

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 12, Issue 4: April, 2017

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

Mark your Calendars!

April 8: 9:30 a.m.;
Monthly Meeting of
MCHA at Minnesota
City City Hall, 149 Mill
Street, Minnesota City.

April 27: 6:30 p.m.;
Minnesota City
Community Readers at
Minnesota City City
Hall, 149 Mill Street;
Selection: *A Man
Called Ove* by Fredrik
Backman.

May 20: Minnesota
City Day. 165th
anniversary of
founding.

“Go Green!”

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

Coming Your Way on Saturday, May 20th: A Stand Still Parade

On Saturday, May 20, past and present residents of Minnesota City will be celebrating the 165th Anniversary of the founding of the city in May 1852. Both the Minnesota House of Representatives and State Senate are drafting resolutions to be presented to the city that day.

There will be a Stand Still Parade along Mill St. from 10 am to 1 pm when residents and guests will walk along the street and visit with those entered in the parade. Judging will take place at noon. Food vendors will be available to offer refreshment, sandwiches and snacks. A local artist will be available to sketch pen and pencil character drawings.



Standing Still for the New Bridge opening parade in September 2009.

The Minnesota City Historical Association archives will be open to the public for viewing and the Historic Community Church will be selling memento note cards designed for this day. The Minnesota City Post Office is planning a cancellation stamp to commemorate the day. Please watch for further details in the local newspapers, posted flyers, and in the May MCHA newsletter.

Rollingstone Township Elects Supervisor and Treasurer

On March 14, 28 voters of Rollingstone Township elected a new treasurer, Christine Dux, and a new supervisor, Tim Neyers. Dux replaces Susan Althoff. Tom Tibor was the elected moderator of the annual meeting at which attendees reviewed the annual budget, the road report, and voted on a levy for 2017. Discussion topics coming from the group included opinions and experiences related to emergency response of various organizations. Allocations in response to written requests to the township were approved for the City of Minnesota City, the Minnesota City Historical Association, Winona County Fair for seal coating paths, and the City of Rollingstone. These were all voted on and approved. The six years of service as Treasurer of Susan Althoff to the Township was acknowledged and Althoff thanked for the opportunity to have served.

County Recorder Bambenek Enlivens the Mundane

By Rebecca O'Grady Weiss, Bloomington Correspondent

Some people have to go a long way to find property taxes, real estate values and current school levies interesting, but not attendees of the Minnesota City Historical Association's spring presentation given by Winona County Recorder Bob Bambenek. Even for those who traveled a distance to St. Paul's Church on March, 20, it was not a stretch to stay engaged with the written and spoken information about both specific properties and general trends for commercial as well as residential sales in Winona county and the surrounding areas. Bambenek's presentation included both a lecture format following an organized set of handouts, and an easy going flow of audience questions that were knowledgeably answered.

Interesting facts about commercial sites included information that the former K-Mart site is perhaps the most valuable in the city of Winona, due to its visibility and access from Highway 61, and that with unprecedented number of sales in 2016, there is a trend towards business or investment groups buying other business sites while the tenants remaining the same. What most local residents refer to as the Schuler Chocolate factory building on West Fifth Street has as its origin the premier wagon builders' site west of the Mississippi, and a future as a dog vitamin factory.

In rural areas, there has been a broad price range with the smaller acreages generally selling at higher per acre prices. Some sales are considered not at "arms length" when they are sold to a known buyer without really being advertised on the market and are not considered in assessing land values.

The number of residential properties available is at an all time low, with 74 MLS listings compared to the usual 325-400 range, and many experience multiple first day showings. A higher demand for houses in the \$100,000.-\$150,000. range, coupled with the lowered availability is producing a "seller's market" and in some cases higher sale prices. This range had the highest number of home sales in the county in 2016.

Although Minnesota's system of property taxation was described as "the most complicated in the country" by Bambenek, he also pointed out that the statements being sent out currently for 2017 taxes, in some cases, reflect decreases and that an examination of the sales figures from the previous three

years are used in calculating current taxes. Township, county and school district levies along with certain state set maximums are also contributing factors. Gentrification, the possibility of half lots for mini houses and the accuracy of land surveys as one moves from valleys to hilltops were also discussed.

The afternoon was sweetened with refreshments hosted by Janet Seabern, Gen O'Grady and Jean Gardner. Gardner was also the door prize winner of a 2014 Winona County plat book. Bambenek purchased a 2017 plat book as a gift for MCHA; more are available for purchase at the Recorder's Winona Office.



Bob Bambenek talks with Edwin and Judy Maus. Walt Kelly is in the background. (MCHA photo)



Leo and Barb Jilk speak with Bob Bambenek

The Miracle ~ L.H. Bailey

Yesterday the twig was brown and bare; Today the glint of green is there;
Tomorrow will be leaflets spare; I know no thing so wondrous fair,
No miracle so strangely rare. I wonder what will next be there!



Newsletter Reader Prompts Another Look at Western Farm and Village History

MCHA Newsletter reader, Sherry Havener, responded to the March article on Robert Pike with the following note: “I received your newsletter Mar 10th and read the article on Robert Pike. He refers to having breakfast with Mr. Haddock and family. William Haddock was my great great Grandfather. He later refers to being sick with fever and chills and says Mrs. Haddock died on this morning. Mrs. Kate Haddock died within 45 days of arrival to Mn. It is reported in his obituary and some other info. on him that she died on Aug 24, 1852 and by September 11, 1852 Mr. Haddock was so disheartened that he moved on and settled in Iowa. I always love reading things that confirm your findings on ancestors. Thanks for sharing. - Sherry Havener.”

Christopher Johnson, a former Winonan (readers may remember his parents, Curtis and Alice Johnson) wrote an article on motivation for settlement in the Rollingsstone Colony in the Winter 1984 Minnesota History Magazine.

(<http://collections.mnhs.org/MNHistoryMagazine/articles/49/v49i04p140-148>). In the article entitled “The Rollingsstone Colony: Labor Rhetoric in Action” Johnson explores research on the link of man’s worth with ownership of land, thus the hope of many reformers to acquire land in the west. In July 21 of 1851, the New York Tribune advertised a meeting that would plan for Western settlement. This meeting was the origin of the Western Farm and Village Association—the group that would “found” Minnesota City.

William Haddock was 29, a printer, and he presented at this meeting his plan for such a settlement: a contingent of 150 to 200 family men of various occupations. “There they would lay out a village in which each member of the proposed society would receive a four- acre village plot, as well as 160 acres of farmland from the tract surrounding the settlement. Haddock maintained that this was the most “comfortable and profitable” form of settlement, one that “secured the advantages of civilization.” William Young objected to this plan, calling it commercial in that it set up each man as a speculator by giving him four acres of village land to sell at a profit to later arriving settlers. “The most prominent idea held out in the ‘Western Farm and Village’ Movement, as in most other organizations for improving the physical condition of man, is the *acquisition of wealth*. This is the governing consideration with a large majority of those who engage in such enterprises. Divest our organization of this feature, and it would probably fail of any given enterprise for the accumulation of riches, and thereby the means of independence.” In fact, as Haddock said, the principal appeal of the organization was the lure of wealth. “Can any person of limited means do better than to embark on this enterprise” he asked. There are, indeed, other considerations and advantages to be derived from it, but these of themselves would be insufficient to induce men to break the ties of association, affection and interest, and seek out new objects in a strange land. It requires a stronger stimulus than merely intellectual or moral considerations to effect an abandonment of old and perhaps remunerating pursuits for the prosecution of enterprises that are new and possibly hazardous; and that stimulus is found in the *probability* or *certainly* which exists in any given enterprise for the accumulation of riches and thereby the means of independence.” *Minnesota History, Winter, 1984*.

Haddock, with Murphy, a blacksmith member of the Association left New York to search out a site for the settlement and the rest is history. The complete article of Johnson is available for reading or copy at the archives. Ask for “The Rollingsstone Colony: Labor Rhetoric in Action.” Readers will recognize the overlap of a number of article issues with those discussed in Reorder Bambenek’s presentation on Sunday. The organized squatters in the Johnson article remind of some of the preparations of some of the towns along Highway 14 since the reveal of Destination Medical Center, Rochester.



More News from Correspondence of Former Neighbors

Janet Hill Seabern, former Minnesota City resident, writes: "I just heard from Betty Lloyd's daughter. She married Ken School from Dakota, MN where he owned a service station. Betty Lloyd was born in Minnesota City near Rebs. Then they moved. They rented a farm from A. Rolbecki on Hwy. 61 and had a large family, 13 or 15 kids, Janet thought. They also farmed in Deering Valley. Then they moved to Melrose, WI. One daughter, about 15 at the time, was in a hospital in Minneapolis after a steam/water accident. Ken and Betty were active in a Pearl Harbor for Survivors' organization in Hement, California. Betty played piano for a polka club. They had children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Betty was 82 years old when she died on March 10, 2017. Three of the other children are still living.

MCHA Expresses Sympathy

- To the family and friends of Byrle A. Tschumper, 89, Winona, who died on March 5 at Sauer Health Care, Winona, MN.
- To the family and friends of Allan J. Stier, 61, Buffalo City, WI, who died on March 4 at Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center, La Crosse, WI.
- to the family and friends of August P. "Gus" Verdick, age 68, of Winona, who died on March 4 at his home.
- To the family and friends of Donna Jeanne Heble, of Winona, who died on March 13 at Abbott Northwestern Hospital, Minneapolis, MN.
- To the family and friends of Gary Egge, 66, Winona, who died on March 16.
- To the family and friends of Karrol Wenzel, 73, Goodview, who died on March 18.

MCHA Thanks

- St. Paul's Parish for use of the parish hall on March 19
- Bob Bambenek, County Recorder, for March 19 presentation

MCHA Website Welcomes Data

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

Remember to check out the MCHA website at:

www.minnesotacity.org or use the QR code above.

Submit information to (mgogrady@embarqmail.com)



Whitman-Deering Valley Poet International Poetry Prize Winner

Chad Oness who lives in Whitman Deering Valley is on the short list for the Balley Maloe International Poetry Prize for 2017. His poem "On the Sprocket Side of the Hay Rake" invites reader consideration of his down to earth adventures, at least one of them, since moving to the area. As noted in many discussions of this award, it is one of the most prestigious in the world. Oness is a poet and printer. He is the founding editor and director of Sutton Hoo Press, a literary fine press of hand-made limited editions of poetry and prose. Oness is a prolific writer and award winner. His wife Elizabeth, also an author, is in the English Department at Winona State University.

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.