In the late 1800s, North Mankato was only a small community along the banks of the Minnesota River. By 1880 the first iron bridge linked the burgeoning community with neighboring Mankato opening the area for both business and residential development. The first school was built in 1891 on the corner of Belgrade Avenue and Center Street with a 160 pupil capacity. On December 19, 1898, the community gathered to vote on the issue of incorporation. A 74 to 53 decision was reached to incorporate the river community into the village of North Mankato. The fledgling village was quick to attract businesses such as the Wheeler and Bennett Brickyard and Koppens Garden Wagons. At the turn of the century, the population of the village of North Mankato was already 939.

Over the years North Mankato saw businesses come and go like the Marigold Dairy on, the North Mankato Review newspaper and the Mankato Brick and Tile Company. Meanwhile, the process of transforming into a city continued, and in 1921 the citizens of North Mankato gathered again for the change from village status to fourth-class city. D.O. Tenney was elected the first mayor of the City of North Mankato. A new municipal building was constructed on the corner of Center Street and Belgrade Avenue.

Disaster in the form of floodwaters plagued the city in the 1950s and 1960s until a flood wall was built along the Minnesota River. This sparked the construction of Veterans Memorial Bridge in 1986. In the 1990s North Mankato expanded both its fire and police departments, elected the first female mayor of the City and built a new school in the hilltop area. Today North Mankato boasts a thriving business community, growing population, a lively social center, and so much more.

The Treaty Site History Center is excited to spotlight the unique history of North Mankato with an exhibit celebrating their first 120 years. North Mankato: A Stroll Through 120 Years runs August 1-December 14, 2019 and features artifacts from the Society’s collection as well as memorabilia on loan from individuals, including the centennial quilt, a card table sponsored by the Fortnightly Study Club, a copper bathtub once a fixture in the Wendall Hodapp home, menus from the Century Club, and a driver scorecard from Marigold Dairy.

Thank you North Mankato and congratulations on 120 years!
Dear members,

Summer is a special time for us. Your Society really comes alive this time of year. Our sites are open, and we have programs happening weekly (sometimes more than one!). If you’re a new member now is a great time to get acquainted with the Society for the first time or if you haven’t visited us for a while, enjoy the benefits of membership through complimentary admission at any of our sites.

In these pages, you’ll find out what we’ve been up to at the sites since the last newsletter, who has renewed their membership or joined the Society, and what’s new and upcoming with exhibits and programs. As you will see, many of you have made the conscious effort and choice to come to one of our sites in the past few months, and we sincerely thank you for doing so.

Yet attendance has been low this year. Oh, we have our days, but something is just a little off this year. I guess this makes sense. The terrible winter kept people indoors until April; then spring flooding made it difficult to find a way to us. Now we’re in full-blown summer mode with kids playing baseball, county fairs to visit, back to school shopping, family vacations, and more. There’s simply more competition for your time.

We rely on those admission dollars to help keep the doors open, so we can continue to preserve, protect, and share the rich history of Nicollet County. Now we have to find ways to recoup some of the dollars we’ve lost with low attendance, and you can help us.

As members of the Society, you are uniquely qualified to assist us. First, if you like what you see when you visit us or enjoy our programs, please renew your annual membership. The next best thing is to be an ambassador for the Society. Don’t hesitate to recommend us to others, pass along newsletters, forward our e-mails, or bring a friend along the next time you visit. Word of mouth is still valuable in this digital age. In this newsletter, you’ll also see volunteer opportunities. Volunteers are the very heart and soul of this organization who allow us to build our capacity and make a lot happen with few resources. Please consider volunteering your time and talents.

Thanks for supporting us and being great ambassadors for local history!

Jessica Becker
Executive Director
Asgrim K. Skaro
Grand Army of the Republic
Post Number 37, St. Peter, Minnesota
by Bob Sandeen

After the Civil War, many communities in the United States formed posts of an organization known as the Grand Army of the Republic (often referred to as the G. A. R.). Founded in 1866, men who had served in the Union Army, the United States Navy, the Marine Corps, and the Revenue Cutter Service during the war were eligible for membership.

As stated in the history of the organization in the October 1, 1930 issue of the Saint Peter Herald, the goals of the Grand Army of the Republic were as follows:

“(1) preserve and strengthen those kind and fraternal feelings which bind together the soldiers, sailors and marines who united to suppress the late rebellion, and to perpetuate the memory of the dead; (2) to assist such former comrades in arms as need help and protection and extend needful help to the widows and orphans of those who have fallen, and (3) to maintain true allegiance to the United States of America.”

On July 16, 1883, the Asgrim K. Skaro Post Number 37 was organized in St. Peter. Earlier attempts to organize a post had not received much support. However, as early as Decoration Day (now Memorial Day) on May 30, 1870, an effort was made to recognize those who had served in the Civil War, when Thomas Montgomery and a large group of residents of the community walked to Klein’s Cemetery (now Greenhill Cemetery) to decorate the graves of veterans.

When Jeremiah Donahower was put in charge of the 4th of July activities in St. Peter in 1883, he asked Thomas Montgomery “to invite and take command of all veterans of the late war in Nicollet and Le Sueur counties.” About 100 or more veterans took part in the celebration in Gorman Park on the 4th.

That day, a paper was circulated, and the consent of a significant number of the veterans was obtained to begin the process of organizing a post of the G. A. R. in St. Peter. A petition was sent to the department headquarters, and the new post “was organized and mustered in and officers chosen and installed” on the 16th. The post’s charter, with the signatures of 39 area veterans, soon arrived. Many of them are well known to local historians.

The post was named, as was frequently done in other communities, in honor of a local soldier who died during the Civil War. Born in 1829, Asgrim K. Skaro was a Norwegian from Hol, Hallingdal, who came to the United States in 1846. He served in the army at Fort Snelling until 1852. Skaro soon went to the future site of St. Peter with two fellow Norwegians, Matthias and Per Evenson. They can be considered among the founders of the community. When the Civil War began, Skaro was mustered in as the captain of Company E of the 2nd Minnesota Infantry Regiment on July 5, 1861. He served until March 20, 1862, when he was forced to resign for health reasons. On September 23, 1862, he was mustered in as the captain of Company D of the 9th Minnesota Infantry Regiment. He participated in the Dakota War that began in August. Eventually, his regiment was sent to fight Confederates in Tennessee. Skaro was killed on December 15, 1864, during the Battle of Nashville while leading his company. Chaplain A. H. Kerr reported that Captain Skaro was shot in the right breast and that he died instantly. Because Skaro was such a highly respected person, his body was brought back to St. Peter, where he was buried in Klein’s Cemetery. An obelisk marks the burial site.

G. A. R. continued on page 4
Skaro had married Theodora Laumann of St. Peter in 1857. She appeared on the 1870 St. Peter census with three sons and a daughter. Skaro is remembered today with a street named in his honor, as well as a section of St. Peter known as the Skaro and Evenson Addition.

Thomas Montgomery was the first post commander. In August of 1862, Montgomery enlisted in Company K of the 7th Minnesota Infantry Regiment. He served in the Dakota War until October of 1863, when he and his regiment were sent south to fight the Confederates. Beginning in 1864, he served as an officer in the 76th U. S. Colored Regiment, before moving on to serve in two other U. S. Colored Regiments, the 67th, and the 65th.

Other commanders of the post include Gideon S. Ives, D. Fichthorne, W. C. Moses, Thomas Moses, James B. Turrittin, C. L. Key, Max Hoefer, and Henry Hayes. During the Civil War, Ives served in New York Engineer Regiments, first in the 50th, and then in the 15th. After the war, having moved to St. Peter, he married the daughter of the late Governor Henry A. Swift, who had been a St. Peter resident. Ives served as the mayor and as the county attorney. He was elected to the Minnesota legislature as a senator and became lieutenant governor of Minnesota from 1891 to 1893.

By 1895, there were 140 post members. Skaro’s fellow Norwegian friend, Matthias Evenson, who had served with Skaro in Company D of the 9th Minnesota, was a member. Jeremiah Donahower, who fought in several battles, including Missionary Ridge, had replaced Skaro as the captain of Company E of the 2nd Minnesota in 1862. Ernst Meyer was a bugler in the 1st Minnesota at First Bull Run. Azro A. Stone enlisted with Skaro in Company E of the 2nd Minnesota. He was discharged after being wounded at Chickamauga. After the war, Stone served as sheriff, mayor, clerk of court, and county attorney. Bernt Olmanson, who had served with Donahower, kept a record of his wartime experiences that is available in book form. Photographer Hiram J. Jacoby, District Judge E. St. Julien Cox, and Judge of Probate William G. Gresham were among other prominent members. Gresham was the editor-in-chief of History of Nicollet and LeSueur Counties Minnesota. Civil Engineer Theodore G. Carter rose to the rank of captain of Company K of the 7th Minnesota Infantry Regiment. He was with Gen. Sibley during the Dakota War in 1863. During the Civil War, he was in the Tupelo campaign and the Battle of Nashville in 1864. After the war, Carter wrote extensive accounts of the early settlement days. In 1930, the Herald stated that only James Clark of St. Peter and William Hunter of Cleveland were still on the membership list. James Clark and his brother, Frank, served in Captain Skaro’s Company D of the 9th Minnesota. Clark died in St. Peter in 1932 at the age of 96.
At the end of the 18th century, the Age of Enlightenment, classical architecture reigned supreme. Buildings were symmetrical, and utilized the principles of Andrea Palladio, following the Doric, Ionic, or Corinthian architectural orders inherited from Greece and Rome. Think White House or Jefferson’s Monticello. But change was in the wind, and that change would begin with literature. In England, Sir Walter Scott’s Ivanhoe was a stunning success. With the development of the novel, readers could experience a life other than their own, and the Romantic age was born. In England, the Bronte sisters and Jane Austen wrote stories of middle-class life that sparked the imagination and were set in a rural environment. A longing for a simple yet elegant and romantic life took root. In America, novelist James Fenimore Cooper, known mostly for stories of the frontier with romantic elements, tried his hand at a Gothic romantic novel with The Heidenmauer, set in medieval Europe. Though never a literary success, it indicates that the romance of the medieval had reached American shores as well. Both poetry and architecture were deeply influenced by the romantic movement, and soon housing styles would be influenced by the desire for a life that mirrored the images conjured by literary and poetic works people were reading.

Enter Andrew Jackson Downing. Beginning his career as a nurseryman, he eventually turned from landscape architecture to the architecture of the houses situated in the landscapes he was creating. He categorically rejected the classical when he wrote:

“The temple cottage is an imitation of the Temples of Theseus or Minerva in thin pine board, with a wonderfully fine and classical portico of wooden columns in front. The grand Portico covers, perhaps, a third of the space and the means consumed by the whole dwelling. It is not of the least utility, because it is too high for shade; nor is it in the least satisfactory, for it is entirely destitute of truthfulness: it is only a caricature of a temple- not a beautiful cottage.”

Downing’s two books, The Architecture of Country Houses and Victorian Cottage Residences, based on the new Romantic principles, would have a profound and lasting effect on American architecture. When a country lawyer, E. St. Julien Cox arrived in the young city of St. Peter and decided to build a residence commensurate with his status and hopes for the future, it is not surprising that he would turn to the essential concepts Downing espoused. Downing writes, “In a dwelling house, our everyday comfort is so entirely dependent on a convenient arrangement of the rooms, or plan of the interior, that this is universally acknowledged to be the most important consideration.” Gone was essential symmetry that was visible in many early Minnesota residences which were still remnants of the Classical Revival architectural period. Cox, however, wanted something new, something based on the romantic vision that was transforming architectural norms.

Wood was cheap in Minnesota as the vast white pine forests were being harvested, and Downing in his books prominently displayed house plans using board and batten exterior walls identical to those Cox would use. But by the time Cox was to build, adaptations were already being made to Downing’s more modest plans. The widespread use of the band saw would make available cheaply a great variety of bracketing and verge board design and the use of what some writers call “gingerbread” would appear in profusion on Dowling inspired designs. Yet, Cox’s plan seems to fit nicely into Downing’s basic vision. He writes in Country Residences: “The rural, Gothic Style characterized mainly by pointed gables, and the Italian, by projecting roofs, balconies and terraces, are much the most beautiful modes for our country residences. Their outlines are highly picturesque and harmonious with nature. Their forms are continued on page 13
Upcoming Events at Harkin Store
All programs take place on Sundays from 1 – 4 p.m. Programs are included with site admission of $6 adults, $5 seniors and college students, $4 ages 5 – 17, free age 4 and under and MNHS members.

Aug. 4 | 40th Annual West Newton Day
Aug. 11 | Old Games Day
Aug. 18 | Bees & Honey Day
Aug. 25 | Old Nicollet County Schools Day
Sep. 1 | The West Arrives in West Newton
Sep. 8 | Grandparents Day
Sep. 14 | Snakes of the Minnesota River Valley Day
Sep. 22 | Horses & Transportation Day
Sep. 29 | Sheep & Wool Day
Oct. 6 | Preparing for Winter Day
Oct. 13 | West Newton Post Office Day
Oct. 20 | Live Music with Lonesome Ron

We are sure excited about all the programs coming up. They are repeats from prior years, but we’re still noticing a lot of interest in them. Our store has been featured on New Ulm Community Access Television and also in the New Ulm Journal, Lafayette-Nicollet Ledger, KEYC News 12, and more!

Our “40th Annual West Newton Day” is coming up on August 4. Visitors can view historical photographs and learn about the history of Alexander Harkin and his family, the founders of the 1870’s Harkin Store. Descendants of West Newton’s earliest settlers are invited to share their stories and any old photographs.

“Old Games Day” is fun for children and children at heart. On August 11 enjoy an afternoon full of old-fashioned games, such as pick-up sticks, tic-tac-toe, checkers, dominoes, graces, and rolling hoops. Visitors can take some of the fun home with them because many of the games can be purchased in the gift shop.

In the 1870s, pioneers would search for and harvest honey on the prairie to use instead of sugar. Our “Bees and Honey” program brings together people who want to learn more about a project that is becoming very popular. Visitors can view a display on bees and honey created by Crystal Bock and hear her speak about the ins and outs of beekeeping. Bock’s honey will be for sale.

We head back to school on August 25. “Nicollet County Old Schools Day” gives visitors the chance to explore the history of old schoolhouses, including the Robinson School in West Newton. Photos and textbooks will be on display, and visitors are encouraged to bring theirs to share.

Music is a favorite pastime for many of our visitors if program attendance is any indicator. Labor Day weekend the west arrives in West Newton! Local musician Lonesome Ron, the King of the Valley Yodelers, is coming to perform Western music like cowboy ballads, yodels, and tell the history of the songs that were popular during that time.

Road construction hasn’t kept visitors away from us this summer, and for that we are grateful! People have traveled from different states and have enjoyed the information given to them about the village and area. They have found the gift shop an enjoyable place to find unique items.

Reminder: We will again be dealing with the MNDOT highway construction project this season. The Highway 14/15 intersection will be closed for construction through 2019. Please follow the signage or check: http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d7/projects/14newulmtonmankato/ before your visit.

Descendants of Alexander Harkin visited the site this summer, during a family reunion.
It has really been a good start to the summer at Fort Ridgely. This year we hosted Company B Weekend. We welcomed approximately 40 reenactors that weekend along with many visitors. There were musket drills, a Sutler complete with wares to sell to the public, music, and of course, cannon fire!

All of the programs so far this summer have been well attended. We have also welcomed the Lafayette-Nicollet Ledger, New Ulm Journal, and KEYC 12 to help us out with some great publicity. Just recently KEYC 12 was here to cover our Flag Program which is written and presented by our very own Site Guide Anna Endorf. In her program, she talks about the history of Old Glory and the connection it gives us to be an American. This program draws people from as far as two hours away every year!

We still have a few programs coming up, “The Civilian Conservation Corp Hiking Tour” will be on Saturday, August 3 followed by “Wild About Wildlife” with Scott Kudelka on Saturday, August 17 and “The New Ulm Battery” on Saturday, August 31.

Have a great summer and we’ll see you at the Fort!

NEW FACE AT THE FORT

Meet summer intern Sam Hawkins!

My name is Sam Hawkins and I am a rising Sophomore attending the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. I am hoping to double major in History and Government. At university, I am also a member of the Reserve Officer Training Corps, with a particular interest in military history. My parents are originally from the Twin Cities area but live overseas for most of the year in the country of Qatar. I am very excited to have the opportunity to intern at the Fort Ridgely historic site, learning about both the history of the State of Minnesota and the operations of a historical society. It has been a great experience thus far and I look forward to working at the site for the remainder of the summer.

Sam Hawkins, Ft. Ridgely, Summer Intern
The NCHS Archives recently received a donation from Representative Jeff Brand of Minnesota House District 19A. The certificate commemorating a Resolution Establishing Saint Peter as Minnesota’s Capitol isn’t simply a piece of paper, but rather, is a document that reflects an heroic attempt to bring some modicum of justice to our city, to give the residents of St. Peter a reason to dance in our extra-wide streets that really do befit a capitol (watch out for traffic on Minnesota!).

Rep. Brand’s press release on the matter, dated April 1, 2019, explains:


‘For 162 years the citizens of St. Peter have been slighted by an event that many would characterize as some of the darkest days of 1857. It was that year when Jolly Joe Rolette stole legislation calling for the removal of the Capitol to St. Peter, legislation that had actually passed the House and council (now Senate). I believe this action to be a great injustice to the hardworking folks of St. Peter and the surrounding areas...It is time to right this wrong.’"

Thank you, Rep. Brand, for entrusting this sacred text to the NCHS!

Donated recently by Michael Frederick to NCHS Collections

Digital images of The Gathering, a week-long theater event created by Cherry Creek Theatre director David Olson, St. Peter, August 1981.
OPENING DAY
August 1 | Treaty Site History Center continues through Dec. 14, during usual museum hours

Nicollet County Fair
August 7–11 | Nicollet County Fairgrounds
Check out the NCHS booth in the exhibits building, or see call for volunteers and help us out at our booth.

Log Cabins of Nicollet County
Thur., August 15, 7 p.m. | Treaty Site History Center, | $5 non-members.
To what extent do our buildings reflect who we are? Bob Douglas, Gustavus Geography Emeritus Professor, leads us on an examination of pioneer log buildings and their builders in old Nicollet County to shed some light on this question.

Their Spirits Were a Flame:
Nellie Griswold Francis, Lena Olive Smith, and Black Minnesota Women Fighting for Suffrage and Civil Rights
Thur., August 22, 7 p.m. | Treaty Site History Center, | $3 non-members.
Join us for a program examining two of the Twin Cities most extraordinary women leaders of the early twentieth century as a window for revealing how black women's activism de-centered white women and black men as the only players in Minnesota's journey toward racial and sexual equity.

About the presenter:
Misti Harper, left, is a professor at Gustavus Adolphus College. She is a women's historian who specializes in race and gender and her current book project is titled *Ladies of Little Rock: Black Femininity and Respectability Politics in the Fight to Desegregate Central High School.*

Events continued on page 10
**Documentary Film Series**

**11th Season**

**From Cairo to the Cloud**

**Thu., September 5, 7 p.m. | Saint Peter High School Performing Arts Center | FREE.**

This movie is the story of an astonishing collection of ancient manuscripts—hIDDEN for centuries in an Egyptian synagogue—and their remarkable odyssey to the modern world. It is a tale of adventure and discovery by pioneering women and radical rabbis. Victorian photos and early film-reel scenes combine with modern animations and visual effects to reveal a rare, crumbling text for the first time. This remarkable film combines an adventure story with the historical gaze of scholars, curators, programmers, and novelists from across the globe.

Following the film, there will be a Q&A with university faculty Dr. Fuad Naem, Department of Religion at Gustavus Adolphus College, Dr. Gregory Kaster, Department of History at Gustavus Adolphus College, and Mr. Noam Sienna from the University of Minnesota.

**War of the Worlds**

**Thu., October 3, 7 p.m. | Treaty Site History Center | FREE.**

Shortly after 8 p.m. on the Halloween Eve, 1938, the voice of a panicked radio announcer broke in with a news bulletin reporting strange explosions taking place on the planet Mars, followed minutes later by a report that Martians had landed in the tiny town of Grovers Mill, New Jersey. Although most listeners understood that the program was a radio drama, the next day’s headlines reported that thousands of others plunged into panic, convinced that America was under a deadly Martian attack. It turned out to be H.G. Wells’ classic *The War of the Worlds*, performed by 23-year-old Orson Welles.

Featuring interviews with film director and cinema historian Peter Bogdanovich, Welles’ daughter Chris Welles Feder, and other authors and experts, as well as dramatizations of some of the thousands of letters sent to Welles by an alternately admiring and furious public, *War of the Worlds* explores how Wells’ ingenious use of the new medium of radio struck fear into an already anxious nation.

**Shadows at the Crossing: Spirits of Old Traverse des Sioux**

**Fri., October 11 & Sat., October 12 | starting at 6:30 p.m. | Traverse des Sioux Historic Site**

Join us on Friday, October 11 and Saturday, October 12 for the return of the popular and informative “Shadows at the Crossing: Spirits of Old Traverse des Sioux” on the Traverse des Sioux historic site. Groups will be led by costumed guides to the “spirits” at stations on the trail beginning every 10 minutes starting at 6:30 p.m.

Local actors will portray personalities who lived in the Traverse des Sioux area over 160 years ago. The “spirits” will tell dramatic and humorous stories about their lives and experiences. Their stories are fascinating, sometimes tragic, and always inspiring.

“Shadows at the Crossing” is appropriate for children as well as adults. For non-members, the cost is $10 for adults, $5 for children ages 8+, and $20 for families. NCHS members receive a 20% discount.

If you would like to participate in the event, please contact the Program Committee at events@nchsmn.org or by calling 507-934-2160.

**A House in Mourning**

**Sat., October 26 | E. St. Julien Cox House | FREE.**

Please join the Cox family in mourning the dead. Guests to the home will find Mariah Cox and her remaining immediate family grieving over the loss of her beloved husband, Eugene St. Julien Cox.

Please be our guest and join us at the Eugene St. Julien Cox House for this richly layered turn of the century theatrical event. For additional information on admission and time, please contact Jessica at 507-934-2160.

**Trick or Treat at the Cox House**

**Thur., October 31, 5–7 p.m. | E. St. Julien Cox House | FREE.**
Now Accepting Applications for 2020 NCHS Board of Directors

The Nominating Committee is seeking individuals to fill vacant seats on the Board to begin in January 2020. We are looking for individuals from any of the cities or townships across greater Nicollet County and from various professional backgrounds, especially legal, accounting, facilities, and human resources.

Applications are due by Friday, November 15, 2019. For more information or to request an application, please contact Executive Director Jessica Becker at (507) 934-2160 or email director@nchsmn.org.

Volunteers Needed for the following:

- **Museum reception:** Wednesdays and Thursdays and special events
- **Tour Guides:** On-call for special tours and events at the Cox House, Traverse des Sioux historic site, and the Treaty Site History Center.
- **Newsletter:** Articles written by scholars and local historians
- **Gardeners:** Maintain the gardens and landscape at the Treaty Site and Cox House
- **Committees:** Use your skills and interests to assist the Society with programs, exhibits, fundraising, and more!

Volunteers meet people from all over the world. All volunteers will be trained by staff members.

It’s fair time!

The Nicollet County Historical Society was organized August 22, 1928, when 96 members of the Old Settlers’ Association gathered for a picnic dinner in Floral Hall of the fairgrounds during the 1928 county fair. Be a part of the fun at this year’s fair August 7th through the 11th. NCHS will have an exhibit and friendly representatives to talk about local history, Society memberships, upcoming events, and more. It’s a great chance to meet new people and renew friendships. Several hundred visitors stop by and get better acquainted with our local history and our organization. Special thanks to those who come by our booth to chat, enter a drawing, or learn some history. Those opportunities make the county fair a real special time of year for all of us!

Two-hour shifts are available throughout the fair. If you’re interested in volunteering at our booth, please contact the Society at 507-934-2160 or events@nchsmn.org by August 2.
Mahkato Wacipi

CHS is proud to be one of several community organizations partnering with the Mahkato Wacipi in their education tent. The education tent is a wonderful place where we can add to the celebration with resources and information that offer visitors the chance to delve deeper into their community connections with history and think critically about what they’re learning and experiencing.

This years’ dates are Friday, September 20th starting at 6 p.m., Sunday, September 22nd at 5 p.m. We’ll be breaking up the days into shifts so they’re more manageable. All materials will be provided. If you’d like to learn more or are interested in volunteering, please contact our education tent coordinator Kate at katejmartens@gmail.com.

Now in Bloom on Traverse des Sioux

The Many Rivers Chapter of the Prairie Enthusiasts is in year four of the five-year plan to restore the prairie on Traverse des Sioux. The volunteer group has been diligently fighting invasive plants that are encroaching on the young prairie plants and signs of their success are showing. Despite a wet spring, the prairie looks much better this year with more desirable prairie plants over the weedy ones. Earlier this spring TdS was spot-checked and parts of the prairie were later hand-seeded. It was mowed mid-July as is often done with new and renovated plantings to prevent annual weeds from setting seed and allowing more sun to reach the perennial prairie plants. Stop out to the prairie soon and take a stroll through this beautiful, living exhibit.

Yarrow (Achillea millefolium)
Millefolium meaning thousand leaves describes the compound fern-like leaves of the yarrow. Densely packed, flat-topped flower clusters in white or more rarely pink. Native Americans used aromatic leaves for tea, chewed for toothache; also used as a stimulant or tonic. Winnebagos wadded leaves in their ears as treatment for earaches. Blooms late May–August.

Butterflyweed (Asclepias tuberosa)
Conspicuous bright orange-yellow flowers in flat-topped clusters. Leaves oblong. Plant hairy, spreading, bushy. Seed pods about 4” long. No milky juice in this species. The root was widely used by Native Americans and pioneers alike to treat bronchial and pulmonary disorders. Blooms summer.

Keeley Farm Drainage & Landscaping Supplies restored the walking trail after late snowfall, spring thawing, and area flooding wreaked havoc on them.
convenient, their accessories elegant, and they are highly expressive of the refined and unostentatious enjoyments of the country.” This is what Cox was to build in pioneer St. Peter. Its modernity in 1871 must-have stunned the locals.

In a more modern appraisal of Cox’s creation, Gebhard and Martinson in their 1977 edition of *A Guide to the Architecture of Minnesota* write:

“(It is) The most impressive example of a Gothic Revival dwelling still standing in Minnesota. On close inspection of the building one discovers that it is actually an Italianate Cottage with Gothic detailing. The tower tucked into the L of the house, the bays, the round hooded windows, and the paneled columns on the porch are Italianate features, and yet it all ends up being Gothic.”
The Nicollet County Historical Society needs some items 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!

Don’t forget to do your Amazon shopping at smile.amazon.com and choose the Nicollet County Historical Society as your charity. We even made an AmazonSmile Charity List of products we need to be donated to make it even easier to support us. Please help us stock up!

Society’s Wish List

- Legal-size filing cabinet for photo storage
- Dehumidifier, for the collections storage room
- Computer monitor, 21” or larger for exhibit use
- External hard drives and USB flash drives, to backup our digital collection
- Fiberglass ladder, between 6’ and 12’ tall
- 8½” x 11” white or cream cardstock
- Monetary donations for quality storage boxes and materials
- Supplies: Paper towels, hand soap, dusting cloths

Local history comes alive for one Minneapolis student

Meet Harper Smith. Harper is a student at Annunciation Catholic middle school in Minneapolis who participated in National History Day competition at her school with a project called “St. Peter Almost Became Capital.” The 2018 National History Day theme was “Conflict and Compromise in History,” and Harper found there was a lot more conflict to the story than she thought.

Harper got the idea for her exhibit after her grandma, who resides in rural Mankato, told her St. Peter was almost the Capital. Harper has always been fascinated by what “might have been” for the town of St. Peter if it had become the Capital city of Minnesota.

Each year students in grades 6–12 can participate in National History Day, an interdisciplinary research project based on an annual theme. Students choose a topic that relates to the theme, then research that topic, and present their projects at History Day competitions at their school, regionals, state, and even national levels.

Harper and her mom Kerri stopped by NCHS to show us her exhibit board which is now proudly on display in our lobby. Congratulations on a job well done, Harper!

Budding historian Harper Smith, poses with her National History Day project “St. Peter Almost Became Capital.”
2019 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: Treaty Site History Center events are free unless stated otherwise.

opening Aug. 1  North Mankato: strolling through 120 Years
continuing An exhibit to commemorate 120th anniversary of the City of North Mankato
though Admission fees apply to non-members. (see description on 6)
Treaty Site History Center

December 14

Aug. 4: 40th Annual West Newton Day, 1 p.m. (see description on page 6) Harkin Store
Aug. 1: Old Games Day, 1 p.m. (see description on page 6) Harkin Store
Aug. 3: Civilian Conservation Corps Hiking Tour, 1–2 p.m. (see description on page 7) Fort Ridgely

Aug. 7–11: Nicollet County Fair, 1–2 p.m. (see description on page 7) Nicollet County Fairgrounds
Aug. 15: Log Cabins of Nicollet County, 7 p.m. (see description on page 9) Treaty Site History Center
Aug. 17: Wild about Wildlife, 1–2 p.m. (see description on page 7) Fort Ridgely
Aug. 18: Bees & Honey Day, 1 p.m. (see description on page 6) Harkin Store

Aug. 22: Their Spirits Were a Flame
Nellie Griswold Francis, Lena Olive Smith, and Black Minnesota Women
Fighting for Suffrage and Civil Rights, 7 p.m. (see description on page 9)
Treaty Site History Center

Aug. 25: Guided tours of the E. St. Julien Cox House, 1–4 p.m., (see description on page 5) Cox House
Aug. 25: Old Nicollet County Schools Day, 1 p.m. (see description on page 6) Harkin Store
Sept. 1: Last Day to visit Fort Ridgely, Noon–4 p.m. Fort Ridgely
Sept. 1: The West Arrives in West Newton, 1 p.m. (see description on page 6) Harkin Store
Sept. 5: Film Series: From Cairo to the Cloud, 7 p.m., Free (see description on 10) Saint Peter High School
Sept. 8: Grandparents’ Day, 1 p.m. Harkin Store
Sept. 14: Snakes of the Minnesota River Valley Day, 1 p.m. Harkin Store
Sept. 22: Horses & Transportation Day, 1 p.m. Harkin Store
Sept. 29: Sheep & Wool Day, 1 p.m. Harkin Store

Oct. 3: Film Series: War of the Worlds, 7 p.m., Free (see description on 10) Treaty Site History Center
Oct. 6: Preparing for Winter Day, 1 p.m. Harkin Store

Oct. 11: Shadows at the Crossing:
 Spirits of Old Traverse des Sioux, 7 p.m., (see description and fees on 10) Treaty Site History Center

Oct. 12: Shadows at the Crossing:
 Spirits of Old Traverse des Sioux, 7 p.m., (see description and fees on 10) Treaty Site History Center

Oct. 13: West Newton Post Office Day, 1 p.m. Harkin Store
Oct. 20: Live Music with Lonesome Ron, 1 p.m. Harkin Store
Oct. 26: A House in Mourning, time TBA (see description on page 10) Cox House

Oct. 31: Trick or Treat at the Cox House, 5–7 p.m. Cox House

Please watch the NCHS website, Facebook & Twitter and MNHS website for further events and details for additional programming.
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 Exp. Date
3 4s on VISA, MC, Disc; 4 4s on AE
Authorized Signature __________________________________________

Yes! I would like to support my Nicollet County Historical Society in 2019 at the following level (please check one).

- Senior (65+) $ 30  
- Individual $ 40  
- Family $ 50  
- Family $ 50  
- Sustaining $ 75  
- Patron $ 100  
- Supporter $ 200  
- Benefactor $ 500  
- Life Member $ 1,000

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.