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Jean Chesley is  
shown in 1986  
at a display case  
in the Goodhue  
County  
Historical  
Society museum.

# THE MINNESOTA HISTORY Interpreter

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### Jean Chesley Creates Fund to Support Local and County Historical Societies

Jean Chesley of Red Wing, long-time supporter of and advocate for Minnesota history at all levels, has created an endowed fund to support the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) in its technical assistance and field services throughout Minnesota. The fund will be named the "Jean and Frank Chesley Fund for Local and County Historical Societies."

Britta Bloomberg, head of the Department of Historic Preservation, Field Services and Grants at MHS, said that Chesley "has a deep and long-held passion for local history. She has brought vision and leadership to her work among Minnesota's historical organizations for decades, and this gift will support work that will continue her vision." Chesley was instrumental in developing the Goodhue County Historical Society (GCHS) from a small museum in the basement of the Goodhue County Courthouse to its current place as one of the premier county historical organizations in the state. She was GCHS director for 25 years and remains an active member. She received one of the American Association of State and Local History's highest honors, an Award of Merit, in 1986. A former member of the MHS Executive Council and a current member of the MHS Honorary Council, she was a charter member of the MHS Grants Review Committee, on which she served from 1977 to 1992.

In a note to Bloomberg, Chesley offered these thoughts. She said, "I have learned from my own experience with the Goodhue County Historical



MHS file photo.

Society the importance of the role county societies can play in not only preserving, but in keeping alive the history of their local areas for young and old alike. My hope in establishing this fund is to enable county organizations to achieve this goal with the continued help of professional Minnesota Historical Society staff."

Income from the fund will support several kinds of activities to assist the county and local historical organizations in their work, such as technical assistance, conferences and workshops, speakers, professional development, and publications. Planning is now underway to determine how the income from the fund will be administered in the years ahead.

### Interpreter and Planner Editorial Changes

These are my final issues as editor of *The Minnesota History Interpreter* and assistant editor of *The Minnesota Preservation Planner*. I am grateful for the many, many pleasurable particulars this work has given me: contributions from readers, some really fine projects, the places visited, and friends and very professional colleagues, both in MHS and around the state, with whom it has been an honor and a privilege to work. I hope that you have found the *Interpreter* and *Planner* to be useful, interesting and, from time to time, provocative.

It is good news for *Interpreter* and *Planner* readers that Mary Ann Nord, who was the editor from 1993 to 1996, will return with the November/December issue. See the back page to find out how to contact her.

— Jim Smith



## Chippewa County Historical Society's Norsk Reise Fest Attracts Visitors from Many States

Norsk Reise Fest, or "Norwegian Journey Festival," on Aug. 5, at the Swensson Farm in Montevideo, was a memorable celebration. Sponsored by the Chippewa County Historical Society (CCHS), Norsk Reise Fest commemorated the 175th anniversary of the beginning of Norwegian mass immigration to the United States.

Tom Vraalsen, Norwegian ambassador to the U.S., spoke of the wide and deep appeal of the heritage he represents to the people who share it, however small the percentage of their Norwegian ancestry might be. Congressman David Minge also spoke, and the Montevideo Sons of Norway

Jaabaek Lodge celebrated their 75th anniversary with a special ceremony.

Featured performers included the Fedraheimen Singers, the Dassel Leikarring Dancers, and the Bunad Parade, in which many visitors participated. Solveig Zempel spoke of her grandfather Ole Rolvaag, Kathy Dantzler-Olson played the langeleik, staff from the Milan Arts School led a discussion of Norwegian crafts, Olive Forbord performed on the psalmodikon, and Karen Solgaard gave a performance/lecture on the Hardanger fiddle. JoAnn Grote led a Norwegian Story Hour for children, and a group of children sang Norwegian songs with local artist Sandy Moe. Norwegian crafters and demonstrators from the Upper Midwest sold tine boxes, rosemaling, chip carving, Skan-Dolls and other Norwegian craft objects.

Many visitors who came from distant states reported that they had built their vacations around the festival. They came from Minnesota, and many states from coast to coast, including California, Washington, Colorado, Oklahoma, Kansas, North and South Dakota, Iowa, West Virginia, Florida and New York.

For further information or to reserve one of the Limited Edition Commemorative Christmas ornaments, featuring the Norsk Reise Fest Viking ship and the dates "1825-2000," contact CCHS, 151 Pioneer Drive, P.O. Box 303, Montevideo, MN 56265, 320/269-7636; e-mail, CCHS.June@juno.com.

*Norsk Reise Fest participants in Norwegian attire.*



*Courtesy Chippewa County Historical Society.*

## Railroad Museum Magazine Features Photographs from 1943

The summer 2000 issue of *Minnegazette*, the journal of the Minnesota Transportation Museum (MTM), includes a 15-page section of photographs of railroad engines, cars, stations, repair shops, streetcars, passengers and workers from 1943. It is an album of intriguing images and valuable information about a critical time in the history of the nation and the state.

MTM operates the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line and Minnehaha Depot in Minneapolis, the Jackson Street Roundhouse in St. Paul, the Osceola and St. Croix Valley Railway in Osceola, Wis., and, in Excelsior, the Steamboat *Minnehaha* and the Excelsior Streetcar Line. The journal is sent quarterly to all members; membership costs \$30/individual, \$40/family, \$50/sustaining member and \$100/sponsoring member. MTM is located at 193 Pennsylvania Ave. E., St. Paul, MN 55101; 651/228-0263 or 1-800-711-2591; web site, [www.mtmuseum.org](http://www.mtmuseum.org).



## Legacy Project, Exhibit and Book Honor Architect "Cap" Wigington

Clarence W. Wigington retired in 1949 as St. Paul's chief design architect, the first African-American architect in Minnesota and the first African-American municipal architect in the nation. Over a 34-year career, "Cap" Wigington designed many notable public buildings that even today help define the city's architectural look. His accomplishments were not widely known during his life, however, for it was the custom of that time to credit his supervisors with many of his designs.

In 1996 the St. Paul Foundation brought together a group of historians, architects and community representatives to discuss ways to give Wigington some of the recognition that has long been his due. As a result of their discussions, the Clarence W. Wigington Legacy Project was created to bring philanthropic, community, cultural and civic organizations together to spearhead recognition efforts. Among their early efforts is publication of a newsletter, *Friends of "Cap" Wigington*, which chronicles commemorative events and plans.

An exhibit, *Clarence "Cap" Wigington: An Architectural Legacy in Ice and Snow*, will be mounted at the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota from Nov. 13, 2000, to Jan. 28, 2001. The exhibit will focus on Wigington's six designs for Winter Carnival ice palaces, four of which were built in the late 1930s and early 1940s, as well as designs of some his municipal projects.

A book about Wigington is being developed for publication in 2001. David Taylor, dean of the General College of the University of Minnesota, will be the principal author, well-known architectural historian Paul Clifford Larson will provide architectural research, and Donald F. Wong will be the architectural photographer.

*This is the administration building at Holman Field, St. Paul's municipal airport. "Cap" Wigington designed this building, which was completed in 1939, as part of the federal WPA program.*



*Courtesy the St. Paul Foundation; photo by Don F. Wong.*

## Washington County Historical Society Historic Calendar for 2001

The Washington County Historical Society (WCHS) historic calendar for 2001 has recently been published. This second annual historic calendar features 13 photographs and text about the lumbering industry in Minnesota and Wisconsin. The images are all taken from WCHS collections and include a cook shanty, blacksmith shop and sawmills, and accompanying text discusses the subject of each photograph and the daily lives of the lumbermen.

The calendar can be purchased at Valley Booksellers and the Warden's House Museum in Stillwater, or by mail by sending \$8 plus \$1 for shipping to: WCHS Lumber Calendar, P.O. Box 167, Stillwater, MN 55082. For further information, call 651/439-5956 or visit the WCHS web site, [www.wchsmn.org](http://www.wchsmn.org).



# Kandiyohi County Historical Society Produces Historical "ABC Books"

With the help of the Kandiyohi County Historical Society (KCHS), students from Willmar Junior High School's 8th grade produced five "ABC Books" about historical aspects of the county's people and places and displayed them in the KCHS museum through the summer.

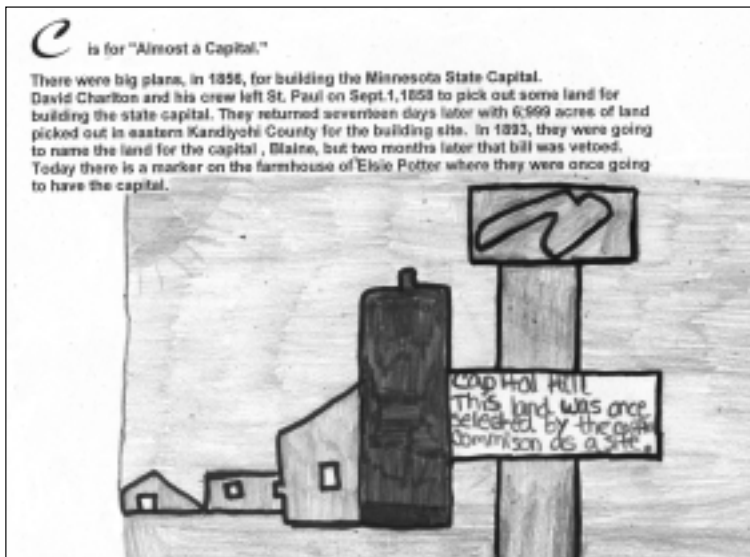
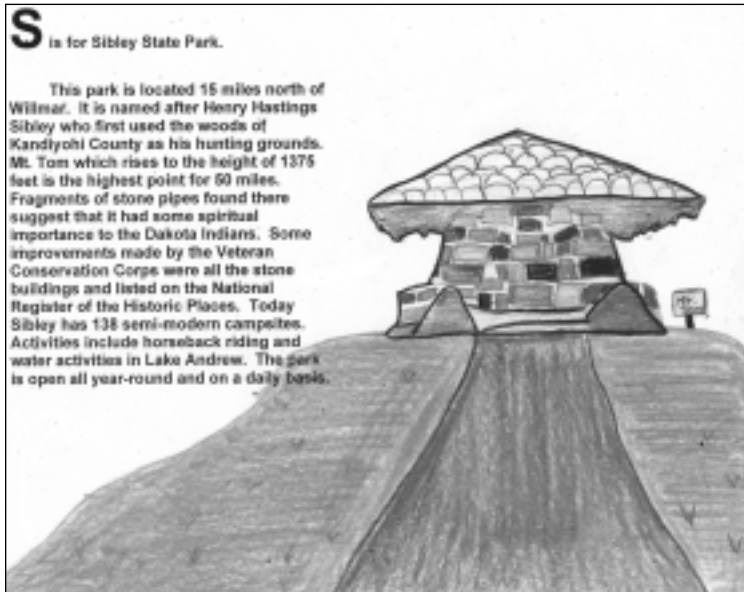
Each spring Mrs. Suzanne Nelsen's five eighth-grade classes do a project on local history as part of their work on the Minnesota graduation standards for social studies. For example, the students in an earlier class visited KCHS, became interested in quilting, and made a quilt that KCHS displayed in its museum during the summer.

Last year, an idea came to Mrs. Nelsen when she saw Lt. Gov. Mae Schunk reading a "Minnesota ABC" book to students, and she applied what she had learned in a local art class. Students drew up a list of topics, then did the research and created the drawings by hand, with some tracing and colored pencils; some students did two topics. The 130 topics include, for instance, the buffalo fish, the Dakota Conflict, Kaffe Fest in Willmar and the Willmar War Memorial Auditorium. Mrs. Nelsen described the process: "We researched by visiting the historical society, visiting with local residents and using my resources of local history clippings. (Since local information is sometimes difficult to find, these clippings are really important for students, This is particular true for at-risk students.)"

The books are printed on 8 1/2-by-11 inch sturdy cover stock paper, spiral bound in a horizontal orientation. Nelsen estimates that the cost for the paper came to about \$10 per book. The books are kept in the school, and Nelsen says, "we hope to put them on our school web page for other residents to see" by scanning and inserting the text from computer files.

For more information, contact KCHS, 610 N.W. Hwy. 71, Willmar, MN 56201; telephone 320/235-1881; e-mail, kandhist@wecnet.com.

*These are the "C" and "S" pages from one of the five "Kandiyohi ABC," books discussed in the article.*



Courtesy Willmar Junior High School.



## Research Grants from Minnesota Historical Society Available

Each year, the research department of the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) makes grants to academic and independent scholars, and professional and non-professional writers, to support original research and writing about Minnesota history. MHS prefers projects that will produce article or book-length manuscripts to be considered for publication in *Minnesota History*, the MHS quarterly journal, or by MHS Press. Projects that add to our knowledge about the multicultural dimension of the history of the area, and that cover subjects not well represented so far, including agriculture, urban history, workers and work, historic preservation, and sports, are especially encouraged.

There are four grant categories:

1. Mini-grants up to \$500 for research expenses.
2. Visiting Scholar grants up to \$1,000 for published scholars whose projects require research in MHS collections.
3. Article grants up to \$1,500 for expenses of conducting research planned to result in an article to be submitted to *Minnesota History*.
4. Major grants up to \$5,000 for expenses of conducting research planned to result in a large-scale project such as a book.

Note: Grants are not awarded to support work on dissertations or theses, or to purchase computers or other equipment.

The next application deadlines are Jan. 2 and April 1, 2001; awards are announced March 1 and June 1, 2001. The grant program is funded on a fiscal-year basis, so the amount of funds available may vary from year to year. Mini-grant applications may be submitted at any time and generally require one month to review.

For further information and application forms, write Deborah Miller, research supervisor, MHS, 345 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul, MN 55102; or e-mail, [debbie.miller@mnhs.org](mailto:debbie.miller@mnhs.org).



## Minnesota Ethnic Resources Directory Available Online

The International Institute of Minnesota has recently published its Minnesota Ethnic Resources Directory on the Internet, at <http://64.32.12.20/default.html>. (*Sics*) It is, as the institute says, a work in progress, but as of this printing the directory offered more than 700 listings of approximately 600 organizations that provide services related to ethnic or national groups. The directory also includes information relating to citizenship and passport procedures and direct links to other ethnic/nationality resources.

The directory is supported by a network grant from the Minnesota Humanities Commission, in cooperation with the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Minnesota State Legislature. The International Institute of Minnesota is located at 1694 Como Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108; telephone, 651/647-0191.

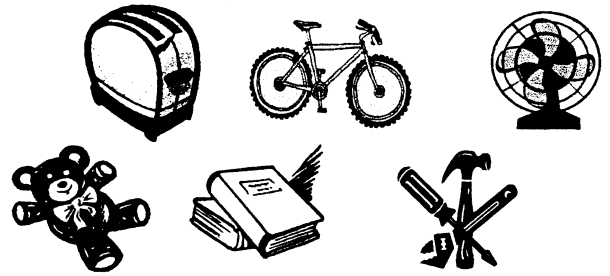


## Fund-raising Idea Works Again: Garage Sale at Crow Wing County Historical Society

The Crow Wing County Historical Society (CWCHS) held its first-ever garage sale from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Aug. 18 and 19 at the Crow Wing County Fairgrounds in the CWCHS historic area. The event succeeded in raising a total of about \$1,000.

In soliciting donations of “just about anything except clothing,” executive director Mary Lou Moudry said, the CWCHS publicity stressed the point that no objects from the collections would be sold, only objects donated by members and friends of CWCHS. Donations were accepted for three days during the preceding week, and included books, toys, kitchen wares, furniture, Christmas decorations, small appliances, electronics, bikes, sporting goods, tools, health equipment and gardening implements. Donors were requested to bring objects that were clean, usable and in working order.

Prices were written on individual tags for the more expensive pieces; colored stickers placed on the



*This is the illustration used on the Summer 2000 issue of Historian, the CWCHS newsletter, to advertise the garage sale.*

less expensive items corresponded to color-coded charts placed throughout the sale area. The sale did not require an inordinate amount of work, according to Moudry, and another similar sale is being considered for next year.

For further information, contact CWCHS at P.O. Box 722, Brainerd, MN 56401, 218/829-3268, or by e-mail at [history@twwn.com](mailto:history@twwn.com).

## Smithsonian Film, Book and Program About Stone Carvers and Builders

For people in the field of historic preservation, the history of the arts and crafts of constructing buildings can be interesting as well as useful. Preservationists should be interested in an Oscar-winning film about the craftsmen who helped build the Washington National Cathedral, a new book and a forthcoming exhibit project.

In 1984, Marjorie Hunt, a folklorist with the Smithsonian Institution’s Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, joined with filmmaker Paul Wagner to make a film about the stone carvers who worked on the cathedral. The film, called *The Stone Carvers* won an Academy Award for documentary short film in 1985, and is the basis for a new book by Hunt, titled *The Stone Carvers: Master Craftsmen of Washington National Cathedral*. It was published in 1999 by the Smithsonian Institution Press, and can be ordered from P.O. Box 960, Herndon, VA, 20172-0960. It costs \$27.95, plus \$3.50 postage and handling.

After the film was made and honored, National Cathedral master carver Vincent Palumbo decided to carve a limestone angel whose face would bear a likeness to Marjorie Hunt’s face. The angel now sits on a spot high on the cathedral’s northwest tower and holds an Oscar statuette in its hand.

Hunt is currently producing a program called “Masters of the Building Arts,” for the 2001 Smithsonian Folklife Festival. It will cover the work not only of stone carvers, but also brick masons, ornamental metalworkers, woodworkers, mosaic tile artists and other building artisans.

Source: *Smithsonian Reports* (Summer 2000), a useful quarterly publication of the Smithsonian Institution that reports on the amazing variety of the research projects the institution sponsors, carries out and displays. The newsletter is published for the Smithsonian’s contributing members and for scholars, educators, museum personnel, libraries, journalists and others. To find out more, call 202/357-2627, ext. 124 (voice) or 202/357-1729 (TTY); by e-mail: [researchreports@publicaffairs.si.edu](mailto:researchreports@publicaffairs.si.edu). On the Internet, visit [www.si.edu/researchreports](http://www.si.edu/researchreports).





## Joint Archaeology and Anthropology Conference November 9-12 in St. Paul

The joint Midwest Archaeological and Plains Anthropological Conference will be held Thursday, Nov. 9, to Sunday, Nov. 12, at the Radisson Hotel, 11 East Kellogg Blvd. in St. Paul. The conference sponsor is the Minnesota Office of the State Archaeologist; co-sponsors are the Hemisphere Field Services, the Institute for Minnesota Archaeology and the Science Museum of Minnesota.

Topics for workshops scheduled for Nov. 9 include ceramics, trade beads, public outreach and paleoethnobotany. Paper presentations, organized sessions and symposia will be held all day on Nov. 10 and 11 and during the morning of Nov. 12. There also will be business and board meetings for the two organizations. Following the banquet on the evening

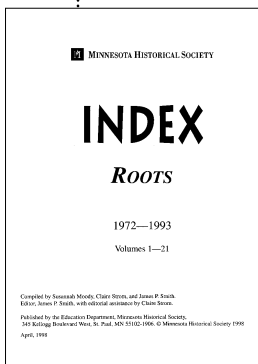
of Nov. 10, the scheduled speaker is Birgitta Wallace, an archaeologist widely known for her excavations of the Viking habitation site in Newfoundland at l'Anse aux Meadows.

The conference registration fee is \$65/regular attendee and \$50/student; workshops require separate registration. The banquet costs \$29/person. The conference registration form is available as a PDF (Acrobat Reader required) file from the conference web site, [www.admin.state.mn.us/osa/mw\\_conf\\_2000](http://www.admin.state.mn.us/osa/mw_conf_2000). For additional information, contact the conference chair, Mark Dudzik, state archaeologist, Fort Snelling History Center, St. Paul, MN 55111, 612/725-2411; e-mail, [mark.dudzik@state.mn.us](mailto:mark.dudzik@state.mn.us).

## Index to Roots Magazine Available on the Internet

The 55-page index to all 21 volumes of *Roots* magazine is now available online on the Minnesota Historical Society's (MHS) web site, at [www.mnhs.org/school/classroom/index.html](http://www.mnhs.org/school/classroom/index.html). The online version of the index is a PDF (Portable Document Format) file, which can be viewed or printed with a web browser and Adobe's Acrobat Reader program. Instructions for downloading Acrobat Reader are given on the web page.

*Roots* began in 1972 and was published until the Spring 1993 issue. At first, *Roots* was a curriculum supplement for younger students beginning classroom work on topics in Minnesota history. With time and the publication of MHS's two-volume textbook and activities book on Minnesota history, *Northern Lights*, in 1989, *Roots* came to be written more for older students and general readers. (Note: MHS Press is planning to publish a revised version of *Northern Lights* in 2003; it was tested in 20 classrooms around the state last year.)



## AAM Adopts Ethics Guidelines for Exhibiting Borrowed Objects

Concerns expressed inside and outside museums all over the country about the ethics of exhibiting borrowed objects led the American Association of Museums (AAM) to formulate institutional policies and standards on this subject. The new principles, titled *AAM Guidelines on Exhibiting Borrowed Objects*, are consistent with the AAM Code of Ethics. They include adhering to ethical standards that exceed legal minimums, staying within the museum's mission, documenting all activities, and maintaining control over museum activities.

The new guidelines are the work of a broadly constituted task force, assisted by organizations and professionals representing a wide variety of museum and accrediting bodies. The guidelines already have been disseminated to AAM member institutions and are listed on the AAM web site, [www.aam-us.org](http://www.aam-us.org), under Hot Topics.

Source: Sept. 2000 issue of AVISO, newsletter of the AAM.



**Correction**



Due to an editorial mix-up, this photograph was inadvertently omitted from an article in the September 2000 *Interpreter*. The photo shows four of the artists whose work was displayed in the Ojibwe art exhibit at the Jaques Art Gallery in Aitkin; left to right: Carl Gawboy, Wendy Savage, Karen Savage-Blue and Steve Premo.



**David Nystuen Retires**

*David Nystuen, Field Services Coordinator for the Minnesota Historical Society, retired in September. On leaving, he wrote these thoughts for his friends and colleagues in Minnesota's historical organizations.*

For more than three decades, I have had the privilege of working with you in trying to create the best possible museums. Together we have endeavored to increase funding, staff, and most important, to improve the interpretation of our state's great history. We have had many successes. There will always be more to do, but I am very confident that you will continue, with even more success.

One benefit of this work for me has been the opportunity to travel from one end of Minnesota to the other, and to learn about it as few people have. I thank you for that. As I look back and then look ahead to the future, I know that I will not miss the work or the travel, but I will miss all of you.

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. Phone: 612/729-4729; e-mail, [nordreeves@earthlink.net](mailto:nordreeves@earthlink.net).

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