

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 6, Issue 7: July, 2012

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

Mark your calendars!

Note: No July MCHA Meeting;

Note: Readers Group Meetings will resume on September 20.

Selection: *The Odyssey*

July 29: Climatology Round Table: Speaker, Peter Boulay

August 4: Regular MCHA Meeting; 9:30 a.m.

September 15: Oakland Cemetery Walk and Bob Welch: Civil War Songs and Narrative

Go “Green”!

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

Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund (GBDRF) Commemorates 2007 Flood Anniversary with July 29 Climatology Forum

As part of their 5th Anniversary commemoration of the 2007 flooding events, Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund is presenting a public forum related to Climatology at Stockton Community Center at **2:00 p.m., Sunday, July 29**. Peter Boulay, UM Department of Ecology and Water Resources, is scheduled to speak as will Brian Maki, Winona SWCD. Maki will discuss projects accomplished since the flood. Jesse Skelley from Winona Radio will be the MC for the forum. Information tables will include those of the American Red Cross (how to make disaster clean up kits) and Winona County Code Red (how to sign up for alerts of weather).

Featured speaker Boulay is an expert from the Minnesota Climatology Office. “For many years, state and federal agencies have teamed with the University of Minnesota to provide climate information services to the citizens of Minnesota. The Minnesota State Climatology Office (MN_SCO) assists its customers in their investigations of the climate's impact on various components of the natural environment, and on socioeconomic activities. The MN_SCO uses its climate monitoring resources to quantify weather conditions and to place these conditions within historical and geographical context. The MN_SCO also provides quantitative summaries of historical climate conditions, allowing users to make informed decisions about future activities.” (**Minnesota State Climatology Office website**)

MCHA AND OAKLAND CEMETERY ASSOCIATION PRESENT: **VOICING THE VALUES OF THEIR LIVES:**

ANNE ROWNEY BURLEY, DANIEL Q. BURLEY, SARAH PIKE, ROBERT PIKE,
SAMUEL LOUDON, ESTHER DENZER, LUCY BELLE BATES CHURCH

CEMETERY WALK: OAKLAND CEMETERY

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2012

September 15 Oakland Cemetery Walk Plans Proceed

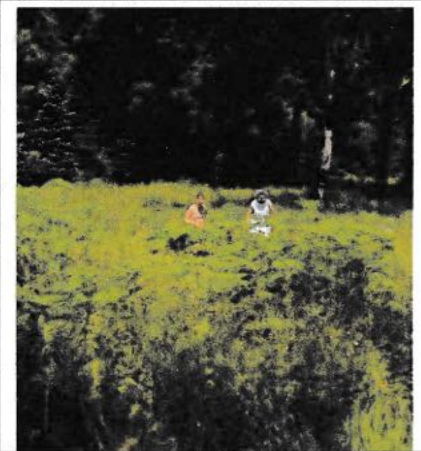
Cemetery walks are being held in increasing numbers throughout the country. They are a sensory experience honoring the history of places and persons. The Oakland Cemetery Walk on September 15 will be such an opportunity for attendees. Seven individuals are being interpreted by readers, all who are descendents with the exception of readers for the Pikes and Samuel Loudon. Dates of the lives indicate that all of these persons lived in Minnesota City at some same period of time, and the activities of their lives indicate some shared values. Disparate places of origin impress. Samuel Loudon was from Scotland, Daniel Burley was from Vermont. Esther Denzer was born and raised in Stockton and Minnesota City. Readers will give attendees a wealth of interesting material about the interred, some indicating commonality and some great difference. Artifacts of the individuals will be displayed at Oakland that day. Assistance and materials for grave rubbings will be available. These make meaningful gifts for persons unable to visit the graves of families and friends. Times for the walk will be announced in the August newsletter and in local media. The date, **SEPTEMBER 15** is set. Please mark your calendars and tell your friends.



Rebecca O'Grady Weiss marks the Pike graves at Oakland Cemetery.

Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund (GBDRF) Garden Walk

Persons who participated in the GBDRF Garden Tour on Sunday, June 24, participated in a celebration of recovery. First recovery efforts following the flood in 2007 focused on land and building reclamation. The restoration of gardens, beautification of the reclamations, is a tribute to residents' continuing recovery efforts. The six tour sites of the GBDRF event included the Greethurst Garden at 141 MaurL Drive, the Melvin and Barb Nelson Garden at 23078 Highway 14, the Stan and Geri Smith Garden at 120 Minnesota Street, the Jerry and Pat Mertes Garden at 306 Saehler Drive, the Home and Community Garden Options Garden at 253 Saehler Drive, and the Stockton Green Space Garden in Stockton. Green spaces created by post flood regulations are spaces where permanent structures cannot be placed because of possible reflooding of such areas. In these cases, relative to flood commemoration, less may be more. Much like the locations in some civil war battle sites, where open empty space has been maintained, as alternative to tourist information kiosks, a dramatically different invitation is presented to viewers to consider the history of the site. The Stockton Green Spaces Garden, a growth of natural grasses in our flood area invites reflection. We commend GBDRF for this well organized event, a tribute to flood recovery that brought together people with people and people with land—both essential connections.



Tourists walked in gardens aided with information and presence of owners, master gardeners, and GBDRF Board Members. This garden is the green space in Stockton.

Minnesota City Civil War Connections

“Henry Legg, a veteran of the Civil War, died Sunday morning at his home on the Minnesota City Road at the age of eighty two years. He resided with his daughter Mrs. Eugene Williams. The funeral will be at 2:30 Tuesday afternoon from the family home and the interment will be made in Woodlawn Cemetery.” *Winona Republican Herald: February 13, 1911.*

Thank You to:

- the Minnesota City City Council for the generous donation of \$250.00 for MCHA support. Regular goals of the Association—mailings, website costs—are possible through this and other donations.
- Greg Wing, Minnesota City resident, who has retired from 39 years of teaching in the Winona School District.

MCHA Extends Sympathy:

- The Agnes Fenton family and friends. Agnes, a former resident on Denzer Road, and a Rollingstone native, died at St. Anne's in Winona on Friday, June 8. She was 89.
- The family and friends of Andrew Buggs, who died on June 10 at the age of 87. Andrew and his wife Joyce constructed the Sundown Motel. A wildlife artist, Buggs' paintings have widespread placement in the U.S.
- The family and friends of Roger Vogelsang, 73, who died in Winona on June 13. Roger attended Minnesota City School.

Congratulations to the Minnesota City 12U baseball team which took 1st place in the Sparta Baseball Tournament on Saturday, June 17.

Llama Farm Owner Returns to Whitman Deering Valley

Newsletter readers will have seen local media coverage of the return of Lynda Carothers to Carothers Country Farm on Whitman Deering Road. Following serious health issues, Lynda is now back with the llamas and on land location that she called "Heaven." MCHA wishes Lynda continued improvement. Many area residents are familiar with her work with the llamateers; this group of youth and parents was helpful in maintaining the llama operation while Lynda was hospitalized. Carothers Country Farm, in addition to raising llamas, has a fiber mill which processes raw wool into batts, yarn, and other products. www.carotherscountryfarm.com/



This pancake cactus (paddle plant or *Kalanchoe luciae*) is in the garden of Stan and Geri Smith at Minnesota City. The plant is sold in California and infrequently seen here.

July News in Minnesota City

Many earlier July Minnesota City newspaper headlines cite sports event. Occasionally other news made the paper. A sampling.....

July 28, 1926: Part of No. 3 (state highway) to Minnesota City is Open.

July 8, 1930: George Whetstone, Resident of County since 1855, Succumbs

July 18, 1934: Sheriff Literally Digs Up Clue (tools in a cream can); Two Men Under Arrest

July 29, 1941: G. Whetstone Hits .357 for Minnesota City

July 5, 1946: Minnesota City Wallops Hart, 19-1

July 5, 1947: Jay Alleman Hurls Minnesota City to Eighth Straight

July 21, 1948: Boy Scout Funds Drive Set at Minnesota City

July 16, 1952: Minnesota City Club (Boat) Dance, Dinner Sunday

July 8, 1965: School Bonds Win OK at Minnesota City

July 19, 1967: Minnesota City Board Orders Building Changes (to school building)

(All headlines from Winona Republican Herald)

Pickwick Dickens Event Reveals Parallel Histories of Communities Where “A Creek Runs Through It”

Although foci of the June 3 event in Pickwick, MN were the 200th anniversary of Dickens’s birth and the naming by a founding mother of the village who had read Charles Dickens *Pickwick Papers*, as one listened to the speakers, similarities of the founding of Pickwick and Minnesota City were plentiful and invited consideration of the significance of the mills and the creeks which ran by them. In Pickwick, the presence of Big Trout Creek inspired the envisioning of Pickwick Mill. In 2007, Bill Yake, the great grandson of Amos Dolbier Ellsworth sent MCHA information and photos of the mill built in Minnesota City in 1867, a wooden structure eventually destroyed by fire. The Ellsworth Mill was also damaged by the flood of 1881. In Minnesota City, Canton Mills now sits near Garvin Brook, the site of the former Ellsworth Mill.

The location of Canton Mills was a coincidence, according to Dave Bunke. “It is a coincidence that Mill is part of our name. My father started Canton Mills when he bought and operated the feed mill in Canton, MN. The Minnesota City property became available when he was looking to move the business to the Winona area.” The Ellsworth Mill was located on the banks of Garvin Brook, just below the swinging bridge. In Minnesota City, founded in 1852, the Ellsworth Mill followed the founding of the village. The Pickwick Mill was envisioned by early “founders”, including the Davis family, before the town was envisioned. The first mill in Minnesota City was the one on the Mississippi side of the high land to the north, known as the Troost Mill. This is believed to be near the site where the first 1852 settlers came ashore. Troost’s Mill was built by Mr. Otto Troost in 1866. The mill was 50x80 feet in size, on the ground, and four stories high, and had a larger capacity of manufacturing than any other mill on the stream.

Readers familiar with *Pickwick Papers* will know that the defining strength of the story rested more on memorable characters than on plot. In Pickwick, Opal Fitch denies acclaim for her role, but to many she has been the long time constant, the memorable character in the repair and maintenance of the mill and the traditions of annual Pickwick celebrations. On June 3 she was one of many contributors to a lovely afternoon.



Kate O’Grady, MCHA newsletter layout editor and Pickwick resident is served scones, cookies (biscuits), and English Tea. Period costumed servers were from Pickwick and neighboring area.

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.

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 Andrea Church, Marv O’Grady and David Eckert for keeping the website updated.