

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 9, Issue 5: May, 2015

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

Mark your Calendars!

May 9: Saturday;
MCHA Monthly Meeting & Open Book Shelf;
9:30 a.m.;
115 Iowa Street,
Minnesota City.

May 16: Minnesota City Day (163 years);
8:30-12:00 a.m.;
Various times and venues (See enclosed schedule).

May 16: Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund Belgian Waffle Breakfast; 8:30-11:30 a.m.; St. Paul’s Church Hall; 132 Anderson Street.

May 21: Thursday,
Minnesota City Community Readers & Open Book Shelf; 6:30 p.m.; Former Minnesota City School Building; selection: *The Glass Castle* by Walls, 115 Iowa Street.

“Go Green!”

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

Historic First Baptist Church Engages Restoration Project

Monday, April 20, will be entered as an historic date in the books of the First Baptist Church of Minnesota City. The deterioration of the foundation of the building has been marked and carefully observed as church proprietors (First Baptist Ladies Aid) have sought artisans for the repair work. R.J. Jurowski Construction, Whitehall, WI began the work on Monday, April 20.



Jurowski Co. employees work on First Baptist Church

All Minnesota Citizens should recognize the significance of the maintenance of this historic structure, the first church in Winona County, which now houses the archives of MCHA. The historic church is a fitting repository for area historical records. First Baptist Ladies are to be applauded for determination and persistence in execution of this project.

May 16...Minnesota City Day

In the Beginning

At the Minnesota City site chosen for settlement by the Western Farm and Village Association in 1852, there were people and promises and problems—and churches and schools and governing groups soon formed to regulate all of these in helpful ways. Minnesota City Day 2015 will give attention to three churches that have sustained followings and have been significant in the village’s early and continuing history. First Baptist Church, 140 Mill Street, St. Paul’s Catholic Church, 132 Anderson Street, and First Evangelical Lutheran Church, 141 Mill Street. All will all have open house events on May 16 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. The three churches are currently the foci of the reflections of many: St. Paul’s possible transition to an oratory, First Baptist Church restoration, and the 125th anniversary of First Evangelical Lutheran.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church

A Minnesota City Day open house will be held at the church on Saturday morning, May 16, from 9:00-11:30 a.m. Coinciding with Minnesota City Day is the 125th anniversary of the founding of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church. The congregation will celebrate with a special service on May 17 at 2:00 p.m. Pastor David Ponath, pastor of the congregation from 1961-1965, will be the speaker for that service. An open house will be held beginning at 1:00 p.m. and continue after the service.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 (See Minnesota City Day)

Minnesota City Day (continued from page 1)

First Baptist Church Open House

Because of church restoration work, First Baptist Church will possibly move their observation of open house (9:00-11:30) to the Former Minnesota City School where they will show a promotional video for the church. Filmed in the church, the video highlights the building's artistic features. As the oldest church in Winona County, the building represents the long history of the community/area as well as of the religious community. The work on the church foundation can be viewed in a drive-by at the Mill Street location.

St. Paul's Catholic Church Shares History With Archival Materials

In addition to generous sharing of their kitchen for the GBDRF Belgian Waffle Breakfast on Minnesota City Day, St. Paul's will display some of their historical artifacts during their open house hours: 9:00-11:30 a.m. Available for viewing will be the 2008 film featuring parish history—buildings and people—from the beginning in 1925 to the present. Other materials on display will include a collection of Sunday bulletins published by a former pastor, Rev. Joseph Frisch, featuring photos of parishioners and parish events, the recently published History of the Diocese of Winona which features St. Paul's Church, and additional print materials related to the church.

Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund (GBDRF) sponsors Belgian Waffle Breakfast to benefit Minnesota City First Responders and GBDRF Causes

The opening event of Minnesota City Day and the most popular draw of the day for some is the Belgian Waffle Breakfast held in St. Paul's Church Hall and sponsored by GBDRF. This year's breakfast runs from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Proceeds will benefit Minnesota City First Responders and GBDRF goals. The Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund was started in December of 2007 in response to the flooding of August 18-19 in SE Minnesota. Its mission is to aid and assist families and individuals in the community and surrounding area. First responders are those individuals who arrive in the early stages of an incident/accident and assist in providing care. (Chad Larson at 507-689-4361 or Tim Neyers at 507-459-3831).

Cotton to Genealogical Research? A Session for You.

Although the phrase "cotton to" was in use in the early 1800s, Samuel and Sarah Cotton may have been perusing legal printed documents for Samuel's work in the community, rather than genealogical resources. On May 16, however, Barb and Gerry Okland, Thief River Falls, MN will team with Andrea Church, Winona, to demonstrate a genealogical search using contemporary technology. Church, who works with Ancestry.com and other resources will demonstrate a genealogical search that can motivate listeners to begin their own ancestral searches. Okland will present information on his great great grandparents, the Cottons, who were among the very first 1852 Minnesota City settlers. Newspaper accounts are plentiful about Samuel who became a respected judge as well as the performer of many other "civic" duties that affected the new colony. Sarah, as judged by her obituary in the October 30, 1893 Winona Daily Republican, was an outstanding person. "The entire community was greatly moved at her departure.....a noble Christian mother, with her six stalwart sons and one daughter, rising up to call her blessed was followed by the large audience in tears. Seldom does any person win the esteem and love of an entire community as did Mrs. Cotton." MCHA archives include information about the property Cotton owned, later owned by Val and Charlotte Kowalewski and Gary Denzer. Andrea Church, with her father Roger, compiled a Church family history which will be available for event attendees as well as the history of the Burley family presented for MCHA by Pamela Aune and the Maus family history compiled by Edwin and his sister Delores Maus Felsheim. We will now add the Cotton Family History to these, and hopefully a number of attendees will begin work on their own families. Attendees are invited to bring their laptops for work with Andrea.

Maus, Peace Resource Center Coordinator, Travels to Japan

Tanya Maus, has recently traveled to Hiroshima, Japan to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the World Friendship Center. Maus is the Coordinator of the Peace Resource Center of Wilmington College, Ohio. Wilmington, renowned as a Quaker Peace activist institution, works for global peace. The World Friendship Center was founded by Barbara Reynolds who also founded the Wilmington College in 1975. Maus was a presenter at the Hiroshima event and will later tour the Kyoto Museum for World Peace. Maus, the daughter of Edwin and Judy Maus received her PhD in history from the University of Chicago. Maus has written extensively on varied Japanese topics.

In May – John Burroughs

*... When such delights greet eye and ear,
Then strike thy tasks and come away:
It is the joy-month of the year,
And onward sweeps the tide of May.*

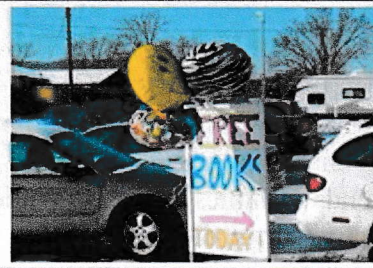
*When farmhouse doors stand open wide
To welcome in the balmy air,
When truant boys plunge in the tide,
And school-girls knots of violets wear;*

*When grapevines crimson in the shoot,
Like fin of trout in meadow stream,
And morning brings the thrush's flute
Where dappled lilies nod and dream;*

*... When purple finches sing and soar,
Then drop to perch on open wing,
With vernal gladness running o'er--
The feathered lyrist of the spring:*

*When joys like these salute the sense,
And bloom and perfume fill the day,
Then waiting long hath recompense,
And all the world is glad with May.*

Open Book Shelf Invites Visitors on May 16



The open book shelf at the former Minnesota City School, 115 Iowa Street will be open from 9:00 a.m. until 11:30 on Minnesota Day, May 16. Started

in December of 2013, the Book Shelf has attracted contributions from a number of readers. The Book Shelf is open concurrent with any other events held in the building, usually MCHA meetings on 2nd Saturdays, and Minnesota City Community Readers meetings on the 4th Thursdays. Visitors on May 16 are invited to take with them numbers of books that could be distributed at locations where they can be read—healthcare facilities, homebound persons, jail, etc. Readers are asked to spread the word about this availability of books. Just come into the front door; books available in the first room on the right.

All books are “giveaway.” No money, no cards, no due dates, no names, nor returns. Take books for yourself or your friends. If you have books for giveaway, you may bring them on May 16.

Mary Singer Exhibit at the Acoustic Cafe

The April 1 Winona Post included the announcement of a Mary Singer painting exhibit at the Acoustic Café, 77 Lafayette Street in Winona. A collection of Singer's paintings often includes scenes of the Mississippi River north of Minnesota City, views possible from the land owned by her son Jay. A mural of Singer's remains on one wall of the former Minnesota City School Building. Originally painted with Riverway Charter School students, the mural was vandalized, and then repaired by Singer. Post material indicates that Mary will be at the Acoustic the last weekend in April for the Bluff Country Studio Art Tour.

Anyone who wishes to 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. Separate or additional donations may also be sent to the above address.

MCHA Expresses Sympathy

- to the family and friends of Joseph "Joe" W. Brown, 46, Minnesota City, who died on April 13, 2015 at Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center in Lacrosse, Wi.
- to the family and friends of William Frank Bambenek, 78, Minnesota City, who died on April 2, 2015, in Winona.
- to the family and friends of James "Jim" A. Wadewitz, 77, Winona, who died on April 15, 2015 . Jim's wife, Betty Curtis, died in 2008.

MCHA Thanks

- Rollingsstone Township for the contribution of \$300.00 which was applied to the purchase of a new laptop computer for Association use.

MCHA Congratulates

- **Melanie Butenhoff**, winner in the Hands Are Not For Hitting Art Contest, an event of Winona Child Prevention Council activities in April as part of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention month. Melanie, Jefferson Elementary STEM School student, produced the Most Creative art work in the primary grades. Winners received gifts from Winona National Bank. Melanie lives in Stockton Valley with her parents Mike and Vanessa Butenhoff and her brother Brandon. She has performed in the MCHA Christmas skits at the December Caroling event in 2013 and 2014.
- **Peter Horton**, Minnesota City, Cotter High School History teacher who was named a finalist for Teacher of the Year award by the Minnesota Independent School Forum. Horton has taught in Winona Schools for 42 years (Winona Post, April 22).
- **Elizabeth Oness**, Minnesota City, WSU English Professor, who has won the Brighthorse Prize for her last novel *Leaving Milan*, her first novel set in the Upper Midwest. Oness teaches composition, literature and fiction writing at WSU and is the marketing director for Sutton Hoo Press. (WSU Currents: Spring, 2015).

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 for keeping the website updated.

Standing Invitations:

- to attend meetings of MCHA. These meetings are held at 140 Mill Street.
- To join Minnesota City Community Readers – meetings coming up in May, June and then from September to June.
- **Writers of regular newsletter columns would be welcomed.** These might include monthly columns on area businesses, churches, schools, organizations or any other relevant topics on the area and/or our history.

Minnesota City Day Notes ...

Please see the additional inserted page on Minnesota City Day event descriptions, times and locations. Invite your family and friends to breakfast, then attend other events. See you there!

Minnesota City Day

Family Research Conversation

Minnesota City Founders – Samuel and Sarah Cotton



Andrea Church

Genealogy Researcher



Gerald Okland

Cotton Great-Great-Grandson

May 16, 9:30 a.m.
Former Minnesota City School
115 Iowa Street
No charge event