

CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

Vol. XI No. 5

NEW PHOTO EXHIBIT: "MOORHEAD AUGUST, 1923"

In August, 1923, President Warren G. Harding died in office, Clay County Sheriff P.E. Malvey seized a still in Kurtz Township and Constance Tallmadge was starring in "East is West" at the Lyceum Theater in Moorhead. And pioneer Moorhead photographer, O.E. Flaten was busy taking over 30 photos of street scenes and businesses in downtown Moorhead.

The negatives he shot (part of our Flaten/Wange Collection) today offer a unique view of what the city looked like that summer; a moment in Moorhead's past, frozen in time.

The museum's staff is currently assembling

a photograph exhibit featuring some of these photos.

Although Flaten may have wanted to record his city for posterity, his primary motivation was probably financial reward. He was a businessman, after all. These views were meant to grace postcards which he could sell.

Absent, for instance, are images of run down housing in flood prone areas. However, he took many views of the corner of Front Street (Center Avenue) and 4th, the heart of Moorhead's Downtown and, not incidentally, the location of Flaten's Studio.

The exhibit will be up in December 1988.



The Comstock Hotel, August 23, 1923, corner of Front Street (Center Avenue) and eighth.



CCHS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Member:

Thank you for your positive response to the train trip to Fergus Falls. It looks like we will fill both cars. If you have any questions or would like more information, please call Karen at 233-4604.

The Board of Directors are happy to introduce our newest board member, Mrs. Nancy Tedros of Moorhead, MN. She has been appointed to fill the unexpired term of Willis Kingsbury. Welcome, Nancy! We appreciate your help and look forward to working with you in the months ahead.

Clay County Historical Society, Red River Valley Heritage Society and the Heritage-Hejmkomst Interpretive Center have formed a By-laws Committee with two members appointed by each organization. The purpose of this committee is to study the by-laws of the Center and make suggestions and recommendations for improvements to the appointing organizations. The committee members are:

Dan Skolness	CCHS	233-5050	Cecil Johnson	RRVHS	236-5516
Nancy Tedros	CCHS	236-9034	Grace Landin	RRVHS	236-9947
Brian Arett	HHIC	236-1368	Scott Hutchins	HHIC	236-0340

If you have any suggestions or comments, please give them a call.

CCHS and HHIC are currently cooperating on a monthly newsletter to inform our members and supporters of what is happening here at the Center. Each member of CCHS will receive a copy, either in your bi-monthly newsletter or seperately in the off months.

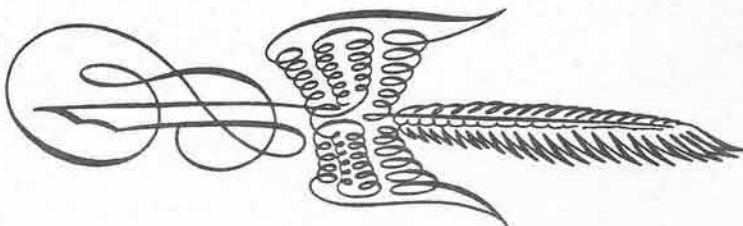
In each of our previous newsletters, we have asked for your support in a number of areas. We appreciate whatever support you are able to give. This month we ask again. On the back of this newsletter is a membership application. We challenge you to ask someone to join the Clay County Historical Society. Membership is essential to the continued progress of this Society.

Thank you for your support and we will see you on the train!!

Sincerely,



Vernon A. Pederson



INTRODUCING . . .

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself, Claudia Pratt, Program Coordinator here at the Center. As mentioned in previous newsletters, CCHS staff and I have been directed to work together to plan and produce the program: exhibits, education and special events for both Clay County Historical Society and the Heritage-Hjemkomst Interpretive Center. Pam and Mark are helping me with their curatorial and research skills and I will be lending them my coordination and design skills. I will specifically assist Clay County Historical Society with their exhibits, coordinating special programs, and making long term plans. I will be working out of the Clay County Historical Society office; so, if you have any ideas or suggestions, please do not hesitate to call or stop and visit with me!

DISPLAY!! DISPLAY!! DISPLAY!!

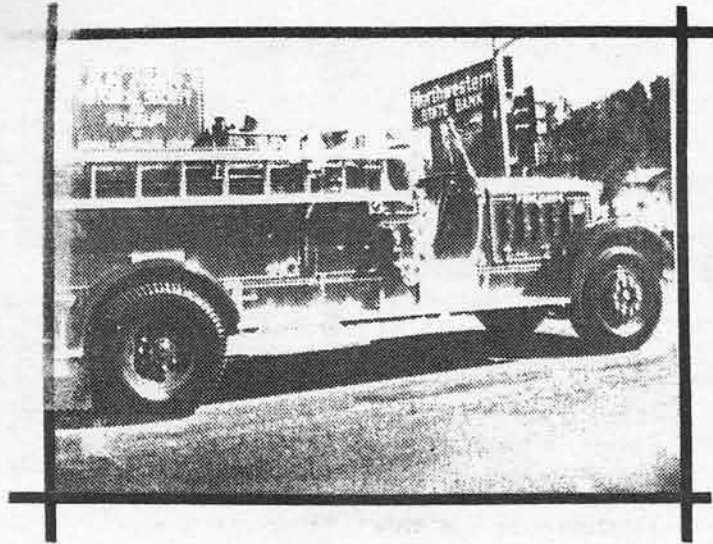
As part of our Outreach Program, artifacts are being placed in the public libraries, nursing homes and senior centers out in the county. The first display "Red River Land Dolls" went to the Hawley Public Library in September. It features dolls from the Heifort Collection and runs through October 25. Hawley's next display is "Christmas Calories" starting October 26.

"Spinning a Yarn" a display on fiber arts will be featured at the Moorhead Public Library for the Grand Opening of their recently remodeled facility. Spinning demonstrations are also provided by the Clay County Museum.

Viking Manor in Ulen and the Ulen High School are receiving display cases purchased by the Sander Jacobson VFW Post. The Manor's display starting October 26, will be "Forward Ho! Carved by Anna" and the High School's, placed on October 28, will be "Weights' and Measures."

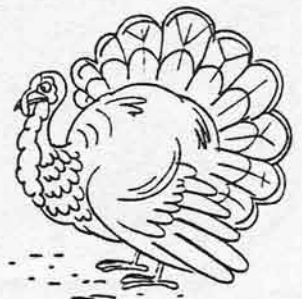
We will continue to place display cases as funding becomes available and suitable locations are arranged. Be sure to visit the display in your area.

ON PARADE



August 27, was a cold, windy day in Dilworth for their annual Loco Days parade. Our 1936 Buffalo fire engine was an entry in that parade which drew many area fire vehicles. Perhaps due to the firefighters' competition later that day. Our driver, Ron Sorum of Moorhead, participated in those events. Passengers on the engine were Isaac Johnson, a young friend of Ron's, and Smokey, the dalmation belonging to the Southside Fire Station. These three also participated in the Valley Fest parade in Moorhead September 10. Thanks Ron, Isaac and Smokey! The MSU Homecoming parade was held on October 8, in Moorhead, on a perfect fall morning. Our driver from last year, Mike Sigdestad, was at the wheel. He postponed his hunting trip to drive for us. The Clay County Historical Society would like to thank the drivers who volunteer their time to help us get this beautiful fire engine out where it can be appreciated. A special thanks to Jerry Shaustad, Southside Fire Station, for maintaining the engine for the Society.

"HAPPY
THANKSGIVING!!"



"MOORHEAD BRIDGE DISASTER, 1902"

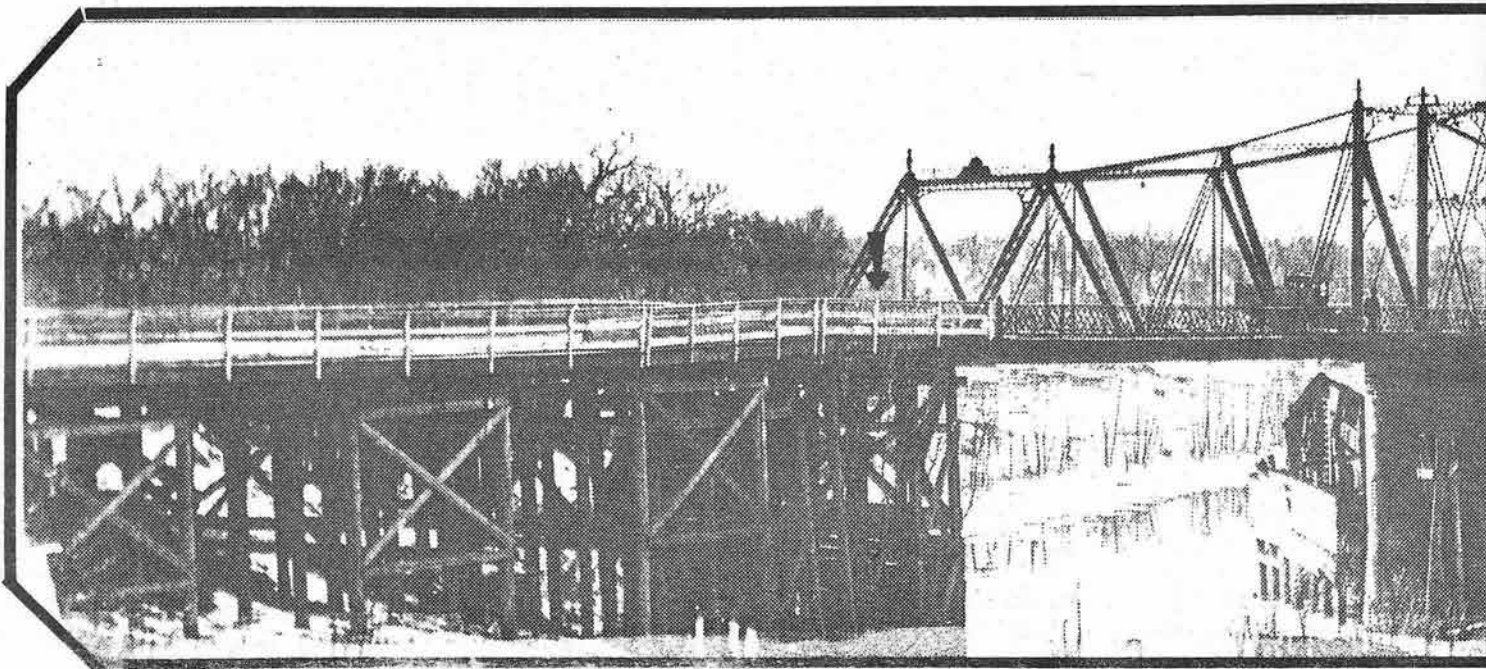
Three men barely escaped with their lives April 15, 1902, when a threshing rig, complete with seperator, water-tank, steam traction engine and team of horses, crashed through the Moorhead approach to the old south (Main Avenue) bridge. Ole Larson, a farmer south of Moorhead, had recently purchased the equipment in Fargo and hired Charles Anderson and George "Rat House" Miller, both of Fargo, to deliver the rig. Accompanying them was Larson's son, Louis, NDAC student and football player. According to the Moorhead Daily News, "They got up steam and about 5 a.m. they started for the Moorhead side. Anderson's team was hitched by means of chains to the short tonge of the engine. The rig had passed safely over the Fargo approach and the bridge proper. The team had passed off the first span (from the bridge) and Anderson, who was driving them on foot a little in the rear, had about reached the end of the first approach, when with a frightful crash and grind the timbers forming the support gave way. It gave way on the south side first, and as the engine went down the team was drawn after it, the poor beasts going over backwards to their instant death. Anderson jumped to the next span and escaped. On the foot board of the engine stood Larson and Miller. As the tremendous weight went down they jumped to the south side" 20 or 30 feet to the riverbank below.

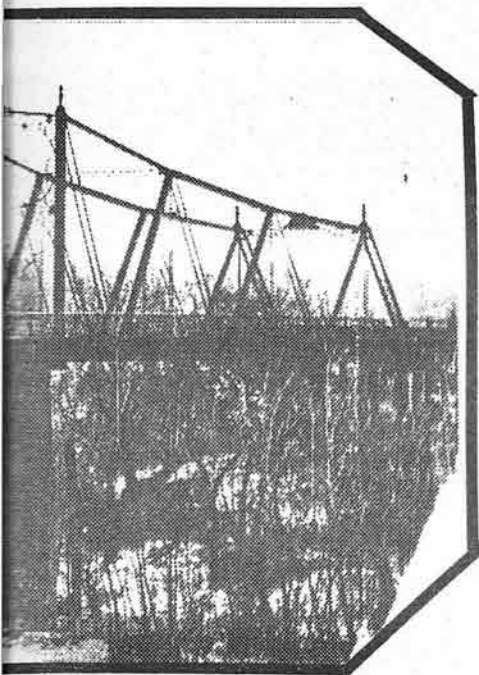
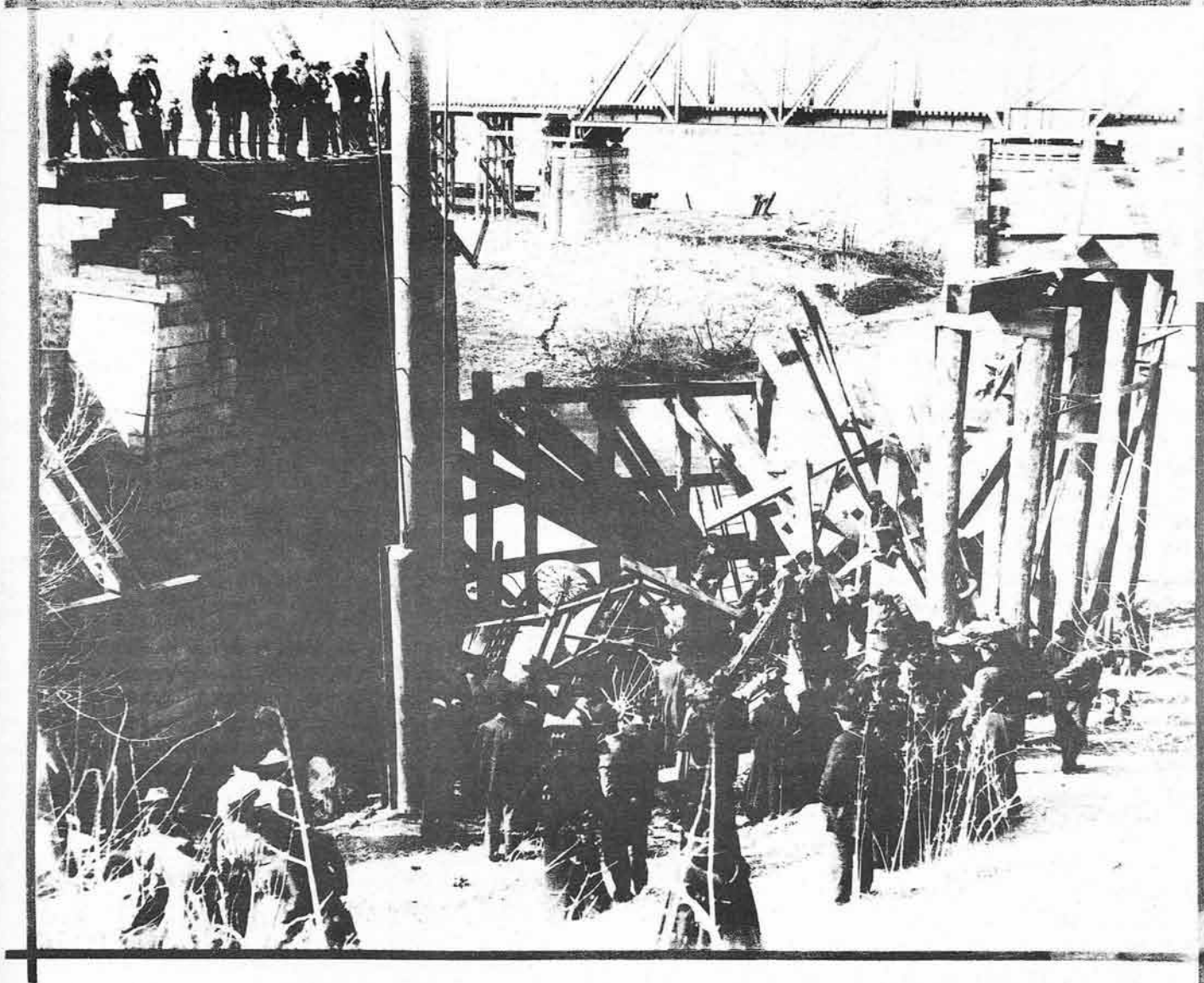
Mike Sheridan, bartender in A.J. Rustad's Saloon at the east end of the bridge "said that the noise of the crash was terrifying" and that he was "nearly scared out of his boots".

E.E. Deady witnessed the accident from a window in the Dwight Flour Mill where he was employed. The mill stood about where Sportland is now located. Deady said, "I ran out of the office and down the bank. Steam was escaping from the engine and I could not see anything. I heard someone groaning and calling and I called two other men from the mill...by the time the steam cleared away a policeman (Ed Sauvageau) had arrived and we found the man, Miller, with three-quarters of his body under the thresher." Miraculously, Miller had landed in a slight depression and "the rise on either side kept the weight of the machine from him."

Rescuers dragged Miller from under the wreckage and he was later treated for a broken leg, head and possible internal injuries. Larson had jumped clear of the wreckage, but was knocked unconscious during his fall. Otherwise, he was not seriously injured.

It took three days to clear the wreckage. The seperator, watertank and dead horses were easily removed but the 14,000 pound steam engine had to be set upright and dragged up the steep bank.





ABOVE: Moorhead photographer was on hand to record the event. AT LEFT: Old south (Main Avenue) bridge from the north about 1920. The arrow marks the span that collapsed in 1902.

Repairs to the bridge approach took another 8 days and cost the city of Moorhead \$484. But the city did not get off that cheaply.

Miller, a cafe owner on lower Front Street, recovered from his injuries and sued the city for \$10,000. In October 1903, the Federal Court in Fergus Falls awarded him \$8700. Anderson received \$250 for the loss of his team.

The bridge had been built in 1883 and had seen better days. Although bridge experts in 1901 had pronounced the bridge was widely acknowledged to be falling apart. After Miller's award, the city made substantial improvements in both the north and south bridges.

The south bridge was finally torn down in 1936 and replaced with the present Main Avenue bridge.

OUTREACH UPDATE

The month of August brought us our first glimpse of how well the outreach program was being received in the county. The Ulen VFW sponsored two display cases, the fire engine was booked for several parades, a "shopping list" of demonstrations/ presentations offered by CCHS was developed and circulated to the contacts made in June and July. Response has been good.

September, the month of events for CCHS. We sponsored the stagecoach rides for the Valley Fest kick-off event held at the HHIC, participated in a parade, and made the train ride to Fergus Falls a reality. The date was set for October 22, 1988. If you have any suggestions, we would appreciate hearing from you!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 21-23: Embarrass Weekend (bus tours and sauna built)

October 22: CCHS will sponsor a train ride to Fergus Falls via the Otter Tail Valley Rail Express.

October 25: CCHS Board Meeting at 8:30 a.m. held at HHIC

November 12: CCHS Preservation workshop at HHIC to cover textile and photo preservation. General public is invited.

November 12: "Keep the Home Fires Burning" exhibit opens at the Clay County Museum.

November 22: CCHS Board Meeting at 8:30 a.m. held at HHIC

November 24: THANKSGIVING-CENTER IS CLOSED

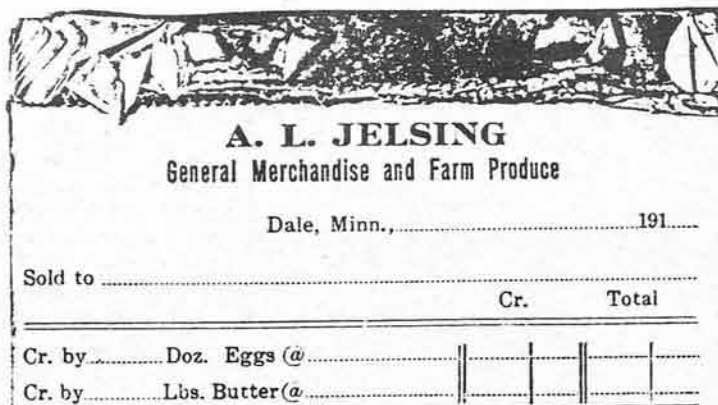
November 25: Ethnic Christmas opens at the Center.

"LET'S GO SHOPPING"

Buy a swimsuit for 98¢? You could in the Andrew Johnson in Hawley, MN, in the late 1930s. This swimsuit is one of the many artifacts on display in a new exhibit area next to the temporary and permanent exhibit galleries in the lower level of the Clay County Museum. The display alcove is about 13 feet wide and about 16 inches deep, and will provide for single theme displays changing about every two months. This area will give the Collections Manager a chance to "liberate" some of the artifacts in the museum.

The first display is "Let's Go Shopping" using an old store show case filled with plain and fancy goods from area stores. Specific stores represented are de Lendrecie's in Fargo, Moody's in Moorehead (that's the way the price tags read!), the Andrew Johnson Store in Hawley, MN, and the Jelsing/Ulven store in Dale. Artifacts with original labels and prices were selected for the display. The time period ranges from the late 1880s to the early 1940s. A shoe fitting stool has boxes of shoes nearby. The candy scale weighs real lemon drops. Signs advertise 7-Up and Dingman's Soap. The most unusual artifact is the Putnam's Cloth Chart, a gauge for measuring fabric while on the bolt.

Future themes for this area include musical instruments, babies, art, quilts and wedding dresses.



A. L. JELSGING
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Dale, Minn., 191.....

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Cr. by Doz. Eggs @		
Cr. by Lbs. Butter @		

The Valley Fest kick-off event, held September 8, was a success. The Society sponsored stagecoach rides for all ages. We counted 101 people taking rides. Everyone had a terrific day and we look forward to next years event!!

STAFF ATTENDS CONFERENCE

Pam Burkhardt and Claudia Pratt recently traveled to Kansas City to attend the Midwest Museums Conference and the Mountain-Plains Museum Association joint annual meeting. The American Association of Museums is broken into several regions. A national meeting and regional meetings are held each year. This conference hosted the entire center section of the United States.

Over the three day conference, Pam and Claudia were able to attend sessions that dealt with "Planning for a Secure Future"-funding, long range planning, traveling exhibits, museum collaboration, and collections management. Evenings were spent visiting several of the area's museums and visiting with the 400 other museum professionals. Sharing ideas and making contacts with other museum professionals was perhaps the most valuable part of the conference. Clay County Historical Society has the same problems as many other museums, but we are doing things correctly and are on the right track for the future.

REMINDERS

The CCHS staff has many programs to offer. Programs include slide shows, videos and demonstrations. For a list of programs available call (218) 233-4604.

As always, we are looking for volunteers at the museum. If you are interested, please give us a call. There are a number of interesting jobs waiting for you!

Linens and Lace continues to be on exhibit until November 6, 1988. The exhibit was designed and produced by the CCHS staff for their temporary exhibit hall. Items on exhibit include clothing and accessories dating from 1845 to World War I. Featured in the exhibit is Wash Day, Barber Shop and Home Sewing. Time is running out if you have not seen this exhibit yet!

"NEW DIRECTOR 'ON BOARD'"

The Board of Directors and staff would like to welcome Nancy Tedros to the Board. She is filling the unexpired term of Willis Kingsbury. Nancy and her husband, Yoseph, have two children ages 5 and 3. While Nancy is working at Villa Maria in Fargo, Yoseph is part-owner of Spot Shot Billiards in Moorhead. Nancy and her family reside in Moorhead.

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER DONORS

MOORHEAD: Mable Gunderson Young, Helen Euren, Shirley Holen, Helen Hedelund.

FARGO: Mark Peihl, Dewey and Tess Bergquist.

PORTLAND, OR: Mary Fay Spencer.

FERGUS FALLS, MN: Otter Tail County Historical Society.

FLAGSTAFF, AZ: Allen C. Bergland.

MINNEAPOLIS, MN: Wallace Hafstad.

NEW AQUISITIONS

Buffalo robe, Swedish costume, drawing of Aspelund Church, 1920s date hats, photos, minute book for the Farmers Alliance, Souvenir cup and saucer, county awards, 1957 phone book.



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MOORHEAD, MINN 56560

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CCHS - 1988 Membership Information

CCHS Membership

I would like to begin/renew my membership in the Clay County Historical Society. Please enter my membership in the category I have checked below:

- () SPECIAL* \$2.00
- () INDIVIDUAL \$15.00
- () FAMILY \$25.00
- () PATRON \$50.00

*Persons residing in a nursing/retirement home.

CCHS Membership With Annual Pass

I would like to begin/renew my membership in the Clay County Historical Society. Please enter my membership in the category I have checked below:

- () INDIVIDUAL \$25.00 Includes One Individual Annual Pass
- () FAMILY \$50.00 Includes One Family Annual Pass
- () PATRON \$75.00 Includes One Individual Annual Pass
- () LIFE \$300.00 Includes One Individual Annual Pass
- () COUPLE LIFE \$500.00 Includes One Family Annual Pass
- () BUSINESS \$100.00 Includes One Individual Annual Pass
