



SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Henderson, Minnesota 56044 Ph: (507) 248-3434

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4-H History

By Eldrene Ebert

In the late 1800's researchers at experiment stations of the land-grant universities and USDA saw that adults in the farming community did not readily accept new agricultural ideas. Educators found that youth would experiment with these new ideas and then share their experiment and successes with the adults.

T.A. (Dad) Erickson, teacher in 1902, at the Nelson School District of Douglas County, MN came up with the idea of a school fair involving competition for the students. The fair would give all students a chance to participate in something suited to their skills – not just a spelling contest. At the end of the school year he asked his students to help their parents with field work, their gardens and general homemaking. The first school fair was held in the fall of 1902 at the Nelson School. Students brought samples of their

crops, baking and sewing – all done at home. The judge from Evansville rode the caboose of an early morning freight train into town. Nelson business places supplied the prizes and parents were there to take it all in.

Later that year Erickson was elected Douglas County Superintendent of Schools. He started to promote the school fair idea on a county-wide basis. In 1904 he introduced a school agricultural contest. At his own expense he

bought some new Hybrid #13 seed corn. He offered to give some to all students that completed an essay with a promise to exhibit 10 cobs of their best corn at the school fair in the fall. Those who applied were named Corn Club members. The contest was held and farmers in every community of the county became interested in #13 corn.

Erickson arranged a seed contest that same year. This contest was held to select par-

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These familiar 4-H member signs were given to club members to display at their place.

Calendar of Events

Check our website for 2015 programs.

- June 23 7PM A *Snapshot of 4-H & County Fairs* by Jason Wurst. At Courthouse Basement

July- See you at the County Fair!

August Tuesday August 24th, 2015 *Tour to Stearn's County Museum and Munsinger & Clemen's Gardens*

- If you have suggestions or comments on upcoming events Contact Judy Loewe 507-248-3345



The Prez Sez

by Jerome Petersen

Thanks to all who attended our annual meeting in Gaylord, and thanks to those who participated in the program. Their photos are on page 7 with a short caption about their piece. Our county has many interesting stories about family members who served in the army in the Civil War. We maybe should devote a newsletter issue to some more of those stories, like Sharon Byer Shimota's great grandparents hearing Lincoln give his Gettysburg Address at the battlefield site, the story of the New Auburn soldier told in a series of letters home we published a few years ago and Mary Foltz Petersen's great grandfather being a 12 year old drummer boy marching in front of the troops, and caring for those wounded in battle. Minnesota had recently joined the Union but had a hefty percent of its population serving in the Union Army. Sibley

County also had many serving in the army before many townships were even organized.

Two of our long time members passed away recently; Nelson Norman Ph.D., of San Diego CA at age 97 and Roman Jaus, 88, formerly of Gibbon. Both had roots in Sibley County going back nearly 150 years. I was honored to know both of these two knowledgeable and articulate guys. Our condolences go out to their families.

The newsletter is a little late and my piece is a little short due to my vacation and some family health care things that needed to be attended to.

Celebrate the 4th of July, fly the flag, tell your family and friends what a wonderful country we live in and be grateful for the freedoms we have in our great country.

Rommie



(Continued from page 1)

Participants for the state contest. Winners were chosen to prepare exhibits to be sent to the state seed contest in St. Paul. This state competition was the beginning of state competition for 4-H clubs. Several years later Erickson was selected by the state to be the leader of youth and then 4-H clubs were organized.

Erickson served another term as superintendent of schools. He continued to work on a plan to involve the students from all 100 country schools in Douglas County. They were brought together in a countywide competition at the 1907 Alexandria Street Carnival in October. All rural schools were closed that Monday so the students would be able to attend. Exhibits included crops, gardening, penmanship, fancy work and drawings. The winners earned the right to send their exhibit to the State Industrial Contest at St. Paul.

Nationally Erickson was not credited to be the first who started this type of club. A.B. Graham started a youth program in Clark County, Ohio in 1902. His club is credited as the birth of the 4-H program in the United States. The club was called "The Tomato Club" or the "Corn Growing Club." From 1905 to 1914, clubs were started in nearly all states. By 1912 they were already called 4-H clubs.

When Congress passed the Smith-Leaver Act in 1914 and created the Cooperative Extension Service within land-grant institutions, it included work of various boys' and girls' clubs involved with agriculture, home economics and related subjects. The Act effectively nationalized the 4-H organization.

The idea of using a four-leaf clover for an emblem is credited to O. H. Benson, Wright County Superintendent of Schools in Iowa. He dropped by for a visit at a one room school house near Clarion, IA. As he left, the students were outside for recess. They presented him with seven four-leaf clovers they had just picked. At the next school fair he awarded the participants with clover pennants and pins.

Today the official 4-H emblem, adopted in 1924, is a green four-leaf clover with a white H on each leaf standing for Head, Heart, Hands and Health. White and green are the 4-H colors. The white symbolizes purity and the green represents growth.

Sibley County's 1918 Extension Annual Report mentions "Boys and Girls Clubs." Six clubs were organized at that time with a membership of 93. Special prizes were offered for baby beef and pig feeding contests. Four canning clubs were formed. Poultry contests, garden, sewing and bread making projects were added to the program during the next few years.

Club activity came to an abrupt halt in 1922 when Extension work in the county was discontinued. A small group of farmers protested to the county commissioners that Extension cost too much money. The appropriation was rescinded and Extension did not return to the county until 1937.

During the absence of Extension, several attempts were made to conduct youth programs. Local clubs operated in various places in the county. The two known clubs were the Lone Star 4-H Club in Transit Township, organized in 1927 and a small club in the Green Isle area started by Leonard Connelly in about 1928, when he

came home from Ag School at the University

Continuous 4-H work in the county started when the Sibley County Holstein Association made plans to sponsor a "calf club" for the county. The association had exhibited a 10 animal Holstein herd at the Minnesota State Fair in 1930. So much interest developed in this project that plans were made to sponsor a calf club in the county. At the association meeting of November 3, 1930, it was voted to award \$25 for prizes in Holstein calf work and to meet with the county fair board to obtain additional prizes. In February 1931, Helmer Quist of Lafayette and Alfred Lieske of Henderson were asked to act as leaders and to get enrollment blanks and 4-H litera-

ture. The first club, The Happy Go Getters, was organized by Alfred Lieske on May 3, 1931. 4-H members, parents



Scene of a typical local 4-H club meeting. The tradition of displaying an American Flag along with the 4-H Flag was used by all clubs throughout the years



Photo taken at the first meeting of "The Happy Go Getters" – May 3, 1931.

and other family members came to the John Olson farm near Arlington. Wilbert Olson was elected to be the club's president and Lucille Mueller was the first secretary-treasurer. The club included members from the entire county. Present at the meeting were: Ray Henke, Alvin and Ray Meffert, Lucille Mueller, Harold Nagel, and Evelyn, Wilbert and Caroline Olson of Arlington; and Art Lindorff, Fredrick and Walter Lieske, and Arnold and Karl Blaessing of Henderson. Other members from Gibbon and Winthrop also joined the club that first year; among them were Marvel Jaus and Edith Sallstrom.

The club was formed according to the by-laws of the Holstein Breeders Association. The only project that first year was a Dairy Calf. Helmer Quist was the main leader and Alfred Lieske his assistant. One member was sent to the state fair...perhaps it was Marvel Jaus as Helmer Quist remembers her having a champion calf.

4-H Club work continued to be under the sponsorship of the Holstein Association from 1935-1937. A committee appointed by the Association went before the

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county commissioners to seek financial aid for 4-H club work, but was unsuccessful in its first try. The committee met with the board again and was allowed to set up a committee of three to take charge of and disburse money appropriated by the county board for 4-H activities.

In 1934 Paul Winkels and A. J. Lind from the West end of the county and J. J. Olson and A. G. Lieske from the east were appointed to take charge of club work.

Extension work returned to the county on January 5, 1938 when the county board of commissioners appropriated \$1,500 for the support of Cooperative Extension work in agriculture and home economics in Sibley County. No time was wasted. Dwight Garner was hired as agricultural agent the same day. Club agent Dorothy Ann Cretney started work the same year.

When the county agent began work January 1, 1938 there were four clubs in Sibley County. The names of these clubs were: Arlington Conquerors, Gibbon Gophers, Jolly Juniors and Gaylord Willing Workers. In 1939 five new clubs were organized namely, Henderson Live-wires, Grafton Merrymakers, Moltke Happy Hustlers, Rush River Willing Workers and Green Isle Hustlers. Three hundred and eight members were enrolled in 1938 compared to 70 in 1937.

Projects offered in 1938 were baby beef, purebred baby beef, bread, cake, canning, clothing, corn, dairy calf, colt, farm accounts, thrift, and poultry. Sheep, fruit, garden, home beautification, junior leadership, meal planning, room furnishing, and potatoes were some of the projects offered. Activities were health, conservation, and safety. Eighteen adult and 17 junior leaders served the nine clubs. Handbooks, instructions and records were offered through the Extension Service.



Anna Mae Beliveau shows the ribbon she received at the fair for her first year clothing project. No doubt she is wearing the dress she made sometime in the 1940's.

Available statistics in the following chart reveal the number of 4-H members enrolled in the county, number of organized clubs, and total number of exhibits at the county fair.

Year	Clubs	Members	Fair Exhibits
1918	6	93	
1921			75
1937	4	70	
1938	9	308	335
1940	15	303	402
1946	14	298	500
1950	16	310	
1955	19	414	1140
1960	17	429	1100
1965	16	432	1321
1970	16	560	1850
1975	19	604	2315
1980	18	480	1661
2002	10		
2013	8	257	1171
2014	8	219	1175
2015	9	225	



1955 Dairy Showmanship Contest at the fair. First place went to Marvin Sprengeler, second to Richard Quast and third to Gene Rodewald.



Show blanket received by Charles Lundgren at a dairy show.



Steve Hebeisen's Entomology exhibit that received a Grand Champion ribbon.

A new 4-H building was erected in 1940. The building cost \$3080.89 and had exhibit space downstairs and sleeping quarters upstairs. When the horticulture building was removed, open class exhibits, except livestock, were also displayed in the 4-H building.

New projects and events were added over the years. Some of these were Demonstration Day, Share the Fun (Search For Talent), Job Interview, Community Pride, Style Revue (Dress Revue), Project Bowls, Dairy Judging and County Fair. Today the list of projects remains about the same as it was 20 years ago. The clothing project now allows members to exhibit a purchased garment or a constructed one. The most popular projects in Sibley County are Dairy, Photography, Fine Arts, Flower Gardening and Clothing.

The first 4-H Club banquet was held September 29, 1938 at Gaylord. A.J. Kittleson, State 4-H Leader was the speaker. This was a largely attended event and continued on through the years. The name was changed

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to Awards Night in 1969.

4-H reached peak enrollment during the 1970's. Those enrolled at that time still talk about their experiences. The monthly meetings continued to be a learning experience because they were conducted by the members under the guidance of adult leaders. All members were expected to present a demonstration pertaining to their project at these meetings. Farm families looked forward to them as there were few other activities for them to attend. Records were required in each of the projects enrolled in and had to be completed in order to exhibit at the county fair.

Some clubs have folded over the years and others have merged with another club. Members from folded clubs joined another one in their area. Today there are nine active clubs. They are: Arlington Conquerors, Blazin' West Stars, Good Cheer, High Island Clovers, Silver Spurs, Sundown Busy bees, Rush River Rushers, Transit Trailblazers and Weeping Willows.

Connie Rettmann is the current 4-H program Coordinator which is a part time position. Sue Bentz is the Extension Administrative Assistant. At this time the Ag agent position is vacant, but will be filled. They oversee the program and outreach to after school clubs targeting both city and rural youth.

The original 4-H pledge was written by Otis E. Hall of Kansas in 1918. Minnesota clubs added "for my family" to the last line. The current version follows.

**I pledge my head to clearer thinking,
my heart to greater loyalty,
my hands to larger service, and
my health to better living,
for my family, my club, my community, my country.**



Starting in 1980 the state asked for one banner per county depicting a slogan or theme to hang in the state 4-H building. Clubs made banners to exhibit at the county fair and the winner was sent to state fair. This one was made by the Gibbon Gophers 4-H Club in the 1990's.



Ann Petersen's swine exhibit at the fair.

4-H's research-based programs develop responsible young people – better prepared to lead in work and life. 4-H is the largest youth development organization in the United States with more than 6 million 4-H youth who live in urban and suburban areas as well as rural America.

Information sources: Sr. Perspective, July 2013. Wikipedia. *Continuous 4-H Work in Sibley County, The First 50 Years, 1931-1981*, edited by Ruth Klossner.

4-H CLUBS IN SIBLEY COUNTY AND YEARS OF ACTIVITY

*Current Clubs in 2015

*Arlington Conquerors	1931-
Gibbon Gophers	1931-
Merged with Moltke Happy Hustlers	
Jolly Juniors	1933-Disbanded after 1981
Gaylord Willing Workers	1937-43
Grafton Merrymakers	1938-Disbanded after 1981
Sibley County Hustlers (G.I.)	1938-39
Moltke Happy Hustlers	1938-
Merged with Gibbon Gophers	
Henderson Livewires	1938-Disbanded after 1981
Rush River Willing Workers	1938-40
Washington Lake Jumping Jacks	1939-48
*Sundown Busy Bees	1939
Sunnybrook	1939-43
Bismarck Jolly Juniors	1939-40
Green Valley Go Getters	1940-41
Transit Tip Toppers	1949-42
Happy Go Lucky	1940-41
Bismarck Troopers	1943-47
Green Isle Go Getters	1943-Disbanded after 1981
Jessenland	1943-Disbanded after 1981
Faxon Eagles	1943-Disbanded after 1981
Alfsborg Merrymakers (Be Square)	1944-Disbanded after 2002
Hearty Hustlers	1944-67
Transit Go Getters	1949-54
New Auburn Atoms	1946-Disbanded after 1981
Bismarck Fireflies	1947-56
*Good Cheer	1947
*Rush River Rushers	1948
The Forty-Niners	1949-55
Cloverleaf	1950-56
Lakeside	1951-60
High Island Hotshots (New Auburn Sparkplugs).	1952-55

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Part of the 4-H display now showing at SCHS. Please stop by some Sunday afternoon and spend a few hours viewing the display and looking through scrapbooks.

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Cornish Huskers	1952-Disbanded after 1981
Willing Workers	1954-61
*Weeping Willows	1956-
Gaybees (Magic 4-H)	1958-Disbanded after 1981
Washington Lakers	1961-2014
Lucky Clovers	1966-
Disbanded after 1981	
North Stars	1972-
Disbanded after 1981	
Country Cousins	1973-75
Eager Beavers	1973-Disbanded after 1981
Gibbon Stars	1978-79
*Blazin' West Stars – (Moltke Happy Hustlers & Gibbon Gophers merged)	
*High Island Clovers	
*Silver Spurs	
*Transit Trailblazers	

Notice the picture above

See the little guy in the lower right corner? He is exhibiting a one time 4-H member's family genealogy project. Center bottom of the picture does not show much of what is standing there. A visit to the museum will show that it is a plywood Holstein from the yard of the Brandt Dairy farm. Signs will explain what the cow is wearing and why paper ribbons were awarded.

See the edge of a big dark cabinet at the left of the photo? It contains many 4-H related items. Come and see what is way up on top; two special items, one is a former 4-H member's feathered taxidermy project.

Within this room can be seen results of long ago clothing projects; two of the garments were worn as bride's maids dresses and have matching head wear. There are photographs and newspaper clippings of dress reviews at the county fair. A very brown and fragile corsage worn for a dress review in the 1950s is part of the display!

The items mentioned are samples of what is in the parlor. The music room adjoins the parlor and has club and personal scrapbooks to be viewed. A large "quilt" wall hanging in this room has squares for each of the active clubs when it was made. Two ribbon winning entomology projects are in this room also.

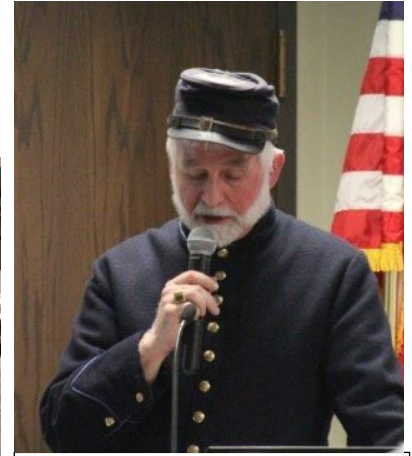
Please come, enjoy seeing and celebrating the efforts of members and leaders of Sibley County 4-H clubs through the years.



Wal-Mart and SCHS has greeters, but ours are not old!

We saw you at the

ANNUAL MEETING



Program narrator was Steve Briggs. The participants in April 2015 SCHS Annual Meeting, topic, *Remembering Civil War Connections to Sibley County*. Photo and captions on following page.





Eddie Reimer Spoke about his great grand father, Herman Reimer, Dryden Township. He enlisted in Co. H of the 7th Regiment in 1862. Served under Gen. Sibley in the Dakota War before his Regiment was sent to the South.



Sharon Byer Shimota A Byer decedent explained that the Beyer family of rural Gettysburg had the barn on their farm commandeered to be a Confederate Hospital. Teen age children then, her great grandparents heard Lincoln give his Gettysburg Address.



Rommie Petersen Explained that his great grand father, Conrad Eckert, was in New York when he entered military service. His land claim in Moltke Twp. led him to Minnesota after the war. Land claim research also produced his military record.



Charlie Woehler Told that his great grand father, Charles Woehler, also served in Co. H. He left his motherless baby daughter in Henderson when he went off to war. Later he established a farm in Kelso Twp. where he raised a large family.



Dwight Grabitske Talked about land records; showed patent issued to John A. Meyer for land in Arlington Township and the envelope it came in, addressed to the Federal Land Office in Henderson in 1860.



Kevin Pioske John Kuske, Kelso Twp., served in Brackett's Battalion, discharged in 1866. This cavalry unit was the longest serving Regiment of Minnesota troops. His burial site in the Rush River Cemetery did not have a veteran's marker until arrangements were made by the area's 4H club.



Almira Polzin Talked about the origins of Memorial Day, of New Auburn's G.A.R. Post 144 and of soldier Joseph Kirby who enlisted after he heard of the battle at Bull Run. Surgery to fix an old war wound caused his death in the 1890s. He was the Sibley County Judge for years.



Jerry Narr His great grand father, John Narr and great grand uncle Jacob Haefner, neighbors in Arlington Twp., both left families and farms behind when drafted to serve in Minnesota Regiments. Jerry had photos of both men.



Roger Just Told about the service of his great grand father, Jacob Geib, a disabled veteran of Brackett's Battalion. He was the last Commander of Henderson's W.S. Hancock G.A.R. Post 146, surrendered in 1916.



Al Rostberg, Larry Klundar and Lowell Nagel

The safe from the Sibley County Bank stood in the basement as long as I can remember. When the Winthrop HS picked up some shelving we had stored for a generation they moved the safe aside, but not quite where we wanted it. The crew above pried and pushed but it didn't budge. I would guess it weighed well over 1,000 pounds. It had wheels, but not castors. The guys went home, brought crowbars, and now the immovable object is in its new place, never more to be moved in my lifetime. I thought we should hide it so we could say your safe is secret with us.

THANKS

Thanks to this list of kind people who gave memorials or donated to our society. We are always grateful for your generosity.

Donations: Lynelle Brant, Joe & Yvonne Mullen, Stephen Olson, Brian Anderson, Frank Roux

Grants & Memorials: In Memory of Delores Messerli; Jerome & Mary Petersen, Arlene Busse, Dorothy Peterson

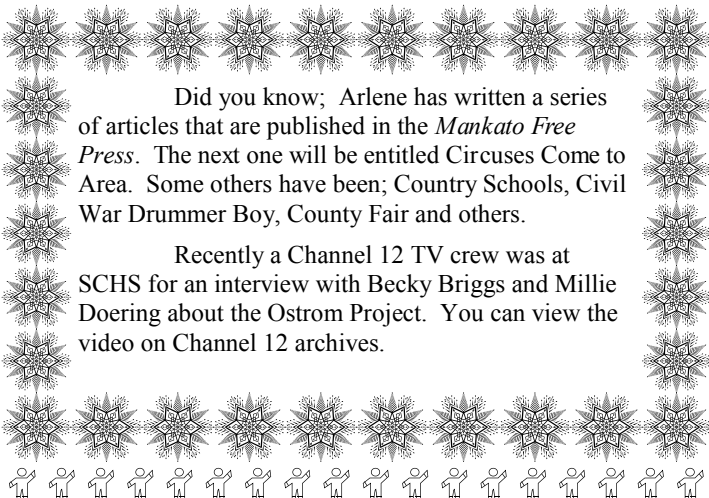
Think about this quote from an article by Al Batt in the Gaylord Hub; "I listened to his stories. It's important that someone listens. Each time I see an obituary in the newspaper I realize that a library had burned. The stories are gone."

You knew SCHS put out a book *Remembering Country Schools*. But did you know that we are down to less than 50 copies. Sales have been going well since it was available in January, a mere 5 months ago. The price is still only \$30 (\$27 for members). If you would like to order another copy for a friend or relative, time is running out. We don't think there will be any more printed because of the higher cost of ordering fewer copies.

WEBSITE

Check out our website. Steve is updating information regularly with photos and upcoming events, as well as past events.

Recently added section to the website; Postcards from Sibley County towns. If you have some oldies but goodies, scan and send them to our email address, and Steve will display them on the website. 2015 annual meeting photos have been posted.



FACEBOOK

By Roseann Nagel

SCHS now has a Facebook page to keep you up to date on our activities. Please LIKE us at Sibley County Historical Society and Museum to see information on past and current events, photographs and volunteer staff hard at work (and play). We will be using this medium as a communication tool to send out notices and reminders of upcoming events.

Don't miss out.....we want to be your Facebook Friend!!



NEW* AND RENEWED MEMBERS since our last newsletter

Keith & Paula Anderson*	Gaylord MN	Albert and Arline Karels	Henderson MN
Barbara Puhl*	Chester CA	Pat Keating	Oconomowoc WI
Chad Skare*	Henderson MN	David & Diane Laabs	Gaylord MN
Elaine Nelson*	Albert Lea MN	Fred W Lobitz	Hanburg MN
Dave & Dee Czech*	Arlington MN	Lou & Peg Longhenry	Carver MN
Howard & Frances Armstrong	Gaylord MN	James Mayer	Winthrop MN
Leo Berger	Henderson MN	John & Jacquelyn McCoy	Irvine CA
Lynelle G Brandt	Cumberland MD	Jim Mueller	Clearwater MN
Steve & Becky Briggs	Eagan MN	Joe & Yvonne Mullen	Minneapolis MN
Beth Christianson	Eagan MN	Diane D Neubarth	Hutchinson MN
Amy & George Coury	Torrance CA	Don & Gail Nuessmeier	Arlington MN
Lawrence & Phyllis Crawford	Gaylord MN	Doug & Iris Parrott	Gaylord MN
Colleen Deis	Gaylord MN	Susan Peters	Palm Bay FL
Phil & Connie Delzer	Minneapolis MN	Arlene & Pete Pinske	Gaylord MN
Terry & Janet Dempsey	New Ulm MN	John & Susan Plahn	Mound MN
Jeffrey Ducharme	Henderson MN	Roland & Denise Pogatchnik	St Paul MN
G. R Durenberger	Henderson MN	Carol & Lowell Pogatchnik	Finlayson MN
Dale & Patricia Ericson	Gibbon MN	Wayne & Louise Quast	Arlington MN
Marlys Gaucher	Arlington MN	Leon Stadtherr	Winthrop MN
Kenneth & Donna Gleisner	New Ulm MN	Pat Steckman	Henderson MN
Karrie Hanson	Westfield NJ	Lorraine Steeber	Palatine IL
Carol Jackson	Eden Prairie MN	Sally Webster	Winthrop MN
Carrie Johnson	Poolesville MD	Charlie Woehler	Arlington MN
Pat Judd	Waseca MN	Jeff & Joan Zumhofe	Winthrop MN

Membership Form RENEW NEW

NAME _____ SCHS TREASURER

ADDRESS _____ PO Box 206
 _____ Arlington MN 55307

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

Individual--\$20, Family-- \$25, Business-- \$50 Send to:

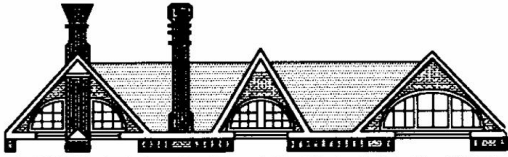
I would like to receive my newsletter by email (in living color!)

I would like to receive my newsletter by US Mail

Regular meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of the month, March thru November at the museum in Henderson. The public is invited. The museum is open to the public for tours on Sundays from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. June thru October and by appointment.

Send articles, announcements, photos and comments to the SCHS Newsletter, P.O. Box 407, Henderson, MN 56044 or Email: schs1@frontiernet.net

Check your due date on the mailing label.
 Membership dues are as stated on the form. Please use it to renew your subscription or pass it along to anyone who is interested.



SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD

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Sibley County Fair Time!

Ask any 4-H'er and they will tell you. . . . it's almost FAIR TIME. We hope you are getting ready too, to come to the fair, that is. It's a FREE fair this year. The only charge will be if you wish to drive onto the fair grounds; a parking sticker will be needed.

Our plans for our fair exhibit are not yet complete but will involve making butter and other food demonstrations. Details, with times of demonstrations, will be in area newspapers and the Sibley County Fair newspaper that comes out in a couple of weeks.

We'll have some "mystery" items to identify and we'll bring some "Country School" books as well. We don't have many books left, so if you want one you better get it soon.

See you at the Sibley County Fair in Arlington, JULY 29-AUGUST 2. We are located in the former Cub Scout building, next to Porky's Ham House.



Because we need all the help available at the fair, the museum at Henderson will NOT be open on Sunday, August 2.