

# MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 7, Issue 4: April, 2013

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

## **Mark your calendars!**

Saturday, April 13:  
9:30 a.m., MCHA regular meeting, 115 Iowa Street, Minnesota City School Building.

Thursday, April 25:  
6:30 p.m., Minnesota City Community Readers, 115 Iowa Street, Selection: Kanter’s *Some Girls, Some Hats, and Hitler*, Minnesota City School Building

Saturday, May 18  
Minnesota City Day

## **Go “Green”!**

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

## **MCHA Begins May 18 Minnesota City Day Plans**

**City Council, Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund, Oakland Cemetery, Churches, Fire Department, First Responders, Youth Baseball and Businesses and all individuals are invited to attend the MCHA Monthly Meeting on April 13 at 9:30 at the Minnesota City School Building, 115 Iowa Street. Planning for May 18 Minnesota City Day is first on the agenda. Ideas and participants will be welcomed. Please come!**

Minnesota City Day, May 18, will mark the 161<sup>st</sup> year of history of the founding of the community. At MCHA’s March 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, initial plans were considered for the commemoration. These include a feature on “glass”—recovered, owned or historical—that has any connection with the Minnesota City Area. Past the immediate attraction of the glass itself, the answers to questions of how, when, where, and by whom objects were produced becomes a rich historical study. Interest in the F.A.M.W. bottle (see story on MAILBOX), leads directly to the artesian well in Minnesota City in 1909.

A glass display will be exhibited for Minnesota Day. Residents are invited to bring their own Minnesota City Glass treasures for display on that day, for loan, or for contribution to MCHA. The archives currently has a bottle from the Minnesota City Vill Brewery and recently acquired a bottle recovered in the Wastewater Excavation process from the Minnesota City Fifield Artesian Mineral Water Company. **Sandy Erdman, Winona collector and designer, will speak on glass collection.** Please give some attention to glassware treasures—bottles, dishware, etc. in your homes and outbuildings and start setting them aside for May 18 exhibition.

**A second planned event is tours of the Wastewater Treatment Recovery Plant at Minnesota City.** Excavation for the city Wastewater project resulted in the unearthing and recovery of some of the interesting glass contributed to the archives by Kelvin Penrod and others.

## **!Calendar Keeper Needed for the Website!**

Since the initiation of the MCHA Newsletter, Marvin O’Grady, David Eckert, Andrea Church, and Susan Althoff have been the caretakers of the website. Someone is needed to take over the task of ‘keeping’ the calendar. This will be a valuable contribution to Association efforts. Many dates are “fixed”, some are received from the newsletter, and some are contributed to the calendar keeper as they occur (birthdays, meetings, reunions, etc.). The calendar can be viewed on the website, [www.minnesotacity.org](http://www.minnesotacity.org), linked from Calendar. Please notify [mgogrady@embarqmail.com](mailto:mgogrady@embarqmail.com) or call 507-689-2440 if you can help with this work. Previous calendar keepers will help initiate a volunteer.

## Township voters Re-elect Susan Althoff, Treasurer, and Elect Mark Clark, Supervisor.

Rollingstone Township residents at the annual meeting on March 12 learned the results of the day's election: Susan Althoff was re-elected treasurer and Mark Clark was elected as a supervisor. Both were unopposed. The meeting included land information reports from County Recorder Bob Bambenek and drug reports by Winona County Sheriff Dave Brand. A detailed road care report was distributed to meeting attendees. A report on the Board of Audit Minutes included the note that outside audits are required every five years, the next one being required in 2014. Randomly selected bills for this internal audit included payments to Winona County Hwy. Dept., Susan Althoff, Potter Construction, Barth Construction and PERA. Supervisors approved township contributions to Minnesota City Historical Association, Winona County Historical Society, Winona Area Humane Society and Minnesota City and Rollingstone playgrounds. Discussion of the monthly meeting time concluded with continuation of the 7:00 p.m. time.

## Friends and Fun for All Seasons at Sandstedes



Minnesota Historical Society Photo Sandstede's Bar

In the March newsletter, the sympathy expression for the family of Betty Sandstede Sullá noted the significance of the Sandstede family in Minnesota City history. Because of the variety of his work, John Sandstede, Betty's father, was a well known figure in the Minnesota City area. This included the ownership and operation of the Sandstede Bar on Mill Street. The several children in the family increased acquaintanceship of many through their in and out of school activities. In her *Family History and Life*, Maxine Church Spaag writes, "When I was five, my Grandfather Church died...He and Grandma lived in a big house on a corner in Minnesota City (Mill Street) where they retired after

farming on the homestead farm for many years....After Grandpa died, someone had to move in with her (Grandma) to take care of her. For some reason, out of ten children, my Dad was the one who made the move out of our little house on the hill and moved into the big house on the corner (currently Ledebuhrs) with Grandma Church...We kids liked it there, as there was a big attic we could play in when it rained. There were lots of kids in the area. Esther Sandstede and I would play hopscotch by the hour and all of the kids would play ball, and at night in the summer, we would play Red Light, Green Light, Hide and Seek, Red Rover, and all kinds of games til it got dark. In winter we could sled down the hill behind us where the school was located, and we skated on a nearby pond." When interviewed for *Old Wise Tales*, Gerry Cisewski (deceased) reported "Kids used to gather and play cards, 'Schafskopf,' at Sandstede's tavern by the garage....Sandstede's would get ice cream in May. That was a big deal. They had it until it got cold." Delwin Tschumper (deceased) reported "We played a lot of baseball and football." Delwin has a long list of friends he remembered—starting off with "...Jack Sandstede, Harold Dickman, Gerry Cisewski, Richard Newman, Phillip Streng, Clayton Maxham, Arnold Cisewski, Jay Alleman, Brother Beryl Tschumper, and Allen Whetstone." Living near the Sandstede home provided friends and fun for every season.

## MCHA Thanks:

- Rollingstone Township for the donation of \$300.00 for Association purposes
- All individuals and groups who contributed to the January membership request.

## Mailbox Returns on March Newsletter

Several readers responded to March newsletter stories. Eliciting the most responses were the stories on the F.A.M.W. bottle and on the Box Social. About the bottle. The first response came from Bill Yake in Washington State (Bill's family is connected with the Ellsworth Mill). "FAMW CO is apparently is an abbreviation for FIEFIELD (or, more likely, Fifield) ARTESIAN MINERAL WATER COMPANY. A USGS publication titled "Geology and Underground Waters of Southern Minnesota" (Water Supply Paper 256, published 1911) [searchable on-line as a Google ebook] refers to a well owned by George Fifield "about 3 1/2 miles above Winona ... only 280 feet deep. The water, known as 'Fifield's Artesian Mineral Water,' is sold in the city and shipped to other points." **MCHA has purchased the USGS 1911 book**, and will continue research, hopefully with membership assistance, on the Fifield Artesian Well. According to a July 10, 1937 Winona Republican Herald, "Mr. Fifield had a well drilled on his farm. The water obtained from the well was unusually clear and palatable and after a chemical analysis was made, he placed the water on the market and founded the Fifield Artesian Mineral Water Company... Equipment was purchased and a regular trade was established here. The business grew and gradually developed into the manufacture of soft drinks. Constance Denzer also reported information that Edwina Fifield, a quilter (Minnesota Quilt Project has one of her quilts), was listed as the owner of the Artesian Mineral Water Company.

Readers also had information on the 'Mary Anns' of the box social sales. From Jean Gardner: "I have inquired about the 'Mary Anns'. The only ones I can think of are rectangular in shape, (about the size of a Spam can) and frosted with a white glossy frosting. Dorothy (Brom, Jean's sister) thinks they were sold at Church Brothers store." From Susan Althoff: "I did a little checking on the internet and got these recipes for 'Mary Anns'. One of them is like my 'Aunt Sally' cookies."

### MARY ANN COOKIES

1 c. white sugar  
1 c. brown sugar  
1 c. lard  
1 c. sour cream  
2 eggs  
2 tsp. soda  
Flours, for a soft dough (4 1/2 c.)  
Vanilla

Add ingredients together and roll out cookies and bake. Frost if you wish.

And Constance Denzer said "The 'Mary Anns' I believe refers to old fashioned molasses cookies." Terry Bormann, Minneapolis reader, enjoyed the article on the box socials, specifically, the description of Quimby Burley as 'good enough.' For those of us connected with the production of the newsletter, the feedback at various times keeps us aware of how much more information is out there about many topics, but also lets us feel 'good enough' about some of the connections established through the newsletter. All readers are invited to continue giving feedback.

## Janet Hill Seabern Awarded Jefferson Medal

For the month of March, The Jefferson Medal, an award for Public Service to someone who has positively impacted their community, was awarded to an "original" MCHA member and an "original Minnesota City individual," Janet Hill Seabern. Janet attended Minnesota City School and Winona Senior High School. Janet, with her husband Cliff Seabern, now deceased, were some of the first members of the Historical Association. They helped lay out spaces for the craft market in the first years, they supervised the materials at the Oakland Cemetery visits for several Minnesota City Days, Janet helped with refreshments at MCHA presentations. Her many other contributions to the city were acknowledged with this presentation.



Janet and Cliff at a previous Minnesota City Day Oakland Cemetery event.

## **MCHA Extends Sympathy to:**

-The family and friends of Margaret Masepohl Brabbit, Goodview, who died at age 77 in LaCrosse on March 13. The Masepohl family were Minnesota City residents during the 1940s; Marge and her brothers attended Minnesota City School.

-The family and friends of Ellen Berry, 104, Stockton, who died on March 16. \*

-The family and friends of Dorothy Gardner Brom (Goodview), who died on March 16 in Winona. \*

-The family and friends of Donald Elliot, longtime Minnesota City resident, husband of Margaret Peterman. Don, 81, died in LaCrosse, Wi. on March 26.

## **\*Deaths of Special Friends**

The newsletter frequently carries notice of obituaries of persons known to some area persons and states their connection with the area, but the degree of involvement with these individuals varies greatly—some are only known by address, some by other family members, some by work associations and some in other ways. Some have endeared themselves to the area through their long time friendships and supportive and involved presence among us. Two of these women in our communities died on March 16—Dorothy Gardner Brom and Ellen Berry. Both women were gracious, graceful, appreciative and competent in their public demeanors.

Ellen has received attention in recent years as the oldest member of the Winona Old Settlers Association, attending this year's meeting on February 16. She has recounted for some, in addition to her early life experiences, her experience in the 2007 flood in Stockton including her need to evacuate from her home. Ellen worked at Winona businesses as well as at the Stockton Post Office and as an election clerk.

Dorothy, sister of Jean Gardner, lived an involved life in this area, beginning with her childhood in Stockton Valley, where the Gardner sisters retain property that was owned by their parents, Blanchard and Elsie. Dorothy was a teacher at Hart School. Her name frequently appeared in the local media connected with the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) and with the Winona Flower and Garden Club. She was a beginning and continuing member of MCHA, supportive of all of its activities, especially appreciative of the newsletter, responding with Jean to the inquiry about 'Mary Anns' in the February issue.

## **Unanticipated Connections with Ancestry at Dorothy Brom Funeral**

Dorothy Gardner Brom and Helen Daskoski were classmates at the Maybury School in Minnesota City, and their friendship continued the remainder of their lives; they exchanged greetings on all holidays and birthdays. Helen died last March, and Dorothy died on March 16 of this year—an eighty year friendship. It was a serendipitous result of Dorothy's funeral that brought together grandchildren of people involved in another historic event of Minnesota City history. In 1925, as the result of request by a "delegation" to the Winona bishop, Isadore Daskoski, Leon Bronk, and August Jilk, the Catholic Church building, now the Schoen home, was purchased in Minnesota

City. At the Brom funeral, the grandson of Daskoski, Brian Norberg from Fargo, North Dakota, the granddaughter in-law, Eleanora Bronk (Gerald), Don Evanson, Ed Butenhoff, and Gen O'Grady, grandchildren of August Jilk, met each other. Also present at the funeral was Ruth Brom Wills, a granddaughter of Emil and Mary Wockenfuss, also early members/founders of St. Paul's congregation. Jilk, Daskoski, and Bronk were all landowners in Stockton Valley. In 1925, the First Baptist Church was an ecumenical meeting place in Minnesota City, but Catholics had been attending services in Winona.



Brian Norberg, Edwin Butenhoff, Genevieve O'Grady, Eleanora Bronk, Donald Evanson