

# SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Newsletter - March 2023

Volume 33 – Issue 1

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700 Main Street – P. O. Box 407 – Henderson, Minnesota 56044

Phone: (507) 248-3434

www.sibleycountyhistoricalsociety.com - schs1@frontiernet.net

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### Words from the President –

This has certainly been a winter to remember and I think all of us are looking forward to Spring.

We have our Annual Meeting coming up on April 23<sup>rd</sup> at Hahn's in Winthrop; hoping weather is good and everyone can make it. However, I regret that I will not be able to attend. I had booked the vacation of my lifetime to Ireland before I knew the date of the annual meeting. We are in need of one (1) new board member. I am quite sure, with our very competent board, all will go well. All members, guests and friends of SCHS are invited.

We will soon begin to get ready for opening the museum this year for visitors. If anyone is interested in helping clean up, please let anyone on the board or the weekly volunteers (Tuesdays & Thursdays) know.

Currently, we are in the midst of updating our computers, getting a new lawn sign, and have several other projects in the works.

*Joy Cohrs, SCHS Board President*

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### Sibley County Historical Society Annual Meeting

**Sunday, April 23, 2023 at**

**Hahn's Dining, Winthrop, MN**

#### **Schedule:**

**Check In begins @ 11:30 a.m.**

#### **Noon:**

Two-meat family style/buffet dinner with potato, hot vegetable, cole slaw, bread stick, soft ice-cream cup, beverages (coffee, milk, water)

**Cost: \$15.00/person**

**Send your Registration Information with \$15/dinner payment to**

**Diane Fredin, 25271 571<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Winthrop, MN 55396**

**You must RSVP & pay in advance!**

Cancelations before Friday, April 21, 2023 will be accepted & dinner dollars/checks received previously will be refunded.

**Annual Meeting at 1 p.m. – Program Follows Meeting**

“This Old House” – continued

## “Rush River Post Office Cabinet”

By Verne Schlueter

Another interesting find in the basement of the Sibley County Historical Museum is a cabinet used by the Rush River, Minnesota Post Office.



Rush River was a thriving pioneer town in Kelso Township. The post office was established in June of 1968 and was located in one of the two grocery stores at this time. One of the stores eventually turned into a saloon and a place where many card games were played. Thus, the village nickname: Eucherville.

In 1897 the Rush River Creamery Association was started. This creamery served the area until 1935, when a modern block structure was completed in 1954. The patrons formed Star Creamery which was in operation until 1970. The demise of the Star Creamery was attributed to farmers switching from milk cans to bulk tankers. The creamery building is still standing today and is used for storage along County Road #8.

In the early days milk was delivered to creameries in milk cans by the farmers themselves or via a trucking company. A nearby farmer, Eldred Harder, recalls one of these truckers was Adler Erickson. He drove a 1946 GMC stub-nosed truck, with a single two-speed axel and a four-speed transmission. In winter chains were a must on trucks hauling milk. Eldred recalls that in some of the worst snow storms, you could hear the truck roaring from farm to farm even though you couldn't see them! Adler also was a farmer and when he retired, a Sibley County farmer purchased this truck at his auction. It was used as a grain truck for a number of years and then retired to truck shows and parades. This truck was eventually sold to John Vanderhage, who owned a truck museum in Sanborn, Iowa (about 30 miles south of Worthington). The museum has a collection of over 300 retired trucks and two are from Sibley County.



# “The Government Room”

by Becky Briggs

In the Northeast corner of the second floor is the museum’s Government Room. SCHS has a small but meaningful collection of items related to early Sibley County government.

Henderson was the original county seat. In 1915 the citizens of the county voted to move the county seat to Gaylord. Some of the furniture and office equipment displayed was used at both sites. In the small glass display cabinet and on the well-used desks we have an assortment of old typewriters, various office machines and supplies, stamps, and seals. The glass case on the south wall holds antique survey equipment.

The map on the wall is from 1894. Grab the magnifying glass and see if you can find your ancestor’s farm site!

The case below the map holds ledgers given to us by the Sibley County Courthouse. Most of these beautiful old books are probate-related... Inheritance Record, Claim Record, and Judgment Record are some of the topics.

The uniform on display was worn by Herb Buerkle, the first Sibley County sheriff to have an official uniform. The top hat on the other mannequin was worn to the courthouse by Henderson attorney William H. Leeman.

Unrelated to county government, but stored in this room, are thousands of negatives by Gaylord photographers Jack Schuster (1960-1974) and William Wetmore (1974 -1980s). They are organized by date, and we can make positive images for you if you would like.

Government Room

Burroughs Machine & Ledgers



Survey Tools



Map on the Wall - 1894



Gaylord Photographers’ Negatives



# The Cistern Pump

By Arlene Busse

'April showers bring May flowers' and fill cisterns, if any still exist. Museum visitors may notice the hand pump located to the right of the kitchen sink, just like the one in Bob Artley's cartoon drawing shown following this page.



The museum's pump was built in 1883/4 for the A. F. Poehler home. The basement level includes a large cistern below the kitchen. Although no longer in use, it remains hidden behind the southwest wall of the basement.

Cisterns were filled by a system of roof gutters and downspouts. The Poehler house originally had wooden gutters and metal downspouts. Domestic water softeners with electrical timers and automatic regeneration was common by the 1950s. Cistern water was 'soft' but not very clean.

Cisterns needed an annual removal of sludge of bird droppings and dirt from shingled roofs. Cisterns were abandoned and new houses were built without them.

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## April Showers Bring May Flowers



According to the Internet, the source of all factual knowledge, the following short poem originated in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, written by Thomas Tusser.

“A Hundred Good Points of Husbandry”

*When in April the sweet showers fall  
That pierce March's drought to the root and all  
And bathed every vein in liquor that has power  
To generate therein and sire the flower.*

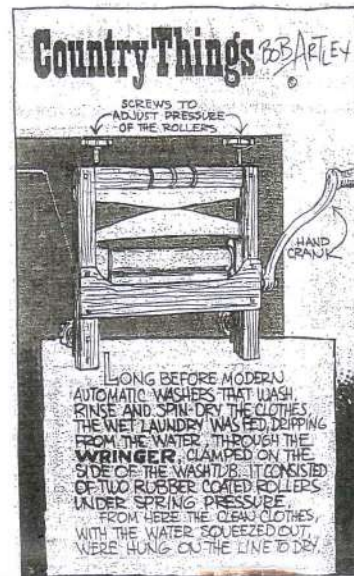
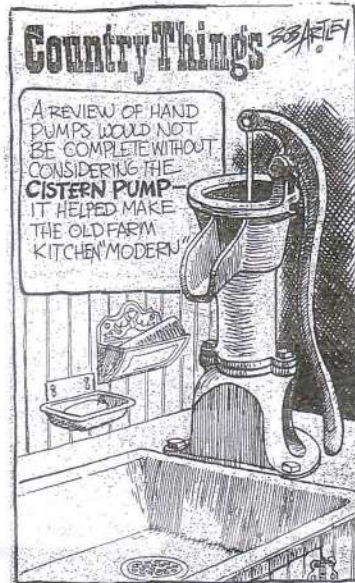
May the world titrate measures of rain, sunshine, and flowers in each of our lives.

from Wikipedia:

**Bob Artley,**

Illustrator, Commercial Artist, Cartoonist, and Writer

Museum curator, Sharon Haggemiller, has been sorting a tranche of old paper. A few cartoons by Bob Artley, probably from a 1980s Minneapolis paper, were included. Title to each of the cartoons in the series was “Country Things.”



George Robert Artley (1917 – 2011) was a professional illustrator, commercial artist, cartoonist, and writer. His books recount memories of growing up on the grandparents’ 1877 farm near Hampton, Iowa. In *Memories of a Former Kid* (1978), he was trying to portray Iowa farm life in the 1920s and 1930s through this cartoon series.

**“I wanted to show how things used to be done, the mood of the times, and the poetry of living then. I wanted to give proper perspective to a life that was good and can still be good.”**

Many of Bob’s earliest sketches were first of live subjects: pigs, since their pen was most available. These sketches appear in his 2003 book, *Living with Pigs*. He was then quoted in the *Worthington Globe Gazette*:

**“I like everything about a farm . . . . There was a downside, of course, like everything else. It was hard work—discouraging at times—but you’re outside. I liked the outside. I liked the animals. I just liked the whole farm atmosphere.”**

College, military service, art centers, occupied Bob Artley until he retired in 1986 from fulltime work. He continued drawing feature panels syndicated from Rochester, MN.

Our SCHS Newsletter may use several clippings in future issues. The museum has many country things!

## “Welcome to the porch!”

By Shirley Black, SCHS Secretary

Some architectural styles celebrate excess. Have you ever seen a house embellished with lots of decorative flourishes? You might have been looking at an example of Queen Anne architecture.

Queen Anne architecture was a style found from around 1880 to 1900. It began in England and then became very popular in the United States, lasting in the western states until around 1910. When you hear someone talking about Victorian architecture, chances are this is the style that comes to mind.

Throughout the history of American architecture, trends have come and gone. But through all those variations in style, one element has remained: the porch. Few architectural features have been more important in the formation of a unique American identity than this highly beloved porch.

The image of the front porch remains as one of the few semi-public outdoor spaces associated with community and neighborliness. Porches link us to an idealized past—one before television, email, and the business of life, when face-to-face interaction formed the core of communities. Porches add beauty to a streetscape and they also offer environmental advantages by providing shade and breeze in the summer, and, when oriented south, allowing low winter light to enter the house.

The museum's stately residence was designed in the Queen Anne style by Mankato architect George Pass. The large porch which wraps around the southeast corner of the house replaced the original porch and balcony after the turn-of-the-century.

2023 is the year for the museum's porch to receive maintenance to keep it in its turn-of-the-century beauty.



Current porch...which will undergo fresh paint and minor repairs this summer. Donations for the project are welcomed and appreciated.

Original Porch: The A.F. Poehler residence soon after occupancy in 1885. The proud owner stands on the boardwalk, while son August poses with his velocipede. The date stone (with a swan on top) and it's companion marked AFP, flank the present day portch. The short obelisk, a hitching post, still stands on the lawn.



**Sibley County Historical Society Paid Memberships  
For the Time Period of February 1, 2023 through January 1, 2024**

**Received January 2023**

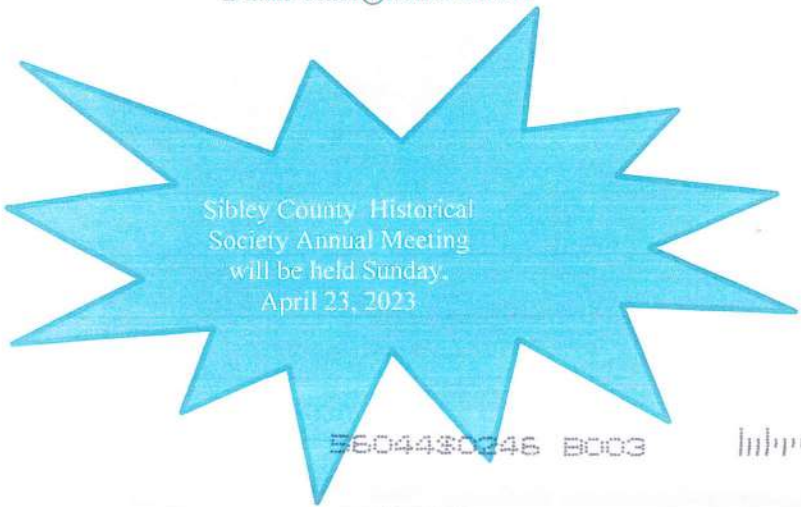
Cindy Stevens	Mankato	John & Dorothy Johnson	Gibbon
Lavonne Sandersseld	Williamsburg, IA	Duane & Vicki Stock	Arlington
Ed & Arlene Pinske	Gaylord	Barb Boisen	LeSueur
Harriet Troidahl	Gaylord	Dave & Barb Herry	Int'l Falls
Ray & Liz Jacobson	St. Peter	Birdine Battcher	Arlington
Edward Kruse	Burnsville	Charles & Karen Erickson	Mpls
Bernice Hanson	Arden Hills	Susan Peters	Palm Bay, FL
Susan Mathwig	Arlington	Don & Betty Strobel	LeSueur
Thomas Williamson	Arlington, VA	Howard & Fran Armstrong	Gaylord

**Received February 2023**

Mary E. Weller	Madison, WI	Rick & Randee Trocke	Arlington
Leon Stadtherr	Winthrop	Carrie Johnson	Poolesville, MD
Robert Fahey	Belle Plaine	Vern & Renee Ruschmeyer	Dassel
Lowell Nagel	Arlington	Eugene & Jeanette Bening	Hutchinson
Rich & Roseann Nagel	Arlington	Darrel & Jackie Alsleben	Arlington
Jim & Kathy Stumph	Arlington		
Shirley Black	Gibbon		
Michael Reinhardt	Henderson		
Diane & Brian Fredin	Winthrop		
Dale & Patricia Ericson	Gibbon		
Tom & Diane Frauendienst	Henderson		



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 E-mail: schs1@frontiernet.net



Sibley County Historical  
 Society Annual Meeting  
 will be held Sunday,  
 April 23, 2023



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**Board of Directors:**

- President – Joy Cohrs
- Vice President – Diane Fredin
- Secretary – Shirley Black
- Treasurer – Tom Frauendienst

**Board Members at Large:**

- Holly Harjes
- Mike Reinhardt
- Verne Schlueter
- Becky Briggs
- Vacant Seat

Send articles, announcements, photos, and comments to the SCHS Newsletter Editor (Diane Fredin, P. O. Box 407, Henderson, MN 56044 or e-mail them to schs1@frontiernet.net

Check your membership date on the mailing label. Memberships now run from February 1, 2023 through January 31, 2024. Mail your check and information to: SCHS Treasurer, P. O. Box 407, Henderson, MN 56044



**SCHS Membership Form**

Circle: New or Renewal

- Individual: \$20.00
- Family: \$25.00
- Business: \$50.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Sibley County Historical Society Treasurer, P. O. Box 407, Henderson, MN 56044