

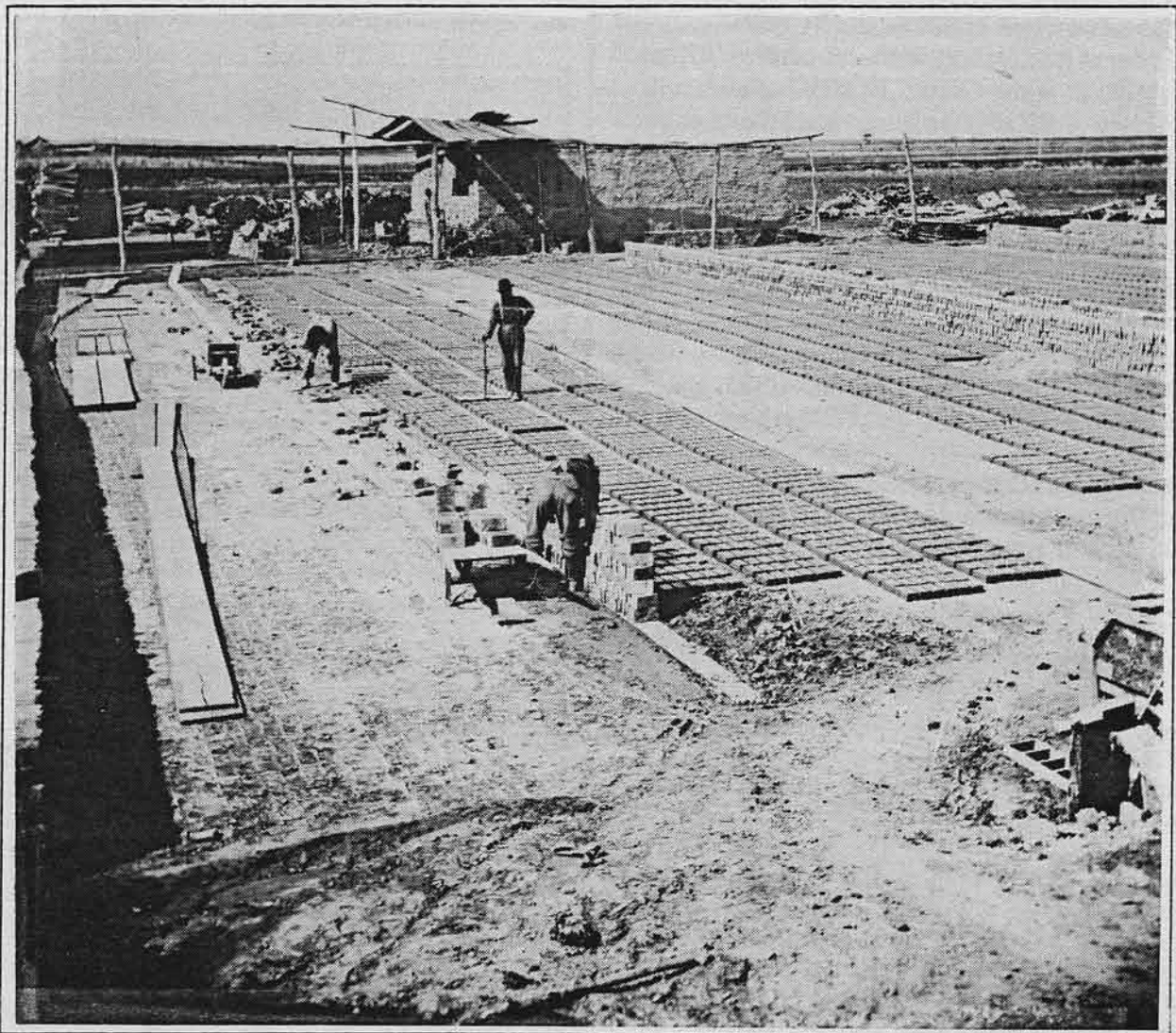
CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



CCHS Newsletter

March/April 1992

Vol. XV No. 2



Lamb Brothers' Brickyard, 1879 (See outline and story Pages 3-5)
(* Annual meeting notice and reservation information on Page 15)

President's Message



Dear Members,

Spring is right around the corner and sooner than we think the wonderful sight of farmers planting their fields will let us know that spring has sprung. The Clay County Historical Society has had a fruitful winter. We have purchased a new computer and printer so we can put together an even better newsletter. The computer will also be used to facilitate computerizing the collections.

I would like to invite all of you to the CCHS Annual Meeting/Banquet (see registration form on Page 15) on Thursday, Apr. 2, at the Center. Featured speaker will be Kathy Coyle of KXJB Television. Mark Peihl will give a slide presentation on "Old Georgetown" and musical entertainment and homespun humor will be provided by Marion Bergseid of Hawley.

There will be a short annual business meeting and the election of two board members to three-year terms each as proscribed by the CCHS By-Laws. Leaving the Board are Mercedes Roos, who has served since 1985, and Nancy Tedros, who has served since 1988.

This is the only time that all CCHS members meet as a group and I strongly encourage your attendance. I'm looking forward to seeing you April 2!!

Sincerely, Kelly Aakre, Board President

Olson to run for CCHS Board

Chris Olson, a Public Information Specialist with the Lake Agassiz Regional Library at Moorhead, is standing for election to the CCHS Board of Directors on April 2 at the annual meeting/banquet.

Olson's tenure as a CCHS representative on the Program Council for the past year will prove a good training ground for his position on the board. "I think the Program Council is working rather nicely," said Olson. "I am pleased with the process of long-range planning. I think we [the Program Council] have come to realize there are some limitations we have to accept because we don't have the staff or resources to do all that we would like to do." His vision for the future of CCHS includes "more outreach - and bringing more people in to feel like they belong."

Olson first became interested in historical societies when he worked as a museum aide at the Becker County Historical Society in Detroit Lakes, his home town, while he was in college. His first formal contact with CCHS was receiving artifacts for displays at the Moorhead Public Library and he continues to work with CCHS in dealing with the Outreach programs and displays at a number of public libraries in Clay County.

Among the attributes Olson will bring to his board position is a strong interest in history, public relations skills, such as marketing and advertising knowledge, and a sound understanding of the county.

Olson has served three years on the Clay Wilkin Opportunity Council Board, six years on the Moorhead Community Education Advisory Council and is currently serving with the Minnesota Library Association and Minnesota Association of Library Friends. He graduated from Moorhead State University with a degree in Mass Communications/Business and enjoys reading, bicycling and travelling.

CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



202 1st Avenue North
Box 501
Moorhead, Minnesota 56560

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Cream-colored bricks that built a town

By Mark Peihl

At the end of last century, Clay County's rich soil yielded up a raw material perfect for making a product that literally built Moorhead and other area towns - bricks.

In 1874, the three-year-old village of Moorhead was a ramshackle collection of wood frame buildings and shacks. Brick was scarce on the frontier and expensive to ship. Not one structure even had a brick chimney. This created a tremendous fire hazard. After the Bramble House Hotel nearly burned down - for the second time - the Red River Star pressed Moorhead citizens to do something about it.

Brothers John and Patrick Lamb had made bricks for years in Missouri. In the spring of 1874, they scraped top soil off an area just south of Moorhead exposing a layer of fine yellow clay. In June, they burned their first kiln and a new industry was born. In eight years, five Moorhead companies employing 135 men were making an astounding eight and a half million bricks each year. The outskirts of Moorhead glowed with burning kilns.

At the end of the last ice age, melt water formed two glacial Lake Agassizes. After the first lake drained away, a temporary re-advance of the ice caused the lake to refill about 9,900 years ago. Rivers rushing into the lakes carried huge amounts of rock ground into a fine powder by the ice sheet. This material settled to the bottom of the first lake creating a thick layer of heavy, sticky, grey-green clay. Sediments in the shallower second lake were of a lighter, yellow silt.

Cover: At the Lamb Brothers' Brickyard in 1879 workmen dismantle "hacks" of low walls of dried brick and haul them to the kiln builder in the distance. The man at center with the rake-like tool is "spattering" or smoothing the freshly made soft bricks laid out to dry. Later he'll use the tool to "skintle" or flip the bricks onto their sides to dry their bottoms. Note the empty brick molds in the right foreground.

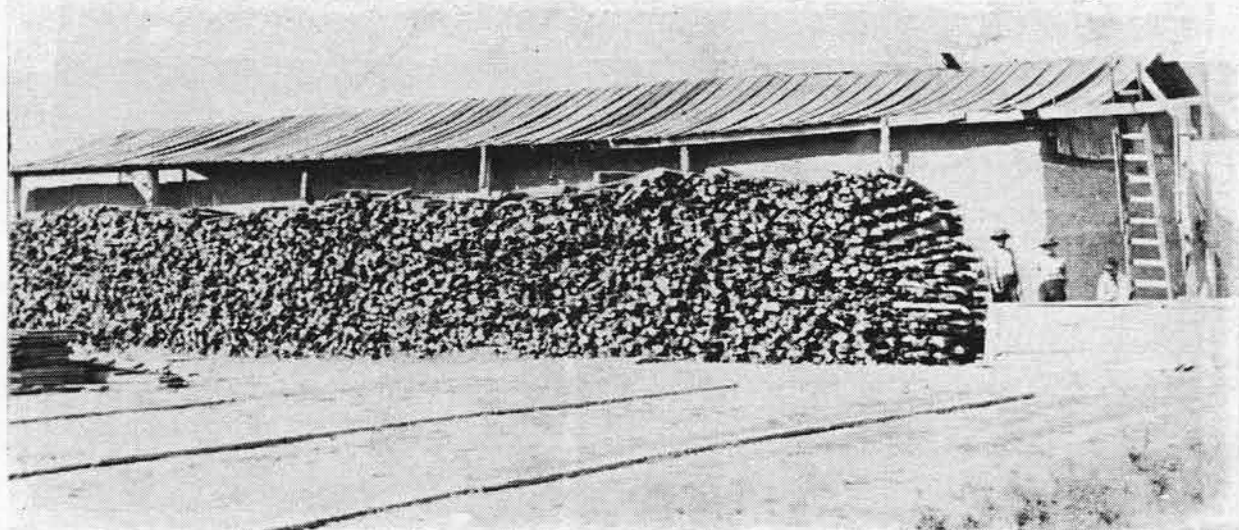
Flaten/Wange Collection

Local brick-makers used this two-foot-thick upper layer of yellow clay to produce a lovely cream-colored brick that the Lambs' called "Chaska Brick." Although too soft and porous for use as facing brick (on the fronts of buildings), they were perfectly good "common brick" for general construction purposes.

Early brick making was amazingly labor intensive. Workers scraped off the top soil, shoveled the yellow clay into wheelbarrows and carted it to a "Pug Mill" where it was mixed with water. The mill was a big upright steel cylinder with a pole running down the middle. Blades radiating out from the pole chopped and mixed the clay as a horse-powered sweep turned the pole.

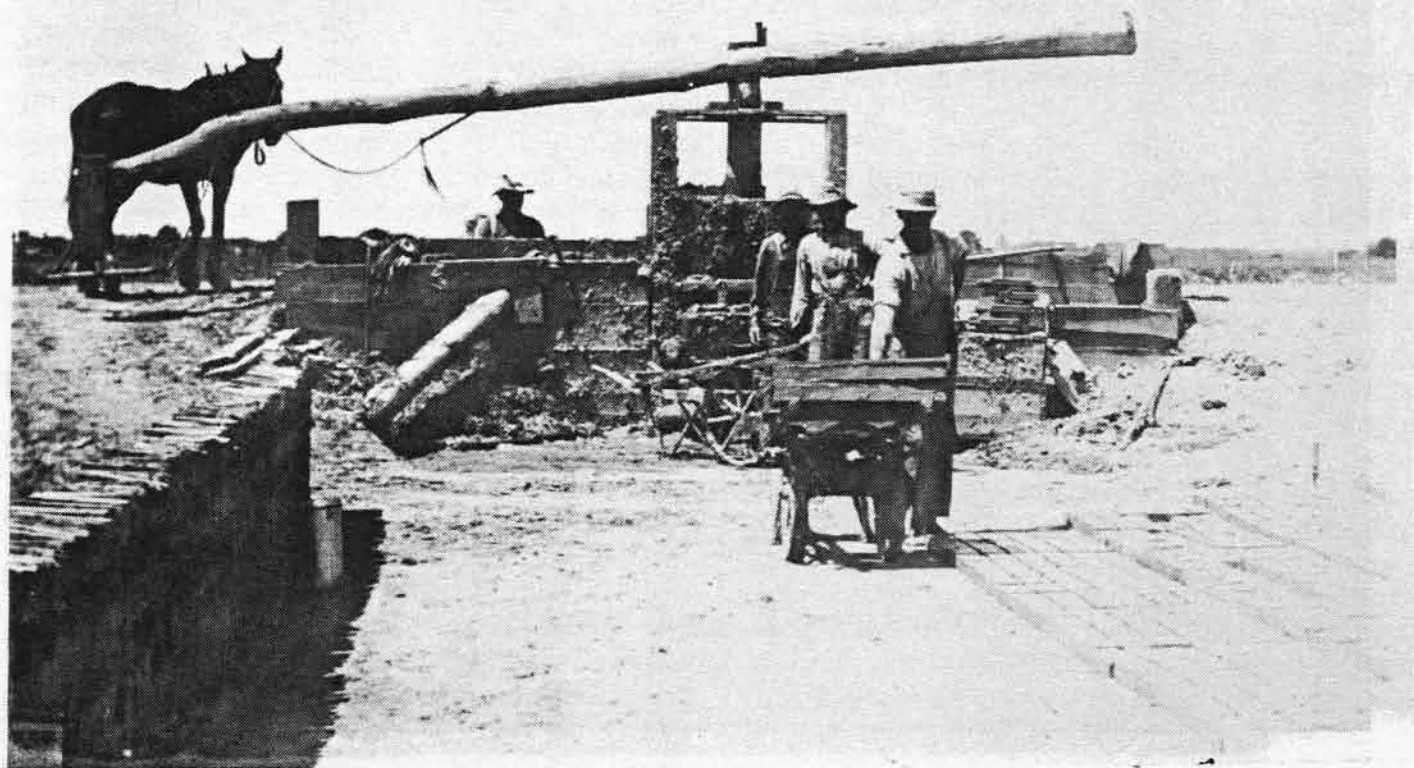
The bricks were hand formed in wooden molds. A mold looked like a wooden box divided into six compartments with no bottom or top. The molder was the most highly skilled worker in the yard. Seated at a table in the shade, he formed a clot of clay with his hands into a

(Continued on Page 4)



Cord wood at the Bergquist Brickyard, 1914. It takes lots of wood to burn 200,000 bricks for a week. In 1902, brick maker Leslie Welter went all the way to Beltrami County to buy wood to feed his kilns.

Dewey Bergquist Collection



Horse power to mix clay. A horse powered sweep turns a pug mill to mix the clay with water in the Bergquist yard. Workmen cart molds filled with wet bricks and empty them on the ground. Note bricks drying in the sun at right and others "hacked" at left.

Dewey Bergquist Collection

Bricks (Continued from Page 3)

rectangle slightly larger than a mold compartment. Then he raised the clot above his head and slammed it down into the wet mold filling a compartment. (The molds were kept wet to keep the clay from sticking to them. Most locally made bricks in CCHS' collections show evidence of this "slop molding" lubrication. Some later brick-makers sprinkled the wet molds with sand.) With a flat stick or blade he "struck" the brick or scraped off the excess clay. A worker loaded the mold, bricks and all, onto a wheelbarrow and hauled them to the drying yard.

Sun drying was a critical phase of brick making. About a pound of water had to be removed from the bricks before they could be fired in the kiln. If not completely dry, the bricks could bloat and deform, if they dried too much or too fast they could crack.

The worker dexterously shook the green bricks out of the mold onto the ground where they would lay for a day or so in the sun and wind. Each brick was flipped up on edge for further drying then "hacked" (stacked an inch or so apart in low walls).

All this time the bricks were at the mercy of Clay County's weather. Hail and rain storms in 1878 and 1880 ruined tens of thousands of Lamb Brothers' bricks.

After a few days workers used the dried bricks to built a "scove kiln" - a long stack of 200,000 bricks about 35 or 40 layers high with open arches running the width of the stack. Wood placed in the arches provided fuel for burning. Plastered "walls" of finished bricks surrounded the dry stack on all sides to keep out drafts and iron doors covered the ends of the arches.

Workers lighted the wood and baked the kiln at low temperatures for a couple days, then raised the heat to about 2200° F. for five days to burn the bricks hard. Workers tended and fed the fire constantly. After cooling for a couple days the kiln was dismantled and the bricks sorted. Scove kilns are notoriously inefficient. Perhaps 25% of the bricks were over or under burned and unusable.

Albert Bergquist, son of Moorhead pioneer and early brick-maker John G. Bergquist, worked in his father's

brickyard for years and called it "the hardest work I've ever done." The rough bricks left hands raw and bloody. Greasy and sticky when wet, the clay turned to choking dust when dry. Long hours under the hot sun and back breaking lifting took its toll. There could be a quarter million bricks in a kiln - each one had to be handled several times. Albert later said he didn't know if he'd go to heaven when he died, but it didn't matter, he'd worked in a brickyard and either place would be an improvement.

The layer of yellow clay underlies the entire Lake Agassiz Basin. Folks made bricks throughout the Red River Valley. In 1904 C.A. Grover and A.P. Bekkerus made bricks in Moland Township from clay dug along the Buffalo River. Presumably others in Clay County did the same, but Moorhead was the center of the industry in the county.

The industry hit its peak in the early 1880s when several factors resulted in a huge business boom in Moorhead. A building frenzy created a tremendous demand for brick. By 1882 four new brick-makers were competing with the Lamb Brothers including their own uncle, John Early. That year every brick building in Moorhead but one was made of local cream-colored brick. Many bricks were shipped to Jamestown, Bismarck and other railroad points.

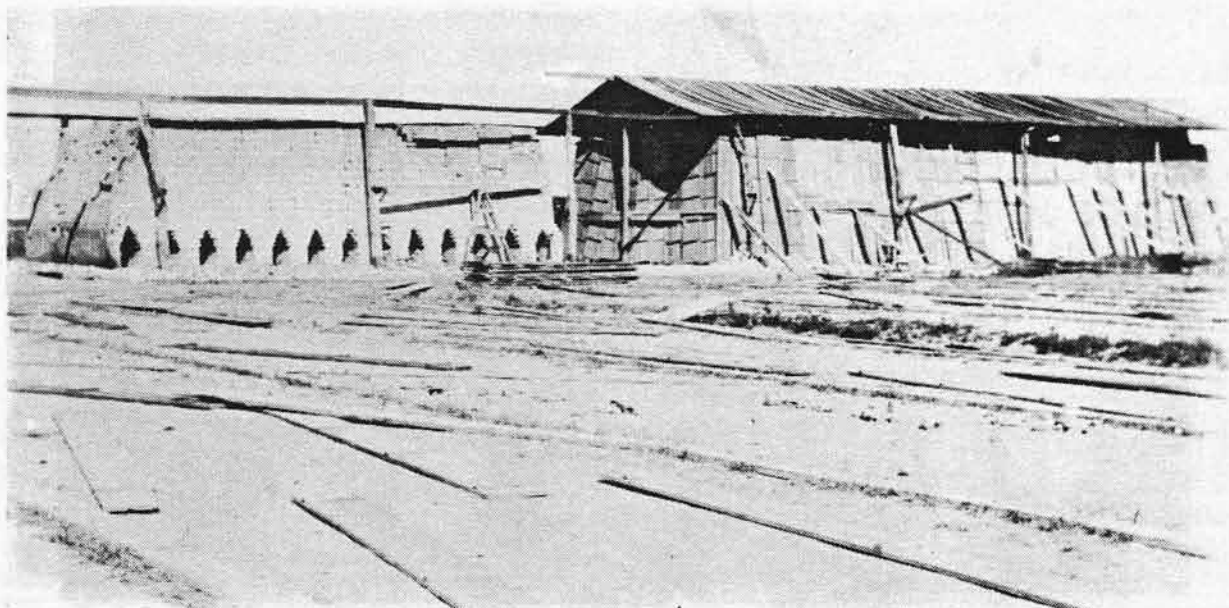
John G. Bergquist was another competitor. Like most brick-makers he was also a contractor. In 1882 he donated bricks and a building site for the new Clay County Courthouse a half mile north of downtown. Bergquist owned much of the land between and hoped to increase its value. It didn't work.

Like most booms this one quickly busted. Many people lost their shirts and brick making stopped. The Lambs went into horse trading and banking. Bergquist lost a fortune in bad investments and was reduced to peddling milk door-to-door. Through hard work he rebuilt his finances and by the late 1880s he was making brick again. He continued until at least 1914.

The local clay supply was not inexhaustible. After Bergquist mined out all the clay from his first yard near the courthouse he replaced the topsoil, farmed it and opened a new yard at what is now 28th Street and 2nd Avenue North in Moorhead.

After 1900 a healthy economy again gave brick making a boost. In 1902 William Auxer and Leon Martell opened a yard in what is now the west side of Dilworth. The same year, potato dealer and grocer Leslie Welter's Moorhead Brick Company began operating nearby. These companies used brick making machines to fill the molds and covered racks to dry the bricks. They produced 30,000 to 45,000 bricks a day, nearly 10 times the amount possible from hand molding.

Eventually the local clay began running out. Competition from concrete and cement blocks lowered demand for bricks. The number of brick companies in Minnesota steadily declined through the teens and twenties. Clay County was no exception and the industry disappeared. Urban renewal wiped out most Moorhead buildings made of local brick. But there are still plenty of basements, foundations and chimneys made from the cream-colored bricks that once built Moorhead.



Two kilns at the Bergquist Yard, 1914. The kiln at right is ready to burn. The one at left is still under construction. Note the fire chambers running through the unfinished kiln.

Dewey Bergquist Collection

Outreach Displays

	Opened
Hitterdal Senior Center	Feb. 12
Ulen-Hitterdal High School	Feb. 12
Viking Manor, Ulen	Feb. 12
Hawley Public Library	Feb. 12
Glyndon Community Center	Feb. 14
Moorhead Public Library	Feb. 14

A selection of RED RIVER LAND DOLLS will be on display at the Hitterdal Senior Center and the Ulen-Hitterdal High School. These character dolls created by Mildred Heifort of Moorhead tell the story of Red River Land and pioneer days in our area.

The display at the Viking Manor Nursing Home asks **WHAT IS IT?**

Will you be ready with your answers?



HEAVY METAL will open at the Hawley Public Library. This display features a selection of irons from our collections.

From hats and collars to shoes and stockings, a display entitled **FROM HEAD TO TOE** will be

seen at the Glyndon Community Center.

HAIR TODAY/GONE TOMORROW will be displayed at the Moorhead Public Library. This display looks at men's shaving tackle and women's hair care articles.

[Note: due to program changes, the Outreach Cases will be changed four times a year instead of six. These changes will take place in February, May, August and November.]

Artifacts Donated

January/February 1992

Donors include:

Moorhead:	Jon Evert, Esther Olson, Concordia College Archives
Dilworth:	Joanne Relling
Rollag:	Norman Bjorndahl
Minneapolis:	Dolores A. Zwack-Mellon
Fargo, ND:	Kenneth Gartzke

Artifacts include:

Research manuscripts for Clay County Family Album: A History of Rural Clay County, 1936 and 1946-7 receipt books for two elevators in Georgetown, two notebooks containing minutes of the Clear View Homemakers' Club, a hat and hat box from Waterman's Dept. Store in Moorhead (Waterman's was destroyed by fire on Oct. 30, 1967), aerial photographs of Clay County, a trade token from "The Mill," and calendars from 1933-1940 containing farm records.

New Members

T.W. Richards, Moorhead
Harry Fillafer, Moorhead
Stan Skogen, Fargo
Linda Lawson, Issaquah, WA
Sherwood E. Peterson, Jr. Rochester
Shirley Jacobson Hill, Alexandria, VA
Sharon Hoverson, Fargo

Donations

Shirley Manston, Barnesville
Frank & Peggy Borem, Martinez, CA
Eastern Star, Moorhead
Julie & Jodi Cresap, Hawley

CONCRETE BUILDING BLOCK MACHINES

OUR CONCRETE BLOCK MACHINES ARE THE BEST IN THE WORLD. THEY WILL MAKE MORE BLOCKS PER DAY THAN ANY OTHER MACHINES, THEY WILL MAKE BETTER PROPORTIONED AND BETTER FINISHED BLOCKS THAN ANY OTHER MACHINES AND THEY WILL MAKE MORE MONEY FOR YOU. OUR PRICES ARE LESS THAN ONE-HALF THE PRICES ASKED FOR OTHER MACHINES NOT HALF SO GOOD AS OUR MACHINES.

THERE IS BIG PROFIT IN MAKING CONCRETE BUILDING BLOCKS.

Grain growers and photographer win awards/prizes Leif Erickson wins bronze medal at 1893 Columbian Exposition

By Pam Burkhardt *Part 2 of a 3-Part Series*

The 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition, or World's Fair, was a tremendous show designed to commemorate the discovery of America by Columbus four centuries earlier.

By whatever twist of fate, Leif Erickson, a Clay County farmer, was among the medal winners at the fair commemorating Columbus.

The Fair caught the fancy of many Clay County residents. Some traveled to see the fair, some exhibited at the fair and some took advantage of the fair's visibility for advertising purposes - up to and including such unlikely items as "corsets."

Part 2

Grain samples exhibited at Fair

On Dec. 7, 1892, the Moorhead Daily News reported, D.L. Wellman, "noted seed wheat man of the Northwest," collected grain samples from the W.H. Davey warehouse in Moorhead to be sent to St. Paul to be "cleaned and dressed up and arranged" before being sent on to Chicago. He had gathered these samples in Clay and Norman Counties the previous year.

Judging began in August, 1893. Later that month, Rev. A.A. Zabriskie of Moorhead reported in the Moorhead Weekly News, "It is a wonderful fair. The state's exhibits in the great exhibition buildings are excellent. I heard while there that Minnesota has won the first premium or award for wheat, on a specimen that was grown north of Moorhead."

Clay County award winners in the grain competition listed in the "Moorhead Daily News" including variety, if known, yield per acre and weight per bushel:

Moorhead area: C.T. Pomeroy, Wellman Fife wheat, 30 bushels, 51 lbs.; W.H. Newcomb, Saskatchewan wheat, 40 bushels, 64 lbs.; R.M. Probstfield, Saskatchewan, 36 bushels, 62 lbs.; R. Richards, Scotch Fife wheat, 35 bushels, 62 lbs.; L.C. Erickson, Scotch Fife, 34 bushels, 61 lbs; P.H. Lamb, Scotch Fife, 32 bushels, weight 61 lbs. Also for wheat: Q.E. Andrews and E.F. Parker. For timothy seed: W.H. Davy and S.A. Holmes. For flax seed: S.A. Holmes.

Barnesville area: Nathan Butler, Blue Stem [oats], 42 bushels, 61 lbs. and White Russian oats, 85 bushels, 35 lbs.; Fred Mix, Scotch Fife wheat, 40 bushels, 62 lbs.

Kragnes area: A.G. Kassenborg, White Russian oats, 85 bushels, 35 lbs.

Erickson's bronze medal and certificate awarded for the Scotch Fife wheat grown on his Moland Township farm are on display in the Clay County Museum. (See photo of certificate below.) The certificate measures 26x20 inches and the medal is 3 inches in diameter, 1/4 inch thick and weighs a pound.

(Continued on Page 8)



The grandiose certificate shown above was awarded to Leif Erickson at the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition, or World's Fair. The large certificate now hangs in the Clay County Museum.

World Fair (Continued from Page 8)

The certificate was awarded "For yield, weight and purity of variety. Planted April 15 using 6 pecks of seed per acre; harvested August 5. Yield, 34 bushels per acre. Weight, 61 pounds per bushel." The individual judge for this competition was L.H. Clark and not Mr. Briggs, the Moorhead judge. R.M. Probstfield's bronze medal and award certificate remain in the possession of family descendants. It may be that other medals and certificates won at the World Columbian Exposition by Clay County residents survive.

But the significance of the competition went beyond medals and certificates. Agriculture was changing in the early 1890s. Better varieties which produced greater yields were necessary in a time of falling markets. The change to diversified farming was under way.

Moorhead photographer wins award

At one time, the Clay County Historical Society had on loan an award-winning photograph taken by O.E. Flaten, of Moorhead. A description of the item reveals "Mr. Flaten wanted to experiment on enlarging pictures and picked these two children [Katherine & John B. Mason Jr.] from their play, to pose for him. It is enlarged on white silk 'Bolting' cloth, and won first prize at the first worlds fair (sic) held in Chicago."

The Fair and advertising

"Columbus discovered America, but he never discovered anything like the bargains Asselstine will show next week." *Moorhead Weekly News*, Sept. 30, 1893.

F.G. Asselstine spent several weeks in Chicago in September 1893 attending the Fair and purchasing merchandise for the October grand opening of his new Moorhead dry goods store. The Fair was big news in '92 and '93 and advertisers took advantage of the public's interest. Hygeia Corsets advertised for agents for their electro-



WORLD'S FAIR, CHICAGO.
HOTEL - - BANCROFT
Calumet Avenue and 24th Street.
Fireproof; 241 rooms; near Fair Grounds; baths on every floor. American and European plans. \$1 to \$3 a day. First-class family hotel. Write for circular.

Moorhead Daily News, Aug. 17, 1893

magnetic corsets by stating "Columbian Expenses" could "easily be earned" by becoming an agent for the company. Syrup of Figs started its

insertion with "World's Columbian Exposition" and compared the improvements seen at the Fair with improved medicinal agents such as Syrup of Figs.

The Bancroft Hotel in Chicago placed ads in the Moorhead Weekly News in '93 advertising itself as a family hotel with baths on every floor and rates from \$1 to \$5 per day. The Scott Seed Company offered a Free Trip to Chicago as a prize in a contest using the letters in World's Fair. This ad was placed in the May 8 edition of Glyndon's "Red River Valley News."

Of course, the railroads were the biggest and most consistent advertisers in '92 and '93. Many of their ads contained descriptions of sights at the Fair and gave advice on how to see them. The Northern Pacific and Great Northern Railways were available from Clay County and others could be boarded from Minneapolis and St. Paul. The cost of a round trip ticket was \$29.60 from both rail lines in May of '93 and dropped to \$20.50 in September. They dropped again toward the end of October - the end of the Fair. You could choose a day coach, parlor car, vestibule compartment car, or travel by sleeper car train with dining and smoking cars. County residents took advantage of the excellent rail service and visited the Fair in large numbers.

At the Heritage Shop --

- * **Large Selection of Exhibit related Items!**
 - *Inventioneering Books*
 - *Leonardo Drawings*
 - *Patent Instruction Books*
 - *Experiment & Activity Books*
 - *Educational Games*
- * **Regional Artists Gift Items**

Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center
202 1st Avenue North, Box 157
Moorhead, MN 56560
(218) 233-5604

Visa/Mastercard Accepted



"Leonardo da Vinci-The Inventions" at the Center

This national traveling exhibit is based on sketches drawn by a man ahead of his time! See models of his inventions conceived about the same time Christopher Columbus was "discovering" America! The exhibit features:

- * 24 working models of aeronautic, mechanical and hydraulic devices - that you can actually operate!
- * 3 architectural models - St. Peter's Church, The Royal Sable, the Stair Facade!
- * A 60 minute video "I, Leonardo, A Journey of the Mind"
- * An Inventors' Workshop activity area and Inventor's resource materials.

Sponsored by the Lake Region Arts Council, Lake Augustus Arts Council through the City of Moorhead, and Richtman's Printing and Packaging.

Join us for these Invention Programs!

*** Inventors Showcase Weekend - March 21 and 22**
Come and see examples of inventions created right here in the Red River Valley! Hjemkomst Hall will be filled with award winning inventions from recent North Dakota and Minnesota Inventors Congresses. Special demonstrations by inventors, presentations and inventions for sale.

*** Metro Invention Convention, Apr. 23, 7-9 p.m.**
Student winners representing Fargo, Moorhead, and West Fargo Schools K-6 Invent America Program will be displayed and judged. Invent America, a nationwide contest designed to encourage creative and inventive thinking in children, is sponsored by the U.S. Patent Model Foundation, Washington, DC. Special open house for the area student "inventors" and their relatives.

*** \$5 Family Weekend - Apr. 25 and 26**
See over 80 student inventions from the Metro Invention Convention while visiting the "Leonardo" exhibit! Award winners from Metro area will be noted. Couples or parent(s) with children 17 and under will be admitted for a SPECIAL family rate of \$5!!!

*** Maps & the Columbian Encounter - May 2-Aug. 23**
Opening May 2 in Heritage Hall, along with "Leonardo da Vinci - The Inventions," will be one of two exhibits hosted this year by the Hjemkomst Center to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the New World's encounter with the Old.



The
Columbus
voyage of
1492

marks the

Leonardo da Vinci

beginning of the modern world. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in maps of the period. They provide a graphic portrait of this historic encounter from two sides of the Atlantic. Native American and European maps are used to reconstruct the world views of these societies both before and after 1492. It includes a 29 minute video that provides an introduction to the exhibit.

The exhibit was produced by the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee and is supported by several grants.

Newsletter ideas sought



Do you have a favorite topic or area of special interest that you would like to know more about? If there is something of general interest you have been wondering about, drop us a line and we will try to cover it in a future newsletter.

History has so many interesting stories to tell. Let us know which ones you want to hear!!



"The earliest possible day whereon Easter can happen in any year is the 22nd of March; it fell on that day in 1818, and cannot happen on that day again till the year 2285."

The Lady's Newspaper, March 23, 1850

Who celebrated and how did they celebrate - St. Patrick's Day in Clay County?

By Karen Waalen, Intern

St. Patrick's Day is soon upon us. In many ways March 17 has become as much an American celebration as an Irish one. The day was designated by the Irish to honor St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, who baptized more than 120,000 persons and founded over 300 churches in Ireland from 432 until his death in 461 A.D. The holiday, like the Norwegians Syttende Mai, is a tradition brought to America from its country of origin with its immigrants.

In the early days of Clay County, St. Patrick's Day was celebrated in various ways. An early mention of St. Patrick's Day can be found in a March issue of the Red River Star in 1873. The paper reports that "St. Patrick's Day came and went without an ovation, a band of music, a green banner, a shamrock, or so far as we know, a mog 'o potheen." Potheen is an Irish term for distilled whiskey, so it seems as though the earliest record of the holiday could not compare with the present day impression of green ale and boisterous celebration so prevalent on college campuses.

The situation was different in 1874 when a Moorhead paper announced a "Grand Hibernian Ball" (Hibernian is another term for the Irish) held at Pinkham's Hall for a "benevolent purpose" and this was "worthy of notice and patronage." The following week the paper reported that the day was a success starting with the Fort Abercrombie Brass Band parading through town and providing music throughout the day. The ball topped the day off with people of every "creed, nationality and sect" totaling 80 couples dancing amidst evergreens and Irish mottos and designs. The report viewed the event as very respectable outside of the "spirited" voting (or bidding) for the "Chrome," which may have been a chromo-lithograph, a colored picture.

The effort to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in a grand manner carried over into 1875 in Moorhead when the Red River Star reported that a meeting was held and Arrangement, Invitation, Reception and Floor Manager Committees were set up for a celebration to take place at the Headquarters Hotel. The Howe Band was schedule to play for the enjoyment of the guests.

Celebration efforts dissipated somewhat after 1874. In 1876 and 1878 the Academy of Music and the Moorhead Minstrel Company held programs on March 17, but there was no connection made between those events and St. Patrick's Day. A simple report in The Moorhead

ST. PATRICK'S DAY!

Banquet, Literary Musical

ENTERTAINMENT.

MONDAY, MARCH 17th, 1879,

At Chapin & Erickson Hall, Fargo, D. T.

Cards of Admission. \$1.00.

Moorhead Advocate, March 15, 1879

This ad is placed sideways here, just as it appeared on the center front page of the newspaper in 1879.

Advocate in 1878 stated only that "It was noticed in Moorhead that more of our Teutonic citizens celebrated St. Patrick's Day than those of Hibernian extraction."

The reasons for a lull in the celebration of St. Patrick's day are mixed and many, but one obvious reason may be a lack of a large Irish population in the area. According to the 1875 census Glyndon had 246 residents, and only 11 who claimed Irish heritage. In Moorhead, approximately 40 of the 475 citizens were of Irish descent.

There was some renewed interest in the holiday in 1879.
(Continued on Page 11)

Coyle to speak at CCHS Banquet, April 2

The featured speaker at the 1992 CCHS Annual Meeting/Banquet on Thursday, April 2 will be Kathy Coyle, anchor-producer of News 4 at noon on KXJB TV.

Ms. Coyle admits to "warm memories of visiting the Clay County Museum in the basement of the [County] Courthouse" as a child. Most recently the importance of preserving history touched her family in a new way when the Minnesota Historical Society accepted a collection of her late brother, Brian's, files.

Ms. Coyle grew up in Moorhead, the daughter of Sparky and Georgia Coyle, and attended the University of Minnesota. She is approaching her 19th year in broadcasting.

On April 2 Ms. Coyle will share with you her love of Clay County and the Red River Valley and its people. Please plan to attend the annual banquet.

Annual Meeting/Banquet - April 2/ (See reservation form on Page 15)



Kathy Coyle

St. Patrick's Day (Continued from Page 10)

Festivities included a band led by Professor Humphrey that presented 21 musical selections. Toastmaster Jas. S.Stack, Esq. gave 11 toasts interspersed between the literary and musical entertainment. The toasts honored everything from the Cities of Moorhead and Fargo, to the Press of the Red River Valley, to Uncle Sam.

The early 1880s did not provide for any grand celebrations of St. Patrick's Day. Dances became the seemingly preferred way to celebrate the day in both Glyndon and Moorhead. In 1882 Glyndon celebrated with a "calico dance," and in 1885 held a "mixed(!)" dance at the Masons Hall.

Moorhead had a rather quiet celebration in 1885 for a couple of interesting reasons. March 17 was a day of a solar eclipse which captured many citizens attention and slightly dimmed (no pun intended) the importance of St. Patrick's Day. The Moorhead Weekly News reported that at 12 noon only 1/8 of the sun shone. Also that day the Moorhead Weekly News reported that the Associated Press had released information claiming that former President Grant had died. The report later proved false, but the news created quite a stir. (Grant died four months later on July 23, 1885.)

But the main reason St. Patrick's Day in Moorhead was not greeted with fanfare in 1885 was of a political nature -it was election day. The Moorhead Weekly News reported that, although a few were seen wearing the green, the American duty to vote in the city elections that day outweighed the desire to celebrate.

Times have changed since the early days of St. Patrick's Day celebrations in Clay County, but many characteristics of those early celebrations have survived. The holiday, historically, has been celebrated by many nationalities, not just the Irish. This still holds true. One difference today is that people seem less concerned with finding a benevolent purpose for their festivities.

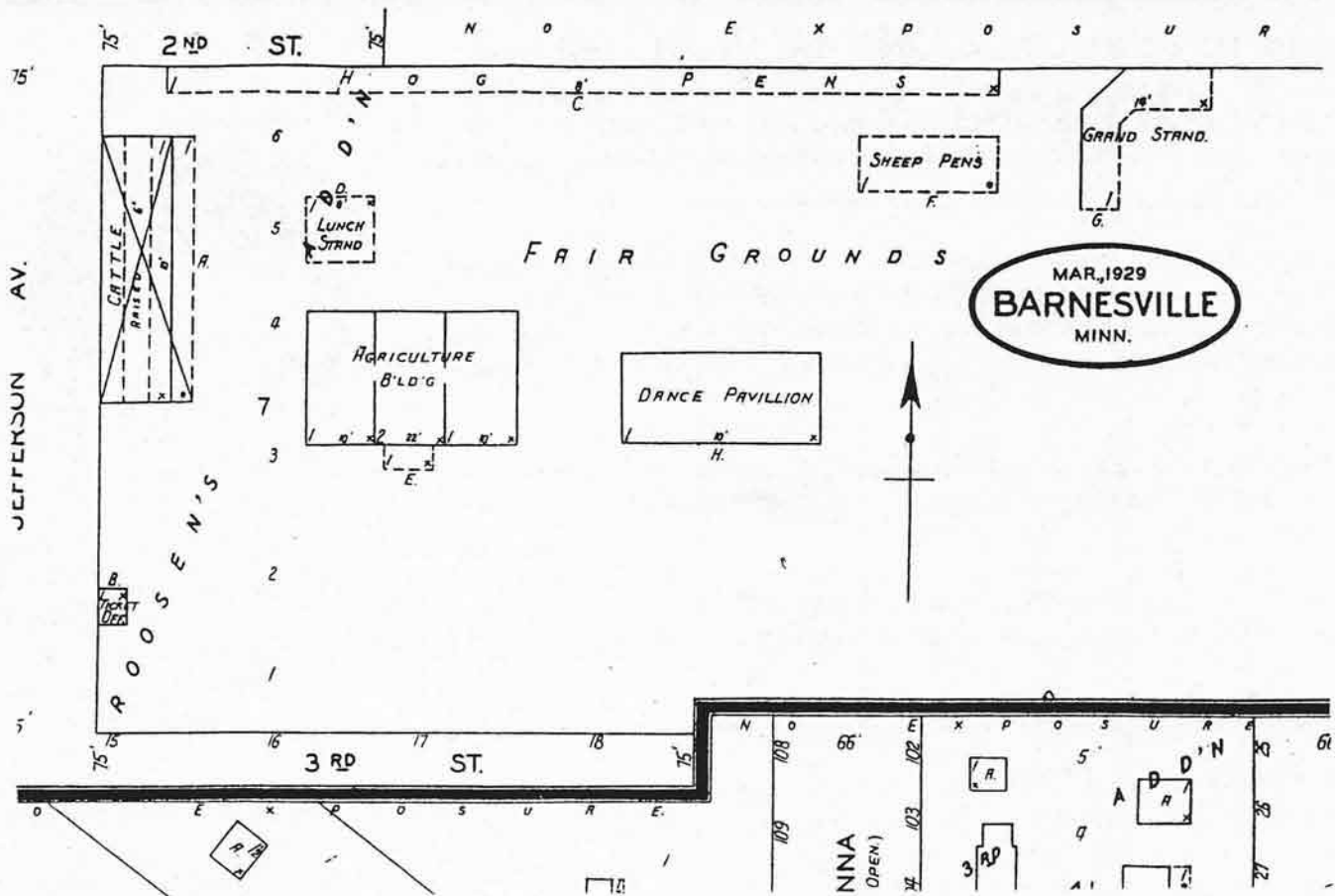
Shamrocks, the wearing of the green and other important elements of St. Patrick's Day were present in early Clay County history. The following excerpt from the March 27, 1884 Moorhead Weekly News, by Owen Doherty, defines the importance of the shamrock and gives us some comprehension of the importance of a traditional Irish holiday in Clay County and American cultures. It summarizes what St. Patrick's Day is all about.

The Shamrock

The reason why Irishmen raise the shamrock on St. Patrick's Day is because of the hope that now rests on Erin's brow, which I fervently trust will be realized. It was originally represented as a lovely child standing tip-toe with a three foil, or three colored grass in her hand, and St. Patrick the Immortal Apostle of Ireland who lit in the fifth century that lamp of religion whose inextinguishable flames have penetrated the remote climes of the habitable globe used the shamrock in explaining the Trinity to the pagan Irish. This it is, in my opinion, that caused the shamrock to be adopted as a national emblem. It is the reason every true Irish Celt should raise the shamrock on St. Patrick's Day and exclaim:

*O! Erin, my country! I love thy green bowers,
No music to me like the murmuring rills;
The shamrock to me is the fairest of flowers,
And nought is more dear than thy daisy-clad hills.*

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY!!!!



Clay County Fairgrounds, Barnesville in 1929, from a Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

Renewals - January/February 1992

Katherine Mentjes, Waseca
 Roland & Beth Dille, Moorhead
 Larry Peihl family, West Fargo
 Helen Rudie, Moorhead
 Lysle & Diane Meyer, Moorhead
 Dorothy R. Johnson, Moorhead
 Robert D. Larson, Moorhead
 Erlene & Janice Linde family, Moorhead
 Steve and Lucia Schroeder, Glyndon
 Esther & Dick Vollbrecht, Moorhead
 Olaf & Verna Cartford, Moorhead
 Diane Gruhl, Hawley
 Sister Mary Anna Fay, Crookston
 Mary Leach, Glyndon
 Ethel Menholt, Felton
 Charles A. Nelson, Alexandria, VA
 DeKrey-Reierson, Moorhead
 Paul Korsmo, Moorhead
 Penelle Mork, Moorhead
 Donna McMaster, Moorhead
 Francis Kukowski, Moorhead
 Howard Freeberg, West Fargo
 Norm Bjorndahl, Hawley
 Vern Pederson, Moorhead
 Curtiss & Helen Danielson, Moorhead
 Stella Carlson, Moorhead
 Trish Olmstead, Fargo
 Betty Swetland, Moorhead

Harding Noblitt, Moorhead
 Mrs. Alice Polikowsky, Moorhead
 Richard Melarvie, Moorhead
 Noel Melarvie, Moorhead
 Rev. Charles Hedelund, Moorhead
 Inez Hogenson, Ulen
 Terry Shoptaugh, Moorhead
 Don & Rose-Mary Strom, Moorhead
 Richard Wussow, Sabin

Adelphia Wallace, LaCanada, CA
 Gordon & Carol Ekre, Hawley
 Harold Helmeke, Moorhead
 Evelyn Langlie, Moorhead
 Mrs. Leslie Welter, Jr., Moorhead
 Erling Erickson, Moorhead
 Howard & Marcell Wergeland, DL
 Town & County Flowers, Moorhead



Pre-1930s Easter card

Corner of 4th Street and Main Avenue, Moorehad,
October 1899. Ten of the 14 buildings on this block
housed saloons.

CLAY COUNTY MUSEUM

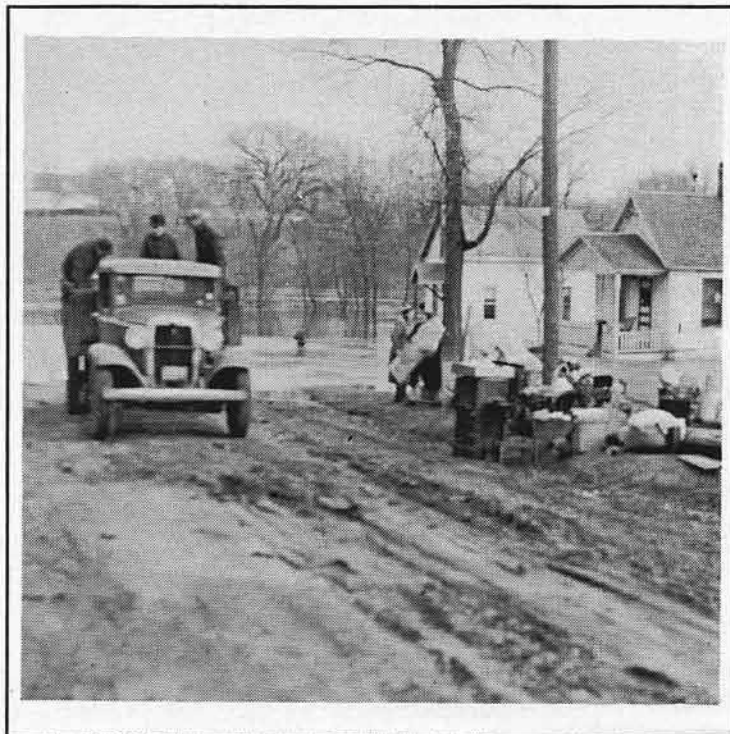
EXHIBIT SCHEDULE:

"The Point" (*Opens April 11*)

This exhibit will look at Moorhead's original residential district - the bend in the river known as "The Point" and now occupied by the Hjemkomst Center. "The Point" is an interpretive exhibit which will explore who lived in the area, how the area changed over the years and why it was vacated.

The Point - April 1943 → → → →

Flood victims evacuate homes along Elm Street North. The fire hydrant shown partially submerged in the center of this picture remains on its original site in the Viking Ship Park, behind the Hjemkomst Center.



Forum Publishing Company Collection

"An Ending & A Beginning" (*Through May 1*)

An exhibit commemorating the 1959 deaths of rock-n-roll stars Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and J.P. Richardson, who were on their way to play a concert at the Moorhead Armory when their plane crashed. Fargoan, Robert "Bobby Vee" Veline, began his career by filling in for the missing stars.

"Quilts and Other Comforts" (*Through April 5*)

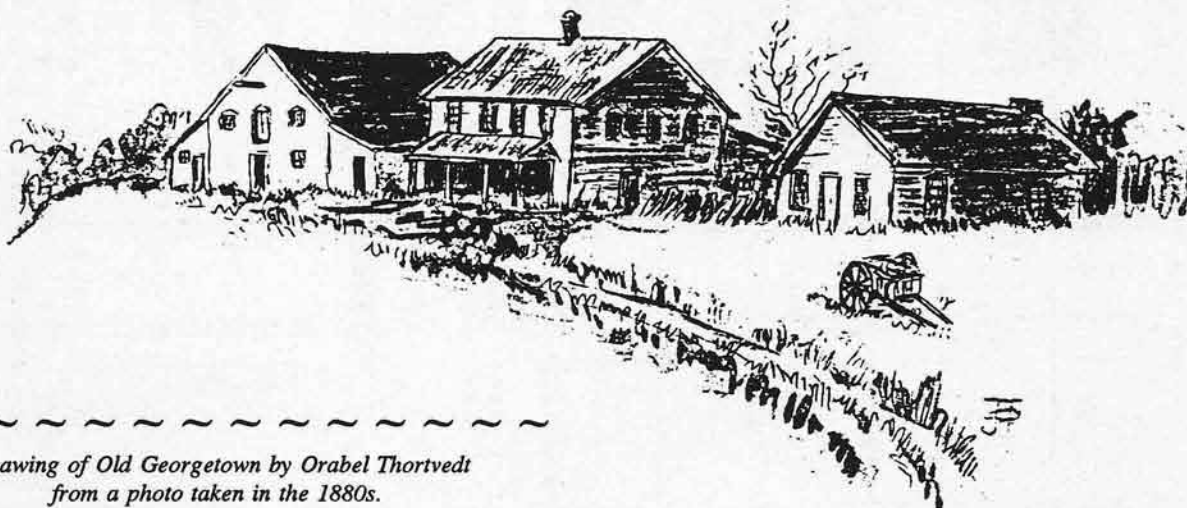
The best of our collections' quilts, coverlets, blankets, shawls, wall hangings and lap robes, illustrates how comfort was defined in the "good-old-days." Quilts on display date from 1876 to 1988.

A Permanent Exhibit depicts unique characterizations of one facet of the history of each county town. Together they form a chapter in the overall history of Clay County.

*Make plans to visit
the
Clay County Museum today!!
Hours are: 9-5 Mon.-Sat.,
9-9 Thurs. and 12-5 Sun.*



CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1992 Annual Meeting/Banquet
Thursday, April 2
at the Hjemkomst Center, 202 1st Ave. N., Moorhead



~~~~~  
*Drawing of Old Georgetown by Orabel Thortved  
 from a photo taken in the 1880s.*  
 ~~~~~

Meeting/Banquet Schedule

5:30 - 6:30 - Social Hour
 6:30 - 7:30 - Dinner Served
 7:30 - Program/Meeting and
 Election of Board Members

~~~~~

**Program**

**Guest Speaker:** *Kathy Coyle*  
*Anchor/Producer, News 4*  
*KXJB Television*

**Entertainment:** *Marion Bergseid, music*  
*and homespun humor,*  
*with Elva Bergseid,*  
*accompanist*

**Presentation:** *Mark Peihl, CCHS*  
*Archivist - a slide*  
*presentation on*  
*"Old Georgetown"*

**Door Prizes:** *Throughout the evening*

1992 Annual Meeting/Banquet  
 Clay County Historical Society  
 at Hjemkomst Center, 202 1st Ave. N.  
 Moorhead, Minnesota

Thursday, April 2, 1992

\$8.00 per person

Make check payable to:

**CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check your choice of Entree  
 and return to CCHS by March 27.

- ☐ Chicken Cordon Bleu  
☐ Stuffed Pork Chop

1992 Annual Meeting/Banquet  
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**Reservation deadline is March 27 - Call 233-4604**

## CCHS - 1991 MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

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

- ☐ INDIVIDUAL \$15.00
- ☐ FAMILY \$35.00

### CCHS MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- \*\* FREE Admission to the Center
- \*\* Bi-Monthly Newsletter
- \*\* 25% Discount on Photo Reproductions
- \*\* 10% Discount on Acid-Free Materials
- \*\* Voting Privileges
- \*\* Invitation to the Annual Meeting/Dinner and all CCHS Events

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

Family memberships, please list family members.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Husband

\_\_\_\_\_  
Wife

\_\_\_\_\_  
Children (under the age of 18)

Return to: Clay County Historical Society  
P.O. Box 501  
Moorhead, MN 56561

(218) 233-4604

Non Profit Organization

BULK RATE

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

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MOORHEAD, MN

CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



202 1ST AVENUE NORTH

BOX 501

MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA 56560