

# SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



# NEWSLETTER

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

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## The Prez Sez by Jerome Petersen

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**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR MEMBERS FROM THE BOARD OF SCHS!** We hope you have all been good and are not getting any coal in your stocking, you know how that pollutes!

We have a good news bad news thing going on. The good news; our Country School Book is at the printer. We were absolutely certain it would be finished in time for Christmas delivery. Then we were certain. Then we

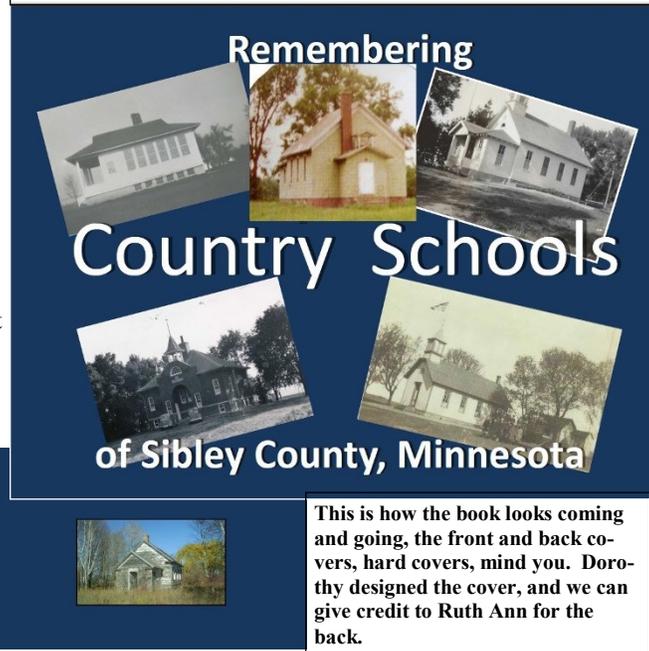
were pretty sure it would be out just before Christmas. Then we really hoped it would be done by then. Then we got the news, (this is where the bad news comes) it was not going to be done by then, *but shortly after*. Did you ever get one of these; "Please accept our sincerest apologies for any inconvenience caused by this delay.?"

Well, Please accept our sincerest apologies for any inconvenience caused by this delay.—we're sorry for any inconvenience this delay may have caused, really sorry. This was a big project to start with when Harriet suggested we do a book on country schools. We thought it was a good idea too. I think she meant it to be a series of photos of students and the school houses. It grew to an enormous project, including the histories of the townships as well as some county and state history, township maps, county maps. We conducted many interviews at various places

from the museum to nursing homes to private homes, as well as telephone interviews. Dorothy would transcribe the comments and put them in text form. Eldrene assembled historical information on the settlement of the townships and school properties, sales, who the land was purchased from and who bought it when the schools closed. Arlene added more historical information and rounded off the sharp edges. Ruth Ann interviewed, typed, scanned photos, proofread drafts, photographed school as they appear now and provided some humor. Dorothy was the glue that held all this together. She had the biggest load, drove the most, arranged the most, found a publishing house, typed

the corrections the proofreaders handed her, printed out each chapter three times so each proofreader had a clean updated copy. I told her often I hope her head does not explode. Sharon, Roseann, Millie, Marie and Mary were involved in various ways. I helped too. I stopped at Dorothy every morning to be sure she was working. And she was! We were so immersed with the book

### COMING SOON TO A MUSEUM NEAR YOU! WORTH THE WAIT!!!



**Remembering  
Country Schools  
of Sibley County, Minnesota**

**This is how the book looks coming and going, the front and back covers, hard covers, mind you. Dorothy designed the cover, and we can give credit to Ruth Ann for the back.**



### Calendar of Events

Check our website for 2015 programs.

- If you have suggestions or comments on upcoming events .... Contact Judy Loewe 507-248-3345
- See my article on the last page.

we did not have a porch party since May. The office looks like a storm has gone through. But the book is done now and I think we are very happy with our efforts and everyone who buys a book will be delighted too. Some things I point out to people about country schools; one teacher with as many as 60 kids, and as few as 3, teaching 8 grades in one room, most had no electricity until about 1940, very few had phones, they all drank from a common

*(Continued on page 6)*



## SOME WWII HISTORY

Joe Traxler stopped at the museum recently and dropped off some genealogy material from the McCormick Family that has its roots in Faxon. The items were given to Harriet some time ago. What follows includes; (a) the photo below, (b) an account of some of Ray's (known as Boots) experiences following the D-Day invasion on an L.S.T., moving soldiers to the beaches where he encountered Gen-

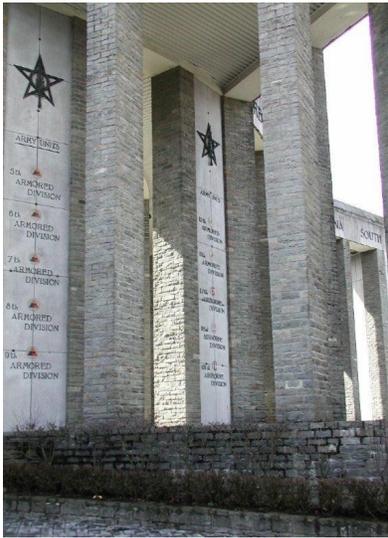


Three McCormick brothers; Cyril, Raymond and Michael. Printed on the back, after their names the caption; All three went 8 grades to Kerry Lake School.

eral Patton, (c) a newspaper article about Fr. George Metcalf, an Episcopalian priest (a rank of Major) from Afton MN. General Patton requested Fr. Metcalf to "find me a prayer for fair weather for battle." His account of that is in the newspaper article on the next page.

Three McCormick brothers served in the Navy during WWII. Cyril was in the Pacific and involved with battles there. Another brother, James, was in the Army and served 26 years. I got information from the brothers' nephew, Richard, who lives in Green Isle.

Now to General Patton. A 1970 movie, *Patton*, starring George Scott, won eight academy awards. There is a current best selling book by Bill O'Reilly called *Killing Patton*. The book is detailed in its account of the battles in WWII, including the Allies, Germans and the Russian front. General Patton was a hero to many, loved, hated, feared, but an effective military strategist.



These are shots of the massive Bastogne Memorial, a short distance outside the city of Bastogne, erected in gratitude for the American's sacrifices.

I was a diesel engineer with the boat crew on L.S.T. # 58. Two weeks before the invasion we were restricted aboard ship in Plymouth, England. The officers briefed the boat crews about where to land, also obstacles and gun emplacements. They gave us mallets and wooden plugs to plug the holes on the plywood L.C.V.P.'s. After the briefings, the guys from the south would sing "When The Roll Is Called Up Yonder, We Will Be There."

When crossing the channel there were ships as far as you could see. Each one had a barrage balloon flying in defense against dive bombers. We hit Omaha Beach at 7:00 a.m., started taking troops ashore and returning the paratrooper casualties back to the transports. The L.S.T. went back to England and left us boat crews on the beachhead to report to the mother ship the "Gooseberry." The Susan B. Anthony transport ship got hit and the skipper beached it rather than have it sink. We picked up several of its dead and brought them to the beach. The "Jerrys" used to bomb and strafe the beach. The allies stopped that by making stockades on the beach with the German prisoners.

One day I lowered the ramp to let the troops off and the Army officer stood there while the troops jumped off. A speed boat came up and a loud voice said, "Mr., lead your men." It was "old Blood & Guts" Patton.

The Jerrys had a psychological effect on us. Every night at 11:00 they bombed the ships laying off shore. Beforehand they dropped tinfoil to foul up our radar. Each day sky trains would go overhead with C-47's towing gliders.

The allies sent stripped merchant ships and they were tied up, bow to stern and sunk for a sea-wall. The bilge plugs were pulled and it sure was a sight to see them sink. We took their skeleton crews ashore.

After that I made 38 or 39 trips across the English Channel. Sometimes to La Havre, sometimes up the Seine River to Rheine. The Jerrys used to float down floating mines. The L.S.T.'s were the workhorses of the Navy. One time off Sherberg we took 470 Jerrys prisoners. One time on the beach three of us went to the wrong ship and we ended up in England.

*R. J. McCormick*

1890 Roblyn Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55104

Seventy years ago this very month the Battle of the Bulge was raging. Patton was commander of the 3rd Army. The Germans were under orders to take Bastogne at all costs. They broke through the American lines with a major offensive with Liege as their objective. Although they were far outmanned and outgunned, the Americans held their ground as they dug in around Bastogne, taking heavy casualties. The defenders of the city became known as *THE BATTLING BASTARD OF BASTOGNE*.



The Allied forces were short of winter clothing as well as ammunition, medical supplies and food. Temperatures dropped to below zero. They were unable to get supplies because of the stormy winter weather, and the battle raged on. There were 100,000 Allied casualties and 100,000 German casualties. "It was the costliest battle ever fought by the US Army." Herman Halverson of Gibbon was wounded and awarded a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star. Member Florain Stevens father was killed in his tank. Chuck Shimota's father was in an anti-aircraft unit. Many others from our area fought in the Battle of the Bulge. On Christmas 1944, Patton's prayer was answered, the weather cleared, troops were re-supplied, and the tide of battle turned.

Patton survived the war, came home a hero, and later died as a result of a traffic accident in Germany. His death is questioned to this day. He is buried by the men he led at a US Military Cemetery in Luxembourg.

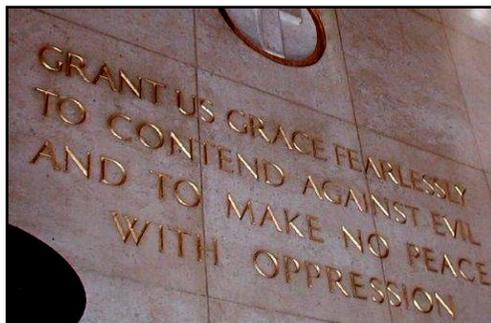
Thanks and a salute to the many veterans who served our country to keep us free. We are truly indebted to them.



Patton's Grave



These 4 photos are from that cemetery.



# A prayer during war

## Gen. Patton story worth repeating today

By ANITA BUCK

In 1975, I had the privilege of interviewing Father George Metcalf who founded the Oratory of St. Mary's in Afton in 1959.

Recently, I transcribed that tape to submit to the Veterans History Project of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

Although I had written an article years ago telling of Father Metcalf and his role in preparing General George Patton's prayer for fair weather, I feel the story is well worth repeating, especially in this holiday season.

To begin with, Metcalf said that the way the prayer scene was portrayed in the movie "Patton" was not at all the way it occurred.

"That's almost the only spot where I would take issue with the movie," said Metcalf.

What actually happened was this.

For almost three months the whole western front in Europe had been deluged with rain. At 8 a.m. on Dec. 22, 1944, Chaplain Metcalf was at his desk in the military caserne at Nancy.

The telephone rang. He answered it, and the unmistakable, high-pitched voice came on and

said, "This is General Patton. Metcalf identified himself, and Patton said, "Can you find me a prayer for fair weather for battle? We can't get air cover under the present conditions. It's pretty serious, and I think we ought to pray about it."

Metcalf said, "Yes sir. May we report in an hour?"

Patton said, "Thank you, Chaplain," and hung up.

Major Metcalf found several excerpts from four or five prayers in the Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church. He then conferred with Chaplain James O'Neal, who was the head Third Army chaplain. Father O'Neal picked phrases from his missa of the Catholic church. Using that material, the two men put together the fair weather prayer.

(In Metcalf's book "With Cross and Shovel," there's a footnote which reads, "Evidently my efforts were more extensive than I remembered, for an analysis reveals that 61 out of 70 words are taken from five separate collects in the American Book of Common Prayer.")



Father George Metcalf

(See Prayer, Page 6)

### Prayer (Continued from page 1)

O'Neal then wrote a Christmas greeting. Both items were submitted to Patton who was very pleased with the work. Patton had 250,000 copies run off on 3" x 2" cards, printed in green ink with a touch of red for Christmas, the prayer on one side, the greeting on the other. These were distributed to every man in the Third Army.

The prayer for fair weather reads, "Almighty and most merciful Father, we humbly beseech Thee, of Thy great goodness, to restrain these immoderate rains with which we have had to contend. Grant us fair weather for battle. Graciously hearken to us as soldiers who call upon Thee that armed with Thy power, we may advance from victory and crush

the oppression and wickedness of our enemies, and establish Thy justice among men and nations. Amen."

The Christmas greeting read: "To each officer and soldier in the Third United States Army, I wish a Merry Christmas. I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty, and skill in battle. We march in our might to complete victory. May God's blessing rest upon each of you on this Christmas Day. G.S. Patton Jr Lieutenant General, Commanding Third United States Army."

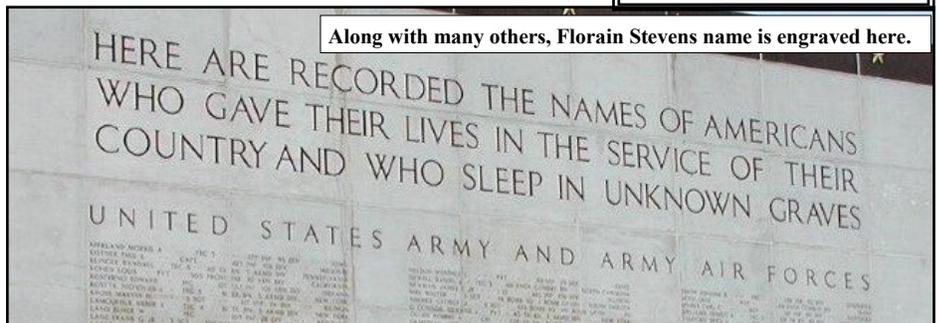
Clear weather greeted the General the morning of Dec. 23, 1944. Metcalf's reaction, "Thank God!"

Learning that this incident

was portrayed incorrectly in the motion picture "Patton," I asked Father Metcalf about the rest of the movie. He said that the only real error in the film was the portrayal of Patton's attitude toward religion. He said Patton was a considerate, kind and courteous gentleman in church. He was a devout man who always let the chaplain take command. Aside from that error, Father Metcalf said the portrayal of Patton was magnificent.

This newspaper clipping was in the things that Joe Traxler brought. We don't know what paper it is from.

Along with many others, Florain Stevens name is engraved here.





## SOME NAGEL HISTORY

BY Roseann Nagel

My husband's father, Paul Nagel, was born on a farm three miles directly south of Arlington in the house built in his birth year – 1900. The farm was settled by the Nagel family in 1869.

Paul married Frieda Oldenburg of Henderson in 1926 and they lived in the house of his birth. Frieda and Paul raised ten children in the large farmhouse which became my home when Rich and I were married.

In 2000, our house celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday with a party and gathering of family and friends. Bricks unearthed on the farm from the prior home were collected, cleaned and a brass plate commemorating the 100 plus years of "solid foundation" the structure and the family was built upon were given to each family member who had resided at the farm.

Several years later, Rich and daughter Kristin worked on a book to give to each of Rich's siblings with memories they had provided. The siblings' birth years range from 1928 to 1957.

I re-read the book today and have taken an excerpt of remembrances submitted by Elaine Nagel Nelson (DOB 1931). Some of the names and activities may sound familiar to you.

Most of the following memories will show how Mom and Dad could keep a brood of ten in tow:

I was always tired and enjoyed the solitude of being by myself at home. It was sometime before Christmas one year and everyone left to go somewhere. I stayed home. I knew the presents were wrapped in boxes at the back of Mom and Dad's closet. I got them out and unwrapped them carefully to snoop at all the gifts. Christmas Eve I did not have any gifts under the tree. After enough tears, Dad told Stanley to look out on the front porch. Santa had left my gifts in a gunny sack out on the porch.

I also remember husking corn after school, or on Saturdays. We all wore those little huskers on our hand and followed the wagon. Dad was so happy with his "work crew." I think someone once had a bad corn stock tear on his hand. Mom would wash all the cuts with Lysol. I also remember shocking grain and getting so sun burned.

Remember those hot summer nights? We all brought our pillow and a blanket to the parlor and slept on the floor. We would all jockey for our place where the breeze came in from the south or north.

Do you remember the big rope swing in the tree on the hill? Stanley would love to swing me real high. The higher I went the louder I'd scream and laugh.

A full moon in summer would bring Eldred Soeffker

over and we would play "kick the Can" and "Andy Andy Over."

Sometimes Mom would be busy with sick kids and could not go to church. I went with Dad to German Worship Service at St. John's. He would have me sing along with him from that little black German hymnbook. I had tears in my eyes. I could not read those German words...he tried! Then when I

was a senior in high school, I remember that breakfast morning when Dad said, "Now I want all of you to be quiet for once so I can talk." He said we were going to join St. Paul's in town. It didn't make sense to drive both directions in the morning, bringing kids to St. John's for school and the rest to town with the milk and to high school.

Do you remember when we played church on the stairs? The preacher would stand at the bottom of the stairs with the kitchen door open. Stanley would imitate Reverend Busch saying the Lord's Prayer and chanting the benediction in German. Mom would be making supper in the kitchen and cracking up listening to our antics.

We were taught how to milk cows when we got to be six years old. When Sharon was born in Arlington at the "Barge's House" Fern Nagel came over as a hired girl. She went to the barn with us and we had a ball squirting milk at the cats.

February 10, 1947, when Rich was born, Mom was at home. Audrey cornered all of us at home before school and said, "Now don't tell anyone at school that we have another baby at home." All you parents know that when you tell kids "don't" that gives them the idea to go blow the good news.

We enjoyed hauling the milk to the creamery with the pick-up truck. On some snowy days we would ram the drifts, back up and then ram them again. We would get to the creamery and they would say, "What are you doing here? There is no school today." So we would go play cards with Aunt Ann and Uncle George all day and stay overnight.

A real treat was when Mom took us along to town and we would stop at Vern's Cafe for an ice cream soda on Sunday.

I remember how Mom would sit at the dining room table and help us with our homework. She would play softball with us in the summer. She was always teaching. When we were doing house-

work she would say: "As you wash the dishes, plan your next job. As you peel the potatoes, plan what you will do next."

When Daryl was born, Mom needed the crib for him so Paul slept between Audrey and me. He was the best little heater. He also kept Audrey and I from fighting about the middle of the bed. During thrashing time when Harriet and Luella Nagel or the Busch twins came over, we would sleep four in the bed, crosswise.

My job was babysitting and cooking. I spent lots of hours playing with Bill, Lowell, Paul and Daryl. If you see pictures where I was very fat as a two year old, Mom tells me that I used to go to the buggy and steal the bottle from Bill and drink it dry.



Elaine (circa 1936)



Elaine Nagel Nelson



When Philip was born, I had two children already. When we came to visit, Bill babysat DeAnn while the rest of us went up to the hospital. A few years later when we came to visit, our kids ran up to Mom calling her Grandma and we all got a good laugh when Phil ran up to Mom and also called her Grandma.

I must finish with my most memorable memory of Daddy. He took me back to Gustavus one Sunday night and walked me to the door; he bent over and gave me a kiss before I entered the dorm. Coming from someone who did not show affection, it made a big impression on me.

#### **More Nagel Memories:**

This is for the 30's generation who will remember the old wood range in the kitchen. Since I am writing this on a Sunday afternoon, do you remember Mom popping corn in those two-inch black cookie sheets? One would be placed upside down on top of the other for a cover. She would hang onto the handles and shake the pans over the heat. Then she would dump the popped corn into the big bread-mixing bowl and set it in the center of the kitchen table for all to enjoy.

Usually February or March, the newborn piglets would be brought into the kitchen in a bushel basket and placed next to the stove to keep warm. Do you remember April 13, 1939? We came downstairs to have breakfast before going to school and there was a little baby wrapped up and lying on the open oven door. The "midwife" or "hired girl," Mildred Nagel or Lydia Busch, informed us that we had a new baby brother and he was "half baked."

The wood range was so very useful. We would get warm water out of the reservoir way on the right side. This would be used to wash dishes, wash our faces, or take baths on Saturday night in the washtub in the middle of the kitchen floor. On wash days, Mom would have to heat additional water in the tall boiler which was also used as a "canner."

Mom would put starter yeast in a fruit jar on top of the "warming closet." One day it exploded and we had a jar ring imprint in the kitchen ceiling. She kneaded lots of bread and usually made six loaves at a time. If we were out of bread for the noon meal, she would take some of the rising dough, stretch it and fry it in a kettle of hot lard. She called these flapjacks. We would sprinkle sugar on top and they were better than any raised doughnut.

The homemade rice pudding was cooked slowly all day long on the back of the stove. Mom put dates, milk, sugar and nutmeg into the pudding. That was a real gourmet treat. At times she might have baked it in the oven also.

In summer it was too hot some days to use the wood range. What type of stove did we have in the "summer kitchen?" Was it kerosene? She would have the washing machine in the summer kitchen, too. That was handy for hanging all the wash. In my mind, when I see the clothesline I see lots of sheets and pillowcases and overalls. I guess that was the beginning and the end of the Monday job.

In 1949 when I was a senior in high school I would drive the car to school in the evenings once a month to publish the school newspaper. In the spring of the year the road where Johnny Olson lived, with the ditch crossing under the road, would always feel very soft. One time I

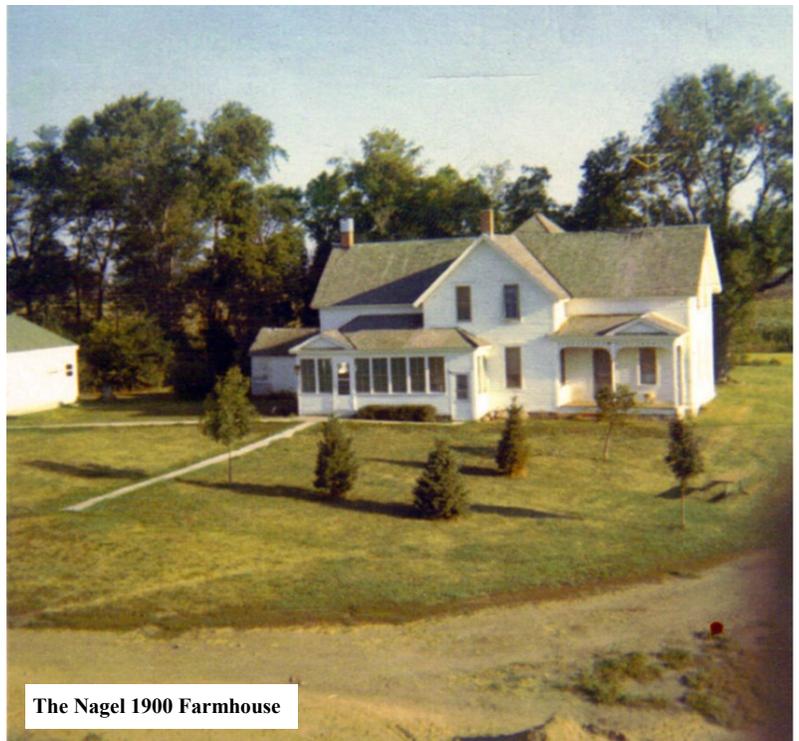
felt like the car was sliding sideways toward the ditch. I got out and walked to the farm to the northwest of that corner. The farmer was milking at the time. I told him my problem and he came out with the tractor and pulled me to safety. I asked him what he wanted for helping me. He said, "How much would it be worth to you if I never tell your dad?" I said I only had 25¢. He said that would be enough.

Has Paul ever told you about trying to get the baby chicks to swim in a cream can? I think the story goes like this: Mom was having ladies over for Ladies Aid. Paul and some of his little friends went to the brooder house which then I believe was southeast of the house. Mom must have kept a cream can of water in there for watering the chicks. Paul and his friends wanted to see if the chicks could swim. The result was lots of baby chicks drowned in the can.

#### **Post High School:**

I knew that I was going to Gustavus when I graduated in 1949. I wanted to become a great math teacher like Mr. Brenny. I worked at Vern's cafe in the summer. I was given lots of responsibility like locking up and staying with the girls when Vern went to the lake for the weekend. I remember working 13 hour shifts during Fair week. I need to go back one year. I got my waitress experience the summer before in that little coffee shop on Nicollet Avenue in Minneapolis. I stayed with the Newman family near Lake Harriet and took care of their three children when I got off work.

In December I was trying to decide on a college. I considered Vapraiso and Luther. Mom and Dad sat down and talked with me. "If you go to Gustavus, you will be closer to home and it will be easy to get you for weekends and holidays. We will help you with tuition if you go to Gustavus. We need your help around here." I kept track of every penny that Dad loaned me. I had it all paid back when DeWain and I got married, except \$800. Dad told me not to worry about paying it back, it was a wedding present.



The Nagel 1900 Farmhouse



(Continued from page 1)

dipper filled from a water pail, the outhouse was the bathroom, no central heat, and pretty much all kids walked to school. And you probably know it was uphill *and* from school. I was telling my barber about our book and he ordered one. He also has 4 of Harriet's books. He wondered how good was the education they received. We have the 8th grade exams that Melroy Ruschmeyer saved and shown in our book. To graduate, they had to pass these difficult geography, math, English and history tests. Could any of us pass this test today? The former students we interviewed praised their country school experiences.



Melroy Ruschmeyer



Not my actual barber, but a facsimile. And that is not me either. He has more hair and I have less.

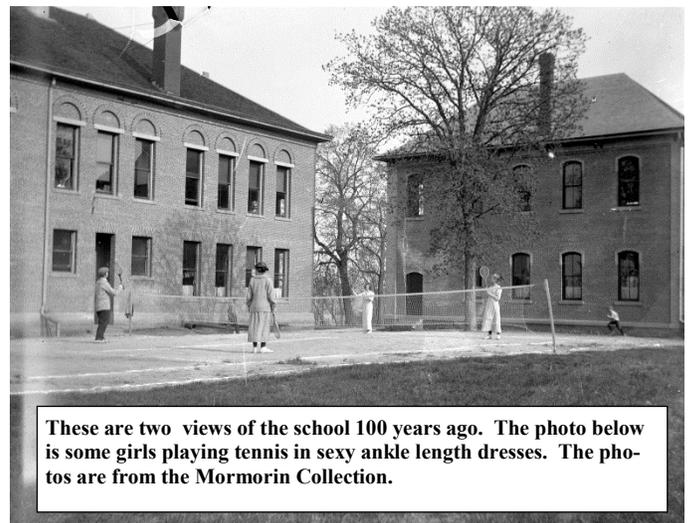
We are planning on a book pickup party in January. The date will be determined by the printer's delivery date. We will have an announcement in the papers and on our website. Shipping will be available for \$6 (six dollars), but check with us for the price of shipping for your address. Pick up is also available.

I think all of us who worked on the book are proud of our accomplishment and hope our readers and their families will enjoy the stories of past generations for generations to come. Thanks to all who helped or contributed in any way to the completion of our project.

Henderson Heritage Days, and annual festive day in September for Henderson, is a busy time for us too. We get many visitors, and this year was no exception. We also gained some new members from those visits, plus some contributions to our book project. There was a tour of historic places and people in town. Even though Henderson has a population of less than 1,000, they never run out of material. On the next column are photos of several



Doug Thomas in the Old 1900 Henderson High School renovation, recently opened, become the New Country Elementary School.



These are two views of the school 100 years ago. The photo below is some girls playing tennis in sexy ankle length dresses. The photos are from the Mormorin Collection.

I enjoyed reading Elaine Nagel Nelson's story of growing up in the country, contributed by Roseann Nagel. All the familiar stuff from our era. Channel 2 had a program narrated by author Jerry Apps, A Farm Winter. He grew up on a farm in Wisconsin. His stories have many similarities to Elaine's. He has authored several books about rural life in the 30s and 40s. There was a piece on the Minneapolis paper years ago about "the slop pail." Not many know about that any more. Or the reservoir. What memories! Thanks to all for your membership, loyalty, contributions and just for being part of our society. *Rommie*

Can we call this issue of our newsletter the SCHS Variety Pack.



You may have heard of Digger O'Dell, the Friendly Undertaker. This is Pastor Deb Meyer portraying 1930's mortician Margaret Hensler, complete with embalming instruments. This would be Digger O'Deb, the Friendly Pastor *and* Undertaker.



National Register Medallion on Toody's Sweet Treats building, in 1899, the Wentker Dry Goods store, and for many years, a drug store.



These ladies were portraying a German Immigrant, and family, from the mid 1800s. They were actually descendants of the lady. This display was set up by the log cabin in Allanson's Park.



### Telegrams Aid Sibley County Sheriff

Research by Arlene Busse

The telegraph was invented by Samuel F. B. Morse in 1832. Service came to Minnesota in 1860 and to Sibley County in 1872. The December 7, 1872 *Henderson Times* announced, "A telegraph office has been established at the East Henderson Depot, and our merchants and businessmen are now placed in direct communication with the outside world..." The line was run directly into the courthouse in Henderson in 1881. The location of the telegraph office moved about in Henderson until 1900 when the local office closed and it became necessary to go to the depot to send messages. By then telephone service had come to Sibley County and to the depot.

William Dretchko served several terms as the Sibley County Sheriff in the 1880s and 1890s. He frequently used telegrams in his work. Several have been found in papers once on file in the Sibley County Auditor's office, now in a collection at the Sibley County Museum at Henderson.

Evidently Dretchko had been in contact with Minneapolis police in his search for James Fahey, wanted for murder committed at a Fourth of July picnic at St. Johns Church in Faxon Township. A telegram dated July 6, 1896 to the Minneapolis chief of police stated, "I have my man thanks to you" sent at a cost of 25 cents. A second telegram went to County Atty. Ed Huebner at Winthrop. This one had more words and cost 29 cents. "Have murderer in custody hearing tomorrow come quick as possible answer quick" No punctuation was used in telegrams.

A clipping from the July 10, 1896 Henderson paper, the *Sibley County Independent*, tells the story of the murder. In the same paper, in the Local News column, this editorial statement appears, "The crime committed at a Fourth of July picnic in Faxon, this county, plainly illustrates that the law governing the sale of intoxicants, is not thoroughly enforced. There is nothing else responsible for this murder."

The hearing, to which the county attorney was summoned, was held and the defendant "bound over to await the action of the grand jury in December." The case was tried in district court with Fahey found guilty of manslaughter in the second degree. He was then sentenced by the presiding judge to hard labor at the state penitentiary.



The 1880s Sibley County Courthouse in Henderson

Below, Sheriff Dretchko's 1896 telegram

Form No. 2.

**THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.**  
INCORPORATED  
21,000 OFFICES IN AMERICA. CABLE SERVICE TO ALL THE WORLD.  
THOS. T. ECKERT, President and General Manager.

Receiver's No. \_\_\_\_\_ Time Filled \_\_\_\_\_ Check \_\_\_\_\_

**SEND** the following message subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to. \_\_\_\_\_ 189

To: *Chief Police Minneapolis Minn*

*I have my man thanks to you*

*Stallie Dretchko*

*Na P 7 23 p m*

READ THE NOTICE AND AGREEMENT ON BACK.

## HE LOST HIS LIFE

### Lewis Basel, Formerly of This City, the Victim.

#### A Picnic at St. Johns on the Fourth of July, Ends in Blood Shed and Murder.

Lewis Basel, formerly of this city, but recently a farmer in Faxon township, met his death at a Fourth of July picnic at St. Johns. It seems there were a number of fights during the afternoon and Lewis also got into an altercation with Pat. Fahey which resulted in the former knocking the latter down, and while being led away by peace makers, James Fahey, a son of the man who was struck, approached from behind and dealt Basel a terrible blow on the head with a white oak stake three feet long and weighing ten pounds. Basel fell to the ground and expired in twenty minutes. After committing the deed young Fahey went to Belle Plaine remaining all night. When he returned Sunday morning, he was told to look upon the man whom he had killed, but even after that he could not realize that he had committed murder, and went to Minneapolis to his brother who advised him to go back and give himself up, which he did, arriving here from Belle Plaine in Sheriff Dretchko's charge Monday evening.

Coroner Kelley was summoned and made his appearance at St. Johns Sunday. He found everything as stated; that Basel had been killed by James Fahey was evident and the jury returned a verdict to that effect.

Lewis Basel was about 25 years old and only recently lost his wife. One small child is left to the care of relatives. The funeral was held Tuesday.

The prisoner was given a hearing before Judge Ayer on Tuesday. Owing to the prisoner having no defense the case was continued until next Tuesday at one o'clock p. m.

The prisoner is only 18 years of age, but appears considerably older.



## Our Unsung Heroes

We've talked throughout the book project about the dedication and hard work of our staff of writers, interviewers and those connected directly with writing the things that went into making the book.

However, right now I want to give special thanks to the special group of ladies who proofread all our copy so carefully. We had 3 different proofreaders read each chapter and each time the number of corrections got less and less. And while we don't expect there will not be any errors in the book, we think they did an awesome job. They complimented each other, even though some of them do not even know each other, but their styles were different and each looked for something different. One would very thoroughly read over every bit of the copy first, then go back and make corrections, making sure that it all "made sense" to one who was a newcomer to the area. Maybe even counting the number of people on the pictures, to make sure we got all of the people accounted for, and even reading all the ads, newspaper articles and other historic documents, looking for names. Another made sure all the pictures were spaced just right, and all had a text box around them. That's real dedication. So a special thanks to, Kathy W, Gail H, Kathy K, Kathy T, Karen W, and Ethel B, for a job well done.

While it was disappointing not to be able to get the book finished in time for Christmas giving, we think you are really going to enjoy it. Why shouldn't you enjoy it, you helped write it. So we thank you also, for all your help and encouragement along the way. We are expecting delivery shortly after Christmas and we will notify everyone who has purchased a book when they arrive and make arrangements for delivering. I've even heard talk about a "book party" at the museum shortly after the New Year. For those from out of the area who ordered books, we will be mailing them as soon as we get them. Be sure to tell your friends about the book so they can get a copy too. And most of all enjoy the book!

Dorothy Peterson,  
County Schools Book Editor

I prepare most of the newsletter at home. I have Publisher 2013 on my computer. In September I took the almost finished file to the museum where we have Publisher 2010. I did not notice that some of the text on **page 5** was cut off because the font I used was not available on the older version of Publisher. *Please accept our sincerest apologies for any inconvenience caused...* Is that stuff going around?? I am an old retired farmer. Don't expect much and you will not be disappointed.

I reprinted the text below using a standard font. By the way, the early discount has expired on November 15. The books are now \$30, \$27 for members. You can still order from;

**Jerome Petersen**  
**PO Box 25**  
**Gibbon MN 55335**

**Make your check to Sibley County Historical Society and note that it is for THE COUNTRY SCHOOL BOOK. Include a note with your address, phone number and email. We will notify you when they are ready, and where you can pick them up. Shipping will be available for an additional charge.**

**\*Note; Members will always get the 10% discount (\$3.00)**

**You are allowed to purchase more than one book at this unbelievable low price.**

## THANKS

Our thanks go out to these folks for their gifts; Pat & Dale Erickson, Barbara Congdon, Charles & Donna Meyer, Rich & Roseann Nagel, General Mills Foundation, Henderson United Charities and Thrivent. We are always appreciative of any gifts we receive, both monetary and donations to our museum collection.

### Subject: Politically Correct Greeting

"Please accept with no obligation, implied or implicit, my best wishes for an environmentally conscious, socially responsible, low-stress, non-addictive, gender-neutral celebration of the winter solstice holiday, practiced within the most enjoyable traditions of the religious persuasion of your choice, or secular practices of your choice, with respect for the religious/secular persuasion and/or traditions of others, or their choice not to practice religious or secular traditions at all. I also wish you a fiscally successful, personally fulfilling and medically uncomplicated recognition of the onset of the generally accepted calendar year 2006, but not without due respect for the calendars of choice of other cultures whose contributions to society have helped make America great. Not to imply that America is necessarily greater than any other country nor the only America in the Western Hemisphere. And without regard to the race, creed, color, age, physical ability, religious faith or sexual preference of the wisher.

By accepting these greetings you are accepting these terms. This greeting is subject to clarification or withdrawal. It is freely transferable with no alteration to the original greeting. It implies no promise by the wisher to actually implement any of the wishes for herself or himself or others, and is void where prohibited by law and is revocable at the sole discretion of the wisher. This wish is warranted to perform as expected within the usual application of good tidings for a period of one year or until the issuance of a subsequent holiday greeting, whichever comes first, and warranty is limited to replacement of this wish or issuance of a new wish at the sole discretion of the wisher."



This piece was in an archived newsletter. We are still politically correct (sometimes), so I ran it again.



NEW\* AND RENEWED MEMBERS since our last newsletter

Robert Fischer	Gibbon MN	Carol Reiter	Henderson MN
Rich & Roseann Nagel	Arlington MN	Dave & Birdine Battcher*	Arlington MN
Richard Klatt Prestor*	Milwaukee WI	Lavonne Sandersfeld*	Williamsburg IA
Carol Oelfke*	Osakis MN	Beth Christenson*	Eagan MN
Trent & Tera Messner	Henderson MN	Thomas Williamson	Arlington VA
Cathy Creech*	Henderson MN	Dennis Walter	Lakeville MN
Dwight Grabitske	Arlington MN	Chathlene Meyer	Moorhead MN
Ken & Janice Parrow*	Minneapolis MN	William & Vickie Holtz	New Auburn MN
Connie DeWitte*	Coppell TX	Barb & David Herry	International Falls MN
Virgil Lieske*	Austin MN	Delores Slonski*	Richfield MN
Nanette Hartmann*	Green Isle MN	Marjorie L. Matthiae	Gaylord MN
Mary Brandt*	Gaylord MN	Margaret Hoffman	Hutchinson MN
Zelpha Mueller	Winthrop MN	Rosetta & Art Blomquist	Mankato MN
Karen M. & Ray Klenk	Winthrop MN	Bill & Charlotte Beseke	Arlington MN
Lila Sillerud	Canby MN	Arlene Moore	Gaylord MN
Leslie & Diane Pettis	Winthrop MN	Debra Meyer*	Henderson MN
Raymond (Ted) Pinske	Gaylord MN	Kathleen Ringo	New Auburn MN
Barbara Congdon	Wenatchee WA	Barbara Mathwig*	Brownton MN
Marlene Moskop	Arlington MN	Rev. Jerry Berger	Green Isle MN
George & Cheyann Doheny	Prior Lake MN	James Berger	Minnetonka MN
Dean Caldwell-Tautges	St. Louis Park MN	Greg & Carolyn Johnson*	Winthrop MN
Victor Gess	Lafayette CA	Vernetta Brinkmann	Arlington MN
Myra Bushard	Gibbon MN	Ladonna & Gene Rodewald	New Ulm MN
Janet Mackenthun	Glencoe MN	Joan Eckert	Gibbon MN
Gloria Pudewell	Winthrop MN	Dwight & Vincie Jacobson*	Farmington MN
Davis Biebl	Gibbon MN	Nelson & Dorothy Norman	El Cajon CA
Judith Monkkonen	Culver City CA	Neva Paulson	Lafayette MN
Karol Erickson	Olympia WA	Flora Hendrickson*	Crosby MN
Kevin Kreger*	New Prague MN	Arden Sjogren	Bismarck ND
Judy Loewe	Henderson MN	Dr. Kathryn Kelly*	Olivia MN
Glenn Kicker	Burnsville MN	Ellen Traxler*	Henderson MN
Carol Reiter	Henderson MN	Janet Wieman*	Gaylord MN
		Richard & Sandy Weckwerth	Gaylord MN
		Karen & Charles Erickson	Brooklyn Center MN

Membership Form  RENEW  NEW

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SCHS TREASURER

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PO Box 206  
\_\_\_\_\_ Arlington MN 55307

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

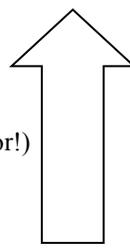
Individual--\$20, Family-- \$25, Business-- \$50 Send to:

- 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](mailto: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.





700 Main Street  
P.O. Box 407  
Henderson, MN 56044  
Phone: 507-248-3434  
Email: [schs1@frontiernet.net](mailto:schs1@frontiernet.net)



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

### What Does it Take to be a Program Director

Judy Loewe

In spotting a good program it starts with my background. Each organization provided projects, experiences and various planning conditions to fulfill the various programs and tours. Each organization had its influence in gathering ideas, organizing, creating, developing, preparing, all on a time line. Those organizations were 4-H Club, high school student, college student, part-time Community Ed. Director for 20 years, Women's Fellowship president at church, on the church council- six years as an Elder, and General Federation of Women's Clubs member and leader for 42 years at club, district, state and national level.

I've been volunteering at the Sibley County Museum at Henderson since 1998, as close as I can figure, starting with doing what I was told to do and observing how the museum volunteers have niches where they are the best at. By being a guide, I hear people tell of their connection to items in the museum and having a historical collection or knowledge in certain areas to a topic that fits our museum era, the late 1800s-early 1900s.

Eventually we needed to find some way to get more people to come to monthly meetings to tour the museum, to volunteer at the museum, and to come to our monthly meetings from April through October. We needed to step outside the box of present offerings, to see and hear what other museums do and find programs that fit our era. So, the 'multi need' was in my mindset.

Everything in the museum sparked my thoughts to find someone to tell us more about each item other than when it was accessed, from whom, the year and maybe what it was, on a tag. There are collectors, specialist and places to go to find more information than what we see.

My help to come up with program and trip ideas come from you, too. Maybe you have a question. That triggers me to find a person or place to find the answer. Another way is to keep my ears open to general conversation. Some people know of someone or something that will lead to the best answer and needs to be shared with others. That's a program or a trip or a tour idea.

Then it's the organizing the program from beginning to end. To have all go smoothly, my plan is based on experience, timing, cost if any, comparison of vendors needed like for food or bus needs. While on a tour to a specific area, I try to make the most of your time when we are there, and include main attractions and unknown places. We travel mostly by volunteer drivers, with their car and they appreciate some gas money from the passengers. Our timing is to be done like clockwork. Each stop expects to present at a certain time when we arrive on time. Any augment of the schedule delays the presentation, we get less information or delayed departure for the next stop. So, the bottom line adds up to total planning for successful programs and tours, calls on numerous sources including commitments from the presenter, early registration for tours and follow the schedule, and people attending opportunities offered.