

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 11, Issue 2: March, 2016

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

Mark your Calendars!

March 6:
 Sunday, 2:00 p.m.; St. Paul’s Catholic Church Hall, 132 Anderson Street; MCHA Spring Presentation: “Memories, Stories, Histories”

March 8:
 Tuesday, 8:15 p.m.; Rollingstone Township Mtg.; Rollingstone Township Hall, 24643 Highway 248.

March 12:
 Saturday 9:30 a.m. MCHA monthly meeting; City Hall, 149 Mill Street.

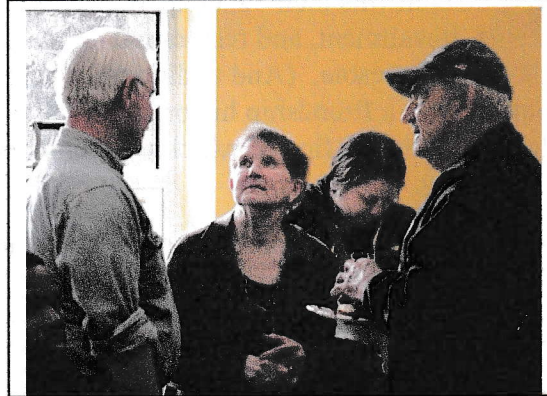
March 31:
 Thursday, 6:30 p.m.; Minnesota City City Hall, 149 Mill Street; Minnesota City Community Readers; Selection: *The Storied Life of A.J.Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin

MCHA
 Box 21, Minnesota City, MN 55959

March 6 Spring MCHA Presentation: “Memories, Stories, Histories”

On March 6, at 2:00 p.m. in St. Paul’s Parish Hall, 132 Anderson Street,

a number of area residents have agreed to share some of the stories of their lives, and audience will have the opportunity to respond to these with anecdotes of their own. The storyteller roster at this time includes Lester and Maxine Church Spaag, Janet Hill Seabern, Jean Gardner, Howard and Gladys Church Volkart, Barbara Pierce, and Emil Sulla. Many of the friends and families of these individuals will recognize their connections with the area and can anticipate drawing comparisons with their own life stories or stories that involve the area or these individuals. People may remember going to Volkarts to collect bounties on rattlesnakes. They will want to know about the U.S. Fish and Wildlife acquiring the land by Garvin Brook/Harbor Drive. Janet Seabern will know changes from Hill family cabins to Bass Camp dwellings. Audience members will be most welcome to respond and also to tell their own stories. A remarkably fitting poem of Robert Penn Warren has these lines: “Tell me a story. In this century and moment of mania, Tell me a story. Make it a story of great distances, and starlight. The name of the story will be Time....” Poet Warren believed the telling of stories was a “way of restoring our sense of common humanity” in a century and moment of “mania.” Perhaps our time and area are not manic, but an afternoon of visiting with our neighbors will reinforce and enrich our humanity. **Invite your friends and family members. They will want to hear your stories; they will have stories of their own.**



Hollis Donehower tells a story to Janet Hill Seabern and Gale Hill.

MCHA Congratulates:

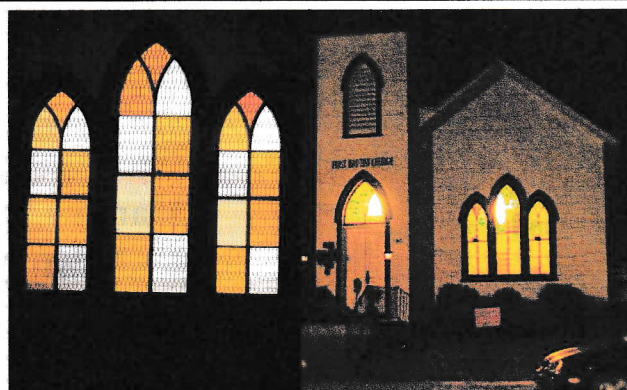
- Howard and Gladys Church Volkart for being the Longest Married Couple -- 68 years-- at the Old Settlers Meeting on February 6.
- Howard Volkart, the oldest man at the Old Settlers Meeting on February 6. Howard is 97.

Correction

The December newsletter listed parents of the skit performers, Madison and Ethan Church, as Reid and Linda Church. The children’s parents are Jared and Jody Church.

Gifted Restoration/Repair of Windows in Historic First Baptist Church

On Wednesday, January 20, two artisans from Reinarts Stained Glass Studios in Winona accompanied Jean Gardner to the historic First Baptist Church in Minnesota City to examine the needed repairs of the stained glass windows. A number of the windows have been damaged in various ways through the years, and this damage became a concern related to the beauty and general condition of the structure. The Reinarts website confirms their vast experience in design, installment, and restoration of stained glass in Minnesota. (And additionally, Jean Gardner has a friendship history with the family!) Reinarts have donated the installation and repair of the windows, the first of which was removed on January 20. The repaired windows were completed on February 9.



First Baptist Church Stained Glass Windows, Outside and Indoors

Although newspaper archives carry abundant items about the First Baptist Church from its dedication date in 1875, there are few accounts that mention the windows. The colored glass, less common in large churches, seemed not to merit attention. Almost 100 years later, this information was in the October 27, 1970 Winona Republican Herald. "The Winona County Historical Society will host a fund-raising party Friday evening at 8 p.m. at the First Baptist Church, Minnesota City, Minn. The party will feature a demonstration of household articles including brushes, cleaning supplies, and cosmetics, which may be purchased. The proceeds from this project will be used to pay for the improvements made on the First Baptist Church which was acquired by the society this year.

Ornament, steel made in an artistic design, was installed on the church windows to protect the stained glass and also to prevent any possibility of vandalism. Mrs. Ruth Girod, Stockton, is in charge of the party. The public is invited to attend." Already then, care of the windows was in place.

Now, some forty five years later, attention has turned again to the beauty and the preservation of the windows. It was the illuminated stained glass windows that inspired the possibility of community caroling in the Church in 2006, followed later by the placing of the MCHA archives in the building. For many persons, this repair, even if viewed infrequently, can promote understanding of the loyalty and painstaking care of an historical treasure by a group of committed individuals. Thank you First Baptist Ladies. Thank you to Don Evanson for contribution of glass salvaged from the replacement project of St. Paul's Catholic Church in Minnesota City which was used in the restoration project.

When we went to the Church on February 10 to see the completed installation, a discussion of the famed writer Pico Iyer came to mind. Iyer asks "What more could one ask? ...To be strange and



Reinarts Glass Co. Employees and Jean Gardner examine the stained glass windows at Historic First Baptist Church.

familiar all at once, with enough change to quicken my mind, enough steadiness to give sanctuary to my heart." The windows quickly feel the same; the building endures, but because of the repair and new pieces, a visitor can experience observation that helps regain a sense of stillness in a world where devices and digital networks increasingly distract us. Iyer talks about this as a "stained glass whole."

Thank you, Reinarts Glass Studio.

MCHA Extends Sympathy to:

- to the family and friends of Jason Scrogam-Brown, Stockton, Minnesota, who died on January 12 at Gundersen Hospital in LaCrosse. Jason was 46, the long time life partner of MCHA member, Dixie Brown.
- to the family and friends of Rose Arnoldy Saehler, long time Minnesota City resident and a Rollingsstone native. Rose was 89 and died in Winona on January 16.
- to the family and friends of Lyle Ziegeweid, 83, Minnesota City, who died on Monday, January



Rose Saehler who died on January 16 and Lyle Ziegeweid who died on January 11 lived for many years in neighboring houses on County Road 32.

11, 2016 at his home. Lyle and his wife Joann were first owners of Lyle's Carpet in Minnesota City. Ziegeweids are MCHA members.

- to the friends and family of Doris Doebbert, 82, Fountain City, who died on January 12. Doris is a sister of LaVern Fritz.
- to the family and friends of Stanley Pozanc, 79, Rollingtone, who died on February 11. Stan served on the Board of Directors of Minnesota City Boat Harbor.

Thank You:

- to Minnesota City City Council for the donation to MCHA of \$300.00. This money will be used for costs of the MCHA website (www.minnesotacity.org). All readers are invited to access this vehicle of information about Minnesota City.
- to Andrea Church for purchase of speakers necessary for presentation volume for the Association laptop.
- to David and Brenda Eckert, Andrea Church, Dawn Church-Webster, Maxine Church Spaag, Jean Gardner, Janet Seabern for monitoring the MCHA display tables at the Winona County Historical Center Open House and James O'Grady, Rebecca O'Grady Weiss and Don Evanson for help with display transportation.



Andrea Church, Maxine Church Spaag, and Dawn Church Webster monitor the Minnesota City Historical Association display at the Winona County Historical Society Open House on February 14.

MARCH Minnesota City Memories—Weather and Otherwise

March 2, 1903 (*Winona Republican Herald*)

The snow is disappearing and is making "us begin ter Kinder sorter" think Spring is here....The dime social given by the teachers and our school for the benefit of the Scandinavian famine sufferers was a pronounced success-the proceeds were in the neighborhood of \$10.00.

March 15, 1903 (*Winona Republican Herald*)

One day last week Ben Daering had the misfortune to lose his hog house and nineteen fat hogs by fire, a loss on hogs alone of about \$200.00. Mrs. Daering was alone at the time and was powerless to do anything. Although the door of the house was open the hogs all refused to go out and all were roasted alive.

Mary Hadley Speaks at Hiawatha Civil War Round Table

Winona Post of February 10 reported that Mary Seebold Hadley of Rushford, former Minnesota City resident and current MCHA member, gave a presentation on Mabel Marvin, a Winona Civil War "heroine." Marvin was responsible for compiling gravestone records of soldiers, primarily Civil War persons, including those in Woodlawn.

Carl Mastenbrook Naval Service Featured in Winona Post

The February 3 issue of the Winona Post included an article entitled "Mastenbrook serves country in Navy in Spain." Mastenbrook says the Navy has helped him find out what he wants to do in the future, and he speaks positively of his service in Spain. Mastenbrook is a 2013 graduate of Winona Senior High, the son of Estelle and Leonard Mastenbrook (both deceased), former residents of Denzer Road in Minnesota City. At the time of Len's funeral (2015) Carl was also at sea. Area residents will recognize that Carl has the name of his Mastenbrook grandfather and an uncle.

GBDRF says farewell

(2/8/2016 Winona Post) Reprinted with authors permission

From: Bryce Maus, past president

Susan Althoff, past secretary

Representing GBDRF

The Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund (GBDRF) Board of Directors would like to thank the area organizations and community residents for their support over the past years. GBDRF was started in December 2007 after the flash flooding hit the communities of Stockton, Minnesota City and Goodview. The goal was to assist families with the many little things they needed to put their lives and homes back together.

Among the many things we coordinated and hosted were a coat and mitten drive, utensil and household shower, book drive for the children who lost beloved story books, landscaping and plants for yards, trees and benches for green spaces, as families moved back into their homes they received a green plant as a welcome back home. For the first two years we held monthly community meals in Stockton and Minnesota City for the residents that were working day and night to get back into their homes so that they had a place to gather, talk with others in the same position as they were and encourage and support each other.

On the one year anniversary we held a community gathering at La Canne Park with games, food, and entertainment and recognized many who had went above and beyond during this period. After five years we held a garden tour to highlight the work the many had done to once again bring beauty and natural resources back to the environment and their neighborhoods. GBDRF also produced a DVD about the flash flood and its impact on the local environment, economy and social well-being. These first-person and expert interviews were distributed to many educational institutions in our area. GBDRF also hosted a seminar on weather patterns, where it was learned despite the huge volumes of rain in 2007, this area could experience even greater precipitation of greater proportions if the right conditions would come together! It's certainly our hope this never occurs, but because of the last flood we'll all be better prepared to respond to any such occurrence.

The GBDRF Board has felt that it has accomplished what it set out to do and it was time for the organization to acknowledge that, congratulate each other on a job well done and close the final chapter of the existence. Board members held a farewell party on December 6 in which they invited all current and past board members to attend and voted to divide up their remaining resources between the cities of Minnesota City and Goodview to use for a special project and to disband as an organization.

Sometimes you need to know when to let go. We appreciated our time with those affected by the flood and all of those that supported our efforts.