Archives High School Yearbooks Digitization Project is Complete!

by Bob Sandeen, NCHS Research Assistant

Earlier this year, NCHS was contacted by an individual offering us a chance to digitize many of the high school yearbooks that we have in our collection at no cost to the Society. (We were thrilled!) Yearbooks within a fixed range of years were eligible to be digitized, so not all of the ones that we own could be processed. However, we were able to send yearbooks from St. Peter High School for the years from 1950 through 1988, with the exception of the 1984 yearbook. We hope to have the 1984 yearbook and a better copy of the 1959 yearbook digitized later. We also sent yearbooks from Nicollet High School for the years 1984, 1986, and 1992, as well as ones from Minnesota Valley Lutheran High School for the years 1987 through 1991.

This digitization project started in Oklahoma after tornados destroyed several schools. It was noticed that residents in the affected areas were quick to ask whether or not the yearbooks of the destroyed schools survived the tornados. In order to be certain that the contents of Oklahoma yearbooks would be preserved, it was decided to digitize them. The project became so popular that a decision was made to expand the program beyond the borders of Oklahoma.

Of course, we were concerned about sending our yearbooks away from the building for a long period of time (about 10 weeks), especially when we knew that they would be digitized by people within the Oklahoma prison system!

We had no reason for concern though because on October 9th, we received two large boxes filled with our yearbooks, along with three computer discs containing the scans, one for each of the three schools that were represented in the project. Staff was very pleased to find that our yearbooks still in good condition and that the digital scans are of excellent quality. Each yearbook was digitized as a separate PDF and is searchable making it very easy to quickly find specific people or subjects.

In the future it may be possible to expand the scope of this project to include years prior to 1950 and beyond 1988. NCHS has copies of the 1948 and 1949 St. Peter yearbooks, as well as ones from 1989 up to the present. We are not aware of yearbooks from St. Peter High School being printed prior to 1948, but if such yearbooks exist, we would like to see and scan the book for the archives.

Much of the material in the archives, including yearbooks, has been acquired through donations, which is why we do not have many of the ones that have been published in the county over the years. It is clear from the list in the first paragraph that we need far more yearbooks from areas outside of St. Peter. We also need extra copies of ones that we presently own, because books do wear out as people handle them over the years. So, if you have some yearbooks from Nicollet County schools that you do not want to keep, please contact us!
Members

Thank you to the following renewing and new members of NCHS from the July Crossing through September 30, 2017.

Renewed Patron Members: Bill & Durene Pedersen
Eugene Retka
Renewed Sustaining Members: Buster & Nina West
Renewed Family Members: Sarah & Andrew Davis
Bob & Judy Douglas
Judy & Bill Hanson
Bradford & Linda Johnson
David & Doris Nelson
Molly & Joe Reinemann
Larry & Jo Zambrano
Renewed Individual Members: Carol Forbes
Kate Martens
Renewed Senior Members: Gail Dummer
Maurine Johnson
Vickie Johnson
Lorraine Olson
Tim Pulis
Ken Saffert
New Business Members:
New Benefactor Business:
Patrick’s on Third
New Patron Members:
Lawrence W. Potts
New Family Members:
Kim Allison (complementary from Nicollet Co. Fair)
Joel Henderson, Jane Coleman, Joel & Zach Walgren Bach (complementary from Rock Bend Folk Festival)
Chris Jones
Jim & Dee Dee Michels
Tuff & Ginny Miller
Elizabeth Mulvehill (complementary from Nicollet Co. Fair)
Steve Ream & Elaine Hewitt (complementary from Boomers & Beyond Senior Expo)
Tamara Stoffel
New Individual Members:
Kathleen Bouchie
Julie Ferrell
George W. Green III
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New Senior Members:
James Brown
Nanette Chambers
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Marcy Muchow, Lafayette
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Justin Grewe, Robin Grewe, Glenn Stryker
Harkin Store Guides: Opal Dewanz,
Anna Lise Endorf, Char Nack
Treaty Site History Center
1851 1st 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. (Mar.–Oct.);
CLOSED: Three weeks around Christmas,
December 18–January 8, 2018
Archives: Mon.–Fri. 10 a.m.–4 p.m., and by appt.
General info via e-mail: museum@nchsmn.org
or research@nchsmn.org
E. St. Julien Cox House
500 N. Washington Ave., St. Peter MN 56082
Phone: 507-934-2160
• For tour and rental information call 507-934-2160.
Harkin Store
P.O. 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–Sept. and first three weekends in Oct.:
Sat. and Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
• Memorial Day–Labor Day:
Sat.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m. and Mon. holidays 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
Fort Ridgely
72404 County Road 30, Fairfax MN 55332
Phone: 507-508-2848, ridgely@mnhs.org
Hours:
• Sept. and first three weekends in Oct.:
Sat.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m. and Mon. holidays 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
• Memorial Day weekend–Labor Day:
Fri.–Sun. 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Open Mon. holidays

Now you can purchase or renew memberships online!
Visit nchsmn.org/membership for details.

Director’s Column

This is YOUR historical society!

If you’re reading this it’s likely you’re an NCHS member (thank you, by the way) so you know it’s our job to preserve, protect and interpret the rich history of Nicollet County and Minnesota. You may even know some of the ways we do this—by providing tours, creating exhibits, offering educational public programs, and by maintaining our collection of historic items.

One comment we hear a lot from our visitors is they’d like to see more displays of local artifacts and stories. We hear you and we’re working on it, but we need your help.

One way the Society interprets our past is through artifact-based exhibits. NCHS curates tens of thousands of artifacts within our collection; everything from photographs to maps, to clothing, and furniture. These items are donated by members of the public—people who understand the importance of preserving pieces of Nicollet County’s history. People like you!

The Society collects items that contribute directly to our mission to preserve, protect and interpret Nicollet County’s history. Storytelling is an important component to exhibit creation so items should tell stories. Stories provide the historical framework that makes items interesting and assists the Society with interpretation. When you come to us to donate artifacts, we’re going to ask you to tell us why and how it’s important to Nicollet County history. For instance, how old is it? Do you know who bought or owned it originally? What was it used for? Can you tell us how you came to own it? By answering these questions, we are putting pieces of a puzzle together that will give us a tangible representation of the story of Nicollet County.

If you’re still stuck on how you can help, put yourself in the mindset of a curator. Pretend you’re the person planning an exhibit, display, or program. It could be about anything—a business, a family, pastimes, life on the farm, etc. As a visitor, what would you like to see in that exhibit? What artifacts would best tell that story? Tapping into your personal history can help you identify and empathize with the visitor experience.

Director continued on page 3
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NCHS Archives
by Guest Writer Marcy Muchow, NCHS Volunteer and Board Member

On one of my visits to the Nicollet County Historical Society to do some family research, I met Nita Aasen and Bob Sandeen. After talking with them about how important information is in building your family tree, they said they really need someone to go to the Lafayette Ledger and obtain a list of obituaries from the time the paper was started in 1905 till present day.

I said that would be something I could do and really like the idea and it would also help me. So that is how my volunteer work for the NCHS started. After contacting the Ledger's publisher, Paula Schaeffer, and getting the OK, I started. I make my own hours according to what else I have on my calendar. Doing the research at the Ledger is only seven miles from my home and I only travel to St. Peter once every two weeks to turn over my papers to Nita to put into the computer system. If I don't feel like traveling I can even e-mail them to her.

Going through the Ledger I find many articles of interest; from who visited with whom on Sunday to who bought and sold a horse, who had birthday parties etc. It gives you a real insight into the daily lives of your ancestors.

In starting your family tree, the easiest and best place to start is with obituaries. They are loaded with information. Name, date of birth and place, date of death, parents, spouse, and children's names, sometimes brothers and sisters, date of marriage and sometimes place. Where they lived. From there you can check public records on the parents, then their parents, then back another generation and so forth. Also checking on the brother and sisters and children. And before you know it you have your family history.

Marcy Muchow, NCHS volunteer and Board Member

Below: The index of the Lafayette Ledger that is being created by NCHS volunteer Marcy Muchow.
As an adjunct professor of Humanities I see young people on a regular basis. While teaching a group several years ago, I made reference to Black Friday 1929 and was surprised that no one recognized the date or event it referred to. I decided to check student general knowledge of American history in the class. “When did the American Revolutionary War begin?” I asked. Silence. “What about the American Civil War, when did it begin and end?” Silence again. “How about the First World War? When did it start and what countries fought in it?” Nothing. Finally I asked, “When did the War of 1812 begin?” A student in the back sheepishly raised a hand and said tentatively, “1812?” (Laughter from everybody.) Some discussion of student educational experience followed. No one had taken a college history class and what they learned in high school seemed pretty superficial. Something significant was going on in American education.

What was going on is called STEM… Science, Technology, Engineering and Math education. This push in recent years has been at the expense of social studies, government, and the arts in our schools. So why is that a big deal? We live in a technological age! Of what use is history in a modern world, my students asked.

The founders of our republic were deeply aware of Greek and Roman history. As they established the rules which govern us today, they knew precisely how Athenian democracy devolved into mob rule and how the Roman Republic ended as a dictatorship by emperors. Their study was instrumental in the formation of the world’s longest lasting democratic republic. They attempted to create a government that would avoid the mistakes made in the past. History, they knew, provided both perspective and valuable lessons.

Anyone who has watched Ken Burns’ Vietnam has had to ask themselves, have we not learned anything from history? Are we not making some of the very same mistakes we made in Viet Nam in our well intentioned attempts at nation building in the Middle East? Much to ponder there. So the question isn’t really, is history important. It is rather how do we engage the future generations in understanding the importance of history to our own national survival. How do we convince them that history matters, that it provides us with essential lessons and perspective., Edmund Burke was right when he said, “Those who do not know history are doomed to repeat it.”

We will not be able to change the short-sighted focus on STEM in our schools in the foreseeable future. But we can begin at an early age to acquaint our children with the rich and spectacular history that surrounds them. Geological history is a great way to initially engage kids. It is everywhere! Where did our native limestone come from? Why does the Minnesota River turn sharply right at Mankato? (The answers are we were once at the bottom of an ancient sea, and the river valley formed on the edge of a glacier 11,000 years ago!) History like that surrounds us and stimulates youthful imagination.

What about the native peoples…where did they come from? How does the treatment of them 150 years ago inform us about how native peoples in, say, the Amazon ought to be treated in light of our sad history here in the Minnesota River Valley? How can we engage the next generation in a life-long interest in history that will serve to improve their judgement, stimulate critical thinking and problem solving, and through those activities enrich their lives?

Maybe the education begins at home with Grandma’s tablecloth set out for Sunday morning breakfast…or Aunt Millie’s jam recipe. Who were these people? How did they live their lives and what do we have to learn from them and how are our lives intimately connected to theirs? At an older
age, perhaps a tour of the Hubbard House or the Cox house would enlighten...how did people live in the past? How are we the direct beneficiaries of that past, and what might we have to learn that is important, and that might help us in preparing for the future? Beyond that, perhaps take a family vacation and tour historic places further afield. There are rich lessons to learn about how we got to where we are, and profound implications as to where we are going and where we need to go!

Local historical societies can also be a good place to start the appreciation of history with your children or grandchildren. Blue Earth County and Nicollet County both have impressive collections to view as well as furnished historic houses to visit. Start early to help children make a history connection. Get involved yourself by volunteering at your local historical society. Rediscover your own family and community history. You will be surprised at how much history has the power to enrich our conversations and our lives.

**History Center Bits...**

**New Faces:**

**Bill Pederson**, TSHC Museum Assistant

Very happy to be a volunteer for the NCHS. We live in a region rich in highly significant historical events and the Historical Society is an important source for information and knowledge of our past.

I was born in Anoka, Minnesota, was high schooled there and came to St. Peter in 1986. I served as the Chief Executive Officer at the St. Peter Regional Treatment Center for fourteen years until my retirement in 2001. I have, and continue to serve, on various boards including the Linnaeus Arboretum, and the SPRTC Volunteer Committee Board. I look forward to being a part of the Nicollet County Historical Society family.

**Erica Smith**, TSHC Museum Assistant

My name is Erica Smith and I work at the Treaty Site History Center on weekends as a Museum Assistant. I’m originally from Windom, MN and lived in the area on and off until earlier this year. I currently live and work in Mankato. I obtained a Bachelor of Arts in history from Minnesota State University, Mankato in 2009.

I’ve always had a passion for history and am excited to be working for the Nicollet County Historical Society. During the week I work full time in the data entry field. In my spare time I enjoy pursuing my love of books - particularly mysteries and works pertaining to history, spending time with family and friends, and cheering on the Vikings.

**Scott Lassiter**, NCHS Webmaster

Scott Lassiter is a Web Designer and Developer living outside of Cleveland, Minnesota with his 3 kids and wife Andi. He has been designing and developing websites for over 15 years. Scott enjoys volunteering, the outdoors, curling, golf and travelling with his family.
Forgotten History Lecture Series

Join NCHS Research Assistant Bob Sandeen and guest presenters on a journey through topics of Nicollet County’s lost or forgotten history. Each month we’ll explore little-known or forgotten people, places, and events in Nicollet County’s varied and fascinating history.

Lectures will take place on the last Thursday of each month at 2:00 p.m. at the Nicollet County Historical Society. Cost is $3 for the general public and free for Nicollet County Historical Society members and Gustavus students, faculty, and staff with IDs.

**2017 Schedule:**
- **November 30:** *Benjamin Franklin in Nicollet County*, presented by Marlin Peterson
  - Cost: $3 for the General Public. FREE for Nicollet County Historical Society members and Gustavus students, faculty, and staff with IDs.
  - Where: Treaty Site History Center, 1851 N. Minnesota Avenue, Saint Peter, MN 56082

**2018 Schedule:**
- **January 25:** *Drug Stores and Druggists of St. Peter*, presented by Bob Sandeen
  - Cost: $3 for the General Public. FREE for Nicollet County Historical Society members and Gustavus students, faculty, and staff with IDs.
  - Where: Treaty Site History Center, 1851 N. Minnesota Avenue, Saint Peter, MN 56082
End of the Fort’s Season

by Amber Bentler

It’s the end of a very busy season at Fort Ridgely. It has been a fulfilling season with Company B Re-enactors in June down to our Kite Making Program we held in August with the Minnesota Kite Society.

The thing I love the most about Fort Ridgely is watching the seasons change from Spring to Fall between the prairie and woodland. In the Spring we see the birds nesting and striped gophers bustling about for food, in the summer we get to enjoy the warm sun and watching the rain come across the prairie periodically. By Fall the colors are brilliant red, orange and yellow and fall light falls across the prairie grass in a way that makes you forget even your slightest troubles as you hike through the park. Any time of year it is always worth stopping to take in the nature and the history that lie in this little jewel we call Fort Ridgely State Park. We will close October 22, 2017 for the season and will be working hard on planning and providing great programming for the 2018 season. Keep in mind the park does not close, they are open for snowshoeing and cross country skiing as well many other activities through the winter.

We look forward to seeing you next year at the Fort!

Harkin Happenings...

Finishing up 2017 at Harkin

by Ruth Grewe

The Harkin Store this year has been very well attended with program days being the busiest. The weather has been a factor with the amount of people coming, however.

We are very thankful for all the visitors from Minnesota and other states and countries that have visited and enjoyed our area. We hope that more will be able to come next year even though we will have a detour in effect, more information about that for next year.
The Society and St. Peter Community and Family Education present our ninth 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.

**Stranded**  
**Thur., November 2 | 7:00 p.m. | Treaty Site History Center | FREE**  
Rural Minnesota school teacher, Miss Enter (Bette Davis) becomes a courageous survivor during an unexpected blizzard that leaves her stranded with several students in a one-room school house nine miles from the nearest shelter. With a snow plow plodding a course through a snow-packed dirt road that circles the school, at less than one mile-per-hour, Miss Enter cleverly plans an escape route that could lead to their rescue.

*Stranded* is a suspenseful episode of the anthology TV series “Telephone Time” that was broadcast on May 9th, 1957.

**Film runtime is 30 minutes.**

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**Remember Pearl Harbor**  
**Thur., December 7 | 7:00 p.m. | Treaty Site History Center | FREE**  
Sunday, December 7, 1941 was a beautiful morning on the Hawaiian island of Oahu. A few sailors and soldiers were already up and playing a game of football near Pearl Harbor. Others were sleeping in their barracks or aboard ships after a late night of partying in Honolulu.

An unlucky few were wiping the sleep from their eyes and reporting for duty aboard their ship anchored off Ford Island in Pearl Harbor. Still others headed for adjacent Hickam Field or up north to Wheeler Field.

Ship decks were being washed, planes wiped down and hangars swept. It was just another day in paradise.

At 7:48 a.m. all that changed as the first Japanese planes dropped their bombs and started firing their guns at stunned American soldiers and sailors. The United States had been violently thrown into World War II.

Every sailor, airman, soldier and civilian who was in or near Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 has their own individual story of courage, fear, heroics, or tragedy. No two stories from that day of infamy are the same.

From sailors on the U.S.S. Arizona and West Virginia on Battleship Row to pilots at Hickam and Wheeler Fields, to young children who were waved at by Japanese pilots flying over their homes, the memories remain vivid to this day. These are some of their stories from December 7, 1941. They will always Remember Pearl Harbor.

**Film runtime is 84 minutes.**
The Ivy League Farmer
Thur., January 11, 2018 | 7:00 p.m. | Treaty Site History Center | FREE
The Ivy League Farmer offers a first-hand glimpse into the lives of a dairy farm family on the cusp of generational and technological change. It’s also a love story that explores a small town’s concern about local kids not getting enough to eat.

After graduating from Harvard and landing his dream job on Wall Street, 23 year-old Joel Gilbert returns to the heartland to spend one final summer at home on his family’s dairy farm. While there, he quickly learns that the three-generation family farm is in trouble. Using the skills he gained with his Ivy League degree, Joel is now faced with the difficult task of confronting his strong-willed father and convincing the proud man to take the ultimate risk to save the farm. Joel also has another unexpected problem—he’s falling in love with the girl of his dreams in the small town in which he grew up. This film is being shown in partnership with the Nicollet County Farm Bureau.

Following the film join Nicollet County Farm Bureau and local dairy farming families for a short Q&A and discussion about the economics of the local dairy business.

This film sponsored by Nicollet County Farm Bureau.

Film runtime is 98 minutes.

Minnesota Hotdish: A Love Story
Thur., February 1, 2018 | 7:00 p.m. | Treaty Site History Center | FREE
Biting into a forkful of good, old-fashioned Minnesota hot dish is an experience like no other! It’s one that’s rooted in the memories of almost every person privileged enough to call themselves a Minnesotan. But what makes this dish so special? Where does the tasty treat come from? And… gulp... just how many calories are in there? We’ll endeavor to answer all of these questions—and seek out some of the craziest connections to hot dish our great state has to offer! Experience the history, heritage, and flavorsome future of this one-of-a-kind dish!

Film runtime is 29 minutes.

Program information to be announced soon!

(Mid)West of Somalia
Thur., March 1, 2018 | 7:00 p.m. | Location TBD | FREE
Since the 1990s, Minnesota has become home to more than 30,000 immigrants from Somalia and other east African nations. They have settled in cities and towns around the state, becoming a prominent part of communities throughout southern Minnesota. In the documentary film (Mid)West of Somalia, several Somali-American millennials provide a behind-the-scenes glimpse into their everyday lives. From career aspirations to the joys of the hijab, from bigotry in the shopping aisle to surprising encounters with bacon, these savvy and smart women and men offer insights you will not discover on the six o’clock news.

After the film, please join us a panel of local Somali-Americans, including participants in the film, will discuss their experiences and respond to audience questions.

Runtime approx. 35 minutes. Appropriate for all audiences.
History with a Twist
Patrick’s on Third, $500 Benefactor Business Member

Ross Gersten wrote in the April 1990 St. Peter Free Press, in a story about Patrick’s “Nowadays, it’s burritos, beer and bands on Saturday nights…but years ago the building, now Patrick’s on Third saw a different clientele.”

The corner of Third and Park Row, now home to Patrick’s, has been home to a myriad of businesses in its history. Theodore Knoll, the original owner of the property, constructed the brick two story, two storefront building in 1886 with a general store in the south storefront and saloon in the north storefront. In 1888 Knoll added the two-story wooden building to the north and also built a home for himself and his family, which is the present Marie Dranttel accounting business at 117 S. Third.

Knoll continued business on this corner until his death in 1904 and the buildings then went through a variety of metamorphoses until 1927. Dr. Walter W. Covell, a North Platt, Nebraska native, had graduated from medical school in 1906 from Barnes Medical College. Having served in World War I, from 1917 to 1919, with the 218th Aero Squadron where he had, as part of his duties, served as Captain Eddie Rickenbacker’s flight surgeon.

Covell came to Minnesota with excellent credentials and had settled in St. Peter to begin his private practice. Dr. Covell, after a time in town, saw the necessity for a hospital and had been pushing the city for quite some time to meet that need but, when he met resistance, acquired the former Knoll property on March 25, 1927 and prepared to establish a hospital himself. So the corner shifted from groceries and saloon to the ill, injured, and pregnant clientele. From his grand-daughter Melanie Covell’s research, you entered the hospital by the door in the South storefront on Third and that was the waiting room, reception area, and Dr. Covell’s private office, with the back portion of that side being the X-ray and darkroom. The other half of the building to the north being the hospital dining room and diet kitchen. The upstairs contained the operating room, “17 light and airy rooms, 20 beds, in 8 individual rooms and 3 wards.” All was open for tour by the St. Peter community on July 22 and 23, 1927 at the official open house. Even though—St. Peter rumor has it—pregnant mothers dreaded that the long climb via stairway to the second floor—between 1927 and 1931, 212 babies were born at the Covell Hospital. In addition to all the other patients from St. Peter and surrounding area the
doctor faced the overcrowding by going up, and added an elevator and a third floor which included 11 more rooms, 35 additional beds and a new operating room. During its operation well-known St. Peter residents such as Bob Wettergren had his tonsils removed there at age five and his brother Bill left behind his appendix. Office visits were $3 according to Melanie Covell. Dr. Covell continued his hospital until September 1939 with the opening of St. Peter Community Hospital with much of Covell’s equipment and furnishings being transferred to the new hospital building. Dr. Covell’s private office remained in the Third and Park Row building with other businesses coming and going from the buildings such as Emil Trinka’s insurance business, Dr. Robert Dahleen Sr.’s dental office with its entrance on the Park Row side; Nicollet Soil Conservation Offices, Lillian Sjostrom’s beauty parlour, and Jerry Sjostrom’s insurance business to name a few; in addition to residences for many, many, St. Peterites in the numerous apartments throughout the complex over the years. Dr. Covell died in 1957.

In 1967 another member of the Covell family, Wallace W. “Wally” Covell, the doctor’s son, opened Valley Liquor and Lounge at 125 S. Third. Liquor sales were in the south portion of the building with the bar in the original Knoll’s saloon side. Wally had the Valley Lounge bar built and many St. Peterites and Gusties may remember the matching red padded bar stools and red padded armrest along the front edge of the long bar. Valley Liquor and Lounge also sported a gameroom in the wooden portion which included two pool tables, pinball machines, air hockey table, and a sound booth and dance floor for the up-and-coming disco craze of the time. The basement was primarily for liquor storage though the boiler took up a large portion of the space. Wally had a conveyor belt installed over a portion of the basement stairs to ease stocking. Empty beer bottles slide down a tube from the bar above, and were re-crated and returned to the supplier. Liquor bottles, being of thinner glass were sorted by color, broken, and the glass was recycled, melted, and formed into new bottles. Melanie Covell worked with her father not only in the liquor sales but also in the sound booth.

recalled that there was a tunnel from the brick portion of the building “under where Dad parked his car and where the dumpster was” to the wooden building side “that we used as the wine cooler.” Wally’s “sales catch” was free ice with ANY liquor purchase.

Wally and his wife Bonnie retired to Florida in 1979 and the business then passed to Shoop’s Saloon from 1982 to 1988 when Patrick and Margaret Mayer purchased the buildings and business, Patrick’s publicity relates: “It took the proud [Patrick’s] parents three days to figure out how to turn off all the lights. We had four beers on tap and had no idea what we were doing. For the first few years we tried this and that, not always making money, but always having fun. Having fun was Margaret’s crusade in life. Since 1988 we have greatly expanded our tap lines, menu, seating area… We hope you can visit us soon and enjoy all we have to offer! Patrick’s is also the home of Drum and Bugle corps, World Champions “The Govanaires!’ Whom we proudly support.” Patrick’s expanded the restaurant seating to half of the wooden building, offered a sidewalk café option for a while, opened patio seating in 2015, recently replaced the Valley Lounge bar with a newly constructed bar, upgraded the restrooms in 2017; and is ever expanding not only their menu items but the beer selection as well. Mug Club and Tuesday night Trivia are popular on-going events with several nights of live music; menu features nodding to their Irish namesake, and Patrick’s has even hosted several live performances of the Arts Center’s epic sing-a-long Jesus Christ Superstar to standing room only crowds.

**Post-1998 Tornado:** Employees, of the then Brown-Nicollet Public Health Department, remember Patrick’s heroic efforts after the 1998 tornado. One former Public Health employee describes a “MacGyver-style” transformation of the no-electricity, no-water kitchen still being put into service not only to provide free food to tornado victims who had lost homes, but visiting aide crews; and also in an effort to keep the Patrick’s employees employed during that tremendously disruptive period. One of Public Heath worker’s memories, especially from her health inspector viewpoint, was a large coffee urn that was transformed into the hand washing station. Another Public Health worker related: Patrick’s was just one of several “pop up” feeding sites after the tornado. They were a valuable partner in the response, and worked with our office to follow food safety guidelines as best as they could for as long as they operated.”
One of the many uses of the Norseland Creamery Hall was theater productions. The hall boasted a 9-foot wide stage across the back that members of the public could use for a fee. A unique part of the hall was this colorful stage curtain. Advertisements for 22 local businesses plus the Norseland Creamery surround a central image. The bottom the curtain was rolled up and down on a piece of downspout that also likely acted as an anchor when the curtain was down.

This artifact is on display now as part of our Nicollet County township exhibit at the Treaty Site History Center.

Archives Still Seeking County Images

We are still seeking additional photographs from all parts of the county. If you are willing to share your images with us, please contact us or stop at the museum. While we always welcome donated photographs, we are also very happy to be able to borrow them and return them after they have been scanned and saved as digital images. As you can see from the examples below we collect a wide variety of images and welcome almost any image that you wish to share and most importantly, preserve.

Society’s Wish List

The Nicollet County Historical Society needs some things to help its operations! Here are several items which would be put to good use at the Society. We would take them new or gently used. A cash donation works, too. Just let us know for what the cash is intended. Please contact Jessica at director@nchsmn.org or at 507-934-2160 if you have questions.

Thank you!

- Wet/dry vacuum (3 gallons or larger)
- Office supplies (pens, pencils, tape)
- Desktop computer with Windows 7 or higher
- Computer monitor, 21” or larger
- External hard drives and flash drives
- Monetary donations for technology upgrades
- Fiberglass ladder, between 6’ and 12’ tall
- Paper cutter
Treaty Site Winter Hours Begin!

The Treaty Site History Center closes Sundays starting November 5. The Treaty Site will also be closed for the holidays from December 18, 2017, through January 8, 2018. Archives and group tours available during this time by appointment only.

NEW HOURS! / Beginning January 8, 2018:
- Sundays: CLOSED
- Mondays: CLOSED
- Tuesdays: 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
- Wednesdays: 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
- Thursdays: 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
- Fridays: 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
- Saturdays: 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Questions about the changes? Give us a call at 507-934-2160.

Now Accepting Applications for 2018 NCHS Board of Directors!

The Nominating Committee is seeking individuals strong in fundraising and development, facilities management, and nonprofit management as well as candidates with a strong legal and accounting background. In addition, the committee is seeking candidates from greater Nicollet County, in particular, representatives from the surrounding areas, including Courtland, Lafayette, Nicollet, North Mankato, or any of the multiple townships.

The Historical Society has big goals for the next five years and this is an exciting time with a lot of work ahead of us.

For more information or to request an application, please contact Executive Director Jessica Becker at (507) 934-2160 or email director@nchsmn.org. Application packets are also available on our website at nchsmn.org/about-us/board-of-directors.

Thrivent Choice® makes a meaningful impact

Are you a member of Thrivent Financial who’s eligible to direct Choice Dollars®?

Choice Dollars charitable outreach funds can make a world of difference to our Historical Society as we work together to preserve, protect, and interpret Nicollet County history. By directing Choice Dollars, eligible Thrivent members recommend where they feel Thrivent should distribute a portion of its charitable funds. Directing Choice Dollars is easy. Simply go to Thrivent.com/thriventchoice to learn more and find program terms and conditions. Or call 800-847-4836 and say “Thrivent Choice®” after the prompt. You can also call NCHS at 507-934-2160 and talk to Elaine.

Artifact & Archival Donations

Artifacts accepted into our collections since the July 2017 Crossing through September 2017:


Marlin Peterson: 1927 Atlas of Nicollet County; ledger for Peterson hardware store; account ledgers/journals and books from Peterson businesses; 60th Anniversary booklet for First Lutheran in Saint Peter, in Swedish (1857–1917); Gustavian 1928–’29; 1964–’65 St. Peter Junior-Senior High School Student Handbook; Handbook of the Insect World; 4-H County Extension program pins (1964, ’65, ’66, ’67); magnet from J.N. Annexstad’s Standard Service; rolled image of congregation from 50th anniversary of Scandian Grove Lutheran Church (1953); rolled image of congregation from 100th anniversary of Scandian Grove Lutheran Church (1958).

Ruth Klossner: Large collection of papers and booklets about townships, towns, churches, schools, fire departments and the Farmer’s Cooperative Creamery Association.


Dean Pettis: Wedding program from the wedding of Ann Martell and H. John Deutschendorf (John Denver);

Minnesota Masonic Heritage Center: wine glass commemorating the installation of Carl Pettis as the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Minnesota in 1997.

Lovona Bengston: 1983 typewritten history of the XL Club, including a list of past members.

Warren Michels: Vietnam era military clothing and equipment.

Sally Webster: Seal/stamper used to stamp shares of ownership from the Bernadotte Loop Cold Storage plant.


Betty Scheider: Wedding dress of Ruth Yaeger, married in Nicollet County in 1941. Includes dress, headpiece, three images (two from wedding day and one from 50th wedding anniversary) along with one piece of fabric.


Brian Oviatt: One undated image and one postcard dated 1919.

Stephen Bruender: Collection of items that belonged to Carl Paul Julius Pidde.

Gary B. Olson: Multiple copies of Ever the Letters by Clair B. and Esther Pearl Olson.


Harry Foster: Large stack of St. Peter Herald newspapers.

Ruth Klossner: DVD with images from 2017 Princess Kay of the Milky Way.

Wendy Nelson: Collection of reference materials that includes Minnesota History, maps, books and a travel atlas.
Join us for the Season of Giving!

The Nicollet County Historical Society is celebrating Give to the Max Day on November 16!

What if you could help the Society receive $1,000 just by giving $10 or more? On November 16, 2017, you’ll have that chance. How?

On November 16, every gift made on GiveMN.org will be entered into an hourly drawing for a $1,000 GiveMN Golden Ticket to be awarded to a non profit organization. Your gift of $10 or more could instantly turn into an extra $1,000!

Here’s the really exciting part: One donation made on GiveMN.org during the Give to the Max campaign (November 1 – November 16) will be randomly selected to receive a $10,000 Super-Sized GiveMN Golden Ticket!

Help us increase our odds and make the most of your gift by making a donation on November 16 on GiveMN.org. Search for Nicollet County Historical Society then make your donation!

Your generosity on this day makes a difference far beyond the 24-hour giving event.

It’s not too early to start thinking about your holiday shopping list. An NCHS membership is never out of stock, the wrong size, and it keeps giving the whole year. Membership comes with free admission to all our sites and programs, our quarterly newsletter, museum store discounts, and the peace of mind that comes with knowing you’ve helped an organization in need. We really appreciate the generosity and thoughtfulness of our supporters. Call or stop by the Treaty Site for a Gift Membership application.

As an added bonus, between now and December 16th, 2017, NCHS is offering gift givers something special. For every Senior or Individual membership you gift, we’ll give you a coupon for $5.00 off in our gift shop. For every other level of membership you gift, we’re offering $10.00 off in our gift shop. The coupon will be good through June 30, 2018.
2017 & 2018 Calendar of Events:

Event/Program information:

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

TSHC: All Treaty Site History Center events listed on the calendar below are free for NCHS members. Admission rates may apply for the general public. Please see individual event details for more information.

Open Now  Nicollet County Township Exhibit

   Nov. 16  Give to the MAX Day, consider a gift to the Nicollet County Historical Society
   Nov. 30  Forgotten History Lecture Series: Benjamin Franklin in Nicollet County, 2 p.m. (see description on page 6)
   Dec. 7   Documentary Film Series: Remember Pearl Harbor, 7 p.m. (see description on page 8)
   Dec. 18  Treaty Site History Center closes for holiday season

2018

   Jan. 9   Treaty Site History Center reopens after holiday season
   Jan. 11  Documentary Film Series: Ivy League Farmer, 7 p.m. (see description on page 9)
   Feb. 1   Documentary Film Series: Minnesota Hothdish: A Love Story, 7 p.m. (see description on page 9)
   Mar. 1   Documentary Film Series: (Mid)West of Somalia, 7 p.m. (see description on page 9)
   Apr. 5   Documentary Film Series: On Eagle’s Wings: Minnesota’s Sacred Music, 7 p.m.

Please watch the NCHS website, Facebook & Twitter and MNHS website for further events and details for additional programming.

YES, I/W would like to make a donation to NCHS...

Name ________________________________

Address ________________________________

_____________________________________

Phone (_______) _________________________

E-mail ________________________________

Amount Donated $______________________

☐ Please accept my ANONYMOUS Donation

☐ I understand that my donation will be acknowledged in NCHS publications

My check is enclosed ☐ Please debit my credit card ☐

Acct. Number _______________________________

CVV Code __________ Expiration Date _____________

3 #s on rev–VISA®, MC®, Disc®, 4 #s on rev–AE®

Authorized Signature ________________________________

Please make checks payable to:

Nicollet County Historical Society
Your membership dollars at work…

NCHS Membership Application

Name _______________________________________________________
Address _______________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________
Phone ( _______ ) _____________________________________________
E-mail _______________________________________________________
My check is enclosed □  Please debit my credit card □
Acct. Number _________________________________________________
CVV Code Expiration Date ______________________________________
3 #s on rev- VISA® 4 #s on rev- MC®, Disc®, 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 2017 & 2018 at the following level (please check one).

- Senior (65+) $30
- Individual $40
- Family $50
- 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

PAPERLESS?? Now you can purchase or renew your membership online! Visit nchsmn.org/membership for details.