



Historical Society's Annual Meeting

Please join us for the Nicollet County Historical Society's Annual Meeting on January 14, 2017 at the Treaty Site History Center. The meeting will feature an open house for the new exhibit "Fur Trade in Minnesota" which is opening that day! The Open House begins at 3 p.m. with the program at 4:30 p.m., and the business meeting to follow.

The day's featured speaker will be Dr. Ron Schirmer, a professor in the Anthropology department at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Dr. Schirmer will give a talk that includes a general overview of what our current state of knowledge is of the county's archaeology, as well as some special time focusing on Traverse des Sioux and recent excavations at Swan Lake.



Dr. Ron Schirmer
Photo credit: Free Press

Cost for the open house and program is \$15 for members, \$20 for non-members. For details and registration call (507) 934-2160. Reservations with payment are due by January 6, 2017. *(Please find the reservation form on the reverse of this newsletter.)*

Treaty Site winter hours begin!

Reminder, the Treaty Site History Center once again has winter hours. We are not open Sundays from November through February. The Treaty Site will also be closed for the holidays from December 19, 2016 through January 8, 2017. Archives and group tours available during this time by appointment only.



Are you struggling to come up with gift ideas this year? Give the gift of history this holiday season! 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 17, 2016, NCHS is offering gift-givers something special. For every Senior or Individual membership you gift, we'll give you a coupon for \$5 off in our museum store. For every other level of membership you gift, we're offering \$10 off in our museum store. The coupon will be good through June 30, 2017.

From the Director

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!
Everyone here at NCHS hopes you have the merriest of holiday seasons. As the new

Executive Director of the Nicollet County Historical Society I would like to take a moment and introduce myself to those of you whom I have not yet met. My name is Jessica Becker and I am thrilled to be your new Executive Director! As some of you may know, I am not a new face at NCHS and you might recognize me from the Treaty Site and various Society activities.

I have a long history with NCHS that I am excited to continue. I was hired as a Museum Assistant by former Executive Director Ben Leonard in May 2009 after receiving a Bachelor of Arts in History. I worked weekends at the Treaty Site with artifact collections and at the front desk, and also led tours at the E. St. Julien Cox House my first summer here. In the spring of 2015, NCHS received the first of two Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage grants to hire me to oversee a collections evaluation and inventory system consolidation project. Later that year when the position of Site Manager was vacated, I was asked to step into that position.

Over the years the Nicollet County Historical Society has become a home to me. I have a passion for Nicollet County history and heritage, for this organization, and the people who support it. I am extremely lucky and grateful to be given this wonderful opportunity to lead NCHS and help it grow and thrive.

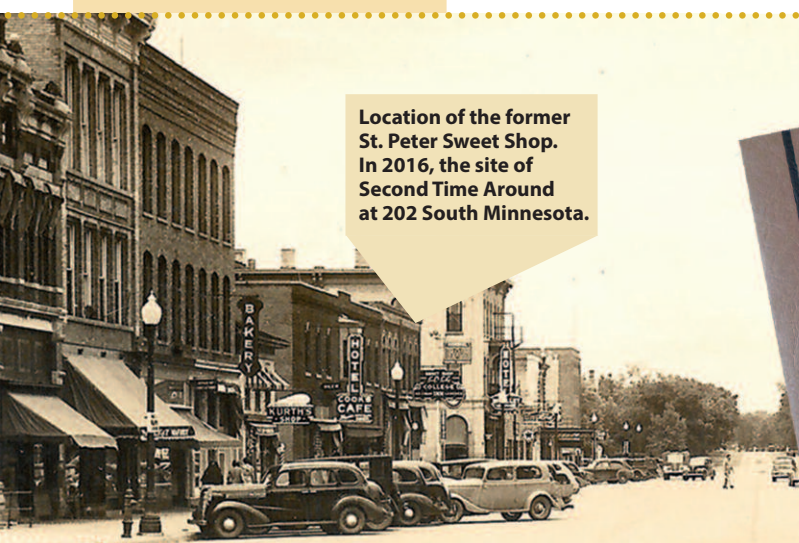
Thank you to everyone who has voiced your support. And thank you to the Board of Directors of the Nicollet County Historical Society for making me your choice. I am look forward to meeting the rest of you and working hard to promote the Society, its many unique historic sites, and helping the wonderful residents of Nicollet County explore our history.



Jessica Becker

Collections Corner

Recently Joan Davis, of St. Peter, donated several items from the Sweet Shop, an eatery formerly located at 202 So. Minnesota Ave. and listed in the St. Peter phone books from 1932 through 1946. Items included a menu, order pads, and several coupon books, as well as aprons and ledgers. The shop was run by Anthony and Marg Bravo and John Widi. They sold Vander Bic's Ice Cream. In the Minnesota Ave. photo at the left the black Sweet Shop sign is just barely discernable below the point of the arrow.



Location of the former St. Peter Sweet Shop. In 2016, the site of Second Time Around at 202 South Minnesota.



SEASONS
Greetings
from NCHS!

*Best Wishes
for Peace
and Joy
this
Holiday
Season
and a
New Year
of Health,
Happiness
and
Prosperity*



Documentary Film Series:
Films on Thursdays

The Nicollet County Historical Society will once again partner with St. Peter Community and Family Education to present our eighth season of documentary films! They’re shown every month from September through May at the Treaty Site History Center. Admission to the film series is *free for everyone!* The Treaty Site History Center is located one mile north of downtown Saint Peter at Highways 169 and 22, across from the Mankato Clinic.

Volstead Fever: Prohibition in Minnesota
January 12, 7 p.m., Treaty Site History Center. Free.

Stories from Prohibition don’t just come from big cities like Chicago and New York. They can be found all over, from Minneapolis/St. Paul to our own backyard in southwest Minn. *Volstead Fever: Prohibition in Minnesota* features the Congressional author of Prohibition, Representative Andrew Volstead of Granite Falls, the impact Prohibition had on the historic Schell’s Brewery of New Ulm and Ghent, the first town in Minn. to serve alcohol when Prohibition ended. In this documentary about the Prohibition-era of southwest Minn., you’ll get a glimpse at early 20th century history, visiting the home of Andrew Volstead and learning dark secrets about Granite Falls’ supper club, Bootleggers. You’ll also hear from local brewers who are shaping the landscape of locally produced beers and find out how Schell’s was able to survive Prohibition for its 13-year duration.

Local collectors will have a display of prohibition era collectibles to filmgoers to check out before and after the film.

Film Not Rated. Runtime is 27 minutes. Doors open at 6:40 p.m.

The Story of Winter: Minnesota’s Most Iconic Season
February 2, 7 p.m., Treaty Site History Center. Free.

We love winter in Minnesota. Or do we hate it?

To be sure, winter in Minnesota is a natural and social enigma. Meteorologically, it follows a general storyline that is synchronized by the sun, yet can be wildly unpredictable from week-to-week, and even from one season to the next. Socially, winter is a complex and polarizing character that inspires adulation, contempt, empathy, bitterness, bliss and misery—often all in a single person! And, more than any other season in Minnesota, its character is fading rapidly into a barely-recognizable version of its former self. What will this mean meteoro-logically, and more importantly, what will it mean to us?

In this documentary, we explore Minnesota’s winter as both a scientific topic and a social and cultural experience. We blend concise and engaging descriptions of its meteorological plot-points, with the candid sentiments of the people who work, play, suffer, and otherwise live with it. We revel in its beauty, we laugh at our confounding relationships with it, and we mourn its ongoing demise. This is the story of our region’s most iconic season; This is *The Story of Winter*.

Following the film filmmakers Kenny Blumenfeld and Alec Johnson will join us for a discussion about the film and Minnesota winter weather.

Film Not Rated. Runtime is 48 minutes. Doors open at 6:40 p.m.

Polka Time
March 2, 7 p.m., Treaty Site History Center. Free.

Gibbon, Minnesota sports more square footage of dance floor per population than any city in the United States. And for more than 30 years, RVs from all over the country have descended on Gibbon each summer for the Gibbon Polka Fest, where thousands of polka-loving dancers party until dawn. *Polka Time* looks at this rural and Midwestern cultural tradition through the stories of some of its devotees, whose joy for polka includes a zest for life that belies their age. But with attendance declining and the Gibbon Ballroom for sale, *Polka Time* may also be capturing the twilight of a great American musical tradition and the end of an era.

Film Not Rated. Runtime is 30 minutes. Doors open at 6:40 p.m.

FILM SERIES continued in right column.

Passing of a Friend

The Nicollet County Historical Society was saddened to hear of the passing of Don Olmanson. Don and the Olmanson family have been long-time supporters of NCHS. He served as Board President for three years and worked tirelessly to help establish the Treaty Site History Center. We will miss him dearly.



Dr. Don Olmanson

FILM SERIES continued

Power and the Land
April 6, 7 p.m., Treaty Site History Center. Free.

A 1940 documentary produced by the Department of Agriculture and the Rural Electrification Administration showing the struggle to bring electricity to rural areas of the United States. The film’s main purpose was to convince American farmers of the necessity for rural electrification through farm cooperatives. It received wide theatrical distribution through RKO. Filmmakers sought to overcome farmers’ conservatism not by direct appeal but by gentle dramatization using a family on an Ohio farm and a poetic commentary by Stephen Vincent Benet in a simple before-and-after structure. The hardships of life on a non-electrical farm are contrasted with the benefits brought by electricity. Ivens wrote about the genuine rapport he established with the farming people and his film is a tribute to American ideals and to the hardworking farming families who love the land.

Following the film will be a talk about rural electrification in our area. More details to follow.

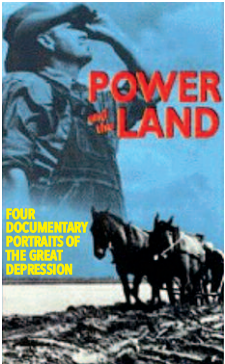
Film Not Rated. Runtime is 38 minutes. Doors open at 6:40 p.m.

Women Serving in War
May 11, 7 p.m., Treaty Site History Center. Free.

From the war zone to life back home: Three generations of Min-nesota’s military women share their stories of service from World War II to Vietnam to Afghanistan. Produced by TPT with the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs.

Following the film join us for a program celebrating women servicemembers. More details to follow.

Film Not Rated. Runtime is 27 minutes. Doors open at 6:40 p.m.



Upcoming Events

Dec. 19, 2016–Jan. 8, 2017: NCHS and Treaty Site History Center closed

Jan. 12: Documentary Film Series
***Volstead Fever: Prohibition in Minnesota*, 7 p.m., Treaty Site, Free**

Jan. 14: NCHS Annual Meeting, 3 p.m., Treaty Site, registration required

Jan. 14–Mar. 27: NCHS hosts exhibit “Fur Trade in Minnesota”
Treaty Site, admission charged, *members free*

Jan. 29: Learn snowshoeing with Scott Kudelka
1 p.m., Treaty Site, *registration required*

February 2: Documentary Film Series
***The Story of Winter: Minnesota’s Most Iconic Season*, 7 p.m., Treaty Site, Free**

March 2: Documentary Film Series
***Polka Time*, 7 p.m., Treaty Site, Free**

April 6: Documentary Film Series
***The Power and the Land*, 7 p.m., Treaty Site, Free**

April 8: Exhibit Opening “Electrifying Minnesota”
Treaty Site, admission charged, *members free*

May 11: Documentary Film Series
***Women Serving in the War*, 7 p.m., Treaty Site, Free**

Annual Meeting Registration Form / Saturday, January 14, 2017

Enclosed is my/our check for the amount of:

\$_____ for _____ reservation(s) at \$15/person (members)

\$_____ for _____ reservation(s) at \$20/person (non-members)

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

Checks should be made payable to: **Nicollet County Historical Society**

Return by **Friday, January 6** to: **Nicollet County Historical Society, 1851 North Minnesota Avenue, St. Peter, MN 56082**

An Open House, Program & Fur Trade in Minnesota Exhibit Preview event at the **Treaty Site History Center**

Open House at 3 p.m., program at 4:30 p.m., business meeting to follow.

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 _____