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Clay County Historical Society Recovers from Water Main Flooding

As briefly noted in the Sept. 1998 Interpreter, the Clay County Historical Society (CCHS) in Moorhead suffered considerable water damage from a broken water main on July 19. The main broke on the east side of the Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center (HHIC), which houses CCHS, and sent water into the lower two floors, where archives, office, artifact storage and exhibit areas are located. In "A Flood and the Recovery," (CCHS newsletter, Sept./Oct. 1998), Collections Manager Pam Burkhardt and Archivist Mark Peihl offered the following tentative explanation.

"Earlier the previous week, contractors had dug the basement for part of our coming new exhibit area on the east side of the existing building. Apparently on Saturday, July 11, heavy rain eroded down the clay bank of this pit leaving a buried water main without adequate earthen support. Vibration from water flowing through the pipe shook a connection loose. Water flowed out, filling the excavation pit like a muddy swimming pool..Water from the pit may have filled the drain tiles under the building and overwhelmed the sump pump in the furnace room in Level 3's northeast corner. At any rate, water poured out of the furnace room and flowed down the halls toward our exhibit area on Level 4. Water pooled in this lowest level much faster than the sumps could keep up."

By chance at about 7:30 a.m., two residents of a high rise apartment building next door to the Hjemkomst Center noticed water gushing into the pit and called city authorities. Calls were made to the building director, the architect of the new construction, and CCHS staff members, who arrived shortly after 8 a.m. Staff members from several city departments, together with volunteers-including board members



Courtesy Clay County Historical Society

These cases and furniture belong to the CCHS "Inside, Outside, Upside Down" exhibit. Note that the case in the foreground is afloat, and its decorated children's shoes are 2 inches above the water. Other cases, such as the one on the left, were tipped on their sides by the water. The exhibit had to be dismantled.

from both CCHS and HHIC-turned the power off, pumped enough water, and removed enough mud to allow staff to enter the building and survey the damage by 10:30.

Water on Level 3 was about two inches deep, but on Level 4 it was up to 16 inches deep. Damaged items included exhibit cases (see photo, left); more than 2,200 negatives (which required immediate attention); 72 of the 194 artifacts on display; and about 100 furniture items.

A professional cleaning company quickly sent a crew; by Sunday evening, the floors were mostly dry, and the exhibit cases containing wet artifacts had been emptied. CCHS staff members contacted many professional conservators for advice on rescuing artifacts and exhibits. They noted the particularly valuable help of Kristen Cheronis of the Upper Midwest Conservation Association in Minneapolis.

Burkhardt and Peihl continued, "At the end of the second week of cleanup, artifacts which needed



In its January/February 1998 newsletter, the Washington County Historic Courthouse recognizes the contributions of its volunteers. That issue includes three pages of photographs from the volunteer recognition event held in December 1997, an announcement of Minnesota Volunteer Recognition

Other recognition methods used by the Courthouse include a "Friend of the Courthouse" award, which is a piece of 130-year-old wood saved from a construction project and inscribed with a small plaque. Another is to publicize the recognition. For example, when a group of volunteers gathered at the

Week, which was held in April, and a letter of appreciation from Myra Peterson, chair of the Washington County Board of Commissioners. The newsletter is one of the ways the Courthouse recognizes the contributions of its volunteers; it regularly features photographs of volunteers at work at their various jobs.

Reportedly, at times they protest mildly about

being photographed for the newsletter, such as when they are at work while lying on the floor or when they are modeling a Victorian-style corset for a seminar, but they overcome their reticence with good humor.

Courtesy Washington County Historic Courthous COURTHOUSE

courthouse in early 1998 for breakfast, they posed for this photograph (left), which was then distributed for publication in newspapers of the volunteers' home areas

Gudrun Nordby, newsletter editor as well as volunteer coordinator, notes in a letter, "Our volunteers are our

best ambassadors. Without them this Minnesota landmark would be a very different place."

For further information, contact the Washington County Historic Courthouse, 101 W. Pine St., Stillwater, MN 55082; (651) 430-6233.

Recovery from Flooding at Clay County Historical Society

Continued from page 1

drying had been dried. Temperature and humidity readings had been returned to normal in a controlled manner. The need to move artifacts quickly from impacted areas and to clear storage areas for cleaning left many artifacts and other property temporarily stored in aisles, on shelves and wherever there was an empty spot. Cleaning and returning these items to their proper storage areas is ongoing."

In his "President's Report," also in the Sept./Oct issue of the newsletter, CCHS president Paul Harris asked, "How could this have happened? We have asked ourselves that question, but we must leave the answer to the responsible parties, their insurance companies and perhaps the courts. The fact is that we have little ultimate interest in assigning blame. Our artifacts, because they are basically irreplaceable, are also practically uninsurable. When we lose something, the cost cannot be measured in dollar amounts. That is why, rather than pointing blame, it was far more important to intervene as early and aggressively as possible to minimize the damage."

He went on to express gratitude to Mardrie and Kenneth Fladgard, the high rise residents who saw the flooding and acted appropriately so quickly, and to the numerous volunteers who helped. "Their assistance was vital to our efforts to get things dried as quickly and safely as possible. You know who you are; we know who you are. Thank you so much."

The newsletter article contains a detailed, very useful chronicle of the recovery work, including informative photographs.

For further information, or a copy of the article quoted here, contact Margaret Ristvedt, CCHS office manager, at (218) 233-4604.

Photo, right: Washington

County

Historic

Courthouse

volunteers on the steps of the

courthouse, in

early 1998.





New Directors for Brown and Scott County Historical Societies

Robert J. Burgess began work as the ninth executive director of the Brown County Historical Society (BCHS) on Sept. 14, 1998. Born and raised in LeSueur County, he graduated from Minnesota State University in Mankato and went on to receive a master's degree in anthropology from Colorado State University, Fort Collins. Formerly director of the Butler County Historical Society in Kansas and the Kansas Oil Museum in El Dorado, Burgess recently worked on the restoration of a 1930s Star Spudder oil rig drilling machine and the installation of an 1898 Historic Flinthills Windmill.

John S. Gutteter, the new executive director of the Scott County Historical Society (SCHS), was formerly the assistant director/curator of collections for SCHS. He has a bachelor's degree in American Studies and a master's degree in Public History from St. Cloud State University. Prior to his appointment, Gutteter worked at the Oliver H. Kelley Farm in Elk River, one of the Minnesota Historical Society's historic sites, and as program manager for Chequamegon Center Inc., a nonprofit organization for revitalizing Ashland, Wis., through historic preservation. He succeeds Lee H. Smith, who retired after serving five years as executive director. Other new SCHS staff members include Cori Wagener, curator of collections, and Judith Hentges, education coordinator.

For information contact: BCHS: 2 No. Broadway, New Ulm, MN 56073; (507) 354-2016; SCHS: 235 Fuller St. S., Shakopee, MN 55379; (612) 445-0378.

Swedish Heritage Projects

Three-county Collaborative Tourism Passport

"The Art and History Passport for Isanti, Kanabec and Chisago Counties," a free booklet listing artists, public artwork and festivals in the three counties for the next two years, has been published by KIST: Kanabec-Isanti Swedish Tourism. The purpose of the passport program is to increase public awareness of the arts in East Central Minnesota and promote cultural tourism through the arts.

Each copy of the booklet is accompanied by a few stickers so that persons holding the passports can keep



track of their progress in visiting public artworks. When the the activities listed in the book are completed, the passport holder can take the passport to any one of the three county historical societies for "validation."

The program was funded by the East Central Regional Arts Council,

with support from the Minnesota Legislature.

The passports are available for residents and visitors, and can be obtained at each of the three county historical society offices. For more information, call (612) 689-4229.

Two Exhibits Open Christmas Season at American Swedish Institute

St. Lucia Day, Dec. 13, initiates the Christmas season in Sweden. In honor of that tradition, an exhibit titled *Illumination of a Saint: The Legend of Santa Lucia*, opens at the American Swedish Institute (ASI) on Nov. 27 and continues through Jan. 10, 1999.

Photographs and text tell of Lucia, a fourthcentury Christian martyr, a symbol of light and hope. According to one legend, as a young Sicilian woman, she gave up her dowry, said she was a Christian, and was burned to death as a witch. In another, she came across a lake in Värmland, Sweden, in radiant white, bearing gifts and food for the famine-stricken people.

In Sweden, St. Lucia Day is celebrated in the morning of Dec. 13. Lucia wears a white gown with a red sash and a crown—either of lighted or batteryoperated candles—and serves coffee, buns and cookies.

The exhibit *Christmas in Scandinavia* also opens Nov. 27 and runs through Jan. 10, 1999. Holiday tables are decorated with trees, candles, cookies and china representing the Christmas traditions of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland and Finland.

In addition to the exhibits, a Lucia pageant will be held on Saturday, Dec. 12, and Sunday, Dec. 13, at 2 p.m. Admission is by advance tickets only. The ASI is located at 2600 Park Ave., Minneapolis, in the Swan J. Turnblad mansion, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Call Jan McElfish at (612) 871-4907 or (612) 870-3342 for museum hours and ticket prices.





Right: Logo of Anoka

County

Historical

newsletter, the Colonial Hall

Society's

Crier.

Anoka County Newspapers Publish Local History Column

Since January 1995, Sharron Stockhausen has been contributing a column about county history to

the ABC Newspapers, which publishes the columns weekly in the Anoka County Union, Blaine-Spring Lake Park Life, and the Coon Rapids Herald. Stockhausen lives in Andover, and does most of her research in the Anoka County Historical Society (ACHS) library and the archives at ABC Newspapers. The ACHS staff help her in generating ideas, editing and conveying the final copy to Peter Bodley, managing editor of the ABC Newspapers.

The idea for the column, which is called "Reliving the County's History," originated in conversations in 1993 with Jim Mattson, thenpresident of the ACHS, and Jean Smith and Vickie Wendel, co-executive directors. They were discussing ways to share information about county history more



widely, and Stockhausen, who had been writing professionally for several years, offered to write the

> weekly column if satisfactory arrangements could be made with the ABC Newspapers. The rest, as they say, is history.

In an article in the August 1998 issue of Colonial Crier, the ACHS newsletter, Stockhausen adds a note to her readers: "We couldn't do the column without Peter Bodley supporting us, so if you're reading the column and if you enjoy it, it would be wonderful if you would let Mr. Bodley at the ABC Papers know. I'll keep writing as

long as he keeps publishing, but he needs to know what you, his readership, thinks." Stockhausen also suggests you let your county commissioners know how much you value history.

For further information, call ACHS at (612) 421-0600.

Itasca County Historical Society Commemorative Village Collection: 1998 Edition

Each year since 1995, the Itasca County Historical Society (ICHS) has produced a miniature replica of a turn-of-thecentury historical place in

Right: The photo of the Grand Rapids Public Library in the ICHS descriptive brochure. Grand Rapids. The series, called the "Heritage of Grand Rapids Commemorative Village Collection," will ultimately consist of 10 figurines. The 1998 edition is a detailed sculpture of the Grand Rapids Public Library, which was completed in 1906. Built with funds from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation, it has since been remodeled and enlarged, so that only one exterior wall of the original Carnegie Only 2,500 copies of each figurine are made, and each one comes with a certificate of authenticity. Each copy of the library figurine costs \$24.95. Previous editions in the series include the Grand Rapids

> Central School in 1995 (\$25.95), Hotel Pokegama in 1996 (\$25.95), and St. Joseph's Catholic Church in 1997

(\$26.95). The shipping and handling cost of \$8 for each figurine is waived when the order is picked up at ICHS.

For more information and an order form, write or call ICHS, 10 N.W. 5th St., P.O. Box 664, Grand Rapids, MN 55744, (218) 326-6431. Allow six to eight weeks for orders to be filled.

Editor's Note

The Tech Talk article originally scheduled for this issue, "Treatment of Firearms, Part II," will appear in the December issue of the Interpreter.

design remains today, facing the library parking lot.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS Two Conferences Announced Call for Papers

AASLH 1999 Conference

Caring for Our Treasures at the Millennium is the topic of the 1999 joint meeting of the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) and the Mid Atlantic Association of Museums. The meeting will be held in Baltimore, Md., from Sept. 29 through Oct. 2, 1999. Proposals for presentations related to the conference theme are welcome, and are due **Nov. 20, 1998**. For a copy of the proposal form and more information, call AASLH at (615) 255-2971.

Norwegian American Conference in 2000

"Vandringer: Norwegians in the American Mosaic, 1825-2000," a conference co-sponsored by the Norwegian-American Historical Association and the Minnesota Historical Society, will be held in St. Paul on April 6-8, 2000. If you would like to present a paper at this conference relating to Norwegian immigrants, their descendants, and their multicultural neighbors in Minnesota and throughout North America, please do so by March 1, 1999.

Papers should be in English and deliverable in no more than 20 minutes. Comparative studies are encouraged; topics of interest include emigration from Norway; relation of Norwegian minorities to other minorities; environmental studies and immigration; Norwegian American art, architecture and material culture; education and religion; identity, gender and leadership; music and literature; and ethnic work patterns. (*Vandringer* roughly means "wanderer.")

For further details, contact J. R. Christianson, History Department, Luther College, Decorah, IA 52101, telephone (319) 382-4362, fax (319) 387-2158. E-mail: christjr@luther.edu.

Program for Archaeology Volunteers Underway

The Institute for Minnesota Archaeology (IMA) has begun its 1998-1999 Volunteer Laboratory Program. IMA invites people of all interests and skills to "explore the world of archaeology" by joining IMA staff in working on projects in the laboratory.

The prgram is held on Wednesday evenings through May 1999 from 5 to 7 p.m. For more details, call IMA at (612) 627-0315; the Institute is located at 2635 4th Street, S.E., Minneapolis.

Conflicts of Interest in Tax-Exempt Organizations: New IRS Ruling Proposed

According to the October 1998 issue AVISO, the monthly newsletter of the American Association of Museums (AAM), the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has proposed a new regulation concerning conflicts of interest for charitable organizations. In particular, the regulation affects cases in which "insiders" are suspected of profiting improperly from the organization they control or influence.

The new regulation is the result of Congressional action prompted by a scandal at United Way two years ago. In that case, the *AVISO* article states, "The charity's executive director spent lavishly on himself and steered lucrative contracts to family members. At the time, only an extreme sanction was available to the IRS: revocation of the organization's tax-exempt status. Given that such an action effectively puts a charity out of business, the IRS almost never invokes it. The new rules give the IRS the power to invoke a less or intermediate sanction by fining the individuals and requiring them to repay the charity that they abused."

For copies of a memo describing the new rules in more detail, contact Andy Finch, AAM Government and Public Affairs, at (202) 289-9125, fax (202) 289-6578. E-mail: afinch@aam-us.org.





RESOURCES

Books and Materials about Upper Midwest Region on New Web Site

A wide variety of literature and printed material about Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin has been

Right: The image from the Pioneering the Upper Midwest home page.

made available on the Internet as Pioneering the Upper Midwest: Books from Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, ca. 1820-1910.

The 138 works include firstperson accounts, biographies, promotional literature, local histories, ethnographic and antiquarian texts, colonial archival documents, and other works drawn from the General Collections and Rare Books



and Special Collections Division of the Library of Congress.

> Topics include the land and its resources; conflicts between settlers and American Indians; experiences of pioneers, missionaries, soldiers, immigrants and reformers; growth of local communities and cultural traditions; and development of regional and national leadership in many fields.

The web address is:

http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/umhtml/umhome.html

Legal Issues in Managing Museum Collections

A revised edition of A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections by Marie C. Malaro has been published by the Smithsonian Institution Press. In this "completely revised, expanded and updated second edition, the author offers the only comprehensive discussion of the legal questions faced by museums as they acquire, use and refine their collections." The author also suggests guidelines for internal policies to

avoid legal complications. \$50 cloth; \$27.50 paper. To order, contact Smithsonian Institution Press, P.O. Box 960, Herndon, VA 20172-0960; call 1-800-782-4612. Postage and handling for the first book ordered is \$3.50, and \$1 for additional copies.

Source: Smithsonian Institution Research Reports, Summer 1998.



New Atlas of East Central Europe Available at Discount

The Historical Atlas of East Central Europe by Paul Robert Magocsi of the University of Toronto was published in 1993. The first volume in the History of East Central Europe series, it is available for \$31.96 (a 20 percent discount) if ordered from the Friends of the Immigration History Research Center (IHRC).

The atlas covers all of East Central Europe from the early fifth century to January 1993. Text and maps illustrate changing boundaries, economic developments, ecclesiastical structures, education and culture, demography and ethnicity, and military affairs of all lands within present-day countries. Also included are

the eastern part of Germany (historic Mecklenburg, Brandenburg, Prussia, Saxony and Lusatia), Bavaria, Austria (northeastern Italy [historic Venetia]), the lands of historic Poland-Lithuania (present-day Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine up to the Dneiper River), Moldava and western Turkey. The index contains 5,000 names in 26 languages.

For an order form, contact the Friends of IHRC, University of Minnesota, 826 Berry Street, St. Paul, MN 55114; phone (612) 627-4208; fax (612) 627-4190. Tax and postage and handling charges are additional.



Grants from the Institute for Museum and Library Services

General Operating Support, Conservation Project Support, Museum Assessment, Conservation Assessment

The Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS), a federal agency in Washington, D.C., recently announced its 1998 awards to museums in the four categories listed below, totalling \$19,169,318.

General Operating Support (GOS) grants are two-year awards of unrestricted funds for ongoing institutional activities, (generally recognized as the hardest kind of funds to raise). These awards are for up to \$112,500, and are highly competitive; they provide "national recognition for museums that demonstrate the highest professional practices." Minnesota recipients: Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum, Minneapolis: \$112,500; Cokato Museum, Cokato, \$14,805; Kanabec County Historical Society, Mora: \$27,957; and the Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul, \$112,500. Next deadline: Jan. 22, 1999.

The Conservation Project Support (CP) program awards two-year grants (matched 1:1 in cash or inkind) up to \$50,000 and up to \$75,000 for Exceptional Projects (that benefit multiple institutions). These awards assist museums in developing a "logical, institution-wide approach to caring for [not management or maintenance of] their living and non-

Libraries

IMLS makes awards to libraries as National Leadership Grants, Native American Library Grants and Native Hawaiian Library Services grants. The next deadline for these categories is April 30, 1999.

living collections." Minnesota recipients: Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, \$3,000; Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul, \$50,000; Murphy's Landing, Shakopee, \$43,013; and the Scott County Historical Society, Shakopee, \$9,965. Next deadline: March 5, 1999.

d rants. for April Center of the North Woods, Sandstone, \$1,775; Laura

Ingalls Wilder Museum, Walnut Grove, \$1,775; and the Pipestone County History Museum, Pipestone, \$1,775. Next deadlines: I: Oct. 30, 1998; April 30, 1999; II: March 12, 1999; III: Feb. 26, 1999.

The Conservation Assessment Program (CAP), whose grants serve as an adjunct to CP grants, awards one-year grants in varying amounts for conservation survey projects. CAP supports a two-day site visit by a conservation professional (by an architectural conservator for museums in historic structures) and up to three days to write the report. Minnesota museums receiving awards were: Anoka County Historical Society, Anoka, \$5,430; Depot Museum, Sleepy Eye, \$6,190; and the Pavek Museum of Broadcasting, St. Louis Park, \$3,020. Next deadlines: Dec. 4, 1998; Dec. 3, 1999.

Museum Leadership Initiatives

Fourteen museums also received grants in the new category of *Museum Leadership Initiatives* (MLI); these awards are for innovative, nationally significant programs that seek to "cultivate interaction between and among museums and community-based organizations." The Science Museum of Minnesota (SMM) in St. Paul was awarded \$49,730 for Studio 3D, its two-year pilot project with the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board and the Minneapolis Community and Technical College.

MLI awards are two-year grants (matched 1:1 in cash or in-kind) up to \$50,000 for planning or implementation projects; the next application deadline is June 18, 1999.

Professional Services Program and Museums for the Millennium

IMLS also awards grants for museums in the category of the *Professional Services Program* (PSP), which awards two-year grants up to \$50,000, most of which are for professional development opportunities. IMLS is particularly interested in (a) training staff members of small museums and (b) developing cultural tourism "to enhance the role of museums in promoting and benefiting from cultural tourism." In 1998, awards totalling \$310,294 were made; no Minnesota museum received one of these awards.

The new *Museums for the Millennium* grants program, part of PSP, supports the development of state-wide museum millennium initatives that emphasize cultural tourism or family celebrations. Up to \$10,000 is available for museum organizations or museum associations in every state. In 1998, awards totalling \$433,832 were made in 44 states; no Minnesota museum group received one of these awards. The next deadline for PSP awards is July 1999.

For more information, including grant guidelines, contact IMLS, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C., 20506; (202) 606-8536; or visit the IMLS web site, www.imls.fed.us/.







AASLH 54th Award Program

The American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) recently announced its 54th annual awards program. The awards recognize groups and individuals who attain standards of excellence in the collection, preservation and interpretation of state, provincial and local history throughout North America.

Nominations must be sent to the state or regional chair of the awards program by March 1, 1999. The awards will be announced on July 15, 1999. Awards are made in four categories.

Award of Merit, for a performance deemed excellent compared with similar activities in North America.

Certificate of Commendation, for excellence within the context of available means and regional standards.

NOTE: Nominations for the two awards listed next are made only through regional chairs of the AASLH awards program; do not gather documentation before contacting the regional chair (see right). Albert B. Corey Award, for primarily volunteeroperated historical organizations that best display the qualities of vigor, scholarship and imagination in their work. It is named in honor of a founder and former president of AASLH.

Award of Distinction, for long and very distinguished service. This award recognizes individuals for their contributions to the field of state, provincial and local history, who are acknowledged nationally as leaders in the profession, and who have demonstrated the highest standards of performance and professional ethics.

For further information, contact the the state or regional chair of the awards program. Do not send award applications to the AASLH office. The chair in Minnesota is Tim Glines, Minnesota Historical Society, 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul, MN 55102-1906; (651) 297-7913; e-mail: timothy.glines@mnhs.org. The regional chair is Lynn Wolf Gentzler, State Historical Society of Missouri, 1020 Lowry St., Columbia, MO 65201-7298; (573) 882-9366; e-mail: gentzlerl@umsystem.edu.

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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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