Director’s Column

We’re nearing the end of a tremendous year for the Society. 2012 marked the sesqui-centennial of the U.S.-Dakota War—one of the darkest moments in Minnesota history, and one that still represents a living wound.

From January through today the Nicollet County Historical Society was at the forefront of institutions interpreting that complicated history. Public programs, lectures, traveling exhibits, and interviews with state and national media reached thousands and thousands of people. Over the past year we’ve fostered new relationships and friendships among Dakota elders, scholars, and tribal members.

Those friendships and historical interpretation will continue on December 31st. We will continue events like our annual meeting and programming surrounding the Hillstrom Museum exhibit. Multiple copies of our own traveling exhibits continue to be displayed throughout 2013.

The relationships we’ve built and lessons we’ve learned this year will continue to shape our institution for decades to come. Too much cannot be done. There are more big ideas, projects, and goals--this story, and others, are not finished being told.

Cheers,

Ben Leonard, Director

Society featured on This American Life National Public Radio

Mankato native and Gustavus graduate John Biewen created an hour-long documentary on the U.S.-Dakota War for “This American Life.” Episode #479 “Little War on the Prairie” originally aired November 23, 2012. The story features Minnesota State University-Mankato professor Dr. Gwen Westerman, Lower Sioux Agency Historic Site Manager Anthony Morse, and Gustavus College organizations Building Bridges and History Club.

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From the film’s website:

“The spring of 2005, Jim Miller, a Native spiritual leader and Vietnam veteran, found himself in a dream riding on horseback across the great plains of South Dakota. Just before he awoke, he arrived at a trading post in Minnesota and saw 38 of his Dakota ancestors hanged. At the time, Jim knew nothing of the largest mass execution in United States history, ordered by Abraham Lincoln on December 26, 1862.

Now, four years later, embracing the message of the dream, Jim and a group of riders retrace the 330-mile route of his dream on horseback from Lower Brule, South Dakota to Mankato, Minnesota to arrive at the hanging site on the anniversary of the execution. This is the story of their journey—the blizzards they endure, the Native and Non-Native communities that house and feed them along the way, and the dark history they are beginning to wipe away.”

Mr. and Mrs. John Martinson and their daughter, Mary, own a sleigh going south on Minnesota Avenue in St. Peter. The Stark and Davis store is on the southwest corner of the intersection of Minnesota Avenue and Grace street. Joseph Mason’s Hardware store is at right
Please debit my credit card with lecture funding from the Lecture Series of Gustavus and the Diversity Center of Gustavus Adolphus College.

Enclosed is my check for the amount of: $________ for_____ reservation(s) at $15/person (members). Checks should be made payable to: NCHS Partners with Programming Surrounding Exhibit

Name(s) __________________________________________________________
Address __________________________________________________________
Address __________________________________________________________
Acct. Number _____________________________   Expiration Date _________

Phone (_____)__________________________________________________

Email ____________________________________________________________

My check is enclosed □ Please debit my credit card □

Authorized Signature ____________________________________________

Checks should be made payable to: Nicollet County Historical Society

The event will be held in Jackson Campus Center, Gustavus Adolphus College, with the meal starting at 1 p.m.

NCHS Annual Meeting
Please join us for the Nicollet County Historical Society’s annual meeting will be Sunday, January 20, 2013 at Gustavus Adolphus’ Jackson Student Union banquet hall. The dinner service will begin at 1 p.m., business meeting at 2 p.m., and program at 2:30 p.m.

Collection Spotlight
The modern Christmas tree tradition started in the Renaissance and 16th century Germany, but this tradition’s roots go back much earlier. Evergreens were used by ancient Egyptians, Chinese, Hebrews, and European pagans.

Christmas trees were often small and displayed on tables until the late 1900s. Tree skirts like originated as table cloths and coverings placed under the trees to protect furniture. This Christmas tree skirt was made by Elaine Malmberg, and donated to the Society in 1999.

Upcoming Events
December 17–7 p.m., Hillstrom Museum of Art: January 27, 3:30 p.m., Round Table discussion with Dakot a elders, artists and others about the Hillstrom’s Hena U exhibition.

February 7th, 7 p.m., TSHC: The Loving Story Film Screening. The dramatic story of Richard and Mildred Loving, an inter-racial couple living in Virginia in the 1950s, and their landmark Supreme Court Case, Loving v. Virginia, that changed history.

March 7th, 7 p.m., TSHC: We Still Live Here Film Screening. The Wampanoag tribe’s ancestors ensured the survival of the Wampanoag people. The Wampanoag are bringing their language home.

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Annual Meeting Registration Form / Sunday, January 20, 2012

Enclosed is my check for the amount of:

$________ for_____ reservation(s) at $15/person (members)

$________ for_____ reservation(s) at $20/person (non-members)

My check is enclosed □ Please debit my credit card □

Authorized Signature ____________________________________________

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