

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 8, Issue 10: October, 2014

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

Mark your Calendars!

October 11: Saturday;
**Monthly Meeting,
Minnesota City
Historical
Association;** MCHA
Archives, 140 Mill
Street; 9:30 a.m.

October 19: Sunday;
**Community Wedding
Celebration;** Elks
Lodge, 4540 N. Service
Drive, Goodview;
3:00-7:30 p.m.

October 23: Thursday;
**Minnesota City
Community Readers;**
Former Minnesota City
School Building, 115
Iowa Street; Selection:
Leon Uris; *Exodus*;
6:30 p.m.

October 23: Thursday;
**Minnesota City Book
Shelf Open;** 115 Iowa
Street; Book
Giveaway; 6:30 - 8:00
p.m.

December 13:
Saturday; **Community
Caroling;** First Baptist
Church/MCHA
Archives; 140 Mill
Street; 6:00 p.m.

“Go Green!”

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

GBDRF Invites Community to October 19 Event

It's Not Too Late!

You still have time to register for **All Star Wedding II**
to be held Sunday, October 19 at the Elks Club
starting at 3:00 p.m.

Make sure your family joins others from the Minnesota City
area for a fun time.

Help make history once again!

Send \$15.00 per person to GBDRF, PO Box 34, Minnesota City, MN 55959

According to Susan Althoff, Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund (GBDRF) secretary, reservations and family histories continue to come in for the October 19 event which promises to be an enjoyable food, photo, and historical occasion. The afternoon will be a continuation of the organization's efforts to promote community/connectedness in our area. First events of the group were directly related to 2007 flood results—landscaping, community meals, garden tours and others. In subsequent years, the group has sponsored fundraisers that have benefited local groups—sports, First Responders, etc. A well received event has been the Belgian Waffle Breakfast hosted at the former Minnesota City School Building and St. Paul's Church. The All Star Wedding II commemorates a 1941 talent show that garnered much good will in the Minnesota City area. The October 19 event includes a catered meal, Misty Mountain Boys music, souvenir booklets, photo viewing and prizes. It promises to be a fun afternoon. THANK YOU, all GBDRF personnel, past and present for continuing to celebrate our community.

Jean Gardner Participates in Commemoration of Constitution Signing

MCHA member Jean Gardner was again one of the recent presenters for Winona Mayor Mark Peterson's signing of the Daughters of the American Revolution proclamation commemorating the 227th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution. Celebration of the signing is a tradition begun by the DAR, Daughters of the American Revolution.

Through their efforts Congress passed a law in 1956 that set aside Sept. 17-23 as Constitution Week. In Minnesota City the DAR participated in the donation and dedication of the flag when it was replaced at Riverway, the former Minnesota City School in 2002.



Jean Gardner and Brenda Eckert approach the flag at the former Minnesota City School. 2002 archival photo.

First Baptist Ladies Aid September 7 Service Outlines Organization Presence in Minnesota City

There were familiar faces at the annual service of the First Baptist Ladies Aid, which did not surprise when one heard the family connections read by Jean Gardner of the members whose ancestors were also involved in this organization which continues to maintain the historic first church established in Winona County.

This year's service included a report from Gardner of information related to the restoration effort intended to remedy foundation issues of the building, a reading called "The Oldest Church in Wright County" read by Maxine Church Spaag, comments by Gen O'Grady on the uses of the building this year by the Minnesota City Historical Association, address by First Baptist Church Winona Pastor Dennis Hudson, and the video developed for inclusion in fundraising efforts of the First Baptist Ladies Aid. Some refreshments carried name cards of the person whose recipe was used for preparation; Donna Friesen identified these. Hymn singing included "Bringing in the Sheaves," the theme music of the video.



Attendees enjoy refreshments following the annual summer service at First Baptist Church on September 7.

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Minnesota City News: Is old news "news"?

Recruits for the First—"Eleven recruits for the First Regiment passed down river yesterday on the Favorite. Among the number was a son of Mr. Geo. A. Durfee of Minnesota City. This makes three sons Mr. Durfee has contributed to this regiment. One of the boys was taken prisoner at Bull Run and subsequently died from disease caused by the inhuman treatment received from the rebels." *Winona Daily Republican, October 28, 1862*

Union Meetings in Winona County. "Lincoln and Johnson Union Meetings will be held at the following places in Winona County on the evenings designated below: Minnesota City, Pike's School House, and Tuesday, October 18." *Winona Daily Republican October 18, 1864.*

For Sale—"Forty acres, railroad Station at Minnesota City. A lot of timber land on Prairie Island. 1 House and Lot in Rochester....All of the above will be offered cheap for Greenbacks. For particulars enquire of the undersigned at Buck's or Miller's Fanning Mill shops, Winona. A.A. Gilbert." *Winona Daily Republican, October 17, 1863.*

MCHA expresses sympathy to the family and friends of

- Carl Evanson, 73, Middle Valley, Minnesota City, who died on September 2 at his home. Born in Winona and a lifelong area resident, Carl was an informed, opinionated, and vocal participant in the various communities of his life--home and family, church, work career, and Rollingstone Township.
- Peter Logan, 70, former mayor of Stockton, who died at his Stockton home on September 11.
- Daniel Werner, 66, Decorah, Iowa who died in Rochester following a bicycle accident on September 18 in Decorah.
- Florence Ida Brown, 91, Minnesota City who died on September 26, 2014 in Rushford, Minnesota.

Minnesota Citian Marcia Hall Anderson Contributes Information on Family and World War II Participation

Beginning in 1956, Fay and Alice Schouweiler Hall lived in the home now owned by the Ferdens, next to First Baptist Church; Fay died here in 1975. Alice now lives in Winona and her daughter, Marcia Hall Anderson, Minnesota City, is the clerk of Rollingsstone Township. Anderson recently gave us a copy of a 1943 article in The Winona Republican Herald's *Voice of the Outdoors* in which Fay's father Homer Hall writes to columnist Lefty Hymes about his son, Homer Jr.. Homer, Fay's brother, was killed during the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands in the South Pacific. Hall's ship was attacked by Japanese torpedo planes, one of which crashed into the forward section of the Smith, Hall's ship. His father Homer, also in the Navy, wrote the tribute to his son Homer. Fay Hall, at the time a LaCrosse resident, served in the Navy during World War II. Particularly poignant in the tribute is the father's discussion of the purpose of military service, the purpose of Liberty, that is often cited as the "purpose for which they (persons who died) gave their last full measure of devotion."

Homer Sr. writes "It doesn't make any sense to mix up the purposes of the death with the purposes of the living. These boys did not make the sacrifice in that mood, they didn't say this or that is at stake, so now I am going to die for it, that is not the way it happens, it happens unexpectedly when he is doing something he learned in basic training at Great Lakes...But I will always feel that before the sacrifice was made there was an instant when he had a chance to think and in that instance his thoughts were so simple that it would be hard for us the living to understand them, let alone try to write them down." The writer than relates the day to day experiences of the "hometown" lives of many—family members, the hometown, the movie theater, the baseball diamond, etc. The column is a father's reasoned approach to his son's death combining loss with convictions. Persons interested in "the rest of the story" can find it at the Winona Newspaper Project <http://digital.olivesoftware.com/Default/Skins/WinonaA/Client.asp?skin=WinonaA&AW>, The Winona Republican Herald, *The Voice of the Outdoors*, October 18, 1943.

Butterflies and Bagpipes Celebrate Lydia (Pearl) Singer



The 100th birthday celebration for Pearl Singer held on September 7 at the VFW in Winona was a festive occasion that included decorations and performance related to her interests.

The banners listed family - and many of them were in attendance - photos from the stages of her life, and a bagpiper who played music that she has enjoyed

as well as Happy Birthday. Neighbors and family and friends enjoyed a sumptuous buffet dinner and were able to greet Pearl who had kind words and memories of all she encountered. Pearl and Joe Singer were the parents of six sons and one daughter. The afternoon promoted reflection for many on the amazing length and experience of this life, the good fortune of health and happiness. Thank you, family of Pearl, for opening the celebration to the rest of us.



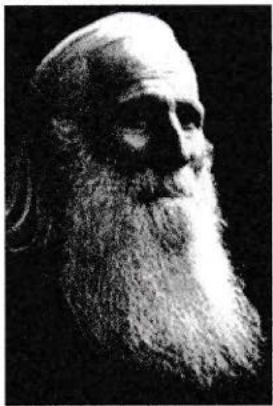
A bagpiper plays at 100th birthday party for Lydia (Pearl) Singer

Reader Sends Progress Report on New Information for Burley Biography and Family History

Newsletter faithful reader Pam Stansfield Aune has sent an update on the progress of the biographical novel about her ancestor, early Minnesota City settler Daniel Q. Burley, and new information the family acquired on a recent tour of some Burley sites. Burley owned the land later owned by the Denzer family and now owned by Chris Roberton (about one mile north of the Highway 248 Junction).

Pam writes "...I wanted to tell you about another journey my daughter, Colleen and I went on a couple of weeks ago to New Hampshire. I'm trying to finish up loose ends in my Burley family tree going back to 1700. Also, we wanted to visit more burial sites of this family, which I'd found online since our last visit there in 2009. We definitely are accomplishing more of the fine points of research and pulling together more information on the journey of Daniel Quimby Burley within the state of New Hampshire. Colleen is in the early stages of writing a fictional story of Daniel's life and wanted to see many of the places he lived and worked while in his youth and early to mid-twenties.

In Tamworth, NH between 1837 and 1844, Daniel was a member of the Tamworth Freewill Baptist Church and most certainly was aware and possibly participated in The American Lyceum Movement which still takes place today in Tamworth. It was and is a place in which the entire community could and does gather to discuss new ideas and build consensus about local issues. In Daniel's time, it was used as a means of educating the rural communities about the importance of standardizing and making current the state of knowledge about the industrial arts now being introduced into their lives.



D. Q. Burley, Western Farm and Village Settler in Minnesota City.

Shortly thereafter, at about the age of 23, Daniel removed to Laconia, NH to work in a large cotton mill. Apparently, he worked at the Belknap Mill for about 3 years.

Within walking distance of his work place was located the 2nd Freewill Baptist Church of Upper Gilmanton, NH. It is our belief this is where Daniel met Naomi Rundlett for she was a member of this church along with her parents and siblings. (Of course, the name of the church has changed over the years, and, perhaps, even the structure).

After their 1846 marriage in the 2nd Freewill Baptist Church, Daniel and Naomi leave for Quincy, Massachusetts where he becomes a stone mason. We believe he carved the grave stones for Naomi and their son, Charles, up on the hill behind the Burley homestead in Minnesota City."

We will be waiting for the book!

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 Marv O'Grady and David Eckert for keeping the website updated.

Standing Invitations:

- to attend meetings of MCHA. These meetings are held at 140 Mill Street.
- **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.