

Clay County Historical Society

Clay County Historical Society Newsletter November/December 2003

Volume XXVI No. 6



This detail of a panoramic 1923 photo of the corner of Moorhead's Main Ave and 4th Street South shows the Kassenborg Block (until recently Kirby's Bar) and the Douglas House just to its rear. Both of these historic buildings are endangered by uncertain plans for development of the city block. See the story on page 9. CCHS Collections.

In this issue:

- *Minnesota Eats Out* Book Talk & Signing, Dec. 9, 7:00 p.m.
- New Interns at CCHS
- Endangered: Kassenborg Block and Douglas House



President's Column

By CCHS President, Donna Voxland



The CCHS Board of Directors is undergoing a change in members this month. A couple of our directors have had to resign their positions because of conflicts between their career schedules and our meeting times. Sam Leathes joined our board just last April, and we were enriched by his involvement in the Membership Committee as well as his board position. A change in his work hours prevents him from attending the board meetings, but he has agreed to continue in the committee work if possible. Steve Aakre has been a board member for almost four years and we benefited greatly by his legal help. He, too, has generously offered to continue helping us when legal advice is required. A BIG "thank you" to both of these men for serving on the board and their willingness to give their time and energy for the CCHS. We are sorry to see them leave.

We are currently recruiting two new members to fill their positions, and hope to introduce you to them in the next Newsletter. The commitment of each board member is vital to our organization while we struggle with the current financial times while planning for future growth.

Part of the plan for our future includes a restructuring of our committees. We will have one or two board members on each committee with the rest of the committee members made up of other members of the historical society. This will not only give the board members more time to devote to one committee instead of two or more, but it will also involve more of the historical society membership and enrich our whole organization by providing more insight and input. Please consider serving on a committee and contact us about your interest, or say "yes!" if you are contacted by one of our board members who would like you to serve with them.

And lastly, remember to come to the Clay County Museum on Saturday, December 20, for our Holiday

Open House! It will be a great time to mingle with other members and staff while enjoying some holiday treats and our wonderful museum. We are looking forward to seeing you there!

Donations and Memorials

September & October 2003

Renee Drakulich, Aurora, CO
 Eventide, Moorhead
 Georgia Sanden, Aurora, CO
 Nancy Shier Crocetti, Elgin, IL
 State Bank of Moorhead, sponsorship of shuttle bus for Bergquist Cabin Open House, June 27 & 28



CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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MINNESOTA EATS OUT

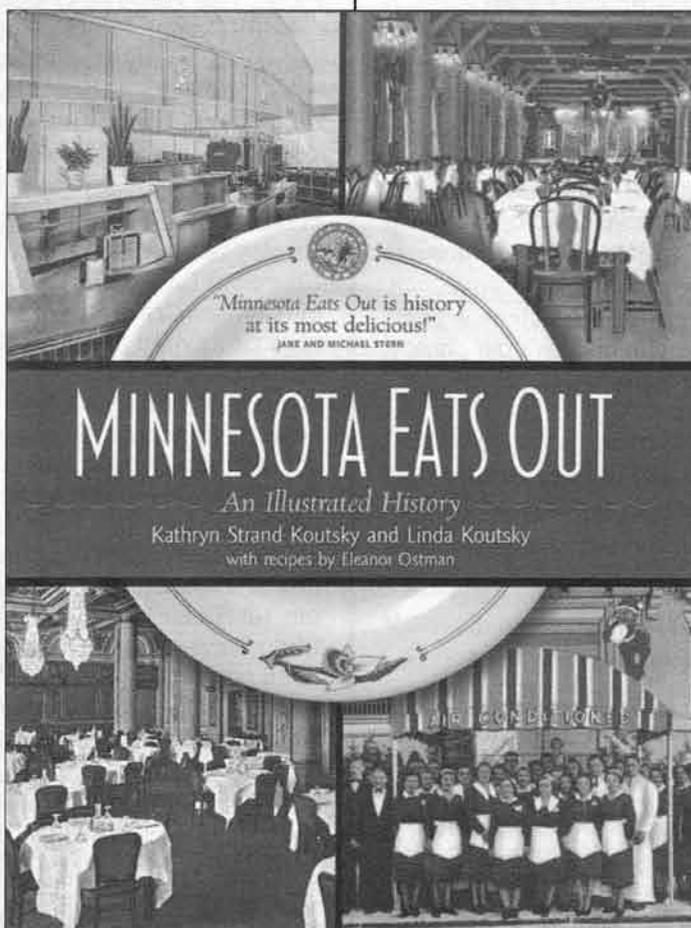
Book talk and signing, Dec. 9

Food writer Eleanor Ostman will speak at the Clay County Museum on Tuesday, December 9 at 7:00 p.m., sharing anecdotes from the book *Minnesota Eats Out*, a joint project with Kathryn Strand Koutsky and Linda Koutsky, just published by the Minnesota Historical Society, and also from her best-selling book *Always on Sunday*, based on the 30 years of her "Tested Recipes" column in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*.

The Clay County Historical Society is hosting the event, since the publication of *Minnesota Eats Out* just happens to coincide with the exhibition of *Eating Out in Clay County*, CCHS' current exhibit that examines the ever-evolving culture of "eating out" and all the ways residents of Clay County have eaten outside their homes.

Minnesota Eats Out traces through more than a thousand images the evolution of Minnesota dining, starting in the 1860s, continuing through the 1960s. Ostman, long-time food writer for the *Pioneer Press* contributed more than 70 recipes to the project, collected from restaurants mostly long-gone. The authors drew from their own collections of postcards, photos, and restaurant ephemera, but also spent time collecting information from individuals and historical societies all over Minnesota.

CCHS Archivist Mark Peihl was contacted in March 2003 to submit photos and information about popular past restaurants and diners in Clay County for the upcoming book about dining out in Minnesota.



Ostman's book *Always on Sunday* includes more than 300 recipes and 600 funny stories from her Sunday column in the *Pioneer Press*, the longest-running personal food column in America. She tells stories such as having lunch with Paul Newman, crashing Vice-President Walter Mondale's banquet at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, and about judging all the major recipe contests.

Ostman is founder of the Newspaper Food Editors and Writers Association and organizer of world travel for her food writer colleagues, just returned from Russia, Finland and Estonia.

She will autograph copies of both books, and have them available for sale at the event.

For further information, contact the Clay County Museum at 218-299-5520, or lisa.hanson@ci.moorhead.mn.us.

Outreach Displays

	<u>Open</u>	<u>Close</u>
Hawley Public Library	October	January
Moorhead Public Library	October	January
Barnesville Public Library	October	January
Fargo CVB	November	January

The Hawley Public Library opens a series of displays focusing on toys. Part 1: TOYS! JUST IMAGINE! presents toys that educate and exercise the mind such as a 1936 Gilbert Chemistry outfit, a tea set and a Nancy Ann story book doll, "Missing Link" puzzle and "The Corner Store" by Wolverine complete with food boxes, scale and roll of wrapping paper!



A photo display SCHOOL'S IN SESSION: RURAL CLAY COUNTY SCHOOLS is at the Moorhead Public Library. This display debuted at the Clay County Fair July 11. In addition to several artifacts, there is a repeat visit by Dick and Jane. Don't be absent!

The Barnesville Public Library travels back in time with *more* THEN & NOW photos. This display pairs old photographs of Clay County sites with more recent photos taken in the same place.

Visitors at the Fargo Convention and Visitors' Bureau along I-94 will remember (or learn about) children's holiday crafts transformed for use through the year. Included are Swedish baskets, chenille candy canes and a paper ring garland. One versatile decoration is a spool-knit wreath adapted for use as napkin rings and picture frames honoring members of the military over seas.

IN-HOUSE DISPLAYS

The CCHS hall case hosts the Artists Studio from Oct. 10 to Dec. 10. This is a repeat visit by the artists who meet regularly in the Hjemkomst Center. [Senior Showcase opens mid-December.]

CCHS set up a special display of exquisite, hand-decorated china in the lobby area. These items were painted by Beulah Forness who is still holding china painting classes in the building Tuesday mornings.

A small case promoting our EATING OUT IN CLAY COUNTY is on view in the lobby in the Hjemkomst Center. We hope this "appetizer" whets your appetite for the "main course" in the CCHS museum just down the stairs.

Artifacts & Donors

September/October 2003

Donors include:

Moorhead: Jessykah Lattery, Virginia Borgen, Jordis Smith, Ardith Magnuson [Hillsboro] with Karen Schneider, Darren Leno, Clarice Ellingson
 Felton: Ernest H. Dahl
 Rollag: WMSTR (Western Minnesota Steam Threshers' Reunion) & Tom Hall [Moorhead]
 St. Paul: Mrs. Floreen Hagen
 North Mankato: Bruce L. Larson
 Fargo, ND: Royal Neighbors of America [Gateway Camp], Paul H. Rustad, Arnold & Helen Miller [formerly Moorhead], Charles Norby, Katherine Murphy, Phyllis Thysell
 Kingman, AZ: Barb Bednarz

Artifacts include: CD ROM of Dahl & Thysell family photos with family genealogy & other photos concerning Hawley area; copies of photos of Dale, MN and Lutheran Church at Dale; color photocopy of postcard before 1925 of "Cement Crew, St. Road, Clay Co. Minn.;" panoramic photo, mounted & framed "Moorhead High School 1924" student body; copies of (20) photos from photo album and copies of pages from 1 vol. of a 1952 daybook; research materials re: Heritage Bridge Project early 1980s compiled by Cyd Maattala, Architecture student, Univ. of Ill.; poster, Operation: Shock and Awe Drag Show [2003]; box of PEO records dating from 1918 and (5) scrapbooks; (6) WMSTR year books for 1990 & 1999-2003; box of materials, photos, certificates, report cards, letters etc. re: Peder Hagen family Parke Twp. & still bank from State Bank of Hawley; photo of John Magnuson, Moorhead contractor, photo of Magnuson & contracting crew w/Nellie Hopkins, Magnuson's estimate notebook, handwritten bio sketch of Magnuson by Karen Schneider, (2) wood planes used by John Magnuson & cardboard sign for John Magnuson Contracting; copies of materials from a collection of postcards, matchbook covers, tokens and other ephemera; Royal Neighbors of America meeting banners, flags, floor cloth, ballot box and [mock] campfire, silver coffee servers, water server and trays used by Gateway Camp; over 190 trophies, photos & certificates selected from about 300 representing the best of Ismay quarter horses over a period of about 40 years & include youth activities; leather coin purse belonging to Albert Carlson containing pennies and a note written by Albert's widow; pair of long, cotton stockings with price tag of 15¢; (2) Comstock Hotel dinner plates from the all-you-can-eat buffet.

What Is It? Bring it to the Library!

A special event will be held at the Hawley Public Library Thursday, November 20, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Pam Burkhardt, Curator of the Clay County Museum and Dean Sather, archeologist and Director of the Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center (HHIC), will attempt to help you identify those What is it? items you might have around the house. Burkhardt and Sather will focus on determining what an item was used for, its date of use or manufacture, and the material of construction. Monetary appraisals will not be given.

Burkhardt has over 15 years of experience classifying artifacts and reading museum objects from her work with the Cass County Historical Society at Bonanzaville and with the Clay County Historical Society. Sather directed the Becker County Historical Society in Detroit Lakes for three years prior to his employment at HHIC. He has an extensive background in archeology, working with objects from both ancient and modern cultures.

Dig out or hunt up one or two easy-to-transport items and bring 'em to the Hawley Public Library, Thursday night Nov. 20!

*As always, programs are subject to change without notice.

Visitors make their mark in *Eating Out*

One of the features in the Eating Out in Clay County exhibit at the Clay County Museum is a notebook where we have asked visitors to record their favorite or most memorable experiences of dining out. We would like to share with you some of the interesting responses we've received. Though we particularly appreciate the record of Clay County-related experiences, we are very happy that the exhibit stirs up all sorts of memories for everyone, so we have included stories from all over. If they inspire you in any way to share your experiences and memories, please feel free, to write, email or call our office! Contact information is listed on the inside cover of the newsletter. Bon appetit!

-Hamburgers at The Barn after a movie in the 1950s. A

Holiday Open House Clay County Museum Saturday, December 20

Take a break from the hassle of holiday shopping, baking, and gift wrapping on Saturday, December 20, and stop over at the Clay County Museum for our annual Holiday Open House! Relax and visit with fellow historical society members in a casual atmosphere 2:00-4:00, with music by the Community Strings ensemble and free refreshments of holiday treats. It will be one of your last chances to see our great *Eating Out in Clay County* exhibit before it's replaced in January!



The Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center Holiday Heritage Festival will also be in action that day 10:00-5:00, with

demonstrators, performers and craftspeople representing the rich diversity of cultures in the Red River Valley region.

One of the most beautiful sites in the building during the month of December is the Festival of Trees. In celebration of world holiday traditions, the Hjemkomst replica Viking ship is surrounded by trees and display cases decorated by local organizations representing Judaism, Islamic and Christian cultures. The exhibit is on view during regular Hjemkomst Center hours, 9-5, Mon.-Sat., 12-5 on Sunday.



place where lots of college students would go to see friends and be seen on a date.

-King Leo's—where Mom brought along the milk carton and paper cups for the 8 kids to drink w/ our burger in the car. The only place we went to eat out.

-Duane's Pizza! like the pizza we used to get in Chicago in the 60s.

-The Comstock used to be the best bargain in town!

-Lefse w/ chocolate sauce! (umm yumee!)

-Beef stroganoff at the Old Rex Café was marvelous.

-Eddie's Coffee Shop—none like it

Continued next page...

-Sher's Kitchen carmel & cinnamin rolls—a Concordia tradition

-Chimichanga & strawberry margarita at Paradiso (but you can keep the fried ice cream)

-My husband's steak on the grill

-The Blue Bird Café in Moorhead—my mom worked there

-The White Spot Drive Inn—Great burgers & malts.

-16th Birthday at the top of the F-M in 1967 with my Mom & Dad

-Converted American Legion Hall The Red Bear—Mushrooms & Salad Dishes

-A & W Restaurant, cheeseburger & frosty mug of root beer

-I worked at Eddy's Coffee Shop in the late 1960s as a dishwasher. I was a teenager at the time.

-I love the McDonald's food. My favorite were the milk shakes.

-Speak Easy Rigatoni—nothing like it anywhere.

-Duane's Pizza—have some every time we come back to Moorhead to visit!

-I will always remember good times with my linemen brothers at the Hi-Ho.

-Dad would buy a bag of burgers and fries at the Bluebird Café & bring the home (dripping with grease!) about twice a year. That's all the "eating out" we could afford at that time! What a contrast to today.

-Our Sunday treat was when Dad would get White Castles with a coupon -13 for \$1. That was a big deal for us in St. Paul because Dad had a bad heart and could not work steady. That was in the early 1950s before all the other fast food places came.

-My folks had a café in the early 40s and 50s. I remember the uproar when they decided to raise coffee to 10¢ a cup!

-On Saturday night it was a trip to town, Detroit Lakes, to go to the A&W and park by the outdoor roller skating rink to watch the skaters. Some older folk were so graceful and youngsters just learning. A fond memory!

-After school in Twin Valley found the "Class of 58" enjoying soda's, malts & wonderful pies at the Club Café. What wonderful memories of High School in the Midwest.

-There is nothing like eating a few "sliders" from White Castle.

-My husband won a prize for selling the most merchandise in a week at OK Hardware. The prize was an elegant dinner at the Tree Top. I had duck ala orange!

-Happened June 16/58. After eating at the A&W—I was taken to hospital—where my first son was born.

-Der Blaue Affe—Jügerheim, Germany

-The "Beaver Palace Café" in Minot [ND]

Got tools?

Carpentry skills needed for repairs to Woodland School

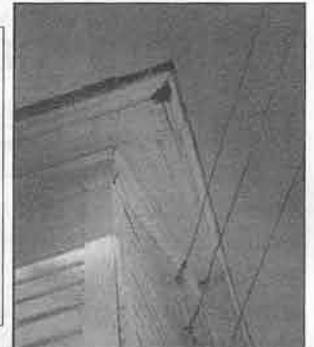
In addition to the programs and exhibits provided at the Clay County Museum, and the research services offered in the Clay County Archives, CCHS also owns three historic properties throughout the county that require constant maintenance. CCHS staff can handle minor repairs, but some projects require a little more skill and know-how.

Three particular spots on the District No. 3 School in Parke Township (also known as the Woodland School) are currently in need of some TLC: a hole under the eaves needs patching, the bottom of the small window over the sink is rotting, and the platform around the old water pump needs replacing. CCHS would also like to fill the well hole under the pump.

If you are able and willing to tackle one or more of these projects, please call our office. CCHS will pay for the materials. Thank you to Bette Haring for the photos shown here.

Right: The hole in the eaves is large enough for varmints to cause mischief.

Bottom: The rotting wood base of the well has been temporarily mended, but needs replacing, preferably over a filled well.



Interns get hands-on experience at CCHS

This fall school semester CCHS is providing intern experiences for two students from Minnesota State University Moorhead, Christine Densmore and Tim Jorgenson.



Christine viewing fragments of the batting from the crazy quilt in the background.

Christine Densmore

I graduated from Underwood High School in Underwood, MN in 1998. I continued my education at Fergus Falls Community College in Fergus Falls, MN, where I graduated with my Associates of Arts degree in Dec. of 2000. Currently I am working on my Bachelor's degree in American Studies at MSUM. I am graduating in December of this year.

I chose to complete my final credits by interning at CCHS to improve my research skills and also to get hands on knowledge of history and artifacts. I am sincerely enjoying and benefiting from the experiences I have had at CCHS thus far.

Next fall I hope to begin a Master's program, possibly in American Studies, but I have not fully decided if that is the area I want to pursue. In the future I hope to teach at the college level, which has been my goal since I began at the Community College.

When I am not busy with school work, I work as a florist

in a small town flower shop in Battle Lake, MN. I am also a second degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do, and volunteer as an assistant instructor at the Master's Martial Arts Academy in Fergus Falls every Monday and Thursday night.

Tim Jorgenson

After graduating from Fargo North High School in 1995, I spent a year working with vintage guitars and amplifiers at various trade shows throughout the U.S. In 1996, I began my studies at MSUM in the Speech department, focusing on costume design and TV Production. Next, during the summer and fall of 2002, I took a trip abroad to study language and Scandinavian Studies in the culturally rich county of Telemark, Norway.

I am currently in my final semester at MSUM and will



Tim repairing the lining in a sleeve of a 1860s wedding gown.

soon graduate with an American Studies degree and a minor in Scandinavian Studies. Other interests of mine include playing bass guitar, creating strange and unusual pizzas, and reading non-fiction books.

After graduation I plan to spend some time in Austin, Texas, writing a blues album and returning to Norway with hopes of finding a job that makes me happy. Thanks to MSUM and CCHS for having me here as an intern. The hands-on experience gained from being here works well with all that I have studied thus far.



This detail is from a stereoview taken by Moorhead photographer F. J. Haynes. The view is to the southwest from in front of Haynes studio on Center Ave and 5th St. The front of the Douglas house is visible in the distance just behind Haynes head. Written on the back of the stereoview in Haynes' own hand is "My first negative in Moorhead, Minn." Haynes arrived in Moorhead in September 1876. The photo likely dates from then. James Douglas probably built the house late in 1872 - only months after the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railway. Marjorie Roberts Collection.

ENDANGERED: Moorhead's historic Kassenborg Block and Douglas House eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places

By Mark Peihl, CCHS Archivist

Moorhead's face is changing yet again. The Main Avenue Bridge replacement and downtown revitalization projects are creating new open spaces for future development. In the process, however, one of the oldest buildings in the city is scheduled for demolition and another's fate is uncertain. In this article we'll look at these two buildings and why they are significant.

Most of our readers have probably followed recent developments in the media. The old Main Avenue bridge, built in 1936, backed up water during the 1997 flood. Federal and state authorities required that a new, higher span be constructed. That also meant a longer bridge, necessitating the removal of a number of buildings on the Moorhead end of Main Avenue. Simultaneously, the City of Moorhead was in the midst of a revitalization effort downtown which included adding greenery, shaping more pedestrian friendly streets and removing old buildings. Over the last few years, CCHS has worked closely with consultants hired by the Minnesota Department of Transportation to study the impacted area.

In 2000, the St. Paul firm, 106 Group, Ltd., studied buildings in the potentially impacted area (between the BNSF tracks, 2nd Avenue South, the Red River and 5th Street). Using CCHS resources, the consultants determined that two buildings in the area had the potential for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places: the Douglas House at 111 South 4th Street and the Kassenborg Block on Main Avenue and 4th Street. (This was in addition to the 1936 bridge, which the North Dakota Department of Transportation decided was eligible for nomination and the Burnham Building, 420 Main Avenue, which is already on the Register.)

The National Register of Historic Places is a federal project managed by the National Park Service. Each state administers the program through a State Historic Preservation Office. Nominated buildings or places must meet certain criteria for inclusion. Any person or group can nominate a property to the Register. Listing, however,

does not protect a property from demolition or alteration nor does it prevent an owner from doing anything he or she wishes to his or her property. Federal law does require agencies to allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to comment on federally funded projects that might impact Register properties. Mitigation might result. And there are some tax advantages and a certain prestige to owning a National Register place. But the real importance of the program is to recognize and celebrate the real, national historic significance of certain buildings, districts and places around the country.

After the 106 Group presented their findings, the MnDOT hired Gemini Research of Morris, Minnesota to take a closer look at the two buildings. Again, we worked closely with Susan Granger and Scott Kelly of Gemini Research. They confirmed that both properties were eligible for nomination. What follows is from their report and subsequent investigation by CCHS.

The Douglas House

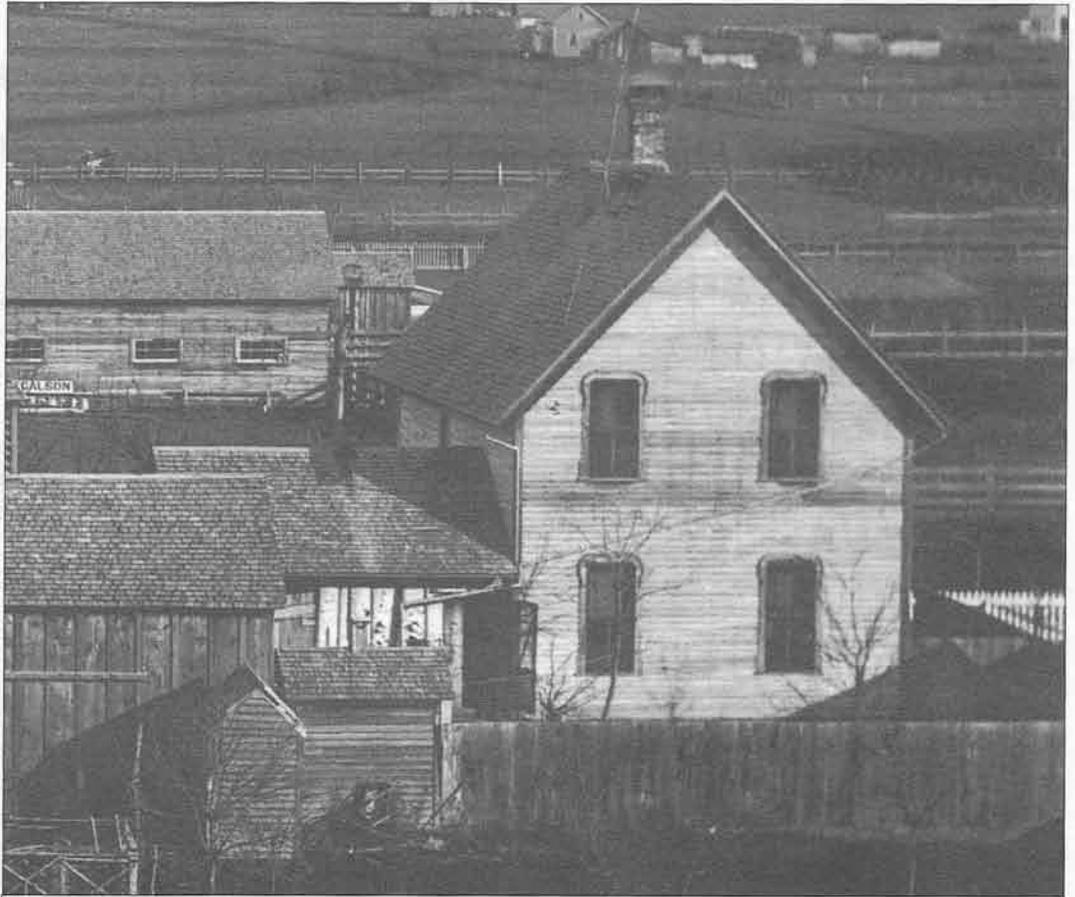
Just south of the Kassenborg Block (formerly Kirby's Bar) stands a nondescript looking white, two-story house. We've been intrigued with this place for years. It shows up, little changed, in two early photos. In October 1880, Moorhead photographer O. E. Flaten climbed to the top floor of a flour mill which stood on Main Avenue and 3rd Street and took a series of photos looking from southeast around to the west. One clearly shows the back of 111 South 4th Street. We also have a stereoview taken by Moorhead photographer F. Jay Haynes. The view is looking southwest from Haynes' studio on the corner of Center Avenue and 5th Street. In the distance the front of the house, again, little changed, is visible. On the back of the stereoview, in Haynes' own hand, is written, "My first negative in Moorhead, Minn." Haynes arrived here in September 1876, less five years after the Northern Pacific Railway reached the prairies on the banks of the Red. The house was probably built a few years earlier, in summer or fall of 1872.

Scott and Susan used our tax and land records, city direc-

tories, photographs, manuscripts, books, Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, newspapers and other resources to track the house to Moorhead's first Postmaster, James Douglas. Douglas, a Scottish immigrant, and his Canadian-born Scottish wife Wilhelmina were among Moorhead's earliest residents. They arrived in fall 1871 and opened a hardware store in a tent-roofed building. The Post Office Department named Douglas first postmaster the same year. He served 14 years. Douglas was also appointed Clay County's first Probate Judge in 1872, helped found Moorhead's second school and served on the School Board.

According to a deed filed in the Clay County Recorder's Office, Douglas bought lots 1, 2 and 3, Block 49, Moorhead's Original Townsite from the Lake Superior and Puget Sound Land Company in July 1872. (This is where the house and the Kassenborg Block sit today.) He probably built the house soon after. A tax list from spring 1873 shows Douglas' land, not including any buildings, valued at \$90 but the total valuation was \$270. The \$160 difference likely reflects the new house's value. The 1875 Minnesota State Census did not record street addresses, but James and Wilhelmina are listed with their four daughters. The census enumerators listed families in order of visitation; those listed on the schedules near the Douglas' were close neighbors. These include the Horace DeCamp family – long time residents of a nearby house on 4th Street South.

In 1875, Douglas helped launch a steamboat line. Through the 1870s James J. Hill and Norman Kittson's Red River Transportation Company held a monopoly on steamboating. Douglas, along with other local businessmen, built two competing boats, the *Manitoba* and *Minnesota*. The result was a freight rate war – which Hill, Kittson and company won. In 1876 Douglas began a



This detail from an O. E. Flaten photo from October 1880 shows the rear (west end) of the Douglas house. The addition on the north (left side) was later removed and an addition added on the west side. Otherwise, it's little changed to this day. Flaten took this photo looking east from the Moorhead mill on Main Avenue and 3rd Street. Flaten/Wange Collection

more successful venture. He built a new, two-story brick hardware store on Center Avenue and 4th Street, three blocks from his home.

Douglas left Moorhead in 1888. The house became a rental property. In 1891, John H. Hanson, co-owner of Hanson and Peterson's Saloon (Ralph's Corner Bar today) rented the house from Douglas. Douglas died in 1914. Several other owners followed until Norwegian immigrant A. G. Kassenborg bought Douglas' lots in 1897. He continued to rent out the house and that winter built a large commercial block on the land just to the north.

Kassenborg Block

Andreas Guldbrand Kassenborg came to the U.S. from Norway with his parents in 1850 at age 14. He married Tone Kragness in 1858 in Houston County. Like many in

Houston County, she was from Frysdahl, Telemark Norway. And, like many of them, she and Andreas moved to the Buffalo River Settlement northwest of Glyndon in 1876. They bought land in Oakport Township, raised a large family and became quite wealthy.

The Kassenborgs never lived in Moorhead. Andreas probably built the block as an investment. The first floor was divided into three "bays" for wholesale or retail businesses. The upstairs was split in half. The east part housed about seven apartments and rooms for rent. The west offered space for offices. Among the block's first main floor tenants was a dry goods store owned by Linder Moe, husband of Andreas and Tone's daughter, Mary. City directories later list Andreas as Moe's partner.

Large, multi-business commercial blocks of this sort were common along the main streets of Fargo-Moorhead in the 19th century. A surviving Fargo example is the Johnson Block 216-218 Broadway, now home to Christmas on Broadway. In Moorhead, only the Kassenborg Block remains. Early 1970s Urban Renewal and the ravages of time took the rest. Moorhead grew very quickly after the arrival of the Great Northern Railway in the early 1880s. Two- and three-story commercial blocks popped up along Center Avenue and 4th Street, Moorhead's major commercial streets. By 1897, Kassenborg's property on Main and 4th was about the only location for a large block still empty.

Kassenborg hired Moorhead's leading contractor, William H. Merritt, to build the block. Merritt built an impressive array of Moorhead buildings including the Trinity Lutheran, Bethesda Lutheran, Methodist-Episcopal and Congregational Churches; Northwestern Hospital; Concordia College's Old Main; the State

Normal School Assembly building; Moorhead's Carnegie Public Library; at least seven saloons and liquor warehouses and many homes of the local elite.

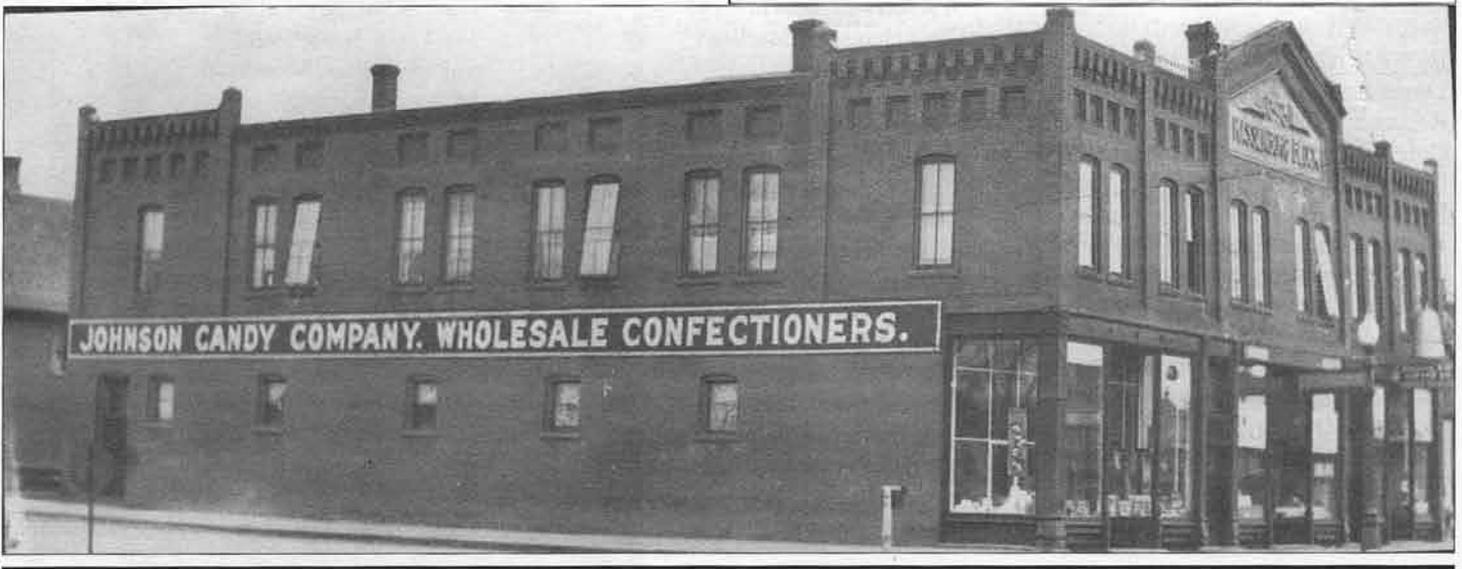
Faced with red brick on the north and east sides, with plate glass storefronts and topped with a zinc sign reading "Kassenborg Block 1898," it was an impressive edifice. Though a Sanborn Fire Insurance map from October 1899 indicates the western most main floor storefront still vacant a year and a half after opening, the rest of the building filled up quickly. Upstairs roomers included a traveling salesman, two clerks, a railroad employee, a saloon owner and a minister. Also living upstairs was a widowed dressmaker – with an office on the west wing.

After Andreas Kassenborg's death in 1914 the block remained in the family's hands. About 1930 the family remodeled the west half of the upstairs into more apartments – over 20 altogether.

A wide variety of businesses occupied the main level over the years. Long-term tenants included Christianson and Wentzell grocers, Moe Dry Goods and the Johnson Candy Company. And, perhaps best known, Billy Diemert's café and liquor store. Several times in recent months, local media have incorrectly suggested Diemert occupied the east-end of the block around 1902. Actually, Diemert owned bars and cafes in other parts of the city beginning in 1902. Late in 1933 Minnesota allowed the sale of 3.2% beer in restaurants. Not surprisingly, the number of "restaurants" in Moorhead jumped from 14 in

Continued on page 12...

The Carl A. Johnson's Candy Company occupied the east storefront of the Kassenborg Block through the 1920s. Ella Hawkinson Collection.



Endangered, continued

1932 to 37 in 1934. Diemert's Kassenborg location was one of the new establishments.

After Billy Diemert's death in 1944, Nick Wambach ran the place under the Diemert name for a few years. In the early 1950s Billy's widow, Ella, and his sister-in-law Pearl Diemert bought the block from the Kassenborgs. Pearl ran the liquor store until 1978 when Kirby Kuhlinsky bought the block and opened Kirby's Bar. Kirby's closed in June 2003. The city of Moorhead bought the Kassenborg Block soon after.

Gemini Research determined that the Douglas house was eligible for nomination to the National Register because of its age and connection with one of Moorhead's earliest prominent citizens. Susan Granger and Scott Kelly wrote, "James Douglas appears to have played a significant role in the early development of the city through 14 years of service as the first postmaster, by serving as the first county Judge of Probate, by helping organize early

schools and serving on the first school board, and as a leader in the development of Moorhead's steamboat industry.

"Although it has been altered somewhat, the Douglas House retains much of its original form, design, materials, and exterior and interior details and still conveys a sense of its historic character. It is one of the oldest houses still standing in Moorhead and a rare remnant of the city's early settlement period."

Unfortunately, recent years have not been kind to the Douglas house. When I visited the house and took photos inside and outside in 1988, the place appeared somewhat rundown but livable. Now, the house is unsafe to enter. Earlier this year the city of Moorhead purchased the house from the Kuhlinsky's. It's scheduled for demolition soon.

The Kassenborg Block also is eligible for nomination. Gemini concluded, "The Kassenborg Block is largely

Continued on page 14...

New CCHS Memberships & Renewals

CCHS extends a special thank you to the following individuals who renewed their memberships or became new members in September and October:

NEW MEMBERS

Lloyd Gunderson, Moorhead
Lois Ivers Altenburg, Fargo
Betty Maus, Wibaux, MT
Donna Richards, Fargo
Marvin A. Tingdahl, Lancaster, CA

RENEWALS

Leona Anderson, Hawley
Robert & Selma Anderson, Moorhead
Col. Milton & Armored Arneson, Mhd
Delores Bekkerus, Glyndon
Russell & Lois Bekkerus, Glyndon
Sharon Benzel, Moorhead
Gary & Rose Bergan, Hawley
David & Carolyn Bowe, Fargo
David & Vicky Bowe, Moorhead
Beverly Coleman, Moorhead
Chris & Jolly Corley, Glyndon
Donald & Dorothy Dale, Moorhead
Marvin & Shirley Dauner, Hawley
Robert & Mary Davies, Moorhead
Benjamin Dille

Vincent Dolva, Hawley
John & Audrey Elton, Hawley
Art & Gwen Erickson, Moorhead
First National Bank of Hawley
Marion Formanek, Moorhead
Clifford Gilbertson, North Saint Paul
Hazel Haarstad, Detroit Lakes
Fern Haiby, Moorhead
Clarence & Donna Hanson, Ruso, ND
James & KariJo Hanson, Moorhead
Neil & Polly Hanson, Glyndon
Waldo Hatledal, Hawley
Clair Haugen, Moorhead
City of Hawley
Hawley Public Schools
Helen Hedelund, Moorhead
Lorine Holschuh, Moorhead
Virginia Johnson, New York, NY
Audrey Jones, Lexington, KY
Evelyn Keeping Hansen, Hawley
Korsmo Funeral Service, Moorhead
Marilyn Krogh, Fort Collins, CO
Norman Kuehl, Fargo
James Landblom, Fargo
David & Anne Larson, Moorhead
Sam Leathes, Dilworth
Jay & Rebecca Leitch, Moorhead
Stanley Lunde, Ulen
Shirley Manning, Fargo

Matt & Zona Mathison, Moorhead
Richard T. McMurray, Annandale, VA
Moorhead Drug Company, Moorhead
Moorhead Kiwanis, Moorhead
Gisela Nobel, Moorhead
Lynne Olson, Fargo
L. Maynard & Elaine Oss, Elk River, MN
Lloyd G. Pladson, Pelican Rapids, MN
Dewey & Margery Possehl, Moorhead
Dorothy Sandvik, Moorhead
Geneva Schachtschneider, Moorhead
George Shippey, Fallbrook, CA
Jim Steen, Moorhead
Shirley Stelter, Moorhead
Marge Stoa, Fargo
Ruth Swanson, Moorhead
Kenneth & Mary Tangen, Moorhead
Mary Ellen Thompson, Roseville, MN
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, Mhd
Phyllis W. Thysell, Fargo
Raymond & Mae Treese, Moorhead
Galen & Sharon Vaa, Moorhead
Chris & Ellen Velline, Torrance, CA
Mark & Donna Voxland, Moorhead
Marrion E. Walsh, Moorhead
Dale D. White, Moorhead
Jim & Clara Wilkins, Fargo
John Young, Jr., Hawley
Deloris Zwack-Mellon, Apple Valley, MN

Monthly Results of the Favorite Restaurant poll

In CCHS' current exhibit, *Eating Out in Clay County*, visitors can vote for their favorite Clay County restaurant, past or present! These are the most recent results:

September 6, 2003—November 2, 2003

A & W - 1

Comstock Hotel buffet - 1

F-M Tree Top - 1

Sarello's - 3

Silver Moon - 1

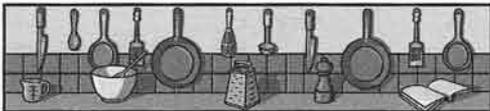
Speak Easy - 2

Village Inn - 1

Willy's, Dilworth - 1

(4 for non-Clay County restaurants - Cajun Café, Famous Dave's, Fryin' Pan, Ramada Plaza Inn)

If you don't see your favorite restaurant here, come in to the museum, bring your friends, and VOTE!



Dress form request

Thanks to Delores Bekkerus for the junior size dress form. We will put it to good use. Once again, if you have a dress form (in good condition) that you are willing to donate, bring it to the museum. If you have one we could borrow, please call us at 299-5520. We need to fit dresses to forms as soon as possible for the upcoming weddings exhibit (June).

Plaster of Paris

Thank you to Rita Erickson, Hawley Public Library, for donating a box of plaster of Paris. The plaster was used to stabilize a tree branch for displaying items featured in the Outreach case at the Convention and Visitors' Bureau from November to January.

The Last One Hundred Years in ^{\$20}
MOORHEAD
MINNESOTA

1900-2000



A Century of Change!

Published by Heritage Publications in collaboration with the Clay County Historical Society

Take a stroll through the last 100 Years in Moorhead

Moorhead, 1900-2000: A Century of Change is full of historic photographs and stories that draw you into the story of Moorhead. See how much Moorhead has changed!

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These high-quality, paper cover books, published by Heritage Publications of Hendrum, MN, are fundraisers for the Clay and Cass County Historical Societies.

Pick up your copies today at the Clay County Museum & Archives in the Hjemkomst Center, 202 1st Avenue North, Moorhead, or send your check or money order for \$23.00 to CCHS, PO Box 501, Moorhead, MN 56561.

Call CCHS at 218-299-5520 for more information.

Endangered, continued

intact on the exterior except for alterations to the first story storefronts. The building is significant as an excellent representative example of late 19th century commercial architecture.

“Because the Kassenborg Block is one of only a handful of late 19th and early 20th century commercial structures to remain standing in downtown Moorhead, and it is one of the largest, it is important as a rare survivor and significant representative of Moorhead’s historic commercial development.”

The Kassenborg Block may yet escape the wrecking ball. The City of Moorhead now owns the entire block on which the Kassenborg and Douglas house stand as well as the block to the west – formerly home to the Sportland complex. The city has invited developers to submit plans for utilizing the entire parcel. At last count some eight proposals have been accepted. Some incorporate the Kassenborg Block into the plan. If the city okays one of the latter, the block will be saved. If not, not one but two of Moorhead’s last historic structures will disappear.



Sponsor, Patron, Sustaining and Supporting Memberships

Please help us thank these members for supporting the Clay County Historical Society by patronizing their businesses:

SPONSOR (\$500+)

We need you!

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First National Bank of Hawley
Hawley Public Schools
Korsmo Funeral Service
Moorhead Area Public Schools
Moorhead Drug Company
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Stenerson Lumber
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
Ward Muscatell Automotive
Wells Fargo Bank MN, N A, Mhd
Wright Funeral Home

Thank you also to these individuals in the Patron, Sustaining, and Supporting membership levels:

Individual Patron (\$200-\$499)

Richard T. McMurray, Annandale,
VA
Ronald & Katherine Mentjes,
LeCenter, MN

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Robert & Selma Anderson
John Caron
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Rod & Audrey Angstman
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Jim & Chris Stenerson
Kenneth & Mary Tangen
Bruce N. Thorson
Phyllis Thysell
Ron & Deanna Ulven
Mark & Donna Voxland
Arthur & Marie Wenner

Calendar

Oct.-Dec.	Artists Workshop, hall display case
Nov. 27	Thanksgiving Day, museum closed
Dec. 2	CCHS Holiday Volunteer Party 7:00 p.m.
Dec. 9	<i>Minnesota Eats Out</i> book talk and signing by author Eleanor Ostman, 7:00-8:30 p.m.
Dec. 11	Minnesota Historical Society Northern Lights Curriculum Teacher Training, Hjemkomst Center
Dec. 20	CCHS Holiday Open House (rescheduled from Dec. 13)
Dec. 25	Christmas Day, museum closed
Jan. 1 '04	New Year's Day, museum closed

Jan. 11	<i>A Captive Eye: German POW Art and Artifacts</i> exhibit Grandopens
April	CCHS Annual Meeting
June	Weddings in Clay County exhibit opens (as yet untitled)
June 25 & 26	Bergquist Cabin Open House
June 25-27	Scandinavian Hjemkomst Festival
July 8-11	Clay County Fair
Schedule subject to change	



EATING OUT IN CLAY COUNTY

Our tastiest exhibit yet!

From restaurants and picnics to hospital food and school lunch—menus, lunch boxes, photos, luncheon sets, church dinners, archaeological saloon remains, and more—Every way that residents of Clay County eat—out!



Vote for your favorite Clay County restaurant and menu item, or email or send your choice to us!
lisa.hanson@ci.moorhead.mn.us

October—mid-December:



Artists Workshop

Beautiful watercolors, oils, and acrylics by budding area women artists

Thank you to the businesses, organizations & individuals who donated or lent time & materials for this exhibit!

Auto Salvage, Inc., City of Moorhead, Clay County Social Services WIC Program, Fry'n Pan Restaurant, Heglund Lutheran Church, McDonald's, MeritCare Clinical Nutrition Services, MeritCare Food Service, MeritCare Material Services, Perkins Family Restaurant, Red Bear Grill & Tavern, Speak Easy Restaurant

**Clay County Museum Hours: 10-5 Monday-Saturday, 10-9 Tuesday, 12-5 Sunday
Hjemkomst Center, 202 1st Avenue North, Moorhead, MN ♦ FREE ADMISSION**



CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP FORM

YES! I would like to become a member of Clay County Historical Society

- Individual* \$20 minimum Sustaining \$100 minimum
- Family* \$35 minimum Patron \$200 minimum
- Supporting \$50 minimum Sponsor \$500 minimum

*Businesses are not eligible for Individual and Family membership levels

CCHS MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

- ◆ Support preservation of your heritage
- ◆ Bi-monthly newsletter
- ◆ Discount on Acid-Free Preservation supplies
- ◆ Discount on photo reproductions from archives
- ◆ \$1 off admission to Hjemkomst Center Exhibits
- ◆ Invitation to all CCHS events
- ◆ Access to all CCHS Tours
- ◆ Voting Privileges

In addition to the great benefits listed above, Supporting, Sustaining, Patron and Sponsor members a certificate ready to frame and display, and a listing in all CCHS bi-monthly newsletters.

To become a CCHS Member please complete and return this form or a copy of this form to:

CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 PO Box 501, Moorhead, MN 56561-0501
 218-299-5520

Visit our website! www.info.co.clay.mn.us/history

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