



Published
by the Minnesota
Historical Society
for local and county
historical societies
and heritage
preservation
commissions

THE MINNESOTA HISTORY Interpreter

April 1999 Vol. XXVII, No. 4

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Bats in Attics: A Win-Win Solution

The Hilda Bauer House in Lindstrom was donated to the Chisago County Historical Society (CCHS) in 1996 and now serves as the society's office. It was built in 1854, and since then, many different families have lived in it continuously. Its attic was also once the home for several colonies of bats.

Bob and Caroline Porter, after visiting the house in May 1996, wrote, "The attic was home to colonies of bats and Hilda climbed up the step ladder, entered through the trap door in the ceiling and removed bat dung by the buckets full." After a new roof was put on the house and it was relocated to its present address, the bats did not return to their colonies in the Bauer House attic.

While bats in attics are not a typical problem in historic preservation, and, though the CCHS was not directly affected, the story of the Bauer House showed the CCHS that bats could become a problem in historically valuable structures. In the January 1998 issue of its newsletter, *CCHS Connections*, the CCHS told its members of an illustrated talk at the Wild River Audubon Society about dealing with bats in attics of old houses and in



Courtesy Chisago County Historical Society

The Hilda Bauer House in Lindstrom in its present location.

old barns. Richard Hjort, well-known Audubon Society expert on bats, was the speaker, on "Building Bat Houses." More than 70 people attended the meeting.

Hjort's approach to solving the problem of bats inside houses is to provide alternative housing outside. If bat houses are properly constructed, bats will readily use them. In a letter to the *Interpreter*

editor, Hjort says that this approach is better than the various means used to exclude bats: It helps us, because bats are valuable animals, and it helps the bats.

Hjort addressed the fear of bats in a newspaper article, saying that if bats contract rabies, they will quickly die, and that they only harm humans if handled. "Chances of getting sick at a church picnic are definitely greater than being harmed by a bat."

Reminder: Field Workshops & Historic Preservation Meetings in April and May

On Friday, April 30, the workshops will take place at the Best Western Prairie Inn in Morris, (1-800-535-3035) and on Friday, May 21, they will be held at the Sawmill Inn in Grand Rapids (1-800-667-7508).

Workshop topics include using the arts in history programs, family programs with museum collections, affordable exhibit lighting, and documentation of collections catalogs. The registration fee is \$20. For information, contact David Nystuen at 651/296-5460 or by e-mail at david.nystuen@mnhs.org.

Remember: on each Thursday evening preceding the workshops, free and open meetings on issues in historic preservation are held; these meetings begin at 6 p.m. with refreshments. In Morris, the meeting will be on the University of Minnesota-Morris campus, and in Grand Rapids, at the Grand Rapids Central School. For information, contact Michael Koop at 651/296-5451, or by e-mail at michael.koop@mnhs.org.

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Solving the Problem of Bats in Attics

Continued from page 1

In an unsigned article in the *Bat House Builder's Handbook*, bats are said to be:

“the primary predators of night-flying insects, and they play a vital role in maintaining the balance of

nature. And, as consumers of vast numbers of pests, they rank among humanity's most valuable allies. A single little brown bat can catch hundreds of mosquitoes in an hour, and a typical colony of 150 big brown bats can protect local farmers from the costly attacks of 18 million rootworms each summer.”

Hjort offered some basic information about alternate housing for bats. They like hot places, so a bat house should be placed on the hottest part of a building, and painted black on the outside. To provide a gripping surface inside, use fiberglass window screens—definitely not metal. Bat houses should be

high on a wall, pole or tree: from 10 to 12 feet or higher. Bats mate in the fall; in the spring the females leave for what Hjort calls “birthing areas of high insect counts.”

For more information, contact Richard Hjort, 9571 270th St., Chisago City, MN 55013; 651/257-2553.



Photo by Richard Hjort; Courtesy Richard Hjort

The outside of this bat house is painted with a mixture of black and brown paint.



Photo by Richard Hjort; Courtesy Richard Hjort

In this chamber, 7/8" in height, a fiberglass window screen is stapled to one internal side that extends down about 5" and serves as a landing strip. The unpainted wood cleat at the bottom of the screen holds the screen tight. It also serves to evaporate urine, thus preventing urine running down the side of the building.

Saint Louis County Historical Society Seeks Memorabilia from Regional Veterans **by Steve Gerber**

The St. Louis County Historical Society (SLCHS) is actively collecting service- and war-related historical objects and records from the county's veterans of military service and their descendants. SLCHS seeks donations of items such as letters to soldiers from home, photographs, and artifacts of everyday life in the service. Memorabilia from families, businesses and organizations that illustrate daily life on the home front in St. Louis County are also needed, as are oral histories and stories of individual veterans.

SLCHS has also begun planning Veterans' Memorial Hall, a permanent memorial exhibit with related educational programming, to be located in Duluth's landmark Union Depot. Alexander Design

of Chicago has been selected as the design and project management contractor. A Phase I prototype of the hall will be unveiled on Veterans Day (Nov. 11, 1999). A future issue of the *Interpreter* will include further information about the Veterans Memorial Hall project.

Publicized collecting sessions have been held in Hibbing and Duluth; additional dates and locations for donations will be scheduled. For further information about the veterans' collection and the memorial exhibit project, contact Bret Thompson-Lookingback, SLCHS's American Indian collections associate, at 218/733-7584.

Steve Gerber is finance & information manager for SLCHS.



Notes About Changing a Name

In January, the Stearns County Historical Society and its facility, the Stearns County Heritage Center, began doing business as the Stearns History Museum. The decision was made only after considerable study and reflection, and it involved issues of interest to many historical organizations in Minnesota.

Over a period of eight months, the museum investigated the public's perception of its presence and services, in order to increase community awareness and attract new visitors. Through mail surveys and focus groups of both members and non-members, and after consulting with marketing and research firms, it was decided to focus on two main issues.

First, to attract more families and make membership more attractive, four special family events, with an increased number of components in each, will be scheduled each year. They will include history, entertainment and hands-on activities.

The second issue was the name change. An editorial in the November 1998 issue of *Crossings*, the museum newsletter, stated, "A great confusion exists

because so many local organizations use the word 'heritage' in their names. We are continually being mistaken for those organizations, such as Heritage Bank. Sadly, a great many in our community don't realize there is a first-class history museum in their back yard. Most often the general public assumes the Heritage Center is the Nature Center (the small building at the entrance of the [heritage]park)." The editorial went on to list other uses of the term "heritage": a park, a market, a nursing home, and the neighboring Sherburne County Heritage Center.

For these reasons, a new name was chosen. As of Jan. 1, the museum began doing business as the "Stearns History Museum." The new name clearly states that its function is a museum, not a civic center, convention center or shopping center.

For further information contact the Stearns History Museum at 320/253-8424 or by e-mail at info@stearns-museum.org. Its web site address is www.stearns-museum.org.



Exhibit on Sesquicentennial of Printing in Minnesota

To mark the sesquicentennial of printing in Minnesota, the Minnesota Center for Book Arts (MCBA) in Minneapolis is presenting an exhibit, *Faithful Mirror: The Printing Press in Minnesota*, from March 27 to June 4. The exhibit covers such events as James M. Goodhue's publication of the *St. Paul Democrat*, and of Samuel Hinton's book of common prayer in Santee dialect. The exhibit title comes from Goodhue's promise in 1852 that his paper "...shall hold a faithful mirror up to Minnesota, to reflect its true impress and image upon the world."

The exhibit is funded in part by funds from the Minnesota Historical Society's Grants-in-Aid program, the Minnesota State Arts Board, West Group, and Wet Paint, Inc. Admission is free. For more information, call 612/338-3634, or visit the MCBA Web site, www.mnbookarts.org.



Print shop workers in Minnesota.
MHS photo

Museum Fund-raising with Casino Coupons

The Minnesota Military Museum has again arranged with the Grand Casino Mille Lacs to co-sponsor a coupon program to raise funds for the museum. The program, which began on Jan. 1, lasts through Dec. 31. The museum will distribute 10,000 free coupons to visitors, who can then have the coupons redeemed at the casino for \$3 in "lucky quarters." For each redeemed coupon the museum receives \$1 from the casino. A similar coupon program in 1996 resulted in the distribution of 20,000 coupons, a 40 percent redemption rate and a return of \$7,905 to the museum.

The Minnesota Military Museum is located on the grounds of Camp Ripley near Little Falls. For further information, contact Sandy Erickson, museum administrator, at 320/632-7374, or by e-mail at mnmuseum@brainerd.net.



Hamm Family Stories: New Pogo Press Book

In *Louise's Legacy: Hamm Family Stories*, editor and St. Paulite Moira F. Harris has collected memoirs, newspaper articles, essays and photographs that tell us not only about the justly famous brewing family, but about the life and times of St. Paul and Minnesota

during the last half of the 19th century.

Louise Muller's essay, "Theodore and Louise Hamm: Their Story," is based on interviews with the five Hamm daughters, Wilhelmina, Louise, Josephine, Marie and Emma. (Louise Muller [1899-1991] was Marie's daughter.) The essay is lightly edited and rearranged from the carbon copy of the original, which is all that remains, but otherwise, it presents us with Louise Muller's account of family life as remembered by the sisters.

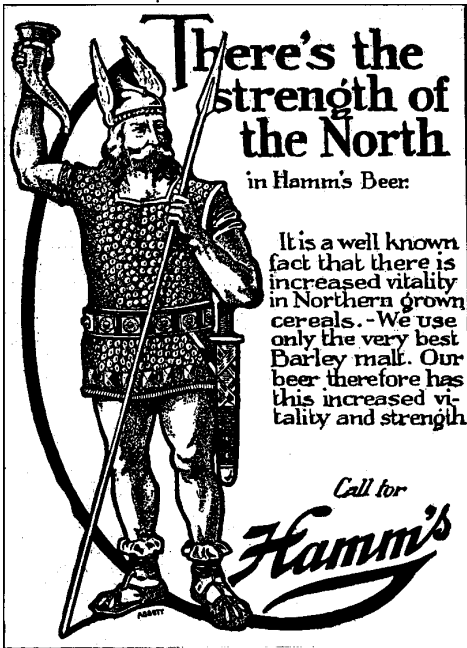
In the section titled "The Press Visits the Brewery," eight newspaper stories give a comprehensive account of the highly competitive brewing scene in St. Paul in the 1890s, significant events in the life of the brewery, and how it worked. The following passage tells, in the distinctive style of the reporting of the time, of the "star" saloon and the machinery.

"One of the most interesting rooms in the brewery is that devoted to a refreshment room for the employees. Here they may come at all hours during the day and drink as much as they please. Some employees get away with forty or fifty glasses a day, but the average workman finds from twenty to thirty sufficient. This 'star' saloon, as it is termed, is a time-honored institution without which any brewery would be incomplete.

"A visit to this great St. Paul plant is certainly among the sights of the city. A trip from the hoppers in the tower to the tubs holding 700 barrels in the basement, a glance into the storerooms, whose air is heavy with the odor of hops, an inspection of the ice machine, capable of making seventy-five tons of ice daily, which forces cold air through the pipes which are found in the storehouse and are crusted to the depth of several inches with ice crystals, a walk through rooms where the visitor feels like a pigmy beside the Brobdingnagian tanks and boilers and hoppers, is something no one interested in a great industry can afford to miss."

Another section, "The Rhine Journey," gives a partial account of the family trip to Germany in 1886. It was written by Alice Muller Franzen, a young friend invited to accompany the family. A short poem by a grandson, John T. Flanagan, and a photo essay "The Compound on Dayton's Bluff," are also included.

Paperback, 160 pages, 38 bw illustrations; \$15.95. For further information, contact Pogo Press, 4 Cardinal Lane, St. Paul, MN 55127; 651/483-4692; web site: www.pogopress.com



An ad for Hamm's beer, circa 1902

Right: Minnesota Humanities Commission logo

Humanities Commission Issues 1999 Grant Guidelines

The Minnesota Humanities Commission (MHC) makes grants to Minnesota groups and organizations for conducting public projects in the humanities, projects whose general purpose is to foster connections among humanities scholars, cultural organizations and community groups.

The commission has slightly revised its grant guidelines for 1999. Priority in grant-making will be given to applications from: senior citizen organizations, minority organizations, multi-site projects serving hard-to-reach audiences, and organizations in Greater Minnesota. These organizations are eligible for larger amounts of funds in each grant category.

The guidelines provide a full description of the general eligibility conditions, restrictions, the two general types of grants—project and network—and procedures for submitting applications. Call the MHC staff at 651/774-0105 to request a copy of the guidelines, or go to the MHC Web site, www.thinkmhc.org.



MHS Press Reprints 1850 Guidebook

In 1850, the newly formed Territory of Minnesota extended from the British Possessions (now the Canadian border) to the Iowa border, and from Lake Superior and Wisconsin to the Missouri and Whitewater rivers on the west. It was almost four times the size of the state of Ohio. The word

Minnesota, though “variously interpreted,” signified “grey, cloudy or turbid” water, and was reportedly first applied to the territory by Col. H.L. Dousman of Prairie du Chien.

These are among the first facts reported in *Map of Minnesota Territory, 1850*, a 16-page, 3" x 5" guidebook reprinted in near-facsimile format by the Minnesota Historical Society Press and published on Territory Day, March 3.

An 18" x 20" four-color map of the territory is folded into a pocket on the inside back cover. The larger

part of the map shows the chief geographic and survey lines of the vertically oriented “organized counties,” Benton, Ramsey and Washington. A smaller part

shows the entire territory, marked off in five horizontally oriented counties, from Pembina in the north to Wabashaw in the south.

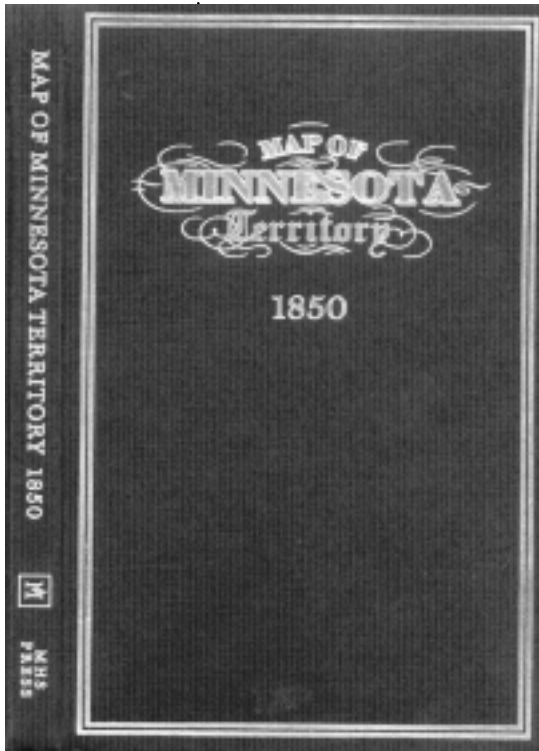
The guidebook is intended to be a collection of facts and near-facts that would be of interest to potential settlers to the region. For instance, in describing the rivers, waterfalls, and lakes, the author wrote: “The water of Devil Lake is brackish, and in dry weather the soil on its borders is covered with a saline efflorescence, hence it is a great resort for the buffalo.”

The climate is described as “more mild and temperate than persons who live farther south would imagine; one favorable character is its dryness in winter.” Furthermore, “Bilious disorders are seldom heard of in Minnesota, and the fever and ague are unknown.”

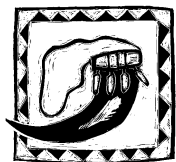
The population is given as “Sioux, 15,000; Chippeways, 6,000; Winnebagoes, 2,500; Mennomonies, 3,500.” Most of the 4,940 settlers were from the New England states.

Natural resources, products, governmental organization, and possibilities for work are all described, as are the very interesting travel routes. An eight-leg trip from New York City to St. Paul, by rail, stage and steamboat, was 1,537 miles long, took five days and two hours, and cost up to \$40 “in cabin and first class cars.”

The names of the author of the guidebook and the map engraver are not known, but the map was published by the Philadelphia map printer, Thomas, Cowperthwait and Co. The guidebook with map costs \$9.95; the map alone costs \$6.95. Contact Jeannie Richgels at 651/296-7539, or by fax, 651/297-1345.



Above: The cover of the guidebook and spine are dark green, shown here at 75 percent of its actual size.



Tobacco Records Planning Project: Status Report

Bob Horton, head of the State Archives department at the Minnesota Historical Society and newly appointed State Archivist, reported recently on the status of the 12,000 cubic feet of records collected during the recent litigation between the State of Minnesota and the tobacco industry.

The records are in a depository in Minneapolis; more are being added as the lawsuits proceed. The settlement provides that the tobacco companies are to cover costs of the depository for the first 10 years, after which the records would become the property of the State Archives or some state agency.

After a preliminary investigation of the consequences of this provision, State Archives staff decided a special effort would be needed to determine its options for making the records as accessible to the public as possible. In concert with several other interested organizations, such as the World Health Organization and the Association of Nonsmokers-MN, application was made to Blue Cross/Blue Shield for a planning grant. The first step in the planning process was taken when State Archives hosted a meeting of researchers from around the country at the History Center on Feb. 21-22.

For further information, contact the State Archives office at 651/297-4502.



Mississippi River Corridor Programs

Each year, the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, a department of the National Park Service, holds educational and entertaining programs at various sites in the Mississippi River Corridor. Below is a list of programs scheduled for the rest of 1999.

Stewardship Lecture Series. The series began in March and continues with discussions of "Cultural Resources," by John Anfinson, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers historian, with Jean Smith and Vicki Wendel, co-directors of the Anoka County Historical Society. *Tuesday, April 6, Anoka City Hall Community Room, 7 to 9 p.m.*

Bob Steinholtz, of Bristlecone Trails Consulting in Lakewood, Colo., will present an all-day workshop, "Lightly on the Land: Building Trails in Sensitive Areas." *Friday, April 16, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.*

Stories of the Mississippi, listed below, are led by Charlie Maguire, the first singing ranger of the National Park Service.

"That Cool Mississippi." Families can bring a picnic for an evening of crafts, games and song and celebrate the ice that the river once provided to help people get through the long, hot Minnesota summers. *Tuesday, Aug. 3, Grandview Park, South St. Paul, 5 to 8 p.m.*

"Bringing the Mississippi River to the Lakes." This program of river music about the river will include special guests. *Friday, Aug. 6, Lake Harriet Bandshell, Minneapolis, 7:30 to 9:10 p.m.*

"Mississippi Music Midstream" with guests Lisa Fuglie and Gordy Abel. *Thursday, Aug. 12, Nicollet Island Amphitheater, Minneapolis, 7 to 8:40 p.m.*

September (exact date to be announced): "The Mississippi Classic Canoe Race." Come to the Coon Rapids Dam for the conclusion of the canoe race from Monticello by racers from more than 12 states and Canada. After the race, join the "Singing Ranger" Charlie Maguire for some river races and river music.

Fall, 1999: CD release concert. Charlie Maguire has produced a CD of his songs about the "Great Mississippi." Join Charlie and friends in a CD release concert. (Time, place and date to be announced.)

TBA: "Mississippi River Wild Ricing." A slide documentary of how the tradition is carried on today.

TBA: "Falls of the Mississippi," a program built around a new hand-made book by Richard Arey, with illustrations by Gaylord Shanilac. Program presenters will discuss the resources of the river, and demonstrate making books and illustrations by hand. Co-sponsored by the Minnesota Historical Society.

For details about future programs, contact the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area at its web site, www.nps.gov/miss/mnrra/calendar.html.



International Museum Day May 18

The theme for International Museum Day 1999 is "The Pleasures of Discovery." Museums around the world can participate in many ways, such as holding behind-the-scenes tours or by reducing admission fees.

Other ideas can be found in *The International Museum Day Resource Guide*, available from the bookstore of the American Association of Museums (AAM). The price of the guide is \$10.50 for AAM members, \$14 for non-members.

To order, call 202/289-9127; e-mail the bookstore at bookstore@aam-us.org; or shop online at www.aam-us.org.

Heirloom Preservation Workshop April 21

You can learn the right way to preserve such treasured items as wedding dresses at "Preserving Your Heirloom Textiles," a free two-hour workshop co-sponsored by the Minnesota Historical Society Conservation Outreach Program and the Olmsted County Historical Society (OCHS). The workshop will be at the OCHS in Rochester, from 7 to 9 p.m. on April 21.

MHS textile conservator Deborah Bede will discuss causes of damage to textiles, show how to store and display heirloom pieces, and demonstrate how to pack or roll textiles for storage. Participants may bring a textile for advice on conservation.

Pre-registration is required; call 507/282-9447 for more information.



History on the Internet

From time to time, *The Interpreter* will report on Internet resources of potential interest to readers, including new web sites of historical organizations in Minnesota. (Space limitations may preclude the fuller descriptions we would like to add.). We welcome your recommendations.

- The Historical Society of Washington County is online: <http://members.aol.com/washcogen/wchs.html>.
- Remember that a list of web site links (now 28) to Minnesota historical societies is available through the MHO Directory on the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) web site, at www.mnhs.org.
- “Tech Talk” articles are going on-line soon; watch the “Preserving the Past” section in the MHS web site.
- The Y2K issue is very much alive. The December 1998 issue of *Dispatch*, the newsletter of the American Association of State and Local History, includes “Six Myths about Year 2000 Compliance” by Kathleen Krajewski, reprinted from the May 1998 issue of *Association Management*. Krajewski’s list details reasons for being extremely careful about promises and guarantees from vendors and consultants. For example, one of the myths is “All I have to do is buy the software upgrade.” She writes, “This sounds easier than it actually is. First, a Y2K-compliant upgrade must be available. Second, the upgrade must be backward-compliant—that is, your data will carry forward to the upgraded software. Third, you may lose some or all of your customization in the upgrade. And fourth, you must still rigorously test the conversion to a Y2K compliant upgrade.”
- The Museum Management Program of the National Park Service has published 96 technical leaflets about a wide variety of matters that come up in caring for museum artifacts, such as “Choosing a Vacuum Cleaner for Use in Museum Collections,” and “Modifying Museum Storage Cabinets.” The leaflets, called *Conserve O Grams*, are online via www.cr.nps.gov/csd/publications/. You can read the leaflets online if you have a PDF viewer (the Adobe™ Acrobat Reader), or you can order a subscription to the series (\$164.00) from the Superintendent of Documents at the Government Printing Office, using the order form in that same web site.



Historical Society Staff News

Stevens County Historical Society Seeks Director

The Stevens County Historical Society (SCHS) in Morris, which has gained national recognition for its programs and will soon begin a building expansion program, seeks a director to work with a board of trustees to administer its activities and supervise the paid staff and volunteer. The new director must have a bachelor’s degree in museum administration or related field and experience in public relations, grant writing, fund raising, museum management, historic preservation and public outreach activities. Salary \$20,000 - \$23,000. Applicant review begins May 1, 1999. For details, call Ward Voorhees, SCHS president, at 320/589-3411, or by e-mail: voorhees@info-link.net. Send resume and three references to Voorhees at 116 W. 6th St., Morris, MN 56267 . EEOE.

New Museum Staff Member at Nobles County Historical Society

Roxann Polzine, the new museum administrative collection assistant for the Nobles County Historical Society (NCHS) in Worthington, replaces Tom Zishka, who is retiring after working for NCHS for eight years. She will give priority to membership and collections, as the NCHS is in the process of cataloging its collections, which have been in storage since 1997, and putting the information into the computer. Roxann and her husband Alfred also have a farm outside Brewster.

AASLH Workshop: Historical Organizations & Their Communities

Each spring the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) offers professional development workshops. One that is both still available and offered in a nearby state is “Making History with Your Community,” which will be held at the State Historical Society of North Dakota in Bismarck from July 29-31. Its goal is to train history and heritage organizations in historic resource management and how to develop their role in their local communities. For further information, contact Lauren Batte at AASLH, 615/320-3203 or by e-mail at batte@aaslh.org.



Volunteer Recognition Week • April 18-24



Historical and other cultural organizations throughout Minnesota will be acknowledging the critical role that volunteers play in their work during Volunteer Recognition Week, April 18-24. Volunteers' many contributions will be recognized and honored in many kinds of special programs.

At the Nicollet County Historical Society (NCHS),

volunteers serve in the museum and museum store, as tour guides, by working on the newsletter, and by doing various kinds of work in the archives. At a special get-together to be held twice on April 19 at the Treaty Site History Center, the volunteers now serving will be recognized and new volunteers will be recruited—and all will be treated to refreshments.

The logo printed here was displayed in a larger (4" x 4") version on the front page of the March 1999 issue of the NCHS newsletter, *The Crossing*. For more information, contact NCHS at 507/931-2160.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Minnesota Association of Museums Meeting

Explore ways to develop and maintain mutually beneficial community collaborations at the annual meeting of the Minnesota Association of Museums (MAM). The meeting will be held on June 25 at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Robert Archibald, director of the Missouri Historical Society, will give the keynote address.

For further information, contact Maija Sedzielarz, secretary, Interim Steering Committee, 651/221-4554; e-mail: maija@smm.org.

The Minnesota History **Interpreter** is published by the Historic Preservation, Field Services and Grants Department of the Minnesota Historical Society, and distributed to Minnesota's county and local historical societies and heritage preservation commissions.

Readers are invited to submit information for publication. To be considered, items must reach the editor by the 18th of the month, two months before publication (example: the deadline for the October issue is August 18). Send to: **Interpreter** Editor, Minnesota Historical Society, 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul, MN 55102-1906; (651) 296-8196 or jim.smith@mnhs.org.

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On request, this publication is available in alternative formats: audiotape, large print or computer disk.

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