



Milaca Area Historical Society News

Preserving and sharing Milaca's history for 30 Years

Summer 2014 . Volume 16, Number 2

Many ways to contribute

By Tom Sauer, MAHS President

There are many ways to contribute to the Milaca Area Historical Society, and people keep coming up with new ideas. The First National Bank Corporation **and** the First National Bank Employees recently gave an interesting donation. Each acknowledged MAHS's 30th anniversary this spring with a nice gift. We also received a couple of larger donations recently. Though Lowell Mycue was not a MAHS member, memorials were given to us in his name. Bob Hulett was also not a member, but his estate sent us a very generous donation in accordance with his wishes. We think that these gifts recognize the importance of the historical society to the community as a whole, and to these families. In addition, we get donations when members renew, and often researchers at our facility will leave five, ten or even twenty dollars in return for photocopies of their research results. We appreciate all of these contributions to our work preserving and sharing local history!

So far in 2014, MAHS has over 200 members, and we've had about 600 visitors to our museum, half of them elementary students. We are busy with our architectural study, adding items to our collection, and beginning to plan for next year. We can always use more help-- please volunteer to staff the museum during open hours, or to assist with other tasks that keep our collection and building and grounds clean and maintained.

*** * Excuse Our Mess! * ***

To give the engineer better access to the brick wall in the east exhibit space (old fire hall), we pulled back some of the paneling. One thing led to another, and we bared some of the brick wall, and then some more. The bad news is that it was quite wet in there, and some of the brick has been damaged. The good news is that for the most part, the wall appears to be sound. We await the conditions report (more on that below) to give us more direction and a better understanding of options, but for the time being, the downstairs exhibit space is in a bit of turmoil.

Please bear with us as we move through the process of caring for and improving the building.

Local History – It's Where You Live!

MAHS News and Notes

No Rain-outs This Year!

Milaca elementary students learn about history

It's always good to share history with our friends at Milaca Elementary School, and this year we've expanded our repertoire! For the first time ever, Jere Day and Karen Schlenker took a traveling history box to school on May 13. They visited all of the second graders, and showed them objects people once used before they had electric appliances. The students were very attentive and had great questions. Thanks, Jere, for developing this traveling history idea and promoting it in the schools!

The second graders then came to our place for a museum visit on May 21. They learned a bit about our building, about changes in transportation over the years, and had a quick look at our displays. They were lucky to have the flower girl from our wedding display tell them all about her aunt's wedding. Thanks, Janet Burklund, for sharing your family treasures and for sharing your stories with the students!

Weather was a factor for the third grade walking tours. The appointed date was very dark and very rainy, but fortunately a day had been set aside in case of rain, so the tour happened on May 20. Students paused by the museum building, the depot, and in Trimble Park to learn about what used to be, and to learn how to look at buildings to better understand how they have been used over time. Imagine a train coming right through here, a hotel over there, a lumber mill right down the hill! These are places the students pass all the time, and now they can see them differently.

We thank the elementary teachers for including us in their busy schedules, and for their cooperation in helping us develop good ways to connect with their curriculum. And none of this would be possible without our volunteers. Many thanks to Leslie Anfinson, Ardy Becklin, Janet Burklund, Jere Day, Ann Johnson, Tom Sauer, Karen Schlenker, and Lola Vedders.

Important Project for Our Building

We have long felt it would be beneficial to get a better grasp of the needs of the National Register building that houses our museum, and how to address those needs for the good of our community and in compliance with National Register standards. In February, MAHS successfully applied for a grant enabling us to hire an architectural/engineering firm to produce for us a thorough building assessment. Collaborative Design Group, Inc. of Minneapolis has been hired, and on May 16 Craig Milkert, a principal of that firm and an engineer, met with committee members Ann Johnson, Tom Sauer and Karen Schlenker, and gave the building a thorough going-over. We expect to receive a visit soon from historic architect and CDG principal William Hickey, and will see a draft assessment probably by the time this newsletter is published. We should have their final assessment, including a prioritized list of the building's needs, how they can be addressed, and cost estimates, as well as a plan for ongoing repair and maintenance for the building, by the end of summer.

With this study in hand, we can begin, step by step, in cooperation with the City of Milaca, to keep this historic treasure both functional and beautiful.

This project has been financed in part with funds provided by the State of Minnesota from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the Minnesota Historical Society.

Rec Park Band Shell Gets a New Lease On Life

By Lola Vedders

Recreation Park is on land purchased by the Village of Milaca in 1906 from the Foley Bean Lumber Company when the lumber mill that had been sited there was closed for good. The park underwent a beautification project in 1935 under the Works Progress Administration, with the construction of a band shell as an important focus. Built of native fieldstone, and with sleek "Moderne" lines, the structure has been the home of concerts, speeches and even weddings over the years.

Time and weather have taken their toll on the band shell, and when the Milaca Art Council brought regularly scheduled concerts back to Milaca with its "Music in the Park" series four years ago, its poor condition became an issue. The Rum River Community Foundation responded by selecting the band shell as its special project, and formed a "Save the Milaca Band Shell" committee. Since that time funds were raised for a new roof, which was installed in October 2013, and grants have been applied for (one from Benton Telecommunications Foundation was received, others are pending). There are discussions with an engineer and architect regarding safe accessibility, and structural and electrical needs will be addressed.

A fundraiser offering donors engraved pavers for a walkway at the site is ongoing, and any and all donations are welcome. Forms are available at city hall and at Teal's. For more information or to donate, call 320.237.2657 or go to the Community Foundation website rrcfoundation@gmail.com.

Handicap Access

The replacement of the handicap ramp at the south door of the auditorium has been completed. There is a signed handicap parking spot at the base of the ramp. The broken walkway has also been repaired. Thanks to the city and to Baas Construction!

From the Collection

By Karen Schlenker
Volunteer Curator

Changing Times



Everyone was saddened at the news that North Star Garage was closing this spring. Owned and operated by three generations of the Jacobsen family, the car dealership and repair business weathered many changes in the automotive industry, but is now shutting its doors. We at MAHS are very grateful that as they negotiate this change, the family has given us quite a few items having to do with North Star, with the Winters Café, and with the Jacobsen and Winters families. (At left is the pewter reproduction of the Chrysler Building received as a leadership award by Bruce Jacobsen in 2003.)

Over the last couple of years we have received a few very interesting business-related items, and we can't restate it enough: our collection is based on what comes to us. It is often fragmentary, and often becomes more meaningful as we get more fragments related to a particular business or family. We ask everyone in the community to share with us their family histories, business and organization histories, and house and property histories. And anyone who is interested in delving into their own family/business/property history is welcome to come

use our resources as they search out their missing links. You never know when just the right piece of information will fall into place.

MAHS Officers 2013

Tom Sauer, President 982-6603, tysauer@milaca.net
Jere Day, Vice-Pres, 983-3325, jlazyday@frontiernet.net
Lynn Kent, Treasurer 983-3155, lynnkent@frontiernet.net
Ann Johnson, Secretary, 983-6391, alj1941@yahoo.com
Karen Schlenker, Newsletter, Curator 983-3586, jkarschlen@gmail.com
Museum phone . 320-982-1212
Museum email - museum@milaca.net
Website <http://milacamuseum.org>

Places To Go, Things To Do

Music in the Park will once again bring class acts to the historic band shell in Rec Park, thanks to the Milaca Art Council. Concerts are on Thursdays in June and July at 6:30, and are free. To see the schedule and more information about MAC events, go to www.milacaartscenter.org.

Gateway to the Northland Parade on June 19 will once again feature an historic car from the collection of John Boggs, representing the Milaca Area Historical Society and Museum, as well as a roster of marching bands second to none and many other floats and units.

Laura Ingalls Wilder Museum in Walnut Grove, MN is open April through October. In addition to the museum in town, visitors can now go to the original Ingalls dugout site a few miles away. The Wilder Pageant will be performed in 2014 on July 11-12, 18-19, and 25-26. There will be a Little House Cast Reunion, including actors from the television show, on July 25-26-27. For more information call 888.859.3102 or visit the website at www.walnutgrove.org

Recfest Bluegrass Festival and Art Fair brings nine notable bluegrass bands, workshops and jam sessions to Rec Park in Milaca July 25-27. For more information call the hotline at 320.983.3141.

Stearns History Museum, 235 S. 33rd Ave, St. Cloud has excellent exhibits and is open Monday through Saturday, 10-5 and Sunday noon to 5. It also hosts a monthly breakfast club with speakers on local history subjects, and will sponsor pub crawls to historic downtown St. Cloud bars on June 28 and July 25. More information at stearns-museum.org.

Kanabec History Center, 805 W. Forest Ave., Mora, open Tuesday through Saturday 10-4:30.

Benton County Historical Society, 218 1st Street N., Sauk Rapids, open Monday through Friday 10-4.

Sherburne County Historical Society, 10775 27th Ave SE, Becker. In addition to a museum, there is a Legacy Trail. Open Tuesday through Friday 10-5, Saturday 9-4; sherburnehistorycenter.org.

Wright County Historical Society, 2001 Hwy 25 North, Buffalo. Open Monday and Wednesday through Friday 8-4:30, Tuesday 8-8; wrighthistory.org.

Melrose Area Historical Society, 518 2nd St. SE, Melrose. Open 9-4 Wednesday, April 15-September 30; melrosemnhistory.com.

From the Record

Post offices have always been important to communities, giving them an identity and, for historical researchers, helping to date the establishment of towns. Today, information on postmasters can be found on the internet. The following is from the US Postal Service's website; digital images of original rosters of postmasters (by county) can be found on Ancestry.com. As with any records, there are gaps. The Milaca and Bock postmaster lists are not yet complete, but the Foreston (originally Bridgman) listing follows:

POSTMASTERS, FORESTON POST OFFICE, MILLE LACS COUNTY, MINNESOTA

(Originally established as BRIDGMAN, Changed to FORESTON
August 15, 1889)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date Appointed</u>
Coleman Bridgman	Postmaster	12/04/1882
Adolphus D. Jesmer	Postmaster	12/03/1884
Henry R. Mallette	Postmaster	10/24/1887
Henry R. Mallette	Postmaster	08/15/1889
Edward E. Price	Postmaster	09/05/1893
Elijah N. Bacon	Postmaster	06/17/1897
John R. Norgren	Postmaster	01/22/1908
Mrs. Anna E. Smith	Acting Postmaster	08/10/1933
Mrs. Anna E. Smith	Postmaster	12/16/1933
Clement F. Stromwall	Acting Postmaster	04/30/1959
Clement F. Stromwall	Postmaster	07/06/1960
Mrs. Fern M. Stromwall	Officer-In-Charge	04/28/1972
Mrs. Fern M. Stromwall	Postmaster	11/11/1972
Joyce W. Vanderplaats	Officer-In-Charge	05/16/1980
Donald H. Mueller	Postmaster	10/04/1980
Donavon E. Horrigan	Postmaster	01/02/1999
Judy Nelson	Officer-In-Charge	06/10/2004
Matthew J. Fountain	Postmaster	12/11/2004
Debra J. Zajac	Officer-In-Charge	12/29/2005
Louise Stanton	Officer-In-Charge	02/07/2006
Jeanyne M. Knerr	Postmaster	06/24/2006
Amisa A. Pollard	Officer-In-Charge	06/27/2012

Converted to a Remotely Managed Post Office under the
direction of the postmaster of the Milaca Post Office on
November 17, 2012.

Laura Brown	Officer-In-Charge	02/27/2013
-------------	-------------------	------------

MAHS appreciates our 23 business members

All-Aboard Travel/Travel Leaders

Billings Service

Blue Moon Saloon

Circle 6 Appraisal

Ethan Allen Law Office

First National Bank of Milaca

Fransen Decorating

Fures Jewelry

Greater Minnesota Credit Union

Harris Hardwoods

Jims Mille Lacs Disposal

Koch Hardware

Milaca DAC

Milaca Local Link

Milaca Township

Molacek Family Eyecare

NAF Properties

North Star Garage

Peterson Johnson Funeral Home

Rum River Realty

Sage Cats Consulting

Town & Country Finance

United Country Real Estate

Milaca Museum Open Hours

Wednesday through Friday 1p.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Admission is free!

MAHS

PO Box 144

Milaca, MN 56353

JOIN US

at any of our regular MAHS meetings!

4th Tuesday each month

January through October

Note The Time! **6:30 p.m.** *Note The Time!*

At the Milaca City Center

Council Chambers

255 First Street E.

Call for updates or details 982.1212

Participate in fun and fellowship with
the Milaca Area Historical Society!