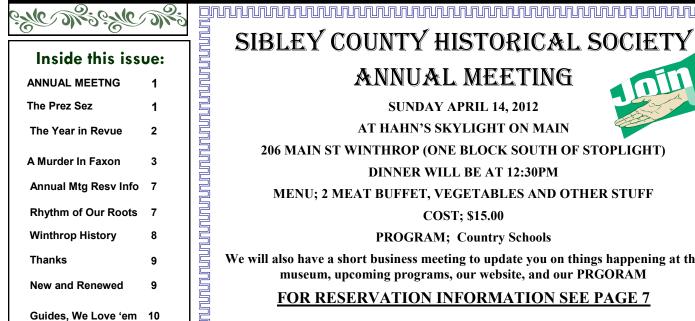




Henderson, Minnesota 56044 Ph: (507)248-3434

MARCH 2013

Volume 18, Issue 1



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SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIET

ANNUAL MEETING

SUNDAY APRIL 14, 2012

AT HAHN'S SKYLIGHT ON MAIN

206 MAIN ST WINTHROP (ONE BLOCK SOUTH OF STOPLIGHT)

DINNER WILL BE AT 12:30PM

MENU; 2 MEAT BUFFET, VEGETABLES AND OTHER STUFF

COST; \$15.00

PROGRAM; Country Schools

We will also have a short business meeting to update you on things happening at the museum, upcoming programs, our website, and our PRGORAM

FOR RESERVATION INFORMATION SEE PAGE 7



Calendar of Events

Check our website for 2013 programs. The next issues of the newsletter will have the programs listed, also page 8.

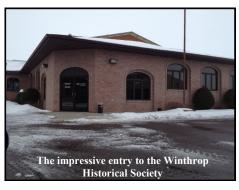
- Check website for details
- May 28 7PM New Auburn City Hall, Kathy Ringo
- If you have suggestions or comments on upcoming events Contact Judy Loewe 507-248-3345 Calendar Subject to Change.



The Prez Sez by Jerome Petersen



It is time for our annual meeting and it will be held in Winthrop. Mayor David Trebelhorn will giving us a lesson on the history of Winthrop. Karen and Zylpha are also instrumental in getting their town's historical society up and running and will tell us about its beginnings. It was included on one of our summer tours a couple of years ago, and it will be open after our annual meeting on April 14th. They will also tell about the St.



John's School in Bismarck, sometimes called the German School. They have a short PowerPoint presentation

Our Country School Project is in full swing. Dorothy Peterson is Commander-In-Chief. She has gathered a trove of pictures and other historical country school items. We have had numerous interviews with people around the county and surrounding area sharing their experiences. I visited with Edgar Kiecker of New Ulm.

(Continued on page 4)

2012 IN REVUE

By Marie Main

Approximately 1300 people were reached at the Museum, County Fair and Schools by volunteers Sibley at County Historical Society in 2012. Countless more were reached by Newsletter and Website.

Visitors came from the states of Virginia, Wisconsin, Colorado, Florida, Tennessee, Montana and Minnesota plus the countries of Sweden, India, Venezuela, Brazil and Canada.

Much "behind the scenes" work must be done before we are ready to welcome these visitors. Because we did not decorate for Christmas at the close of 2011, work could be started immediately on a long neglected task of sorting our many items of clothing stored throughout our building. Sharon Shimota, RuthAnn Buck and Mary Petersen undertook this job. All boxes were opened and, non-accessioned items were removed. All were labeled, and repacked with approved insect control.

We co-sponsored with the Joe Brown Society, a Swedish presentation at the New Country School on May 6. Children from 6 to 12 years old sang and performed skits in Swedish and English. Arlene Busse decorated the serving tables beautifully and special cookies were made by our members. Over 100 were in the audience and choir.

To get ready for our traditional opening on Memorial Day, Arlene Busse, Marie Main and Mary Petersen with the help of ladies from the DAR worked for many Tuesdays.

The theme for the 2012 season was *Summer in the Park*, commemorating Gaylord's City Park being accepted into the National Register Of Historic Places. Our many mannequins wore dresses from the 20s, golf clothing, picnic attire and wedding clothes. As usual, Dorothy Peterson did a great job of signage and Sharon Shimota was busy retrieving boxes from the attic and bedrooms upstairs.

Pete and Arlene Pinske came to install the decorative spindles. Pete turned the dozens of walnut spindles on the lathe, and donated his time, labor and material to restore the fireplace and breakfront. They have been gone for many years.

Lowell Nagel remodeled the gun room. He removed an old plywood cleaning closet, and boxed in the area to accommodate the new shelves that many of our county newspaper are stored on.

A display of Gibbon Memorabilia to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the town was completed by Marie Main. It was finished in time for the Memorial Day opening. The museum was open every Sunday through the end of October. From June through August it was also open on Tuesday evening when the Classic Car Rollin was happening. Marie Main recruited guides for Sundays and other special days we were open. Sharon Haggenmiller arranged for tours of special groups that requested a tour. These groups were; Arlington Garden Club (14), Model T Club (31), Cognizance Club of Gaylord (8), Sibley County

Thrivent Group (65), DAR Ladies (20) and the Car Club (18 cars and 34 people). Sharon Haggenmiller and Holly Hajes went to the Gaylord School and brought many museum arti-



facts with them to show students. The season ended with Park Elementary School (110) students of LeSueur spending the morning at our facilities. Guides were Sharon Haggenmiller, Marie Main, Al and Diane Rostberg, JoAnn and Jessica Heinz.

In November all the summer clothes and decorations were quickly stored away and Christmas came to the museum with the help of many. Sharon H. and Judy put up the outdoor greens and bows. Sharon Shimota made the house shine with the traditional candle lights in all the windows. Arlene Busse, Marie Main and Mary Petersen decorated with fur coats, carolers, a Christmas morning display in the parlor with mannequins and a Christmas Tree in the parlor decorated by Ray and Gisela Meyer.

Our program and open house, A Grand Old House Filled With Gifts, was held on December 30th. Art and Barb Straub played piano music of the late 1800s and led a sing-a-long. Gaylord Royal Ambassadors; Kathryn Templin, Morgan Setterman and Ashley Templin told the story, The Gift of the Magi. Steve and Becky Briggs told about three artifacts from our collection; Adam Buck's Civil War Sword, sleigh bells, and the Leeman Tea Set. Steve wore an authentic Civil War Uni-

(Continued on page 3)





Branstyn Peterson and Kyle Blood on the left. Liz Kuphal posing by a mequin wearing clothing Liz wore as a child. below.





(Continued from page 2)

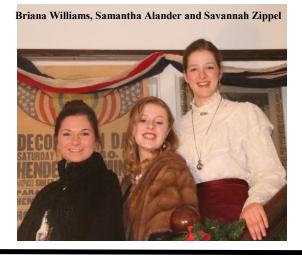
form worn by his brother in two movies; Dances With Wolves and



Harriet Traxler

Glory. Dorothy Peterson's grandsons (Branstyn Peterson and Kyle Blood) played a piano duet. Henderson Royalty; Savannah Zippel played mandolin, Samantha Alander played piano and Briana Williams

read a poem. Coffee, cider and cookies, made by members of SCHS, were served by Gloria Sinell, Mary Petersen, Arline Karels, Liz Kuphal and Diane Rostberg. Millie Johnson welcomed people at the sign in book where a drawing of a year's membership was given. Sharon Haggenmiller and Marie Main announced the programs. Marie Main made the arrangements for the presenters. The program was presented at 2:00, 3:00 and 4:00.





A MURDER IN FAXON

Putting pen to paper and writing the story, "A Murder In Faxon", which is based upon a true story, began many years ago when, as a teenager, I first read the old yellowed newspaper clippings from the Sibley County Independent. I discovered the clippings, tucked away for safe keeping, within the

Michael Collins, the man who had been murdered and written about in the newspaper clippings in 1891.

Michael Collins happen:

Michael Collins happen:

Michael Collins happen:

When

February Sheriff
When and his deputy, a grandfather and Michael's grandson was my god-father. My parents
Dretchko and his del Jim and sisters grew up on the Michael Collins homestead. So there
Johnny Mullen, the side always was a close connection to the story.

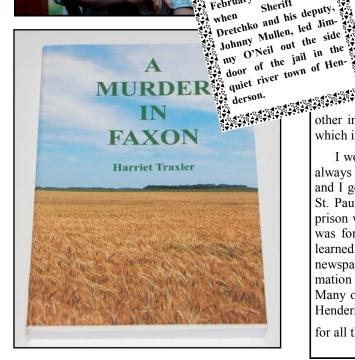
The newspaper article

The newspaper article

Minnesota's Stillwater State Prison for the murder of Michael Collins on his farm. The O'Neil and Collins farms bordered each other in Faxon township and the murder itself happened along that border which is along State Highway 25 about 8 miles east of Green Isle MN.

I would often run across that article over the years and read it again and always wondered about it and the story that went with it. My sister Margaret and I got busy and did a lot of research at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul where we had discovered that many files from the old Stillwater prison were stored. I was especially interested in how long "Life in Prison" was for Mr. O'Neil and what happened to him while in prison. What we learned made for an interesting story. Local newspapers and the prison's own newspaper also provided us with a lot of information. With all the information that we found I was able to turn the story into a historical novel. Many of the names we found are still familiar names from the area around Henderson. I hope that I have done the story justice. It was truly a sad affair

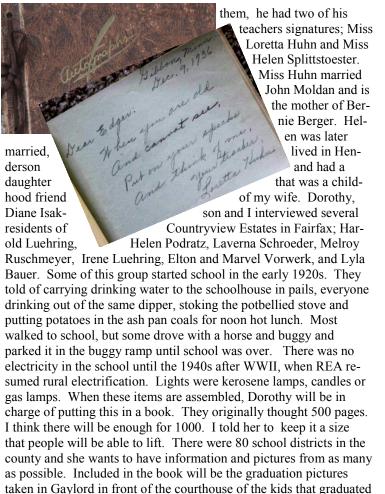
Harriet Traxler for all those involved.



(Continued from page 1)

He attended District 62, as well as St. Peter's School in Moltke. He had his report cards, his graduation celebration in Gaylord and the all school photo, his 8th grade graduation diploma and an autograph book. How many of us remember those? In addition to kids signing





Our Holiday Celebration was successful. Art and Barb Straub led a sing-a-long program that also included presentations by the Gaylord and Henderson Royalty. The weather cooperated this year. Several years ago it was 25 below zero on the day of our presentation. On the way down I told Mary that if I wasn't working, I would not have

from the 8th grade and made it to that ceremony.

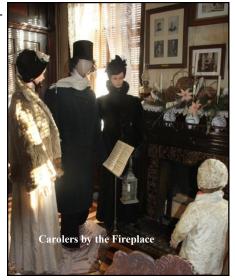
gone out in such weather. No one will come! As it turned



out we had a big turnout. And one of the treats that day was homemade ice cream.



I want to men tion a couple young gentlemen from the Minnesota Country School; Tyler Bloom and Rune Berg. We have run into technical problems a few times that are insurmountable. Our group of senior citizens looks at each other and scratch our heads. If only we knew some curse



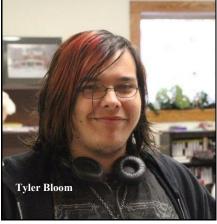
words, we would use them. We call Tyler and he makes the systems hum again. I'm sure many of you know the helpless feeling when something goes awry with the computer. We had router problems, network problems, printer problems, computer and cell phone problems. Our computers are talking to each other again. Dr. Tyler Bloom makes house calls, and he is easier to understand than someone

(Continued on page 5)



(Continued from page 4) from India. Last time we called he was busy and Rune was our aide.

Two of our members have written books that are promoted in this edition. Harriet Traxler, yes *that* Harriet, the Barn Lady, did extensive research on the murder of her ancestor. She pored over the court records, the Henderson newspapers (the site of the



trial) and did research in the Stillwater Prison Records. She has it all in her new book. An interesting point in the book mentions Cole Younger, the infamous Northfield Bank robber, who started the prison newspaper and became acquainted with the subject in Harriet's book. (Younger was part of the Jesse James Gang) Not only is she a superb photographer, but an author. She has put together other books. *County Kerry Ireland* is a nice combination of her photographic and writing skills. It is a photographic tour she took with her sisters. Don't let me forget to mention she is a sooooper nice person. He husband Joe is a Packer fan, but I won't mention that here. He has good taste in wives, but we have to question his team picking choices.

I enjoyed Dean's book very much. I have known Dean since he was a baby. He was a classmate of our daughter at GFW. I have the highest regard for the Tautges family. I enjoyed his book because of the story it told, but also because I knew many of the people in it. As you read it you get a real feel for the trials and tribulations people go through dealing with bad times, along with the good.

He devotes a chapter to the Sjogren family, and chronicles the life and death of Art, and his wife Alice, who died in a terrible blizzard, their bodies found frozen the next day along the road. I remember that tragic event. Their son Lowell was a friend of mine

and a classmate of my brother at Gibbon High. Lena (Neyers) Rathke, Dean's cousin, designed the cover/jacket. She is also a Gibbon Graduate. Lena is another one of those people who have much more than their share of talent. When she was a high school student, we took an oil painting class together. She has an artful eye. I made some fabulous oil paintings too. My wife said I should give them to my mother. She liked my mother that much!! ...that she would deprive



herself of those masterpieces. I think my mother kept them safe in the closet.

I asked Harriet and Dean to tell about their books at our annual meeting. Maybe you can get an autographed copy that day.

A few times each year we have a potluck party for our regular volunteers, now dubbed A Porch Party. We invite a few others who have contributed to our efforts. I enjoy these parties. Some say we are too busy to take a day off. Maybe it's like prayer, if you are too busy to pray, you are too busy.



If you are too busy to party then... The tables are covered with an array of interesting foods and desserts. Mostly we have finger food, but in December it was a soup party, plus we always have wine. One thing we do not have; hotdish.



Minnesota Historical Society asked permission to reprint a couple pieces, the report of the WASP program and the From Illinois to Minnesota Territory, from our newsletter, and we happily allowed them to do that.

We had such a successful year that we decided all would keep their job and, in spite of sequestering, we would not get a pay cut. You cannot cut the pay when there is no pay. But you can get a 20% pay increase without affecting the budget.





Early History of Winthrop, Minnesota A little history of Winthrop

Eagle City, Minnesota 1858 - 1881

History of the Winthrop Community must begin with the early settlement known as Eagle City. The first records available



The Eagle City Post Office is on display at SCHS. The display card has this information; Established by Michael Cummings, who had a saloon and hotel. This post office was in the saloon. It was used by Erick Olson who homesteaded on the Winthrop Town Site. Donated by Helmar Lind

show that there was a settlement known as Eagle City as early as 1858. This was the same year that Minnesota became a state. Records substantiate the location to have been approximately one-half mile south of the present location of Winthrop. Even before the Eagle City post office was established in 1858, the military trail from Henderson to Fort Ridgeley had been a route across this area.

Winthrop, Minnesota 1881

With the arrival of the railroad in 1881, growth of the town was assured. New settlers arrived, some to make homes in the rural areas, others to settle in the town and start business ventures there. Winthrop, so named by E. A. Campbell for Governor John Winthrop of Massachusetts Bay Colony, was to continue to grow in the years that followed. He has been called Father of Winthrop. He settled on a farm in Transit Township and became postmaster of the Eagle City post office located there.

School Started 1883

Records state that the first school in the Winthrop vicinity was located in Transit Township. Children in this area attended school there until 1883 when a school was organized in the village of

Winthrop. The first school opened for a two-month session on the second Monday in July, 1883. This was held in Schilling's Furniture store on Main Street. In 1884 a two-room school house was built. This building was located on Third Street & Carver.

The village was incorporated in 1884 with E. Miller as President of the council and Mr. Driesbach as Recorder.

The First Swedish Lutheran Church - 1884

In December of 1884 a request for use of the school

house for holding services was granted. It is a part of the history of the Winthrop School that it served as the meeting house of

Winthrop's First School, 1884

the Lutheran Church in 1884 and 1885; in later years the building became the Methodist Church. Construction of a new church began in the summer of 1885. It was a white



frame building, lighted by kerosene lamps with electric lights installed in 1894.

The Winthrop News 1887

The first issue of the *Win-throp News* was released on December 17, 1887 (Vol. 1, No.1). In the first issue of *The Winthrop News*, mention

is made of the need for a bank in Winthrop.

State Bank of Winthrop, Minnesota

On June 8, 1888 the State Bank of Winthrop was founded, with E. A. Campbell as President. The bank at that time was on the first floor of the Ostrom Building. After three (3) years the bank built the structure on Carver Street. The bank was there until 1915 when the building on Second Street was completed and the bank facilities were moved to the new location (now occupied by First Point Pharmacy, formerly Hanson Drug). Later, the bank was moved to the corner of Second Street and Main, which is the present location of the Winthrop State Bank.

Ostrom Building



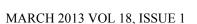
Carl J. Ostrom was the photographer (58 years) in Winthrop from the 1800's until his death. He also had studios in Waverly and Gibbon. Today, the Sibley County Historical Society continues to search for names matching the pictures of people in Ostrom's negatives.

L. J. Larson and Company

This firm was started in 1886 as a partnership consisting of P. P. Quist, N.A. Lilyquist and C. J. Larson. This partnership did not last long and after a few years, the sole ownership was handled by C. J. Larson and members of his family. C. J. Larson was never very active in the operation of the firm but rather the firm was handled by his son, L. J. Larson.

The firm operated a general hardware store furnishing plumbing services and a tin shop. In the early days it also

(Continued on page 8)





SCHS ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION

PLEASE SEND YOUR RESERVATIONS TO; **JEROME PETERSEN PO BOX 25**

GIBBON MN 55335-0025

MAKE YOUR CHECK TO;

SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OR JUST **SCHS**

THE COST IS \$15 PER PERSON PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATION BY APRIL 8, 2013 THERE WILL BE A SHORT MEETING AFTER OUR MEAL A PROGRAM AND SEVERAL DRAWINGS FOR PRIZES

Our annual meeting will be in Winthrop this year at Hahn's new place, Skylight on Main (the former VFW Club) in Winthrop. Some items on the program will be the authors of the two books previewed in this newsletter telling us about the books. We will also hear of the beginning of the city of Winthrop, formerly known as Eagle City, along the Henderson to Fort Ridgely Trail. Winthrop has their own Historical Society and it might be open for tours after our meeting.



RHYTHM OF OUR ROOTS

After eight years of family and local history research, and often being humbled by both what I learned and the task of writing itself, I'm excited to share my self-published book, "Rhythm of Our Roots". The hardcover book focuses largely on how my grandfather, John Tautges (1912-2009) came to arrive in the Gibbon-area in 1935 and the unusual events that led to his meeting my grandmother, Cecelia Gitter (1908-2003). Most of the book takes place in rural Nicollet and Sibley Counties between 1935 and 1968, and includes a name index with over 100 people, most of who lived (or currently live) in the local area.

I graduated from GFW High School in 1989 and have always enjoyed writing. Rhythm of Our Roots, which was inspired by the death of my father, Harvey Tautges, in 2004, relies on old journals, newspaper clippings, documented local history, and the vivid memories of my grandfather. Using this factual foundation, I took some creative license to recreate dialogue and weave local history with family history. Based on feedback I've heard so far (including from your Prez), I believe anyone interested in local history who is also rooted in the Minnesota farm fabric should enjoy the book.

For a copy of Rhythm of Our Roots send \$35 (plus \$5 shipping) to:

Dean Caldwell-Tautges 3144 Kentucky Avenue South Saint Louis Park, MN 55426 deanct@earthlink.net.

Supplies are limited.



Sisters Cecelia and Monica Gitter greet a friendly goat at a wedding reception (circa 1930)

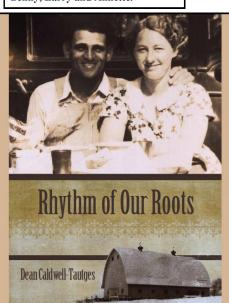


The children of John and Cecelia Tautges pose before their new 1951 Pontiac Chieftain: (L-R) Harvey, Genny, Larry and Annette.













(Continued from page 6)

had a very active seed department.

The Winthrop Creamery, 1896



As the homesteaders came and the rural areas surrounding the town became more settled, it soon became evident that the land was well suited to grain farming, pasture land and dairying. Several skimming stations were organized and each station did its own hauling of cream to the main creamery in Winthrop.

The Winthrop Canning Company



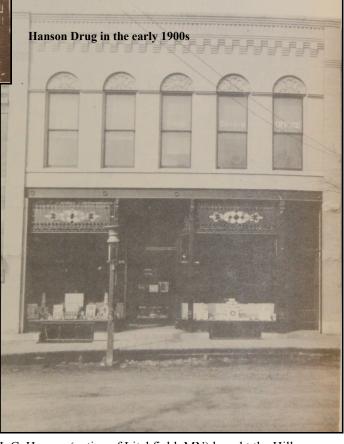


Organized in 1905 by John S. Hughs. The first corn pack was made that fall. The February 8, 1906 Winthrop News stated: "All farmers who are desirous of contracting with the Winthrop

Canning Company for growing corn or peas this spring, are to call at the L. J. Larson & Company Store where Mr. Abbott or Mr. Bergquist will be found and arrangements can be made." The Minnesota Valley Canning Company purchased the plant

in 1930. Halvor Hagg became plant manager. Other employees who contributed to the success of the canning plant were Clarence Scherff, Lydia Spaeth, Henry Hoaglund, Roy Johnson, "Happy' Bomm, Urban Johnson, Edward Hagg, Waldo Hall, and Norville Stuber.

Hanson's Drug Store



J. C. Hanson (native of Litchfield, MN) bought the Hilleman Store and started business in 1899. The store was then located on the west side of Carver Street (now Eagles' Landing Bar). Carl Hanson, a son, joined the business in 1931. In 1968 Carl's son, Ron, took over the ownership of the business.

Since 1905, many new businesses in Winthrop have been established and continue to grow and prosper. This early history was a mere start for things to happen in a rural Minnesota city called Winthrop.





THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

Thanks to the following donors to our Society since the last newsletter; Joe and Yvonne Mullen, Francis and Marie Thurn, a grant from Thrivent, Lois and Kenneth Ahntholz, Judith Monkkonen, Henderson Township United Fund, Gaylord Cognizance. Memorials for Pat Sauter (Mother-in-law of Sharon Shimota) Dorothy Peterson, Jerome and Mary Petersen, Arlene Busse, David and Marie Main, Jean Schuetz, also friends and relatives of Pat Sauter.



NEW* AND RENEWED MEMBERS

NEW* AND RENEWED MEMBERS		
Mary Beth Egesdal	Gaylord MN	
Earl & Marjorie Renneke	LeSueur MN	
Steve & Becky Briggs	Eagan MN	
Ruth Ann Buck	Arlington MN	
Karen Erickson	Minneapolis MN	
Marjorie L Johnson*	St Peter MN	
Arden & Marie Kreft	Arlington MN	
Jeff & Amy Franke	Gaylord MN	
Davis Biebl	Gibbon MN	
Steve Grosam	Gibbon MN	
Herbert Poncin	Nicollet MN	
Marjorie Matthiae	Gaylord MN	
Steve Kleist	Richfield MN	
Barbara Gustafson	Savage MN	
Esther Grischkowsky	Rochester MN	
Mildred Doering	Edinia MN	
Philip Delzer	Minneapolis MN	
Roger Just	Henderson MN	
August & Kathleen Kaufman	Henderson MN	
Terry L Goettl	Mankato MN	
Lois & Ken Ahntholz	Ankeny IA	
Judith Monkkonen	Colver City CA	
Eugene Hackert	Sleepy Eye MN	
Jo Ann M Heinz	Henderson MN	
Eric C Hanson	Chesapeake VA	
Vernon & Renee Ruschmeyer	Dassel MN	
Robert Fischer	Gibbon MN	
Rose S Knight	Colorado Springs CO	
Terry & Janet Dempsey	New Ulm MN	
Darlene Weckwerth*	Arlington MN	
Jeff & Joan Zumhofe*	Winthrop MN	
Roger H Kottke*	Alexandria MN	

Membership Form

I would like to become a member of the Sibley County Historical Society.

NAME SCHS TREASURER

ADDRESS 49858 316 ST

Winthrop MN 55396-2038

PHONE _____

E-MAIL____

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



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.



ACHTUNG! ACHTUNG! We'RE ON THE WEB! ...NEW ADDRESS

http://sibleycountyhistoricalmuseum.com/





P.O. Box 407
Henderson, MN 56044
Phone: 507-248-3434
Email: schs1@frontiernet.net

SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD		
Jerome Petersen	President	
Dwight Grabitske	Vice-President	
Dorothy Peterson	Secretary	
Ray Meyer	Treasurer	
Sharon Haggenmiller	Curator	
Judy Loewe	Marie Main	
Millie Johnson	Sharon Shimota	
Ruth Ann Buck	Mary Petersen	





Dorothy Peterson

Ruth Ann Buck

MUSEUM GREETING AND GUIDING 2012

Our guides are some of the most important people in our organization. They are "on call" to meet and greet visitors when they come to the door of the museum. Their welcome sets the mood for the entire visit.

Signage has been placed on most of the artifacts. We have a history of the Poehler Family, the museum and our society that can be read if visitors are interested. We also have original Poehler Family photographs displayed in the dining room. We have printed information that can be referred as needed. Less experienced volunteers will be paired with someone having more experience.

For pre-arranged groups who plan to spend more time and want more information, our veteran guides will be called on to do the honors.

But if you can smile, love history and Sibley County, antiques, and like to meet interesting people, try greeting at your Sibley County Museum. Please call the museum at 507-248-3434 for more information. We would love to include you on our list of happy volunteers.

Millie Johnson

Gloria Sinell

Dorothy 1 eterson	Ruth / Hill Buck	Willie Johnson	Gioria Billeli
Marie Main	Sharon Shimota	Carmen Wigand	Sharon Haggenmiller
Arlene Busse	Ray Meyer	Judy Loewe	Liz Kuphal
Arline Karels	Gisela Meyer	Holly Harjes	Dwight Grabitske
Al Rostsberg	Mary Ellen Petersen	Doris Wigand	Rommie Petersen
Diane Rostberg	Lowell Nagel	Bonnie Nagel	Your Name!