

SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

MARCH 2010

Volume 15, Issue 1

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Calendar of Events

by Judy Loewe

- **May 25, 7:00PM** - Pharmacy Through The Years by Tiffany Reinitz at the museum
- **June 22** - Tour and Movie with New Auburn Historian Jon Rivers at Maple Lake
More info in June newsletter
- **July 27, 7:00PM** Electric Coops by Tom Graham at the museum
- **NOTE NEW STARTING TIMES**
- If you have suggestions or comments on upcoming events Contact Judy Loewe 507-248-3345 **Calendar Subject to Change.**

SCHS Annual Meeting

You are holding in your hand your special invitation to attend the annual meeting and program...

COME ON DOWN!!

WHEN; SUNDAY APRIL 18, 2010 12:30 PM

WHERE; HIGH ISLAND HIDEAWAY NEW AUBURN MN

7540 5TH STREET

MENU; TURKEY AND TRIMMINGS, HAM, VEGATABLES AND OTHER STUFF

COST; \$15 PER PERSON (RSVP BY APRIL 10TH)

Your check is your reservation

PROGRAM; STEVE BRIGGS MISSION/ADVENURE WITH BRIAN MOON TO NEW GUINEA SEARCHING FOR WWII MIAs, NARRATION AND SLIDE SHOW, Q&A

WE WILL HAVE A SHORT BUSINESS MEETING TO UPDATE YOU ON THE BUILDING ADDITION AND OTHER ONGOING PROJECTS.

See page 8 for more details



The Prez Sez by Jerome Petersen

There have been many things going on at the museum since our last annual meeting. Our building is nearing completion, and we have started to move in. Each week throughout the fall and winter there was noted progress. First the site work, then the foundation, the plumbing and heating, the slab, then walls, roof, wiring, more plumbing and electrical work, drywall, taping, texturing, painting and brickwork outside. It has been exciting. I mentioned before that the



This is how the building looked early in March

building inspector said we had to have a urinal in our bathroom. Isakson's, the plumbing and heating contractor, installed the urinal, but there was a flaw in it, and they had to replace it. They installed urinal #2.

(Continued on page 4)



St. John's Lutheran Church Celebrated 150 years in 2009

Arlington Township

By Ethel (Lieske) Beuch

Pictures by Dorothy (Lieske) Peterson

As I walked across the lawn at St. John's Lutheran Church in Arlington Township to the corner where the old cemetery starts, I remembered when, as a grade school child, headstones dotted the landscape. Today the headstones are gone, and the only evidence of what was the first cemetery is a plaque (on the right) with the names of pioneer settlers buried here. Among them are the names Nagel, Soef-fker, Blaesing and Lieske; the names of my ancestors.

St. John's was where I worshiped for many years: I was baptized at St. John's, attended the school there, and was confirmed and married there. It is where my children were baptized, educated, and confirmed as well. Today, although I no longer regularly worship there, its history offers a significant picture of life in Sibley County when the frontier was opening up. And I can relive it through the lives of my grandparents and parents, as well as my own.

The Minnesota territory was just opening in the early 1850s and several families from Wisconsin, Ohio, and Coopers Grove, Ill. a suburb of Chicago, had settled in the Prairie Mount area, in the southeastern part of Sibley County. Moving up out of the Minnesota River valley, heavy timber gives way to prairie land and this must have seemed like a good place to stake a claim.

For these families, most of whom were of German Lutheran descent, a place to worship was important. (Lutheran churches are still a significant part of Sibley County. A recent glance at church directories in the Gaylord Hub showed that 9 of 15 churches in the Gaylord vicinity are Lutheran.) Desiring the need for spiritual leadership and guidance these families requested services of missionaries from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and beginning in 1857 Rev. Kahmeyer of Benton

Township conducted services in the log homes of the families. In 1858 this loosely organized group constructed a 24 x 32 foot log church building with a dirt floor. The first pulpit is said to have been a big store box with a black cloth over it! In 1863 each member was asked to furnish 200 feet of boards and two joists for the purpose of providing flooring in the church (and for the parsonage which had been built in 1859). This building served the congregation through years of hard work and hardship until a new church was built in 1877.

Hard work, illness, and natural disasters made life difficult for these pioneers. Elsa Meyer, (great aunt to SCHS benefactor Charles Meyer), whose grandfather Andreas and great uncle John Narr were charter members of St. John's, tells how her grandparents moved from Stillwater to Arlington by ox-team in 1854 and homesteaded three miles north of the church. When the family walked the three miles to church for Sunday services they sometimes walked barefoot, carrying their shoes and stockings under their arm, stopping to put them on for the worship service, then removing them again for the homeward trek. Shoes were not so easy to acquire; walking barefoot helped them to last longer!

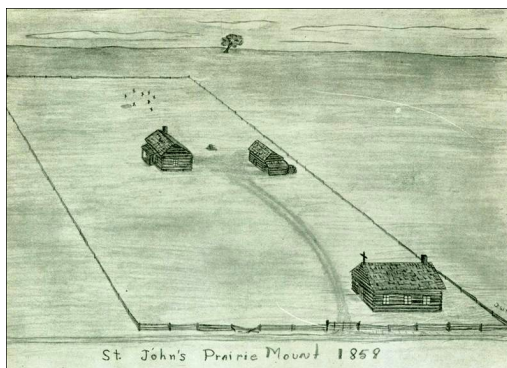
In the early 1870s Scarlet Fever and Small Pox struck the area. One Sunday morning an officer of the church met early worshippers with the news that Pastor Schulze's two sons had died during the night. Two of Philip Nagel's sons also died; another member lost three sons in 11 days. Funeral records show 23 funerals in 1871, more than three times the number of other years.

In the summer of 1859, when 20 families formally organized, secretary Martin Blaesing (my great, great grandfather) was instructed to issue a call to Johannes Paulus Ruprecht on behalf of "The Evangelical Lutheran Congregation at Prairie Mount, Sibley County". A copy of that call document is still held by Martin Blaesing's great, great grandson.

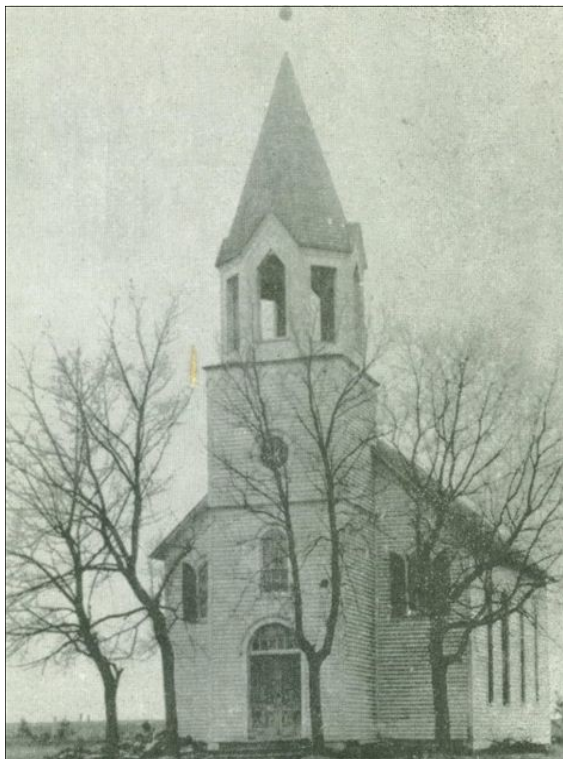
In the fall of 1860 Rev. Ruprecht accepted a call to Hamburg. The pastor's salary, which for Rev. Ruprecht had been \$50.00 plus flour, corn and potatoes, gradually increased during this time; by 1865 it was set at \$200.00! During the years of 1860-1873 the congregation was served by Pastors Winter and Schulze. These men made many missionary calls throughout the area and served or started congregations in Gaylord in 1860 and Arlington in 1872.

Civil records of births and deaths kept by the county were not yet required; those that were kept were often inaccurate. Births, baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and deaths recorded in family Bibles and in church records were used for official business. At least three of Martin Blaesing's sons, including my great grandfather, Julius Blaesing, served in the military during the civil war. Young men who

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The First Church



The Second Church



(Continued from page 2)

volunteered for military service were promised a bounty and their families were promised a pension. Undoubtedly this money was a boon to many of the early settlers. When the widow of Julius Blaesing applied for a pension, county records did not show a birth record for her daughter Clara, (my grandmother). Apparently the court clerk could not read the doctor's scrawl and instead had recorded "Blaesing, Charlie, Male. With records from the family Bible and baptismal records from St. John's she was able to prove her daughter's birth and get her pension.

Church records show that not only did people frequently have three or even four given names, the name by which they were known in the family may well have been their second or third name, perhaps to distinguish them from older family members. Baptism records for two sons of my great grandfather, Philip Nagel, a charter member of St. John's, show a son Heinrich Martin who was known by the family as Martin, his youngest brother, George Heinrich Christian was known by the family as Henry.

As early as 1870 members considered building a new church. In addition to smallpox the grasshopper plague in the 1870's delayed the building until 1877 when, as stated in the St. John's Centennial Book in 1959 "trusting in the blessings the Lord bestows (they) resolved to build a new church". The final cost of this church was \$2,087.00. Pledges of \$2,037.00 left a debt of \$50.00! In 1880 a pipe organ was built into the balcony. It took 10 years to build and had both metal and wood pipes. Two bells, still in use today, were purchased. The name Prairie Mount is cast into one, and they are inscribed with Bible passages. My grandfather, Martin Nagel, was the bell ringer, followed by his son-in-law, Harry Schneider, and today his grandsons Roger and Howard Schneider continue the tradition.

The 1877 building served the congregation until 1915 when the current brick building was built for a cost of just over \$10,600. The bells were moved to the new church. When dedicated in May of 1916 not only was the debt liquidated, there was a surplus in the treasury!

This impressive building with its magnificent stained glass windows must surely have reminded older members of similar windows in the churches of their native Germany. Two windows depict Jesus as the Good Shepherd and Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane; others show various religious themes and symbols. Each has a German inscription showing the family that had donated it.

A new pipe organ was also purchased and installed in the church balcony at this time. Originally a pump organ, it was subsequently electrified, then later moved downstairs to the front of the church where it is still in use. Many members of the Lieske family served as organists over the years.

Celebrate, Celebrate!! Despite the hardships there were times of good fellowship as well. And it is not surprising that Christmas was a special time for these early Christian settlers. Harvest time was over. It was a time to celebrate the birth of the Savior. Chil-

dren would spend weeks practicing for the Christmas Eve program at which they would retell the Christmas story (and get a bag of goodies afterwards.). At home decorations went up, baking was done, suits were pressed and dresses sewed. Many of these traditions continue into the present day.

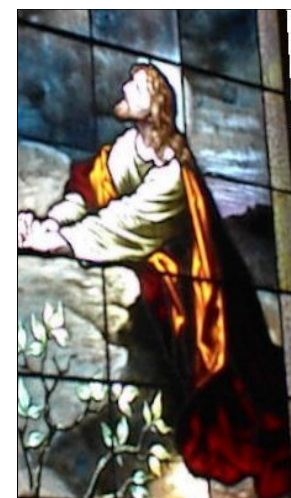
The church was festooned with lights and decorations including a tree, which, before the 1920s was decorated with candles. Ruth (Hardel) Sander whose family lived in the Rush River area, remembers that during the Christmas Eve program Mr. Reichenbach sat near the Christmas tree so that he could snuff out and replace the candles that were burning low before they caused a fire. Ruth also tells of one Christmas Eve when going home from church they got stuck and had to spend the night with neighbor's.

Sometimes we would have services on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and Second Christmas Day. And if the next day was a Sunday, some would go back again. Some of these services were in German, however, so since the younger members of my family did not understand German, we were allowed to stay home on those days.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, also founded in 1856 was located on a Lieske farm in Henderson township. It had been affiliated with St. John's from its earliest days: it helped build the school building and the children were confirmed there. The two congregations formally merged in 1891. It was at this time that my Lieske great grandparents became members at St. John's.

Although from its beginnings the congregation was served by pastors of the Missouri Synod, it was not until 1879 or 1880 that they officially became a part of that synod. Christian education was a strong focus of this synod and so it was at St. John's. A Christian Day School was inaugurated by Pastor Schulze and continued until into the 1980's. Since 1929 qualified teachers provided education for grades 1-8. My six sisters and I were students there during the 1940's and '50's.

Over the years St. John's auxiliary organizations became part of synod -wide organizations. The youth group, organized in 1932 under the guidance of pastor John Busch, affiliated with



These bells still in use today were moved from the previous church

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the national group, the International Walther League, in 1944. My friend Mary Buck and I were privileged to attend the national convention in Milwaukee in 1945.

The men's club, organized in 1944, joined the Lutheran Laymen's League in 1945. While the Ladies Aid, organized in 1919, was the oldest of the auxiliary organizations, it did not become a part of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League until 1955. Perhaps the good ladies felt that there were plenty missionary opportunities at home, as at least one commented



St. John's as it looks today

that the national organization just wanted their money!! Today, while continuing to provide the homemaking services of the congregation the women support mission projects around the world.

Today Nagel, Schneider, Willmsen, Hardel, Kube, Reichenbach and Lieske families, descendants of the pioneers who started this church still worship at St. John's.

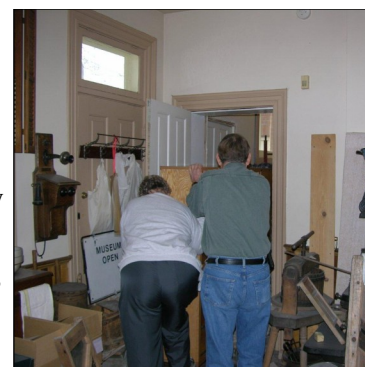
Ethel

(Continued from page 1)

That one had a flaw in it too. So they tried #3, but from a different manufacturer. That one was not approved because it had a different configuration on the wall, and the first two left a caulking outline mark. So they got #4 from manufacturer of #1 and #2. Unfortunately it too had a different wall configuration even though it had identical model numbers and same company. But #1 and #2 were made in China, and #4 was made in Ecuador. ...and we thought *everything* was made in China! So now I can use #4 to go #1. The summer kitchen which has been a photo negative warehouse for the last few years was emptied out and given a fresh look with paint and a new "old" look. There were holes rotted in the floor and Pinkse Builders repaired that too. The 1890 wooden washing machine that was falling apart was taken home by Bert Karels. The thing was truly a basket case. A week later he brought it back looking better than it has in 100 years, and working! I mentioned before that Bert can fix anything, and he keeps proving himself. Our copy machine is a hand-me-down from the Sibley County Courthouse. It gets used a lot and we love it. But it was *heavy and clumsy*. How to move it to the new addition. With Arlene Busse as navigator, Sharon Shimota as engineer, some grunting and shoving (but no scratching floors or woodwork), we managed to get the machine moved. It is already being used in its new home. Our microfilm reader needed to get moved into the new genealogy room. It was *heavy and clumsy*. We moved it 6 feet and a wheel collapsed. It was so heavy that even Sharon Shimota could not lift one side. And I could not lift the other side. Stuck! Luckily the carpenters were working that day and Charlie Alsleben and Tom Frauendiest lifted the machine in sections and carried it to its new home. There is a big oak cabinet in the east entry that held much of our genealogy material. It is over 6 feet high and 5 feet wide. How to move it into the new genealogy room? It was *heavy and clumsy*. Stuck! Luckily unsuspecting visitors Pat Steckman and Leo Berger were visiting us and were drafted to help move it to its new home in the addition. Do you see a pattern here? We have a lot more *heavy and clumsy* stuff to move. Come for a visit! We will be very happy to see you! ...heh heh :)



We were as happy to have Bert bring this back all fixed up as the lady who got this in 1895



Pat Steckman and I posing for a picture on moving day. Leo Berger is posing on the other side of the wall. You can't see him either. Come to think of it, you can't even see the bookcase. We look good, trust me.

We have new computer desks, shelves and file cabinets. These items came unassembled and David Main, Dwight Grabitske, Ray Meyer and I set them together. They were really *heavy and clumsy*. The masons were laying brick the day these items

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were delivered. They had a skid-steer with forks and took the pallet from the semi and set it in front of the door. Isakson's Plumbing and Heating happened to be installing the furnace that day and Kevin Dreier and Curt carried the boxes in for me. The pallet weighed over 1,000 lbs. Some of the boxes were well over 100 lbs - think hernia. We will slowly be moving file cabinets, genealogy material etc. into its proper place. Ian helped with the phone and Internet lines so we have service in each of the rooms. Gisela moved kitchen supplies to the new kitchen cupboards.



David Main in "Assembly Mode"



Yes, that's 30 below zero

Our post Christmas Sunday Open House was a success with a very good turnout. The day before it been very cold, but luckily it warmed up that day and the temperature shot up to 10 below zero in the afternoon, prompting people



The Petzel Ice Cream Maker



The Petzels; Ice Cream Makers. Donna on the left and Marvin on right. Mary Petersen, observer

to get out of the house and enjoy relief from the cold. Refreshments were served; a variety of cookies, coffee, hot cider and homemade ice



Mary Petersen, Ice Cream Dispenser

cream. Our special guests, Marvin Petzel and Donna **Petzel** Surfus shared the recipe that was part of their family's tradition on Christmas Eve. When their mother, Nelda Petzel, passed away in 2009, they donated some of her farm kitchen equipment, includ-



Eldrene

ing the ice cream maker, to the museum

Did you think Eldrene Elbert had retired? She is now working many hours at home entering PastPerfect information for SCHS. Dorothy Peterson picks up the computer periodically and we download her entries to the main computer to combine it with other entries, in the PastPerfect Program this is known as "Scattering and Gathering". Becky Briggs works on scanning the Ostrum Negatives at her home. All this information is backed up to an external hard drive that we keep in the fireproof safe. This, too, is done periodically to lower the risk of losing the work being done.

We have set a tentative date for our dedication ceremony as **JUNE 27, 2010**. Mark that date on your calendar with pencil. In our June newsletter we will have a confirmed date, maybe the same one. If not, it will probably be a different one.

DID YOU KNOW SCHS has all the negatives (thousands) from the William's Studio of Gaylord? The example picture below is of the Vernon and Sharon Hahn family taken in the mid 1980s. If your family had photos taken by the studio we can make copies for you for a small fee. The negatives date from 1960 until 1995. Duane Thiele started the business, later sold to Jack Schuster, and lastly, Williams Studio headquartered in Redwood Falls.

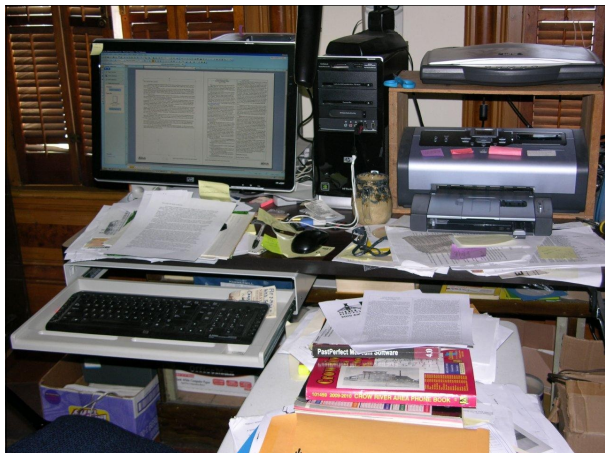
I had more to say but no one will read this far anyway. And the page is full.

Amen





OUR WORLD IN PICTURES



Mess?? What mess? I'd like to know who works by this trash heap. No, wait. That's mine.



Our first lunch in our new facilities; Dorothy Peterson, Millie Johnson, Rommie Petersen, Sharon Haggenmiller, Marie Main, Gisela Meyer



Lieske Ladies at the Christmas Open House; Dorothy Lieske Peterson, Lois Lieske Scherer, Ethel Lieske Beuch. The infant is not a Lieske.



Gisela—Scrub woman



Sharon Shimota, Photographer, cleaner, mover, shaker, Xmas Wreath & more



Gisela—Kitchen organizer



Left to Right; my car, Pastor Fischer (secretary), Ray Meffert (President), Mae Lieske (Treasurer). The ceremony putting our museum on the National Register. 1987



Some days there was congestion as SCHS



We'll call this the "piano file"



Talent? We even do some of our own wiring.. OSHA unapproved



Our Greeter; Millie Johnson



Junior Historical Society

By Terry Dempsey

Henderson High School in the late 1940's and early 1950's organized a school group that was unique. It was called the Junior Historical Society. As far as is known, this group only was in existence for three years.

Its purpose was to learn about local history, especially about Henderson, which was and still is a place of much history of Sibley County. It was not confined to those limits, but that was one of the motivations for the founding of this group. Much of the information about this group has disappeared except in the memories of those who were its members and I rely on their recollections.

Mr. Harold Haas was the faculty member that brought up the idea and started the group. His leadership was integral, not only as the founder but also as the mentor during its time at Henderson High School.

At the time this group was formed, the Sibley County Historical Society was in its' infancy. Jr. Society members were sent in teams to different parts of Sibley County to collect items. There was a wonderful response throughout the county and many items were collected. This effort was very interesting for the members as collecting the items gave the members a chance to learn more about Sibley County history. Geib-Janni Lumber, Arlington was one of the places that allowed the group to gather and store items until they could be taken to Henderson, recalled Lois (Lieske) Scherer and Dorothy (Hendrickson) Martin at a recent class reunion.

In addition to collecting items to be displayed in the Museum, the group on occasion went to the Twin Cities to visit historical sites and museums.

Another project of two members of the Jr. Society, Edythe (Foltz) Hagenmiller and Teresa (Buley) O'Brien) was to prepare a history of Henderson. This article was a very accurate and complete history of Henderson which was submitted to the Sibley County Historical Society and is available to those who want to learn more about the early days of Henderson.



Thanks to the following who have generously contributed to our funds since the last newsletter. Some of these are specifically for our building fund;

Karol A. Erickson

William J. Mickelson

Harriet Traxler

Nancy Nehl

Charles and Donna Meyer (That name sounds familiar!)

Leo Berger

Henderson Township United Fund

Christmas Open House



Officers in 1950 or 1951; Dale Pogatchnik, Treasurer, Teresa (Buley) O'Brien, Historian, Lois (Lieske) Scherer, Secretary, Verling (Pete) Trodahl, vice-president, Mr. Harold Haas, advisor, Terry Dempsey, president.

Junior Historical Society Officers; Vice President, Terry Dempsey, Historian Myrna Brahs, President Jean Geronime, Treasurer, Shirley Walsh, Secretary Ramon Odenburg





ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION AND RESERVATION

**PLEASE SEND YOUR
RESERVATIONS TO;**

**JEROME PETERSEN
PO BOX 25
GIBBON, MN 55335-0025**

**YOUR CHECK IS YOUR RESERVATION.
MAKE YOUR CHECK OUT TO SIBLEY
COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, OR
JUST SCHS WILL WORK TOO. THE COST
IS \$15.00 PER PERSON. PLEASE MAKE
YOUR RESERVATION BY APRIL 10TH TO
GIVE THE CATERER PREP TIME.**

You will not want to miss this program and meeting. Besides an interesting program by world traveler Steve Briggs, there will be other surprises. Many of us have heard Mr. Moon on WCCO telling about his journeys into the jungles of New Guinea with his MIA hunters and now you will hear first hand from someone who has gone with him. Steve was telling us of his trip at one of our porch parties last summer. It is fascinating, and he has many photos that he will show us projected on a screen.

Mary Salisbury of New Auburn has shared some of her old New Auburn pictures and written some history of New Auburn that will included in our annual report that will be handed out at the meeting.

MIA HUNTERS

Steve Briggs, Sibley County Historical Society member, joined Bryan Moon and seven other Minnesotans to the jungles of Papua New Guinea. Their mission was to locate crashed World War II airplanes in hopes of finding evidence of American MIA's. As Bryan said to the adventurers, "I can only promise you an adventure of a lifetime." Steve was not disappointed.

The group made daily excursions to local villages where the locals would hike the group out to known crash sites. One particular site, an American B-24 deep in the jungle, had probably never been visited by white people. Human remains were found nearby. The group found other American planes, as well as several Japanese aircraft (a bomber and fighter plane). The villagers and their modest lifestyles were also right out of National Geographic! The group returned home with 21 World War II dog tags.

Below and to the left are photos from Steve Briggs taken in the jungles of New Guinea. They are WWII airplane crash sites.



"Bryan Moon, President and Mission Director of MIA Hunters, takes a small group of adventurers into the jungles of Papua New Guinea. Our goal is to locate World War II Americans missing in action. We hope this leads to their return to the United States and their relatives. This mission's challenge is to follow up on leads provided to the MIA Hunters' scouts/trackers on six reported aircraft crash sites. The discoveries will be communicated to the U.S. Army's MIA recovery unit in Hawaii. The jungle mission may enter territory not previously explored by white people. MIA Hunters have made previous missions to Papua New Guinea, each of which has been successful."





Dale & Barbara Gustafson	Savage MN	Paul E Nelson	Owatonna MN
Bonnie J Anderson	Shawnee KS	Ruth Ann Buck	Arlington MN
Millie Doering	Minneapolis MN	Ray & Gisela Meyer	Winthrop MN
Steve & Becky Briggs	Eagan MN	Dean Caldwell-Tautges	St Louis Park MN
Gene & Marlene Moskop	Arlington MN	Jerome & Mary Petersen	Gibbon MN
Eunice A Beneke-Rucks	Henderson MN	Marie A Kreft	Arlington MN
Viola J Lang	Winthrop MN	Terry Goettl	Mankato MN
Darrell & Marjorie Amberson	Henderson MN	Mary & Michael Armstrong	Woodbury MN
Ron Klement	Gibbon MN	Beverly Woods	Gibbon MN
William J Mickelson	Columbia SC	Terry & Janet Dempsey	New Ulm MN
Eric C Hanson	Chesapeake VA	Leslie & Diane Pettis	Winthrop MN
William H Grimes	Round Rock TX	Janice Isakson	St Peter MN
Art & Barb Straub	Le Sueur MN	Bill & Charlotte Beseke	Arlington MN
Harvey Meyer	Gaylord MN	Karol A Erickson	Olympia WA
Joseph & Yvonne Mullen	Minneapolis MN	Joan Ewald	Brownton MN
Cindy Stevens	Lake Elmo MN	Rose S Knight	Colorado Springs CO
Lou Longhenry	Carver MN	Roger & Lorraine Just	Henderson MN
Kathy Carson	Jordan MN	Jo Ann Heinz	Henderson MN
Frank & Margaret Bina	St Paul Park MN	Joan Eckert	Gibbon MN
Harriet Traxler	Carver MN	Jon & Roxanne Butler	Hamden CT
Robert Fisher	Gibbon MN	Marjorie Matthiae	Gaylord MN
Mark Henry Alsleben	New Auburn MN	Harry W Kreger	Ocean View DE
Penny J Warner	Mayer AZ	Craig Kotasek	Le Sueur MN
Jacquelyn Mccoy	Irvine CA	Kevin Pioske	Le Sueur MN
		Orville & Joyce Doering	Oak Park Heights MN
		Verjean Schindeldecker	Excelsior 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--\$10, Family-- \$15, Business-- \$25 Send to:



Regular meetings are held at 7:30 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.





700 Main Street
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 Haggemiller	Curator
Judy Loewe	Marie Main
Millie Johnson	Sharon Shimota
Ruth Ann Buck	

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

<http://history.sibley.mn.us>

Highlights from 2009

Thank you to the 29 guides who kept our museum open Sunday afternoons, special celebrations and on location, through the 2009 season. We saw over 1200 visitors during the season, most from Minnesota, but also from other states, including South Dakota, Arizona, Oregon, Missouri, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C., Vermont, California and Texas.

Our guides signing in through this very interesting year were: Sharon Haggemiller, Judy Loewe, Arlene Busse, Al Rostberg, Diane Rostberg, Holly Harjes, Roger Harjes, Liz Kuphal, Dorothy Peterson, Sharon Shimota, Marie Main, Mary Petersen, Rommie Petersen, Gloria Sinell, Gisela Meyer, Ray Meyer, Ruth Mueller, Arline Karels, Bert Karels, Ruth Ann Buck, Mildred Johnson, Dwight Grabitzke, Doris Wigand, Joann Heinz, Philip Delzer, Arden Kroehler, Roman Jaus, Bonnie Nagel, Lowell Nagel, Jan Lundgren and Chuck Lundgren.

Special tours were given at the museum by Sharon Haggemiller, Arlene Busse, All & Diane Rostberg, Judy Loewe, Ray & Gisela Meyer and Arden Kroehler to groups from St. Paul's Lutheran, Arlington; Prairie Lutheran School, Gibbon & Fairfax, Park Elementary (80 students strong), Transit Trailblazers 4-H Club, Winthrop (32) and Red Hat Ladies of Le Sueur. Sharon Haggemiller and Holly Harjes traveled to the Sibley East School with a trunk full of items from the same time period as the book the class was reading "Little House on the Prairie". Forty Six third graders enjoyed this presentation. Sharon Haggemiller took the same trunk to Golden Hearts Living Center in Arlington, where the residents identified many items which they had been familiar with as children.

Over 500 people registered at the Sibley County Fair at a display set up in the Arlington Boy Scout Building, which had very generously been offered to us by the County Fair Board for use during the days of the fair. We hope to make this an annual event.

Candles again glowed brightly in our windows from the first event of the Christmas Seasons on November 14th. "Christmas Trimming Thru the Years" was our theme this year. We had many guests for tours, cider, coffee and cookies. The lights burned until after our final celebration on January 3, 2010. As our holiday celebration was coming to a climax our decorating took another turn when we added farmstead pictures and stories, more vintage quilts, and from our wonderful attic, farm art photographs by Rita Curran, originally displayed in 1987. These pictures were displayed in the basement with our superior year around collection of tools and newly designed signs, and where with a touch of whimsy we added bubble lights from another era.

In addition to the above named activities we also continued many of our ongoing projects such as: Adding more cemeteries to our on-line database; published 4 newsletters and 4 e-mail extras, sent to e-mail members; enrolled 49 new members; Becky Briggs continues to scan Ostrom pictures; Eldrene Ebert has spent countless hours working from her home on entering PastPerfect data.

It was an exciting year planning and overseeing the new museum addition. Over 100 friends and organizations from around the county and around the country donated to our Matching Fund Campaign initiated by the Charles & Donna Meyer donation.