

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 3, Issue 9: September, 2009

“Minnesota City: A Past that we honor; a Present that we give meaning; a Future that we build together”

Mark your calendars!

Sept. 10 : Minnesota City Historical Assn. Meeting; 140 Mill Street; 6:30 p.m.

Sept. 13: Annual First Baptist Ladies Aid Church Service; 140 Mill Street; 2:00 p.m.

Sept. 17: Minnesota City Community Readers; Riverway Learning Community; 6:30 p.m.; selection: “The Great Gatsby” by F. Scott Fitzgerald (see article page 2)

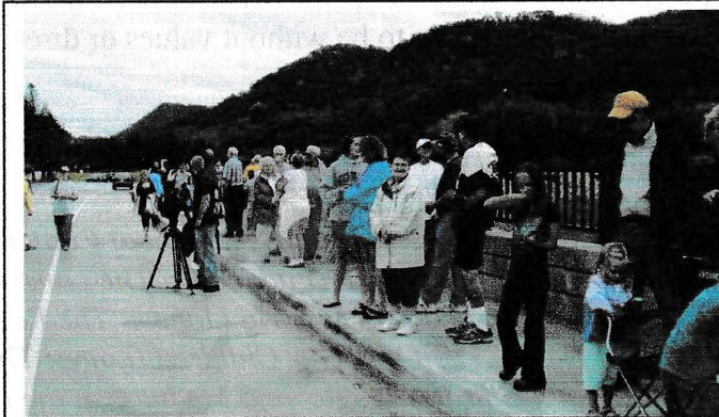
Sept. 12, 19, 26: Archives Open; 140 Mill Street; 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Go “Green”!

If you receive this newsletter in paper form and would prefer to receive it electronically, please call 689-2440.

Tornado Warnings Elapse: Crowds of Area residents and Supporters Gather to Celebrate Bridge Dedication

Submitted by Susan Althoff



Part of the crowd lining the bridge awaiting the ribbon cutting.

Small town USA was celebrated in grand style on Wednesday, August 19, 2009. A community came together to lay a tragedy to rest and dedicate a new bridge. The setting was to be in a park that boarded the new bridge and restored creek bank. But, Mother Nature once again reminded

those planning the event that the best laid plans and the need to be in control can be changed with gusts of wind or downpour of rain.

That did not deter the outcome. Riverway Learning Community opened its doors and heart's wide and welcomed us in. Now if you have ever been in charge of a facility or worked in maintenance, you would know that a newly stripped, waxed and polished floor does not need tables and chairs moving around and a crowd of people with wet feet to be the first thing it is used for. We set up display tables and food booths and John Will Bernadot and Carla Barton set up their music, until the tornado sirens blew.

It was stated that the ribbon cutting and mini parade would go on no matter what the weather and it did. **(continued on page 4)**

September 13 Public Service at Minnesota City Historic First Baptist Church

A church service will be held on September 13th at the Historic First Baptist Church at 140 Mill Street. Although an inactive church since members affiliated with the Winona Baptist Church, this annual event has been sponsored by the Minnesota City First Baptist Ladies Aid who purchased the church from the Winona County Historical Society in 1988. The public is invited to the 2:00 p.m. Sunday service which in past years has drawn attendance from former member families and area residents. Pastor Dennis Hudson from the First Baptist Church, Winona, will conduct the service. The founders and current members of the Ladies Aid were honored for their commitment and service at the May 17, Minnesota City Day celebration.

Minnesota City Community Readers Invites New Members

On September 17, Minnesota City Community Readers will begin their fourth year of discussion of books which members select for group readings. The group invites anyone who is interested in discussing almost anything to join it for third Thursday monthly meetings at Riverway Learning Community, 115 Iowa Street. The group does not meet in the summer months. Books are often available from the Winona County Library System, or they are ordered at cheapest outlets.

The book selected for the September 17 discussion is *The Great Gatsby* authored by F. Scott Fitzgerald. A Minnesota writer, Fitzgerald became identified with *The Lost Generation*, a term referencing the generation that appeared to many to be without values or direction following WWII. This theme will probably surface in the group's discussion.

A listing of some of the books read by Minnesota City Community Readers indicates the range of reader interest.

Old Times on the Upper Mississippi: The Recollections of a Steamboat Pilot from 1854 to 1863 (Merrick); *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* (Fadiman); *The Land Remembers* (Logan); *Death Comes to the Archbishop* (Cather); *The Known World* (Jones); *The Painted Drum* (Erdrich); *Last Child in the Woods: Nature Deficit in Our Children* (Low); *The Kite Runner* (Hosseini); *The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair that Changed America* (Larsen); *Amish Society* (Hostetler); *Kristin Lavransdatter* (Undset); *Staggerford* (Hassler) and others.

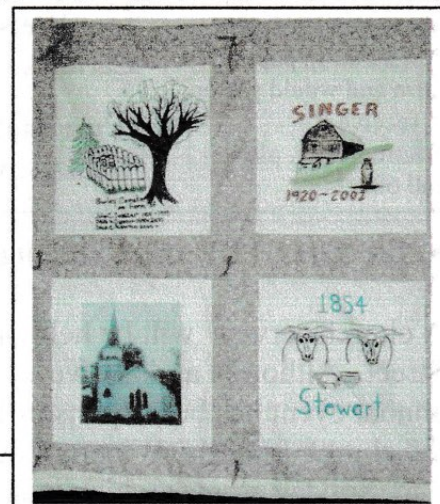
Please join us on September 17. For information, call 689-2440.

Notice:

MCHA is contemplating a move of monthly meetings from Thursday evenings to Saturday mornings. A number of individuals have indicated daylight driving and scheduling would be better accommodated by Saturday mornings. Please watch local media and future newsletters that will announce this change when/if it happens.

Quilt Squares Available for Second Heritage Quilt

Following requests of a number of Minnesota City residents, the quilters of St. Paul's Catholic Parish have agreed to construct a second heritage quilt. The first was completed for the Sesquicentennial in 2002. Judy Hohensee has given MCHA a number of "blank cloth squares" which are at the archives on Mill Street. Area residents are encouraged to design a square that reflects their home or their place of business. Quilt squares can be picked up during archives hours (Saturdays, Sept. 12, 19, or 26 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., or by calling 689-2440).



(right) Four of the many images on the first Heritage Quilt (2002)

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!

Thank you to Susan Althoff, Marv O'Grady and David Eckert for keeping the website updated.

Tornado Warnings Elapse: Crowds of Area residents and Supporters Gather to Celebrate Bridge Dedication by Susan Althoff (continued from page 1)

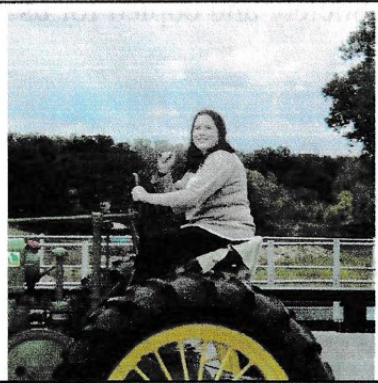
The rains stopped and we gathered along the sidewalk (that the Minnesota City Fire Dept. took upon themselves to hose down the evening before to make ready, showing their true community pride.) The ribbon was cut by Mayor Don O'Neil while State Representative Steve Drazkowski and Susan Althoff, GBDRF Chair held the ends and the crowd clapped and cheered.

A little parade of a cross section of our daily lives moved across the bridge as those gathered smiled and waved. Three Minnesota City Fire trucks (volunteers who make a pledge to protect us), the Riverway Learning Community float (proclaiming 10 years of education in our midst), a brand new school bus from Minnesota City Bus Co. (a main stay business that cares for the transportation of our children), Zesto Penguin truck



Mayor Don O'Neil and Susan Althoff, GBDRF Board Leader following the cutting of the ribbon to mark the bridge dedication.

(what is summer without ice cream?), US Post Office vehicle (yes, we have a Post Office and are proud of it), and to remind us of our roots the Kupietz Feed Sales float and three farm tractors driven by the Ferden family. Winona County Sheriff's department helped out with weather concerns and traffic control during the parade.



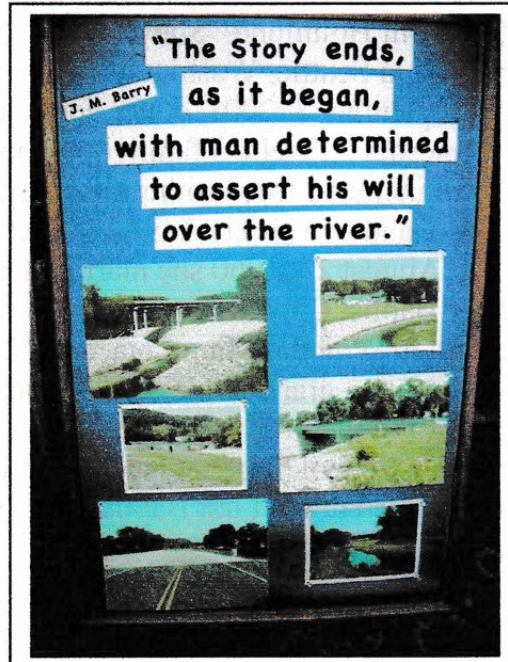
Cristina Ferden drives one of three Ferden family tractors in the parade.

Moving the rest of the celebration up the hill to the school turned out to be just the right thing. Those attending could pick from pizza and pop served by the Minnesota City Baseball League; Hot Beef sandwich and chips served by Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund; cookies and lemonade from St. Paul's Catholic Church; bars, cookies and coffee from the Riverway 4-H Club, popcorn from the Baptist Ladies Aid and Winona Co. Dairy attendant handed out milk, cheese sticks and ice cream bars. The Little Red Barn sat by itself back in the park.

John Will and Carla proved what kind of troopers they are with making changes and even coming up with a little humor. Deb Rackow did a make shift layout with her tattoo booth for the kids and some of the parents too. Kim Wirt was on hand to take pictures and document the whole evening.

The Minnesota City Historical Association under the direction of Gen O'Grady provided a historical display of bridges in Minnesota City. She also did a script that was used in a short program with readers David and Brenda Eckert, Linda Brzezinski and Don Evanson. The interesting observation was made that man continues to build bigger and better designs that will hold back the elements and Mother Natures continues to challenge those designs.

This is what community is all about. Gathering to visit, share, laugh and support each other. Those we know from the past, those who live next to us now, and those who just came to share in our celebration.



(right) One of several flood history graphics depicting history at the dedication celebration —this one reflecting photos of a recovered and hopeful Minnesota City following the 2007 flood.

Many New Materials in the Archives

Thank you to all recent donors. Although they have not all been “archived,” many new materials have been given to MCHA during the past month. Some of these will be detailed in future newsletters. They include:

- a large number of items including tools, household items and others used in the Minnesota City area (Neil Denzer)
- a number of photos, including one of the gas station where the post office now stands, and a bottle from Vill’s Brewery (Janice Tschumper Drazkowski)
- a disc and photos of Minnesota City circa 1889, which include a clear image of the arch bridge on the road beyond the current post office site and images of the Ellsworth Mill (Roger and Andrea Church)
- an extensive set of photos documenting the construction of the new bridge (Mitch and Kari Halbakken)
- flood photos (Emil Sulla)
- photos of Cotton family members for the Winona County Historical Society and copied for us by Marianne Mastenbrook (Gerald and Barbara Okland)

Acquisitions:

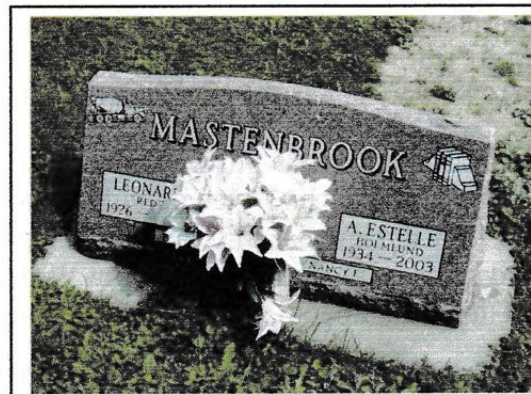
- a DVD player (money previously contributed MCHA member Darlene Decker)
- a paper cutter, easels, shelving purchased with MCHA General funds

Correction: The July newsletter information about the archived “Billy Club” mistakenly listed Bob Fleming as a milkman. Bob was a mailman.

Buried in Oakland---

Estelle Holmlund Mastenbrook (1934-2003) was born on August 16, 1934, in Strandquisst, Minnesota to Gust and Julia Lufstrom Holmlund. She graduated from Queen Anne’s High School in Seattle, Washington. Estelle was 69 when she died on September 3, 2003, at her home in Minnesota City, Minnesota. Estelle’s family members who preceded her in death included four brothers, Robert, Ernest, George and Adrie, and two sisters, Lorraine (Setten) and Geneva McGraw.

On August 20, 1960 she married Leonard Mastenbrook at First Baptist Church in Winona. Estelle and Leonard had two children: Leonard (married to Pamela), living in Winona, Minnesota, and Nancy, who lives in Minneapolis. At the time of Estelle’s death she had two grandchildren, Carl and Claire. She was employed at H. Choate and Co. in Winona. She was a member of First Baptist Church where she served on various boards, and was also the Sunday School Superintendent. She was a twenty year member of Tops. Memorials for Estelle were given to the First Baptist Church in Winona.



Anyone who wishes to be a member of the Association is invited to send \$15.00 to
MCHA, P.O. Box 21, Minnesota City, MN, 55959.

All monies will be used to support Association goals.

Separate or additional donations may also be sent to the above address.