesota's Own Civil War." Stephen's many years of research will be of interest to all age groups. Learn about the causes, visit the battlefields, and consider the legacy of the Dakota War.

More programs are in the planning stages, so continue to check the NCHS calendar for upcoming events.

The Fort Ridgely Historic Site will be open Saturdays and Sundays after Labor Day until October 17. Hope to see you before the end of the season.



Stephen Osman is a senior historian for the Minnesota Historical Society. Previously he developed interpretive programs at Historic Fort Snelling, furnished the fort's buildings and managed the museum complex for over three decades. Mr. Osman served with the U.S. Army Reserve in psychological operations, headquartered in one of the old barracks along Fort Snelling's Taylor Avenue.

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Treaty Rock becomes Eagle Scout Project



Nick, left, on a recent scout meeting at Boy Scout camp.

My name is Nick Gansen. I am a member of Boy Scout Troop 58 in St. Peter and currently working toward my Eagle Scout rank. One of the requirements to achieve the Eagle rank is to complete a community service project. I have decided to work on the small Traverse des Sioux park that is at the north end of Old Minnesota Avenue in St. Peter.

I believe the park could use some attention and maintenance to make it a nice historical spot in St. Peter. My plans include a general clean up of the park, adding some new gravel to the paths and parking lot, trimming and clearing fallen trees, painting the bench, updating the marker signs and possibly putting up some bird houses. I also plan to submit the paperwork for Troop 58 to adopt the park so that it can be taken care of in the future on a regular basis. I will be updating Ben Leonard with all the plans and progress of the project, so he can pass information on to anyone that might be interested in helping with the work.



"Treaty Rock" and cabin in a better day. Members of the St. Peter D.A.R. arranged for the rock to be brought to the site. With an attached plaque, the rock was dedicated in 1914. The transplanted cabin was again moved to the County Fairgrounds in 1991 and unfortunately lost during the tornado of 1998. The grounds, property of Minnesota State Historical Society (MSH), has fallen to disrepair in the past years. Nick's project is a welcome, and needed project for the history of this area.

From the collection of Nicollet County Historical Society.

.....

Séance continued from page 1

making its presence known to the guests, and finally making contact with the lady's recently lost husband.

Regarding the medium, it is important to note that there have been hushed rumors spinning through the gossiping circles of St. Peter that the gentleman medium is in fact an audacious fraud. In neighboring towns as close as Le Sueur and Henderson, the medium has been called into question and has been boldly labeled, "a charlatan and a cheat who preys on the sorrows and grief of unsuspecting widows."

Please be our guest and join us at the Eugene St. Julien Cox House for this richly layered turn of the century theatrical event.

The Cox House is located at 500 North Washington in St. Peter. For additional information on admission, times, and reservations, please call Jessica at 934-2160.

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Letters continued from page 10

the mail, but I will not risk it just now if the need for the money is not urgent.

Obviously none of us were alive during the Civil War. I myself have no memories of any conflict before the Persian Gulf War. I have never served in the armed forces. But as I read Bernt's letter I felt like I understood a little better. Not just what he faced in the South during the war, but what today's soldiers face. We're told that Afghanistan and Iraq are different than previous wars. Reading Bernt's letter I'm not so sure. He found himself in a hostile place where threats could come from anyone. Where the front lines weren't well defined, and where almost every moment of the day was potentially deadly.

I'm constantly reminded of Mark Twain's quote, "history doesn't repeat itself, but it rhymes." We should study the past not simply to avoid repeating it, but to help understand and add perspective to today's events. ~ Ben Leonard

Antique Sale continued from page 1

Persons wanting to contribute items for sale should contact the Society at 934-2160, Bev Wetherill at 934-4417, or Susan Stenson at 931-0912.

The Cox House will be open for tours. Local Victorian expert Richard Tostenson has spent many hours this summer redecorating the house. If you've been to the Cox House before, you should definitely go back and see the wonderful changes. The Society received a significant grant to re-envision the House, its interpretation, and programming. Richard has helped us a great deal. While we anticipate most of the changes will be unveiled at the start of the 2011 season, you can definitely check some out now.

Whether you're shopping, browsing, or would just like to see the house, please stop by the sale. Just because the Cox House season is over doesn't mean your group can't see the house. Call 934-2160 or e-mail museum@nchsmn.org to set up a special tour.

Cox House Searching for Antiques



If you find anything you'd like to donate to the sale—let us know! The sale consists of items given to us by people such as you, to sell and make money, to benefit the Cox House. Nothing from the NCHS collections is displayed or sold at the sale. If you have an item you'd like to give, please contact the Society at 934-2160, Bev Wetherill at 934-4417, or Susan Stenson at 931-0912.


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Remembering With Dignity Will Visit Treaty Site



Above: Anne Hansdatter Willand by Melvin Haagenson

Right: Melvin Haagenson, a participant in a RWD "See Their Faces" activity.

Remembering with Dignity, a non-profit group with state funding, has been working hard over the past few years to identify and mark graves of State Hospital patients.

Between 1866 and 1997, almost 13,000 Minnesotans living in state institutions were buried in anonymous graves when they died. The numbered grave markers are a stark reminder of a system that separated people from the community and denied them their basic human rights and dignity. Today, through Remembering With Dignity, people with disabilities are leading the work to honor those who have died: telling their stories, marking their graves, and preserving our dignity.

Please join us in welcoming Remembering with Dignity to the Treaty Site History Center on September 11th from 12:30 to 4 p.m. for an exhibit and interactive experience. RWD staff and volunteers will display artwork, discuss their work, and lead participants in an outdoor activity.

Below: A gravesite with the original numbered stone and the new named stone.



For more information contact Halle O'Falvey, Remembering With Dignity Community Organizer, at 651-641-0297.



A row of "named" gravesites at the St. Peter Regional Treatment Center hilltop cemetery.

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2010 Calendar of Events:

Event/Program information:

- Harkin Store:** Time: 1 to 4 p.m. / Fee: \$3 adults, \$2 seniors and children 6–17. Free for children age 5 and under and MHS members.
- Fort Ridgely:** Time: Programs start at noon each day / Fee: A State Park Vehicle Permit is required unless otherwise noted below.
- TSHC:** Time: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. unless noted below / Fee: \$4 adults, \$2 children 6–18, \$10 family max. Free for children age 5 and under, NCHS and MHS members.
- Cox House:** Time: 1 to 4 p.m. Friday–Sunday. Fee: \$4 adults, \$2 children 6–18, \$10 family max. Free for children age 5 and under, NCHS and MHS members.

Now Open	Tales of the Territory Exhibit <i>Be sure to visit this exciting new NCHS exhibit</i>	TSHC North Exhibit Room
September–October	Gift Shop Sale <i>Harkin Store, Fort Ridgely, and Treaty Site items for sale. Week-ends from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday afternoons from 1–4 p.m.</i>	Harkin Store
September 2	Documentary Film Series: <i>No Impact Man</i> <i>See details on page 3 of this newsletter. 7 p.m. Free and open to the public.</i>	St. Peter Community Center, Senior Center
September 4	Curtis Dahlin <i>Curtis Dahlin, author and historian, will present a PowerPoint program that will show rare photos of people and sites related to the U.S. Dakota War of 1862. 2 p.m.</i>	Fort Ridgely
September 5	The West Arrives in West Newton <i>John J. Koblas, authority on Jesse James and Lonesome Ron, the king of the valley yodelers. 1 p.m.</i>	Harkin Store
September 11	Remembering With Dignity <i>Exhibit and interactive experience, 12:30–4 p.m.</i>	Treaty Site History Center
September 12	Grandparent's Day at the Harkin Store <i>An afternoon of activities to do with parents and grandparents. 1 p.m.</i>	Harkin Store
September 16–September 18	Cox House Antiques and Collectibles Sale <i>Several local antique and private dealers plus the Cox House Committee will present their wares on the lawn. Proceeds from the sale will be used to benefit the House. House tours available also. (Thursday, Friday, 9 a.m.–6 p.m. and Saturday 9–12 a.m.)</i>	E. St. Julien Cox House
September 19	Snakes, Snakes and more Snakes <i>Snake expert Tom Jessen will bring a variety of the fascinating reptiles for visitors to see and learn more about. 1 p.m.</i>	Harkin Store
September 26	Preparing for Winter <i>Preparing for Winter with a display of the jobs that pioneers did to get ready for the hard, long winter. 1 p.m.</i>	Harkin Store
September 26	Minnesota's Own Civil War <i>Stephen Osman, will share the causes of the U.S. Dakota War of 1862. The PowerPoint program will be at the commissary building. 2 p.m.</i>	Fort Ridgely
October 3	The Farrier Visits the Harkin Store <i>R.J. Gurska will be making horseshoes for the visitors. 1 p.m.</i>	Harkin Store
October 7	Documentary Film Series: <i>Food, Inc.</i> <i>See details on page 3 of this newsletter. 7 p.m. Free and open to the public.</i>	St. Peter Community Center, Senior Center
October 10	Honoring the Sheep Industry <i>Wool and what they did with it. 1 p.m.</i>	Harkin Store
October 17	Lonesome Ron's Round-Up <i>A fun time of bidding farewell to the season, area musicians are invited to come and jam. 1 p.m.</i>	Harkin Store
Oct. 21, 22, 23	Victorian Séance and Mourning <i>See article on page 1. 7 p.m., 8 p.m., 9 p.m., and 10 p.m. Reservations, call Jessica at 934-2160</i>	E. St. Julien Cox House
November 4	Documentary Film Series: <i>Beer Wars</i> <i>See details on page 3 of this newsletter. 7 p.m. Free and open to the public.</i>	St. Peter Community Center, Senior Center
December 2	Documentary Film Series: <i>Man on Wire</i> <i>See details on page 3 of this newsletter. 7 p.m. Free and open to the public.</i>	St. Peter Community Center, Senior Center
Dec, 4 & 5, 11 & 12	Cox House Christmas <i>1 to 4 p.m.</i>	E. St. Julien Cox House

Fort Ridgely
Harkin Store
Traverse des Sioux
E. St. Julien Cox House



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