

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 14, Issue 2: March 2019

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

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Saturday, March 9: 9:30 a.m.;
MCHA Regular monthly meeting;
Minnesota City City Hall, 149 Mill Street, Minnesota City

Thursday, March 21: 6:30 p.m.;
Minnesota City Community Readers,
Selection: *Pope Joan* by Donna Cross;
Minnesota City City Hall, 149 Mill Street

Saturday, May 18: Minnesota City Day;
Celebrating 167th year of founding.

“Go Green!”

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

March MCHA Meeting Discusses Minnesota City Day, May 18.

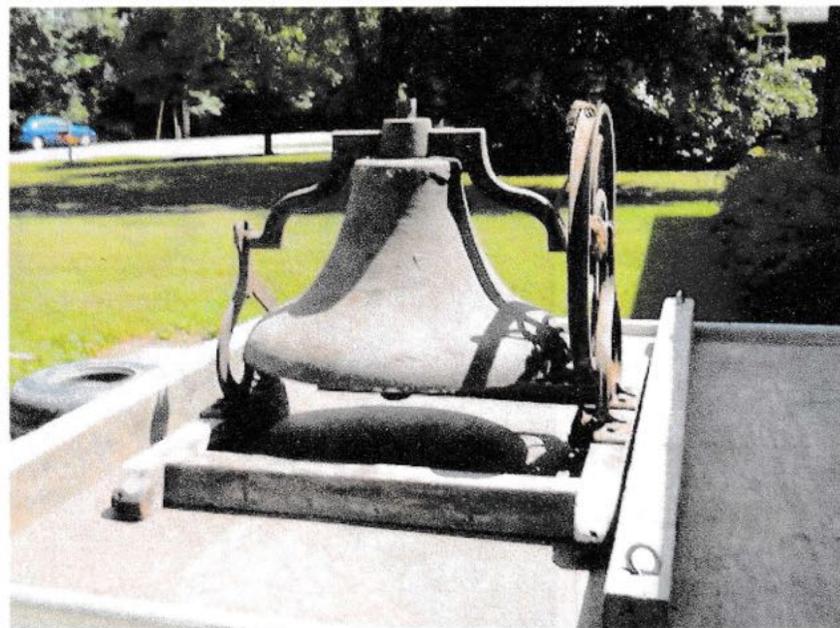
With the Wallace Burley construction plans for the protective memorial structure for the Maybury School Bell near completion, MCHA members discussed related topics—securing bids, grants, and eventual solicitation for funds. The bell, cast by Rumsey and Co. in Seneca Falls N.Y. was purchased for the school in 1870. It was brought to Minnesota City partly by steamboat.

Pumps, steam fire engines, sadirons, coffee grinders, sausage stuffers, stoves, whirly gigs, corn shellers & huskers, boot jacks, bells, sinks, were spin-off products made of iron that made Seneca famous. **Waterways History: Seneca Museum of Waterways.**

Following consideration of work bids, MCHA will begin solicitation of funds for the structure. W. Burley, a Minnesota City Burley descendant, has devoted considerable expertise, time and effort to this project. MCHA is grateful.

Additional site markings for the walking/driving Minnesota City tour were discussed. Currently considered are the First School site, The Martin Shoe Store and the land site formerly worked by D.Q. Burley. Hopefully work for one or more of these will be completed by this Minnesota City Day.

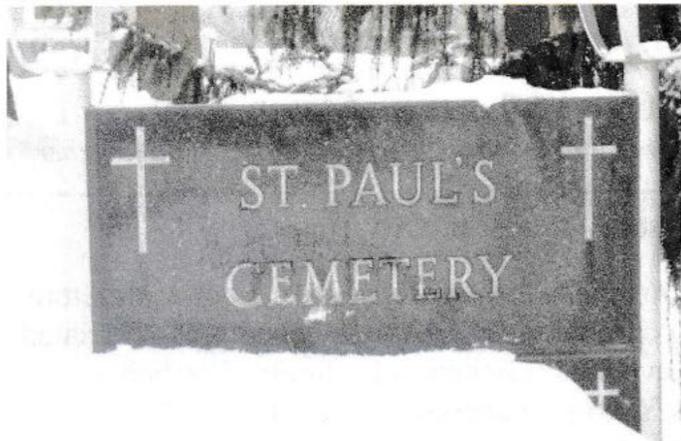
The Association members also discussed the arrangements of Don Evanson with Don Borcharding, a surveyor /civil engineer from Rochester, to speak on township surveying focusing on Minnesota City. He presented at the Winona County



The Maybury bell on the Donehower lawn when it was moved to Minnesota City from the Bunnell House for the Minnesota City School Reunion in 2002.

Township Officers' meeting.

Email correspondence with Don Evanson indicates Borcharding's ample information on a number of Minnesota geographical spots. Borcharding will speak on Minnesota City Day, May 18. This event will likely be at St. Paul's Church Hall, although this is not yet confirmed.



(Snow covered Father Cunningham's Monument to the Unborn sign)

Buried in St. Paul's Cemetery

William F. Wicka 10/6/1942 - 3/20/1993

William F. Wicka was born October 6, 1942, in Winona to Florian B. and Angeline B. (Przbylski) Wicka. He married Sharon J. Siefert on October 20, 1973 in Winona. He was a member of St. Paul's Catholic Church in Minnesota City, and a member of the Minnesota Trapper's Association. Bill was in the Boy Scouts and became an Eagle Scout. He attended the Boy Scout Jamboree in Philadelphia in 1958 and 1959.

He served in the U.S. Army from March, 1962 until he was honorably discharged in December, 1965. He served at the United States Army Infantry Center in Fort Benning, Georgia and at

Aberdeen Training Grounds in Maryland. He was trained at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri.

When Bill returned from the service, he worked at Federal Bakery until it closed. He also worked with his father, doing roofing and later worked on his own. Bill loved the outdoors and loved life. (Information gathered at the time of a Minnesota City Day commemoration of Minnesota City persons who had served in the military. Bill's sister, Sandy (deceased), was the wife of Don Evanson who lives on Denzer Road).

MCHA extends sympathy to families and friends of

- Kevin J. Senn, 70, who died on Friday, December 28, 2018, at his home in Daytona Beach, Florida.
- Sherman Woodward, 76, Minnesota City, who died on January 27, 2019.
- Dorothy Stoos, 89, Rollingstone, who died on February 1, 2019, in Winona.
- Roger Metz, 82, Winona, who died on February 14, 2019, in Winona.

Sarah O'Grady Remembered by MCHA

Sarah, daughter of Marv and Gen O'Grady, died from cancer on January 5 in Winona. She was 51. Sarah was a "behind the scenes" contributor of many talents to MCHA. She made posters for caroling events and Minnesota City Community Readers when they met at the school; she did flower bouquets for events at the church, she helped clean, she diligently read the newsletter - "her favorite piece of mail," she said. The O'Grady family thanks all friends and family who are supporting them with thoughts and friendship during these difficult days.

At right: Sarah O'Grady working on posters for MCHA.



March Notes from the Archived Minnesota City PTA Logs (1960-1964)

March 8, 1960 “.....Mr. Howard Volkart, leader of the Minnesota City Scouts, presented the following boys in a talk and demonstration of the various means of starting fire. Pat Ellis gave a splendid talk on ‘The Art of Fire Making’ and Bruce Volkart, Ardell Hanson and Hollis Donehower presented the demonstration...”

March 14, 1961 “....The treasurer’s report showed a balance of \$156.47. Mr. Dunn (president) announced that a check for \$50.00 would be sent to the School Board for our share in the plastering of the gym. ... Mrs. Donald Elliott moved that we have the picnic on May 28th at Prairie Island. It was agreed that we would not send a representative to the Safety Conference in St. Paul, March 25....Community singing was enjoyed followed by a surprise baby shower on Mrs. McNally. She received many lovely gifts.”

March 13, 1962 “Mrs. Scattum is to contact the School Nurse for the Pre-School Round-up. There is the general feeling that the Manitoux Clinic should be conducted in the school as it has in the past. It was felt that going to Rollingsstone was not successful. Mrs. Dunn moved that the secretary call the School Nurse to get more information. We feel it is a detriment to the community in not having full coverage. This was seconded and carried....It was also suggested that the secretary contact the president of the Winona Medical Association to find out why they will not cooperate.”

March 12, 1963...”Mrs. Pierce reported that a small bill amounting to \$2.94 from 1961-1962 at Witt’s Market was paid....A panel discussion on ‘What the P.T.A. can do to prevent teen age marriages’ followed the meeting. Mrs. Robert Dunn was the moderator and Mrs. Claude Kratz, Mrs. Allen Whetstone and Mrs. Vern Pierce were on the panel. The panel brought out the following facts: Some causes of early dating are caused by too early ‘boy-girl’ parties, parents trying to push their children into social life too soon, parents trying to relive their youth in their children, and also trying to seek a high social status. Parents can prevent early dating by encouraging parties at home, but watch for pairing off at parties and do not leave the house while the party is in progress. Try to keep the home attractive and happy and children should be taught the things of making a home by understanding the budget and let them help make some decisions....”

Dill Pickle Interesting Information

“Dill pickles must rest to develop flavor. The taste of the pickling solution and dill permeates the cucumber over time to produce the classic pickle taste. How long the pickles must rest, though, depends on the recipe.” (and the placement during the preparation period apparently) Susan Peterson in *Leaf*.

“We all have objects that we notice every day... Maybe it’s a particular mailbox, or a nice street tree. Maybe it’s a sign on the way to work that makes you laugh. Or maybe it’s a pickle jar, perched on a concrete wall next to a highway ramp. Such is the case for many who drive through Des Peres, Missouri.



O’Grady photograph
This jar of pickles was in Minnesota City one summer. Some pickles have been on the highway in Missouri for several years.

On the ramp that leads from I-270 North to Manchester Road, near a grocery store and a busy shopping mall, there often sits a quiet and mysterious jar of pickles. When it falls, breaks, or disappears, it is always replaced. It is the highway’s warty lodestar. Barb Steen, who lives nearby, first noticed the jar in 2012. She’s been watching it ever since. “Every day for six years, I brushed my teeth, I got in my car, and I looked for pickles,” she says. Seasons changed: the sun beat down, then snow piled up. Construction and protest actions shut down the highway.” And the pickles remained.” And these observers repeat the Farmers Insurance Ad Script.



Courtesy Ian Patrick Cunningham
(Atlas Obscura)

“We know a thing or two because we’ve seen a thing or two.”

Whitewater State Park Celebrates 100th Anniversary

Note: anyone with information about experiences in Whitewater - picnics, reunions, school trips and others - is invited to email to mgogrady@embarqmail.com

Whitewater State Park is located in the Whitewater River Valley between St. Charles and Elba, Minnesota. The Park was established in 1919 and has a vast and interesting history that includes a CCC camp, floods, WWII German POWs, and much more.

An email from Susan Althoff shared information about her family's experiences with the park and she suggested inviting readers to do the same.

"I know that my folks had a German prisoner of war who worked for them. Both my brothers went to Boy Scout camps there. Some of the first Denzer reunions were held there and I signed up for Outdoor Women programs the last couple of years. That is just one family's connection." (Althoff).

The Winona Daily News in 2017 published a *Throwback Thursday: POWS in our Backyard* authored by Christ Hubbuch. The article begins: "During the summer of 1944 and 1945, the U.S. Army used a former Civilian Conservation Corps campsite in Whitewater State Park to house about 380 German prisoners of war."

Readers familiar with Riverway School's 2000 publication of *Old Wise Tales* found Delwin Tschumper's recall of one memory quite interesting. "I was standing out in the yard and a car came down the road. It was a 2 seater coupe. There were two guys pushing the car. They were not speaking English, they were speaking German. There was a prisoner of war camp at Whitewater State Park. Farmers could go up there and borrow prisoners to work. They wouldn't try to escape; they had it too good up there, and they would have been caught. They were pushing the car because the car ran out of gas. Gas rationing caught them."

"The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was a public work relief program that operated from 1933 to 1942 in the United States for unemployed, unmarried men. The CCC was a major part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal that provided unskilled manual labor jobs related to the conservation and development of natural resources in rural lands owned by federal, state, and local governments. The CCC was designed to provide jobs for young men and to relieve families who had difficulty finding jobs during the Great Depression in the United States. Maximum enrollment at any one time was 300,000. Through the course of its nine years in operation, 3 million young men participated in the CCC, which provided them with shelter, clothing, and food, together with a wage of \$30 (about \$570 in 2017) per month (\$25 of which had to be sent home to their families).

Sources written at the time claimed an individual's enrollment in the CCC led to improved physical condition, heightened morale, and increased employability. The CCC also led to a greater public awareness and appreciation of the outdoors and the nation's natural resources, and the continued need for a carefully planned, comprehensive national program for the protection and development of natural resources. Enrollees of the CCC planted nearly 3 billion trees to help reforest America; constructed trails, lodges, and related facilities in more than 800 parks nationwide; and upgraded most state parks, updated forest fire fighting methods, and built a network of service buildings and public roadways in remote areas. By 1942, with World War II and the draft in operation, the need for work relief declined, and Congress voted to close the program." (Wikipedia)

Anyone who wishes to donate to or 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.

MCHA invites readers to submit dates for the newsletter of family reunions, milestone birthdays, and other events about which readers wish to share information.

Check www.minnesotacity.org or use the QR code. Submit information to mgogrady@embarqmail.com

