

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 3, Issue 10: October, 2009

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

Mark your calendars!

Note: There will be no October MCHA meeting

October 15: Minnesota City Community Readers; Riverway Learning Community, 115 Iowa Street; 6:30 p.m.; Selection: *The Night Birds* by Thomas Maltman

October 25: City Nite Club History presentation by Brian Campbell; Riverway Learning Community, 115 Iowa Street; 2:00 p.m.

Go “Green”!

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

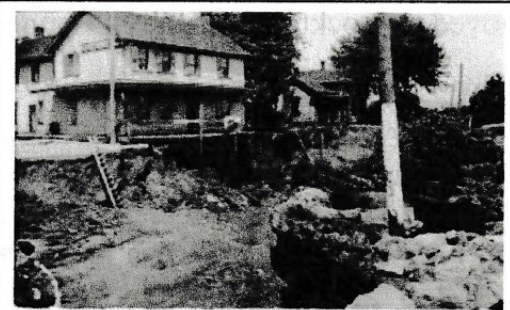
October 25 Program Features City Nite Club, Popular Historical Minnesota City Area Entertainment Spot

At 2:00 p.m. on October 25, at Riverway Learning Community, 115 Iowa Street, Brian Campbell will present information on his family’s home at 159 Mill Street, formerly the renowned City Nite Club. The public is invited to the presentation. There is no charge (donations always welcome) and refreshments will be available.

Through advertisements of entertainment in local media and news articles describing altercations and events at the Club, the spot’s fame is clear; the building’s recorded history reflects its dynamic role in the life of many residents of the city. Minnesota City Historical Association (MCHA) is hopeful that some of these connected persons will be in attendance to add information and entertainment to the October 25 event. Woodworking Artisan Campbell will describe history of the site beginning with its first recorded ownership by O. M. Lord in 1855 (Minnesota City was founded in 1852) through the renovation done by himself and his wife Lynn.



Brian and Lynn Campbell Home, 2009



The City Nite Club following the flood of 1914

Newspaper research reveals application after application for liquor licenses for the building by familiar and unfamiliar names, ad upon ad for food features and entertainment at the club. Narratives recount adventures of efforts to outwit the law at the club as well as efforts to help the law.

In 1936, the proprietor of the Club, Aldoph Rolbiecki, was arraigned in municipal court on charges of maintaining gambling devices. These included a dime slot machine and a nickel slot machine. Both were seized by the sheriff and were held at the county jail. “He got my machines,” Rolbiecki said following his arraignment, “but the county is full of them.” The Rolbiecki machines were the first seized by Sheriff Seeling in several months, although previously many machines had been seized both in and out of the city of Winona and the defendants sentenced to pay fines up to \$200.00. June 1, 1936 (Winona Republican Herald).

(continued on page 4)

Additions to the Archives:

Howard Volkart has contributed to MCHA archives a booklet titled *Ropes: Knots, Hitches, Splices, Halters*, written by James Drew, son of E.B. Drew, one of the first settlers of the area. In a 1938 speech to the Minnesota City PTA, Caroline Smith, a Minnesota City teacher, cites James Drew as "an individual who distinguished himself as a member of the Department of Agriculture at the University of Minnesota." Drew attended the dedication of the 1938 school and spoke briefly of his recollections as a student in the previous school. The book was given to Volkart at a Whitewater Camporee in May, 1940 where Drew taught rope work to the Boy Scouts including those of Troop 15, Minnesota City. Volkart was the Scoutmaster of the troop.

Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund (GBDRF) has given the Archives six copies of the DVD "In a Flash: The Flood of 2007" Produced with the assistance of a Winona Foundation grant, the DVD was released and viewed on Minnesota City Day, May 16 2009. Copies may be checked out for viewing.

The Archives does not hold regular hours from October to May; however, persons wishing to check out materials, do research or contribute items may contact 689-2440.

MCHA extends sympathy to the families of

-Anthony Jilk

Anthony "Tony" Jilk, 72, died in Houston on September 12. The son of August and Anastasia Monahan Jilk, Tony was raised in Stockton Valley and married Georgia Hinton, also from Stockton. They lived for a short period of time in the current Ferden Home next to First Baptist Church, then moved to Stockton and later to Looney Valley where they have lived from 1972.

-David Alleman.

David J. Alleman, 67, died in Winona, on Sept. 23

David was the son of Glen and Margaret Alleman and with his sister Alice Mueller grew up in Minnesota City in the Alleman home on Iowa Street. David's wife, Cheryl (Redman) Winona, survives him. He was buried in Oakland Cemetery.

Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund Considers Organizational Changes

At its quarterly meeting on September 21 at the Saehler Drive Home of Lyle and Joann Ziegewied, board members began discussion of organizational changes involving mission of the group as well as personnel. Organized in 2007 following the flood, the group has focused on flood remediation for places and people since that event. These efforts have included community and meal gatherings, landscaping projects, clothing and home objects distribution, development of a DVD commemorating the flood, sponsorship of a one year flood recovery celebration and of the bridge dedication celebration in August. The organization hopes to secure new board members who will continue the representation of the various involved geographic areas. Any persons interested in board membership are invited to call Susan Althoff, board leader at 689-2281. Board members expressed unanimous agreement of interest in responding to current and future community requests for assistance with projects that promote community welfare of the Garvin Brook Area.

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.

October 25 Program Features City Nite Club, Popular Historical Minnesota City Area Entertainment Spot (continued from page 1)

In 1943, violations of liquor laws described in the Winona Republican Herald included the arrest of Dolly Brose, Minnesota City Nite Club employee, who was charged with serving liquor after the 1:30 closing time. She was arraigned before Justice of the Peace Leo Richter and sentenced to pay a fine of \$25.00. City Nite Club was owned by Mrs. Julius Pellowski at the time. (February 25, 1943)

When THE OAKS burned in 1946, Chef Walter Kelly published an announcement in the Winona Republican Herald of the restaurant's temporary relocation in the City Nite Club. The description included this information: "The building we are now occupying (City Nite Club) has been completely checked by competent persons and is capable of handling the capacity to which it is limited by its size. Fire escapes and supports have been added so that it will pass all the regulations covering such an establishment. Seating capacity is limited to about 250 persons...." (Mar. 30, 1946)

Susan Althoff remembers that Glenn and Eleanor Whetstone were managers of the Acorn Motel when it was owned by a Mr. Sullivan out of Rochester, MN. "Mom ran a cafe and the motel was usually full of highway and railroad crews. I lived in the upper quarters for a short time with my husband and first daughter," said Susan. "I cleaned the rooms and did some table waiting while living there."

Food and entertainment were foci of the business. An example of the cuisine offered by the Club is presented in this July 30, 1934 ad in the Winona Republican Herald.

Brian and Lynn Campbell, current owners of the building, continue the process of renovation.. Brian describes it as "one of the few remaining buildings from before the Victorian period. It is a simple vernacular Colonial Revival building. It is now a family home with a small 'mother-in-law' apartment in the back. The old dance hall is in use as a woodworking shop."

Chinese and American Dishes

Prepared by Our Chinese Cook

Regular Chinese Dinner—Shanghai Dinner—Peking Dinner—
Chop Suey—Chow Mein—Egg Foyoung—Yeteamein—Warmein—
Chicken Subgum with Mushrooms and Almonds, Nuts, etc.

Fried Spring Chicken—Steaks—Sandwiches of all kinds.

Arrange to Hold Your Next Luncheon Party Here

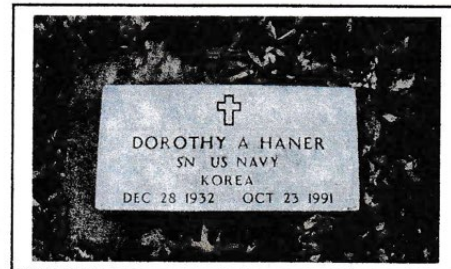
ORCHESTRA MUSIC EVERY EVENING

CITY NITE CLUB

—No Cover Charge—Minnesota City—

Buried in Oakland--- Dorothy A. Haner December 28, 1932-October 23, 1991

Dorothy A. Curtis was born in Kellogg, Minnesota to Jay and Cecelia Blum Curtis. She was a resident of Minnesota City most of her life. She graduated from Winona Senior High School and attended Police Training School. She worked for Montgomery Wards, Peerless Chain, and was a police officer for the Winona Police Department for 18 ½ years. She was a member of First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Minnesota City, its Bible Study Group and Ladies Aid.



Dorothy served in the U.S. Navy. She was a volunteer who trained at Great Lakes, IL. She married while in the Navy and left the Navy upon becoming pregnant, a mandatory regulation at that time. Dorothy was stationed at Great Lakes, IL, North Carolina, and New York, before returning to Minnesota City. She became the mother of four daughters and was a single parent. A Minnesota City News item reported in 1940 that Dorothy Curtis was on the first grade A honor roll at the Minnesota City School. Another item recalls her role as an angel in a Christmas play for Grades one, two, and three, called "The Isle of Christmas Dreams."

Dorothy's survivors at her death included four daughters: Sheryl (Bill) Bestler of Owatonna, (grandchildren Heather and Amber), Teresa Haner of Chesapeake, VA (grandchildren Sean, Scot, and Amy) Cathy Erickson of LaCrescent, (grandchildren Christopher, Emily and Bradley) and Debbie (Kevin) Berhow of Minnesota City, (grandchildren Jon (Meg) Winona, Jerad (Allison), Fargo ND and Andrew. Dorothy was also survived by a sister, Betty (Jim) Wadewitz of Stockton, Minnesota. She was preceded in death by her parents, two brothers, and a sister. Following funeral services at First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Minnesota City, Dorothy Haner was buried in Oakland Cemetery, Minnesota City.

October News in Minnesota City (as researched in *The Argus* and *The Winona Republican Herald*)

October 15, 1897 Ben Waterman has gone to the northern part of the State duck hunting with H.C. Shepard of St. Paul, formerly of Winona. He will probably remain long enough to kill a few deer also.

Mike Schultz has resigned his office as town constable and as we have not village marshal, the town is without a peace officer. We are so good we don't need any.

County Supt. Wilber visited our schools Wednesday and found Mr. Loomis and Miss Scherffus doing good work.

Rev. John Festersen of St. Charles preached at the Baptist church Tuesday evening. The Baptist people may conclude to engage him.



The beautiful, "well preserved" Mary Waterman

October 19, 1908 Mrs. Mary Waterman will on October 28 celebrate the eightieth anniversary of her birth. She is one of the number of well preserved people at Minnesota City who attained a ripe old age. For fifty-six of these eighty years, Mrs. Waterman has made her home at Minnesota City. She came to Minnesota City with her husband, the late Judge Harrison B. Waterman in May, 1852, and has lived a life of usefulness there ever since. The trip from Galena to Winona was made on the steamer Nominee under command of Capt. Smith.

October 6, 1931 A hearing upon the petition of members of Rural School District No. 118 on Highway 3 between Minnesota City and Minnieska to consolidate with District 29 at Minnesota City was scheduled for a November meeting. Only six children are attending the school in a building that has been condemned by the state. The school district petitioners believed it impractical to construct a new school in view of the small enrollment.

October 21, 1938 L.A. Stickney of Minnesota City, 89, oldest bee keeper in Minnesota, was unanimously reelected president of the Southeastern Minnesota Bee Keepers Association at the city hall here Thursday. Mr. Stickney has been an active bee keeper for 61 years.

October 16, 1939 Sheriff Ben Zimmerman said he planned to release Eugene Lilly, Ponca, Neb. today because he has no means of bringing charges against him in regard to a reported knifing altercation in the City Nite Club at Minnesota City October 10. Lilly had headed toward Winona on the highway while the other man, still unidentified went north. The latter was bloody from knife wounds. He was the only person who could bring charges against Lilly.

October 27, 1941 John J. Bucholtz, a private in the Marine Corps and the son of Mr. and Mrs. Francis X Bucholtz, Minnesota City, is listed as wounded in Navy casualty list No. 15, covering the period of October 1 to 15.

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.