

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 8, Issue 1: January, 2014

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

Mark your Calendars!

January 11: 9:30 a.m.; **MCHA Meeting;** 115 Iowa Street, Mn City (Former Minnesota City School)

January 17: 6:30 p.m.; **Minnesota City Community Readers;** 115 Iowa Street, Mn City (Former Minnesota City School)
Selection: *Snake Dreams* by James D. Doss.

Minnesota City Book Shelf;

Open Hours:
January 11; 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
January 17; 6:30-8:00 p.m. Former Minnesota City School.

MAY 17:
Minnesota City Day!

“Go Green!”

If you receive this letter in paper “hardcopy” and would like to receive it electronically, please call 689-2440.

Children, Horses, Wagon Rides, Music and Food Entertain Caroling Event Standing Room Only Crowd

The evening’s beautiful snow, warmer temperatures, the wood fire, and the soft light of oil lamps and ice luminaria contributed to a near perfect setting at the historic First Baptist Church in Minnesota City for the 2013 Caroling Event. The decorated Yule Log carried to the wood fire by Jim O’Grady accompanied by six young bellringers followed Rebecca Weiss’s introduction of the history of Yule and her announcement of the other entertaining aspects of the evening.



James O’Grady, accompanied by bell ringing dramatists, presents Yule Log to Marvin O’Grady. (Jensen photo)

MCHA extends thanks to all these participating persons - and others we overlooked or who participated “behind the scenes.” We are making lists for next year.

Brian Ebbinger - Guitar/vocal solos; Children’s Performance - “Why the Evergreens Stay Green” (James and Samuel O’Grady, Brandon and Melanie Butenhoff, Brynn and Anissa Lee); Parents of the performers; Marv O’Grady - slide show and ice luminaria; Photo Contributors: Sister Marie Louise Jilk, Andrea Church, Brenda Edwards, Bill Yake, Maus FARM book; Debbie LaFee Karnath and Jennie Ebbinger - church decoration; Lynda Brzezinski and Becky O’Grady Weiss - candy and gift bags for children; Duane Hutton, Dick Karnath, Jim O’Grady, Kate O’Grady, Becky O’Grady Weiss - music and drama direction; Sarah O’Grady - signmaking; Susan Althoff - photography; Edwin, Bryce, Judy Maus - horsedrawn wagon rides; Attendees - Outstanding refreshments, outstanding audience!; MCHA and First Baptist Ladies Aid - Sponsorship and attendance. This list of contributors increases each year through volunteered and solicited efforts.



Brandon Butenhoff, Anissa Lee, Brynn Lee, Samuel O’Grady, James O’Grady, Melanie Butenhoff present the skit “Why the Evergreens Stay Green.” (Jensen Photo)

The night has become an increasingly community involving event. A number of persons send regrets, and several persons, including metro residents, drive far to attend. At one of the caroling events, the contrast of Minnesota writer Bill Holm, now deceased, was set against the foci of Martha Stewart, an expert of merchandizing and detail. Holm in his 1998 discussion of Christmas entitled *Faces of Christmases Past* discusses

his mother’s loss of her Icelandic customs as immigrants in the new world of Madison, Minnesota. “One ritual function of a tradition,” Holm wrote, “is to create connection inside a community. So, lacking Iceland, Jona (Holm’s mother) made do, announcing, ‘This is now tradition; help yourself.’” And so we say to the MCHA audience, “This is Minnesota City tradition; Help Yourself.”

Readers add Photos, Glassware, and Information to the Archives

- Photos from **Tim Fox** have been framed and placed in the archives. The flood photo backgrounded by Minnesota Street is one of the clearest photos available of the Methodist Church, later the Woodman's Hall.

- **Judy Maus** contributed photos of Minnesota City School Classes.

- **Janice Tschumper Drazkowski**, Goodview, sent a photo of the Conoco gas station located at the site of the current post office. Janice wrote, "This was taken in the mid 1930's. The new post office is now on this site. My father, Roy Tschumper, ran this station at the time. My mother painted wooden garden ornaments and sold them there. She had a



little business of her own! They were lined up outside and brightened up the place. I remember being old enough to do some painting too. Perhaps she was just keeping me busy, but it was fun." A photo that has been requested by archive visitors is of the Cities Service Station which was located south of the post office, and owned by Arnold Kohner.

- **Judy Kleinbach** has shared photos of the Anderson and Leerkamp properties on Lake Street.
- **Janet Hill Seabern** corresponded with a classmate of hers, requesting information about James Bucholtz, son of Francis and Sophia Bucholtz, previous owners of the Marvin/Genevieve O'Grady land. Janet pursued this following a discussion about the Bucholtz land where Janet and her brothers Ken and Gale had picked beans. "Dad then took them to the Church Brothers store in Minnesota City to sell." Janet's classmate, Betty Englerth, informed Janet that Jim Bucholtz had died, news Janet had heard, before their class reunion in 2009.
- **Lori Donehower** sent an article from the Boise, Idaho TV station which had been forwarded to her by Sharroll Richards, former Minnesota City resident. Paul and Sharroll Richards lived in the Schmidt house in Minnesota City, home of Faith Ann, Mark, and Hollis, now next to the Donehower property. The story, developed by Karen Zatkulak, details the information about the Richards granddaughter, Madison.

"Thanksgiving is a day where we take time to remember what we're grateful for. This holiday, we found a family from Nyssa, Oregon doing just that. They decided to help others by sharing their blessings in a place that may surprise you -- St. Luke's Hospital. As people came and went from the hospital, one family stood with a bucket of chalk asking people to write on the sidewalk what they were most thankful for." There's a lot more to be thankful for than what you're upset about." That was the purpose of the idea that Sharroll Richards decided to start. "We're spending the day at the hospital, probably not the place we want to spend the day but we figured if we were here we're still grateful for a lot of things," said Richards. The thing Sharroll is most grateful for today, is the girl standing next to her, with her IV cart at her side -- her daughter, Madison. "She's 16 and she's battling cancer, we've been battling for quite a few months now," said Richards.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 (See **Archives**)

MCHA extends Sympathy to

- Family and friends of Wayne "Whiskers" Pagel, 77, Minnesota City, who died Nov. 20 at his home.
- Family and friends of Sandra Wicka Evanson, 65, Denzer Road resident, who died November 30th at St. Anne's in Winona. Sandy was a member of MCHA and attended and supported many MCHA and other Minnesota City events. She had a continuing interest in her Przybylski /Wicka family history. She served as the clerk of Rollingstone township for several years.
- Friends and family of Fern Hansen, 89, Winona, mother of Wayne (Carol) Hansen, who died Friday, December 6, at Lake Winona Manor.
- Roger E. Srock, 82 of Stockton, who died Sunday, December 15, 2013 at St. Mary's Hospital, Rochester.
- Friends and family of Ruth Peterman Mrozek, 80, Winona, Minnesota City native and longtime resident, who died in LaCrosse, December 23.

GBDRF Holds Annual Meeting and Holiday Social

Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund (GBDRF) held its quarterly meeting and its annual Holiday Social at the home of Susan Althoff, Minnesota City, on December 4. Board members discussed possible 2014 events, including a repeat Belgian Waffle breakfast on Minnesota Day, May 17, 2014. 2013 events included a successful fundraising drive in January, 2013, a Dad's Belgian Waffle Breakfast with proceeds partially given to the Minnesota City Youth Baseball program, and the planting of trees at the Stockton green space in memory of John and Shirley Micheel who died in the 2007 flood. 2014 officers include President, Bryce Maus; Vice President, Sharon Nako; Secretary, Susan Althoff, and Treasurer, Duane Hutton. Other Board members are Dallas Denzer, Hollis Donehower, LaVern Fritz, and Connie Greethurst. Visitors are welcome at quarterly meetings, invited to serve as board members and work on events. Phone calls may be directed to Bryce Maus, 507, 452, 9689. GBDRF current news can be read on the Minnesota City website, www.minnesotacity.org.

Legacy funding Important for Minnesota Wastewater Treatment Plant

The *Winona Daily News* carried a story on December 1 detailing the contribution of Legacy Funding to the construction of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Because of the 2007 flood, city septic systems were damaged. The University of Minnesota study found that more than half of the city's systems were failing or non-compliant, necessitating a sewer system. To keep local control, according to Mayor Don O'Neil, the city built its own system using several grants. Of the \$3.2 million project, \$1 million was from Legacy funding. Most houses are now hooked up. (*Winona Daily News*, December 1, 2013).

January Burials in Oakland Cemetery

January 13, 1913. **Mathilda C. Wright**, 50 yrs old. Housewife. Born in Wisconsin. Father, William Kurth, Born in Germany. Mother, Louisa Hener, Born in Germany. Informant, C. E. Wright. C.C. Smith, Registrar. Krier Brothers, Winona, Undertaker. Cause of Death, Heart Failure. Burial on Jan. 16.

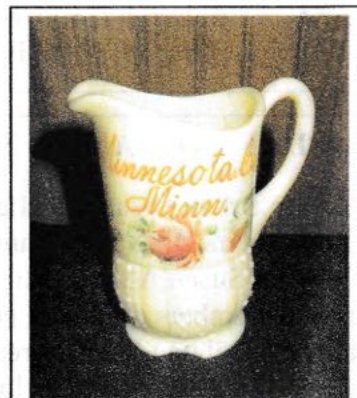
January 16, 1918. **Augusta Wiese**, 81 yrs. old. Housewife. Born in Germany. Father, Schram, born in Germany. Mother, name unknown, born in Germany. Henry Weise, informant. Cause of death, Cancer of the throat. Duration of several Years. Dr. Lichenstein, M.D.

Archives (Continued from Page 2)

Madison is halfway through her fight with a rare form of cancer, and just had a successful surgery to remove the large tumor. "I'm doing pretty good, right now at least," said Madison Richards. She was able to take a break from her hospital room on Thursday to watch others take time to appreciate what they have.

"It's really cool to see what people write and what they're grateful for, things that you don't always think about," said Madison. One teenager, who didn't know Madison, stopped to write perhaps the most powerful message -- he wrote "You" with an arrow pointing to Madison. "Just don't take those things for granted that you have every day and enjoy every moment you have with family," said Richards. <http://www.ktvb.com/home/Family-helps-share-Thanksgiving-message-in-Boise-233779641.html>

- **Mary Hadley**, Rushford, former Minnesota City resident, attended the Caroling Event on December 14 and brought with her a contribution to the archives: a custard glass Minnesota City cup, possibly a Minnesota City business promotional item. According to online information, custard glass, an opaque glass, which with the addition of different compounds including silver, lead and antimony, produces a cream custard like color, was introduced to the U.S. in the 1880s. It remained popular in the U.S. until Carnival glass became the fad around 1915. Most intriguing perhaps is the fact that the U.S. glass contains minute amounts of radioactive uranium dioxide. We hope a newsletter reader will reveal its distribution with the Minnesota City name (information from Jill Davidson, Yahoo Contributor Network).
- **Gerald Okland**, Thief River Falls, sent several clippings related to the Fifield mineral water issue, Minnesota City floods, the Western Farm and Village Association, and a biography of Mary Gibbs, the first woman park commissioner in North American who led the struggle between loggers and conservationists for Itasca State Park Land.
- **Thank you for all contributions.**



Custard Glass pitcher
contributed by Mary Hadley

Membership Dues Appeal in January

To simplify organizational detail work for MCHA, a decision was made two years ago to solicit all membership monies in the month of January as opposed to individual dates. During this month all newsletter readers will receive a membership renewal letter which will detail information related to Association needs and uses of membership monies. THANK YOU for attention to this annual request.

Standing Invitations:

- to attend regular meetings of MCHA. These meetings are held at 140 Mill Street. In cold weather months, generally October to May these are at the former school building.
- to respond to newsletter content. Please send additions, corrections, suggestions, calendar information (meetings, reunions, birthdays, other significant dates) etc. to mgogrady@embarqmail.com.
- **Writers of regular columns would be welcomed.** These might include monthly columns on area businesses, churches, schools, organizations or other relevant topics on the area and/or our history.