

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 1, Issue 6: October, 2007

Mark your calendars!

*Note change of MCHA Meeting
to October 25*

October 13-14: Winona County Woodlawn Cemetery Walk: One of the individuals being “interpreted” this year is Jesse B. Jestus, former superintendent of Winona schools. Jestus was a frequent visitor to Minnesota City School when it was District 29. Kate O’Grady, Assn. member is presenting natural history of the area for school groups.

October 18: Minnesota City Community Readers
“If I Live to be 100:
Lessons from the Centenarians.”

October 22: Winona County Historical Association:
Food for Thought : “The Devil in the White City” 12:05 Mae Murray Room Armory Bldg. (Minnesota City Community Readers have read this book)

October 25: Minnesota City Historical Association Meeting; 6:30 p.m. at Riverway Learning Community, Minnesota City

Nov. 4: “Silver Linings” : a benefit concert for SE Minnesota Flood Victims by former Minnesota Citian, Pamela (Althoff) McNeill. Concert and Silent Auction for United Way Flood Fund to be held at O’Gara’s in St. Paul. Possible local concert in January.

Minnesota City Historical Association Remembers Flood Victims

Although the media coverage related to the flood has greatly diminished and many of us are no longer affected on a daily basis, we are aware of the remaining complications and difficulties the flood has caused for residents of the city and surrounding area. Thank you to city officials and all residents who have helped each other in this period.

Minnesota City Historical Society Places Archives in Historic First Baptist Church

With the help of a State of Minnesota Sesquicentennial MicroGrant (\$1000.00 anticipated) The Minnesota City Historical Association (MCHA) and the Minnesota City Baptist Ladies Aid are collaborating on a project that assures a stable location for Association Archives and the continuing preservation of the historically significant First Baptist Church located in Minnesota City. Now inactive, the church was established in 1852. In 1981 the Winona County Historical Association divested itself of ownership of the historical church and deeded it to the First Baptist Ladies Aid Society of Minnesota City. The members of this group have preserved the building, its contents and grounds until the present. The Minnesota City Historical Association, founded in 2002 and now numbering some thirty members, following the city sesquicentennial has maintained its materials in members’ homes until the present. This collaboration of resources and materials will further the goals of both groups—preservation of the historic church building established in 1852 and its use as an anchor for promotion of the significant history of Minnesota City. In Winona County, Minnesota City was the site of the first church, the first school, the first post office, the first merchandise store, the first horticulture experiment in the state, the first representative in the state legislature (O.M. Lord) and others. Two storage rooms of the church are being restored for archival storage and display purposes. Uses for the money as submitted for the grant include plaster work, floor repair, a fireproof file, and a reader board. **The Association will continue to research and solicit funding for this project, and intends to reduce costs by securing some volunteered and donated labor.** Several events will be developed during the sesquicentennial year using the storage rooms as worksites and display sites.

Artifact Shelves:

-Leahsah Lilla called this week with the exciting news that she has purchased a Vill's Brewery bottle which she will donate to our archives.

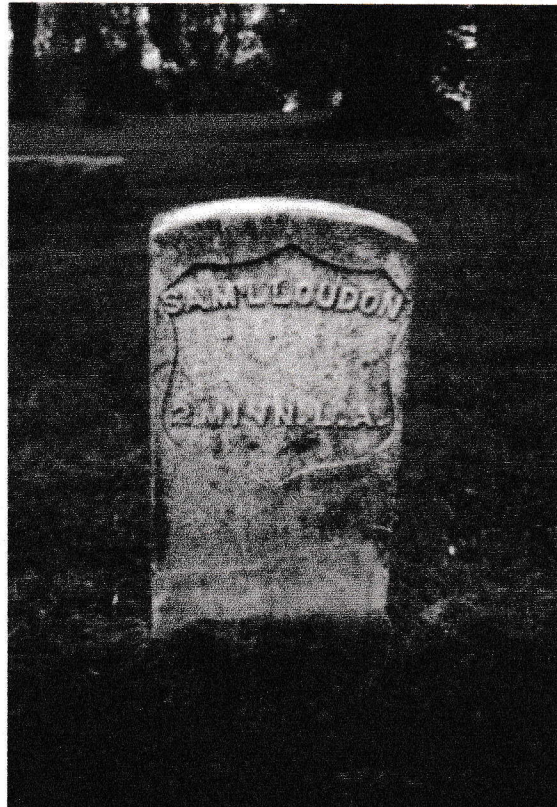
-If anyone has photos of "The Blazing Stump" roadhouse, photos of the Methodist Church (Woodmans' Hall), or photos of the 1947 flood, please contact us. Marianne Mastenbrook has provided us with newspaper copies of one of the legal battles ensuing from a train/car accident at "The Stump" in 1929. Three persons were killed in that accident.

O'Grady Trip Includes Samuel Loudon's Battlefield in Murfreesboro, Tennessee

On a recent trip to Atlanta, passing through Murfreesboro Tennessee, several O'Grady family members visited the site of Stones River National Battlefield of the Civil War where Samuel Loudon, Civil War participant buried in Oakland Cemetery, had been injured. One of the site guides, a University of Minnesota retiree, talked about the many additional combatants not buried at the site, but in other places where they died from war injury or disease. This was the case with Loudon who spent nearly the rest of his life trying to obtain a pension for his family because of his injury. Some six thousand graves are at this site, about 2000 of them unnamed. The documentary film shown for visitors explains the important role of music in the war; engagements sometimes stopped by the strains of "Home Sweet Home." The material in MCHA archives has been provided by the Oakland Cemetery Association and Red Wing Military sources. (cont'd p.3)



Stones River National Battlefield Site;
Murfreesboro, Tennessee



Samuel Loudon gravesite
Oakland Cemetery, Minnesota City

Volunteer Cleaning Days at Baptist Church

Volunteers are needed to help clean the areas of the First Baptist Church designated for renovation. Please call Gen O'Grady (689-2440) if you can help with this project. We will appreciate two or three workers for a session (the spaces are small). Dates and times will be arranged to match availability of workers.

MCHA Extends Sympathies

The Minnesota City Historical Association extends sympathy to Ruth Peterman Mrozek and her family on the death of her husband, Ervin Mrozek, September 4, 2007. The Mrozeks are longtime Minnesota City residents; both of them have been bus drivers for the Minnesota City Area. Ervin is buried in Oakland Cemetery.

Minnesota City School Students in the News

Former Minnesota City resident, Patrick Knoll, has been named a Distinguished Young Alumnus for Winona State University. Knoll is currently a Creative Director, Vice President at DDB in Chicago. He has developed numerous prize winnings commercials. Knoll lived with his family on Whitman Deering Road and attended Minnesota City School.

Mike Whetstone (deceased 1988) is being inducted in the Winona Senior High School Athletic Hall of Fame the weekend of October 5-6). Mike was a three sport athlete at Winona Senior High. After receiving various athletic awards in a football career, he returned to coach at NDSU where he was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1989. Mike attended Minnesota City School. His early death was caused by cancer; his mother also died from cancer two years later. The Whetstones lived on County Road 23.

Anyone who is receiving this letter in paper format and who has an e-mail address is encouraged to send your e-mail address to mgogrady@wildblue.net to save the association printing and mailing costs. E-mail addresses will be used only for MCHA communication purposes.

SHARE THE NEWSLETTER

At this time, the newsletter is being sent by email or surface mail to members of the Minnesota City Historical Association or persons who have indicated an interest in receiving it. Please share your copy with friends and family and send us names and addresses of persons who wish to receive it.

Check Out The Website: www.minnesotacity.org

Continue to check the website periodically. New information is constantly being added. Remind family and friends and former Minnesota City residents to check it out!

Anyone who wishes to be a member of the Association is invited to send \$15.00 to MCHA, P.O. Box 41, MN City, MN, 55959. All monies will be used to support Association goals. Separate or additional donations may also be sent to the above address.

(Loudon; continued from page 2)

Loudon was born in Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland, came to America about 1851 and lived in New York City where he married Jane Dempster, another Scot. They moved to Winona in 1854 and then to St. Charles where they farmed. Samuel was one of the early members of the Second Minnesota Battery, enlisting on February 20, 1862. He served as a private and for about a year, a corporal. During the battle of Stones River, Tennessee, on January 1, 1863, he was acting as the gunner. His captain, Hotchkiss, describes his injury. "By some misunderstanding of No. 4, he pulled the lanyard and fired the gun while corporal Loudon was changing its direction with the trail handspike and the recoil caused the end of the handspike to strike the claimant in the groin." The gun was on an incline, slanting to the rear, so the recoil was exaggerated. Records do not show that Loudon reported to the hospital. It is unclear why, but on June 16, 1864, Loudon was reduced to the ranks and then remained a private for the rest of his time in the army. In 1864, records show that Loudon was sent to the Chattanooga hospital where he remained until 1865. Of the \$690.00 the government owed him when he mustered out, Loudon was given \$110.00 which he took back to Winona County. In 1866, the Loudons were farming in Rollingstone township. They had seven children before Jane Loudon died from cancer. Loudon also worked for the Northern Pacific Railway. His life ended in the Old Soldiers Home in Minnehaha on September 17, 1906. Until his death he was fighting for a pension for his second wife and family. A number of his war compatriots and attending physicians wrote graphic testimony of his illnesses and suffering from the war injury, including descriptions of his milky urine, swollen feet and legs, and back pain. Samuel's body was taken back to Minnesota City by train and he was buried in the Oakland Cemetery. The pension was ultimately granted in 1912. The grave is marked with a veteran's stone of white marble.

Minnesota City Referenced in Other Media

-*The Winonan* (WSU publication) article on Winona History for August 29 cited several comments of Winona County Historical Society Archivist, Marianne Mastenbrook, a member of the MCHA. In the discussion of the work of the County Society, Mastenbrook noted, "We continue to gather records all the time, because down the line, someone will want to know what our times were like, too." This is the case with the Minnesota City Historical Association. Anyone with material that pertains to Minnesota City history or knows someone with material artifacts, please save it (them) until our storage space is available.

-The Winona County Historical Society September/ October issue of *Argus* contained photos and a brief description of the Swinging Bridge.

-The descriptions and photos of Minnesota City flood damage appeared countrywide. Perhaps the most unexpected of these was a photo of the houses left "hanging" which appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*, sent to us by Kathy Delahanty (founder of the Winona Montessori School in 1967).