6th Grader Memorial Designs on Display at Treaty Site

A few months ago the Nicollet County Historical Society was contacted by a sixth grade teacher in Minneapolis about reviewing his classes’ proposals for memorials to be built about the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862. Director Alyssa Auten agreed and reviewed 28 proposals that included students’ drawings of what the memorial was to look like and a letter describing why the memorial was designed the way it was. Six projects were chosen to be displayed in the lobby of the Treaty Site History Center for the summer. In June, the class from Minneapolis traveled to St. Peter, got a tour of the Treaty Site History Center and Traverse des Sioux trails, and got to see their classmates’ work on the wall! This class of sixth graders is extremely talented, thoughtful and NCHS is proud to show their work!

Treaty Site’s Patio Grand Opening—Big Success!

On Sunday, June 14, over 100 people gathered at the Treaty Site History Center to celebrate the Grand Opening of the building’s new patio and landscaping. After receiving a very generous anonymous donation two years ago the Nicollet County Historical Society was able to enhance the front entry to the Treaty Site
Members

Thank you to the following renewing and new members of NCHS since the March 2015 Crossing.

New Individual Members:
- 2015 Crossing.

New Family Members:

New Patron Members:

Renewed Family Members:
- Wayne & Theresa Bjorklund
- Abbi & Daniel Carleton
- Opal Dewanz

Renewed Individual Members:
- Marty Duncan
- Elaine Hermanson
- Dale E. Himmelman
- Rita Kramer, Joerg Edward F. McLean
- Ronald McMinnlin
- Jim Pitton
- Ron Roselli
- Beverly Suhm
- Agnes Stensby

New Family Members:
- Dan & Diane Cochran

New Individual Members:
- Karen Annexstad
- Humphrey
- Barbara A. Jerabek
- Karen Robison
- Shirley Zimprich

Directors:
- Nita Aasen, Saint Peter
- Steve Baxa, St. Peter
- Michael Calahan, Oshawa Township
- Abbi Carleton, Nicollet
- Rhonda Dass, North Mankato
- JoAnn Gieske, Nicollet County
- Julie Gilbert, Saint Peter
- Eileen Holz, Saint Peter
- Maria Lokensgard, Norseland
- Bob Schabert, Courtland
- Mark Ulman, North Mankato
- Joe Urban, Saint Peter

Contact Information:
- Executive Director, Alyssa Auten
  alyssa@nchsmsn.org
- Research Coordinator, Bob Sadeen
  bob@nchsmsn.org
- Office Manager, Elaine Deschaines
  elaine@nchsmsn.org
- THSC Site Manager, Susie Carlin
- THSC Museum Assistants, Jessica Becker, Jack Buser, Sarah Cooper, Marian Determan, Teresa Saum
- Loren Sundboom

Thank you to the Mem bers

Individual Members:
- Agnes Stensby
- Beverly Sohm
- Dave Solheim
- Weber’s Custom Catering
- Wayne & Theresa Bjorklund
- Jim Pitton
- Ron Roselli
- Myrtle R. Gieseke
- Nelson Printing Co.
- Abbi & Daniel Carleton
- Dan, Lori & Isaac Oachs
- Jam es & Diane Stenson
- Opal Duwanz
- Marty Duncan
- Elaine Hermanson
- Dale E. Himmelman
- Rita Kramer, Joerg Edward F. McLean
- Ronald McMinnlin
- George & Joyce Merino
- Dale E. Himmelman
- Ronald McMillin
- Myrtle R. Gieseke
- Sara & John McKay
- George & Joyce Merino
- Carolyn Meyer
- Dan, Lori & Isaac Oachs
- Roger & Myrna Schoeb
- James & Diane Stenson
- Nelson Printing Co.
- Abbi & Daniel Carleton
- Dan, Lori & Isaac Oachs
- Jam es & Diane Stenson
- Opal Duwanz
- Marty Duncan
- Elaine Hermanson
- Dale E. Himmelman
- Rita Kramer, Joerg Edward F. McLean
- Ronald McMinnlin
- George & Joyce Merino
- Carolyn Meyer
- Dan, Lori & Isaac Oachs
- Roger & Myrna Schoeb
- James & Diane Stenson

Executive Board
- Officers:
  - Alma Forst, President, West Newton Twp.
  - Scott Hermanson, Vice President, St. Peter
  - Marie Dranttel, Treasurer, St. Peter
  - Pam Morson, Secretary, Lafayette

Directors:
- Nita Aasen, Saint Peter
- Steve Baxa, St. Peter
- Michael Calahan, Oshawa Township
- Abbi Carleton, Nicollet
- Rhonda Dass, North Mankato
- JoAnn Gieske, Nicollet County
- Julie Gilbert, Saint Peter
- Eileen Holz, Saint Peter
- Maria Lokensgard, Norseland
- Bob Schabert, Courtland
- Mark Ulman, North Mankato
- Joe Urban, Saint Peter

Contact Information:
- Executive Director, Alyssa Auten
  alyssa@nchsmsn.org
- Research Coordinator, Bob Sadeen
  bob@nchsmsn.org
- Office Manager, Elaine Deschaines
  elaine@nchsmsn.org
- THSC Site Manager, Susie Carlin
- THSC Museum Assistants, Jessica Becker, Jack Buser, Sarah Cooper, Marian Determan, Teresa Saum, Loren Sundboom
- THSC Maintenance, Wayne Passion
- Harkin Store Manager, Ruth Grewe
- Harkin Store Site Guides, Rose Alsleben, Donna Dose, Robin Grewe, Glenn Stryker
- Ft. Ridgely Manager, Amber Bentinger
- Ft. Ridgely Guides, Dan Cochran, Annaliese Endorf, Rachel Montpetit, Charlotte Hack
- Mayo House Manager, Becky Pollack
- Mayo House Guide, Amanda Johnson
- Treaty Site History Center
- 1851 N Minnesota Ave., St. Peter, MN 56082
- Phone: 507-934-2160; Fax: 507-934-0172
- Hours: Mon.–Sat. 10 a.m.–4 p.m.; Sun. 1–4 p.m.
- Archives: Mon.–Fri. 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
- General info via e-mail: museum@nchsmsn.org or research@nchsmsn.org
- E. St. Julien Cox House
- 500 N Washington Ave., St. Peter MN 56082
- Phone: 507-934-2160
- Tours of 10+ available by appointment.
- The Cox House is available year-round for a variety of programs and facility rentals.
- Please call for more information.
- Harkin Store
- PO Box 112, New Ulm MN 56073
- Eight miles east of New Ulm on Co. Hwy. 21
- Phone: 507-354-8666, harkinstore@mnhs.org
- Hours: May, September, First 3 Weekends in Oct.
  - Sat. & Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
- Memorial Day-Labor Day
  - Tu.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
  - and Monday holidays 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
- Fort Ridgely
- 72404 County Road 30, Fairfax MN 55352
- Phone: 507-508-2848
- Hours: Memorial Day weekend–Labor Day
  - Fr.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
  - Sept., first 3 weekends in Oct.
  - Sat.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
  - & Monday holidays 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
- W. W. Mayo House
- 118 N Main St., Le Sueur MN 56058
- Phone: 507-665-3250
- Hours: May–Sept.; Sat. 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
The Society will once again partner with St. Peter Community and Family Education to present our seventh season of documentary films starting in September. They’re shown every month from September through May. Admission to the film series is free for all! The Treaty Site History Center is located one mile north of downtown Saint Peter at Highways 169 and 22, across from the Mankato Clinic.

Thurs., Sept. 3, 7 p.m.: Split Rock Light: Tribute to an Age of Steel
35 min. for two short films, not rated. Along with the building of the Split Rock Lighthouse Visitor Center, constructed in 1986, the Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) produced a 22-minute long interpretive film called Split Rock Light: Tribute to the Age of Steel to show at the historic site. The popular and award-winning film was shown at the historic site until 2013, when MNHS produced a new Split Rock film. The new 13:30 long film, titled The Story of Split Rock Lighthouse, was designed to meet the current interpretive program at the site, and was produced using state of the art sound and picture quality. On September 3, Lee Radzak, historic site manager of Split Rock Lighthouse, will show both films and discuss the films and how they reflect the story of Split Rock Lighthouse.

Thurs., Oct. 1, 7 p.m.: The Folsom House
10 min., not rated. Join NCHS Executive Director Alyssa Auten in an evening discussing her previous place of employment, The Folsom House Historic Site in Taylors Falls, Minnesota. Alyssa will present the film she helped create as the introduction to visitors of the historic home. Alyssa will then present information about the history of the Folsom family and their story. This 1855 frame home sits within Taylors Falls’ National Register Historic District, Angel Hill. The home was built by lumber baron W.H.C. Folsom after he moved his family to Taylors Falls in 1850. Folsom was a lumber baron, owned the general store in Taylors Falls, served as a State Representative for many years and was involved in Minnesota’s Constitutional Convention. The Folsom family lived in the home until 1968 when their grandson, Stanley, sold the home to the Minnesota Historical Society. Today, the home features views of the St. Croix River and is furnished with original items belonging to the Folsoms.

Coffee on the Patio!

Please join the Nicollet County Historical Society for its monthly “Coffee on the Patio” series to drink coffee and talk about local history! This program is held the following upcoming Tuesdays at 10 a.m.:

July 21: History of the State Hospital
August 25: History of Railroads in Nicollet County

We invite you to come by to share any memories or stories you might have about the particular topic. We’ll be gathering at the Treaty Site History Center, just north of St. Peter off of Highway 169. Coffee and a light snack will be provided. There is no cost to participate.

We hope to see you there!
**History Center Events...**

**It's back!**

**The Prairie and Big Woods trail tour series!**

Please join us again this year for our “two-part trail tour” presented by Scott Kudelka, Minneopa Area Naturalist. The two programs, one in July and one in August, will take place on the Traverse des Sioux trails and will teach participants about the two very different landscapes on either side of the Minnesota River—the Prairie and the Big Woods.

During the Prairie tour we will learn how—prior to Euro-American settlement of southern Minnesota—the tall-grass prairie dominated the landscape through the Minnesota River basin. A hike through our restored prairie will give us a chance to learn about some of the plants and wildlife found in this ecosystem. Scott will talk about its benefits to the natural environment and how people over time have viewed and managed it as a resource.

During the Big Woods program we will examine how these forests formed in the first place, some of the rare species found in this ecosystem and its history over time. The dense forest dominated by maple and basswood once covered a 3,000-square-mile area of southern Minnesota reaching all the way to present-day Mankato. Called “Bois Grand” or “Big Woods” by early French explorers, it was recognized as a distinct area from the band of hardwood forests.

The two-part program will take place starting at the Treaty Site History Center:

**The Prairie:** Thursday, July 23 at 7 p.m.

**The Big Woods:** Thursday, August 20 at 7 p.m.

Regular Site Admission.

*Both of these tours will take place outdoors. Please wear good walking shoes and dress for the weather.*

**History on Tap:**

**Homebrewing**

Treaty Site History Center

Friday, August 28, 7 p.m.

Have you ever considered brewing your own beer?

Join the Nicollet County Historical Society and local homebrewers to learn about the practice of brewing beer in your home! These experienced brewers will share “secrets of the trade” including the science of brewing beer, best practices, and more. Following the program we will sample some home-brewed beer!

One of the homebrewers leading the discussion will be Mathias Ove, manager of Patrick’s on 3rd and recently voted 2014 Best Bartender by SouthernMinn.com.

$15/person. Must be 21 to participate. Min 10, Max 100.

Registration Deadline (through St. Peter Community Education): August 25
**History Center Events...**

**Dakota Culture & History Days**  
Treaty Site History Center  
August 11–13. (Tu.-W.-Th.), 9:30 a.m. to noon.  
Learn about life in this area before St. Peter even existed! Staff members from the Lower Sioux Agency will join us in this three-day program that explores the history and culture of the Dakota people. There will be a mix of indoor and outdoor activities. Activities will include traditional Dakota games and pottery making. Children will also learn about the language, music, and daily life of the Dakota people in the 19th century.  
This program is designed for children entering 3rd through 6th grades.  
A light snack will be provided each day.  
Cost: $60 per child.  
Minimum 10; maximum 30.  
Registration Deadline (through St. Peter Community Education): August 4

**Digital Nature Photography**  
September 20, 1–2:30 p.m.  
Photography is a great way to take some memories home with you after a visit to a natural area. Join NCHS and Scott Kudelka, Minneopa Area Naturalist, in this exciting class about digital photography. Participants will get a chance to learn how to use a digital camera and receive tips on how to shoot better photos. To practice their new skills participants will have a chance to shoot images of what they find interesting. Digital cameras are provided and each participant will be able to print one photo to take home.  
20 people limit, registration required  
Cost: $8 per person  
Registration Deadline (through St. Peter Community Education): September 11

---

**Patio continued from page 1**

History Center with new sidewalks, a redesigned brick patio and thoughtfully chosen landscaping and plants. The new landscaping creates a much warmer welcome to the building and adds another place for people to gather.

During the Grand Opening Executive Director Alyssa Auten acknowledged those who made the project come together, those who had donated to the landscaping and event, and invited assorted people to speak. The St. Peter Color Guard from the American Legion Post #37 was present and long-time NCHS volunteer, Herb Poncin, raised a new American Flag to complete the program.

Visitors received free admission to the museum and various refreshments were enjoyed. Local partners were present to discuss prairie restoration and other environmental projects; these partners included: Seed to Site, The Many Rivers Chapter of the Prairie Enthusiasts and the River’s Edge Hospital’s Mission Monarch program.

A huge thank you to those who helped bring this project to completion, the volunteers who helped with the grand opening, and to the guests who visited the Treaty Site History Center on Flag Day of 2015.
Cox House Site Manager Retires

In April 2015, our long-time volunteer and Cox House Site Manager, Richard Tostenson, retired from his duties at the Cox House. Richard has been a dedicated champion of the Eugene St. Julien Cox House since the 1980s and the Nicollet County Historical Society extends its sincerest gratitude and thanks for his hard work and support of the historic house.

Fort Ridgely Historic Site

Some of our upcoming programs include author Vince Botz on August 8 at 1 p.m. Botz will be discussing his new book *Stearns County and the Dakota War of 1862*. If you are looking for more cannon fire don't worry—the New Ulm Battery will be back on August 15 along with John Labatte. Author and Historian Curtis Dahlin will join us on August 16 to talk about his new book *Friends, Betrayal, Murders: The Massacre of the Paul Keitmann Party* at 1 p.m. We will also have a little something for college kids looking for research projects, author and historian Al Koenig will be here September 12th to talk about a series of earthworks forts that were erected and used from northern Iowa to central Minnesota. This is a subject that needs further research and could be a great project for a student or anyone that is interested! These are some of our programs for the history buffs out there.

If you are looking to just enjoy the prairie and have a little fun with someone special, we will be hosting our first “Date Night at the Fort” on August 22. Come explore the prairie, take a walk, enjoy food and drinks and other surprises. RSVP required by August 16 by calling 507-508-2848, cost is $10 per person. We have also teamed up with the DNR this season for Childrens’ Days. Kids can come and do old fashioned crafts and games at the Commissary and then they can participate in archery or digital photography depending on what else we have happening that day in the park.

These are only a few programs for the season, if you would like to see a complete list you can visit the Nicollet County Historical Society website or pick up a Fort Ridgely brochure. We look forward to seeing all of at the Fort this season.

Fun Fall Trail Run at Fort Ridgely

The Nicollet County Historical Society is hosting our very first Fun Fall Trail Run on Saturday, October 3! This will be a 5K trail run/walk through Fort Ridgely State Park and all proceeds will go to support Fort Ridgely Historic Site, Fort Ridgely State Park and collections at Nicollet County Historical Society.

The run/walk will begin at 10 a.m. so please come out and enjoy the beautiful fall colors, as well as a great run or walk through the woods and prairie. If you are interested in participating or volunteering at the event, please call 507-508-2848. The registration fee is $25 per person. This will help support NCHS as well as a park many of you grew up experiencing and can continue to share with others.
Harkin Happenings...

Harkin Family Visits by Ruth Grewe

The Harkin Store hosted a Harkin family get together on June 5th. We gave them a tour of the store and told them about the town, store, and their heritage.

Some of the 22 people had never been at the store because they came from out of state, from Colorado and Arizona. They had a very good time getting to know each other and looking at the books that we have of their family and of course they had quite a selection of food. Laughs and stories abounded.

With the weather being so unpredictable, we never know how many visitors we will get in a day. We have had many from out of the state, already. We are glad that many people are interested in our 1870’s general store and are happy to tell the story of the store, the town and Alexander Harkin. It is a great place to learn about the past. We have programs every Sunday afternoon, dealing with the past or displays or music.

Please come and join us for a nice relaxing time while learning about the area in your own back yard.

We are open everyday except Mondays until Labor Day from 10 to 5 p.m. Our gift shop is stocked with many books, toys, hand created and unique items, and 10 cent candy.

The Harkin Store hosted a Harkin family get together on June 5th. We gave them a tour of the store and told them about the town, store, and their heritage.

Some of the 22 people had never been at the store because they came from out of state, from Colorado and Arizona. They had a very good time getting to know each other and looking at the books that we have of their family and of course they had quite a selection of food. Laughs and stories abounded.

With the weather being so unpredictable, we never know how many visitors we will get in a day. We have had many from out of the state, already. We are glad that many people are interested in our 1870’s general store and are happy to tell the story of the store, the town and Alexander Harkin. It is a great place to learn about the past. We have programs every Sunday afternoon, dealing with the past or displays or music.

Please come and join us for a nice relaxing time while learning about the area in your own back yard.

We are open everyday except Mondays until Labor Day from 10 to 5 p.m. Our gift shop is stocked with many books, toys, hand created and unique items, and 10 cent candy.

W.W. Mayo House...

A “Giant” Amount of History at the W.W. Mayo House by Becky Pollack

What is the connection that links the Green Giant Company to the historic W.W. Mayo House? Join us for a “Giant Story” Mayo House Tour on Saturday, August 1st from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the historic W. W. Mayo House. This event is held in conjunction with Le Sueur’s Giant Celebration. The “Giant Story” Tour focuses on the Cosgrove Family who lived in the Mayo House from 1874 to 1920. The Cosgroves were an influential family in Le Sueur as they were founders, CEOs and Presidents of the Green Giant Company for three generations. All three generations either lived in or were born in the Mayo House. Hear about who owned the house, how it was passed on through Cosgrove generations, and how the Cosgroves are connected to the Minnesota State Fair. Browse the collection of Green Giant memorabilia generously donated by Mr. Ralph Thrane, retired Green Giant Executive and other Green Giant affiliates. The “Giant Story” Tour includes a timeline that depicts 75-plus years of Green Giant Company highlights, including the introduction of the Green Giant name and character. See pictures of the first Minnesota Valley Canning Company cannery and visit the room where board meetings for the company were held. The Green Giant heritage at the W. W. Mayo house makes for a fascinating tour that takes visitors beyond the Mayo Family time. The “Giant Story” Tour shows the small gothic house was indeed a place where two great Minnesota families helped build legendary businesses in Minnesota, the beginnings of the Mayo Clinic and the Green Giant Company can be found within its walls.
Goodbye Lelia

The Nicollet County Historical Society would like to thank Lelia Leonhardt for the knowledge and skills she brought as our Office Manager over the last few months. Lelia has resigned from NCHS to pursue a great new job opportunity in the Twin Cities and will be missed! Please help us in welcoming our new Office Manager, Elaine Deschaine.

Welcome New Office Manager, Elaine Deschaine!

I grew up on a dairy farm located between Gibbon and Winthrop, Minn. A Winthrop High School graduate, I received a B.S. in Business Administration with a minor in Accounting from Minnesota State University, Mankato. I presently live in St. Peter with my husband Dan. We have five adult children and seven grandchildren. I enjoy gardening, creative sewing, reading, cooking, traveling, biking, and “all things grandchildren.”

Welcome summer intern, Bri Dickel!

My name is Bri Dickel and I’m a senior history major at Gustavus Adolphus College. I’m a Minnesota native with a passion for both alpine skiing and orchestra, so during the winter you can probably find me practicing my scales or playing in the snow (when I’m not hunched over several textbooks, anyway). My primary historical interests are medieval and pre-modern European culture, American military history, and worldwide medical history. I’ve loved museums (especially their historical artifacts) since I was a kid, so I’m really happy and super lucky to have the opportunity to intern for the Nicollet County Historical Society this summer!

Wishlist Items

The Nicollet County Historical Society needs some things to help its operations! If you have any of these items and are willing to donate them, please contact Director Alyssa Auten at alyssa@nchsmn.org or at 507-934-2160. Thank you!

- Desktop computer and monitor with Windows 7 or higher
- Monetary donations for technology upgrades
- fiberglass ladder, between 6’ and 12’ tall
- Paper cutter
- Label maker
- Fabric tablecloths for 6’ to 8’ long rectangular tables
- Large rug—around 8’ x 6’ (somewhat historic-looking)
- Monetary donations for collections project
- Laptop bag
Volunteers at County Fair

It’s that time of year again! The Nicollet County Fair is less than a month away, August 5–9, and we are planning our booth. We will be featuring the exhibit about the St. Peter School District’s 150th anniversary. This year’s hours are Wednesday 3 to 9 p.m., Thursday and Friday 12 noon to 10 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. If you are interested in giving us a helping hand at the fair, please contact Alyssa at alyssa@nchsmn.org or call the Treaty Site at 507-934-2160.

Steve Hogberg’s Docent Record!

On September 30, 2009 volunteer docent Steve Hogberg gave his first tour of the Treaty Site History Center to 22 people from Minnesota State University-Mankato. Steve has spent the last six years volunteering his time and knowledge to this site. To date, Steve has given 80 tours to 1,925 people. Very impressive! Thank you, Steve, for your dedication and support over the years!

Become a Volunteer!

We are looking for volunteers! There are many opportunities to help out at the Nicollet County Historical Society. We need help with front desk coverage at the Treaty Site, collections and archival work, and many other projects and roles are available or could be created. If you are interested in contributing your time for the good of the Society, please contact Alyssa or Susie at 507-934-2160, or at their emails: alyssa@nchsmn.org or susie@nchsmn.org.

Thank you to Judy Scholl for the front lobby exhibits

A huge thank you is in order to Judy Scholl for her dedication to the rotating display in the lobby at the Treaty Site History Center. Judy has been putting together holiday and season-themed displays in the antique cabinet for over ten years. NCHS appreciates the time and creativity Judy puts into these displays, they are a great addition to the lobby!

The Tschohl Farmstead, which sits on seven acres at the top of Lee Blvd. in North Mankato, is upper North Mankato’s last significant historic site. However, it is currently listed at $524,000 and could be sold at any time for development. Friends of North Mankato, a grassroots organization, is presently working to save this land because it is a noteworthy asset to the community and a valuable piece of history. Some historical aspects include a vintage barn and what might be the oldest Burr Oak in North Mankato. You can help the organization by donating to this cause. Tax-deductible gifts can be sent to: Attn: Lu V, Region Nine Area Inc., PO Box 3071, Mankato, MN 56002-3071. Checks are payable to RNMI, and the memo line must be filled in with “NMPARK” for the check to be accepted. To contact Friends of North Mankato, go to their Facebook page at facebook.com/northmankatofriends, e-mail them at northmankatofriends@gmail.com, or call them at (507) 469-3096.

Help Save Tschohl Farmstead

A huge thank you is in order to Judy Scholl for her dedication to the rotating display in the lobby at the Treaty Site History Center. Judy has been putting together holiday and season-themed displays in the antique cabinet for over ten years. NCHS appreciates the time and creativity Judy puts into these displays, they are a great addition to the lobby!

Steve Hogberg

Thank you to Judy Scholl for the front lobby exhibits

A huge thank you is in order to Judy Scholl for her dedication to the rotating display in the lobby at the Treaty Site History Center. Judy has been putting together holiday and season-themed displays in the antique cabinet for over ten years. NCHS appreciates the time and creativity Judy puts into these displays, they are a great addition to the lobby!
Nicollet County farm histories merge into 100-year commemoration  
by Dana Melius

Marv Gieseke and Garfield Eckberg stand by the "concession stand" which for years served as the picnic headquarters for farm gatherings. It's located in Brighton Township and will again host a July 26 celebration.

Dana Melius, St. Peter Herald

Reprinted with permission from the St. Peter Herald

Nicollet County’s farm history is as rich as its soils.

Garfield Eckberg is among those who want to celebrate agriculture’s significant role in this region’s economic vitality, its place in history here. And, oh, what a history. Three of the county’s leading farm organizations all celebrate 100 years this summer.

Celebrating 100 Years of Nicollet County Agriculture is how it’s being billed, now scheduled for Sunday, July 26 at the “old picnic grounds” in the heart of the county, 5-1/2 miles west of Highway 111 on County Road 5 – the historic Fort Road.

Tucked behind the old church, on the fifth generation Brighton Township farm site currently owned and operated by Marv Gieseke and his five sons, remains a shed which served pies and libations long before the term concession stand. It’s still standing and will be the centerpiece of the July 26 grand picnic.

The early tentative plans are for an 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. meal put on by the Nicollet County Pork Producers, with a program to follow. A church-sponsored pie contest, 4-H softball and plenty of history and honors are likely, according to the first poster. The committee also hopes to mark highlights from the Nicollet County Fair, as well.

Organizers include Eckberg, who will chair the ad hoc committee, along with Gieseke and sons, who have a bit of clearing ahead in preparation, dad said. But Nicollet County Extension farm educator Christian Lilienthal and Dennis Schmidt of Upper Midwest Management-ment and president of the Nicollet County Farm Bureau will assist.

The Nicollet County Farm Bureau, University of Minnesota Extension Service, and United Farmers Cooperative (formerly Lafayette Farmers Coop) are all noting 100 years of service to the regional farm community. All dating back to 1915 is something worth celebrating, according to Eckberg.

“It’s quite unique to look at the history of agriculture, particularly in Nicollet County,” said the 77-year-old rural spokesperson, “where we’ve gone through 100 years. Nicollet County is still farm country, and Extension has had a role in that.”

It’s more significant than that, he added. For the roots of this region’s farm activism and leadership can be tied to the joint beginnings and cooperation between Extension and the Nicollet County branch of Farm Bureau.

While the three organizations are all commemorating 100 years, the picnics weren’t always held at the Gieseke farm site – sometimes referred to as Albert Jensen’s Grove. But that 25th anniversary celebration of Farm Bureau and Extension did bring together a crowd of an estimated 3,000 on June 9, 1940, according to Eckberg.

“That building is still there,” he said. “You’ll see it as kind of a picnic like before we had electricity. It’s amazing that everything’s still there.”

Well, everything is really just the shed, Jensen’s Grove of oak trees, and a pasture where first base can still be seen. There’s a winding road adjacent to the Swan Lake Lutheran Church Cemetery that Gieseke hopes will guide caravans through to the old pasture and picnic grounds.

Farm History continued on next page
The highlight of those picnics used to be the 4-H softball games,” Eckberg added.

And those 4-H clubs of Nicollet County were significant in the historical development and evolution of Extension, Eckberg said. The New Sweden 4-H club organized in September 1915, while the Norseland Club followed close behind.

The former Lafayette Farmers Cooperative slowly developed from its western Nicollet County location in the new UFC, which has become one of Minnesota’s most successful farm cooperatives. UFC’s corporate headquarters officially moved to Winthrop in 2007, but UFC’s footprint remains deep into Nicollet County, with branches in Lafayette, Klossner and Norseland.

The coop actually originated as the Cooperative Creamery Association in 1916, and didn’t purchase its first grain elevator until 1966 in Lafayette, then Klossner’s two years later. In 1971, it was renamed Lafayette Farmers Cooperative. It took the UFC name in 1995.

Starting with just two employees and sales of slightly over $35,000 in 1915, UFC has grown to over 300 employees and annual sales over $230 million.

The forerunner to Farm Bureau, “The Farmers Club” launched in 1915. It merged seven different farm groups for a common cause, according to Nicollet County Historical Society notes. The University of Minnesota was already active in rural regions of the state, but not always welcomed, Eckberg noted.

Dennis Schmidt is thinking the July 26 picnic will be the major commemorative celebration, but there’s likely to be smaller ones throughout 2015.

“I’m hoping that we might have a lot of different things throughout the year,” Schmidt said.

Eckberg approved of that notion. Farm history, he said, is worth celebrating.
medical advancement, but they brought pain and suffering to the Lacks’ family. Behind the HeLa cells was a mother, a wife, a sister, and a friend, all who lost Henrietta in a tragic way. Though it was a struggle to accept the truth of what happened to their mother, the Lacks’ family has begun to focus on Henrietta’s positive contributions to today’s scientific world. This book will challenge you to see all sides of the story.

About the Author
When author, Rebecca Skloot, was in college, she first heard about Henrietta Lacks in her biology class and was eager to learn more about her. She was shocked to discover that no one knew anything about her. This set her on a mission to research and write this book that took more than a decade to write. The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks was Skloot’s debut book and instantly hit the New York Bestseller list, where it remained for almost four years.

Skloot has a B.S. in Biological Sciences and a MFA in Creative Nonfiction. She specializes in narrative science writing and has written on a large range of topics including the HeLa cells, goldfish surgery, tissue ownership rights, race and medicine, food politics, and packs of wild dogs in Manhattan. Skloot gives talks at conferences, universities, and other groups throughout the U.S. on numerous topics.

Two Lacks family members are scheduled to speak at the Gustavus Reading in Common event on Tuesday, September 15, at 7 p.m. in Alumni Hall. This Meet and Greet and Q&A is open to the public.
Applications are being accepted for the 2015–16 Connecting Nicollet County Leadership program. With a mission of connecting people, creating awareness of resources, and building leadership throughout Nicollet County, the program is now coming into its fifth year and has become well established with involvement by almost 130 participants!

In each monthly session from September through May, participants visit a different community across the county to tour local businesses, community and historical sites, agricultural venues, government agencies, school, and health care facilities. Participants also learn new leadership skills through professional workshops on conflict management, strategic thinking, leading effective meetings, cultural competency, dealing with change, visionary and ethical leadership, and generational trends.

This affordable opportunity is available to individuals or company-sponsored employees who live or work in Nicollet County. Space is limited to a maximum of 25 participants. Brochures and application forms are available by emailing Amy Pehrson at cncpcoordinator@gmail.com, calling 507-340-4073, or from any board member. Deadline is July 27.

---

**NCHS Presence in Local Parades**

Upper left: Nicollet Area Friendship Days Parade, June 28th

Right: Another very successful Old-Fashioned July 4th in St. Peter. NCHS participated in the annual parade with volunteers riding in the St. Peter Cornet Band Wagon.

Lower left: the history of the historic St. Peter Cornet Band Wagon is preserved on the wagon itself. From previous Crossing newsletters concerning the Band Wagon’s history:

...A brief article from the March 1999 Crossing mentioned that “it sits in the back room all white and no wheels. Come July the bandwagon will sport a new red and gold coat of paint...the wheels have been sent to Iowa for repair at the Amish Colony”.

...The July 2000 Crossing mentioned that the restoration project was complete and that the bandwagon would be in the July 2000 parade.
We would also like to say **thanks** to these business members:

- Brighton Township
- First National Bank
- Mankato Area Lifelong Learners
- Nicollet Conservation Club

**Nicollet County Bank**

St. Peter, Minnesota 931-3310 Member FDIC

Preparing students for lives of leadership, service, and lifelong learning since 1862.

**gustavus.edu**

**Weddings**  
**Groom’s Dinners**  
**Showers**  
**Graduations**  
**Corporate Parties & Picnics**  
**Business Meetings & Luncheons**  
**Funerals**  
**Family Reunions**  
**Christmas Parties**  
**Church Functions**

*Completely customized & personalized menus for any event.*  
Frank: 507-381-9960 / Connie: 507-381-9970  
E-mail: connieweber16@gmail.com  
525 Grant Ave, North Mankato, MN 56003

**RESERVED for your business!**

**New Sweden Mutual Insurance Company**

**Mark Schaefer**

800-851-7519 toll free 714 3rd St., Box 338  
507-232-3696 fax Nicollet, MN  
507-232-3433 56074  
newswe@hickorytech.net

**NELSON Printing Co.**

*For ALL of your advertising specialties, we have over 800,000 products personalized just for you.*  
Pens, coffee mugs, magnets, golf balls, tote bags, t-shirts, sweat shirts...and the list goes on.

Ph: 507-931-1207 • Fx: 507-931-1207  
338 S. Minnesota Ave. • St. Peter, MN 56082  
E-mail: npsi.com@hickorytech.net

**preserve our past solidify our future**

Did you know becoming a business member provides you with:

- acknowledgement in our newsletter
- gratis facility rental opportunities
- event/site passes for some of your staff

Business Membership Support:

- **Advocate** $200
- **Benefactor** $500
- **Champion** $1000

become a business member today!

contact Alyssa or Susie for more information

1851 N. Minnesota Ave. • St. Peter, MN 56082  
507.934.2160 | museum@nchsmn.org

**Nicollet County Historical Society**  
at the Treaty Site History Center
2015 Calendar of Events:

Event/Program information:

Harkin Store, Fort Ridgely, Mayo House: $6 adults (18–64), $5 seniors (65+) and college students, $4 children (ages 6–17). Free for age 5 and under, MNHS and NCHS members.

Treaty Site History Center: $5 adults (18–64), $3 seniors (65+) and children (ages 6–17). Free for age 5 and under, MNHS and NCHS members.

July 18 Causes of the U.S.–Dakota War of 1862 program and battlefield tour, 1 p.m.
July 19 Shopping with Laura Ingalls, 1 p.m.
July 21 Coffee on the Patio: History of the State Hospital, 10 a.m.
July 23 Prairie Trail Tour, 7 p.m., see page 4
July 25 Children’s Games and Crafts Day, 1 p.m.
July 25 Children’s Day, Noon–4 p.m.
July 25 Frontier Fun Kids Activities, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
July 26 Old Games Day, 1 p.m.
Aug. 1 Civilian Conservation Corp Tour (Lower Campground), 2 p.m.
Aug. 1 “Giant Story” Tour, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
Aug. 2 36th West Newton Day, 1 p.m.
Aug. 5–9 Nicollet County Historical Society at the Nicollet County Fair
Aug. 8 Stearns County and the Dakota War of 1862, 1 p.m.
Aug. 8 Animal Tracks (Upper Picnic Shelter), 2 p.m.
Aug. 8 Geocaching (Upper Picnic Shelter), 4 p.m.
Aug. 8 Wild Edibles (Upper Picnic Shelter), 7 p.m.
Aug. 9 Music “Best of the Wurst”, 1 p.m.
Aug. 11 Dakota Culture Days, 9:30 a.m.–12 p.m. (registration required), see page 5
Aug. 15 Causes of the U.S.–Dakota War of 1862, 1 p.m.
Aug. 15 Le Sueur Tigers Tour, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
Aug. 16 Friends, Betrayal, and Murders: The Massacre of the Paul Kietzm ann Family, 1 p.m.
Aug. 16 Bees and Honey, 1 p.m.
Aug. 20 Big Woods Trail Tour, 7 p.m., see page 4
Aug. 22 Date Night at the Fort, 7 p.m. (RSVP required), see page 6
Aug. 23 Archery in the Park (Upper Picnic Shelter), 10 a.m.
Aug. 23 Prairie Hike, 1:30 p.m.
Aug. 23 Day in the Life of a Pioneer Woman, 1 p.m.
Aug. 25 Coffee on the Patio: History of Railroads in Nicollet County, 10 a.m.
Aug. 28 History on Tap: Homebrewing, 7 p.m. (registration required) see page 4
Aug. 29 Children’s Day, Noon–4 p.m.
Aug. 30 Old School Days, 1 p.m.
Sept. TBD Coffee on the Patio: TBD, 10 a.m. (watch for details)
Sept. 3 Documentary Film Series: film and discussion
Sept. 5 Mayo House Art Work, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
Sept. 6 Digital Photography for Children (Upper Picnic Shelter), 2 p.m.
Sept. 6 Nature Hike, (Campground Picnic Shelter), 4 p.m.
Sept. 6 Weather (Campground Picnic Shelter), 7 p.m.
Sept. 6 Music - Lonesome Ron Arrives at West Newton, 1 p.m.
Sept. 12 Earthwork Forts talk, 1 p.m.
Sept. 13 Snakes of the Minnesota River, 1 p.m.
Sept. 19 Mayo House Art Work, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
Sept. 20 Digital Nature Photography, 1–2:30 p.m. (registration required), see page 5
Sept. 20 Afternoon of Leisure, 1 p.m.
Sept. 26 Children’s Day, Noon–4 p.m.
Sept. 27 Sheep - Wool - Quilts, 1 p.m.
Oct. 1 Documentary Film Series: film and discussion
Oct. 3 Fun Fall Trail Run, 10 a.m. (registration required), see page 6
Oct. 4 Preparing for Winter, 1 p.m.
Oct. 11 Horses - Horseshoes - Leather - Ropemaking - Transportation, 1 p.m.
Oct. 18 Music Jamboree - Lonesome Ron’s Roundup, 1 p.m.
Your membership dollars at work...

Treaty Site History Center  E. St. Julien Cox House  Alexander Harkin Store  Historic Fort Ridgely  Traverse des Sioux Townsite  W.W. Mayo House

NCHS Membership Application

Name ____________________________________________
Address __________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
Phone (_______ ) _________________________________
E-mail ____________________________________________

My check is enclosed □  Please debit my credit card □

Acct. Number _______________________________________

CVV Code ___________________ Expiration Date _____________
5 #s on rev—VISA®, MC®, Disc®, 4 #s on rev—AE®

Authorized Signature __________________________________

□ Please save mailing costs, I will read my newsletter online.

Yes! I would like to support my Nicollet County Historical Society in 2015 at the following level (please check one).

□ Individual $ 30
□ Family $ 45
□ Sustaining $ 75
□ Patron $ 100
□ Supporter $ 200
□ Benefactor $ 500
□ 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