

SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter ~ June 2020

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From the President:

A view from my front porch

Dear Friends,

As I write this letter, the Sibley County Historical Society/Museum is looking as beautiful as ever. The stately house still has manicured grounds with peonies in bloom and hydrangeas growing very quickly. Eileen Brandt, SCHS volunteer and Main Street Henderson gardener, has created colorful flower plantings adorning the sign and hanging baskets at the entrances. Delano Olfert is once again taking care

of mowing our lawn and doing a beautiful job. SCHS volunteer Lowell Nagel takes care of weeding and overseeing the building and grounds. Lowell's interest and passion is much appreciated. Board members and volunteers including Vicki Stock, Wendy Evenson, Mike Reinhardt, Judy Loewe and myself helped with Spring yard clean-up in preparation for the day we can open our doors to members and the public. While we were raking and weeding, a car pulled up along side of the driveway. It was volunteers Pat Steckman and Arlene Busse. It just so happened to be Arlene's birthday. What a pleasing surprise as we sang Happy Birthday Arlene. So, we have maintained some semblance of normalcy during our country's very trying times.

Our Board Meetings are happening on line via Zoom. Todd Sasse, our SCHS employee knows the collections better than anyone since he was part of the inventory grant team. Todd is completing the next phase by entering information into PastPerfect, a museum software program. To date, he has skillfully entered almost 5000 objects into PastPerfect. We are fortunate that Todd will be continuing this project until completion August 31.

I know how much we are all looking forward to the day when we can resume our Museum's programs and activities, which will continue to enrich our beloved community. In the meantime, please know how much I appreciate those dedicated individuals who have stepped forward to assist in getting us through this rough patch.

Stay safe and keep thinking the good thoughts.

Jeff DuCharme

FROM THE FILES: (excerpts from the June 2010 Newsletter)

SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS...

DEDICATION OF OUR NEW ADDITION

TA DAA

SUNDAY JUNE 27TH, 2010 2:00 PM

WE WILL HAVE A SHORT DEDICATION CEREMONY

Board of Directors:

President

Jeff DuCharme

Vice President

Vicki Stock

Secretary

Shirley Black

Treasurer

Tom Frauendienst

Directors

Joy Cohrs, Holly Harjes, Wendy Evenson, Eldrene Ebert, Mike Reinhardt

Inside this issue:

Spanish Flu Pandemic	2
A Black Pox Story	2
An Unsolved Mystery	2
Shorty & Flossie Miller	3
Notes from the Board	3
Battle of Iwo Jima	4
Corporal Charles W. Lindberg	5
May 1st	6
History After Dessert	6
A Chat with Don & Betty	6
SCHS Amazing Volunteers	7
Paid Memberships	7
Recycle or Not	7
Shop the Historical Society	8
Membership Form	8

Spanish Flu Pandemic in 1918-1919

Research Committee

The COVID-19 Pandemic seems even more devastating than the event over 100 years ago. The name came from the early illness of King Alfonso XII of Spain. The killer influenza had an estimated world wide death toll of 50 to 100 million with countless more, perhaps one-third of the world's population, ill but surviving. One survivor, US President Woodrow Wilson, became ill while in France attending the Paris Peace Conference. More American soldiers, 43,000, died from the flu then from military action or accidents during World War 1.

No number has been found for deaths of Sibley County residents. For a short time public gatherings were stopped, schools were closed. The Henderson history book, in the section on physicians, has the statement that Dr. Duclos... "hired a boy to drive his team...for days on end he slept more in the buggy than his bed."



A Black Pox Story

Research Committee

With emphasis on COVID-19 Virus and being sheltered at home you wonder about previous epidemics or pandemics. Stories passed on by Elsie Grewe Ebert's family came up for discussion.

As we looked through her family tree book we concentrated on cause of death for older generations. Some died from the Spanish Flu of 1918. She also had a Black Pox story. It is a short story but heartbreaking.

Elsie's grandparents were August Grewe and Emily Grochow Gruenwald. They lived just south of the village of Mountville and just west of St. John's Lutheran Church. They came to the area around 1860 and had nine children. A story that was passed on by descendants was the loss of two of their children to Black Pox.

Baby William was born in 1870 and died November 13, 1872 at the age of one year and 10 months. Because of the disease they were unable to have a funeral service. August decided to drive to Henderson himself to buy a casket. The next day, November 14, 1872, as he was hitching up the team to drive to Henderson to buy a casket mother Emilie came out to tell him to bring two caskets because Wilhelmine just died. She was six years old.

Both children were buried by their father without a funeral. There is no mention of the burial in the church records. Did he bury them in the church cemetery across the road from the farm? Or, did he bury them on the farm? Did he erect a marker made of wood and it rotted away? LeRoy Grewe, current owner of the Grewe farm does not know of any burial sites on the farm. He mentioned they plowed up a grave stone years ago and tossed it under the granary. This stone was checked out and no names appeared on it. County death records were checked to verify death dates which were correct, but place of burial was not mentioned. The records also state that the cause of death was small pox.

Black Pox is a form of small pox where the pustules burst to the inside which caused the spots to turn black.



An Unsolved Mystery

Collections Committee

J. A. Duclos, M.D. was in practice in Henderson from 1898 until ill health in the early 1940s caused his wife to sell the practice and move them to Oceola, Wisconsin.

The Collections Committee has recently received an eye glass case that the doctor used for his own glasses that he prescribed for himself. The case has his name and Henderson Minn. on the brown print cover. Inside is a paper label with "W. ZIMMERMAN" and "OPTOMETRIST, HUDSON, WIS." So, new lenses in old frames or a new pair must have been put into the old case by Dr. Zimmerman. The mystery is how did this empty case get back to Henderson?

Shorty and Flossie Miller—The Town Characters

Shorty and Flossie Miller were a very unusual couple living in Gaylord during the 1940's, 50's and 60's. They lived in a little house on the north west corner of the intersection of 2nd St. and High Avenue. Both of them were very short in height. Flossie was a thin, frail woman. Not a beauty queen but a heavy smoker.

Shorty drove a little old green 2-door coupe around town. The city hired him to park cars on July 4th. They gave him a cane and badge. He may have been a little over five feet tall, but getting this badge made him feel like ten feet. In other words, he was the "biggest" man in town. He was so proud of that badge.

One day Flossie was cleaning/washing some of his clothes in gas, possibly like dry cleaners would do. She disposed of the gas by pouring it down the hole in the outhouse. A while later Shorty went in the outhouse, sat down, lit a cigarette, tossed the match down below and was blown out.

The Miller's had pigs and chickens fenced in in their back yard. One day a pig got out. Flossie ran after the pig to catch it. Shorty follows Flossie with a butcher knife in hand. The towns' people thought for sure Shorty was after Flossie. They had missed seeing the pig go by.

During harvest Martin Kuphal hired him to help shock grain. He would come out to the farm wearing bib overalls to help and did a good job. He always drove that two-door coupe but painted it a different color each year using a paint brush.

Shorty was so proud of his large potatoes and carrots from his garden, that he would bring them to the courthouse to show them off. Shorty did have a temper and town's people liked to tease him. The more they teased the madder he got.

Flossie and Shorty both liked beer. She walked uptown to buy it and brought it home in a five-gallon pail.

At Christmas time Shorty put on a Santa Claus suit, got in his coupe and drove around town honking the horn. Everyone knew who he was.

The above stories are the combined memories of Marvin Kuphal, Doris Martens and Ruben Ebert.

Notes from the Board:

President Jeff welcomes Shirley Black as secretary for the Sibley County Historical Society and thanks outgoing secretary, Karen Klenk for her dedicated service to the SCHS. Karen is stepping down as secretary but will continue to be a volunteer.

As a result of the election held earlier the spring Holly Harjes and Joy Kohrs will remain on the SCHS Board. Thank you to all who submitted ballots and took part in the voting.

Sibley County Fair - Cancelled

The Sibley County Fair is an event that showcases the best of Sibley County. A place where fairgoers can come socialize with friends and family, a place where 4-Her's showcase their hard work and talents. The Sibley County Fair Board strives to make the fair fun, safe and memorable for all who attend. Last year we celebrated our 150th fair, and we would like to thank our sponsors, volunteers, exhibitors, vendors, entertainers and all who attended for helping to make the 150th Sibley County Fair such a great event.

The safety of everyone who attends the fair is important. With the current restrictions, rules and regulations, along with an uncertain future, the Sibley County Fair Board has made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 Sibley County Fair. The decision was not an easy one. The Fair means as much to us as a Fair Board as it does to you. We under-

stand that many are affected by this decision. We considered many options, but in the end, safety is our top priority.

Even though we will not be getting together to celebrate Sibley County in 2020, the Sibley County Fair Board will be looking to 2021. We will use the time to make improvements and plan for next year. The Fair is a tradition that will live on. We would like to thank everyone for your continued support. We thank our sponsors who, each year, help make the fair such a great event and encourage everyone to continue to support and shop our great local business.

We are all saddened by the cancelation of the 2020 Sibley County Fair but look forward to seeing everyone in 2021, where we will once again gather to celebrate Sibley County and the "Best Little Fair in Minnesota."

Sibley County Fair Board

Battle at Iwo Jima: 75th Remembrance

Roger and Holly Harjes

- ◆ February 19, 1945 to the end of May, 1945
- ◆ US bombed the island for 30 days, prior to attacking, to destroy all vegetation.

Mt. Suribachi was like an ant hill of tunnels and caves to conceal Japanese military. Volcanic ash meant three steps forward and one backwards. It was described as very hostile terrain with mines, caves, booby-traps. While United States Marines landed on sandy beaches, enemy soldiers protected their cave entrances.

Iwo's 36-day battle killed nearly 7,000 Americans, wounded more than 18,000 and killed 22,000 Japanese.

More than 450 US Navy ships surrounded the porkchop shaped island.

One of these ships was the USS Sibley APA 206 named after Sibley County because of the county's war support through war bond investments. Its mission was to transport Marines to shore for battle then return with the dead and wounded. A fleet of 30 boats each carried 36 fully equipped troops.

A Auxiliary indicating hospital facilities with a crew of 500 Navy

P Personnel for moving 1,500 Marines with equipment to battle

A Attack set with three types of guns for protection not that they would be first in a line for attack

Mid-morning on February 23, 1945, Corporal Charles W. Lindberg with 5 others made their way to the top of Mt. Suribachi. The Japanese had been building airstrips there; the Marines found a pipe on which to tie the American flag. Lindberg assisted. As the flag rose to signal Victory, the uproar of shouts and whistles from 450 + ships amazed those six Marines. Corporal Lindberg commented, "That was just a proud moment. I will never forget the feeling of it." This event was captured by Leatherneck photographer Sargent Louis R. Lowery. These pictures were delayed through military procedure.

When Washington, D. C. heard the news, they wanted to preserve this first flag as an indication of US capturing Japanese territory. Later that day, February 23, another group of Marines were sent to raise a larger flag. That was documented by Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal. The President acquired those photos and they immediately became the symbols of victory to promote War Bond Drives.

For the sake of history, Leatherneck photographer Lowery captured the original (smaller) flag coming down while the larger one went up. Ships circling the island blew whistles, sailors shouted: "It was like the whole island came alive to proclaim Victory." Rosenthal had been on the USS Sibley several days prior to taking his monumental photograph.

USS Sibley Navy crew narrated this information when they had their 1992 Reunion in Sibley County.



The original Iwo Jima flag that flew atop Mt. Suribachi. It was raised February 23, 1945 by the United States Marines. It is now at the United States Marine Corps Museum in Quantico, Virginia. Taken by Melinda Hall 2012

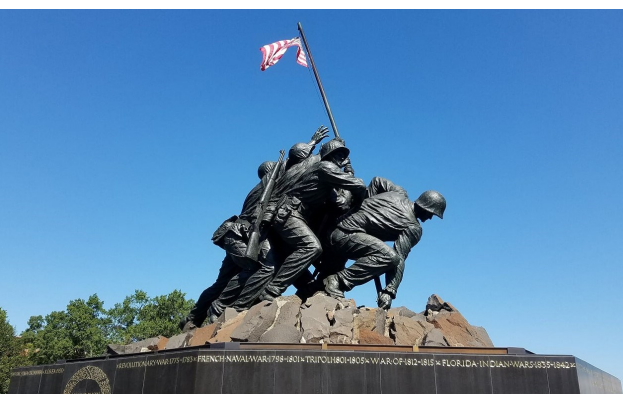


Photo by Diane Fraudentst

The story concludes first when the US government returned Iwo Jima to Japan, and second, Corporal Lindberg was at the unveiling of the D.C. Iwo statue; however, he sat near the rear and received no recognition. And when Marine Lindberg attended the Battle's 50th atop Mt. Suribachi, he needed a passport and Marine escort. (He did take some small American flags along!)

Chuck, the last survivor, and two others from the first banner returned home to everyday lives. Three of the six for the second banner survived to become national heroes promoting President FDR's War Bond Drives.

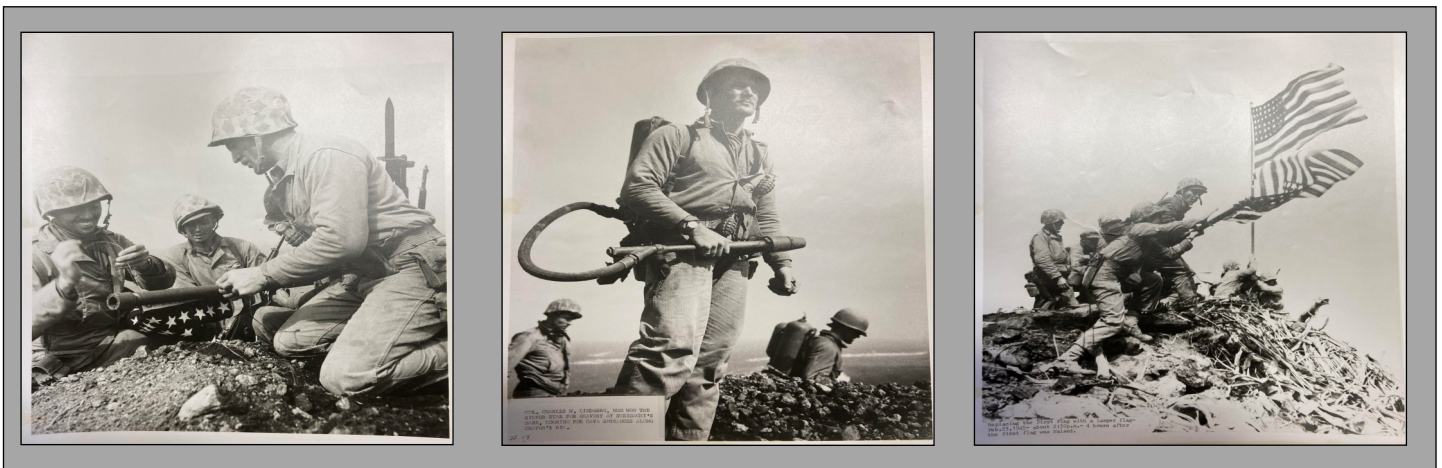
Corporal Charles W. Lindberg

Roger and Holly Harjes

Chuck was born 1920 in Grand Forks, ND. He died in 2006 and was buried at Fort Snelling with the military flyover and full escort from the Patriots. Chuck and his wife Vi resided in Richfield, MN. He was an electrician by trade. His retirement was spent traveling to tell his story of the Original Flag Raising on Mt. Suribachi.

Corporal Lindberg carried a 72-pound flamethrower and 5-gallon tank up the mountain. A quick 6 second napalm blast into a cave could kill up to 70 enemies at once. That was his job. He received a Silver Star Medal for his heroism.

Lindberg was in touch with Leatherneck's Lowery's wife to acquire original photos of their event. In 1945, Washington, D.C. only had the Associated Press photo of the second flag to move the war bond drives.



Our Minnesota Marine presented his story at Sibley East School, Arlington and had a telephone interview with Green Isle Charter School 6th graders. Chuck and Vi enjoyed cheese curds from Bongards. We stayed in touch with them till they both passed away. This has been the greatest honor we have had to be with them and learn his story.



USS Sibley Pharmacist Mate 3c Pat Murphy, San Clemente, CA, presented to the museum his alcohol lamp, syringe, spoon, bandage scissors and medical trays. The burner was used to prepare morphine in hot water for inoculations to the wounded. He administered medications and minor surgeries.



USS Sibley Signalman 2c Robert Collyer, Pueblo, CO, donated a unique lamp base to the museum. Robert was stationed at the guns. One of his crew used the shell casings to sculpture this lamp. The ship's armament consisted of one 5 inch/38, twelve 40 mm, and ten 20 mm.

May 1st

How many delivered their cute or pretty, cleverly designed May baskets?

In Iowa, the plan was to quickly hang a small basket of goodies on the front door knob or sit it beside the door. Ring the bell. Run back to the car. Drive away to avoid being caught to get kissed. Or did anyone dance around the Maypole?



What do Minnesotans do?



History After Dessert

Recipe for a Grand Day

1. Select a friend or couple
2. Invite them to lunch
(because they prefer to be home before dark)
3. During dessert begin reminiscing
4. Four hours later shout
"What a grand event!"
5. Write a tale to share with SCHS
OR

If we do not interview, then we can plan to tell our own life's stories or record family details for younger listeners.

Our Grand Day — *History after Dessert*

Roger and Holly Harjes

A CHAT WITH DON & BETTY

When I met Don and Betty Strobel, and thereafter, I always knew I'd be greeted with a smile.

Who'd ever guess (as they approach their 90's) that they raised a family of 16 children and go three times a week to Silver Sneakers in Le Sueur. And they still find time and energy for volunteering at Sibley County Museum.

Raised in Jessenland/Faxon Townships, Betty and Don discovered each other at St. Thomas Church, Jessenland and married in April 1952. Don remarked, "After milking I could only go far enough to date Betty."

During our four hour lunch, Don and Betty contributed great tales.

A favorite memory for Don was when he was in 5th or 6th grade, school was let out for all the students to go to the State Corn Husking Bee.

Betty recalls the ONLY big event for her was to do 4-H demonstrations on her sewing projects at the County Fair. Gas and tire rationing limited how much driving they could do. Rationing was the way the government controlled some items in order to support World War II.

Don claims, "My mother was a body builder because she raised one dumbbell. And that is me."

Betty Leonhardt Strobel was raised with her six brothers in Faxon Township. Elementary school was in District 42 then two years at Henderson High School. She attended her last two years at Belle Plaine. At that time families paid for bus-sing but her family got a fee price-break because her uncle was the bus driver.

Don did not hesitate to tell that on His dairy farm he had seven boys, five girls, four foster children, ONE bathroom and a 'great' lilac bush.

The couple is proud to announce that all 12 dairy-farm-raised kids graduated from Henderson High School. Farm work habits contributed to successful futures for the twelve.

Don and Betty developed a caring passion for local family history. In retirement, the Sibley County Museum provides an outlet to share personal stories and history of the Museum's collections.

April 2020 marked their 68th wedding anniversary! The family celebration plan included their 7 boys, 5 girls, 4 foster children, spouses, 14 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren.

How special to hear these remembrances from friends. Hopefully, others will experience a grand story telling time or do some writing to remember.



SCHS Amazing Volunteers

Why would anyone want to come to the Sibley County Museum?

Don and Betty Strobel have the answer!

"We come to reminisce and to witness to others what is in the collection. We want to see and tell stories about items from the past 100-plus years. These items actually direct our lives today."

Their specialty stories to the school children tell of his grandmother's log cabin where Don's mother was born and raised. He brings a big picture of where those 10 children lived and where he recalls that he even slept there.

After moving into Henderson and visiting the museum 2-3 times a year to stir their memories of unique items, they decided to get more involved because they could not stay away!

The young-at-heart couple are active volunteers especially to facilitate tours. Thank you, Don and Betty.

SCHS Paid Membership May-June 2020

May 2020

Valerie Rocheleau
 Steven Kleist
 Larry & Pat Klunder
 Leo & Ruth Soukup - 2 yrs
 Mildred Doering
 Ray & Elizabeth Jacobson
 Marian L. Anderson
 Eugene & Jeanette Bening
 Lawrence I. Crawford
 Matt & Jody Boisen
 Rodney & Alicia Nelson
 Otto Templin
 Arden DeBoer - 2 yrs

Rochester
 Richfield
 Henderson
 Bemidji
 Edina
 St. Peter
 Gaylord
 Hutchinson
 Gaylord
 Owatonna
 Gaylord
 Hutchinson
 Lafayette

Jacquelyn Schmidt
 Wm Mickelson
 Susan Peters
 Leon & Bev Stadtherr
 Dennis & Kristin Schultz
 David & Marie Mai
 Dr. Paula Nelson

Gaylord
 Columbia, SC
 Palm Bay, FL
 Winthrop
 Arlington
 Gaylord
 Platteville, WI

June 2020

Ruth Wolter
 Keith & Paula Anderson
 Marie J. Renneke
 Philip H. Delzer

Gaylord
 Gaylord
 Mpls
 Mpls - 2 yrs

SCSH Membership Form

- New
 Renew
- Individual \$20.00
 Family \$25.00
 Business \$50.00

- I would like to receive my newsletter by email (in color)
 I would like to receive my newsletter by U.S. Mail

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

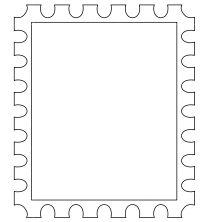
Email: _____

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

Check your membership date on the mailing label. Membership dues are as stated above:

Mail to:

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 Henderson, MN 56044



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 Henderson, MN 56044
 Phone: 507-248-3434
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 Website:



2021 Dues DUE February 2021

Q: What should I do for the new due date to pay my SCHC dues?

Reply: Note your due date in RED on the address label. Grab a calculator. Prorate the monthly change at Individual \$20 = \$1.67/month or Family \$25 = \$2.08/month. OR just pay your dues.

Recycle or Not

Collections Committee

Marked #2, a plastic bottle almost went in the recycle bin. Instead, it is offered to the museum's Collections Committee for consideration. It may be accessioned and find its way into the kitchen pantry where it would join an old syrup pail, the kind some kids once used to carry their lunch to country school.

The reason for saving this opaque white plastic bottle is its label, "Pure Honey", then Honl's Bees, Inc and phone numbers for the business at Winthrop and Lovelady, TX. This bottle came from a "Yard Box". It has been the practice of this business to place bee hives in farm yards in a wide area during each summer. Near Christmas, the land owners are rewarded with a generous gift of honey products, delivered by a member of the Honl family. Meanwhile, the bees have been trucked to Texas for the winter.

Yes, the museum has a lot of really old pioneer objects but history is what happened yesterday. Every decade of Sibley County's past needs representative material. This creates storage issues for the Board of Directors to solve. Our current dilemma is, should all county newspapers be saved?

...To collect, preserve, and disseminate knowledge about the history of Sibley County.