

Clay County Historical Society

Clay County Historical Society Newsletter

September/October 2002

Volume XXV No. 5

**In this issue: CCHS "Viking" History Tour • New Exhibits •
1899 Autograph Quilt • The First Telephone in Clay County**



John Erickson's telephone connected his dry goods and grocery store, at left, with his grain warehouse, off the picture to the left. The businesses sat on the north side of Center Avenue, west of 3rd Street, about where the Moorhead approach to the Center Avenue bridge sits today. F. Jay Haynes Collection.

President's Column

By CCHS President Donna Voxland

I am a little melancholy these days because my youngest is leaving for college and we now have an "empty nest." It has made me reflect on what "home" is and what draws people to come back to their roots. For many of us, Clay County is home, and every summer people come back home to visit and celebrate at festivals such as Ulen Turkey Days and Barnesville Potato Days. What a great way to celebrate "home" and what it means to us. We see people who were a part of our childhood and walk the familiar streets while we remember. No matter where life takes you, you can always return and be surrounded by the things that replay your past. We hope that you view our Society and Museum as a place where you can come and dwell on the memories that might be your own or reflect on what went on here before us. Hopefully my children will keep coming back and will always feel a connection to Clay County that they will find nowhere else.



Bergquist Cabin Open House Report

CCHS would like to specially thank the State Bank of Moorhead for sponsoring the shuttle bus to the Bergquist Cabin Open House during the Scandinavian Hjemkomst Festival, and extend a special thank you to McDonald's for providing the refreshing orange drink for the Open House! A big Thank You also to the volunteers from the Swedish Cultural Heritage Society for your help with refreshments, crafts, and setup and cleanup—the Open House would not be possible without you!

Two prizes were given away at the Open House this year! Once again, CCHS Collections Manager Pam Burkhardt donated a bobbin lace doily that she made, and the Swedish Society provided a Pipi Longstocking doll. Marlys Thorsgaard of Bloomington, MN, won the doily, and the winner of the Pipi doll was Brianna Jesh of Inver Grove Heights, MN. Almost 100 people signed this year's guest book. Thank you for supporting the Bergquist Cabin—See you next year!



CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Brianna Jesh with the Pipi Longstocking doll that she won in a free drawing at the Bergquist Cabin Open House, June 27, 28 & 29.

"Eating Out in Clay County" exhibit set to open Sunday, Nov. 10—objects needed!

The staff of the Clay County Historical Society is pleased to announce the next major exhibit in the Clay County Museum: "Eating Out in Clay County." The exhibit will focus on almost every way and place that folks in Clay County eat other than in their homes. We are excluding items used for food prepared and eaten at home by a family, but entertaining guests in your home *is* included in our list of topics. Think: County Fair food under a striped awning, church dinners and potlucks on 8-foot tables, and bringing out lunch to your husband and other help in the field during seeding and harvest!

The exhibit will open with a ribbon cutting ceremony at 1:00 p.m., Sunday, November 10. The ribbon cutting will be followed with refreshments and public viewing of the new exhibit. Please come help us celebrate!

Exhibit Wish List

The museum has some great items and photos to depict these scenes, but we still need a few items to complete this exhibit! It is difficult to make a list of what we need when we don't know what is out there, but we need to know what you have first before we decide. We have listed the topics and items we are still looking for. **We especially need**

photos showing events or sites with people making, serving or enjoying food (please try to date and identify people in the photos). Thanks for your help!

- 1. Special events** (includes Potato Days, Ulen Turkey Days, Felton Field Day, reunions, homecoming etc.): 5-7 small bales of straw, what else have you got?
- 2. Church dinners:** 6-8 metal folding chairs marked with the church's name, a table cloth and a few serving items.
- 3. Restaurants & hotels:** dishes, furniture and recipes from any hotel or restaurant in the county. Menus welcome (we can scan these).
- 4. Local cafés and family restaurants:** dishes, furniture and recipes from any café or restaurant in the county. Menus welcome (we can scan these).
- 5. Drive ins/fast food:** What have you got?
- 6. At the movies:** theater seats, what else do you have?
- 7. Picnics:** picnic blanket, information on new (and old) picnic sites in Clay County.
- 8. Hospital food:** What have you got?
- 9. At work and school:** specially adapted/made food containers & what have you got?
- 10. Entertaining:** What special items were reserved for your guests?
- 11. Saloons:** dishes, furniture and recipes from any saloon or bar in the county. Menus welcome.

CCHS "Vikings" History Tour scheduled for December 10 & 11

Plans for the CCHS "Vikings" Tour are set! The bus will leave the Hjemkomst Center at 7:30 AM, Tuesday, December 10, so pack your bags, mark your calendar, and make your reservations now!

The main attraction of the trip is a guided tour of the Smithsonian traveling exhibit "Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga," now showing at the Science Museum of Minnesota in St. Paul, but many other highlights are included. The cost for the tour is set at \$150 for double occupancy, and includes tickets to all attractions on the tour, hotel, bus fee, and four meals.

The schedule is as follows: The tour will depart from the Hjemkomst Center parking lot 7:30 am, Tuesday, December 10, on Red River Trails motorcoach. Lunch will be on your own at a restaurant yet to be determined. The Vikings exhibit at the Science Museum is the first attraction stop. Participants will see the Jane Goodall story in the Omnitheater in the Science Museum, following the Vikings exhibit tour. After hotel check-in and dinner at the Red Lion Conference Center,

guests will enjoy a tour of holiday lights in St. Paul with guides from the Wabasha Street Caves. Wednesday morning, we will have a guided history tour of St. Paul's Landmark Center before attending the SteppingStone Theatre's production of "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever." After lunch at the Luther Seminary, we will see the Muskego Church at the Seminary, Minnesota's oldest church. On the way home we will stop in Little Falls for a guided tour of the town, dinner at the Cabin Fever restaurant, and see the holiday grandeur of the Weyerhaeuser and Musser homes. Tour participants must be members of the Clay County Historical Society, but Individual memberships are only \$20!

For information about the "Vikings" tour, or to register, call the Clay County Historical Society at 218-299-5520.

The tour is being planned to complement the Viking Lecture Series sponsored by the Fargo Moorhead Community, and presented by Verlyn Anderson. The lectures will be held at Riverview Place, 2:00-4:00 p.m., four Saturdays in November—2, 9, 16, and 23. Community: 299-3438.

Outreach Displays

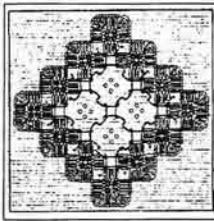
	Open	Close
Hawley Public Library	Aug.	Nov.
Moorhead Public Library	Aug.	Sept.
Barnesville Public Library	Aug.	Nov.
Fargo CVB	May	Oct.

Hawley Public Library will experience a trip back in time with the photo display THEN & NOW. This display pairs an old photograph of a Clay County site with a recent photo taken in the same place.



The Moorhead Public Library presents A BURNING IMPRESSION. The art of pyrography or decorative wood burning is the featured craft, but examples of other wood-related arts are shown. The library will host a cultural diversity display in October.

HARDANGER: FACTS AND FUN at the Barnesville Public Library shows step-by-step instructions with examples and illustrations that show the basics of Hardanger for beginners. For the experienced, read about the history of Hardanger. Come and see this display created by 2001 CCHS intern Alison Ostgarden!



The case at the Fargo Convention and Visitors' Bureau along I-94 shouts LET'S PLAY BALL! This display is a tribute to our area's long history of baseball and softball.

TEMPORARY DISPLAYS AT THE CLAY COUNTY MUSEUM

A special toy vehicle display in the CCHS hall case ends October 1. Dean Baker and L. Duane Geir provided the toys; we provided the gallery. Viewing time is limited so stop by soon.

A small case promoting our TOYS, TOYS, TOYS! exhibit is on view in the lobby at the Hjemkomst Center. These toys will whet your appetite for the main exhibit in the CCHS museum just down the stairs.

Artists from the Hjemkomst Center's Senior Connections will open the display SENIOR CONNECTIONS WORKSHOP in the CCHS hall case Oct 11.

Artifacts & Donors

July and August 2002

Donors include:

Fargo & Moorhead: Swedish Cultural Heritage Society of the Red River Valley, Jan Hillier, 4-H Extension Office, Clay County Court Administration, Paula Bauck, Dennis Olson, In Memory of Rosalyn Rydeen, Steve Johnson
Barnesville: Sharon Biewer
Bloomington, MN: Marjorie Benson
LeCenter, MN: Jeanette (Keeping) Zachariason Estate
St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society
Tucson, AZ: Noma Kane

Artifacts include: 7) snapshots: R&L Service station Gust Langlie owner/Richardson & Langlie [in color], B&B Motor & Supply Co. w/Gust Langlie's C&H EatShop, (2) of Moorhead ski jump, Red Owl S. Bdwy, Fargo, parade float Minn. Valley Breeders June '55, building under construction at Concordia College; cookbook, *Swedish & Such*: a collection of recipes by the Swedish Cultural Heritage Society of the Red River Valley printed June 2002; Wayne Vannet 4-H items from 1959 including (2) project cards for poultry, meal ticket, program, 37th Annual 4-H club dinner; 4-H registration card for MN State Fair, letter, carbon copy from Clay Co. Ag. Extension Service to Vannet from Deane E. Johnson, Agent Sept. 30, 1959 & a 2-pg notice/letter to State Fair Trip Winners from Coop. Extension State of MN with instructions for trip; video tape, 1998-99 4-H Year in Review, Clay County Home Extension notebook 1980-1988, 1989 & 1993 *Atlas of Clay County*, Horsemanship Equipment Identification & Study Kit in box; (2) 4-h banners, (3) *National 4-H Club Song Book* 1938 & 1954, & several agriculture books; boxes of records from Harbor School, Moorhead, First National Bank, Moorhead bank bag, Roi-Tan 50 panetelas cigar box; Rosalyn Rydeen's Campfire Girl dress, vest w/beads, project folder w/loose materials, beading loom + finished piece of beading, blue felt vest, red kerchief & *Red River Scene* Mar. 28, 1957 Camp Fire issue; wedding dress & sash, wedding suit (coat, vest, pants & shirt), gray dress w/belt dress has lace insert & hot pink trim, pair of long johns, & a "company" apron; photocopy (13 pgs) of transcript of Fidelis P. Zwack's WWI diary [Zwack was from Georgetown. His daughter Delores A. Mellon transcribed the diary. The Minnesota Historical Society sent us a copy.]; (10) stickers [possibly envelope seals] with photos of Moorhead buildings; photo of 1983 reunion of 1931-1936 confirmands at Trinity Lutheran Church, Moorhead; (3) files containing monthly reports of marriages 1969-1970, monthly reports of divorces and annulments 1970-1978, monthly checklists of births, deaths, fetal deaths, marriages, divorces and annulments (1969) 1970-1978; white paper plates & rattan paper plate holders; jewelers' tools from A.B. Spencer's store in Barnesville.

Autograph Quilts at CCHS

Autograph quilts or signature quilts were popular starting in the mid-1800s and were often group projects. These quilts are also called memory quilts. Signatures were written on pieces of fabric commemorating a place or event. The Solem Pikeforening (see previous issue of this newsletter) and the Buffalo River Pikeforening (see next issue) made their quilts as a fund raisers.

There are three autograph quilts in the CCHS collections. They date from 1898, 1899 and 1900. These will be the first artifacts entered in the Collections part of our web site. Quilts are extremely popular, and names on each might be of interest to genealogists. Each artifact will have one or more photographs, a brief description and the list of names. The following is the first of the three autograph quilts. Note: Descriptions might be altered before being posted on line.

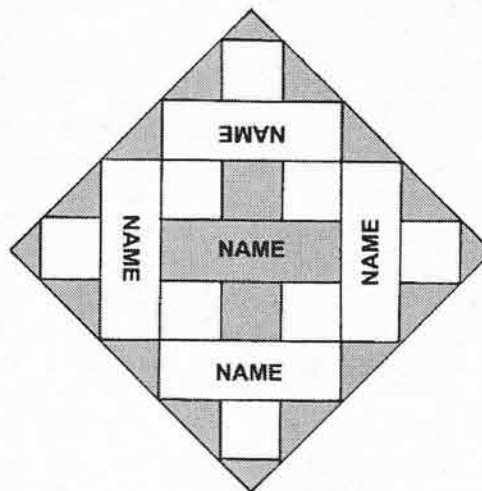
1899 ALBUM BLOCK QUILT

65.28 (86x76)

The 1899 album block quilt in the CCHS collections was made by Louisa (Lucy) Jones (1880-1945) born in Lime Springs, Howard County, Iowa. She married Herbert Bartlett Thysell (1880-1964) on April 19, 1905 in Britton, Marshall County, South Dakota. Thysell was born in Hawley to Carl G. (Christ) Thysell and Angeline Martha (Burgess). According to the 1900 US census, Herbert was a printer by trade, boarding at the Nels Sandin residence in Hawley. Two Sandins appear in Row 2/Block 2. Mrs. Nels Sandin's patch also has Hawley, Minn. embroidered on it. Another patch in that same block is dated Oct. 10, 1899. The date 1899 appears again in Row 4/Block 2 (6/9 Mrs. B.A. Hansen) and Row 5/Block 2 (Ci Bau[z]). Herbert gets the center patch on Row 3/Block 1. His father appears elsewhere on the same block.

Circumstances surrounding the collection of the signatures are unknown, but Mrs. Nels Sandin may have had a hand in it. Information received at the time of donation says the signatures belong to early Clay County pioneer residents. H.B. Thysell would have known most, if not all, the names on the quilt. After Thysell's death, his daughter, Mrs. Eleanor Baum of Long Beach, California, sent the quilt to her uncle John C. Thysell, of Bismarck, North Dakota. John donated it to the museum.

The top of this quilt consists of twenty album blocks of tan and white cotton fabric. The same tan is used for the sashing. Names are embroidered on the five rectangular pieces in each block with red, light brown or cream floss of cotton or silk. Each block is approximately 12" square. The backing and 1 3/4" border are red cotton fabric. The batting is cotton. It was quilted by hand following the straight lines of the patches.



The names on this quilt were placed in each of the five rectangular patches. The darker pieces are the tan fabric; the rest of the block is white.

Note: rows are read left to right, top to bottom. Missing embroidery accounting for more than one letter is indicated by a line; missing embroidery for a single letter is indicated by brackets [], and all educated guesses are underlined or in brackets according to length. Names appearing in the center patch are indicated by an asterisk ().*

ROW 1/BLOCK 1: Ch. Hagen, Mrs. Lien, [J. or F] G. B., A. Hers[]th, *Oluf Olson

ROW 1/BLOCK 2: Berthine Eid, Therese Norgard, C. Helgesen, Dorthia Halverson/Mrs.. Emilie Nygard, *Rosa O. Donald

ROW 1/BLOCK 3: Ida Anderson, Matilda Anderson, Clarence Bang, Sivert Anderson, *Anna Bang

ROW 1/BLOCK 4: Mary Melbye, J.J. Alrick, Peder Hartse, Joel Melvin Waterlan[d], *Elen Waterland [note: the seam at the end of the Joel Waterland patch likely hides the last letter]

ROW 2/BLOCK 1: Miss Bertha Erickson, Miss Lottie Myhre, Mrs. and Mrs. O. Olson, Mrs. Joran Olson, *Mrs. E.C. Jacobsen

ROW 2/BLOCK 2: Mary Lien, Nick Nelson, Nels Sandin, Thea Lien/Oct. 10th 1899, *Mrs. Nels Sandin/Hawley Minn.

ROW 2/BLOCK 3: Marge K__tz, Mr. & Mrs. K__tz, Geo. W. Johnson/S.O. Tang, H.N. Dunn, G.A. Mohn,

*Thea Knutson/Jennie Johnson

ROW 2/BLOCK 4: Mathilde Wahl, Harald Wahl, A.E. Wahl, Einar A. Wahl, *Annie Hoie[n]

ROW 3/BLOCK 1: C.G.T. Tysell, Nick Nelson, John Johnson, A.J. Hallan/Mrs. A. Hallan, *H.B. Tysell
ROW 3/BLOCK 2: Christian Anderson/Baby Dolva, Andrew Anderson, Mrs. M. Lee, Willie Anderson, *Mrs. S. Anderson

ROW 3/BLOCK 3: John H. Reid, Sten T. Wiprud, S. Kirknes, O.T. Olsen, *Tom Gunderson/Mrs. T. Gunderson

ROW 3/BLOCK 4: Jurl Leonard, Anne Mana, [T. or J.] Wange, Inge Mana, *Mrs. Wange

ROW 4/BLOCK 1: Hanna Skree, Olive Skree, Li__ie B. Skree, Josephine Skree, *Hilda Amundsgord [note: the name Li__ie in this block might be Lissie or Lizzie]

ROW 4/BLOCK 2: Mr. A. Hansen, Miss Anni Andersen, Miss Clara Hansen, Miss Ingeborg Kvikstad, [I] n 6/9 Mrs. B.A. Hansen 1899

ROW 4/BLOCK 3: Nina L. Rushfeldt, Ruth V. Rushfeldt, Harriet M. Runholdson, Eleanora Rushfeldt, * [(Mrs.) Alvilda Anderson [note: the missing "(" in the Anderson block is likely in the seam]

ROW 4/BLOCK 4: J.O. Feragen/Christine Kundson, Clara Grottum, W.J.R. Herring, Fred Herring, Rakel Torgson, *Mrs. R.Herseth

ROW 5/BLOCK 1: Mrs. A. Glasg__/Josie Ruud, Elli [Je Grue, A.W. [P]ehrson, Lewis Larson

ROW 5/BLOCK 2: Julie Anderson, John Engesvick, Annie Mickelson, [K. or X.] H. Fulton, *Ci Bau[z] 1899

ROW 5/BLOCK 3: Mrs. Andrew Johnson, Mrs. Ole Storberg, Mrs. Sigrid O. Berg, Mrs. Thos. Awry, *Mrs. [J. or F.] Almquist

ROW 5/BLOCK 4: Eline Eide/Anton Johnson, Mrs. A. Olson/Ida Knudson, Tilla Youngberg, Marie Telnos/C. Reiton, *Clara Nilson

Donations and Memorials

July and August 2002

Galen & Sharon Vaa, Moorhead

David & Debra Armstrong, Erskine, MN, In memory of Fran Iverson (2001)

Randy & Gail Sauve, Fargo, ND

Robert & Selma Anderson, Moorhead

L. L. & Elsie Quam, Hawley, In memory of Rose Asp

CCHS Member donates art with historical resonance



Irene Hogan and CCHS Collections Manager Pam Burkhardt with mixed media piece "Measure Me."

CCHS member Irene Hogan donated a work of art to CCHS in May. Hogan saw the piece at the Women's Network of the Red River Valley art show "In a Woman's Voice" and saved up enough money to buy it, with the intent of donating it to the historical society. The work, entitled "Measure Me" is by Laura Youngbird, a

graduate of Minnesota State University Moorhead, and an enrolled member of the Minnesota Chippewa, Grand Portage Band. "Measure Me" stemmed from the artist's response to the dress as a female symbol, her own ancestors' experiences, Indian boarding schools and the early belief that people of color and Native people would become extinct, so their physical measurements should be recorded for history.

Thank you, Laura and Irene!

Paper Dolls Tear It Up

Peggy Ramstad's presentation on paper doll collecting at the Clay County Museum on Tuesday, August 20 attracted many spectators. Ramstad brought much of her own paper doll collection, which loaded eight tables full of every kind of paper doll you can think of, including binders full of auxiliary background information. Ramstad's collection includes cut and uncut dolls from greeting cards, magazines, comic sections, newspapers, and special paper doll books. Thank you, Peggy for the wonderful program and for sharing your collection!

4-H Centennial celebrated at Clay County Fair, July

CCHS had the privilege this year to be part of the 4-H 100th Anniversary at the Clay County Fair in Barnesville. Selected artifacts from the CCHS collections were used in a special anniversary display in the 4-H building on the fairgrounds.

CCHS also had its own booth in the Grandstand, promoting the museum and archives, and the *Toys, Toys, Toys!* exhibit. The map of ethnic distribution in Clay County was again a big hit.

The winner of the free membership give-away was Helen Hawk of Glyndon. Congratulations, Helen!

Toy Collecting and "Miniatures" Collecting Programs scheduled in September and October

Two programs will be presented at the Clay County Museum to complement the "Toys, Toys, Toys!" exhibit closing October 20.

On Tuesday, September 17, 6-8 p.m., Dean Baker will talk about toy history and the joy of collecting antique toys. Wheeled and winged toys from Baker's and friend Duane Geir's extensive personal toy collections are currently on display at the Clay County Museum in a special exhibit in the museum's hallway exhibit cases. Toys from manufacturers Tonka, Hubley, Weiendotte, and Buddy "L" are well-represented in the display. The exhibit closes Oct. 1.

Baker likes to collect toys that are unique and out of the ordinary—the more so, the better. His home is a virtual museum of toy cars, trucks and airplanes. Geir enjoys restoring the old toys, while Baker rather prefers finding toys in good original condition. Baker believes that the challenge of the search is an important part of the joy in collecting antique toys.

October is "Miniatures" month in the toy collect-

ing world, and CCHS will celebrate it with a special program on the subject Sunday, October 13, 2-4 p.m. Sharon Geisen of the Bemidji area and Kay Hartness of Detroit Lakes will bring parts of their miniature collections, and speak about the different aspects of miniature collecting. Both are members of the Midwest Miniatures Guild. The hobby of miniature collecting and making has a large following around the world. Miniature hobbyists collect and create everything from miniature furniture, people, and trees to complete houses, park settings and other dioramas. If you are a dollhouse hobbyist this program is for you! Check out these websites for more info on the world of miniatures (begin all with "www."): worldofminiatures.org, igma.org, miniatures.org, cimta.org, and miaa.com.

Both programs are free and open to the public at the Clay County Museum in the Hjemkomst Center, 202 1st Avenue N, Moorhead, MN. Call 299-5520 for more information.

• • • **LAST CHANCE** to see this exhibit at the **Clay County Museum!** • • •



TOYS TOYS TOYS!

Fun Through the Ages



Also Showing:

**Moorhead & Clay County
Aerial Photographs**



Relive your childhood through this fascinating exhibit! Toys and games from the past to the present are featured, with special emphasis on the Baby Boomers who grew up in the 1950s to 1970s. Learn how the changes in children's lives are reflected in their toys and games.

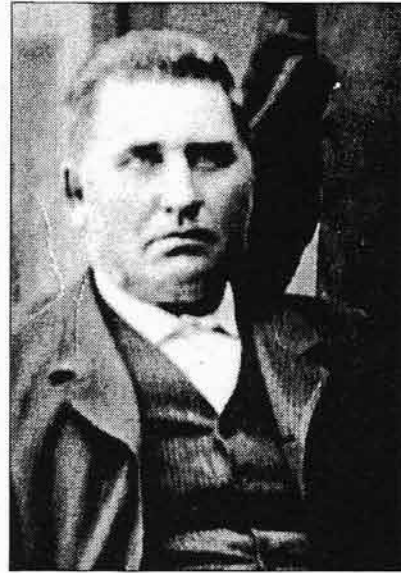
FREE ADMISSION!

Clay County Museum & Archives Hours: 10-5 Monday-Saturday, 10-9 Tuesday, 12-5 Sunday

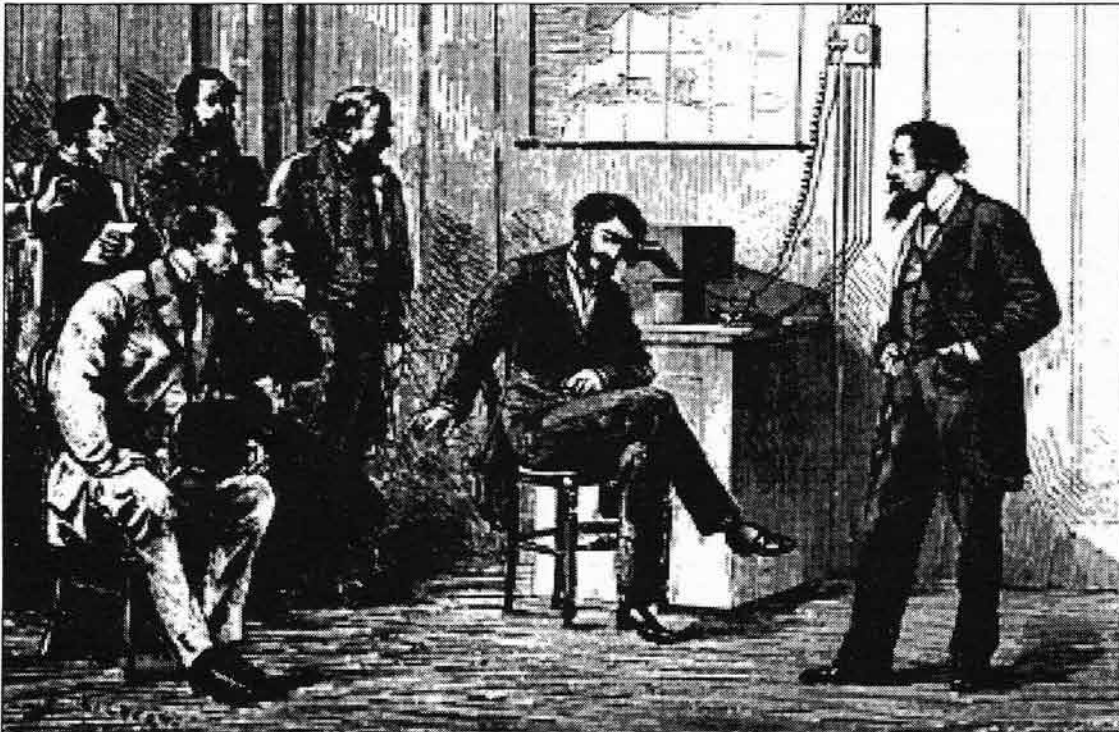
Location: lower level of the Hjemkomst Center, 202 1st Avenue North, Moorhead, MN



Alexander Graham Bell, 1876.
Courtesy Library of Congress.



Swedish immigrant and entrepreneur
John Erickson installed the first
telephone in Clay County in January
1878. Flaten/Wange Collection.



Alexander Graham Bell demonstrating his new phone in Boston,
1877. This is probably the type of phone John Erickson installed in
Moorhead the following January. Courtesy Library of Congress.

TELEPHONES AN EARLY INNOVATION IN CLAY COUNTY

By CCHS Archivist, Mark Peihl

Some people might see 1870's Clay County residents as backward, isolated and far removed from technology. But even here on the edge of the frontier, folks were not only aware of, but often had access to the tremendous new innovations of the late 19th century. The telegraph and railway express services were not exactly the internet and Federal Express of today, but they allowed modern technologies to be ordered up and plopped down in the middle of nowhere.

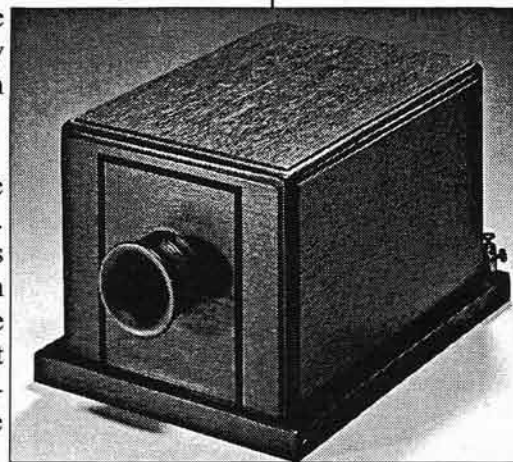
Take telephones, for example. Some locals traveled to the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876 and witnessed Alexander Graham Bell's sensational telephone demonstrations. Most others read about it in national publications. And only a few months after Bell began commercial production of phones, a private telephone system was in operation in Clay County. There may have been others in the area even earlier.

Telephones, even today, are relatively simple devices. Bell's early phone systems worked like an intercom system, connecting one phone with one other phone. Each set consisted of a box with a combination speaker/microphone connected via a grounded wire to another similar box. The caller spoke into and listened through the same opening. Initially there was no provision for alerting someone on the other end to an incoming

call. In June 1877, Bell's associate, Thomas Watson, developed a "thumper," a button on the front of the box which tapped the caller's microphone sending a thumping sound to the other phone's speaker. Bells later replaced the thumper.

On June 10, 1877, the Bell Telephone Company began delivering phones to their agents throughout the eastern United States. These agents, in turn, leased the sets to customers for a commission. Charges averaged about \$40.00 per year for two phones (equal to about \$640 today). By August 1, the company had some 650 phones in operation.

Less than six months later, on January 26, 1878, the *Moorhead Advocate* reported, "The Telephone in Moorhead. During this week we were called upon to investigate and report upon a telephone line. We found the line established between the store and



grain warehouse of J. Erickson, distance the length of a block. A line was stretched tightly between the two points, and attached at both ends to a small instrument of a cylindrical form. Placing our ear in juxtaposition to the cylindrical instrument, we heard quite distinctly what a person said at the other end of the line, although a third person could not hear what was said at a distance of 10 feet."

This early Bell phone was probably the type installed by John Erickson in 1878. The caller both spoke and listened through the opening in the front. Erickson's phone likely also featured a "thumper," a button on the right front which, when pushed, struck the microphone's diaphragm causing a thumping sound alerting the person on the other end of the line of an incoming call. Bells later replaced the thumper. Courtesy Library of Congress.

John Erickson was a Swedish immigrant and early Moorhead entrepreneur. His businesses included a hotel, brewery and a saloon in addition to the store and grain buying business. Like

most early phone customers, Erickson used the device to stay in contact with his far-flung interests. The *Fargo Times* reported in August 1879 that Moorhead businessmen H. A. Bruns and Henry Finkle "have put in a telephone connecting their store with the mill and elevator." The following month the *Times* said that local store owners "Briggs and Elder have connected their Moorhead and Fargo offices with telephone wires." The Northern Pacific Railway quickly followed suit that fall linking their Fargo freight office, freight warehouse and round house by phone. Also that October, Fargo's First National Bank President, Ezra B. Eddy, installed a line between the bank and his home, perhaps the area's first home phone.

Some farmers also made use of the new innovation. A company history published in 1975 by Northwestern Bell suggests that Dakota Bonanza farmer John L. Grandin was one of those astonished spectators at Bell's Centennial Exposition booth. The Grandin Brothers' 65,000-acre operation included the Mayville Farm in Traill County. Grandin divided the farm into three independently operating divisions. The Bell history claims the divisions were linked by phone by the end of 1877, which would make it the first phone set up in the area. Other sources, however, suggest spring or summer 1878.

The first rural phone system in Clay County was also a private line. According to Bob Brekken's *Journey Back to Hawley*, in 1874 a New York dentist, Dr. Charles Sill, purchased a 600 acre farm in northwest Parke Township, some eight miles from Hawley. The good doctor intended to spend his summers rusticating there. Workmen digging a well struck a cold, flowing spring. Sill established a creamery on the farm (which he named "Fountain Place"). The chilly water provided refrigeration for the dairy products. Farm managers sold butter from Fountain Place to customers in Fargo-Moorhead, the Twin Cities and as far away as Washington Territory. Customers placed orders by telegraph to Hawley. Retrieving the orders, however, required a sixteen-mile, four-plus hour wagon ride into town and back. A telephone line would speed the order-

ing process for the perishable products.

On June 17, 1885 the Glyndon *Red River Valley News* reported that "the poles for the telephone line from Fountain Place to Hawley will be set today. The material is all here and the line will be in working order in a few days. Any person having business with the Doctor can do it from the store of W. Tanner & Co." Butter customers telegraphed the Tanner store and Tanner relayed the orders by telephone to the farm. The phone was used for entertainment, as well. On July 1, the *News* announced, "the telephone connecting Fountain Place with Hawley was completed yesterday and works perfectly. The doctor celebrated last evening, and the music could be heard distinctly here, over about ten miles of wire." Dr. Sill's daughter, Anna Sill McDonald was an accomplished organist. She and violinist Fritz Almquist played concerts for Hawley residents gathered at the other end of the line.

These early experiments connected one phone set with another. Real phone service began early in Clay County as well when the Northwestern Telephone Exchange Company established an exchange in Fargo-Moorhead in April 1881. Within a week, a dozen phones were in use in the twin towns. Many more quickly followed. Private home and business customers could now call "central," where an operator connected them with any other phones in the community.

By late 1896, long distance telephone service to the major towns in North and South Dakota and Minnesota was in place. The next spring, the Northwestern Bell Company installed a public phone in B. F. Mackall's Moorhead drug store, the first in the county. Service beyond Minneapolis to the east coast followed in September 1897. Indeed, the same day Twin Cities' residents could call New York, folks in Clay County could do so as well.

So sometime next January, when you're relaxing in a tub of hot water and the phone rings, remember that Clay County residents have enjoyed the mixed blessings of phone service for 125 years.

"Building Your Legacy" theme of HEC Family History Workshop

The Heritage Education Commission will sponsor its 27th family history workshop titled "Building Your Legacy," September 28, 2002, at the Comstock Memorial Union at MSUM in Moorhead.

Jim and Paula Stuart Warren, full-time professional genealogists, lecturers, and writers, are the featured speakers, with sixteen other regional experts presenting on a wide variety of genealogical issues. The Warrens will speak about WPA records, family health history, writing your family history in manageable pieces, and organizing your genealogical materials. CCHS staff Mark Peihl and Pam Burkhardt will also present programs.

The workshop runs 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Registration is \$25, which includes a luncheon for those who register before Sept. 20. The deadline for the photo contest being held with the workshop is Sept. 10. For more information, contact the Office of Continuing Studies at Minnesota State University-Moorhead, 218-236-2183, www.mnstate.edu/heritage/, email: heritage@mnstate.edu.

Snowbird Alert!



We have just one small favor to ask....

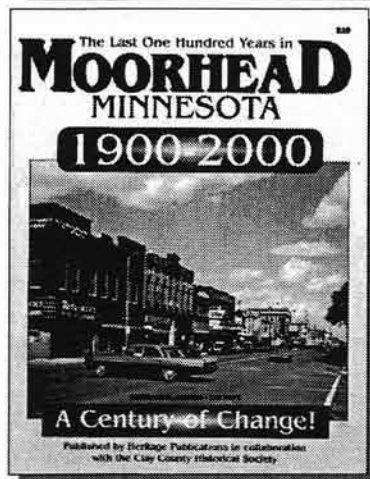
Our newsletter is sent at a non-profit bulk rate, and cannot be forwarded, nor can it be held when you are temporarily away.

Unless we have your correct address or instructions not to mail out the newsletter during a certain time frame, you do not get your newsletter, and every newsletter that is returned to us costs an additional 60 cents—more than a first class letter.

Please help the historical society save money for educational exhibits and programs, and assure that you get your CCHS newsletters, by letting us know if you are going to be away for any length of time. We appreciate your help and thank you for taking care of this matter.

Delve into Moorhead's birth!

The Last 100 Years in Moorhead: 1900-2000, A Century of Change



Filled with historic photographs, this book takes the reader through the major news of the last ten decades in Moorhead, and includes first-hand recollections from people in our community who lived through them.

Heritage Publications of Hendrum, MN, is proud to present this unique 184-page book that takes a year-by-year, decade-by-decade look at the past century in Moorhead. This high-quality, paper-cover book is a fundraiser for the Clay County Historical Society.

Pick up your copies today at the Clay County Museum & Archives in the Hjemkomst Center, 202 1st Avenue North, Moorhead, or send your check or money order for \$23.00 with the form below.

Moorhead 1900-2000: A Century of Change

Send \$23.00 for each book ordered to:

CCHS, PO Box 501, Moorhead, MN 56561-0501

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____
 ZIP CODE _____ PHONE _____

Call CCHS at
218-299-5520
 for more information



"Mexicanos In The Red River Valley" coming to CCHS

A photo exhibit by Yolanda Arauza will be on display for most of 2003 at the Clay County Museum beginning in late November.

Yolanda Arauza teaches Chicano Culture at Minnesota State University-Moorhead. Her research interests lie in the settlement and assimilation experience of Mexican Americans in the Red River Valley. She is actively involved in the campus Latino student organization, Organizacion Latina Americana, and co-produces and hosts two Spanish language radio programs, Notas Latinas and Ritmos Latinos, which are aired on 23 radio stations throughout Minnesota, North Dakota, and Montana.

This exhibition of photography documents the cultural history and legacy of the Mexican-Americans who lived and worked in the Red River

Valley in the early part of the twentieth century.

Mexican migration to the Red River Valley is recorded as early as 1923. The advent of World War I and restrictive immigration laws at the very time beet production was expanding in the Red River Valley created a shortage of workers to work the land. This labor shortage initially brought the first Mexicans to the Red River Valley.

The first group of migrant workers came mainly from the Winter Garden Area of Texas, around Crystal City. A number of second- and third-generation descendants of these first migrant laborers from the Winter Garden Area settled permanently in this area, bringing rich cultural traditions in music, religion, and family with them.

*parts reprinted from "Mexicanos In the Red River Valley" exhibition brochure

New CCHS Memberships & Renewals

CCHS extends a very special thank you to the following individuals who renewed their memberships or became new members in July and August.

NEW MEMBERS

Ron & Nancy Saeger, Fargo

RENEWALS

Allen Cnty Pub. Library, Fort Wayne, IN
Marlene Ames, Fargo
Robert & Selma Anderson, Moorhead
Roland & Carolyn Barden, Moorhead
Russ & Lois Bekkerus, Glyndon
Robert & Dorothy Belsly, Moorhead
Meredith & Aldrich Bloomquist, Mhd
Ona May Brunsvold, Moorhead
Barton Cahill, Moorhead
Mark Chekola, Moorhead
Yvonne Condell, Moorhead
Adeline Corwin, Ulen
Don & Dorothy Dale, Moorhead
Clare Degerness, Moorhead
Ione Diiro, Moorhead
Dorothy Dodds, Moorhead
Paul & Mardeth Dove, Moorhead
Paul & Joyce Eidbo, Moorhead
Loretta Erickson, Moorhead
Eva Felde, Moorhead
Dorothy Garven, Los Angeles, CA
Mae Gee, Moorhead
Lawrence & Belle Gilbery, Moorhead
John & Nadine Glas, Moorhead

Marilyn Gorman, Moorhead
Greater Fargo Moorhead CVB
Juanita Griebel, El Cajon, CA
Edward Gudmundson, Moorhead
Hazel Haarstad, Detroit Lakes
Neil & Polly Hanson, Glyndon
Joyce & Gustav Haug, Hawley
Carole Lee Hays, Albany, OR
Holly Heitkamp, Fargo
Irene Hogan, Moorhead
Andre & Emily Hougum, Moorhead
Ardee & Eunice Johnson, Moorhead
Lawrence Kava, Barnesville
Virginia Klenk, Moorhead
Kent & Donna Knutson, Moorhead
Virginia Kolba, Moorhead
Norman Kuehl, Fargo
James Landblom, Fargo
Gary Landgraf, Moorhead
Morris & Ruth Lanning, Moorhead
David & Anne Larson, Moorhead
Neil Larson, Harwood, ND
Jay & Becky Leitch, Moorhead
Robert Loeffler, Moorhead
Stanley Lunde, Ulen
Julie Marxen, Fargo
Kathryn Matthees, Moorhead
Roger Minch, Fargo
Arloine Mithun, Moorhead
Moorhead Area Public Schools
Moorhead Kiwanis
Donna Nix, Moorhead
Orlow & Bev Nokken, Moorhead

Robert & JoAnn Nyquist, Mhd
Allen Ohrt, Fargo
Esther Olson, Moorhead
Dana Powers, Rochert, MN
Loretta Ramstad, Hawley
Sam Rikhus, Ulen
Eileen Roberts, Moorhead
Una Rydeen, Fargo
Anna Schneider, Moorhead
Karen & Joe Schneider, Mhd
Carol & Donald Schoff, Hawley
Lois Selberg, Moorhead
Ardis & Milton Severson, Detroit Lakes
Maxine Shulstad, Barnesville
Steve & Shauna Slabik, Fargo
Marilyn Smith, Moorhead
Sanford & Joyce Steen, Moorhead
Stenerson Lumber, Moorhead
Bernice Stensgaard, Moorhead
Andrew & Patricia Svenkeson, Forest Lake, MN
Al & Janet Traaseth, Moorhead
Arnold Tranby, Moorhead
Galen & Sharon Vaa, Moorhead
Marguerite Wardeberg, Barnesville
Sherry & Tom Watt, Glyndon
Faye Wells, Vancouver, WA
Dale White, Moorhead
Jim & Clara Wilkins, Fargo
Lauri & Dave Winterfeldt-Shanks, Mhd
Maxine Workman, Borup
Mary Kinsella Ziegenhagen, Cloverdale, CA

NEW EXHIBIT!

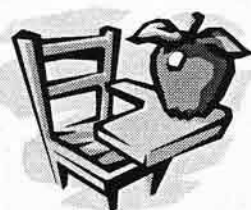
the Clay County Historical Society presents:



"Eating Out in Clay County"

Grand Opening
Sunday, November 10
1:00 p.m.

Vote for your favorite Clay County restaurant and menu item for a chance to win a door prize at the opening! Or email or send your choice to us!



See every way that residents of Clay County eat a meal or snack anywhere but in their own home—from restaurants and picnics to hospital food and school lunch!

Featuring menus, lunch boxes, photographs, dinner sets, promotional items, etcetera!



Showing through
November

**Moorhead
& Clay County
Aerial Photographs**



... Closing October 20 ...

**TOYS, TOYS
TOYS!**

FUN THROUGH
THE AGES

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

Tuesday Nights in Moorhead!

The Clay County Museum has joined with the Red Bear Grill & Tavern, Alpine Carriages, Atomic Coffee, and the Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center to offer a unique Tuesday evening experience until the end of September!

This program was offered in cooperation with the Log Cabin Folk Art Center on 4th Street South in Moorhead this summer. The Folk Art Center closed for the season, and the five organizations listed above have chosen to continue it until the end of September. Visitors can board the carriage beginning at 6:00 at the Red Bear Grill & Tavern in the historic American Legion on 1st Avenue North in Moorhead, where there will be free music on the patio. The carriage rides are free and will run regularly and make brief stops at the other attractions until 8:00.



The Clay County Museum is always free, and HHIC is offering a 20% coupon to be used on future visits to the Viking Ship, Stave Church and traveling exhibits. For more information, call CCHS at 218-299-5520.

Calendar

- Sept. 2 Labor Day (museum closed)
- Sept. 17 Antique Toy Collecting Program, Dean Baker, 6:00-8:00
- Sept. 18 CCHS Board Meeting, 8:00 a.m.
- October 12 Doll "Miniatures" Collecting program, Sharon Geisen, 2:00-4:00
- October 16 CCHS Board Meeting, 8:00 a.m.
- Nov. 10 Grand Opening of "Eating Out in Clay County" in CCHS main exhibit gallery
- Dec. 10 & 11 CCHS "Vikings" History Tour to St. Paul & Little Falls, MN
- Dec. 14 CCHS Holiday Open House, 2:00-4:00
- Dec. 18 CCHS Board Meeting, 8:00 a.m.

Clay County Historical Society

Patron, Sustaining and Supporting Memberships

Thank you to these special members of Clay County Historical Society

SPONSOR (\$500 up) & PATRON (\$200 to \$499)

Join Today!

SUSTAINING (\$100 to \$199)

Chamber of Commerce of Fargo Moorhead
 City of Hawley
 Dilworth/Glyndon/Felton Schools
 First National Bank of Hawley
 Hawley Public Schools
 Korsmo Funeral Service, Moorhead
 Moorhead Area Public Schools
 Moorhead Drug Company
 Moorhead Kiwanis
 Esther Olson, Moorhead
 Bev & Lloyd Paulson, Moorhead
 Rigels, Inc., Appliances-TV, Moorhead
 Sellin Brothers, Hawley
 State Bank of Moorhead
 Vikingland Kiwanis, Moorhead

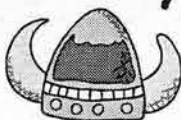
SUPPORTING (\$50 to \$99)

Roland & Carolyn Barden, Moorhead
 Bentley & Bentley, DDS, Hawley

Cass-Clay Creamery, Inc., Fargo
 City of Barnesville
 C. M. Associates, Richard T. McMurray, Annandale, VA
 Paul & Joyce Eidbo, Moorhead
 Eventide, Moorhead
 Greater Fargo Moorhead Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.
 Burton & Catherine Grover, Bellingham, WA
 Lutheran Brotherhood, East Clay County Branch 8431
 McLarnan, Hannaher & Skatvold, Attorneys, Moorhead
 Moorhead Area Retired Education Association
 Moorhead Mid-Day Central Lions, Moorhead
 Lynne Olson, Fargo
 Charlotte Onstine, Tucson, AZ
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 Lynne Olson, DDS, Fargo
 Lois Selberg, Moorhead
 State Bank of Hawley
 Stenerson Lumber, Moorhead
 Veterans of Foreign Wars, Moorhead
 Ward Muscatell Auto, Moorhead
 Wells Fargo Bank MN, N. A., Moorhead
 Wright Funeral Home, Moorhead

CCHS "Vikings"

Holiday History Tour



Did they really wear these hats?



Enjoy a guided tour of the Smithsonian exhibit *Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga* at the Science Museum in St. Paul

Plus

- ♦ The Jane Goodall Story in the Science Museum's Omnitheater
- ♦ Guided tour of Holiday Lights in St. Paul
- ♦ Tour of St. Paul's historic Landmark Center
- ♦ "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" in the SteppingStone Theatre in the Landmark Center
- ♦ Minnesota's oldest church, the Muskego Church at the Luther Seminary
- ♦ Guided history tour of Little Falls
- ♦ Dinner at Little Falls' rustic Cabin Fever restaurant
- ♦ Victorian Christmas splendor at the historic Weyerheuser and Musser homes in Little Falls

**Tues. & Wed.
December 10 & 11**



Unlock the past...

and feel the spirit of the season!

Based on double occupancy. You must be a CCHS member to join us. Individual memberships are just \$20. Join now by calling 299-5520, or on our website: www.info.co.clay.mn.us/history!

*price and schedule are subject to change



\$150

Includes all attraction fees, transportation, hotel accommodations, & most meals

Registration Deadline is Wednesday, November 20

For more information and/or to register

Call 299-5520

email: lisa.hanson@ci.moorhead.mn.us, CCHS, PO Box 501, Moorhead MN 56561



CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP FORM

YES! I would like to become a member of Clay County Historical Society

- ☐ \$20 to \$34 Individual* ☐ \$100 to \$199 Sustaining
☐ \$35 to \$49 Family* ☐ \$200 to \$499 Patron
☐ \$50 to \$99 Supporting ☐ \$500 or more Sponsor

*Businesses are not eligible for Individual and Family membership levels

CCHS MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

- ◆ Support preservation of your heritage
- ◆ Bi-monthly newsletter
- ◆ Discount on Acid-Free Preservation supplies
- ◆ Discount on photo reproductions from archives
- ◆ \$1 off admission to Hjemkomst Center Exhibits
- ◆ Invitation to all CCHS events
- ◆ Access to all CCHS Tours
- ◆ Voting Privileges

In addition to the great benefits listed above, Supporting, Sustaining, Patron and Sponsor members a certificate ready to frame and display, and a listing in all CCHS bi-monthly newsletters.

To become a CCHS Member please complete and return this form or a copy of this form to:

CLAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PO Box 501, Moorhead, MN 56561-0501
218-299-5520

Visit our website! www.info.co.clay.mn.us/history

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Address Service Requested



We're on the web!
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