

Clay County Historical Society


Volume XXIX No. 6

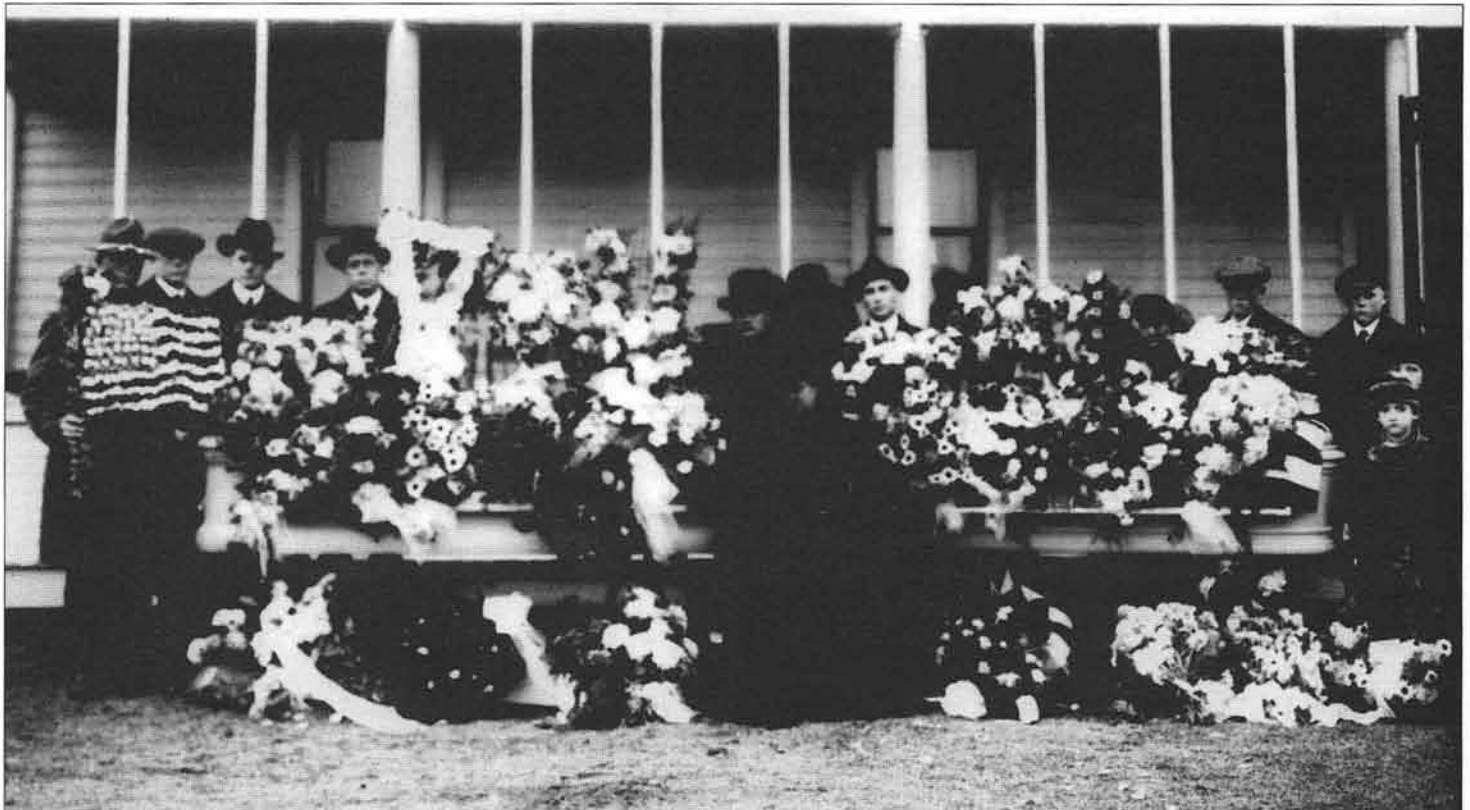
Clay County Historical Society Newsletter

November/December 2006

In This Issue:

Page	Article	Page	Article
2	President's Message	7	Congrats from Hawley and Volunteer Positions
3	Winter History Series and Jubilee Kickoff Photos	8-11	1918 Spanish Flu Epidemic in Clay County
4	More Programs Available and Membership Drive Continues	12	Heritage Members and Sponsors
5	Holiday Open House Dec. 9 and More Upcoming	13	New Members and Renewals
6	Outreach Displays and Recent Acquisitions	14	Jubilee Fund Drive Report
		15	Fund Drive Donation Form

Celebrating
75

Clay County Historical Society
1932-2007



The Spanish flu took a terrible toll on young people around the country, particularly on soldiers and nurses. In November 1918, death took the lives of two of Mr. and Mrs. Jens Larson's children within days. Their son Clarence, a U.S. Army soldier in camp in Georgia died on the 8th. His sister Anna, a nurse at St. Luke's Hospital in Fargo, died the 12th. A double funeral was held in the Larson home south of Hawley. Many families lost multiple members in the epidemic. Flaten/Wange Collection. See the story starting on page 8.

CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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President's Message

By Darren Leno, CCHS President



Exciting Times for CCHS

These are very exciting time for the Clay County Historical Society! We are entering our 75th year of collecting and preserving the history of Clay County, with more than a little fanfare.

Just last month, more than 100 people gathered to celebrate the opening of our wonderful new exhibit, 75 years of Collecting. Attendees included many Society members, leaders from the business community, local and state political leaders, and other well known community figures.

The company that night was very enjoyable, as was the music, and the desserts. Old friends found an opportunity to catch up, and many new friendships were made that night. If you were there, then I thank you for coming. If you missed it, I really hope you can make the next one.

Many people expressed to me that they would like CCHS to hold an event like this again soon. I couldn't agree more. Congratulations to our hard working staff and volunteers for hosting an enjoyable and interesting evening.

Our Best Exhibit Yet!

Our staff has done some terrific exhibits over the years, and "Celebrating 75 Years of Collecting" must rank as one of our best. Right now, we have more items from our collection on display than we have had in nearly 50 years! Many of the items are extremely important, and for preservation purposes, not routinely placed on exhibit. The items you'll see reflect the broad range of our collection. You really must come to see this exhibit, and then spread the word to your friends and family. Word of mouth is the best kind of advertising for CCHS.

The Gift of History

The holiday seasons are upon us, and I'd like to help you with your gift buying responsibilities. This season, give the gift of history! A membership to the Clay County Historical Society is a great way to share your love of local history with someone you care about, whether they live in the area or far away. It's affordable, keeps people in touch with Clay County, and it greatly helps the Society.

We also have some wonderful books and other items that make great presents, including the 75th Anniversary t-shirt for \$10! See page 13 for an order form for our most recent books, and don't forget *Here, There, and Everywhere*, a history of Clay County by Glenn Johnson, published in 1975, for \$10 as well.

Buffalo is Roaming again!

Thanks to generous contributions to the Buffalo Fire Truck Fund, repairs have been made to the engine, and it has been made street worthy!

We've put the old engine to work for the Society. It was featured recently in a KVLV-TV news story. And just last month the Buffalo was displayed at the Hjemkomst Center on the opening day of our new exhibit. The following day, it was a star attraction at the Moorhead Fire Department's community open house, where hundreds of parents and children enjoyed learning about the engine. Many kids had the chance to sit in the engine's driver's seat, clanged the engine's bell, and asked a lot of good questions.

We hope this is the start of a long relationship between the Buffalo engine and Clay County residents. The Buffalo engine and the people who care for it are wonderful ambassadors for CCHS, helping to bring our county's history to life.

Although much has been done to repair the engine, it is still in need of additional care and ongoing maintenance. Donations of any amount to the Buffalo Fire Engine Fund can be mailed to CCHS or dropped off at the museum, and are greatly appreciated. If you're able to donate \$250 or more, we will send you an 8x10 photo of the Buffalo engine in action at a historic fire. I think this is an effort worthy of your support, and one that will benefit CCHS by raising our profile in the community. Besides that, it's just a really cool

Thanks for a Successful Jubilee Kickoff!

Our 75th Anniversary Kickoff Reception and Exhibit Grand Opening on Friday, October 6, was a great success with over 80 guests in attendance! Visitors enjoyed a delicious dessert buffet with a variety of cakes and great music by "Kathie Brekke and 42nd Street." CCHS honored many Clay County businesses and organizations that have been in business for 75 years or more: Comstock-Hoff Lutheran Church, the City of Barnesville, Clay County, Clay County 4-H, St. John the Divine Episcopal Church, Minnesota State University-Moorhead, Moorhead Kiwanis, and Trinity Lutheran Church of Moorhead. The honorees also helped with the ribbon-cutting for the grand opening of the new exhibit "Celebrating 75 Years of Collecting." Thank you to all the attendees and everyone involved for helping to make the Jubilee Kickoff a successful first event!

Note: During our Jubilee, we would like to honor all the businesses and organizations that have been in existence in Clay County for 75 years or more. We have a running list, of which all were invited to the kickoff event, and we were alerted of several more that night. We will be honoring more of you at future events. If you know of anyone who should be noted, please check with us to make sure they are on our list!



John Elton and Pam Burkhardt visit with Edward Gudmundson and representatives from the Clay County Federation of 4-H Clubs.



The ribbon is cut for the exhibit! Left to right: Bob Askegaard (Comstock-Hoff Lutheran Church), Ron Ulven (CCHS Board), Philip and Joey Gedgaud (Clay County 4-H), Ken Bauer (City of Barnesville), Erling Linde (Moorhead Kiwanis), Steve Wold (Trinity Lutheran), Paul Harris (MSUM), Jon Evert (Clay County)

Peihl Presents Winter History Series in Jan.



Mark's program about the Stockwood Fill is one of his best and most popular!

Archivist Mark Peihl will be presenting a short series of our popular slideshows in Barnesville and Hawley later this winter.

Mark will present *The Stockwood Fill*, about the Northern Pacific Railway's challenging project to create a new railroad grade between Glyndon and Hawley along U.S. Highway 10, at the Barnesville Library Wednesday, January 10, 2007 and at the Hawley Library Thursday, January 25.

He will also present *Welcome to Beerhead*, about Moorhead's colorful saloon era, 1890 to 1915 at the Barnesville Library Wednesday, January 17, 2007, and at the Hawley Library Thursday, February 1.

All the shows run from 7:00 to 8:00 pm. The programs are free and open to the public. Stop in!

Additional programs available from CCHS

We have an update on the programs available for presentation by our Collections Manager, Pam Burkhardt. A few of her programs did not get into the list of programs available in our last newsletter! Please add these programs to the list in the September/October 75th Anniversary edition newsletter:

Fashion in the County (slide show & artifacts, 1 hour; slides only, 30 min.) A look at county fashions from the Civil War to the Gibson Girl.

Genealogy and Photographs (30-45 min.) Using fashion clues and other visible information on photographs may help date your family photos.

Specific artifact programs - contact the curator to see if a program is possible using artifacts from the collections.

Other programs listed in the last newsletter include:

Stockwood Fill (30 min. slide show)

Old Ruby: Red River of the North (30-60 min. slide show)

Streetcars! (30 min. slide show) The Fargo and Moorhead Electric Street Railway.

1897 Flood (30 min. slide show) Compared to the 1997 flood.

Early Photography (35 min. slide show)

Welcome to Beerhead! (35 min. slide show) Moorhead's colorful saloon days, 1890 to 1915.

Old Georgetown: Transportation Crossroads (35 min. slide show)

Preserving Your Family Photos (30-60 min. lecture)

Fur Trade in the Red River Valley (60 min. presentation) Designed especially for schools.

Preserving Grandma's Corset (60 min. lecture)

Spinning (30 min. demonstration) Equipment, preparation, and dyeing.

What's in the Archives? (60 min. tour) Designed especially for school children.

Overlooked Genealogical Sources (60 min. lecture)

History Along Highway 10 (30-45 min. slideshow)

Doc Humphrey's Home Movies (25 min. video available for checkout) Moorhead in 1917.

PAST Trunks (themed trunks designed for schools) Down on the Farm, The Good Old Days, Coming to Clay County, and Frozen in Time

Recruit a New Member for CCHS and earn a chance to win a Framed Art Print!

(No purchase necessary)

75th Anniversary Membership Challenge!

That's right! You could win a framed art print just for introducing a friend or family member to the Clay County Historical Society!

CCHS has been challenged to increase its membership from 500 to 750 in honor of our 75th Anniversary in 2007. This means we would like to greet 250 new individuals, families and business to the Clay County Historical Society!

To meet this impressive goal, the historical society is entering the names of all new members through 2006 in a drawing for a framed art print! The print will be a nostalgic scene to reflect the rich history and heritage of this area that the historical society exists to

preserve.

CCHS would also like to give our current members the opportunity to be entered for this fabulous prize, so any CCHS member who recruits a new member will also have their name entered for each new member registered by them! To help us, please make sure that your name is included with the new members' registration.

We know that you will want to help CCHS achieve this goal of increasing our membership and becoming better able to preserve Clay County's history! Start now with the membership form on the back of this newsletter!

Holiday Open House Saturday, Dec. 9

Join us again for our Holiday Open House this year, on Saturday, December 9, 12:00-4:00 pm!

The CCHS Holiday Open House is a wonderful, relaxed get-together where you can visit with old friends and meet new ones. Enjoy refreshments and music by a local group.

It is also a great time to see our new exhibit "Celebrating 75 Years of Collecting" with the joy of the Christmas season in the air.

We look forward to seeing you!



Guests enjoy a cappella music by the Concordia group Laudibus at last year's Holiday Open House.

CCHS Series Offered through Moorhead Community Ed

Another history series from CCHS will be offered in February through Moorhead Community Education. The classes will be instructed by Curator Pam Burkhardt and will focus on preservation, genealogy and display-making. The titles are: "Displays on a Shoestring Budget," "Preserving Grandma's Corset," and "Genealogy and Photographs." More information will be provided in the next newsletter, or call CCHS at 299-5520 or Community Ed at 284-3400, or check the next issue of the Community Ed course catalog.

Input from Educators Sought for Programs

Instilling an interest and knowledge of history in today's youth is an important yet daunting task. CCHS is seeking input from teachers in area schools about what kind of services we can provide to help you with your history curriculum! In the next couple months, we will be contacting area schools to meet with teachers to have discussions about what your needs are and how we might be able to help, but if you would like to contact us first, please call 218-299-5520.

President's Column, cont.

old fire engine, and kids love it! Let's keep it on the streets!

School House Improvements

The CCHS Board is discussing the need for improvements at the Woodland School House, the historic single room school that is part of our collection. By the spring, we would like to have volunteers in place to paint the school house. If you or someone you know could make donations of time, money or materials to this effort, please contact CCHS.

Estate Gifts

We recently became aware that a member has included CCHS in their estate planning. We are very grateful for this person's thoughtfulness. As you plan your estate, I invite you to consider including CCHS in your charitable planning.

There are many financial vehicles available to help you achieve your charitable giving and tax goals, and your financial advisor and tax professional can assist you with your planning.

Did you know that CCHS has in place an endowment fund with the FM Area Foundation? Gifts left to this endowment are professionally managed to benefit CCHS in perpetuity.

Thanks to you

I can't stress enough how important you are to the Clay County Historical Society. In the months ahead, we will keep you informed about all of the great events we have planned to celebrate our 75th year. For your sake and ours, I hope you'll be able to attend these events, and that you'll bring a friend, and that you'll tell others of the great work that our staff and volunteers are doing.

In addition to asking for your moral support, we will provide you with opportunities to get involved, to offer solutions to problems and challenges that we are facing, and to support us with your time, talents and gifts. Just as we today are the beneficiaries of a vision that began 75 years ago, let's work together ensure that CCHS has the resources it needs to continue collecting for another 75 years.

Although you and I probably will not be attending the gala opening of CCHS' "150 Years of Collecting" exhibit in 75 years time, I'm almost certain that many of the items that will be in that exhibit are on display right now in the Hjemkomst Center. We have the people who began our society 75 years ago to thank for the great exhibit that we have today. So please come on down and enjoy the new exhibit!

Outreach Displays

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

HATS are the theme at the Hawley Public Library. Hats, caps and bonnets from the 1880s to the 1960s will be featured.

Our HAT'S OFF at the Moorhead Public Library to all those who served in the military. Artifacts dating from the Civil War to Desert Storm are featured as well as some interesting facts about Decoration Day, our nation's flag, the GAR and other organizations.



The Barnesville Public Library looks into a bit of rural life with BUTTER & EGGS recalling trips to the general store. Credit was given for a farm's home-made butter and farm-fresh eggs.



The welcome mat is still out at the CVB (Convention and Visitors' Bureau) but a display of items from the hospitality industry yields to one featuring holiday collectibles.

The Fargo Dome has a temporary display on the Hjemkomst Center in a small case shared between CCHS and HHIC.

IN-HOUSE DISPLAYS

In the hallway cases on the third level, we have a display of artifacts straight from our collections storage room. We had planned to display a large number of artifacts from particular collections in the hall case beginning in January, but our timetable has been advanced due to work for the Hjemkomst Center's roof replacement. The new air handling system will pass through the center of our Main Storage room, so we've had to move the artifacts to make room for construction and to protect the items from large amounts of dust and water from the wet saw cutting through a wall.

Artifacts & Donors

September and October 2006

Donors:

Moorhead: Janet Gorman, Eddie Gudmundson, Moorhead Fire Dept., Donna McMaster, Lloyd Gunderson

Hawley: John Elton

Rochert, MN: Doris Mjolsness

St. Cloud, MN: Stearns History Museum

Anoka, MN: Eva Hedstrom

Minneapolis, MN: Gloria Lithgow and Fred Arndt

Fargo, ND: Paul Harvey Rustad, Dr. Ronald Olin

Lisbon, ND: Jerry & Lorraine Peterson

Artifacts: photocopy of typescript of names in Lief Erickson Cemetery compiled by Orabel Thortvedt plus information on Concordia Cemetery and a few isolated graves; booklet, St. Joseph [church] Centennial 1873-1973; (3) issues, *Red River Tidende*, [Moorhead] a Norwegian language newspaper dated 1882 and an article from *The [Fargo] Forum* dated Monday, June 4, 1979 re: finding of these newspapers; (1) vol. Cho-kio 1956 [on cover] *Fifty Years Later . . .* directory and biography of Moorhead High School Class of 1956; (1) scrapbook re: Prince Olav's visit to FM area in 1939 [by donor as a little girl]; (5) color ink jet prints of Gudmundson and John Hall w/oxcart [86.30] which they built especially for CCHS; a long photo of the 50th Anniversary picnic of the Old Settlers at Lea Lake June 5, 1921; (2) yellow turnout coats, (2) commemorative envelopes for the Moorhead Fire Department centennial with a short history; (2) wrought iron candle stands used for display at Brigg's Floral, Moorhead, an ashtray "Warren's Café, Moorhead," (2) nail files for Brooks Jewelry and R & S Fabrics, both Moorhead; advertising pencils for Anderson Brothers, Dale and Burns Motor Company, Hawley, business card for Wm. Elsholtz of Hawley with a [combined] livery & auto business, District #41 record books, hat and key cases from the 1972 Hawley centennial, two advertising coin purses and 13 small containers including a medicine bottle from I. W. Swenson, Hawley; two stone points of heavily patinated Knife River flint, one leaf-shaped point, a copper point and geofact found southwest of Felton.

The Thortvedt Family collection increased with the addition of twelve Thortvedt family scrapbooks, seventeen day-books, time books, a ledger, two boxes of photos and one box of negatives.

In September, we received more advertising materials collected by Dr. Ronald Olin. He has been collecting these and other items for about 25 years and is still searching! The entire collection will be displayed during our 75th Anniversary year celebration.

Volunteer Positions still Available

We have had a great response to our request for volunteer help in the last newsletter, but positions are still available. If any of the volunteer descriptions below interest you, call Lisa at 218-299-5520, or stop in to fill out an application! If you are a current volunteer and interested in trying something new, just call! Listed here are our most-needed positions.

Museum Receptionist

Weekends and now Weekdays! The receptionist will greet visitors, provide information about exhibits and other aspects of the Hjemkomst Center, and direct visitors to staff for appointments, research questions, or artifact donations. There will be ongoing small projects like data entry or helping with mailings to fill

the time. Volunteers must enjoy working with people, feel comfortable answering the phone and responding to a variety of visitor questions. Hours are flexible and shifts are available to fill this position by more than one volunteer.

Membership Assistant

This volunteer will help us manage the membership program, preparing renewal notices and thank you letters for membership renewals, and updating the membership database. Some visitor and telephone reception may also be involved. Computer experience is required.

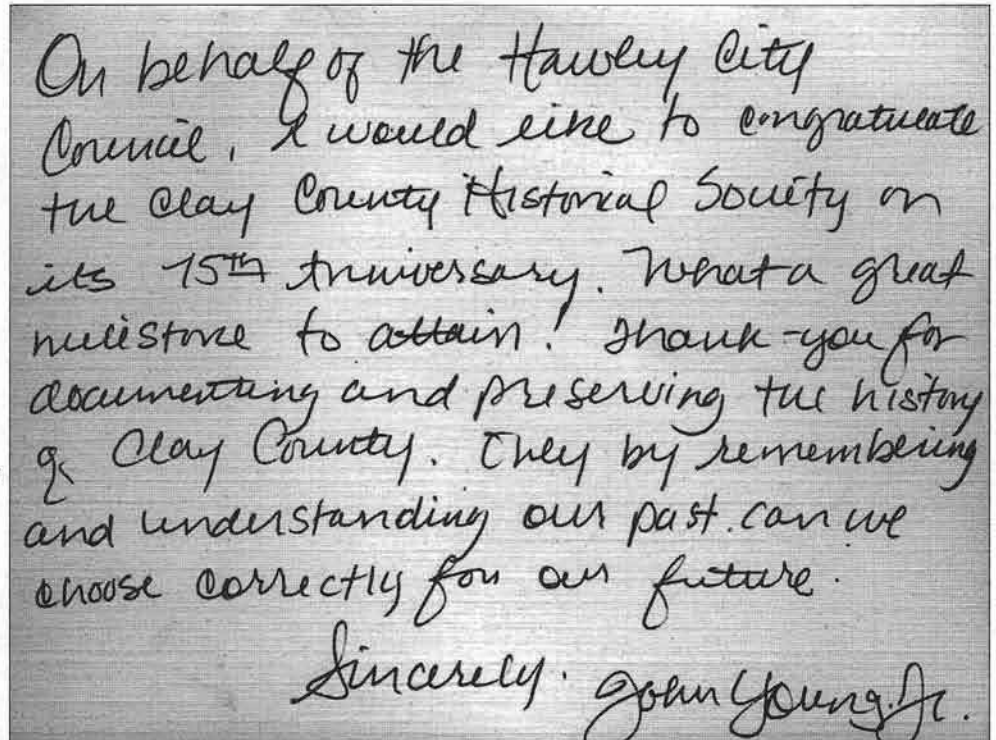
Jubilee Congratulations from the City of Hawley

We recently received this note from the Hawley City Council in honor of our 75th Anniversary, and would like to say, Thank You!

The note reads:

"On behalf of the Hawley City Council, I would like to congratulate the Clay County Historical Society on its 75th Anniversary. What a great milestone to attain! Thank you for documenting and preserving the history of Clay County. Only by remembering and understanding our past can we choose correctly for our future.

Sincerely, John Young, Jr."



On behalf of the Hawley City Council, I would like to congratulate the Clay County Historical Society on its 75th Anniversary. What a great milestone to attain! Thank-you for documenting and preserving the history of Clay County. Only by remembering and understanding our past can we choose correctly for our future.

Sincerely, John Young, Jr.

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

“We Are Afraid”: the 1918 Spanish

By Mark Peihl, Archivist and
Pam Burkhardt, Collections Manager

Pam Burkhardt wrote an article about the Spanish Flu Epidemic for the November/December 1992 CCHS Newsletter. We now have more resources and are updating it here.

Recently we both had a flu shot. For good reason. Influenza is a pain in the butt. Diarrhea, nausea, chills, fever, aches...it's just nasty. And for the elderly, infants and others it can be fatal. There are many strains of the flu virus. They are constantly mutating, changing. Much attention has been paid lately to the deadly H5N1 strain of Avian flu. Right now it can only be transmitted from birds to people. But if it mutates to pass from person to person it could create a world wide epidemic killing millions.

It's hard to imagine the sorrow, dislocation and fear this would cause. But it's happened before. In 1918-1919, the "Spanish Flu" killed some 30 million people world wide. The U.S. alone lost 675,000 lives in a few months, more than have died in all the country's 20th century wars combined. Minnesota reported over 125,000 cases and 7,269 deaths. In 1918, more Minnesotans died from the Spanish influenza than any other cause. Total deaths that year were a record 31,133. In November 1918, the number of deaths exceeded births for the first time.

Of the 219 deaths Clay County recorded between October 1918 and March 1919, 140 (64%) were flu related. The flu caused 71% of those recorded between October and December 1918. It was by far the worst epidemic in U.S., Minnesota and Clay County history.

The whole thing may have started in Kansas. On March 11, 1918 soldiers massed for service in World War I began falling ill at Fort Riley. That spring, the sickness spread to other military bases. Tens of thousands of men shipped out for France, some carrying the disease with them. It quickly spread throughout Europe, mutating and becoming more deadly. Wartime censorship kept word of the epidemic mum in most countries. But when the disease struck neutral Spain in May and June, newspapers trumpeted the news. The strain became known, rather unfairly, as the "Spanish Flu." By July, it had traveled the world, killing tens of thousands in North

Africa, Russia, and parts of Asia.

The strain was remarkable for its virulence and the youth of its victims. In most flu cases the patient is uncomfortable for a few days, then recovers. The Spanish flu often resulted in deadly pneumonia. Indeed, in most Clay County cases the listed primary cause of death is pneumonia. Also in the normal flu, the worst hit victims are usually the very young, the elderly, and people with compromised immune systems. The Spanish flu killed young people in their prime. Of the 140 who died in Clay County more than 50% were between ages 18 and 35. Only seven victims (5%) were older than 48.

In late August, the flu reappeared in the U.S. On the 27th, sailors stationed near Boston fell ill. It spread to nearby U.S. Army Camp Deven. Within a week, Boston was in the grip of a full epidemic. It quickly swept up and down the east coast. Railroads carried the disease around the country. Its effects fell first on military encampments and crowded cities where germs could spread rapidly (see the map on page 9).

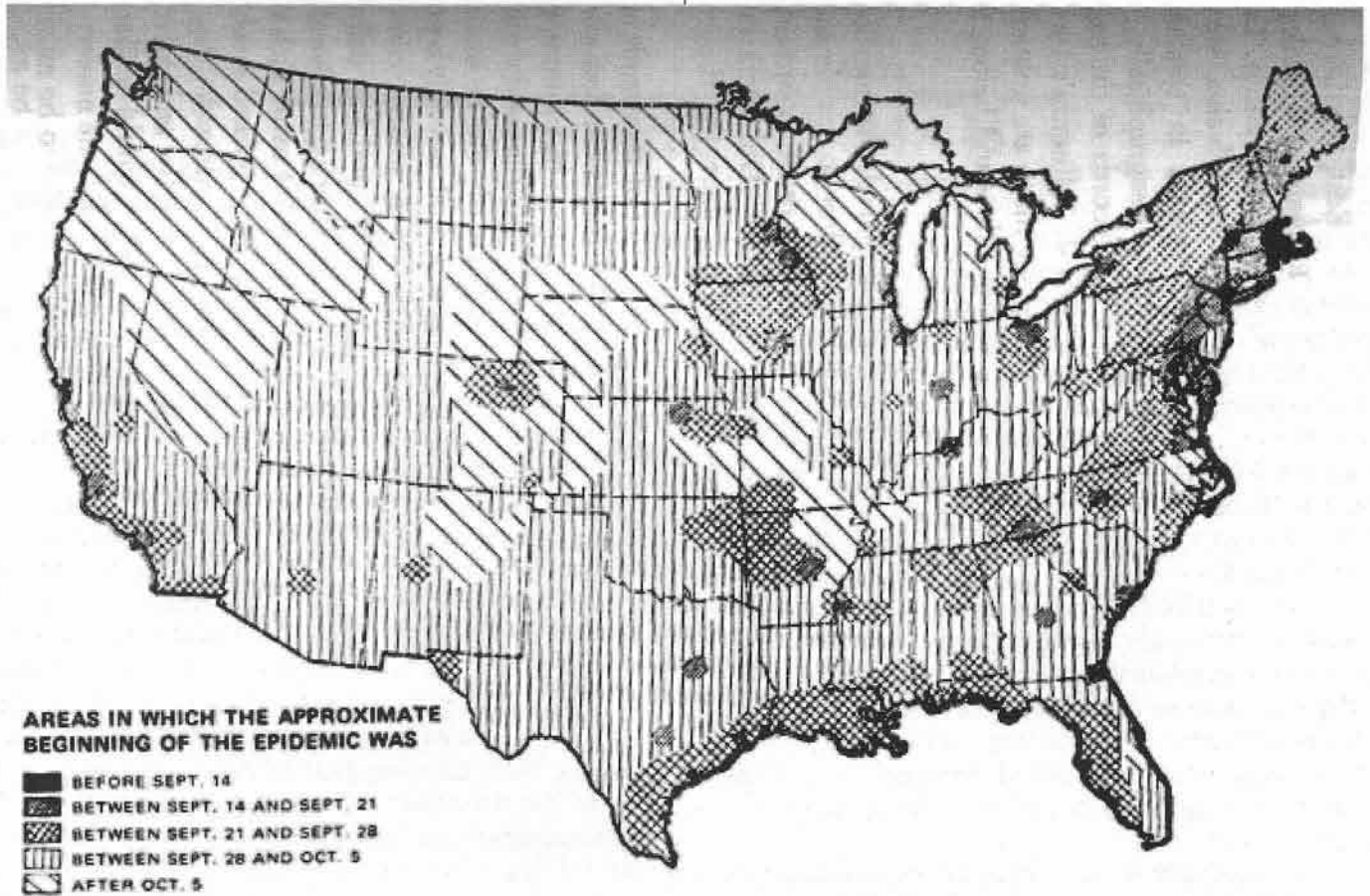
On September 25, the U.S. Surgeon General reported the first cases in Minnesota. It spread through the southern half of the state and along the Canadian border. Local newspapers covered these developments. They reported the deaths of former residents around the country and local people traveling to care for relatives in far flung areas. And they reported the deaths of many soldiers in camps. Of the 44 Clay County men who died in service during World War I, nine perished from the flu. Though the Red River Valley was one of the last areas in the U.S. to be visited by the scourge, area residents certainly knew the flu was coming. They prepared. In late September, Minnesota began registering nurses. Fargo started a drive to collect sheets, towels and handkerchiefs for local hospitals. But the speed and ferocity of the flu's arrival must have been fearful.

As in the rest of the country, the flu struck local cities first, then moved to rural areas. It was sudden and dramatic. On October 4, health officials confirmed the first area cases in Fargo and Moorhead. Within five days there were a reported 350 cases in Moorhead, 2,000 in Fargo, and 50 in Dilworth. On October 7, Clay County recorded its first death. Thomas and Rachel Hanson of Moorhead lost their 22-day-old daughter Selma. Within three weeks another 31 would die in the city. (Moorhead had only 5,600 residents then, barely 1/6 of its size today.)

Flu Epidemic in Clay County

On October 8th, Moorhead's city council and school board met in special session. Like many cities, Moorhead banned public gatherings, closed the schools, churches and movie theaters and urged parents to keep their children in their homes. The efficacy of these moves is still the subject of much debate, but it clearly shows the fear that the flu instilled. A week later the State Board of Health required all funerals of flu victims be kept private

related. There was a desperate need for nurses. Dilworth had one Red Cross nurse, Louise Christensen. They needed 20. On the 19th, Christensen wrote to her supervisor, "A hasty report. We are very, very busy, have 24 patients in hospital now. Have dismissed about 15, two have died and perhaps one or two died last night . . . Cannot say when we will get away. They want us to stay as long as they need us..."



Spread of the Spanish Flu across the U.S. Note that the Red River Valley was among the last places to be visited by the scourge. U.S. Census Bureau, 1920.

with no open caskets.

Dilworth was particularly hard hit. Many Fargo-Moorhead residents worked for the Northern Pacific Railway at Dilworth, an easy streetcar ride away. Train crews from Jamestown to Staples stopped overnight there. The town of 800 soon had 125 cases. The Red Cross set up an emergency hospital in the school. Of 11 deaths recorded in Dilworth in October, 10 were flu-

Area hospitals were quickly overwhelmed. On the 15th, the Red Cross opened an emergency hospital with 60 cots in the basement of Trinity Lutheran Church and another 40 cots in MSUM's Wheeler Hall. In Fargo, the basements of Gethsemane Cathedral and Putnam Hall at NDSU were pressed into service.

Continued next page...

1918 Flu Epidemic, cont.

Doctors and nurses were taxed to their limits. Cora Johnson was in charge of the Trinity hospital nights. She later remembered cases being carried out the back door as fast as they came in the front. At first, the Red Cross recruited retired nurses to help out, then women with nursing training. Eventually, they took anyone who came through the door.

Moorhead doctor O. J. Hagen later recalled working through October, never getting more than three hours of sleep a night and never catching the flu. He was lucky. By the 15th, 16 nurses at Fargo's St. Luke's Hospital had fallen ill; 13 at St. John's were sick. Rev. Martin Anderson and his wife Cora were volunteers at the Trinity emergency hospital. Mrs. Anderson caught the flu and died on the 20th.

Actually, there was not a lot health professionals could do. Without vaccines for the flu virus or antibiotics to fight pneumonia, treatment involved bed rest and aspirin. In mid-October, the *Fargo Forum* reprinted a letter from Army mess sergeant Albert Johnson to his sister in Fargo claiming that none of the men in his unit had caught the flu because he gave them hot lemonade every night and onions for every meal. This started a run on lemons and onions in local groceries. But Sgt. Johnson was writing from Camp Deven, near Boston: the first place the flu had made its reappearance in the U.S. in August. By mid-October practically every man in Johnson's unit who was susceptible to the disease had already had it.

The flu affected local business dramatically. Clerks, waitresses and others either stayed home sick or avoided going out on the streets. The number of sick telephone operators disrupted phone service. The Fargo-Moorhead Electric Street Railway cut routes as motormen and conductors fell ill. Shoppers stayed home. The city of Fargo set several of its employees to work digging graves.

In Moorhead, the epidemic peaked on October 19 when eight people died in one day. The flu killed with frightening speed. Clay County death records from the time list the primary and secondary causes of death and their duration. Typically, the victim had flu for a few days and pneumonia for a few more. Very few were sick more than a week. Elsie Burnham of Moorhead reported in her diary on the 16th, "33 funerals to date," and recorded two more the next day. Early in the epidemic Elsie wrote that "Mrs. Sykes came by to inquire about May [Elsie's sister, who was sick – but not with the flu]. But she was afraid to come in." She wrote of entire households down with the flu, including her neighbors, the Smiths. There was a desperate need for volunteers to

come into such households, just to help with cooking and cleaning. On the 21st she recorded, "We saw the ambulance come to Frank Smith's, took a girl who stayed there."

In the last week in October the number of cases in Fargo-Moorhead and Dilworth declined rapidly. Moorhead and Dilworth recorded 42 flu-related deaths in October, only 4 in November. By then most susceptible residents had already contracted and gotten over the disease or had died. Schools reopened in early November. National estimates suggested some 28% of Americans caught the flu and about 2.5% of those died. Numbers in Clay County seem to be similar.

Just as the epidemic died down in the Moorhead area, it spread to more isolated areas. On October 18, J. T. Johnson of Ulen reported to the *Moorhead Daily News* that there was little illness there. Likewise on the 24th, John Eldelson of Sabin had heard of only one case there, and that person had fully recovered. In October, the *Barnesville Record-Review* reported about a couple of dozen cases in the area, but through the month the city of 1,500 recorded only 3 deaths. Correspondents from Glyndon and Georgetown reported a number of cases in October, but neither community suffered a death through the whole epidemic. With the situation in Moorhead critical, Ulen, Barnesville, Hitterdal, Hawley, and Glyndon closed their schools as a precaution, only to reopen them in early November.

On November 8, *Ulen Union* publisher O. E. Reiersgord reported "the influenza cases in town are about over. There are a few sick people but they are only light attacks... Dr. Bothne, health officer, thinks that the lid on church services will be lifted in about two weeks." But a week later he wrote, "Quite a few cases of flu have developed during the week. This time several in several families have been taken down... Parents have been too careless about allowing their children to run out around town." On November 27th, the *Union's* Hitterdal correspondent reported, "Spanish influenza has at last arrived here. It was first noticed among the school children so school was closed on Friday [the 15th]... at the present writing there is one [or] more case in nearly every home in town and the surrounding country [and] in some homes, 4 or 5 are down with it." Obituaries soon crowded the paper. The village of Ulen and Goose Prairie, Highland Grove and Ulen townships suffered 24 deaths during the epidemic, 19 of them in late November and early December. Only two were recorded in October.

Hawley was another late sufferer. The village of 420 lost one resident in October, then 23 more, all in late November or later. Only in Barnesville were the deaths scattered evenly across the whole epidemic. The city of 1,500 recorded 3 deaths each in October, November and

1918 Flu Epidemic, cont.

December, with two in January. Nearly all deaths in rural townships occurred in November or later. Skree was particularly hard hit with seven fatalities.

Some parts of the county escaped fatalities. No flu-related deaths were recorded in Georgetown, Viding, Oakport, Morken, Moland, Moorhead, Glyndon, Kurtz, Eglon, Keene, Hagen or Barnesville townships (see the map this page). Note, however, the proximity of many of these townships to Fargo-Moorhead. Clay County death records do not indicate the residence of the deceased. Newspaper accounts suggest that some very sick rural residents traveled to (and presumably died in) Fargo or Moorhead hospitals rather than at home. And some deaths undoubtedly were never recorded. At any rate, some cites (Moorhead, Dilworth and Hawley) and some rural areas (Skree Township and northeastern Clay County) suffered deaths disproportionate to their populations.

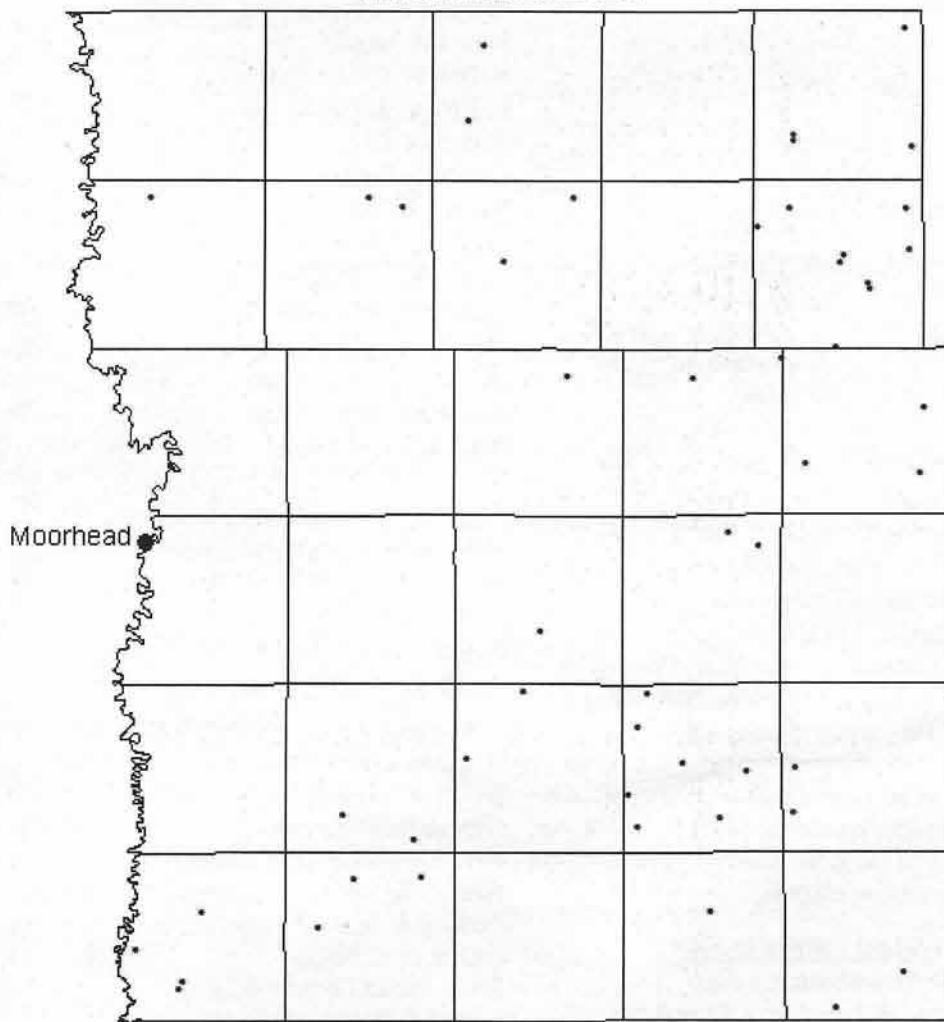
After dying down in late winter 1919, a number of scattered deaths were recorded in the last week of March. The epidemic was over by April.

The Spanish flu epidemic of 1918 was a long time ago. Medical technology has improved. But it is inevitable that someday, whether it is the result of the H5N1 Bird Flu or some strain not yet recognized, we will be faced with a similar event, with similar results.

Many accounts of the 1918-1919 pandemic note that survivors rarely discussed the tragedy. The trauma was too painful, the terror too real. Moland Township pioneer Levi Thortvedt kept a detailed diary. At the end of each year he looked back on the important events of the previous 12 months. On December 31, 1918, he wrote of the war and the "Disease (known as the Spanish influenza) as long as I have lived [I have never seen so] many deaths in and out County and all over the World – *we are afraid* – and it ain't over yet."

Each dot represents one flu related death. The dots are randomly placed in each township and don't reflect the precise location of the fatality. Note the large number of deaths in Skree Township and the northeastern part of the county and the relative lack of deaths around Moorhead.

Rural Deaths from Flu



Heritage Members and Sponsors

Please help us thank these business members for supporting the Clay County Historical Society by patronizing them with your business:

PATRON (\$500+)

Please consider supporting CCHS at this membership level!

SETTLER (\$200-\$499)

Mac's, Inc.

State Bank of Moorhead (Sponsor)

TRAILBLAZER (\$100-\$199)

Dilworth/Glyndon/Felton ISD

Eventide

First National Bank of Hawley

Harmon Glass Doctor of Moorhead

Hawley Public Schools

City of Hawley

Korsmo Funeral Service

Moorhead Antique Mall

Moorhead Area Public Schools

Moorhead Vikingland Kiwanis

Rigels, Inc.

Scheels Moorhead

Sellin Brothers, Inc.

State Bank of Hawley

EXPLORER (\$50-\$99)

Bentley & Bentley, DDS

Fargo-Moorhead Heritage Society

McLarnan, Hannaher & Skatvold

Kay Mahar (Sponsor)

Moorhead Ace Hardware

Moorhead Area Retired Educators

Moorhead Drug Company

Moorhead Midday-Central Lions

Muffler Man, Inc. (Sponsor)

Richtman's Press Club

Stenerson Lumber

Veterans of Foreign War, Post 1223

Wells Fargo Bank MN, N A, Mhd

Wright Funeral Home

The number of members in the following categories continues to grow! Thank you to all of our wonderful members for your tremendous support.

Individual Patron (\$500+)

Elsie Pitsenbarger, Fargo

Darren & Jane Leno, Moorhead

Individual Settler (\$200-\$499)

David R. Alme, Kennewick, WA

Richard McMurray, Annandale, VA

Lynne M. Olson, Fargo

Individual Trailblazer (\$100-199)

Robert & Selma Anderson

Rod & Audrey Angstman

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Roland & Carolyn Barden

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Dr. Yvonne Condell

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Rodney Erickson

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Andre & Emily Houglum

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Phyllis W. Thysell

Ron & Deanna Ulven

Mark & Donna Voxland

Marguerite A. Wardeberg

Tom & Sherry Watt

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Eldon Wollmann

Individual Explorer (\$50-\$99)

Marjorie Aakre

Sharon Benzel

Gary & Rose Bergan

Jim Bergquist & Jane Eastes

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Patrick A. Colliton

Jim & Portia Danielson

Leland & Dorothy Delger

Roland & Beth Dille

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Dorothy Dodds

Gordon & Carol Ekre

Carroll & Joan Engelhardt

Katherine Erickson

Jon D. & Phyllis L. Evert

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Greg & Mary Alice Gillispie

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Janet Gorman

Patty Gulsvig

Ann P. Gytri

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Ethel & Ralph Hest

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Larry & Jan Nelson

Gisela S. Nobel

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Richard & Helen Pemble

Sherwood, Jr. & Wendy Peterson

Lloyd G. & Earlyce Pladson

Paul Pratt

Eugene & Karen Prim

Elsie Quam

Mel & Margaret Ristvedt

Steve & Lucia Schroeder

Terry Shoptaugh & Deborah Janzen

Jim & Chris Stenerson

Marge Stoa

Ray & Erma Stordahl

Alvin & Diane Swanson

Bob & Linda Swanson

Bob & Cindy Swenson

Bruce N. Thorson

Chris & Ellen Velline

Dale D. White

Dick & Kathy Zaylskie

Dave & Carol Zielinski

New and Renewed Memberships

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

NEW MEMBERS

- *Leland Armbricht, Comstock
- Bob Askegaard, Moorhead
- Ken & Jan Bauer, Barnesville
- *Cindy Belohlavek & Greg Sanders, Sabin
- Bette Blair, Blaine, MN
- *Robert & Eleanor Brandt, Comstock
- Nancy K. Cooper, Golden Valley, MN
- Jerry Dow, Fargo
- Janet D. Gallagher, Moorhead
- Herman & Gail Holland, Moorhead
- Richard Horst, Fargo
- Karla Huebner, El Cerrito, CA
- *Robert & Leslie Larson, Wolverton
- *Pearl A. Nyquist, Moorhead
- Bev & John Rowell, Moorhead
- Scheels Moorhead
- Lois Lamb Schur, Mesa, AZ
- S. George & Diane Spangler, Jamestown, ND

- Sharon Teschendorf, Pelican Rapids
- James Van Raden, Moorhead
- Ron & Loretta Welch, San Jose, CA
- *Gift Memberships

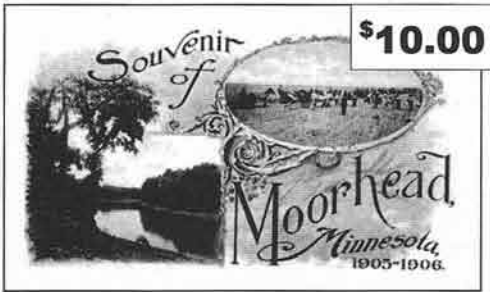
UPGRADES

- Harmon Glass Doctor, Moorhead
- Lois L. Kundert, Fargo
- Gail & Bob Monson, Fargo
- Marguerite A. Wardeberg, Barnesville

RENEWALS

- Leona P. Anderson, Hawley
- Delores Bekkerus, Glyndon
- Bentley & Bentley, DDS, PA, Hawley
- Sharon Benzel, Moorhead
- Gary & Rose Bergan, Hawley
- Michael & Sharon Blasgen, Los Gatos, CA
- Mark Chalimonczyk, Fargo
- Mark Chekola, Moorhead
- Beverly Coleman, Moorhead
- Ann Darby, Moorhead
- Art & Gwen Erickson, Moorhead
- Sharon Geyer, Fargo
- Clifford A. Gilbertson, North St. Paul
- Janet Gorman, Moorhead

- Fern Haiby, Moorhead
- Bonnie M. Haugen, Moorhead
- Irene Hogan, Moorhead
- Ardee & Eunice Johnson, Moorhead
- Virginia H. Johnson, New York, NY
- Norman B. Kuehl, Fargo
- Gary Landgraf, Moorhead
- Donna McMaster, Moorhead
- Arloine S. Mithun, Moorhead
- Moorhead Drug Company
- Larry & Janet Nelson, Fargo
- Bev Nokken, Moorhead
- Joseph Pederson, Hawley
- Sherwood, Sr. & Marilynn Peterson, Sabin
- Lloyd & Earlyce Pladson, Moorhead
- Dewey & Margery Possehl, Moorhead
- Paul Pratt, Gardner, ND
- Donna M. Richards, Fargo
- Edna J. Rude, Gary, MN
- Dorothy Sandvik, Moorhead
- Barb & Roger Spilde, Moorhead
- Bob & Linda Swanson, Moorhead
- Larry Swenson, Glyndon
- Mark & Donna Voxland, Moorhead
- Marrion E. Walsh, Moorhead
- Dale D. White, Moorhead



Shop CCHS for the Holidays!

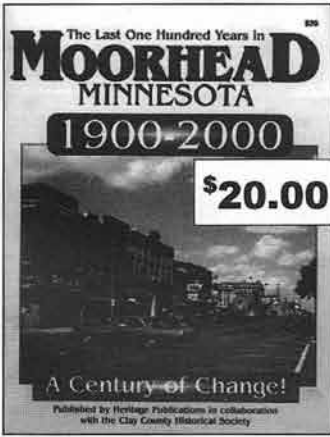
Remember to check the Clay County Historical Society when buying for that special person on your gift list this year!

We have several great books plus acid-free supplies for protecting your treasured family heirlooms and documents.

Books include:

- Souvenir of Moorhead, 1905-1906*, 52 p. \$10.00
- Moorhead, 1900-2000: A Century of Change*, 184 p. \$20.00
- Fargo, ND, From Frontier Village to All America City, 1875-2000*, 168 pp. \$20.00

Shop today at the Clay County Museum & Archives in the Hjemkomst Center, 202 1st Avenue North, Moorhead, or send your check or money order with the order form below to CCHS, PO Box 501, Moorhead, MN 56561.



Ship To:	Order:	Amount:
Name _____	___ Souvenir Book—\$10.00 ea.	_____
Address _____	___ Moorhead or Fargo book—\$20.00 ea.	_____
Phone Number _____	___ Postage—\$2.00 per book	_____
	MN sales tax (6.5%)	_____
	Total	_____

Diamond Jubilee Fund Drive Progress

We are off to a good start with our Diamond Jubilee Fund Drive! With new memberships and donations, \$5,835 of the \$75,000 goal has been raised so far! There will be many more opportunities to help us reach our goal before our Birthday Bash in October next year. Throughout the next year we will be collecting donations of items for the silent auction at the birthday event, looking for sponsors for raffle prizes and 75th Anniversary events, and we will be sending out our Annual Fund Drive letters this month. We'd like to thank the following individuals for already contributing to the Fund Drive!

75th Anniversary Projects—\$2,787.20 Total

Anonymous

Bob Askegaard, Moorhead

Ken & Jan Bauer, Barnesville

Delores Bekkerus, Glyndon

Rose & Gary Bergan, Hawley

Patrick Colliton, Moorhead

Gerald Dow, Moorhead

Arnold Ellingson, Fargo

Erling & Janice Linde, Moorhead

Claudia Pratt, Gardner, ND

Paul Pratt, Fargo

Mark & Donna Voxland, Moorhead

Stephen Wold, Moorhead

1936 Buffalo Fire Truck—\$1,865 Total (as of July 1)

Anonymous Board Member

Helen Benson, Moorhead

Jim & Portia Danielson, Moorhead

Paul Eidbo, Moorhead

Jon Evert, Moorhead

Paul Harris, Moorhead

Irene Hogan, Moorhead

Darren Leno, Moorhead

Donna McMaster, Moorhead

Muffler Man, Inc.

Jan Nelson, Fargo

Gerald Palmer, Barnesville

Lloyd & Bev Paulson, Moorhead

L. Diane Pickett, Dilworth

Roberta Radford, Moorhead

Donna M. Richards, Fargo

Doug & Margaret Sillers, Moorhead

Warren Smerud, Moorhead

Don & Rose-Mary Strom, Moorhead

Alvin & Diane Swanson, Moorhead

Ron Ulven, Hawley

Esther Vollbrecht, Moorhead

New Memberships—\$1,360 Total (as of May 1)

*Leland Armbright, Comstock

Bob Askegaard, Moorhead

Arlie Barrett, Brownsville, TX

Ken & Jan Bauer, Barnesville

Jolene Beckman, Moorhead

*Cindy Belohlavek & Greg Sanders, Sabin

Bette Blair, Blaine, MN

*Robert & Eleanor Brandt, Comstock

Nancy K. Cooper, Golden Valley, MN

Don Dobmeier, Barnesville

Gerald Dow, Fargo

*Christa Evert, Moorhead

*David Evert & Sara Emerson, Moorhead

*Lee Evert, Barnesville

Linda Fleming, Pine Valley, CA

Janet D. Gallagher, Moorhead

Virgil Gunnerson, Hawley

Fred Haring, Lake Park

Herman & Gail Holland, Moorhead

Richard Horst, Fargo

Karla Huebner, El Cerrito, CA

Larry Jacobson, Hitterdal

*Joe Kieselbach, Barnesville

Frank & Loureigne Kimm, Pelican Rapids

Dan Kopen, Abercrombie, ND

Connie Kopp, Moorhead

*Robert & Leslie Larson, Wolverton

Gary Martinson, Minneapolis

*Laura & Shawn Meyer, Watkins, MN

*Pearl A. Nyquist, Moorhead

Terry Olson, Barnesville

Bev & John Rowell, Moorhead

Scheels Moorhead

Lois Lamb Schur, Mesa, AZ

*Cynthia Sillers, Moorhead

S. George & Diane Spangler, Jamestown, ND

*Alex Swanson, Moorhead

Sharon Teschendorf, Pelican Rapids

Terry & Diane Tobin, Barnesville

James Van Raden, Moorhead

Duane Walker, Moorhead

Ron & Loretta Welch, San Jose, CA

Stephen Wold, Moorhead

*Gift Memberships



Connecting People to the History of Clay County, Minnesota for 75 Years!

Preserving our Past, Funding our Future

Diamond Jubilee Fund Drive - \$75,000 for the 75th Anniversary!

Become a Collections Steward!

Level	Amount	Benefits
Penny Campaign	\$7.50	Vintage Photos of Rural Life Postcard Book
Supporter	\$75	Souvenir of Moorhead 1905-1906 Book
Donor	\$250	Frameable 8"x10" Historic Photo of CCHS Property
Sponsor	\$1,000+	Artist's Print of Clay County Landscape

I wish my contribution to be dedicated toward a Collections Fund and/or 75th Anniversary Projects:

- 75th Anniversary Projects
- Collections: Archives & Artifacts
- 1870s Pioneer Bergquist Cabin
- 1895 District No. 3 Woodland School
- 1936 Buffalo Fire Truck
- 1875 Parke Township Yankee Cemetery

Become a Member/Renew Your Membership!

Level (please check one)	Amount	Benefits
Pioneer Individual	\$25	Bi-Monthly Newsletter Access to CCHS History Tours Free/Discounted Admission to CCHS Programs/Events 50% Discount on \$20 Per Hour Archival Research Fee \$1 Off Admission to Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center
Pioneer Family	\$40	All of the Above
Explorer	\$50	All of the Above PLUS 25% Discount on Reproductions of Archival Photos 25% Discount on Acid-Free Supplies
Trailblazer	\$100	All of the Above PLUS Frameable Membership Certificate
Settler	\$200	All of the Above PLUS Four Tickets to Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center One Hour of Free Archival Research
Patriarch	\$500	All of the Above PLUS Frameable 8"x10" reproduction of Historic Photo of Choice Two Complimentary Tickets to the CCHS Annual Meeting
Patron	\$5,000	10-Year Membership – All of the Above!

Businesses are eligible for Explorer, Trailblazer, Settler, Patriarch and Patron Memberships

Contribute an Item for the Silent Auction October

Item	Value (\$25+)	Description

I will support Clay County Historical Society's \$75,000 Goal!

Please complete the following, enclose your check payable to "Clay County Historical Society", and send to: CCHS, PO Box 501, Moorhead MN 56561

Amount \$ _____ I wish my gift to be anonymous: Yes

Name (for membership card) _____

Contact Name (for business) _____

Children's Names (for families) _____

Address/City/State/Zip _____

Telephone/Email _____

Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you for helping us to reach our \$75,000 Goal!

The Clay County Historical Society is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization supported by members, the Clay County Commission, sponsors and grants. Contributions to the Clay County Historical Society are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Feel free to tear off this page of the newsletter to send in your contribution for the Jubilee Fund Drive!

CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Hjemkomst Center
202 First Avenue North
PO Box 501
Moorhead MN 56561
Phone: 218-299-5520
www.info.co.clay.mn.us/history

Some Fun Recent Event Photos!



Above: Mike Sigdestad shows Brayden Johnson, Dilworth, how to ring the bell on the 1936 Buffalo Fire Truck at Moorhead Fire Dept.'s Open House Oct. 8. Mike has been working hard on the fire truck to make it street worthy for parades next year.

Right: Claudia and Paul Pratt hang a banner in the Hjemkomst Center atrium for CCHS' Diamond Jubilee!

Below: One corner of our brand new exhibit. Come see! And don't miss Doc Humphrey's 1917 films of Moorhead, shown on the television in the corner, shown in the center of this photo.



CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Hjemkomst Center
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Moorhead MN 56561

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We're on the web!
www.info.co.clay.mn.us/history