

# CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



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CCHS Newsletter

November/December 1991

Vol XIV No. 6

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## Reindeer a big hit in the 30s!!



Santa and Reindeer in Hawley, 1933 or 1935. Melheim delighted Hawley kids during two visits. This view looks east at the south end of 6th Street. John Hammerstrom's restaurant is in the background. Story on Pages 6 and 7.

Flaten/Wange Collection

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## President's Message



Dear Members,

As the Minnesota Twins put another World Series championship in the history books, we are close to putting a great 1991 away for Clay County Historical Society. I feel this year has been an exceptional year for the society.

We are in the process of purchasing a new computer system which will expedite management of our membership list, enable us to computerize our collections, and do a more professional job on our newsletter and exhibit signage.

Another major project started this year is the 'firing up' of our 1936 Buffalo Fire Truck. We hope to complete this project in 1992 so it can once again be utilized in parades for community celebrations.

A healthy exhibit schedule saw CCHS staff assisting on two major exhibits in Heritage Hall this fall. They are Concordia's "Sent Forth: Concordia College 1891-1991," and "Fargo-Moorhead and WWII." If you haven't already seen these exhibits, be sure to make the effort, they are great! Two other exhibits will open in the Clay County Museum Temporary Gallery in November. They are "An Ending and a Beginning," and "Quilts and Other Comforts."

The last two CCHS Board meetings have been held jointly with the Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center Board of Directors. It is hoped that meeting jointly will provide better communication between the two organizations at the Hjemkomst Center,

which in turn will help the Center to better serve the Valley's needs.

Sincerely,  
Kelly Aakre, CCHS President

P.S. If you have any questions or comments about any aspect of the historical society, please contact any board member. We would love to hear from you. (See list in shaded box below.)

### CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



202 1st Avenue North  
Box 501  
Moorhead, Minnesota 56500

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Margaret Ristvedt, Editor/Publisher  
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Jim Nelson, Contributor



## Christmas, Moland Township, 1870

A small band of Norwegians, three families and four single men, traveled from Houston County, Minnesota to settle by the Buffalo River in 1870 in what was to become Moland Township. Levi Thortvedt was a boy of about 11 when he and his family arrived that July. Many years later, Levi wrote "The Early History of the Red River Valley" because his children "like to know" the history. He wrote about that first Christmas....

*Christmas was near at hand. It was customary in those days among the Norwegians to have a big stack of wood behind the stove for Christmas. We children were busy getting this done.*

*Christmas Eve the grease lamps were set aside and the home-made candles were lit. [Editor's note: Thortvedt then describes candle-making with and without a form.]*

*The whole family washed thoroughly and the best clothes were put on Christmas Eve and Juel Salme (Christmas hymn) was sung at the Christmas supper table.*

*Christmas trees were not in use those days and, if they had been, we could not have gotten one anyway. But it was customary to "shoot in" Christmas. Ole Anderson, a neighbor, went outside and shot in the Christmas [with a shotgun].*

*The horses, cattle, and sheep got the best hay we could find to enjoy Christmas too., Different now....Christmas humns [sic] were sung and sermon read from Dr. Martin Luther's "Hus Pos Til" (Book of Sermons). Well, the sermon was read by Father every Sunday during the whole year for that matter and I had to stay in the house till it was read too. We had a good Christmas and the New Year was at hand, and so passed the first Christmas on the Buffalo River."*

## Christmas, Village of Glyndon

The "Red River Gazette" reported the following two stories in the Dec. 19, 1872 issue:

*Santa Claus is coming! The old gentleman requests us to announce that he will be at the Glyndon Chapel on the evening of the 25th of December, next Wednesday, his many engagements elsewhere rendering it impossible for him to arrive any earlier...Miss Mather has charge of preparing and arranging the fruit which the tree is expected to bear for the [Sunday] School..... The committee wish it clearly understood that all the children of Glyndon and vicinity, whether they have been connected with the Sunday School or not, will be cordially welcome, and they will endeavor to see that none of them go away without at least a plum.*

*Santa Claus put in an appearance at the Chapel on Wednesday evening, a little late to be sure, but possibly owing that the "epizoot<sup>1</sup>" attacking the old fellow's team. He bought [sic] a good supply of presents, however, almost every man, woman and child in town and vicinity having been remembered. A large fir-tree [sic] was provided for the occasion, and was completely filled with presents for great and small.... Santa Claus made the little folks a speech, and with Christmas readings, music, distribution of presents, etc., a very pleasant evening was passed by all who attended. Particular credit is due Miss Mather and Messrs. Burnham, Wells and Everitt, for the church decorations and the happy manner in which the affair was conducted.*

1. The great epizooty (equine influenza) epidemic of 1872 extended over most of Europe and all of North America. It proved fatal to many horses and left others with a chronic cough and other debilitations.

## Outreach Displays

Hitterdal Senior Center	Dec. 11
Ulen-Hitterdal High School	Dec. 11
Viking Manor, Ulen	Dec. 11
Hawley Public Library	Dec. 11

Glyndon Community Center	Dec. 13
Moorhead Public Library	Dec. 13

The Hitterdal Senior Center will host another PHOTO IDENTIFICATION project. We hope the visitors will enjoy the photos as they help us identify the people in them.

COFFEE WITH CREAM (AND SUGAR) opens at the Ulen-Hitterdal High School. Artifacts include a coffee grinder, cream siphon, mustache cup and coffee beans.

Viking Manor will feature JAMS AND HAMS with a sausage stuffer, hog scraper, canning jars, how-to booklet and recipes.

Hawley Public Library will have clothing from HEAD TO TOE starting with hats and collars and ending with shoes and stockings.

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

IN MY MERRY OLDSMOBILE will appear at the Moorhead Public Library. Artifacts include a wooden license plate, road maps, and photos.

### Celebrate your ethnic heritage:



Join us for the 4th annual Holiday Heritage Festival honoring the Red River Valley's rich ethnic heritage. The festival opens November 23 and 24 with an American Indian Weekend. Scheduled Saturday and Sunday from

1-5 p.m. will be a traditional arts market. Featured events on Saturday include a 2 p.m. performance of contemporary Indian music. A mini-Pow Wow will be featured on Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m., with an exhibition dance at 2 p.m.

Opening November 29 in Hjemkomst Hall will be displays of the many festive winter holiday season traditions. Exhibited will be traditions case displays presenting Hannukah, a traditional Hispanic manger scene, and Scottish traditions, as well as decorated Christmas trees representing: Swedish, English, Icelandic, Norwegian, German, Finnish, Danish, Spanish, American Indian, etc. traditions. New this year will be an interpretive exhibit describing the ethnic makeup of the Red River Valley and a "make your own ornament" activity table. Scheduled December 19 at 7:30 p.m. is a free slide presentation by Mary Borkhuis of Moorhead entitled "North Dakota Ethnic Tombstone Tales."

Various traditional ethnic craft demonstrations such as Ukrainian and Eastern European egg decorating, Norwegian rosemaling, Love Spoon carving, knitting; Belgian lacemaking, Swedish wood curl and straw ornaments, Scandinavian baskets, Baurenmalerei-German painting, pine needle basketry, early American fish decoy carving, etc. are scheduled from 1-5 p.m. December 14/15 and 21/22. Folk dance and music performances are scheduled for 2 p.m. both those Saturdays and Sundays: December 14 - Wayne Hoff, Scandinavian Folk Music; December 15 - MSU Heritage Dancers and American Square Dancers; December 21 - Jeff Williams, German Accordion Folk Music; Dec. 22 - Folk Artist Skip Hunt.

The 1991 Holiday Heritage Festival is funded by a grant from the Lake Region Arts Council. The program is subject to additions and changes. For more information call (218) 233-5605.

## New Members

Dawn Morgan, Fargo, ND  
Leif Hegg, Battle Lake, MN



# Obscure graveyard, a wealth of history!!

By Jim Nelson

Clay County, like many counties in this area, has numerous cemeteries ranging all the way from large multi-block cemeteries, such as some in Moorhead, to small family plots in backyards of countryside homes. One of Clay County's smaller cemeteries is Zion Lutheran Cemetery, an obscure graveyard about a mile north of Skree Town Hall in the middle of Skree Township.

Its history begins in 1904 when Zion Lutheran Church was started by a group of families from southern Minnesota and Iowa. Charter members of the church include the following families:

Ingebret  
Anderson,  
Ole  
Haarstad,  
John  
Haarstad,  
Gunder  
Sessing,  
Peter  
Slind,  
Sivert  
Slind, Ole  
J.  
Ronsberg,  
and Tom  
Barsgaard,  
who donated  
an acre of  
land for  
the church  
and  
cemetery.  
Pastors who  
served the  
congregation  
were U.D.  
Johnson,  
Emil  
Salveson,  
E.L.  
Tungseth,  
and Bersvend Blikstad.

Burial records for the cemetery show the first interment, on May 2, 1909, was Elmer Heng, the seven-day-old son of John and

Elsie Heng of Elkton Township. The baby died on April 30 and courthouse records list the cause of death as "hard labor." Rev. U.D. Johnson, first pastor of Zion Lutheran, officiated at the funeral service. At the time of the burial the cemetery had not yet been plotted.

By the year 1929, the congregation had declined to a point where it became impossible to support a pastor. The congregation dissolved and in 1943 Heng purchased the church building and moved it to his farm where it was used for grain

storage. He died in 1969, 60 years after his infant son became the first interment at the cemetery, and is buried next to his wife.

The burial records of the church show the years 1911-1924 all on one page. At the bottom of that page it is noted that the above records come from the notes of Rev. E.L.

Tungseth, the second to last pastor, and that the information is "considered to be true."



Tom Barsgaard was a charter member of Zion Lutheran Church and donated an acre of land for the church and a cemetery. The Barsgaard family pictured above in about 1910 are: top row (l to r) Inez, Otto, and Trace (Thrace); bottom row - Rose, Tom and his wife, Martha. Martha was the daughter of Ingebret Anderson who also was instrumental in organizing the church. Tom and Martha had a son, Roy, who died at the age of 17 months, in July of 1899, before Zion Lutheran Church was organized. He is buried in Silver Lake Cemetery.

**Cemetery** (Continued on Page 8)

# Santa and his reindeer visit Hawley!

By Mark Peihl

One interesting 1930s vintage photo in the Flaten/Wange Collection shows Santa Claus with a bunch of Hawley kids and a couple of real reindeer. Intrigued, we did some digging. As we suspected, it wasn't the jolly old elf himself, but one of his many helpers who visited Hawley.

In mid-November, throughout the 1930s, Hawley merchants and poultry buyers held poultry and trade days to interest local folks in raising poultry and to bring shoppers into town. The buyers paid top dollar for the birds and retailers offered 5% discount coupons to shoppers.

In 1933 and 1935 the promotion featured visits by Herman "Reindeer Man" Melheim of Ray, Minnesota, as Santa Claus. Hawley Herald articles urged parents "to bring their children to Hawley.....and allow the little folks to visit and speak to their friend." Meanwhile, the adults presumably would be spending money in local stores.

According to information provided by the St. Louis County Historical Society at Duluth, Melheim's venture began in 1929 when Nick Dimond brought 31 reindeer from Minneapolis to Lake Kabetogama in Northern Minnesota. Reindeer are still raised in Northern Scandinavia for food and as draft animals.

Dimond hired some Finns to teach the deer to pull sleighs and contracted with local Chambers of Commerce to appear as Santa. He then persuaded Norwegian immigrant Herman Melheim to care for the animals. When Dimond died suddenly, Melheim married his widow and continued touring with the reindeer.

In his trips to Hawley, Melheim's ensemble included a dog sled, five huskies, a Native American chap dressed as an eskimo, two dog-sled-driving former Hudson Bay Fur Company freighters and, of course, his sleigh and a four reindeer team. One deer was even trained to climb stairs.



The "Reindeer Man" poses in S.P. Wange's Hawley studio during one of his visits. Flaten/Wange Collection.

Melheim's Hawley visits were very popular. Local schools called off afternoon classes and the Hawley High School band played as Santa paraded the streets. Many delighted kids received sleigh and dog sled rides. Most children had never seen a reindeer and were particularly interested in the animals feeding habits. They ate moss mixed with oatmeal and sugar beet pulp. It was moss that brought Dimond to Lake

**Santa** (Continued on Page 7)



# *Season's Greetings!*

*FROM: The Board of Directors and Staff  
of Clay County Historical Society*

*Kelly Aakre  
Mercedes Roos  
Nancy Tedros  
Bob Kennedy  
Anne Gytri*

*Larry Quam  
Sherwood Peterson  
Loren Helmeke  
Arlo Brown  
Carol Ekre*

*Gary H. Olson  
Diane Meyer  
Margaret Ristvedt  
Mark Peihl  
Pam Burkhardt*

## **Santa** (Continued from Page 6)

Kabetogama in the first place. Melheim collected a stock of moss over summer to feed his deer on the road.

During his 1935 trip one of the reindeer sickened and died in Hawley. It may have foreshadowed a 1936 tragedy that ended the Diamond Reindeer Company. Early in that year's tour the deer were fed mildewed

moss. Within four days the entire herd died.

Melheim never toured again but is remembered in Northern Minnesota for his hand carved wooden furniture. Stunning examples of this self taught artist's work are on display at the St. Louis County Museum at Duluth. Mr. Melheim died in 1990.



## BAHS changes focus - donates collections to CCHS

The Barnesville Area Heritage Society (BAHS) remains an active presence for preserving history on the Barnesville area today despite the fact that they no longer maintain any collections.

For the last two years, the BAHS has sponsored several projects including an annual open house at the old jail (ca. 1910) and documentation of historic homes in Barnesville. Dorothy Haugen has been instrumental in organizing and overseeing the opening of the jail each summer and Dorothy Garven is in charge of collecting histories of houses in Barnesville. In addition to their interest in the history of homes in the area the BAHS oversees the judging of the Christmas decorations contest for the city.

The BAHS developed out of an interest in preserving information and artifacts gathered in 1982 for the Barnesville Centennial. Maynard Hughs was Chairman of the Steering Committee for the centennial book Seasons to Remember, and while gathering information for the book, Hughs and his committee decided much of it should be preserved. BAHS was organized for this purpose.

Throughout the 1980s the Society was a small dedicated group, usually numbering no more than four to 12 members. They adopted as their first project overseeing the printing, indexing and delivery of a hard cover version of the centennial book.

Later, the group purchased the P.E. Thompson house at 361 2nd Street Northeast, Barnesville. It was the intention of the BAHS to restore the 1902 house for a meeting place and to house Barnesville area artifacts. The project went well for two years, but insufficient funding dictated the sale of the house in 1991.

BAHS By-Laws stated that if the society could no longer care for the collections, they would be turned over to Clay County

Historical Society. In August CCHS staff reviewed the artifacts and accepted them into the CCHS collections. There are over 100 artifacts and photos in the BAHS collection.

## Cemetery (Continued from Page 5)

However careful the researchers were, there appears to be at least one mistake on the page. Ingebret Anderson, a charter member of the congregation, who died November 8, 1911, is missing from the records. He is buried alongside his wife in the cemetery, but no record was entered in the book.

The most recent burial happened this past summer when Herbert Nelson, father of Clay County Deputy Sheriff Herb Nelson, died at the age of 80. Herbert was buried beside his wife, Esther, who died in May of 1970.

Two members of the rural congregation of Zion Lutheran Church went on to serve in ministerial roles, one as a clergyman and another as the wife of a clergyman. John Ronsberg, oldest son of Ole J. Ronsberg, was a pastor for the Jevnaker Congregation in Norman County from 1919-1923. He also served in parishes outside the state, including one in Fargo. Inez Barsgaard, daughter of Tom Barsgaard who donated the property for the church, married Ole Aune of Lysne Church and moved to Wisconsin where he served as a pastor.

Special thanks to Odean and Dorothy Ronsberg of the Downer area, caretakers of the church records, for all their help in this research.

## Donations

Moorhead Central Lions Club  
Anonymous  
M.L. McDonald, Calgary, Alberta  
Elvira Johnson, Moorhead



## Target donates Victorian Christmas tree to Center

Through a new program instituted this year, Target Stores are donating 10 Christmas Trees to organizations in the Fargo/Moorhead area. Each tree has a different theme such as a romantic tree or a red, white and blue patriotic tree. A Victorian tree will be delivered to the Clay County Museum in the lower level of the Hjemkomst Center on December 9.

CCHS would like to thank the Target Stores and to Wish them a "Merry Christmas."

*"Following European tradition, the American Victorian tree was originally arranged on a table instead of on the floor." From The Gift of Christmas Past: A Return to Victorian Traditions by Sunny O'Neil.*



## Make a Victorian cornucopia for Christmas

Victorian cornucopias were made from lightweight cardboard and decorated with seals. They were shaped like our ice cream cones but were not as "fat."

### MATERIALS:

- \* stiff paper, paper doily, heavy aluminum foil, wallpaper or heavy Christmas wrapping paper.
- \* decorative Christmas stickers.
- \* ribbon or yarn (for the hanger)
- \* dried flowers, colored tissue, candy or nuts (optional)
- \* one piece of stiff cardboard or poster board (for the pattern)



From Smith, The American Home Book of Indoor Games.  
Reprinted in The Gift of Christmas Past.

### EQUIPMENT:

- \* scissors
- \* glue
- \* paper punch

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. For the pattern cut a 12" circle out of cardboard. Divide the circle into quarters. Cut out 1/4 of the circle - this is your pattern.
2. Trace the pattern onto the paper or foil and cut it out.
3. Glue the straight edges together holding them until they set.
4. Punch a hole near the top on opposite sides of the cone. Tie a piece of ribbon or yarn in these holes for the hanger. (Form a loop long enough to allow the cone to hang free of the branch.)
5. Place the sticker on the "front" of the cone. (Other trims may be added if you desire.)
6. Fill the cornucopia (optional) and hang it on the tree.

# More than meets the eye!

By Pam Burkhardt

There is a piece of wood in the CCHS collections that, perhaps, wouldn't merit a second look. It is a cylindrical chunk of cedar 5 1/2 inches high and from 6 to 6 1/2 inches in diameter with a flat bottom. The top is coated with a fine black/gray substance which tends to flake off when touched. Not impressed? Read on.

The cedar block is believed to be the only remaining block from a paving project undertaken by the City of Moorhead in 1894.

The nation was in the midst of a serious depression which began the previous year. The spring of 1894 was a very wet one and farmers were worried that they wouldn't be able to get into the fields. Streets made muddy by the rain were made worst by wagons and horses.

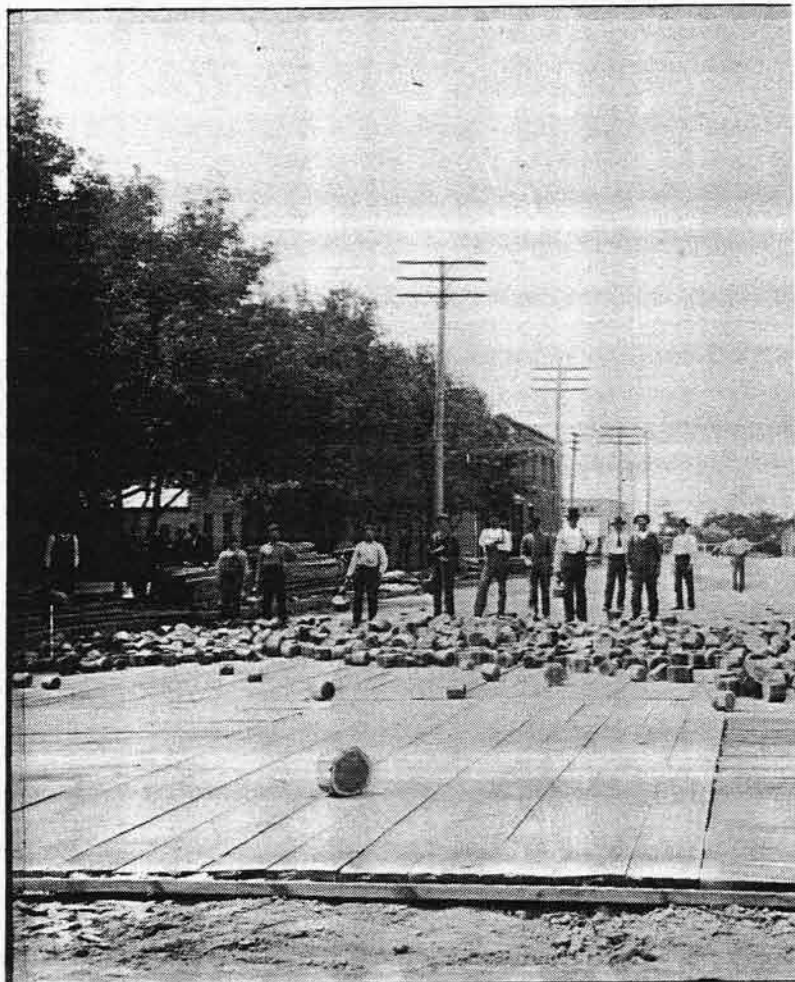
In the beginning of the year in Moorhead you could hardly tell there was a depression with Moorhead bragging that they had made \$161,639 in building improvements the previous year. Moorhead had entered a progressive phase which included a new water plant, power plant and new sewer system.

In May, the City Council and Mayor T.I. Lewis hired consultants Rinker and Hoff, civil engineers and contractors from Minneapolis, for advise on how best to pave the streets.

Rinker reported that "cedar blocks was the only proper material to be used for the paving. Two inch planks would be required for the foundation....The roadway would be 50 feet wide and the walks would take up 15 feet. With granite curbing the paving could be put down at \$1.06 per square yard. ....He estimated that the cost per lot of 25 feet for the paving would be \$95 to the middle of the street, or that sum for each 25 feet frontage on both sides of the street, not including incidentals. .... The total cost [paving Front Street - now Center Avenue] from 4th Street to 9th Street would be about \$16,000."

The City Council asked for bids by advertising in Cities newspapers. Alderman Edling thought the water was more important [referring to the artesian under discussion]. Alderman Erickson asked whether the Pacific Railroad (NPRR) "would pay any portion of [The railroad had exempted property.] Erickson asked the railroad would pay when they did not directly the paving project, leaving the taxpayers ultimate expense, . Alderman Kiefer, Chairman of the Common Council of Streets and Bridges, was in favor of a vote to ask for bids received three ayes. The name was silent, "but did some talking against the paving."

Cedar Paving (Continued on Page 12)





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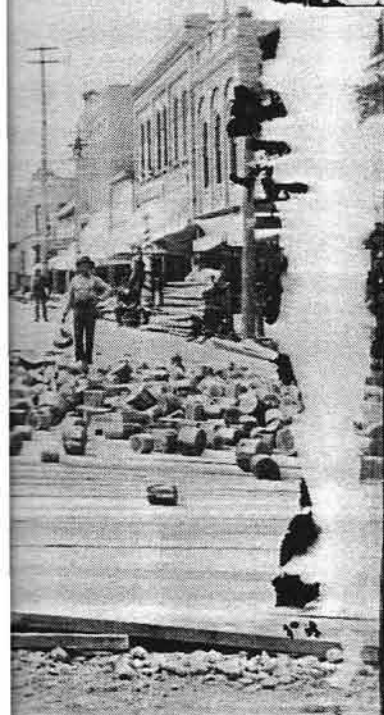


**Above Photo:**

View toward east on Front Street (now Center Avenue) from 8th Street. The man in the foreground is probably J.W. Bayer, superintendent of the paving project. The granite curbing can be seen along the far edge of the street. In the background is the Grand Pacific Hotel.

**Photo to left:**

Looking west on Front Street (now Center Avenue) from 5th Street, shows the planking that served as the foundation for the cedar blocks.





## Cedar Paving (Continued from Page 11)

The May 31 City Council meeting revealed the NPRR "would not advance any money for the paving, but that they would remit one-half of the freight on paving materials shipped over their road..."

Bids were opened and Messrs. McDonald and Kennedy were awarded the contract. They offered the lowest price for paving per square yard - 78 cents versus \$1.09 for the high bidder. Property owners were notified that they had 15 days in which to provide for sewer and water connections. "A remonstrance to proceeding with the work of paving Front Street, signed by the owners of 26 lots upon the said Street, was handed the mayor just prior to adjournment, but was not read," the News reported.

The protest was read at the next City Council meeting but none of the protestors or their legal representatives were present. The resolution was passed to pave Front Street from the west boundary of 4th Street to the east boundary of 9th Street and that the lots that abutted Front Street be taxed "the amount of benefit to such lots and lands by reason of said paving, not to exceed the cost of such paving."

In July bids were also sought on a secondary paving project to pave from "4th Street to Main and Main to the [Main Avenue] bridge." McDonald and Kennedy were also awarded this contract.

J.M. Bayer, superintendent of the paving project condemned a large portion of materials received, labeling them inferior, such as No. 2 grade lumber instead of No. 1 and planking 4 to 6 inches shorter than specifications. The difference in price was noted. Later the News reported, but could not verify, that McDonald and Kennedy lost between \$1,000 and \$1,500 on the Front Street project.

The paving project was completed by the end of the summer. The total costs were reported at the September City Council meeting. The aggregate cost of paving and curbing was \$12,036.51 with \$6,906.46

assessed against the lot owners. The cost to the City of Moorhead was reduced from \$5,130.90 to \$3,211.75 by the remission of \$1,918.15 in freight charges by the NPRR.

Interestingly enough, there were other problems in Moorhead. Citizens complained to the papers that the saloons were violating city ordinances by remaining open after 11 p.m. at night, some until 5 a.m., and some by opening on Sundays. In December 1894, a complaint was made by A.H. Erickson against John Thompson for selling liquor on Sunday. Erickson demanded a change of venue which was denied. Then Erickson, who filed the complaint, was given five hours to raise \$25 as security required when a case seems "petty or frivolous" or the complaint was made through ill-will, malice, or a desire to get even." Erickson "failed to produce" the money and Thompson was set free. It had been noted earlier in the News that saloons followed the ordinance under Mayor Tillotson, but not under the current mayor.

By 1898 the City was in debt and taxes were high. Former Alderman Jacob Kiefer ran under a reform ticket and replaced Lewis as Mayor of Moorhead.

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The cedar block speaks for itself as a part of history, but it becomes more valuable and more interesting when its context in history is defined. CCHS is grateful to the 1894 Moorhead "Weekly News" from which all quotes in this story were taken. Photographs are from CCHS's Flaten/Wange glass plate negative collections.

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# A primer on quilts

By Pam Burkhardt

When you talk about quilts, it helps to know just what a quilt is. A quilt generally consists of three layers: a top, batting and a backing. Quilting refers to the stitching that holds all three layers together. Usually there is a great deal of stitching. Some quilts are not stitched, they are tied at regular intervals to hold all three layers together. These are usually referred to as comforters.

The quilt top is the focal point of the quilt and is the decorative side. A quilt top may be pieced, appliqued, embroidered or just quilted. Some quilt tops have a theme. These may be made to commemorate an event or contain signatures of people. These last quilts are usually part of a fund raising effort and may be auctioned or raffled off.

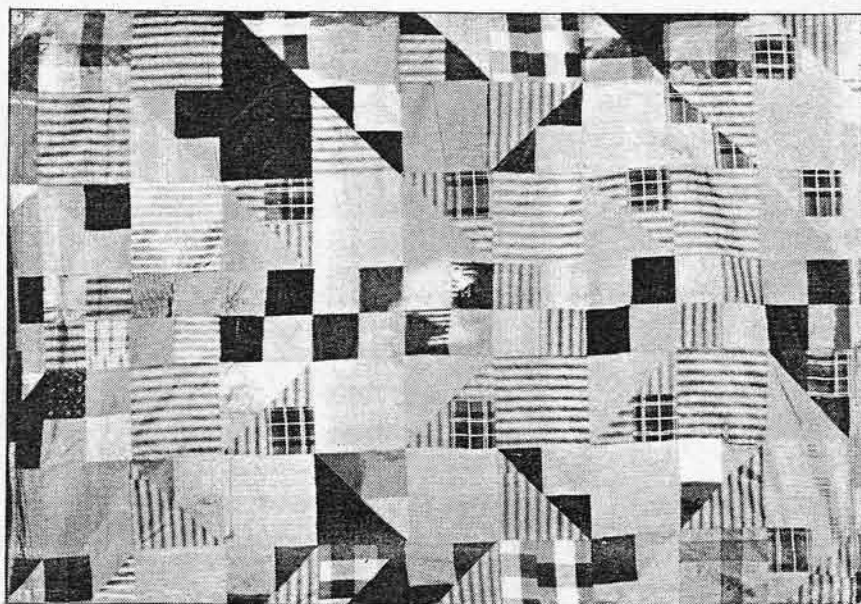
The Clay County Historical Society collections contains mostly pieced quilts. Our oldest quilt is a white-on-white with embroidery, crocheted edging and machine quilting. It was made in 1876 by Sophia Emila Schmitz (1842-1886). It has the date 1876 and "Zum Andenken" meaning "in memory of" embroidered on. It was used only on special occasions, especially after the birth of a child when it was placed on the bed in honor of the first viewing of the new baby.

Our newest quilt is the 1988 Peterson-Larson Reunion quilt. The blocks are embroidered by family members to commemorate Jens and Pauline Larson who settled in Comstock before moving to North Dakota.

The two log cabin quilts are our most unusual. The older of the two is the 1880s red-centered log cabin square made up of generally medium-weight fabrics and arranged in the 'straight furrows' pattern.

Each separate piece was stitched first on light-weight cotton to make the squares and then quilted on a backing of dark brown fabric containing a spikey pattern of lines. However, the backing is not visible because a second backing of a floral print fabric has been attached around the edges with feather stitching. This quilt contains no batting. The supporting cotton fabric in

the middle is only technically batting so this quilt is actually a coverlet. The second log cabin quilt was made by Bessie Lewis (Mrs. T.I.) of Moorhead probably before 1930. Each log cabin square is made from a variety of shiny fabrics in the courthouse



The backing on the newest of CCHS's two log cabin quilts is very unusual. It is rare to find both the top and backing of a quilt pieced.

steps pattern. The blocks are set on point and laid out in an unnamed pattern.

(Continued on Page 14)



## Donors & Artifacts

### Donors include:

Moorhead: Clay County Law Library,  
Assessor's and Treasurer's  
Offices, Hendrix Health Center  
on the MSU Campus, Bruce  
Kiefer, Owen Voxland, Helen  
Hedelund, Eva Felde and Ruth  
Dyer.

Bville: Barnesville Area Heritage  
Society<sup>1</sup>

Sabin: Albert Paasch

Geogetwn: Loren Helmeke

Mankato: Ethel Medalen

Mpls/  
St. Paul: Peg Meier

Fargo: Sons of Norway, Kringen Lodge  
#25; Mark Peihl

Seattle, WA: Marie Reitan

### Artifacts include:

City Directories; WWII Civil Defense materials; 99th Infantry Battalion; Bring Warm Clothes and Coffee Made Her Insane; "Soda Fountain" magazine from January 1930 and a menu from Walgreen's ca. 1930 [Today's Special Whoopee Sundae 25 cents]; photo postcards of the 1909 Hawley flood; patient's gown, stethoscope, enamel bed pan, examination mirror, wire splint and doctor's satchel; rationing flyer, books and tokens; wedding dress, veil and photo; Orpheus Choral Society banner, cabinet and photos; flyswatter from the Lamb Coal Company; set of Christmas bubble lights in the box; German song sheets, AOUW badges and minute book, notice of birth and death slips, WWI Roll of Honor from Sabin; 1938 calendar from the Western Bottling Works.

1. See Article Page 8.

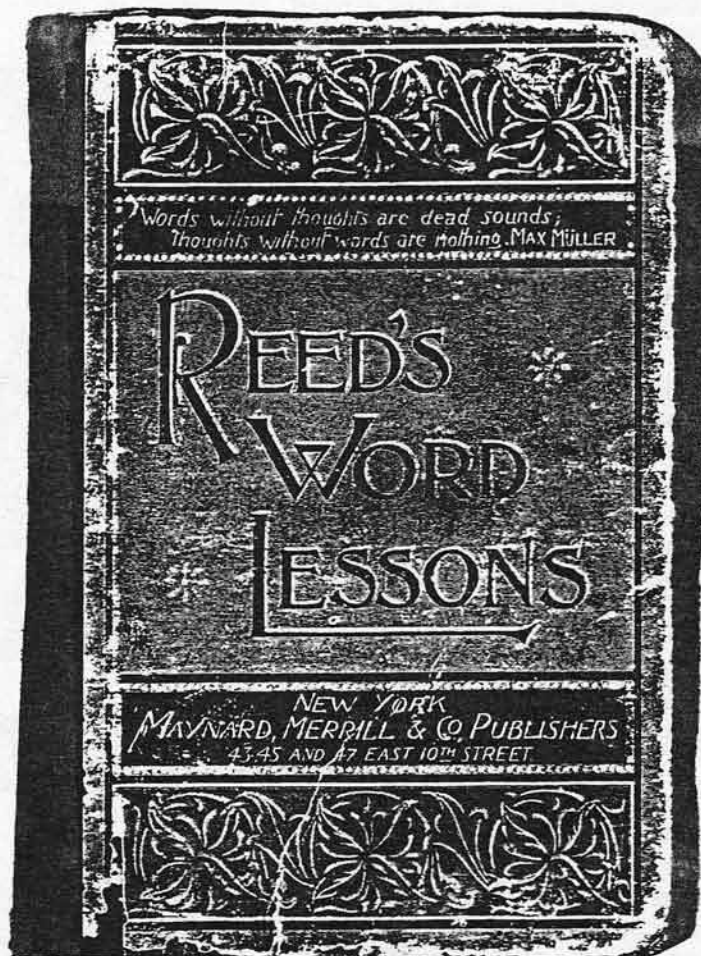
A recent acquisition to the CCHS Collections is a spelling book which was owned by Nels Roos of Hitterdal and donated by his son Norman Roos of Hawley. The book "Reed's Word Lessons" by Alonzo Reed has a copyright date of 1884, 1895. It features an elaborate cover design and this thought provoking message: "Words without thoughts are dead sounds; thoughts without words are nothing." (Max Muller) The cover design is shown to the right.

## Memorials

In Memory of Otila Shadensack  
from Alice Haugen

### Quilts (Continued from Page 13)

Between the top and the underlying layer of cotton support fabric is a thin layer of cotton batt. The backing layer is unusual in that it is also pieced. The pattern here consists of rows of solid squares, four patches and a 'birds in air' variation block. The backing is tacked onto the top layers. This quilt and others will be on display in the "Quilts and Other Comforts" exhibit opening in the CCHS Temporary Gallery on November 27.





## Center receives grant for Red River Exhibit

Recently the Hjemkomst Center received notification of a \$7,662 grant award to fund Phase I - Research and Planning for an interpretive exhibit entitled "Old Ruby - Red River of the North." Phase I includes hiring a researcher who will write an exhibit script and collect exhibit resource materials and potential cooperative educational ventures. The second phase will be the implementation phase where the exhibit will be designed and produced.

This project is one of several semi-permanent interpretive exhibits to be developed over a period of time to satisfy the mission of the Center. The Program Council has determined that the first project should interpret the Red River - which serves as the backbone for the Red River Valley.

The interpretive exhibit and educational programs propose to interpret three main themes: "Old Ruby's Nature," "Old Ruby's History," and "Old Ruby's Future."

"Old Ruby" will premier in 1994 in Heritage Hall at the Hjemkomst Center. After the premier it will be used as a semi-permanent exhibit every summer in Heritage Hall and may be offered to other groups in the Red River Valley when not on display at the Center.

The Hjemkomst Center will be contacting institutions and cultural organizations over the next six months. If you are interested in finding more information on the project or willing to help sponsor Phase II of the project - or know of research materials, photos or artifacts relating to the past and present river, please contact Claudia Pratt, Program Coordinator, at the Hjemkomst Center, 202 1st Ave. N, Moorhead, MN 56560, or (218) 233-5604.

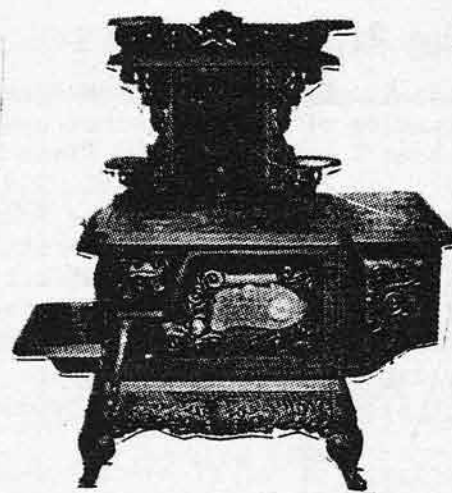
## the Heritage Shop



202 1st Avenue North  
Moorhead, MN 56560

Phone: 233-5604

# CLAY COUNTY MUSEUM



## \* Permanent Exhibit

Unique characterizations of one facet of the history of each county town. Together they form a chapter in the overall history of Clay County.

## \* Temporary Gallery

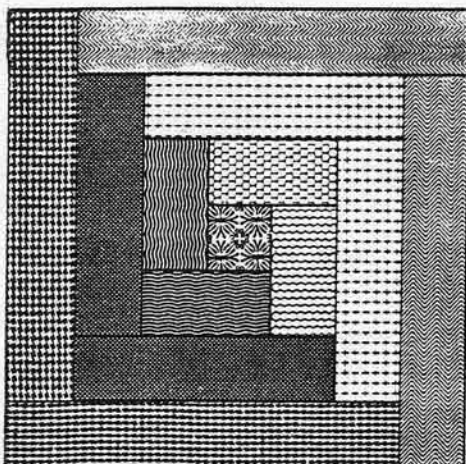
### "An Ending & A Beginning" (Opened Nov. 2)

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" (Opening Nov. 27)

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

Log Cabin quilt block



### "Scandinavian Sampler" (Closes Nov. 20)

This exhibit explores the Scandinavian heritage in this area through artifacts.

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

# What's in the Archives?

By Mark Peihl

Many of the hundreds of genealogists and other researchers who visit the CCHS Archives each year are surprised at the wide variety of materials we have available. This is the first in a series of articles highlighting some of the major sources for research available at CCHS Archives.

## (FIRST IN A SERIES)

### NATURALIZATION RECORDS

In 1790 the United States Congress legislated that foreigners could only apply for American citizenship through "Courts of Record" so that a permanent record would be kept of the proceedings. In Clay County that meant the District Court in Moorhead. Years ago those records were transferred to the State Archives in St. Paul. The state microfilmed them and in 1989 CCHS bought copies of those films for our Archives. They cover papers filed between 1872 and 1954 and are indexed by surname.

Naturalization laws have changed many times but the records generally consist of two sets: the applicant's "Declaration of Intention" to become a U.S. citizen ('First Papers') and the record of the court's actions on his request ('Final Papers').

Until 1906 each local court decided what information would be recorded. In Clay County the first papers list the applicant's name, year and country of birth, foreign allegiance being renounced and, significantly, the date and port of arrival in the U.S. After three years the applicant could return to the court with his copy of his declaration and two witnesses to testify that they had known the applicant for five years, that he had lived in the U.S. five years and in Minnesota for one and that he had "behaved himself as a man of good moral character" and upheld the constitution. (Very few women were naturalized in Clay County. The

spouse and minor children of the successful applicant received citizenship automatically.

The final papers include the witnesses' affidavits, the court's order for admission and the location of the court where the applicant filed his first papers. Early immigrants were quite mobile. From the final papers researchers can often learn of an ancestor's previous residence. Minnesota Historical Society has filmed many counties' records. For more information contact the Minnesota State Archives, 1500 Mississippi Street, St. Paul, MN 55101.

In September, 1906 the U.S. Government standardized naturalization forms and the information recorded. The new declarations of intent added the applicant's occupation, address, physical description, town of birth, last foreign residence, date and port of embarkation and the name of the ship arrived on. The new final papers (now including a formal "Petition for Naturalization") included the above information plus the name, date and place of birth of the applicant's spouse and children. After 1929 a photograph was attached.

Although filing at least a Declaration of Intent was required for an immigrant to claim a homestead, not everyone naturalized. Many others became citizens while serving in the Armed Forces - their papers are filed in the county of their duty station. But for those whose ancestor's naturalized in Clay County, the records await in our Archives. We have a plain paper reader/printer available - copies are 10 cents per page.

The Archives are open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and Thursday nights until 9 p.m. There is no charge to use the Archives, so come on down and do some digging!!



No. 68

Form 1903

TRIPLICATE

(To be given to the person making the Declaration)

# UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Department of Commerce and Labor  
BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION  
DIVISION OF NATURALIZATION

## DECLARATION OF INTENTION

(Invalid for all purposes seven years after the date hereof)

STATE OF MINNESOTA } In the District Court  
COUNTY OF CLAY } ss: of Clay County

I, Knut Johnson, aged 27 years,

occupation farmer, do declare on oath that my personal

description is: Color white, complexion light, height 5 feet 10 inches,

weight 160 pounds, color of hair brown, color of eyes blue,

other visible distinctive marks scar across inside of right hand from wrist to

thumb; I was born in Bergenstift, Norway,

on the 10th day of January, anno

Domini 1881; I now reside at Averill, Clay County, Minnesota.

I emigrated to the United States of America from Bergen, Norway, via Liverpool

on the vessel Mystic; my last

foreign residence was Bergenstift, Norway.

It is my bona fide intention to renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, and particularly to

Haakon VII, King of Norway, of which I am now a subject; I

arrived at the port of New York, in the

State of New York, on or about the 6th day

of April, anno Domini 1902; I am not an anarchist; I am not a

polygamist nor a believer in the practice of polygamy; and it is my intention in good faith to become a citizen of the United States of America and to permanently reside therein;

SO HELP ME GOD.

*Knut Johnson*  
(Original signature of declarant.)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 28th

day of March, anno Domini 1908

[SEAL.]

*E. D. McCutcheon*  
Clerk of the District Court.

~~xxxx~~

~~xxxx~~

Declaration of Intent - after 1906  
After 1906 the forms recorded much more information. Knut Johnson came to America on the ship Mystic, from his hometown of Berenstift, Norway, through Bergen and Liverpool to New York in 1902.

## Archives

The two "Declaration of Intent" documents (Pages 18 and 19) are copies of the actual documents captured on microfilm and printed out of our reader/printer.

Declaration of Intent - before 1906

Immigrant Thomas Smart filed this Declaration of Intent in 1883. We can learn from it that he was born in England in 1835, came through New York in September 1879 and he couldn't write his name. (Note: X = his mark).

United States of America,

STATE OF MINNESOTA,

County of Clay.

District Court, 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial District.

Thomas Smart personally appeared before the subscriber, the Clerk of the District Court of the 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial District for said State of Minnesota, being a COURT OF RECORD, and made oath that he was born in England on and about the year eighteen hundred and Thirty Five, that he emigrated to the United States, and landed at the port of New York on or about the month of September in the year eighteen hundred and Seventy Nine; that it is bona fide his intention to become a CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES, and to renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State or Sovereignty whatever, and particularly to the Queen of Great Britain & Ireland whereof he is a subject.

Thomas Smart his Mark

Subscribed and sworn to this 20<sup>th</sup> day of April A.D. 1883.

G. A. Hendricks

Clerk.  
L. Chas D. Fox

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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