

— The Hourglass —



Published by the Historical & Cultural Society of Clay County | ISSN #: 2153-5876



GERMAN KULTURFEST



Saturday, September 16
10:00AM - 5:00PM



HCSCC Celebrating German Kulturfest

The Fun Begins on Saturday, September 16

By Davin Wait

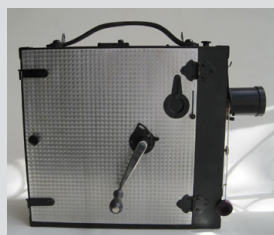
On Saturday, September 16, we'll be assembling the community for a fun-filled, family-friendly celebration at German Kulturfest. The festivities are scheduled from 10:00AM to 5:00PM and we're using the day to highlight our German traditions with a variety of performers, art, crafts, food, beer, wine, science, kids' activities, imports, and classic German films.

Main Stage Entertainment

In our food and beer hall, we'll be hosting two old-time Minnesota oompa bands: Dale Dahmen and the Beats

from 10:00AM to 12:45PM and Kris Keltgen and the Riverbend Dutchmen from 1:15PM to 4:00PM. The two groups show off their own German heritage with both contemporary spins and traditional polka styles and they'll be separated by a performance from the Fargo-Moorhead Opera — performing several German selections from their repertoire and their upcoming performance of *Die Fledermaus*, a comedy sung in English. The day concludes with a set from minstrel accordionist Aimee Klein, beginning at 4:00PM.

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(Humphrey, pg 7)

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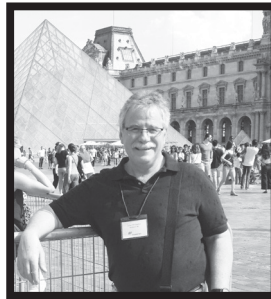
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Our thanks to the Moorhead City Council and the Clay County Commission for their continued support of local history and culture.

HCSCC News

President's Message From John Dobmeier



Greetings all,

As our summer months come to a close, it is good to reflect on our recently completed summer vacations. As many of you know, I am a high school teacher working within the parameters of a nine-month contract. My summers are busy with honey-do lists, fishing, and traveling/camping. Life is good and I am greatly blessed in my present gig on this earth.

Last week I returned from a mini-vacation to the beautiful and historic Medora, North Dakota. One of my dearest friends moved out there last year and is presently working for the Medora Foundation. I was given the opportunity to meet one of his good friends, Joe Wiegand, our nation's leading Theodore Roosevelt repressor. As I was visiting with Joe after his performance (a must-see if you visit Medora) I was once again immersed in the rich history of our Midwest United States and how important it is to us as we navigate the future.

When I returned to the Red River Valley I needed to stop into the HCSCC offices. As I walked through our center, I was amazed at the buzz of excitement from not only patrons but from our staff. I am once again reminded how wonderful the people who work for our organization are.

History is important to us and it really does become our story. My new friend Joe reminded me of that in Medora. I continue to be proud of this society and our small contribution to preserving our Clay County history for generations to come.

I close with this thought:

Do what you can, with what you have, where your are....T.R.

~ John Dobmeier, HCSCC Board President

Please Send Us Your Addresses!

Are you going away for the winter or coming back for the summer? Please send your alternate address to Lynelle.Martin@hcsmuseum.org to make sure you receive all the up-to-date information from us!



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HCSCC News

Opening Reception of *The Saint John's Bible*

An opening reception for our major exhibition of the year, *Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible*, is scheduled for **Sunday, October 1**, from 1:00PM to 4:00PM. Refreshments are provided and the reception is open to the public, but admission will apply. HCSCC members will be admitted for free.

Illuminating the Word: *The Saint John's Bible Program Guide*

In order to better promote and coordinate the extensive programming both we and our partners are offering this fall in conjunction with *Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible*, we will be printing an exhibition and programming guide to be distributed at the Hjemkomst Center and the sites of our community partners. Pick up a copy at the opening reception on October 1 or the first time you explore the exhibition.

Pangea -- Cultivate Our Cultures Slated for Saturday, November 18

Our annual celebration of the global roots that make up the Fargo-Moorhead community is scheduled for **Saturday, November 18**, from 10:00AM to 4:00PM. As always, festival admission is free and includes a full day of global foods, music, arts, crafts, stories, children's activities, and vendors.

Experience the world under one roof with us . . . and make sure you come to the Hjemkomst Center hungry.

Wine Classes at HCSCC

In our continued partnership with member-instructors Sam Wai, Roy Hammerling, Ron Ellingson, and Arland Jackson, we're hosting a Wines of the Bible class on **Wednesday, November 1**, from 6:30PM to 9:00PM.

Enrollment will not open until we make the announcement in early October in our eNewsletter. To confirm that you are on that eNewsletter list, sign up on our website or contact HCSCC Communications Coordinator Davin Wait at (218) 299-5511, ext. 6733, or davin.wait@hcsmuseum.org.



Foods of the Bible Brunch: *An Illuminating the Word Fundraiser*

We're hosting a fundraising brunch for *Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible* on **Sunday, October 29**, from 11:00AM to 1:00PM at the Hjemkomst Center.

The theme of the brunch is "Foods of the Bible," and Rex Cafe chef Kelly Wambach is preparing a delicious feast. Expect the usual breakfast fare but with a Mediterranean and Middle Eastern focus: Sinai-sanded eggs, roasted goat and beef, fish, pita, olives, dates, apricots, spiced milk and honey, etc.

Tickets are \$25, they include museum admission (with *The Saint John's Bible*), and they can be reserved on our website (via the 'Event Registration' tab) or by contacting Lynelle at (218) 299-5511, ext. 6739.

Image: *Joshua Anthology*, Donald Jackson, 2010, *The Saint John's Bible*, Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota, USA.



Message from Executive Director

Maureen Kelly Jonason

August 1 marked my 9th year working with the museum. The time has flown by at supersonic speed.

Almost a decade ago, I came in as a volunteer to work the last five months of Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center's existence as executive director. I quickly realized I needed to get paid! Then in January of 2009, I was appointed by the newly-merged board as Interim Executive Director to lead the organization through the merger process. After 18 months of meetings between the two organizations' boards, the process itself began in January, 2009, and was completed in March, 2010. I ended up being 'interim' for 21 months before I was hired in May for the permanent position of Executive Director of the newly named Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County.

What a remarkable journey it has been so far. Together the team of the staff and the board and I essentially reinvented the organization. The staff was twice as big, we expanded the mission, and we added programming that quickly lifted our community profile. CCHS always had a great reputation for professionalism and high-quality work. That firm foundation proved to be a deciding factor in the success of the 2009 merger. We already had the public's trust; now we needed to sustain our high standards.

The amazing staff rose to the occasion and has grown the organization beyond the original dreams. Far more visitors now see the local history exhibitions and learn about Clay County as a microcosm of the United States. The Moorhead-Fargo community continues to support the valiant stories of the *Hjemkomst* Viking ship and the Hopperstad Stave Church, but now those stories of Scandinavian heritage have expanded to a library of the many different cultures that make up the Red River Valley – and that was the original intention of this building all along.

Sadly, my mother passed away on August 12. She was a keeper of all-things-paper. Working with historians has changed my perspective on the value of photographs, family documents, and letters; I know the stories they all tell add richness to the historical narrative of our region. I can sympathize with the many people who struggle with deciding what to preserve and what to throw away. Digitization now makes it possible to scan the photos and papers and preserve them in the miniscule space of a computer chip – in contrast to the many, many boxes we carried out of her home. It's important not to be cavalier about your family's history. Don't throw out all the paper before you have had it scanned for posterity.

HCSCC collects Clay County, Minnesota's history and heritage stories. The ship and the church are part of those stories. So are the artifacts, letters, photographs, and documents from our Clay County residents. While we cannot save everything old, we do welcome the material culture that helps us preserve and share the history and culture of Clay County. Call Lisa or Mark anytime you have something to offer that tells a part of Clay County's stories. While storage space is at a premium, we have a hard time turning down unique Clay County items. When in doubt about what to save, call your local historian. You'd be amazed how historians put our stories together!

-Maureen Kelly Jonason

Interested in donating to archives or collections?

Contact HCSCC Archivist Mark Peihl at (218) 299-5511, ext. 6734, or mark.peihl@hcsmuseum.org.

Contact HCSCC Curator Lisa Vedaa at (218) 299-5511, ext. 6735, or lisa.vedaa@hcsmuseum.org.

Consider the Gift of Membership

Are you a member of the Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County? Do you have family or friends who might be interested? Sign up or renew your membership today! We have several membership levels to choose from:

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| • Basic – \$40 | • Basic+ – \$60 | • Booster – \$85 |
| • Patron – \$125 | • Heritage – \$250 | • Benefactor – \$500 |

To sign up or to learn more about what each membership level offers, visit our website (www.hcscconline.org) and click on the "Join, Support, Shop" tab at the top menu or give us a call: (218) 299-5511.

Exhibits & Events at HCSCC

Quilt National '15

Heritage Hall (through October 10)

The Dairy Barn Art Center's 19th biennial juried exhibition of innovative art quilts in Athens, Ohio, continues its run in Fargo-Moorhead, as we showcase an eclectic collection of work from fiber artists representing 33 states and 8 foreign countries. As one of the jurors, Judy Schwender, notes, the exhibition shows "the larger world out there that quilting is an art form on a level with traditional fine art mediums."

A reception will be held for visitors interested in meeting *Quilt National '15* textile artist Velda Newman (from Nevada City, CA) on **Thursday, September 21**, from 3:00PM to 5:00PM at the Hjemkomst Center. Velda will also be offering an evening lecture and workshops elsewhere with Quilters' Guild of North Dakota. The reception is free & open to the public.

The exhibition and programming are both funded in part by a grant from the Lake Region Arts Council through a Minnesota State Legislative appropriation, as well as funding from Quilters' Guild of North Dakota, Minnesota Quilters, and The Arts Partnership.

Wet & Dry: Alcohol in Clay County, 1871-1937

Heritage Hall (through January 8, 2018)

One of the most popular local exhibitions in the history of the Hjemkomst Center, *Wet & Dry, Alcohol in Clay County, 1871-1937* now approaches its final stretch. On Tuesday, January 9, we begin disassembling the exhibition to begin construction on our examination of life in Clay County 100 years ago: *War, Flu, & Fear: World War I and Clay County*.

In the interim, introduce or reacquaint yourself with the stories of Dan "Slim Jim" Shumway, a young Solomon Comstock, and Jake Schumacher: the main characters in our study of the pervasive role of booze and brewing in the small Minnesota county that came of age on the edges of the Northern Pacific Railroad and the dry Dakota territory.

Wet & Dry, Alcohol in Clay County features the real rum runners, bootleggers, blind pigs, moonshiners, Temperance debates, gangs, and bank robberies of Clay County that marked this place as a center for sin.

Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible

4th Floor Gallery (October 1 - December 31)

Born in Minnesota's Saint John's University and Abbey and created by an international community of artists, scribes, designers, historians, and theologians, *Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible* is the largest art exhibition in our history, featuring 68 original folios of the first illuminated and handwritten Bible commissioned by a Benedictine monastery in 500 years -- along with rare books, tools, sketches, materials, and didactic panels.

The project of *The Saint John's Bible* combined centuries-old traditions of artistry and craftsmanship with the latest capabilities of digital communication and design. The words are handwritten on calfskin vellum using hand-cut quills and ancient inks, and the folios measure 2ft by 3ft when opened, weighing 30 to 40 pounds each.

We've transformed the 4th Floor Gallery specifically for this monumental exhibition of art, history, and faith -- an impressive feat appealing to all faiths -- and the exhibition has turned into a community-wide event.

A public opening reception is scheduled for **Sunday, October 1**, from 1:00PM to 4:00PM. The reception is open to the public, but admission will apply. HCSCC members, as usual, will be admitted for free.

Red River Masters

Heritage Hall (October 24 - March 4, 2018)

Co-curated by HCSCC Programming Director Markus Krueger and The Rourke Art Gallery's Jonathan Rutter, *Red River Masters* will offer a retrospective of our region's art masters, including the gorgeous work of Jim O'Rourke, Orabel Thortvedt, Charles Beck, Cyrus Running, and Erik Ahlberg (as well as several more).

A public opening reception will be held **Tuesday, October 24**, from 5:00PM to 8:00PM in conjunction with the unveiling of South Dakota master artist Jon Crane's portrait of the Hopperstad Stave Church. The reception will include Hopperstad tours from the master woodcarver who built it, Guy Paulson, as well as Scandinavian treats and a cash bar.

German Foods, Wine, and Beer

The food at German Kulturfest is going to be fantastic once again, and the festival offers one of the few times and places where you can sample such a broad swath of the German and German-American culinary traditions. Rex Cafe chef Kelly Wambach will commemorate the German and German-American experience (and his own German-American heritage) with a main menu featuring bratwurst, smoked pork loin, currywurst, spaetzle, borscht, potatoes and cabbage, red cabbage, Bavarian sauerkraut, traditional sauerkraut, and herring & tomato salad.

The entrees and sides will be supplemented with a variety of German-style beers from Fargo Brewing Company, German wines and cheeses curated by HCSCC member Sam Wai, and Wambach's "Foods for the Brave," a smattering of traditional German and German-American foods for people with peculiar tastes or a daring disposition: headcheese, pickled pig's hocks, and beef tongue.

Dessert will be provided by Karen's Kuchens, the work of a regional pastry chef with a flair for German taste who will be bringing German chocolate cookies, root beer float cookies, cashew cookies, and pecan icebox cookies, as well as a dozen varieties of kuchens, available by the slice and in bulk (almond creme, apple, blueberry, caramel apple, chocolate chip, cottage cheese, German chocolate, juneberry, peach, prune, rhubarb, and strawberry rhubarb).

The German Village

We invite you to move beyond the food, beer, and music and explore the German Village, constructed throughout the Hjemkomst Center. We've assembled another intriguing collection of educators, entertainers, and vendors to commemorate the German and German-American contributions to both our local and national communities.

Seasoned vets like the Brademeyers (traditional German woodcarving and painting), In the Chips (German woodcarving), and Evelyn Engle (Polish Bunzlau pottery imports) will be back, but we're expanding our focus on German history and heritage with over 20 vendors, including a science booth from Inspire Innovation Lab, a traditional German lapidary booth from DB Reality Rocks, a scherenschnitte

table from Sabrina Hornung, and a mini German film festival moderated by MSUM Film Studies' The Film Loop at which we'll be showing both documentaries and classic German films like *Schmeckfest* and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*.

* * * * *

General admission is \$5, but HCSCC members and children under 12 years old will be admitted for free.

Overflow parking will be available in the Moorhead Center Mall parking lot, with LinkFM shuttles running to and from the Hjemkomst Center every 15 minutes.

For more details, please contact HCSCC Communications Coordinator Davin Wait at (218) 299-5511, ext. 6733, or davin.wait@hscsmuseum.org.

For questions about accessibility and accommodations, please contact HCSCC Programming Director Markus Krueger at (218) 299-5511, ext. 6738, or markus.krueger@hscsmuseum.org.

* * * * *

Please Support Our Sponsors

German Kulturfest is sponsored by Fargo Brewing Co., High Plains Reader, Moorhead Rotary, Moorhead Public Service, The Arts Partnership, The FM Extra, Inspire Innovation Lab, LinkFM, and the FM Opera.



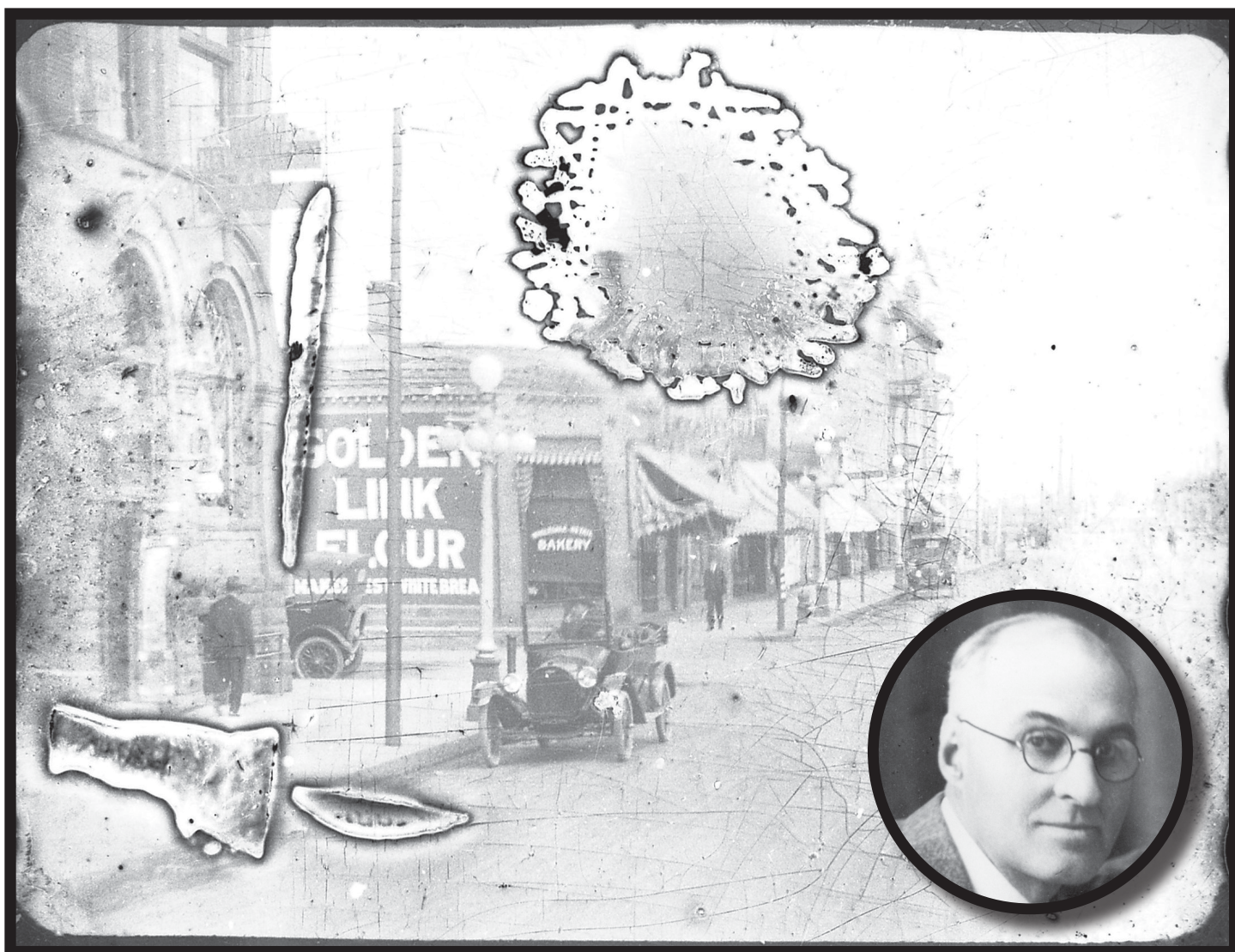
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A still image from Dr. Edward W. Humphrey's 1917 footage, likely filmed on Sunday, May 7. The image faces east from Center Avenue and 6th Street N (HCSCC Archives). Inset: Humphrey, circa 1952 (*Moorhead Daily News*).

Dr. Humphrey's Movies

By Davin Wait

At this moment, HCSCC possesses five different formats of the same 12 minutes of film footage previously owned by former Moorhead physician, surgeon, and five-time mayor Dr. Edward W. Humphrey. The footage was primarily filmed in the spring and summer of 1917, and it now exists in our archives in the original 35mm reel, the 16mm reel onto which his son Dr. George Humphrey transferred the original and then sent to us in 1988, the ¾" videotape WDAY produced from that 16mm stock in 1989, a 1996 VHS recording produced by MSUM's Bob Schieffer and featuring our archivist Mark Peihl's commentary, and the current collection of digital files (.mp4, .mov, etc.) swirling around on YouTube, Facebook, and our shared digital spaces.

As our tendency to commemorate centennials would go, it's worth noting that this year the footage passed into three digits of existence. The footage has also already proven itself to be a valuable asset to our organization, but here it will serve as the focal point for a brief return to Dr. Humphrey's time in Moorhead, the early years of film in Clay County, and life in our community more than a century ago – as well as a reflection on the constant struggles in the work of preserving our past and translating it for the evolving landscape of the present and future.

We could say the life of Dr. Humphrey's films began after the spring and summer sunlight of 1917 passed through a 50mm Bausch and Lomb lens onto the

silver halides and nitrocellulose base of his 35mm film stock. Or after those silver particles were subsequently developed and washed away, leaving a grainy grayscale image (note: an ephemeral, unstable, and flammable, flammable, flammable, incredibly flammable grayscale image). Or maybe they took form after those images were first screened in Humphrey's home for his undoubtedly awestruck Fargo-Moorhead friends and family. Unfortunately, all of that would be a gross simplification of the art, history, and science of both film and the way these images came to be housed in our archives. It's more interesting to start with the man, Humphrey, himself.

Edward William Humphrey was born on January 16, 1877, in Reedsburg, Wisconsin, to his father William and his mother, Elizabeth Fischer, a woman who migrated to the U.S. as child with her French parents. Born after his older sister Agnes and before his brother William and younger sister Isabel, Edward moved as a child with his parents to a farm outside of Gary, South Dakota – a small town 30 miles southeast of Watertown and about as close as you can get to the Minnesota border. He grew up there and lived through the tragedy of his young mother's death in 1887.

Humphrey left South Dakota for college in Ames, Iowa, and in 1899 earned a four-year Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine at Iowa State College of Agricultural and Mechanic Arts (formerly Iowa Agricultural College and now Iowa State University). Iowa State was small then, averaging about 70 graduates a year during Humphrey's stay, but it would have offered an interesting contrast to his farm life in Gary. He likely would have encountered George Washington Carver, the young scientist born into slavery who was teaching and finishing his graduate degree there in 1896. Humphrey also certainly encountered Iowa State's football coach, Glenn "Pop" Warner, a man whose revolutionary football mind led to his commemoration as the namesake of the youth football league. Humphrey wasn't the All-American that his 1961 obituary claimed him to be, but he did play for Warner on a solid Iowa State football team in the late-90s -- including the three semesters during which he may not have enrolled in classes, as University of Nebraska-Kearney professor and Ames historian Dr. Doug Biggs recently shared with me.

After earning his degree in Ames, Humphrey traveled a long road in a brief four years before landing in



An 1899 photograph of the Iowa State College Veterinary Medical Society. Humphrey stands in the middle row, wearing glasses. A classmate rests a hand on his shoulder. (Iowa State U Archives, Courtesy of Doug Biggs)

Moorhead. He earned an M.D. in 1902 from the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Hamline University in St. Paul and then interned in Rochester, MN, before practicing briefly in Lidgerwood, North Dakota. By 1903 he was in Moorhead, living at 411 2nd Avenue South, practicing medicine in the Wheeler Land Company block (Front Street and 7th Street S), and married to local woman Edith Vincent. In 1907 he became the chief surgeon at Northwestern Hospital while living with Edith and his brother William, a student, two blocks west. By 1909 he and his wife were living at 428 8th Street South, just across the street from Solomon and Sarah Comstock. In 1913 he opened a practice with Dr. Gilbert Gosslee in north Moorhead; in 1918 he purchased land for what would become his own Moorhead Clinic; and in 1919 he defeated incumbent Nels Melvey in the Moorhead mayoral race on the strength of his popularity in the 3rd ward – the only ward he won.

Some evidence suggests that Humphrey's politics weren't particularly attuned to the plight of the working class or poor, though he was a loud voice in the community's anti-saloon movement. However, as a business-friendly Democrat who championed several public improvements during his first campaign for mayor and a man with expensive tastes who shared within his circle, he developed many friends and partners in the community. His love for cars and his influence as a doctor in the middle of the Spanish Flu epidemic surely must have raised his profile in the community prior to his election, as well, but his film

equipment and that early movie magic might actually have played a larger role.

The Moorhead Daily News was already commenting on Humphrey's home movies in the early spring of 1917. His friend Ed Rudd, of *The Daily News*, often served as Humphrey's cameraman, so the physician and surgeon's early film exploits were well-known in the newsroom. On Thursday, March 29, 1917, it was reported that he and his wife Edith had entertained several guests with their film projector and five newsreels, of "most impressing war pictures."

(These likely would have been *The Universal Animated Weekly*, *The Hearst International Weekly*, *Pathe Animated Gazettes*, or *The Hearst-Pathe News* – 5-minute news accounts released in local theatres that tended to offer more spectacle than reporting – but official British and American newsreels wouldn't have been far behind. According to Criss Kovacs of the National Archives, prior to entering World War I, the U.S. Army Signal Corps spent nearly \$3 million to equip and train almost a thousand employees for newsreel production (about \$65,000,000 today). The Committee on Public Information (CPI) used much of this footage in its weekly newsreel, the *Official War Review*, in an effort to drum up public support.)

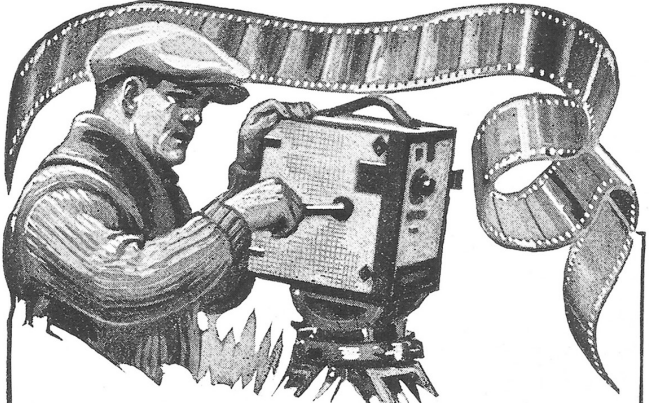
A month later on Friday, April 20, *The Daily News* announced that Humphrey had added to his entertainment collection and purchased a Universal moving picture camera: "with his projection machine makes one of the most complete motion picture outfits extant." He'd bought the piece in Chicago on a business trip only days before, spending somewhere around \$475 on the \$300 camera, film, and accessories. Humphrey likely wasn't considering the political power of film, like the CPI, but he almost immediately set out filming the community, and they responded to that opportunity with enthusiasm.

Now, motion pictures were nothing new to the community by then: Fargo had several movie theatres by this time, Moorhead's Lyceum Theatre had been screening films since December 7, 1910, and a traveling showman had even brought the "Marvelous Cinemascope" to Moorhead's Fraternity Hall in May of 1897, the very infancy of moving pictures (see Mark's article in the January 1997 CCHS newsletter for this account). However, the fact that Humphrey had turned the camera back onto the local community

offered something markedly different. He'd just turned Fargo-Moorhead into both the audience and the stars.

Only days later, on Monday, April 23, Humphrey filmed "Patriotic Day," one in a string of nationwide events scheduled to build support for the war. Moorhead's event had been postponed because of bad weather, but two thousand people gathered at the high school; local children dressed up in red, white, and blue to create a living flag; and the community ran a flag up a 72-foot pole. Humphrey's neighbor, Solomon Comstock, gave a speech. All of it was captured on Humphrey's film and the framing of his shots show that he was given prime real estate to record it.

Two weeks later, on Monday, May 7, Humphrey recorded a test run of the Moorhead fire department running at "top speed and with full equipment." Two



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A 1921 advertisement for Burke & James, Inc.'s Universal Motion Picture Camera. The same model sold at auction in 2012 for \$47,000. It was believed to be Walt Disney's first movie camera (Southwest Museum of Engineering, Communications, and Computation).

days after that, about 650 Moorhead Normal School students and about 550 Concordia College students took a break from class and study to march in circles from their classrooms and through the grounds while Humphrey sat outside of Weld Hall and Old Main to record them. Again, the *Daily News* covered it, with the following headlines: “1200 Students Pose for Movies | Dr. Humphrey Takes Moving Pictures of City’s Students Today | Normal School and Concordia Students Make Excellent Appearance.”

We can presume that Humphrey filmed the community for much of the summer of 1917, as his footage runs from mundane shots in his driveway, through the auto polo matches at the Fargo Interstate Fair in July, and to another patriotic WWI gathering for Dedication Day at Concordia in early September. Unfortunately, we can’t be sure of how much footage existed or what we’ve already lost, because much of it decomposed in his Pelican Lake cabin where it sat for years before Humphrey’s son found and donated it to CCHS in 1989. This is also what makes this century footage even more valuable to us as historians.



The Moorhead Fire Department on a test run for Humphrey’s camera, May of 1917 (HCSCC Archives)

made with immediate durability, not preservation, in mind. So even if the base doesn’t deteriorate on its own, turning into a rust-colored powder, it frequently interacts with heat, humidity, and the emulsion layer (the photosensitive silver layer) in unfortunate ways: separation, growing dry and brittle, decomposing and creating byproduct “bubbles” (as shown on page 7).

Add to this the frequency at which film was destroyed for its silver content, including many early Hollywood “lost masterpieces” -- Austrian-American director Erich von Stroheim’s *Greed* (1924) comes to mind -- and it is amazing that we have the footage that we do.

Humphrey went on to win the mayor’s seat in February of 1919, almost assuredly in some part due to the press he received and the relationships he built around his moving pictures. Even so, the movies, his public works projects, and the strong support he received from Moorhead businessmen weren’t enough to help him in 1921, when he waffled on campaigning again and lost his reelection bid to Clarence Evenson.

Strangely enough, though, that wasn’t the end of the political magic of those 1917 movies for Humphrey. The footage turned up again in May of 1931 as Moorhead celebrated its 50th anniversary. The Moorhead Theatre (which opened in 1928 and ran the Lyceum out of business the same year) screened the films to show the community what the old days were like (*The Daily News* got it wrong and said they were 20 years old).

Humphrey ran for mayor again in the next election. . . . and won. Then he repeated that success three more times before retiring a five-time mayor in 1941.



Concordia College students marching in circles for Dr. Humphrey, May of 1917 (HCSCC Archives)

In the early years of film, the nitrocellulose base that was used before the acetate “safety film” was the same general material as guncotton: a cheap, highly combustible, and autocatalytic explosive. This meant that the slightest heat or friction, in almost any setting, could send this film into flames. . . and often did (the 1909 Cinematograph Act in Great Britain required a fire-resisting enclosure, or projection box/booth, for theaters; this is partly why projectors no longer sit in the middle of the auditorium, a much cheaper option for movie houses).

Additionally, and this is true of the acetate-based safety films that followed, nitrate film base was often



Orabel Thortvedt sculpting in the clay banks of the Buffalo River, circa 1920
(Thortvedt Family Collection, HCSCC Archives).

Red River Masters: A New Local Art Show

By Markus Krueger

The Arts Partnership, FMVA, The Red River Watercolor Society, NDSU, MSUM, Concordia, The Rourke, Plains Art Museum, The Hjemkomst Center. . . .

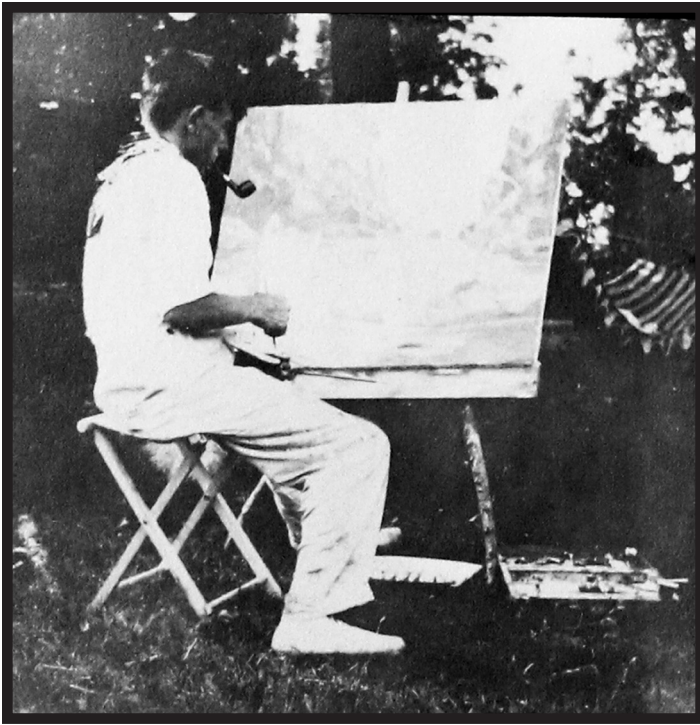
We have a vibrant and unique community of artists in this region. But where did it come from? Sir Isaac Newton said, "If I can see farther, it is because I am standing on the shoulders of giants," acknowledging that his scientific advances were made possible by the hard work of those who came before him. Our area's artists and arts institutions are standing on giants right now and your historical society is teaming up with the Rourke Art Gallery and Museum to give those giants their due.

The new exhibition, *Red River Masters*, will display the work of several local artists who laid the foundation of the Fargo-Moorhead regional art scene. The exhibition

will not be a complete history of local art – too many people are left out and the subject is too big – but it will highlight some of our region's best loved past masters and introduce our visitors to some of our favorite, relatively unknown artists.

Red River Masters will draw from the Rourke's fantastic collection of local artwork and the historic collection of HCSCC, and we will borrow a few things off of the walls of our society's members. We will begin with the artists working when our community was still the wild frontier and continue through the artists who strengthened the Concordia and Moorhead State art departments and established our art galleries back in the 1960s.

The exhibit also reunites two old friends from Moorhead High as co-curators, Markus Krueger (that's



Erik Ahlberg painting while camping with his wife Cora near Copas, Minnesota, in the summer of 1917 (Cora Ahlberg).

me) from HCSCC and Jonathan Rutter from the Rourke, and at this very moment we are sifting through the collections, trying to fit too much good art into too small of a space. Can we find room for some giant Robert Nelson paintings from the 1960s? How about some of Sarah Ambs Moody's painted china from the 1890s? There will be some hard decisions ahead, but it is probably safe to say that you will see some art from the following list:

Annie Stein

A self-taught painter and photographer on the frontier.

Erik Ahlberg

A blue-collar painter who made whimsical decorations.

Orabel Thortvedt

An obsessive artist inspired by friends, family, & animals.

Fred Helmeke

A Georgetown farmer who learned to paint late in life.

Cyrus Running

A Concordia professor who gave biblical art a modern feel and mentored the next generation of local artists.

Jim O'Rourke

A printmaker and art collector whose galleries changed everything by giving local artists needed gallery space.

Charles Beck

A printmaker who celebrated our farmsteads and landscapes with colorful images carved from wood.

Richard Szeitz

A Hungarian monk-turned-sculptor and teacher who turned MSUM into a regional art student magnate.

Of course, we're no New York or Paris, but the stories of these artists tell us how an art community was created on America's northern prairie. And while I don't want to say anything bad about the guy, I must say that Pablo Picasso was no Orabel Thortvedt.

We have paired the opening reception of *Red River Masters* with a special, exciting event that local art lovers will not want to miss. Some time ago, Guy Paulson, the builder and carver of Moorhead's Hopperstad Stave Church, commissioned Black Hills painter Jon Crane to create a painting of our beloved stave church. Mr. Crane is incredibly popular and talented down in western South Dakota, and, now that the painting is finished, he's coming to the Hjemkomst Center to unveil it to the public.

Prints will be available, our local art friends will be out in full force, and *The Saint John's Bible* will be in the building (an extra \$5 if you're not a member). The unveiling is at 5:00PM, remarks at 5:30PM, and cash bar, Scandinavian snacks, and tours from Guy until we close it down. We hope to see you there.

Red River Masters Opening & Stave Church Painting Unveiling

Tuesday, October 24, 5:00PM - 8:00PM

Free to the Public

Meet the Artist

South Dakota master Jon Crane

Tour the Hopperstad Stave Church

with the Master Woodcarver who made it,
Guy Paulson

See Red River Masters:

A new exhibition about the birth of
the Fargo-Moorhead Fine Art Scene

Eat tasty Scandinavian treats
& enjoy a wine and beer cash bar

A Digital HCSCC

By Matt Eidem

New Online Resources with MHS

We are currently engaged in two projects that have been funded by Heritage Grants from the Minnesota Historical Society and designed to better share our history and resources online.

MNopedia

As Minnesota Historical Society continues to work toward their goal of preserving, sharing, and interpreting the past, they've encountered the same obstacles we and every other historical society have -- transferring our vast collections and archives into the digital sphere. One of the ways they've accomplished this is a new partnership with us in which we assign subjects and resources to local students who then submit articles to MHS (for compensation). After both HCSCC and MHS have reviewed, edited, and approved them, they're archived and shared on the Minnesota-focused online encyclopedia, MNopedia.

The topics include the following:

- The Hjemkomst Ship
- The Hopperstad Stave Church
- Buffalo River Settlers
- Randolph Probstfield
- The Moorhead Saloon District
- The Hudson's Bay Company
- Transfer Station in Georgetown, MN
- The Red River Steamboat Industry
- Solomon G. Comstock
- Georgetown's Role in the US – Dakota War
- Algona Branch Camp No. 1
(German WWII POW Camp in Moorhead)
- Florence "Treetops" Klingensmith
- Adolph and Olaus Murie
- The Hanging of Thomas Brown
- The Moorhead Brewery
- Stockwood Fill

Digitization

We also received funding from the Minnesota Historical Society to improve our infrastructure and begin the process of digitizing and cataloging the photographs in our collection. The final product will again be an online database, available to the public.

With grant funds, we hired two NDSU grad students, Emily Kulzer and Kate Savageau, who began work this summer with several interns from local universities to digitize parts of the Flaten-Wange Collection, a valuable resource in our collection that includes over 15,000 glass plate negatives of photographs taken by O.E. Flaten or S.P. Wange, two of the most prolific photographers in early Clay County (Moorhead and Hawley, respectively). The Flaten-Wange collection includes photos of street scenes as well as a multitude of portraits spanning about 1880-1940.

Currently we have over 300 photographs digitized and available online through the "Research" tab on our website; however, that number is still growing.

Also, just because it isn't online doesn't mean it doesn't exist. If you don't see the photograph you're looking for, contact our archivist Mark Peihl by phone at (218) 299-5511, ext. 6734, or by email at mark.peihl@hcsmuseum.org, and he'll help.

MNOPEDIA

A resource for reliable information about Minnesota history

HOME INDEX TOPICS ▾

Comstock, Solomon (1842–1933)

Creator: [Kate Savageau](#) Contributor: Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County

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Solomon Comstock earned his law degree from the University of Michigan in 1869 but worked with railroads when prospects of finding a job in his chosen career path seemed dim. In Moorhead, he began a law partnership and traded in real estate with the Northwest Land Company. In the 1880s, he worked with [J. Hill's](#) Northern Pacific Railway to plat townships across Minnesota.

Comstock was born on May 9, 1842, in Maine. His father was in the lumber business, and from a young age, Comstock knew that was not what he wanted to do with his life. He attended the Maine Wesleyan Academy in Readfield, Maine—a school known for its law program—in his early twenties.

Comstock received his first practical legal training in the law office of Judge Humphrey in Bangor. Two years later, he went to the University of Michigan to strengthen his education and prepare for the bar exam. He gained admittance to the bar in Omaha, Nebraska.

A Busy Comstock Fall

By Matt Eidem

Historical Horror & Local Histories

Halloween and Horror

On Wednesdays in October, we're partnering with the MSUM Film Department and MSUM student group The Film Loop to present classic horror films at the Comstock House for FREE, with FREE popcorn.

Wednesday, October 11, we'll screen the German classics, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920) and *Nosferatu* (1922). Roger Ebert called the former "the first true horror film"; and the latter stands as one of the earliest and most influential Dracula films.

Wednesday, October 18, we'll screen another German horror, *Vampyr* (1932), and the Bela Lugosi film often cited as the first zombie movie, *White Zombie* (1932).

Wednesday, October 25, we'll screen the the George Romero "ghoul" movie that revolutionized zombie films: *Night of the Living Dead* (1968).

The movies start at 7:00PM. Soda/water will be available for \$1 and local beer will be available for \$5, thanks to the fine folks at Rustica in Moorhead.

* * * * *

On **Saturday, October 14**, from 1:00PM to 4:00PM we will host pumpkin carving at the Comstock House. We supply the pumpkins, tools, hot apple cider, and free tours; you leave your artwork to decorate the house.

* * * * *

We're finishing our historical Halloween programming with a Parlor Talk on **Monday, October 30**, at 6:30PM. HCSCC's own communications coordinator Davin Wait will share his graduate research at NDSU on literary and film depictions of monsters and their relationship to popular pseudoscience from the Victorian Era.

General Admission is \$10 and \$5 for HCSCC/MNHS members. As a Parlor Talk, admission includes snacks from the Rex Cafe and a local beer (or pop), again thanks to Rustica Eatery and Tavern in Moorhead.

Drache Lectures

The Comstock House will continue to offer interesting local student lectures throughout the 2017-2018 school year. Named in honor of two local historians, longtime supporters of the Comstock House, and HCSCC members, the "Hiram M. and Ada M. Drache Lectures" will feature three presentations this fall.

On **Tuesday, September 26**, NDSU doctoral candidate Carole Butcher will discuss her research on Fargo's Company B. With photographic and text records, Carole will share the story of Fargo residents' efforts to bring Company B home at the end of the Filipino-American War.

On **Thursday, October 26**, NDSU master's student Kaci Johnson will discuss her research on former Oakport resident Florence Klingensmith, the first woman in North Dakota to receive her pilot's license, as well as the inaugural winner of the Amelia Earhart Cup.

On **Thursday, November 2**, NDSU master's student John Hest will discuss his research on the role of Georgetown, Minnesota, in the Hudson's Bay Company Red River Valley empire.

Each student lecture will begin at 6:30PM and include light refreshments, as well as a chance to explore the historic Moorhead home on either a guided or self-guided tour.

General admission to the Drache Lectures is \$5 and free for HCSCC/MNHS members.

Reserving Seats

To reserve seats for any Comstock House programming, please sign up online through "Event Registration" at www.hcscconline.org or contact HCSCC Director of Operations Matt Eidem by phone at (218) 291-4211 or email at matt.eidem@hcsmuseum.org.



Concordia Music at The Comstock

This fall the Comstock House will continue its partnership with Concordia College Music. On **Thursday, October 12**, and **Thursday, November 9**, we will have a recital from one of the many talented student musical groups from Concordia College.

These performances will begin at 7:00PM. General admission is \$5 and free for HCSCC/MNHS members.

On **Saturday, September 30**, at 11:30AM the Comstock House will host a Concordia faculty recital. Our faculty performers will play *Siegfried Idyll*, a piece that was composed by Richard Wagner for his wife Cosima the day their son Siegfried was born. As the first performance was on the steps of the Wagners' home on Christmas morning, the faculty will recreate the moment and perform on the Comstock House's main staircase.

Doors open at 11:00AM. General admission is \$10 and free for HCSCC/MNHS members and Concordia staff, faculty, students, and alumni (with respect to Concordia's homecoming weekend).

Want to Reserve Tickets Online?

Perfect! Go to www.hcscconline.org and click on the "Event Registration" tab on the top menu. As always, we'll still reserve seats by phone or email.

Fall Comstock Hours
Saturdays, 1:00PM - 4:00PM (& by appointment)

Beginning Labor Day (Monday, September 4), the Historic Solomon G. Comstock House will once again move to its fall hours: Saturdays, from 1:00PM to 4:00PM. After Saturday, October 28, the Comstock House will only be open for special events or reserved appointments.

Admission is \$6 for adults, \$5 for seniors, \$4 for kids, and free for HCSCC/MNHS members.

For more details, contact HCSCC Director of Operations Matt Eidem by phone at (218) 291-4211 or by email at matt.eidem@hcsmuseum.org.

Saturday Christmas Programming

On **Saturday, December 9**, we will host the 2nd annual "Christmas with the Comstocks." Between 4:30PM and 7:30PM, we'll open the decorated home to our visitors to enjoy holiday music, play Victorian parlor games, and sample cookies from Sarah Comstock's own recipe. The event is casual, with no set program, so guests are free to come and go at their own leisure.

Admission is \$9 for adults, \$8 for seniors and college students, \$7 for youth, and free for HCSCC/MNHS members.

As many Christmas traditions originated in the Victorian era, the Comstock House will be decorated with lights and Victorian ornaments all holiday season. Tours will shed some additional light on the Comstocks' Christmas customs, as well as those of their Victorian contemporaries. At the end of the tour, guests can enjoy hot chocolate and Christmas cookies.

These tours will begin at 5:30PM, 7:00PM, and 8:30PM on **Saturday December 2, 16, and 23**. Each tour will be limited to 12 people, so guests are encouraged to register early, either online or by contacting HCSCC Director of Operations Matt Eidem at (218) 291-4211 or matt.eidem@hcsmuseum.org.

General admission for Comstock Christmas tours is \$10 and \$5 for HCSCC/MNHS members.

Historical & Cultural Society of Clay County

PO Box 157 • 202 First Avenue North

Moorhead, MN 56561-0157



To collect, preserve, interpret, and share the history and culture of Clay County, Minnesota.

PANGEA

CULTIVATE OUR CULTURES

Saturday, November 18

10:00AM - 4:00PM

Free Admission
