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Acquiring Early Photographs of Moorhead: The Art of Leverage

When photographer F. Jay Haynes began working in Moorhead in 1876, the town was barely four years old. His photographs, among the earliest taken in Clay County, provide valuable historical information about the area. The surviving negatives include 70 views in the county, and are held by the Montana Historical Society. About 10 years ago, the Clay County Historical Society (CCHS) raised enough money to purchase prints of 35 negatives. Recently, prints of the remaining 35 negatives were purchased with a donation by CCHS members Bev and Lloyd Paulson. Behind the donation there is an instructive fund-raising tale.

Last year, CCHS received a grant of \$800 from the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) for a different purpose: to purchase microfilm copies of local newspapers and other records. It was a matching grant, so CCHS had to raise \$800 from other sources to receive the MHS grant. The first \$432 came from a donation by the Hawley Fire Department, to buy copies of the *Hawley Herald*. At that point, the Paulsons told CCHS that they would make a donation to cover the cost of the Haynes prints if CCHS could raise the funds needed to complete the match for the MHS grant—and if the matching money came from local sources other than CCHS general operating funds.

CCHS contacted the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post #4628 in Barnesville, which agreed to contribute \$270 to underwrite the purchase of copies of the *Barnesville Record-Review*. VFW Post #5115 in



Haynes Foundation Collection, Montana Historical Society

The corner of 4th Street and Front Street (now Center Avenue) in Moorhead in the fall of 1877. This is one of the prints from the first set of photographs by F. Jay Haynes purchased from the Montana Historical Society.

Ulen contributed \$152 to underwrite the purchase of copies of the *Ulen Record*. The two contributions were more than enough to match the MHS grant and satisfy the Paulsons' challenge, so they then made their gift of \$350 for the purchase of the remaining 35 Haynes prints.

Source: *CCHS Newsletter*, March/April 1999. For further information, contact CCHS at 218/233-4604 or by e-mail at mpeihl@Juno.com.

Final Historic Preservation Meeting & Field Workshop on May 20 & 21

Testifying to the growing interest in the Minnesota Historical Society's public meetings on historic preservation issues and field workshops, more than 35 people attended the meeting about historic preservation issues on Thursday, March 18, and more than 70 attended the field workshops on Friday, March 19. The meeting and workshops were held in Mankato.

The final field workshop for 1999 will be held at the Sawmill Inn in Grand Rapids (1-800-667-7508) on Friday, May 21. Workshop topics include using the arts in history programs, family programs built around 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.

On Thursday, May 20, a free meeting on issues in historic preservation will be held in the Bovey Village Hall, at 402 2nd St., Bovey—just eight miles from Grand Rapids on Highway 169. The meeting begins with refreshments at 6 p.m. For information, contact Michael Koop at 651/296-5451 or by e-mail at michael.koop@mnhs.org.



Volunteers on the Front Line: Three Crucial Steps for Success

by Jacqueline K. Dohn Maas

Volunteer Coordinator, Minnesota Historical Society

EDITOR'S NOTE:

This is the first of three articles. The next one, on orientation and training, is scheduled for the June 1999 issue of *The Interpreter*.

At many museums, a visitor's "moment of truth" is often provided by a volunteer—at a greeter station, the information desk, the museum store or in a gallery. With increased importance being placed on providing excellent service to visitors, we need to ask, How are we preparing our volunteers to provide the level of service that meets our expectations?

Volunteers are unpaid staff, but managing them is as important as it is for paid staff.

Volunteers must complete an application form, be screened for appropriate skills and a "service personality," be given a position description concisely listing expectations, and be provided with training that will allow them to succeed in their tasks. Finally, because they are not taking home a paycheck in exchange for their services, appropriate recognition of volunteers' contributions is crucial.

Position Descriptions and Interviewing

The first step for any successful volunteer program is to determine exactly what it is we want the volunteers to do. Then we need an accurate position description that lists the position's responsibilities, its basic requirements, the training that will be provided, the staff supervisor to whom the volunteer will be reporting, and any benefits or value to the volunteer. Expectations should be clearly spelled out, but remember: It can't all be hard work. Volunteers need to know up front that they will be rewarded in a manner that

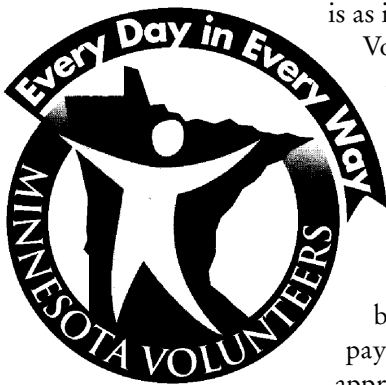
fits their time and efforts, whether it be a free membership, recognition awards or free parking. During the initial interview, the potential volunteer should be given a copy of the position description to take home.

Ideally, a volunteer would first be screened by a volunteer coordinator, then interviewed by the paid staff supervisor responsible for the volunteer's specific front-line position. When there is no volunteer coordinator position, the volunteer would interview directly with the supervisor. An interview need not be a formalized appointment or dialogue; it can be as simple as meeting for coffee, chatting about the potential volunteer's previous experiences and discussing what he or she wants to accomplish by volunteering.

The interviewer should ask probing questions to determine whether the candidate would be a good fit for the front line. Ask about previous experiences working with the public, his or her service philosophy, and examples of success working in a changeable environment.

After the interview, take careful consideration of the candidate's strengths and weaknesses. Would he or she be likely to make all visitors feel welcome? Would he or she go the extra mile to ensure that a visitor had a favorable experience? Ultimately, you must decide whether the candidate would represent your organization in a welcoming, informative, and positive manner. An ideal candidate will have an instinctive service-oriented personality.

About the author: After serving more than six years as head of the Visitor and Member Services department at The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Ms. Maas is now the Volunteer Coordinator at the Minnesota Historical Society.



The logo above, which also appeared in the April issue of *The Interpreter*, is the logo of the Minnesota Office of Citizenship and Volunteer Services (MOCVS); the slogan is this year's statewide theme. For information and statistics about volunteerism, contact MOCVS at 117 University Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55155-2200; 651/296-4731; 1-800-234-6687; or on its web site, www.mocvs.state.mn.us.

Search Begins for Annandale Pioneer Park Executive Director

The Minnesota Pioneer Park at Annandale and its board of directors are seeking a permanent, full-time executive director, who will report to the board, manage the park's 28-acre historic village, promote tourism, design and edit newsletters, develop long- and short-term exhibits, and recruit volunteers and board members. Min. qualifications: BA in history, museum studies or related field. Grant-writing proficiency essential. Computer and public relations skills also required. Salary \$18,000-\$20,000. Send cover letter, resume and three references to Search Committee, c/o Julia Barkley, P.O. Box 176, Annandale, MN 55302. Deadline: June 15.



POST-CIVIL WAR ARCHITECTURE

by

Charles Nelson

Historical Architect, Minnesota Historical Society

EDITOR'S NOTE:

This is the second in a series of five Tech Talk articles on Minnesota's architectural styles. The next one is scheduled for the Sept. 1999 issue of *The Interpreter*.

Figure 1, right above: the Thorne-Lowell house in the W. 2nd St. Historic District in Hastings was built in 1861.

Figure 2, right below: Detail of a bracket on the Archer Hotel in Northfield, built in 1877. The hotel is in the Northfield Historic District.

Editor's note: TECH TALK is a bimonthly column offering technical assistance on management, preservation and conservation matters that affect historical societies and museums of all sizes and interests. Comments and suggestions for future topics are welcome.

After a brief lull in construction during the Civil War, Minnesota witnessed a building boom in the decades of the 1870s and 1880s. During these years many communities virtually tripled in size. Population numbers exploded and industries produced their goods around the clock. The pioneer era of settlement in eastern Minnesota was over. Rail lines were extended to the west, and by the end of the 1880s virtually no burgeoning town was without a link to another. The era of the Greek and Gothic Revival style came to an end, only to be replaced by a more exuberant and substantial architecture indicative of affluence and permanence. These expressions of progress became known as the "Bracketed Styles" and the later part of the period as the "Brownstone Era."

Villas

The villa as an architectural style was introduced to the masses in Andrew Jackson Downing's popular work, *Country Houses**, along with Gothic-inspired country houses and cottages. (See Figure 1.) It was loosely inspired by the romantic image of Italian country villas, which are usually found in a natural setting. Its architectural signature was the rooftop cupola or corner tower, along with a rich adornment of brackets—ornamental, scroll-like supports under the eaves of a roof—and classically inspired columns. (See Figure 2.) The villa was exceptionally adaptable as both a country manor and an urban mansion. It was regarded as a statement of social correctness and respect within the community, and it was an exceptionally popular choice by people of prominence. When all things were considered, the Villa Style was a commodious one.

Villas commonly appeared in two forms: the cube or the "L." The basically simple mass of the building was expanded by the addition of porches, bay windows and service wings. The cube characteristically boasted an ornate cupola at the apex of a low-pitched hip roof. Porches could be either found at the front, or in some cases, extended to encircle the cube. With the "L," a prominent tower was placed at the intersection of two sections of the building; it often served the function of entry and stair tower in addition to its visual

contribution to the overall aesthetic. Common materials for construction ranged from wood to brick and stone.

The Villa Style was popular from 1860 through 1875. Its common characteristics include either a symmetrical or an asymmetrical plan, two or three stories in height, and low-pitched hipped or gable roofs with prominent chimneys. Ornamental treatments include



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carved or scroll-sawn brackets, high windows with arched or flat hoods, elaborate porches or verandahs, and the signature tower or cupola. In later years, in response to changing architectural taste as well as an attitude toward unnecessary maintenance of

*Published in 1861, the full title of the book is *The architecture of country houses; including designs for cottages, farm-houses, and villas, with remarks on interiors, furniture, and the best modes of warming and ventilating. With three hundred and twenty illustrations.*



Continued from p. 3

“frivolities,” many villas lost their cupolas or towers. Devoid of this feature, the Villa Style is difficult to distinguish from its contemporary, and successor, the Italianate Style.

Italianate Style

The Italianate Style was extremely popular for both residential and commercial buildings, and retained its popularity until the early 1890s. In contrast to the villa,



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Figure 3, the Lorenz and Lugerde Gintbner house in Wabasha, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was built in 1882.

Figure 4, right above. The Philander-Sprague house in Red Wing was built in 1868. It is in the Red Wing Residential Historic District.

Figure 5, right below. The Van Dyke-Libby house in Hastings was built in 1867, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

the Italianate building was readily adaptable to an urban setting with narrow street frontages. In these instances, ornamentation was concentrated on the principal elevation, resulting in an elaborate, and sometimes flamboyant, appearance. It was common to

employ ornamental details such as brackets and columns in pairs. Low-hipped roofs with broad eaves emphasized the massing of the building below. With the exception of the cupola or tower, the Italianate Style incorporates the same ornamental characteristics as the Villa Style, though in greater abundance. (See Figure 3.)

The Italianate Style was considered a virtual trademark of popular commercial architecture during the late 19th century. Storefronts employed cast-iron columns with classical ornamentation, and great expanses of glass in display windows. Upper floors were graced by tall, arched windows with stone or metal hoods. The facade was crowned by an elaborate cornice, fabricated of wood or pressed metal. Within the cornice were brackets, decorative panels, and an area for the owner's name and/or date. Virtually all commercial districts during the second half of the 19th century had a proliferation of Italianate storefronts.

Restoring Villas and Italianate Buildings

When undertaking the restoration of a Villa or Italianate building, the critical factor is the proper use of ornament, for it is easy to “over-ornament” such a building. The key to placement, in addition to an understanding of “high style” versus local vernacular, is symmetry and balance. Many pre-formed decorative elements were mass-produced and obtained through catalogues. These range from simple to extremely

elaborate. Some elements were fabricated on site by local builders to create an appearance of the popular image of the style. Research into the time and place, availability of materials, proficiency of craftsmen, and the economic conditions is essential.

French Second Empire: The Mansard Style

The French Second Empire Style is often called the “Mansard Style” in recognition of its most prominent characteristic, the mansard roof. The style was developed in France during the reign of Napoleon III in the 1850s, and was marked by a major remodeling of the Louvre in Paris. It became popular in America immediately after the Civil War, and continued to make its mark on residential and public architecture for nearly 20 years into the 1880s. The elaborate use of classical ornament and mansard roofs on the Old Executive Office Building in Washington, D.C., which was constructed during the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant, earned the style the nickname, “U.S. Grant Style.”

Unlike the low-pitched, hipped roof of the Italianate Style, the mansard roof is composed of a double-pitched structural system, allowing the incorporation of a full story within what normally would be considered attic



SHPo file photo



SHPo file photo



Continued from p. 4

space. The lower face of the roof is nearly vertical and is most often fitted with dormer windows. It is commonly faced with patterned slate or wooden shingles to produce a decorative effect. The upper pitch is very low and, due to the height of the lower face and the use of a cornice or curb, is nearly obscured from view. An ornamental treatment of the curb is created by the addition of a filigree iron cresting, similar to a small fence. The roof and its ornament emphasize the height of the building. It was also common to incorporate a tower (with mansard roof) on public buildings and prominent residences. With the exception of the mansard roof, other details are similar to those found in the Italianate Style. (See Figure 4 and Figure 5.)

The "L" or "T" House and the "Mechanics Cottage"

The 1870s saw the introduction of two simple building types: the "L" or "T" house and the Mechanics Cottage. Both of these buildings have been often classified as "vernacular" in recognition of their relative simple construction and appearance as well as popularity. They generally lack ornamentation particular to any style, and when ornamentation is employed, it is of the mass-produced catalogue variety.

The "L" or "T" house design is common in rural areas throughout the Midwest, and is not unique to

elements is reflected in a slight difference of materials and craftsmanship. (For example, the original section may be constructed of logs while the addition is constructed of dimension timber.) In later years, it was common to construct the entire structure at one time, although the proportions remained essentially the same as earlier examples.

Like the "L" or "T" house, the Mechanics Cottage was a vernacular urban predecessor of the Bungalow



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Figure 7. Part of the row of houses on Milwaukee Avenue in Minneapolis, built 1883-86, part of the Milwaukee Avenue Historic District.



SHPo file photo

*Figure 6.
The Peter
Roggurbush
family house,
Lac Qui Parle
County,
ca. 1895.*

Minnesota. It is often considered the predecessor of the American Four-Square or Corn Belt Cube of the early 20th century. The structure often began as a subsistence dwelling. As the owner prospered, a more impressive story-and-a-half addition would be constructed at right angles to the initial structure, resulting in the characteristic "L" or "T" shape. The addition often contained bedrooms on the second floor and a parlor/sitting room on the first floor. (See Figure 6.) The original structure was adapted to serve as kitchen and dining space. In many early examples of this building type, the difference in the construction of the two

Style. It was a simple house to satisfy the needs of small working-class families. It was hastily constructed on a narrow city lot, using a standard plan and mass-produced materials. Mechanics cottages commonly were erected in rows or groups in subdivisions called "rearrangements" to accommodate concentrations of buildings. Each cottage was identical to its neighbor. (See Figure 7.) Due to the haste and relatively low quality of construction, few Mechanics Cottages survive, and very few survive in their original groups. (Milwaukee Avenue in Minneapolis, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is a rare example of an original row of Mechanics Cottages.)

The Richardsonian Style

Although this period is widely known as the "Brownstone Era," the term is rather misleading in the context of Minnesota architecture. Virtually no brownstone is found in Minnesota. In essence, the term has been commonly taken to refer to any "rock-faced" masonry building, whether it be of limestone, sandstone, quartzite or granite. These buildings were popular during the 1880s and 1890s. They were usually large buildings, including mansions, churches, courthouses and public buildings. If any generalization can be made, it may be stated that the style and medium were not adaptable to small-scale buildings. (See Figure 8 and Figure 9.)



Continued from p. 5

Universally recognized as the founder of the Brownstone Era, Henry Hobson Richardson was an architect with a deep interest in the Romanesque architecture of Medieval Europe. Through his creative genius, Romanesque motifs were given new



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interpretation in a distinctive and popular style, which architectural historians label “Richardsonian” or “Richardsonian Romanesque.” Professional architects of the day cultivated the enthusiasm of the public to embrace the Richardsonian, and the style became fashionable almost overnight.

Characteristics of the style include a strong sense of massiveness, rusticated or rock-face

masonry, low semi-circular arches (often called Syrian arches), elaborate carvings, polychromatic panels, towers, and steeply pitched slate or tile-clad roofs. Bands of windows were often divided by clusters of small pilasters called colonettes. Interiors were remarkable for their use of intricate detailing, fine materials and decorative opulence.

Due to their scale and cost of maintenance, many Richardsonian mansions have been lost. A number have been converted into adaptive uses such as multi-family residences or institutions. Few remain as originally designed for single family occupancy. Public buildings such as schools and seats of government have met similar fates. A number of Richardsonian courthouses survive in Minnesota, but they have been extensively altered by additions and remodeling. All but a handful of multi-story Richardsonian urban buildings were demolished to make way for the urban renewal projects of the 1960s. Of the once-prolific style, only churches have fared well. Well-constructed, and located within residential neighborhoods, most continue to serve their congregations to this day.

Charles Nelson, Historical Architect at the Minnesota Historical Society since 1971, is known throughout Minnesota for his preservation work, presentations and workshops.

Restoration of Richardsonian Buildings

The significance and relative rarity of Richardsonian buildings today is justification for comprehensive and ongoing programs of restoration and stewardship. Common problems inherent in the building type are the effects of weathering on the stone walls and mortar joints, not to mention the extremely susceptible carved ornamentation that embellishes them. Although some Minnesota Richardsonian buildings were constructed of granite or pink jasper (Sioux quartzite), most were constructed of limestone and/or sandstone. Both of the latter types of stone are exceptionally vulnerable to moisture and erosion, which eventually results in deterioration of entire faces of stone blocks or elements. As the stone continues to erode, the disintegration increases at a rapid rate, allowing moisture to enter the walls and cause the stones to spall.

Of paramount concern is keeping the roof and parapets water-tight and the mortar joints sound. Further, it is important that the mortar used in the joints be a soft mortar (avoid Portland cement, which is extremely hard), which allows the stones to expand and contract with changes of temperature. A hard mortar restrains the



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Figure 9. H. Alden Smith house, Minneapolis, 1887, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

movement of the stone and, if the expansion pressure becomes too great, the stone will literally crack and explode.

Also, avoid application of water-repellent coatings, which seal in moisture; freezing temperatures will turn the moisture to ice and crack the stone. Ongoing research into modern techniques for stone conservation includes testing of stone consolidants to retard erosion and solidify weakened stone. However, many of these techniques are in their experimental stages and must be adapted for specific climatic conditions and stone types. The best counsel in the matter of stone buildings is to obtain the services of a professional masonry contractor and to avoid any processes that are not time-proven and reversible.



Project Breckenridge Presents Territorial Program

In 1990 a group of citizens in the Breckenridge area formed Project Breckenridge as a way to organize a variety of activities, many of which are historical in nature, to promote the health of the community. The group formulated a 20-year comprehensive plan, and in 1996, organized itself as a non-profit corporation.

Projects so far completed include a historical walking trail in Breckenridge, a marker at the headwaters of the Red River, and acquisition of a pre-1880s log cabin. Plans for the future include moving and preserving the cabin, acquiring and preserving Breckenridge Depot, and many other activities.

In cooperation with the Wilkin County Historical Society, Project Breckenridge will present "Sunset at the Headwaters—Rivers to History," on July 22. The program includes rides on territorial school buggies (and possibly covered wagons), an ice cream social, a

bonfire with American Indian dancers from Circle of Nations Indian School in Wahpeton, N.D., and a "Sesquicentennial Historical Pageant," *Rivers to History*.

The pageant presents many historical characters, including Gov. Alexander Ramsey; Straight Arrow, a Dakota Indian; and Harriet Bishop, the first public school teacher in Minnesota, all of whom are portrayed by local citizens. The pageant will relate territorial days to the Red River Valley through stories of the importance of

rivers as the territory's only roadways.

The program will be held at Welles Memorial Park at the Headwaters of the Red River of the North, starting at 5 p.m. For further information about the program or Project Breckenridge, write to 404 N. 14th St., No. 1, Breckenridge, MN 56520, or call 218/643-3942.



Courtesy Project Breckenridge, photo by Naomi Laker

Right: The stage of the Welles Memorial Park in 1997, during the "Pioneers of the Prairie" pageant. This is also the site of the 1999 pageant.

Brown County Historical Society Raises Funds with Grocery Purchases

As part of its community outreach initiative, the Hy-Vee Food Store in New Ulm operates a program designed to help non-profit organizations raise funds and at the same time increase its own business. This is the second year the Brown County Historical Society (BCHS) has participated.

Eligible organizations participate three times during a 12-month period, on three consecutive days each time. The BCHS supplies members and friends of the organization with coupons, or "Fund Raising Cards," on flyers inserted in the BCHS newsletter. (Which, it should be noted, has been handsomely re-designed.)

The card-bearer signs the card and hands it to the cashier, who records the date, the amounts of the

purchase and tax, and signs the card. After the three-day event, the gross receipts are tallied and the BCHS receives 5 percent of the total, in cash or 7 percent in credit for groceries. This year, it has chosen Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays in March, June and November. Last year the Hy-Vee program generated \$141 for BCHS.

This program and four other mini-fund raising efforts with local businesses not only produce extra revenue, they help maintain a public presence for BCHS. For further information, contact Bob Burgess at BCHS, 507/233-2616, or by e-mail at bchs@newulmtel.net; Karen Christenson at Hy-Vee can be reached at 507/354-8255.



Critical Praise for Lyon County Historical Society Book on History of Marshall

A review of *Prairie Town: A History of Marshall, Minnesota, 1872-1997*, by John Radzilowski, published in 1997 by the Lyon County Historical Society (LCHS) appeared in the Spring 1999 issue of *Minnesota History* (the quarterly journal of the Minnesota Historical Society). It is an informative review, and members, staff and friends of historical organizations in particular will find it thought-provoking as well.

Reviewer Christopher Kimball, chair of the history department at Augsburg College, says that the book "offers a narrative that adopts an appropriately boosterish tone without losing sight of larger historical developments." Radzilowski "paints a positive portrait of Marshall, [but] does not shy away from dealing with less attractive episodes." These

include the town's struggles with natural forces, and how "the actions of Marshall's boosters and builders have had unintended consequences."

Kimball says that the author's ability to present the story of the one place from several perspectives, such as urban, regional and national viewpoints, "is surely due to his background as both a long-time resident of Marshall and as a professionally trained historian." He goes on to say that "locals will treasure" the book, but people less familiar with Marshall, such as himself "will also learn much from his account about the region, the state, and the nation."

For information about the book, contact the LCHS, 507/537-6580. For information about *Minnesota History*, call the MHS Press, 651/297-3243, or visit its web site, www.mnhs.org/market/mhspress.



Correction: The announcement of the Minnesota Center for Book Arts' new exhibit on printing, on page 3 of the April issue of *The Interpreter*, was accompanied by a photograph whose caption should have included the information that it was a photograph of a printer's office ca. 1910, taken by Guy M. Baltuff.

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