



the CROSSING

a publication of the Nicollet County Historical Society

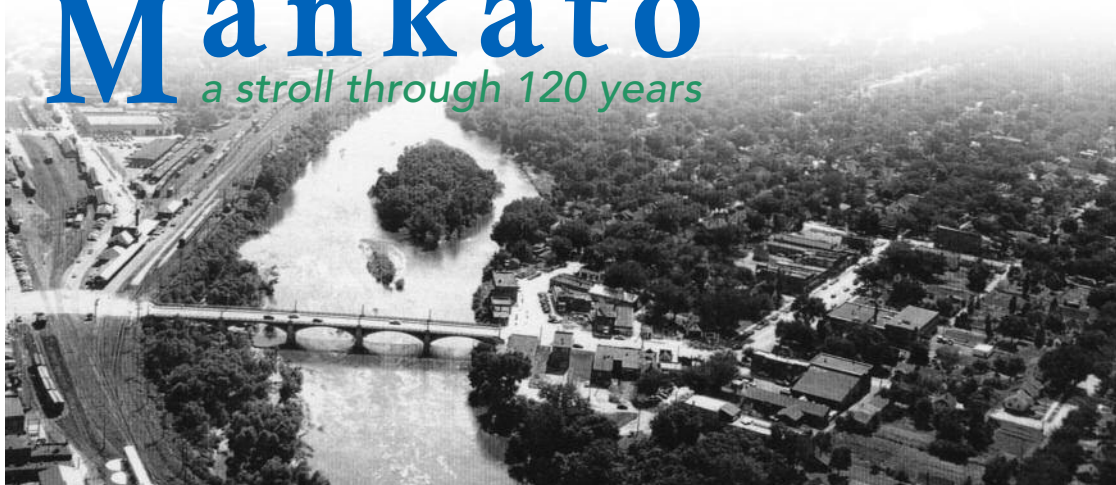
July 2019 • Volume 24 / Issue 2

CONTENTS

Director's Column 2
 Sites Info 2
 2019 Members 2
 G. A. R. Banner 3
 Sites Reports & Events:
 Cox House 5
 Harkin Store 6
 Fort Ridgely 7
 From the Archives 8
 Archive/Collections
 Donations 8
 Historical Society Exhibits,
 Programs & Events 9 & 10
 History Center Bits 11 & 12
 Seeking 2020 Board Apps
 Volunteers WANTED
 Fair Volunteers NEEDED
 Wacipi OPPORTUNITY
 2019 Monetary Donations 11
 2019 Memorials 11
 Prairie & Trails Update 12
 Since Last Crossing 13
 Meet Harper Smith 14
 Society Wish List 14
 Events Calendar 15
 Membership Form 16

North Mankato

a stroll through 120 years



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 Koppen's Garden Wagons. At the turn of the century, the population of the village of North Mankato was already 939.

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!



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

Members

Thank you to the following renewing and new members of NCHS for second quarter 2019.

Renewed Business Advocate Members:

SPRTC Volunteer Services
Town of Brighton

Renewed

Benefactor Members:

Larry & Judy Biederman

Patron Members:

David Solheim
Dean & Jane Wahlund

Sustaining Members:

Jan Prehn

Family Members:

Dwight & Geni DeBoer
John Hall
Don & Rhonda Hermanson
Mike & Maryetta McCarty
John & Carolyn Meyer
Dale & Kay Mowbray
Harold & Louise Rodning
Ken & Patsy Rossow
Jeff & Tami Skinner

Individual Members:

Eric Annexstad
Julie Ferrell
Bradford Johnson

Senior Members:

Janet Boese
Alma Forst
Audrey Gatchell
Elaine Hermanson
Charles Johnson
Patricia Judd
Harriet Mason
Margaret Muchow
Ranae Peterson
Mary Ann Scharf
Bernard Thiemann

New Business

Advocate Members:

Saint Peter Food Co-op & Deli

New

Patron Member:

Sandy Chianelli

Family Members:

James & Tracie Lea Benzmillar
William Riebesell
Lucy Lowry

Individual Member:

Susan Austin

Senior Members:

Yvonne Splettstoesser
Diane Wild

See Life Members on page 10

Now you can
purchase or renew
memberships

online!

Visit

nchsmn.org/membership

for details.

NCHS Board...

Executive Board Officers

Maria Lokensgard, President, Norseland
Eileen Holz, Vice President, St. Peter
Loren Sundboom, Treasurer, St. Peter
Gabriela Roemhildt, Secretary, St. Peter

Directors

Tim Bartelt, St. Peter
Tom Brown, St. George
Tom Hagen, North Mankato
Ruth Klossner, Bernadotte
Matthias Leyrer, North Mankato
Kate Martens, St. Peter
Joe Metzen, St. Peter

NCHS Staff...

Executive Director: Jessica Becker

director@nchsmn.org

Research Coordinator: Ruth Einstein

researchcoordinator@nchsmn.org

Office Manager: Elaine Deschaine

elaine@nchsmn.org

TSHC Museum Assistants:

Amanda Johnson, Erica Smith

TSHC Janitor: Robert Weber

NCHS Webmaster: Scott Lassiter

Harkin Store Manager: Ruth Grewe

harkinstore@mnhs.org

Harkin Store Site Guides: Donna Dose,

Justin Grewe, Robin Grewe, Glenn Stryker

Ft. Ridgely Manager: Amber Bentler

amber@nchsmn.org

Ft. Ridgely Asst. Manager: Cory Becker

Ft. Ridgely Guides: Opal Dewanz,

Annaliese Endorf, Char Nack

NCHS Sites information...

Treaty Site History Center

1851 N. Minnesota Ave., St. Peter, MN 56082

Phone: 507-934-2160; Fax: 507-934-0172

Hours: Tue.-Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Archives: Tue.-Fri. 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

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 info: cox@nchsmn.org

General tours:

May 26, June 30, July 28, & August 25 from 1-4 p.m.

Watch for program info.

Fort Ridgely

72404 County Road 30, Fairfax, MN 55332

Phone: 507-508-2848, ridgely@mnhs.org

Hours:

• May 25-Sept. 1: Fri. & Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.,
Sun. 12-4 p.m.

• Closed Memorial Day, July 4, and Labor Day.

Harkin Store

P.O. Box 112, New Ulm, MN 56073

Eight miles West of New Ulm on Co. Hwy. 21

Phone: 507-354-8666, harkinstore@mnhs.org

Hours:

• May 3-Sept 1: Fri.-Sun 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

• Sept. 7-Oct. 20: Sat. & Sun. 12-4 p.m.

• Open Memorial Day and Labor Day, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Closed July 4.

Director's Column

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

J. 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.



GAR banner: Local banner once used by St. Peter’s A. K. Skaro Post 37 of the G. A. R. now in the permanent collection of the Nicollet County Historical Society. The banner is made of silk with gold leaf lettering and measures 4’x3’ without the fringe.

from the collections of the Nicollet County Historical Society



Civil War Captain Asgrim K. Skaro, who was killed in the battle of Nashville in 1864. Skaro served in the Second and the Ninth Minnesota Infantry Regiments. He was one of the founders of St. Peter in Nicollet County in 1853.

from the collections of the Nicollet County Historical Society

G. A. R. continued on page 4



Civil War veterans who belonged to St. Peter's A. K. Skaro Post 37 of the G. A. R. The men are believed to be, from left to right: W. T. Jones, E. E. Boutwell, Christopher Jensen (or Christopher Jenson), Dennis Newton, unknown, James Clark, H. H. Hayes, Max Hoefer, Louis Filler, William Moses, Isaac Ruble, John Randall, Andrew Lind, and a man named Hunter. The men are shown standing with the local G. A. R. banner in front of the William Rinkel grocery store located on the west side of the 100 block of South Minnesota Avenue. from the collections of the Nicollet County Historical Society

G. A. R. continued from page 3

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. Turritin, 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.

Tune In!

Turn your dials to
KNUJ Radio for
Community Affairs
every fourth Tuesday
at 9:15 a.m.
to hear about what's
happening at NCHS!

Cox House...on the corner of Washington & Skaro by Tom Hagen, Cox House Committee and NCHS board member

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 Austin 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 Fennimore 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 Dowling espoused. Dowling 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



The E. St. Julien Cox House as it was in 1913.

from the collections of the Nicollet County Historical Society

**Summer/Fall
guided tour dates:**
July 28 and August 25 |
all from 1-4 p.m.

A House in Mourning
Sat., Oct. 26

See page 10 for more details.

Trick or Treat at the Cox House

Thur., Oct. 31 | 5-7 p.m. | FREE

Costumed Cox House interpreters invite you to Trick or Treat at their home.

THANK YOU!

Crown Underground, LLC
for sponsoring yard
upkeep at the Cox House
for 2019!

Cox House 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

Harkin Happenings...

by Ruth Grewe
Site Manager Harkin Store Site



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.



Descendants of Alexander Harkin visited the site this summer, during a family reunion.

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.



Fort Ridgely Events

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. State Park vehicle permit required.

Civilian Conservation Corps

Hiking Tour

Sat., Aug. 3 | 1–2 p.m.

Wild About Wildlife

Sat., Aug. 17 | 1–2 p.m.

New Ulm Battery

Sat., Aug. 31 | Noon–3 p.m.

Last Day to visit

Fort Ridgely Historic Site

Sun., Sept. 1 | Noon–4 p.m.

GO PAPERLESS?

Would you rather receive your *Crossing* newsletter electronically?

Simply contact Elaine at 507-934-2160 or elaine@nchsmn.org and we will make that change in our mailing database.

Ridgely Report...

by Amber Bentler

Site Manager Fort Ridgely Historic Site



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!



Sutler selling his wares during Company B weekend at Fort Ridgely

NEW FACE AT THE FORT

Meet summer intern Sam Hawkins!



Sam Hawkins,
Ft. Ridgely, Summer Intern

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.

From the Archives...

by Ruth Einstein
Research Coordinator

St. Peter Resolution



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!).

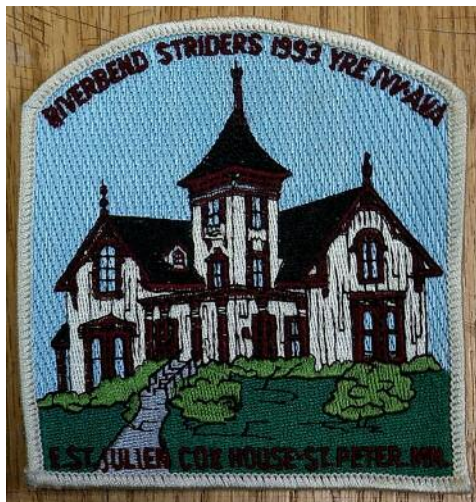
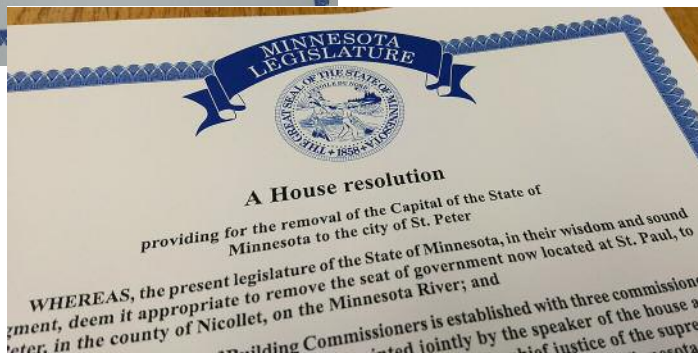
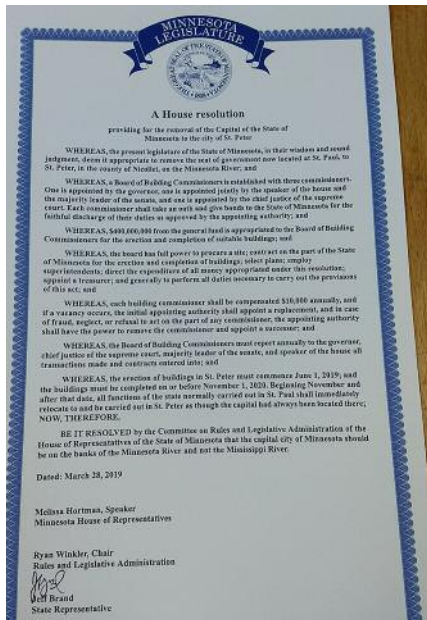
Rep. Brand's press release on the matter, dated April 1, 2019, explains:

"Today, Rep. Jeff Brand called for the removal of the Capitol of the State of Minnesota to its rightful place in the City of St. Peter. Citing historical events, Rep. Brand read his resolution on the House floor today.

'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!



Riverbend Striders Cox House patch, 1993. 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.

Artifact & Archival Donations

Second Quarter 2019 Donations:

Nita & Paul Aasen: Membership directories, First Lutheran Church, St. Peter, 2003, 2012; Letter-jacket patches awarded to David Aasen for band, tennis, and academic performance at St. Peter High School, c.1986.

John Applin: Digital photographs of the 1965 flood in St. Peter.

Blue Earth County Historical Society: Photographs, probate record, and land deed from North Mankato.

Rep. Jeff Brand: Certificate commemorating a Resolution of the Minnesota House of Representatives providing for the removal of the Capital of the State of Minnesota to the City of St. Peter, April 1, 2019.

Carolyn Dry: Pill bottle from L.R. Dry Pharmacy, St. Peter; three books: *Life of John Albert Johnson, History of the Minnesota Valley, including the Explorers and Pioneers of Minnesota, and History of the Sioux Massacre.*

Michael Frederick: Riverbend Striders Cox House patch, 1993.

Tom Hagen: Plat book of the City of Mankato and North Mankato, 1997; sewing rocker, unfinished quilt, apple press.

Eileen Holz: Bottle opener (church key) advertising premium from Nicollet Hotel, St. Peter.

Charles Hurd: Digital images of The Gathering, a week-long theater event created by Cherry Creek Theatre director David Olson, St. Peter, 1981.

Marti Jancoski: Fur coats belonging to Bernice Herffley and her daughter, Mildred Bernice Rebstock.

Kevin Jude: Newspaper articles concerning Confederate soldiers in the U.S.-Dakota War.

Keith Mathews: Digital copy of the autobiography of Jonas Pettijohn, a missionary to the Lakota in Lac Qui Parle and the Dakota in Traverse des Sioux.

Maryetta McCarty: Photograph of Belgrade Boosters 4-H Club Band, Belgrade Township, 1930.

Robert Meyer: Hand-made wooden rake found at Red Top Farm in Oshawa Township.

Barb Michels: Two albums of photos of tornado damage in St. Peter taken by the Highway Patrol, 1998.

Dale Miller: Two woolen buggy blankets from the home of Albert and Emma Miller.

Marcy Muchow: Digital images of advertisements, obituaries, churches, and schools from the Lafayette Ledger and the Lafayette-Nicollet Ledger from 1905-2018.

Gary B. Olson: Photographs and a display manual relating to the JC Penney Company, St. Peter, 1941-1942. The donor's father, Clair Olson, was an assistant manager at the store.

Brian Oviatt: Ball-point pen, promotional give-away from the Century Club of North Mankato.

Sandy Robbins: Genealogical materials relating to the extended Swan Johnson family.

Doug Schultz: Items relating to Schultz and Rendall Portable Grocery Store, Walter A. Schultz Fresh Meats and Groceries, and Walter A. Schultz Farms, Nicollet.

Emily Stark: Includes genealogical materials relating to the extended Stark and Burg families; materials relating to the Church of St. Peter, Nicollet Consolidated School, and the closing of St. Nicholas Middle Lake Catholic Church in 1990.

Judy Teigen: Tax records for Tostenson Brothers, 1920s and '30s; report cards of Norma Johnson Tostenson from District 37 school; a history of Tosten Tostenson: *Every Man/Every Soldier, Every Soldier's Bride*; photograph (postcard) of Tosten Tostenson Brothers threshing machine, New Sweden; photograph of the children of Mr. and Mrs. Erik Tosten; digital images of Tosten and Norma Tosten.

Michele Vogel: Digital images of the Krohn family of Nicollet, a copy of the Harry Burnett Family History, and timelines of Nicollet 4-H.

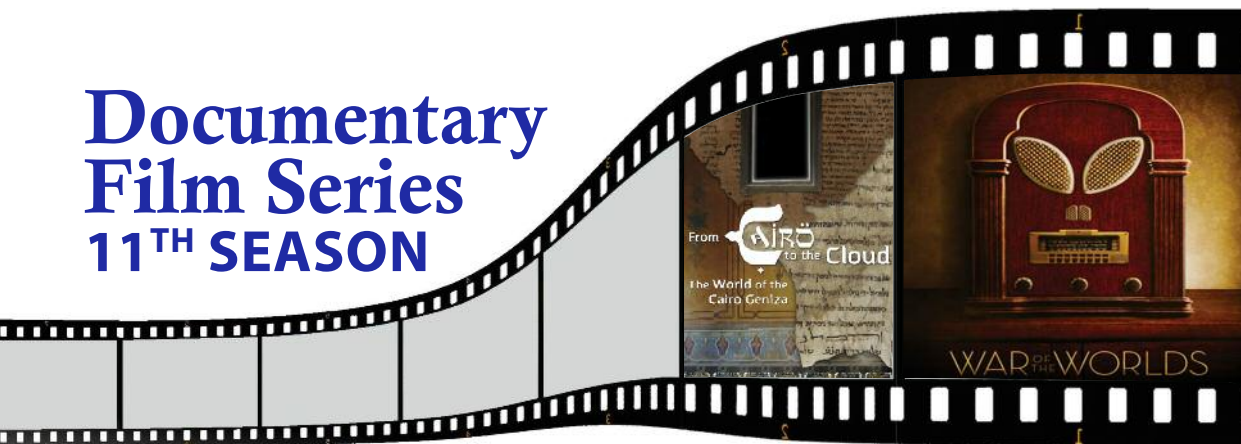
Michael Webster: Copy of a photograph of the original house and log cabin owned by Andreas and Kari Olson in Bernadotte Township, c.1890.

Sally Webster: *Psalms of David* psalter in Swedish from the library of Bernadotte Lutheran Church.

Marlene Willson: Two attached children's desks, possibly from Lincoln Elementary School; copy of a photograph of Robin Wettergren, Jan Wettergren and Marlene Heath in front of Lincoln Elementary School, in costume for the Capitol Days Kiddie Parade, 1963.

Ed Wetherill: Records relating to the Encampment and the Chautauqua Society.

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 Naeem, 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 Groves 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.

NCHS Life Members

*Thank you to the following
Life members of NCHS.*

Crossing Circle Life Members:

Marian Anderson
Roberta Bartholdi
Steven & Becky Briggs
Verlin Carlson
Mel Craig
Mark & Mary Davis
Marie Dranttel
Garfield Eckberg
Julie & Sam Gault
Lisa Gault
Tom Hagen
Emilie Lokensgard
James & Patricia McPherson
Brian Oviatt
Arlene Sandeen
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Schmidt
Loren & Roxane Sundboom
David & Linda Witte

Life Members:

Carl Aanonsen
Ken Albrecht
Mildred Anderson
Lois Annexstad
Phyllis Annexstad
Marshall & Janet Anthony
Willis & Rachel Anthony
Marian Babcock
Paul & Helen Baumgartner
Napoleon Chagnon
Stanley Davis
William Dobbs
E. Lorraine Gatchell
Bruce & Sue Gray
Fred Hanson Jr.
Charles Hendrickson
Mrs. Stephen Hilding
Janet Hoffmann
Eunice Holz
Carl & Susan Johnson
John Kvamme
Mrs. William Leger
Ben Leonard
Elgene Lund
Eugene Majerowicz
Beatrice Martinson
Robert & Kay Moline
Mrs. Herbert Monke
Barb Olmanson
Dr. & Mrs. Vern Olmanson
Lorraine Olson
Dennis Paschke
Carol Peterson
Marian Peterson
Mr. & Mrs. Dean Pettis
Herbert & Louise Poncin
Bill & Marilyn Robertz
Marilyn Rodning
Wayne Schmidt
Judy Scholl
Robert Swedberg
Linda Swenson
Betty Thompson
Mr. & Mrs. Volk
Merton & Margaret Wenner
Ed & Bev Wetherill
Val Youngblom

Corporate Member:

Mrs. Clair McRostie

Monetary Donations

received by NCHS for second quarter 2019.

Monetary

Charles Boeder
Michaelle Rees
Susan Trimbo

Memorials

received by NCHS for second quarter 2019.

In Memory of

Dorothy Schultz

Given by

Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Schultz

In Memory of

Gerald Johnson

Given by

Sally Webster

History Center Bits...

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!

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.



We love it when members of other history organizations visit us! Our friends from the Rice County Historical Society came for a visit on April 30. Though the weather didn't want to cooperate for a tour of Traverse des Sioux, volunteer guide Steve Hogberg ensured their time inside the museum was well spent.

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!



We remember...

... with honor the following members who we lost since our last newsletter.

**Don Gustafson
Stephen Hilding
Marolyn Kleinert
Owen Swenson**

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

NCHS 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.



Learners of all ages enjoy viewing our exhibit and resources in the education tent at the 2018 Mahkato Wacipi.



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. Aster Family - 12–20" high.



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. Milkweed Family - 12–24" high.

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.



Parts of the trail at Traverse des Sioux are still closed after spring flooding.



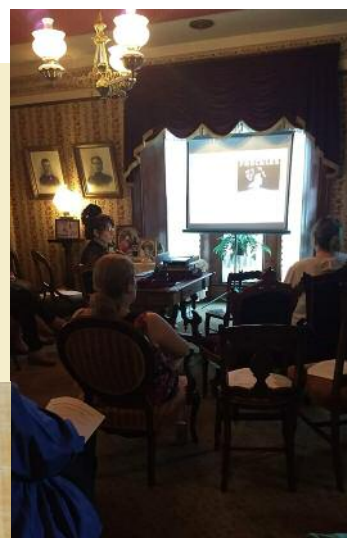
Keeley Farm Drainage & Landscaping Supplies restored the walking trail after late snowfall, spring thawing, and area flooding wreaked havoc on them.

Here's what we've been up to since the last newsletter



Above: An eager audience of over 40 people attended "The Sod Fort and Scandinavian Guards of Norseland, Minn." at Scandian Grove Lutheran Church in Norseland on May 23. Local historian Marlin Peterson spoke on the history of an old sod fort that once stood near that very church during the U.S.-Dakota War in 1862, and the men who defended it.

Right: Local costumed living history interpreter Susan Hynes gave a colorful presentation on women's health and beauty practices from bygone eras at the Cox House on June 27th during her program "Potions, Powders & Patent Medicine: Women's Health & Beauty Secrets from the Past."



Above: NCHS welcomed field trips from many schools this spring including St. Mary's Catholic School in Madelia, Minn. Students spent the day at the Treaty Site History Center learning about Minnesota history, including an activity about the fur trade with volunteer guide John Chamberlain.



Above and right: It's not every day someone you know gets a building named after them. The St. Peter Treatment Center recognized former CEO (and NCHS volunteer) Bill Pedersen by renaming the Administration building in his honor on Tuesday, July 9. Bill's friends and family were invited to a private lunch with a public ceremony and reception to follow. NCHS staff and volunteers were delighted to be a part of Bill's big day. Stop by the History Center on Tuesday afternoons to congratulate Bill on his achievement.



Cox House continued from page 5

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."



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.”

Society's Wish List



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!

- 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

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!

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.





**NICOLLET COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
1851 N. Minnesota Ave. • St. Peter, MN 56082

E. St. Julien Cox House • Fort Ridgely
Harkin Store • Traverse des Sioux
Treaty Site History Center

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 9
St. Peter, MN

Your membership dollars at work...



E. St. Julien Cox House



Historic Fort Ridgely



Alexander Harkin Store



Traverse des Sioux Townsite



Treaty Site History Center

- 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®, MC®, Disc®, 4 #s on rev-AE®

Authorized Signature _____

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

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

<input type="checkbox"/> Senior (65+)	\$ 30
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$ 40
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$ 50
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$ 75
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$ 100
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporter	\$ 200
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$ 500
<input type="checkbox"/> 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.