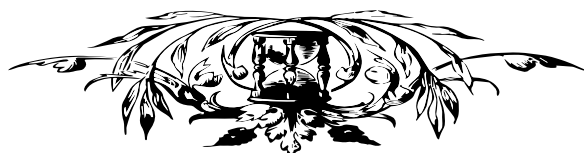


# — The Hourglass —



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## Shopping at Heritage Gift Shop Supports Local History, Local Arts, Local Crafts, and Local Business By Davin Wait

Though we've moved past Black Friday and Small Business Saturday, December is the month of giving (and shopping) for many. In fact, 8 of the busiest 10 shopping days of the year occur in this final month. That's why we're hoping many of you will make a stop at the Heritage Gift Shop here at the Hjemkomst Center as you shop for friends and family this holiday season.

Fortunately, your purchase at the Heritage Gift Shop does a lot of good in our community. First and foremost, you're helping support us. On average, gift shop sales constitute about 10% of our annual income.

Second, your purchase supports the local artists, craftspeople, and writers who typically source our inventory, like local novelist Gerald Anderson, Lake Park pine and raffia weaver Judith Kohout, Harwood woodcarver Kurt Anderson, Fargo clockmakers Mark and Dave Schultz, and Minnesota birch weaver Joy Parker.

Third, we just received some great new materials, including prints and proofs of Jon Crane's *A Dream Fulfilled*, Amy Sharpe's *Charles Beck: The Nature of an Artist*, and a treasure trove of books and prints featuring the art and history of *The Saint John's Bible*.



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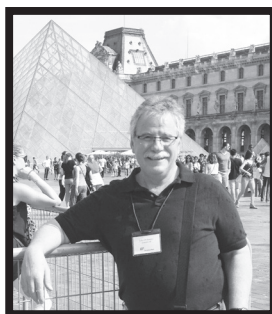
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Our thanks to the Moorhead City Council and the Clay County Commission for their continued support of local history and culture.

# President's Message

from John Dobmeier



Greetings All,

The blessings of another holiday season are upon us and I can't help but reflect on our community and the people we interact with daily. The holidays also bring a promise of rekindled relationships with family and friends alike. I must start working on our Christmas cards and I wish you all smooth

sailing as many of you will be doing the same.

In the halls of HCSCC our staff is winding up another very successful Pangea. We were thrilled to enjoy great support from not only the community but from our rich international connections to the Valley.

We continue to prepare for such ground breaking events like our upcoming exhibit *War, Flu, & Fear: World War I & Clay County*, which will run from March 13, 2018, to January, 2020.

Another date that is on many of our minds is December 31 of this year. On that date *Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible* will leave us. Parts of it will be placed in dark seclusion for the next few years and others will embark on a global tour. Those of you that took the opportunity during Pangea, or made your way to the Hjemkomst Center just to take in this amazing exhibition, can attest this is truly a once-in-a-lifetime event.

As we conclude 2017 and look back at the past 12 months, I am continually reminded how blessed I am with health, family, friends and fishing buddies. Please take time to cherish those around us and, in the immortal words of Irving Berlin, take time to Count Your Blessings.

As always, I thank you for your support.

~ John Dobmeier, HCSCC Board President

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## 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](mailto:Lynelle.Martin@hcsmuseum.org) to make sure you receive all the up-to-date information from us!

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## New Year's Eve Closing Reception for *The Saint John's Bible*

A closing reception for our major exhibition of the year, *Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible*, is scheduled for **Sunday, December 31**, from 2:00PM to 4:00PM. Light refreshments will be provided and the reception is open to the public, but admission will apply. HCSCC members receive free admission.

## Viking Ship Park Sleigh Rides

In partnership with Moorhead Parks and Rec, we'll be selling cookies, cocoa, and coffee at the Rex Cafe during "Sleigh Rides in Viking Ship Park" this December. Sleigh ride tickets are \$4 and riders will receive discounted admission to the museum. Tickets will be sold at the door: first-come, first-served.

Sleigh ride dates and times are 1:00PM to 4:00PM from **Tuesday, December 26, to Friday, December 29**.

## War, Flu, & Fear: World War I and Clay County Set to Open March 13

Years of gathering artifacts and archival research are nearing completion as we begin to design and build our new local exhibition, *War, Flu, & Fear: World War I and Clay County*. The exhibition will open for its two-year run in Heritage Hall this spring and we've set the opening reception for **Tuesday, March 13**.

Mark your calendars to celebrate our new exhibition as we immerse ourselves in the trying years of the local front during the Great War that became World War I.

## Pangea – Cultivate Our Cultures Draws Big Crowd on November 18

Our 23rd annual celebration of our community's tremendous diversity brought a big crowd on Saturday, November 18. More than 1,750 people joined us for a day of delicious food, great music, and a museum full of vendors, artists, and free HCSCC exhibitions. The day capped a record-setting year for our festivals, and preparations are already in full swing for our coming 2018 season, beginning with Scandinavian Hjemkomst and Midwest Viking Festival, held this year on **Friday, June 22**, and **Saturday, June 23**. Skål!

## Christmas Traditions Talk

On **Saturday, December 16**, from 3:00PM to 4:00PM, HCSCC Programming Director and resident demonic satyr Markus Krueger reprises his role as Krampus to lead members and visitors on a lighthearted tour of holiday tradition history, from Saint Nicholas to Santa Lucia to the feisty Tomtens of the North.

The presentation is included with regular museum admission (HCSCC members free).

## Rok Day in the Atrium

On **Saturday, January 6**, from 10:00AM to 2:00PM, members of the Northern Prairie Fiber Artists will be bringing their wheels, spindles, bobbin lace and other fiber projects to the Hjemkomst Center atrium to celebrate Rok, or St. Distaff's, Day. This pre-industrial custom called for women to return to work after the 12 days of Christmas (before men were to return on Plough Monday). Interestingly, St. Distaff doesn't exist and the day was often marked by more play than work.

## Narrative 4 at the Comstock House

The Concordia College branch of Narrative 4 has received some international press this past year for its work connecting local citizens with different values, experiences, and beliefs. In fact, that's just what the international non-profit's mission is, building "a community of empathic global citizens who improve the world through the exchange of personal narratives." On **Tuesday, February 13**, at 6:30PM, we'll be hosting Concordia student Sabina Beck at the Comstock House to discuss the work her local chapter has done in our community and share with us how others can get involved with the project.

Admission is free and light refreshments will be provided; however, we will be taking a free-will donation to help support the great work they're doing.

## New Calendar in *The Hourglass*

This issue of your HCSCC newsletter (read in the finest homes) has a new feature for you to better make room for our increasing programming options. See page 19.





# Letter from Executive Director

## Maureen Kelly Jonason

What a difference a year makes! As we end 2017 with a bang and no whimpers here, I reflect with special gratitude on what a particularly successful year your Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County has had. Many new members are reading their first newsletter with this issue; in fact, by the end of the calendar year, we will have almost 150 new members. That is an unprecedented 20% increase in memberships in one year. We are delighted to welcome you all aboard! Please make good use of your membership and come to the museum often.

We had a very good year for exhibitions, beginning with a National Endowment for the Humanities traveling exhibition called *The Power of Children: Making a Difference*, reminding us that ordinary children like Ryan White, Anne Frank, and Ruby Bridges can change the world; a wonderful display celebrating 125 years of Concordia College history and heritage; *Quilt National '15*, a juried collection of international fiber artists; and finally *Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible*. As I write this, we are enjoying record numbers of visitors to this amazingly beautiful and moving art display. In-house exhibitions included *Wet and Dry: Alcohol and Clay County 1872-1937*; *Red River Masters: The Birth of the Fargo-Moorhead Art Scene* (up until the Celtic Festival in March); and numerous delightful hall case exhibits of artifacts and art. The FM Visual Artists and the Red River Watercolor Society again held their annual exhibitions here as well. The FM Visual Artists also held their annual constraint show at the Comstock House. Please remember that exhibits change regularly here at the museum. Visit frequently!

Events throughout 2017 were also more prolific. Early on, we had several evening events involving Foods of the Bible to introduce donors and other interested persons to the project; parlor talks and concerts

continued throughout the year at Comstock House featuring college students and local professionals. Markus Krueger repeated his popular *History on Tap* lecture series at Junkyard Brewery in the spring, and we partnered with the Red River Finns to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Finland's independence with a Sauna Festival in the parking lot. Our annual meeting of the membership in May celebrated The Tree Top Revisited with a glimpse back at a favorite Moorhead restaurant that many remembered fondly. The Scandinavian Hjemkomst Festival in June featured Norway and Midwest Viking Festival featured Viking cooking, while yoga classes on the Comstock House lawn rounded out a busy summer tourist season. The Hiram M. and Ada M. Drache Lecture Series, featuring local college scholarship, was launched at the Comstock House this fall, and German Kulturfest was celebrated. *The Saint John's Bible* opening reception was a big hit at the museum, and horror films invaded Comstock House.

As the year winds down, programming focuses on engaging the public in *Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible* and learning about Victorian Christmas customs at the Comstock House. Nary a month goes by without something fun happening at your HCSCC (And where else can one use "nary" in a sentence?). Happiest of holiday seasons to you and yours from the staff and volunteers at HCSCC!

-MKJ

### Want to Donate to HCSCC's Collections or Archives?

Contact Senior Archivist Mark Peihl or Collections Manager Lisa Vedaa. If you can't meet them at the museum, they can answer your questions — and sometimes they can come take a look themselves.

## 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 (Individual) – \$40
- Basic+ (Household) – \$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](http://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

## ***Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible*** *4th Floor Gallery (through December 31)*

The largest art exhibition in our history features 68 original folios from the project born in Minnesota's Saint John's University and Abbey and created by an international community of artists, scribes, designers, historians, and theologians: *The Saint John's Bible*. This monument of Minnesota art is the first illuminated and handwritten Bible commissioned by a Benedictine monastery in 500 years and we're excited to join the ranks of some of the most prestigious art institutions in the world in hosting it in our gallery, along with rare books, tools, sketches, materials, and didactic panels.

*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.

*The Saint John's Bible* was created as a gift for the new millennium and directed to a modern community of many faiths and beliefs.

We've already been amazed at the community's turnout for these original pages and we're hopeful that you'll make time to see them for the first time or the next time this December. We still have a busy month of programming scheduled for the exhibition's final stretch, all culminating in our closing New Year's Eve reception on **Sunday, December 31**, at 2:00PM.

## ***Red River Masters:*** ***The Birth of the Fargo-Moorhead Art Scene*** *Heritage Hall (through March 4, 2018)*

Co-curated by HCSCC Programming Director Markus Krueger and The Rourke Art Gallery's Jonathan Rutter, *Red River Masters* offers 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).

Join us to explore Fargo-Moorhead's first frontier painters, tri-college art departments, and art galleries.

## ***Focus on the Process: The Art, History, and Science of Photographic Printing*** *4th Floor Gallery (January 8 - April 10, 2018)*

Supported in part by the Lake Region Arts Council through a Minnesota State Legislative appropriation and The Arts Partnership through an Individual Arts Partner grant, Dr. Ken Andersen and intern Louis Zurn's fascinating photography exhibition set attendance records when it opened at the Hjemkomst Center last winter. Now this History + Art (+ Science) exhibition is back in our 4th Floor Gallery following *Illuminating the Word: The Saint John's Bible*.

Showcasing a collection of photographs using historical and alternative printing processes and juxtaposing both Andersen and Zurn's stunning images with photograph and narrative panels documenting and describing the history and scientific process of each method, *Focus On the Process: The Art, History, and Science of Photographic Printing* offers a crash course on this medium that you won't want to miss.

## ***Wet & Dry: Alcohol in Clay County, 1871-1937*** *Heritage Hall (extended through February 6, 2018)*

One of the most popular local exhibitions in the history of the Hjemkomst Center, *Wet & Dry: Alcohol in Clay County, 1871-1937* has been extended one more month as we prepare to replace it in Heritage Hall with our exploration of local life during the Great War in *War, Flu, & Fear: World War I and Clay County*.

Make use of this added opportunity to introduce or reacquaint yourself with the stories of gunfighter Dan "Slim Jim" Shumway, young railroad laborer Solomon Comstock, and Jake Schumacher: just a few of the main characters in our study of the pervasive role of booze and brewing in a small Minnesota county that grew up on the edges of the Northern Pacific Railroad and dry Dakota territory. This exhibition features the real rum runners, blind pigs, bootleggers, moonshiners, Temperance debates, gangs, and bank robberies of Clay County that marked this place as a center for sin in the Northern Plains.

\*Be sure to check out Prairie Public's new documentary featuring our research and historians, *Wet vs. Dry*, too.



German immigrants suffered rough treatment during WWI. A mob dragged Hawley butcher Matt Steuermann from his bed, roughed him up, and made him kneel, kiss the flag, and cheer President Wilson (HCSCC, Flaten/Wange Collection).

## “A Hysterical Caricature of Patriotism”: Civil Liberties and World War 1 in Clay County

*By Mark Peihl*

We've titled our next exhibition, *War, Flu, and Fear: World War 1 and Clay County*. It's set to open in March and we gave the title some thought. The war part is pretty obvious. The 1918 Spanish Influenza epidemic, coincident with the war, killed over 170 county residents and millions around the world. Both of these topics provided plenty of reasons to be afraid. But World War 1 was marked by another type of fear, more insidious and dangerous. US citizens came to fear and distrust each other. The war marked a very dark time for American civil liberties.

As was the case in the Second World War, America entered WW1 late. In summer 1914, the assassination of an Austrian noble triggered a series of events that quickly plunged the European continent into bloody conflict, pitting Germany and Austria against the Allies: England, France and Russia. News coverage of horrific casualties shocked Americans. Few wanted the US to become involved in the distant blood bath.

That was especially true here in the upper Midwest, where isolationism has a long tradition. Many authorities suggest this is due in part to the region's Scandinavian and German heritage. One of my college professors, Robert Wilkins, concluded in his

Ph.D. dissertation that the area's history of agrarian radicalism was a more likely cause.

It wasn't easy being a Midwest farmer in the late-19th century. An unforgiving climate and geographic isolation left him with little control over his fortunes. Farmers were dependent on banks for money to buy land, machinery, and seed; grain elevators to purchase their crops; and railroads to get them to distant markets. Those interests were mostly found in Minneapolis and the East, and they were not shy about using their influence to gain economic advantage, often at the expense of the farmers who then blamed these powerful forces for their problems and sought relief through political action.

In the 1870s, a national farmers' organization, The Grange, had some judicial success establishing the legal basis for state regulation of railroads and elevators. In the 1880s, farmers organized the Farmers' Alliance to elect Minnesota legislators friendly to farmers' interests, and Clay County was a hotbed of Alliance activity. The group had some success including giving the Minnesota State Railroad and Warehouse Commission some limited authority. In the 1890s, farmers supported the Populist Party,



which pushed for more reforms.

In North Dakota in the teens, farmers organized the Non-Partisan League. The NPL backed candidates, regardless of party affiliation, who shared their overtly socialist agenda, including public ownership of banks, railroads, and flour mills. In 1916, the NPL took control of the ND Legislature and started organizing in northwest Minnesota. They found strong support just across the river in Clay County.

It wasn't much of a stretch for NPL supporters to see the war as yet another way for the eastern moneyed interests to make a profit at farmers' expense. Most interventionist sentiment was found in the eastern US, where pro-Allied economic and cultural interests were strongest. Eastern industrialists supported American participation: German submarines were sinking American ships, owned and manned by easterners, carrying war material to the Allies.

The war was also a long way from the Red River Valley. Though we don't have polling figures for local attitudes toward the war, we've read through each of the seven newspapers published in Clay County during the war years and found no editorial stomach for intervention. Leading up to US entry, all of the papers were either overtly anti-interventionist or neutral on the subject. Letters to the editor reveal no inclination to intervene. Most county residents likely held similar attitudes.

In Europe the war ground on for two-and-a-half brutal, unproductive years. By early 1917, Germany was desperate. The German military announced the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare. Their submarines would sink any ship, allied or neutral, in British waters without warning. The German High Command knew this would likely bring America into the war, but they hoped that the tactic, combined with a series of major offensives in the spring, would beat and starve Britain into submission before the Americans could raise and equip an army.

Americans in the East were outraged. This, combined with a ham-handed German attempt to induce Mexico to go to war with the US, pushed President Woodrow Wilson over the edge. On April 6, 1917, Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war on Germany. In his speech, he spelled out the reasons for going to war. They did not include desire for wealth, power, empire, or prestige. The US would fight for principals, to

safeguard democracy, human decency and civilization itself. The US would fight a "war to end all wars."

However, Wilson knew that would be a tough sell to the American people, so he hired a brilliant publicist, George Creel, to convince them to support the war. Creel and Wilson both believed that 100% support for the war was not enough. Americans had to back the war effort 150% lest they be considered slackers, pro-German or even traitorous. Creel's Committee on Public Information became a powerful propaganda machine. He used modern advertising techniques to convince Americans of the righteousness of their cause, the savagery of the Germans and their duty to obey the government; he was remarkably successful.

Wilson was a Progressive who believed government actions could solve the country's problems. He had an authoritarian streak and felt it proper and vital to



The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety offered newspapers free use of editorial cartoons supporting the Commission's activities. Here a scowling Uncle Sam studies a Minnesota citizen to make sure he's patriotic enough (Hawley Clay County Herald, Jan. 19, 1918).

compel the American public, by force if necessary, to support the war. He needed, and got, powerful tools to suppress dissent. The 1917 Espionage Act outlawed any deed that might be helpful to the enemy. The courts interpreted this broadly to include speech even mildly critical of the draft or other government activities. The 1918 Sedition Act barred any speech that might insult the US government. The courts convicted over 800 Americans under the Sedition Act.

In Minnesota, the situation was particularly harsh. In April 1917, the Legislature established the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety (MCPS). This eight-man, governor-appointed board had the power to do anything not specifically barred by the US or state constitutions to further the war effort. It issued orders that had the force of laws. It could (and did) remove elected officials for almost any reason and it had the power to subpoena witnesses and compel testimony. It developed its own secret investigative force. Meant, ostensibly, to assist the federal government in carrying out its programs locally, the Commission soon came to represent the state's business interests and to root out and suppress any dissent or threat to those interests. The Commission outlawed labor union organizing, banned teaching the German language in schools, and declared the Non-Partisan League "disloyal."

This combination of a hard-sell campaign and government repression created a profound shift in Americans' psyche. In his excellent MSUM master's thesis, *Intolerance and Conformity: The Fargo Moorhead Area in the First World War*, Joel Watne writes a "hysterical caricature of patriotism gripped the country." Even in this part of the country, many people bought into the idea that anyone who expressed even mild skepticism about the war effort could be a dangerous pro-German.

Suspicion fell especially on aliens. The US government registered all Germans in the country. The MCPS went a step further and registered ALL aliens in Minnesota, including those loyal to our allies: Britain, Canada, and France. Aliens filled out four-page forms asking 35 intrusive questions about the amount and location of any real or personal property, stocks and bonds, and safety deposit boxes. Presumably, the MCPS was prepared to seize this, should it become "necessary."

(We have copies of the completed questionnaires. They can be a gold mine for genealogists. One of

the respondents was Ethyl McDonald, a 27-year-old Canadian who had lived in Hawley for 15 years. When asked why she had not applied for US citizenship, she replied she "would if women had equal suffrage.")

Newspaper editorial stances changed quickly. The previously neutral Hawley *Clay County Herald* became a rabidly hyper-patriotic organ, supporting a plan to replace civil courts with military tribunals and the death penalty for "spies." Shortly before the US entered war, the *Barnesville Headlight* editor wrote, "'Let us imagine the United States in war'... Yes, let us imagine it, but for heaven's sake, nothing else." Soon after the declaration, the *Headlight* was printing paranoid stories about German sympathizers shipping 'poisonous beans' into Minnesota and the Dakotas and spreading leprosy and tuberculosis. Local papers published breathless stories about plots to poison the Moorhead and Ulen water supplies. A "bomb" reportedly found at the Dilworth railroad yards turned out to be a railroad flare.

Minnesota passed its own version of the Sedition Act. In other parts of the state, folks wound up in jail for fairly innocuous statements. Watne was able to find only one sedition case in Clay County: in March, 1918, Sheriff Dan McDonald arrested Viding Township farmhand Frank Lang for saying, "This is a rich man's war and can be stopped any time they want it stopped." Witnesses failed to appear and the case was dismissed.

More common were vigilante style beatings of those expressing unpopular views. In June, 1918, Charles Wingate of Hawley disparaged Governor J. A. Burnquist. He was beaten, charged with disturbing the peace, and fined \$100. In another typical case, the Hawley *Clay County Herald* reported that a Northern Pacific Railway passenger near Dilworth criticized the government and got "the worst drubbing he had had in years." The *Herald* opined, "Better be a little careful what you say about our government...the country is far better off without the Pro-Germans and the sooner it is found out the better." The *Herald* also said this about beating up "disloyalists": "The cure is rough in many cases but after reasonable argument fails.... [To] bring about a change of heart, the drastic method ... is the only recourse left."

The Non-Partisan League was one of the MCPS' major targets. Though they did not outlaw the organization



outright, the MCPS made it clear that they would not object to local authorities' attempts to silence the group. Some counties, like Becker, banned the NPL from holding meetings. In more NPL-friendly Clay County, cooler heads prevailed. By November, 1917, the NPL claimed nearly 1400 members in Clay County (there were about 1700 farmers in the county at the time.) Barnesville Mayor N. B. Hanson wrote to the MCPS' local arm, the Clay County Public Safety Association, that Barnesville NPLers were planning a speech that month by national leader A. C. Townley. Hanson wrote, "It is clear that nearly every farmer in the County is or will at some time be affiliated with this League, and I do not believe the right of assembly or free speech should be cut off... [unless Townley makes] treasonable and seditious remarks," and asked for advice. The County Association decided not to stop the NPL from meeting but they sent stenographers to take down verbatim what Townley and others said. NPL held meetings in Clay County throughout the war.

Government coercion was more evident in the sale of bonds. The US paid for two-thirds of the cost of the war through bond sales. US Treasury Secretary William McAdoo wanted average Americans to support the war effort directly by loaning the government the money it needed for guns and bullets. There were four separate "Liberty Loan" drives and a single, post-war Victory Loan appeal. States and counties were apportioned an amount each were expected to raise in each drive. The bonds paid between 3 ½ and 4½ percent interest.

After an anemic first bond sale, the Treasury stepped up efforts for subsequent issues. Bond buying was supposed to be voluntary, but pressure could be high. The Clay County Bankers' Association went through each resident's accounts and determined how much each individual could afford. Volunteer committees visited residents' homes to get them to pay up. Watne describes incidents in other parts of the country where the government coerced reluctant bond buyers to hand over their money but writes, "There seems to have been very little, if any, trouble with such 'traitors' in the Fargo-Moorhead area." Our research suggests this might be evidence that coercion worked.

Moland Township farmer Levi Thortvedt kept a detailed daily journal throughout the war. He was a NPL member and outspoken in his opposition to the war. In October, 1917, during the second bond drive, solicitors told him he had to buy a \$50 bond.

Levi refused and then he was told to put his reason in writing. He claimed it was because the federal government had just capped the price of wheat at \$2.15 per bushel when the market price was much higher, a common complaint among NPLers. They apparently put pressure on Thortvedt. Two days later, he wrote, "at bank bought U.S. Liberty Bond \$50.00."

There were a number of ways coercion could be applied. Bankers could threaten to deny the regular loans some farmers needed to get their crops in. The *Hawley Clay County Herald* published the names of bond buyers and the amount purchased. Those not on the list could be considered "disloyal." The *Moorhead Daily News* reported that the Clay County Public Safety Association had served "subpoenas" on county residents who had refused to buy bonds and hauled them into court to "make explanation to the Executive Committee." There was no legal justification for these actions, but it was undoubtedly intimidating. The *News* indicated several "delinquents" paid up.

In May, 1918, during the third drive, Hilman Nelson of Moland Township, working on a farm near Halstad, wrote to his mother, "I have bought a Liberty Bond that cost \$150. We all had to buy. They said as long as you are working for a man's wages you had to buy or they would get the government after you."

The third bond solicitors told Levi Thortvedt that he had to buy a \$500 bond. This higher demand was in apparent retaliation for his earlier refusal. Levi had had a bad crop the year before and was in tough financial shape. He couldn't afford the bond, but wrote, "but I can't help it." Levi had to borrow \$475 from First National Bank in Fargo to pay for it.

Five hundred dollars was a lot of money 100 years ago. It could buy you a brand new Ford Model T or ten acres of great farmland. Recently we received access to letter books from the now defunct First National Bank of Barnesville for the war years. The outgoing correspondence from the bank President and Cashier show that these two men, arguably among the wealthiest in town, were also expected to buy \$500 in bonds. One letter recounts a Clay County Bankers' Association meeting at which the bankers decided to loan money at 7% to those who could not afford to buy bonds. The records reveal many instances of people borrowing at 7% to buy a bond paying about 4%. Many other folks bought the bonds (presumably to stay out

of trouble) then quickly resold the bonds at a loss. In October, 1918, the fourth bond sale solicitors told Levi he had to cough up for a \$1000 bond. Fortunately Thortvedt had a good potato crop that year and only had to borrow another \$500.

German aliens living in Clay County suffered some ugly treatment at the hands of their neighbors, too. Hawley, in particular, was a hotbed of anti-German activities. It pains me to say this. Hawley is a great community, with lots of lovely people, but it was the scene of some nasty mob activity 100 years ago. In January, 1918, a group of men broke into George Peters' home while the family was out. German-born Peters had lived in the US since 1879 and had a son in the US Army, but he had a picture of German Kaiser Wilhelm on his wall. The crowd burned it in the street. Peters' identified the perpetrators and tried to have them arrested but the County Attorney, at the suggestion of the Attorney General, refused to prosecute.

Later that month two Hawley businessmen wrote letters to the MCPS and the County Association warning that a meeting of Germans was to be held at the farm of immigrant Adolph Schmidt. One also reported a Liberty Loan slacker and a neighbor who criticized Red Cross volunteer work. He wrote, "Send federal officer to me and I will give all information I can." Clay County Association Director H. A. Roberts phoned Schmidt and ordered him to a meeting in Moorhead. There Schmidt denied any meeting was planned and swore his allegiance to the US government.

In March, another group of about 25 broke into the Hawley High School in the middle of the night, removed German language books from the library, and burned them in a bonfire. Then they went to the home of Hawley butcher Matt Steuermann, roughed him up, dragged him into the street, made him kneel and kiss the flag and give three cheers for President Wilson. Afterward they painted a yellow iron cross on a potato warehouse owned by another German immigrant. The *Hawley Clay County Herald* editorialized that making a "Pro-German" kneel and kiss the flag was "an insult to the stars and stripes... Far better it would be to give [the] person... a long prison term at hard labor, and besides, confiscate the property he holds in this country."

In 1919, after the war's end, Hawley built a new high



This MCPS cartoon shows a policeman hustling to stop a citizen from expressing his first amendment right to free speech. WW1 was a dark time for civil liberties in Minnesota (*Hawley Clay County Herald*, April 26, 1918).

school. The school district tore down the building in 1998 and opened a time capsule sealed in the cornerstone. It contained a German-language library book that had escaped the bonfire wrapped in chain with a small plaster human skull attached and a five-page explanatory letter. The letter read, in part, "October 9, 1919... The book bound with the chain is symbolical of the condition of Germany before the American boys left France. May she ever remain thus. The death's head is symbolical of the study of German in our High School and other High Schools of Minnesota. It has been the language of an unworthy nation and from now on shall be considered DEAD."

Over 1000 young Clay County men served bravely in the First World War. Over 65 of them died in service. Their sacrifice deserves to be remembered and honored. But it would be wrong to ignore the American public's excesses during the war.

Let's learn from their mistakes.

# End-of-Year Giving

*By Maureen Kelly Jonason*

The benefits of charitable giving are familiar: tax relief, stress relief, warm feelings of satisfaction, and, of course, financial support for a cause you appreciate. If you itemize your deductions at tax time, all of those small and large donations you give to charities like HCSCC all year long can considerably reduce the taxes you pay, too.

Many of our supporters prefer to give generously at the end of each year. Thanksgiving brings to mind how much we all have here in the US compared to some other parts of the world, and we find ourselves particularly grateful and wanting to share that gratitude. Just taking out the check book or credit card to assist the local non-profits in their work produces endorphins and maybe even a positive increase in heart rate.

Best of all may be picturing HCSCC staff as we open all of those envelopes at the end of the year, knowing that every dollar helps us do what we do better, with that much less stress and with that much more

encouragement. We also greatly appreciate all of the brief notes of good cheer that come with the donations. Everyone benefits from all of these ways of recognizing that what we do is indeed important for the community.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for all your support!

To support our work at the Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County with an online donation, go to our website ([www.hcscconline.org](http://www.hcscconline.org)) and search for our "Donate" button. Alternatively, go to our current fundraising site at [www.impactgiveback.org](http://www.impactgiveback.org), type in our name in the search bar, and make a donation there.

Checks made out to HCSCC and sent to us at 202 1st Avenue North, Moorhead, MN 56560-1985 or a donation card with your credit card information on it sent to the same address will also work just fine.

If you have any questions about those options, please let us know; and thank you again for giving!

## WAR, FLU, & FEAR

### World War I and Clay County



**Join Us for the Opening Reception  
Tuesday, March 13, 5:00-8:00PM**



# HCSCC Current Membership

As of November 15, 2017, the following people are members in good standing. If you do not see your name here, please call and let us know, as we may have made a mistake OR you may have forgotten to renew! Please note that members who joined HCSCC **after November 15, 2017**, will be listed in the **December, 2018, newsletter**. Thanks for your support!

## HCSCC Life Members

new members are marked with an asterisk (\*)

Myron D. Anderson and Susan Duffy	Elizabeth Hannaher	Mikkel and Barbara Pates
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# Come Celebrate!



## Closing Reception for *The Saint John's Bible*

**Sunday, December 31  
 2:00PM - 4:00PM  
 Hjemkomst Center**

**3:00PM, Remarks  
 & Remembrances**

**Light refreshments**

**Free admission to  
 HCSCC members**

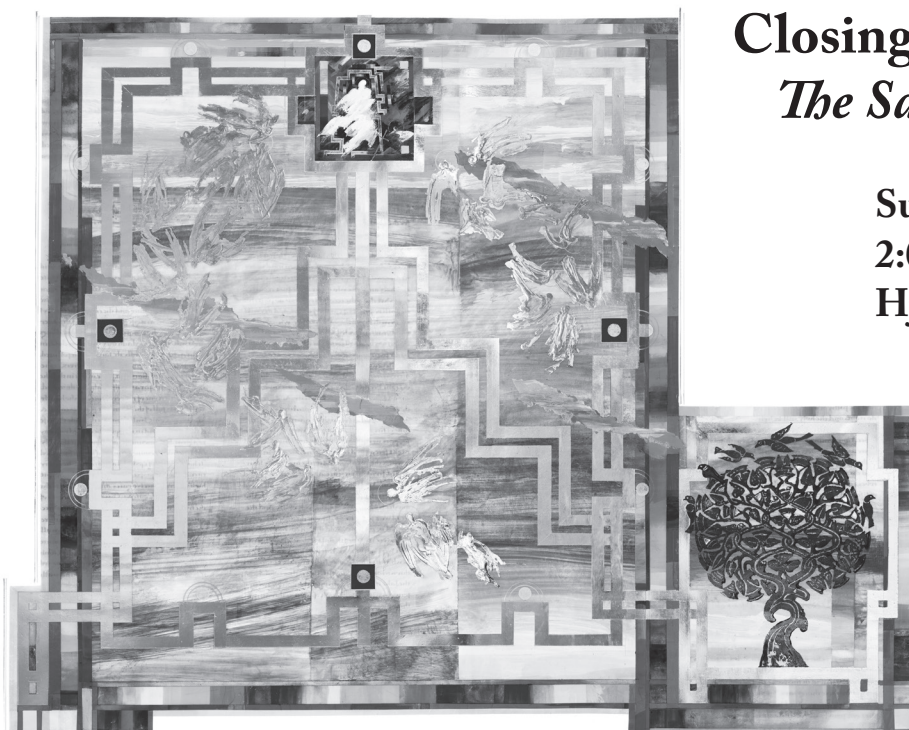


Image Detail: *Vision of the New Jerusalem*, Donald Jackson, 2011, *The Saint John's Bible*, Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota, USA.



# Viking Connection: Year 1 in Review

By Tim Jorgenson

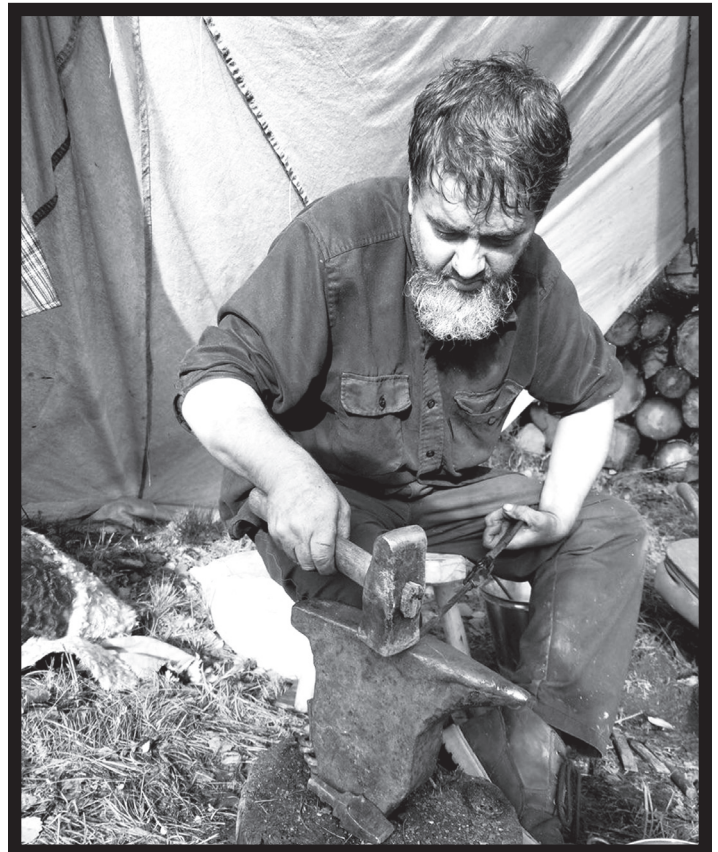
In November 2016 HCSCC began a new program focused entirely on the arts of Viking Age Scandinavia. The program, Viking Connection, invites artists in those fields to teach and tour in a 6-state Midwest region: MN, ND, SD, IA, WI, and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. In addition, the program offers apprenticeship opportunities for residents of those areas to spend time overseas with master artists and develop a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of their art form. Upon their return to the US, these apprentices will embark on a series of workshops and presentations to share that knowledge. Lastly, the program is developing an online database of Viking Age artists accessible to anyone interested in learning about those arts and crafts ([vikingconnection.org](http://vikingconnection.org)).

Viking Connection's first year began with visiting culinary archaeologist, Daniel Serra, of Sweden. His book, *An Early Meal – A Viking Age Cookbook & Culinary Odyssey*, is known worldwide as the preminent study for anyone with a serious interest in Viking Age Scandinavian foods and food preparation. Serra joined HCSCC for the annual Scandinavian Hjemkomst and Midwest Viking Festival, demonstrating cooking on the open fire, and offering indoor presentations in Heritage Theater. Serra's visit also included stops at the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis, where he taught a hands-on cooking course, and Concordia Language Villages near Bemidji, where students of the Swedish language worked with Daniel to cook a pig in the ground, resting on rocks heated in a fire and buried under soil.

Seattle-based Viking Age woodcarver, Jay Haavik, also offered his skillset to students and audiences in our region. In October, he taught a sold-out class at Vesterheim in Decorah, IA, where students spent three days learning how to carve common Viking Age motifs and styles. Jay is most noted in the Viking community for his carvings on the keel of the full-scale replica of Norway's Oseberg ship. He gave daily presentations about that project and Viking Age ship-building at the 2017 Norsk Høstfest in Minot, North Dakota, at the end of September. Jay will return in March of 2018

to teach at North House Folk School in Grand Marais, MN, and we're incredibly excited about him joining us for Scandinavian Hjemkomst and Midwest Viking Festival here on June 22 & 23.

Our first-year apprenticeship recipient, Doug Swenson, participated in a 10-day blacksmithing apprenticeship in Sweden with renowned Viking Age blacksmith, Götz Breitenbucher. Swenson has been a lifelong blacksmith, focusing more recently on 8-11th Century ironwork of Northern Europe. The apprenticeship broadened Swenson's experience and understanding of sourcing iron, processing it, and forging it with the traditional double-bellows to create a variety of tools necessary for daily living, hunting, battle, and working at the forge. As part of the apprenticeship, Doug will embark on a series of demonstrations and classes in 2018. You can expect to see him in action at the 2018 Midwest Viking Festival on June 22 and 23.



Doug Swenson working iron in Sweden (HCSCC).





# News from the Comstock House

## Comstock Christmas Light Tours

As many modern 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](mailto:matt.eidem@hcsmuseum.org).

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

## Comstock House Game Night

On **Wednesday, January 10**, we'll be enjoying two of the best games for historians, Trivial Pursuit and The Wikipedia Game, from 7:00–9:00PM. This will be a friendly competition at no cost (FREE admission) and light refreshments will be available at a small cost (\$1 each for pop, bottled water, or snacks).

## Drache Lectures

On, **Wednesday, January 25**, NDSU Public History student Kirby Sondreal discusses the role of public memorials in a painful episode in Minnesota history: a 1920 Duluth lynching and the 2003 monument erected in its memory (the first of its kind in the U.S.).

On **Thursday, February 22**, University of New Hampshire Public History student Jennifer Johnson, delivers a presentation based on her thesis, *Solomon and Sarah Comstock: Prairie Pioneers and the Building of a Community*.

Both lectures begin at 6:30PM. General admission for each lecture is \$5, but admission is free for HCSCC/MNHS members and college students.

## Christmas with the Comstocks

On **Saturday, December 9**, we will host the 2nd annual "Christmas with the Comstocks." Between 4:00PM and 7:00PM, we'll open the decorated home to our visitors to enjoy Christmas carols (5:00PM) and Christmas flutes (6:00PM), 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 free for HCSCC/MNHS members, \$9 for adults, \$8 for seniors, and \$7 for children and students.

## Concordia Music in the Parlor

The Comstock House continues its growing collaboration with Concordia College Music with some cozy concerts this winter. The performers, both faculty and students, will be announced online via our eNewsletter and Facebook pages, but the music has always been and will continue to be fantastic.

Concerts begin at 7:00PM, but doors open at 6:00PM for light refreshments and tours. Seating is limited to 25, so we encourage you to reserve your seats for **Thursday, January 11**, and **Thursday, February 8**.

General admission is \$5, but admission is free for HCSCC/MNHS members and college students.

## Public Histories and Book Talks

In addition to our Drache Lectures, our efforts to better promote both local history and local historians will bring even more great programming to the house.

On **Thursday, February 1**, NDSU graduate student Emma Novak discusses her research on Harriet Tubman and on **Wednesday, February 28**, NDSU professor Dr. Ashley Baggett discusses and reads from her recent book, *Intimate Partner Violence in New Orleans: Gender Race, and Reform, 1840-1900*.

Each talk begins at 6:30PM. General admission is \$5, but admission is free for HCSCC/MNHS members and college students. Light refreshments are included.

# HCSCC Calendar: December 1 - March 1

HC = Hjemkomst Center, CH = Comstock House

## **Seeing the Word:**

### ***A Saint John's Bible Visio Divina***

December 5, 6:00PM, HC

## **Wines of the Bible: HCSCC Wine Classes**

December 6, 6:30PM, HC

## **Igniting the Imagination:**

### ***A Detailed Tour of The Saint John's Bible***

December 9, 2:00PM, HC

## **Christmas with the Comstocks**

December 9, 2017, 4:00 - 7:00PM, CH

## **Seeing the Word:**

### ***A Saint John's Bible Visio Divina***

December 12, 6:00PM, HC

## **Illuminating Us, Illuminating Our Experience**

December 16, 2017, 10:00AM - 3:00PM, HC

## **Clay County Holiday Traditions**

December 16, 2017, 3:00PM, HC

## **Comstock Christmas Light Tours**

December 16, 2017, 5:30, 7:00, 8:30PM, CH

## **Illuminating Us, Illuminating Our Experience**

December 17, 2017, 10:00AM - 3:00PM, HC

## **Illuminating Us, Illuminating Our Experience**

December 23, 2017, 10:00AM - 3:00PM, HC

## **Comstock Christmas Light Tours**

December 23, 2017, 5:30, 7:00, 8:30PM, CH

## **Viking Park Sleigh Rides**

December 26 - December 29, 1:00 - 4:00PM, HC

## **Closing Celebration:**

### ***New Year's Eve with The Saint John's Bible***

December 31, 2:00PM, HC

## **Rok (St. Distaff's) Day**

January 6, 10:00AM - 2:00PM, HC

## **Comstock House Game Night: Knowledge Night**

January 10, 7:00PM, CH

## **Music in the Parlor w/ Concordia College**

January 11, 6:00PM, CH

## **Monuments and Memories: Drache Lectures**

January 25, 6:30PM, CH

## **Frostival ('Buy One, Get One' Admission)**

January 26-27, HC

## **The Life and Times of Harriet Tubman**

February 1, 6:30PM, CH

## **Music in the Parlor w/ Concordia College**

February 8, 6:00PM, CH

## **Narrative 4 at the Comstock House**

February 13, 6:30PM, CH

## **Solomon and Sarah Comstock,**

### ***Prairie Pioneers: Drache Lectures***

February 22, 6:30PM, CH

## **Dr. Ashley Baggett, Book Talk:**

### ***Intimate Partner Violence in New Orleans***

February 28, 6:30PM, CH

## **Want to Reserve Seats for HCSCC Events?**

Perfect! Go to [www.hcscconline.org](http://www.hcscconline.org) and click on the 'Events' tab on the top drop menu. The 'Event Registration' option will bring you what you need. Of course, we'll still reserve seats by phone or email (we love reservations).

**Historical & Cultural Society of Clay County**

PO Box 157 • 202 1st Avenue North

Moorhead, MN 56561-0157



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

# *Illuminating the Word*

THE SAINT JOHN'S BIBLE

Illuminate Your Spirit This December

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