

The Hourglass



Historical & Cultural Society of Clay County Newsletter

Volume 5 Issue 1 • Spring 2013

2013 ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, May 2, 6 p.m.

THE GARRICK THEATER,

509 Front St., Hawley, MN



PRESENTATION:

Jim Bortnem, the owner, will discuss how he saved the Garrick Theater and what he discovered in the process of remodeling it.

MENU:

Chicken Cordon Bleu

Roast Beef

Mashed Potatoes & Gravy

Vegetables

Buns and salad

*Vegetarian option is available upon request
(must RSVP)

Dinner catered by Whistle Stop Café

\$22 per person (at cost)

Please prepay by **April 25** to hold your reservation: HCSCC, P.O. Box 157, Moorhead, MN 56560. Please specify your entrée.

Wanted:

**Photographs of the
Garrick Theater**
(interior or exterior)

Please bring photos to the Annual
Meeting, Thursday, May 2.
We would love to see them!

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Our thanks to the Moorhead City Council and
Clay County for their continued support.

HCSCC News

Please Send us Your Addresses!

Are you going away for the winter or coming back for the summer? Please send your alternate address to Sarah.Smith@ci.moorhead.mn.us to make sure you're receiving all the up-to-date information from the HCSCC!

Regular Hours Resume in April at the Hjemkomst Center

The Hjemkomst Center, Senior Connections and the Museum will resume being open Tuesday evenings starting **April 2, 2013**. Regular hours are Monday - Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., Tuesday 9 a.m. - 8 p.m., and Sunday noon - 5 pm. Winter hours are from December through March and do not include evening hours.

Board Seeks Representatives

The HCSCC Board is in need of Clay County community representatives to serve on the board. In particular, with the retirement of Helen Olson, we need a Hawley representative. The Ulen Area is also not represented. At the May Annual Meeting, we will need to fill three more seats. Contact Maureen if you are interested at 218-299-5511 or by email at maureen.jonason@ci.moorhead.mn.us.



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www.facebook.com/hcsc

Letter from the Board President

Gene Prim



It's the beginning of a new year and the staff at Clay County HCS have all hit the ground running. The start of a new year means a total revamping of exhibits in an attempt to keep the presentations at the Hjemkomst Center fresh and new.

The Boom exhibit, which focused on the years

following World War II until 1960 is down but not forgotten. The panels that made up the majority of "The Boom" exhibit are now on loan and on display at the Barnesville Public Library. *The Boom* photo panels will later be on display at the Moorhead Public Library.

Replacing *The Boom* is the exhibit of *Prairie Daughters: the Art and Lives of Annie Stein and Orabel Thortvedt*. This tribute to two early Clay County artists has opened to great reviews and great crowds coming in to view this new exhibit.



Opening of Prairie Daughters: The Art and Lives of Annie Stein and Orabel Thortvedt. Left to Right: Eva Hedstrom, Maureen Kelly Jonason, Lisa Vedaa, Melissa Stiel-Paul, Markus Krueger, Kelly Wambach.



Steve Stark giving an illustrated history presentation about Red River Valley History.

History Sundays with Steve Stark also drew rave reviews and great crowds. Stark makes history come alive and hopefully this series of lectures can be expanded upon next winter.

There are also workshops of varied interests and traveling presentations coming to the museum on a regular basis. One of the more interesting of these short duration exhibits features information from Dr. H. Elaine Lindgren's book, *Land in her Own Name*. The author will be at the Hjemkomst Center March 2 at 2:00 p.m. to conduct a book signing and a talk on women homesteaders.

The big ticket item, in addition to the regular work at the museum, will be the development of a permanent display of the Red River Exhibit. This is a major piece of work and will be expensive. If you have a half million dollars you might be inclined to donate to the Red River Exhibit, feel free to stop by the Hjemkomst Center. Maureen would be happy to talk to you. If you don't have a half million bucks to donate right now, we could still use your membership dues to keep the work of the Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County going. You can also help out by encouraging your friends to become members of HCS.

From the Executive Director . . .

Maureen Kelly Jonason



As I prepare for spring activities, including the May 2 annual meeting of HCS, I can't help but burst with pride over what a successful 2012 we had here. We had so many events, one of which was the 30th anniversary of the sailing of the *Hjemkomst*

to Norway that an estimated 700 people attended. Even our lectures on the Dakota-US conflict of 1862 brought in over 50 people each. Exhibit-wise, we were kept ever-busy with many changes: we opened *The Boom: 1994-1960* in January, while Old West Town carvings of Frank Koch continued in the hall cases, Ordinary Vikings continued in the basement gallery, and 2009 Flood Photos opened in Heritage Hall. Claudia Pratt's 50th birthday celebration exhibit *EXPLORING NOW: 365 Days to 50* and *The sheARTS Project: Art Hats for Breast Cancer Awareness* came next along with *Seeds of Victory*, a collection of WWII Victory Garden posters. The Fargo-Moorhead Visual Artists' BIG Show saw us into June when the Red River Watercolor Society's *National Juried Water Media Exhibition* took over. Staff worked with exhibit consultant Claudia Pratt and her intern Amanda Nordick who researched and designed a new exhibit on the building and sailing of the *Hjemkomst*, which opened with a crew- and Asp-family reunion on July 21. Immediately after it opened, staff dove deeply into developing the next Clay County exhibit—*Prairie Daughters: The Art and Lives of Annie Stein and Orabel Thortvedt*—which opened Jan. 22, 2013 – and so it goes. We ended up increasing attendance over 10% to over 25,000; we met our gift shop and admission goals, and we exceeded our grant goals. All in all – it was amazing.

It should come as no surprise then, that the staff and board have decided that our motto for 2013 is this: Do LESS, better! It is hard to say no when

we get so many fascinating opportunities for special events and exhibits. But every staff has its limits, and we have some major projects ahead in the next few years that need extra attention. For spring, watch for these highlights:

- *The Celtic Festival – March 9, free, 10am-4pm
 - * *Electrifying Minnesota* opens March 13-May 27
 - *History Sundays with Steve Stark March 10
 - *German Fraktur Calligraphy workshop March 23
 - *Ukrainian Egg Workshop March 30
 - *German Wine Tasting March 30
 - * *A Woman's Perspective on Ritual Multimedia Art Exhibition* through March 30.
 - *FMVA *BIG Art Show* opening reception April 16 5-7pm (exhibit runs 4/2 – 6/3)
- HCSCC ANNUAL MEETING May 2 in Hawley!
Syttende Mai May 17 at the Hjemkomst Center 11:30-1 with pølse fest.

Did I say we'd be doing LESS? Well, we'll try!

Electrifying Minnesota

A traveling exhibit from the Minnesota History Center and The Bakken Museum

IMAGINE LIGHTING YOUR HOME

at a flick of a switch - for the first time! Through film, photography and interactives, this exhibit illuminates the amazing ways electricity has shaped life in Minnesota.

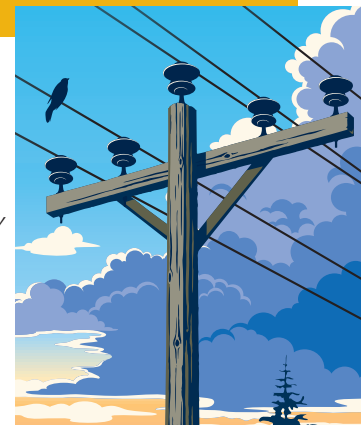
Don't miss it—

March 13 - May 27

Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County

Hjemkomst Center
202 1st Avenue N
Moorhead, MN

www.hscconline.org



***The Hjemkomst: Thirty Years Later* Debuts at the Fargo Film Festival**

The Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County invites the public to a celebration of unique achievement. On Tuesday, March 5, 2013, at the Fargo Theatre in downtown Fargo, the eleven-minute documentary short about the 30th anniversary of the sailing of the *Hjemkomst* Viking ship will premiere. The *Hjemkomst: Thirty Years Later* is also the recipient of The Prairie Spirit Award 2013.

The Hjemkomst: Thirty Years Later was first conceived in 2010 when Eli Akira Kaufman was a guest filmmaker at the 2010 Fargo Film Festival with his two student films *Winning the Peace* and *California King* for which he won Best Student Film, Best Actor, Best Screenplay. Kaufman wandered over to visit the museum on the recommendation of local filmmaker Tony Tilton and ended up falling in love with the story of the ship, the expedition and the communities that made it happen. The following summer Kaufman found himself returning to the Fargo-Moorhead area to chronicle the 30th anniversary of the launching of the ship from the famous potato warehouse in Hawley, MN in order to meet some of the Hawley community and crew members for the first time. Fast forward to the summer of 2012 and Kaufman, now the

Head of Production at GOOD in Los Angeles, CA, reconnected with Jonason to see if they could make their dream project a reality. In the meantime, Jonason had applied for and was awarded a grant through the Minnesota Historical Society to video-record the anniversary celebration and crew interviews for archival purposes. Kaufman was able to travel to Moorhead with colleagues Alex Gorosh and Harry Mayers to shoot the celebration, the panel discussion on July 21, 2012, and interviews with crew and Asp family members. Kaufman then took the footage back to Los Angeles and worked on producing an 11-minute documentary short for GOOD's online magazine at <http://good.is>.

GOOD is a global community of, by and for pragmatic idealists working towards individual and collective progress.

The result is a fun, uplifting high-speed short tribute to most of the people who made the historic voyage a reality and what it means to them thirty years later. At 7pm, Kaufman will be awarded the Prairie Spirit Award of the film festival, the film will debut, and he will answer questions from the audience. Admission to the opening night of the five-day film festival is \$8.



Left to right: Eli A. Kaufman, Harry Mayers and Alex Gorosh filming Doug Asp at the Hjemkomst Center in 2012. (photograph by Martin Jonason)

Saving Hawley's Garrick Theater

By Markus Krueger

The Garrick Theater opened to the public on October 1, 1920. "No expense has been spared to give the movie fans of Hawley and the vicinity the finest movie house in the Northwest, all work and material being furnished by local men, and the building itself a credit to any town or city," the *Clay County Herald* raved that day. The crowd paid a quarter to see Mary Pickford in *Pollyanna* (the price of a movie in Fargo today is \$9.50).

This 93-year-old building is actually the "new" Garrick Theater, replacing the original theater that was probably located above Andrew Johnson's department store. It was likely named for David Garrick, a famous 18th-century English actor whose name was often taken by theater owners to give their place a touch of class. A fire burned the newspapers that would tell us exactly when that first theater opened, but we know it was operating by 1918. By the beginning of 1920, business was going so well that the owners decided to expand. In February of 1920, the Hawley Motion Picture Company was formed by Elbert Johnson (the son of previously mentioned



The Garrick Theater prior to the repairs.

department store owner Albert Johnson), Elbert's brother-in-law Robert Burrill, and Robert's brother Henry Burrill to facilitate the building of a 550-seat brick and concrete theater on Front Street. The Hawley Lumber Co. won the bid for construction, and building was underway by May. The Garrick Theater would show movies in Hawley for 79 years. Fast forward to 2002. The Garrick had been vacant for 13 years. Water was leaking through the roof. "The city was ready to tear it down and make a parking lot out of it," recalls current owner Jim Bortnem. City officials approached Jim with an offer: they would sell the building to him for a dollar if he agreed to put a new roof on it. "Most expensive dollar I ever spent," he says.

I met with Jim Bortnem to talk about how and why he bought, remodeled, restored, and recently reopened Hawley's Garrick Theater. It was the day after a big blizzard, so he showed up in patched, old, insulated overalls. He had plowed his way into Fargo so he could dig out some of his properties downtown. The Garrick is not the only old building he owns. He owns a few others in Hawley, and he recently bought most of a block on Fargo's NP Avenue. The buildings I saw over his shoulder as we sipped coffee at the Fargo Fry'n Pan are his, too.

Jim Bortnem grew up in Audubon, Minnesota, but settled down in Clay County more than forty years ago so his kids could go to Hawley schools and live in



Elbert Johnson was the president of the Hawley Motion Picture Company. Before the new Garrick Theater was built in 1920, the theater was connected to his father's department store, where Elbert worked as a bookkeeper by day. Flaten/Wange Collection, HCSCC

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the country. He was in the cable and communications business. About a decade ago, he sold off his towers and radio frequencies to cell phone companies. He did well enough on the deals that instead of taking up stamp collecting in retirement, he took up collecting old buildings. Now that he is retired, he gets to work hard full time caring for his buildings.

I asked him why he bought up old buildings. Is it a business? Is it a charity? With a thoughtful but puzzled look he responded, "I don't know what it is." Talking with him, you will find some of his motivations for saving the Garrick Theater. He appreciates quality workmanship ("Do you know how much brickwork like that would cost today? People couldn't afford it!" he said of one Hawley building). It seems that he also feels a sense of responsibility to save what buildings he can ("they tore that one down before I could get to it," he regretfully said of another building). He hates the waste of tearing down an entire building just because it needs a new roof. The simplest answer to why he took on this project, though, is that he likes old buildings and enjoys restoring them. "I don't mind working," he said, "and the theater has been just one fun project all the way through."

"It irritates me to tear down an old building," Jim told me. "You don't just lose the building. You lose the stories, the history. People walk into the Garrick and right away they're pointing out, 'I remember that, I remember this, I remember coming here.' You

don't get that with a new building."

Jim fixed the roof of the Garrick Theater right away in 2002, but it took a decade before he had the time to devote to restoring it. In October of 2011, Jim and his crew - his longtime friend Rick Hill and Jim's two grandnephews, Brody Voelker and Eric Softing - "decided to go after it," working long hours to bring the Garrick back to life.

There was much to be excited about when they began. The theater remained just as it was when it closed in 1989. "Everything was there. The door was locked; they left." The building, however, needed a lot of work. The roof, walls, floors, insulation and heating system all had to be replaced. Restoring the building to its former glory was further complicated by the fact that he did not know exactly what the original theater looked like. Jim had only been to the theater once when it was open, and somehow only one photograph of the building could be found in the Clay County Archives. "Nobody has any pictures of it," Jim laments. **If any reader has photographs of the Garrick Theater when it was open, both Jim Bortnem and the HCSCC staff are very interested in seeing them.**

Demolition led to interesting discoveries. Jim reckons that the balcony was turned into an apartment sometime before World War II. While taking apart a piece of rotten ceiling, the crew found the curved contour of the original balcony. While



Above is the beautiful art deco style of the re-discovered balcony.

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Garrick Theater Continued...



Remodeling the floor and a view of the stage.

the newly-restored balcony might not look familiar to Garrick-goers of the last half century, it may look familiar to those who were there for opening night some four score and thirteen years ago.

“We’ve had phenomenal support from the community,” Jim says. The doors were open to the public while they worked, but the real unveiling of the theater was during last summer’s 140th anniversary of Hawley High School. Jim estimates that 400 people come in that day to see the theater they remembered. One man sat down in an old seat and remarked “They feel a lot smaller than they used to.” “Well, it ain’t the seat,” Jim told him.

With the restoration of the Garrick nearing completion, Jim Bortnem will turn his attention to his other buildings in Hawley. Jim and crew applied for a city grant to remodel the outside of two buildings on 6th Street, and he recently bought the Knutson building, an old car dealership that he says is “in terrible shape.” “What I’m gonna do with that I don’t know. My standard answer is ‘I’m gonna put a roof on it.’”

The Garrick Theater has a future as an events center. Bortnem and his crew made an effort to keep the

lobby just as it was in the old days, but the rest of the theater is an up-to-date rebuild. The rows of chairs in the theater have been moved to make open space for dining and dancing. The stage is a little wider and deeper now, with modern stage lighting. A new digital projector has replaced the original film projectors, which will be on view in a planned display of historic theater artifacts in the balcony. “If people want to rent it,” Jim says, “they can.”

We at the Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County have taken him up on that offer. Our annual meeting will be held at Hawley’s Garrick Theater on May 2, 2013. Jim Bortnem will give a presentation about how he restored the theater, including photographs he and his crew took of all phases of the project. A September 24, 1920, passage from the *Clay County Herald* about the opening of the Garrick Theater seems to apply just as much to the rescue and rebirth of the building: “It will fill a long felt want in this community and is an addition of which the people of Hawley and vicinity may well feel proud.”

Prairie Daughters Opens to a Crowd

The Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County opened its new Clay County exhibit on Tuesday, Jan. 22, to a crowd of 220. Besides having the Fargo-Moorhead-West Fargo Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting with Chamber Ambassadors, many HCS members and non-members from throughout Clay County visited *Prairie Daughters: The Art and Lives of Annie Stein and Orabel Thortvedt*.

The exhibit is large and detailed with art works in several media for each artist as well as personal effects and a tremendous amount of information. "It's causing quite a buzz in the county. The reception brought out many people who have a personal connection to one or the other woman, and they are sharing their stories," said Maureen Kelly Jonason, HCS executive director.

The exhibit was funded in part by a grant from the Lake Region Arts Council through a Minnesota State Legislative appropriation. It was designed by Marketing Coordinator Gwen McCausland, who brought a great deal of exhibit designing and building experience from her previous museum positions. The exhibit features two small recreations of the rooms where the artists painted. Large-format photos reveal the women involved in several media including needlework and photography for Annie Stein and sculpture and watercolor for Orabel Thortvedt.

In the work of both artists are reflections of their pride in their parents' pioneering spirit and a reverence for the past. Their personal effects, including furniture, books, journals, and art supplies, add a deeply intimate look into their everyday lives. The exhibit as a whole elevates the two to nearly celebrity status. "We are thrilled to

be able to share this rich tapestry of county history with the public," said Jonason. "And we are grateful for the support of so many individuals who have kindly loaned us their beloved pieces so carefully preserved and cherished all these years." Collectors literally took the works off their walls to loan them for this exhibit, which will be open at the Hjemkomst Center over the next year.

Research on these two women and their art began more than a year ago. Clay County Archivist Mark Peihl has for many years used the Thortvedt journals and scrapbooks for genealogy, but developing the exhibit gave him

more opportunity to dig into the thousands of pages of history carefully documented and illustrated with drawings and watercolor images. The journals of several Thortvedts, including father Levi and daughter Orabel, are treasure troves of information on early Clay County history. Also researching the lives and works of both women were Visitor Services Coordinator Markus Krueger and

Collections Manager Lisa Vedaa. A summer intern from MSUM, Bayley Kinner, spent last summer working on Orabel's journals as well.

Many people helped to put the exhibit together including Annie Stein-collector Kelly Wambach, who also is HCS's gift shop manager; Thortvedt family descendants; local collectors; and HCS full-time staff, college interns and part-time staff. "It was a labor of love with excitement over daily discoveries throughout the year," said Jonason. "We want everyone in the county to come in and see this magnificent exhibit at some point this year. It is well worth the price of admission or membership!"



Left to Right: Gloria Lee, Dale White, Gail Blair, Jim Saueressig, Eva Hedstrom, Maureen Kelly Jonason, Lisa Vedaa, Markus Krueger, Kelly Wambach, Gwen McCausland, and Mark Peihl.

Moorhead's Urban Renewal

by Mark Peihl

Forty years ago this March a huge, orange monster creaked down Moorhead's Center Avenue, swung its clawed arm around and took a bite out of the Moorhead Theater. Within days the last remnants of the city's commercial core disappeared. Dozens of buildings which had lined Center Avenue for nearly one-hundred years were gone. Urban Renewal was nearing completion.

It had been a long and often painful process to get to this point, marked by frustrating delays and bureaucratic infighting. Today many believe it was a mistake, that historic buildings were destroyed heedlessly. Nevertheless, Urban Renewal was one of the biggest things to happen to Moorhead since the railroads arrived.

Moorhead's Urban Renewal story really dates to the end of World War II. Returning GIs and their young families flocked to Moorhead to take jobs in FM industries which expanded during the war. Moorhead's population exploded by 151% between 1940 and 1960. New neighborhoods popped up on the south and north sides of town. Planning was often overlooked.

In 1956 the city established a five-member Planning Commission to develop an overall strategy for the city's future growth. Commission members meant well but got bogged down in day to day minutia. One City Council member complained that the group was "holding meetings on the type of surfacing we should put on our streets when they should have been deciding where future streets were going." In 1958 the City Council replaced the planning group with a new, nine-member Commission with broad

powers tasked to create a comprehensive city development plan.

The rapid growth and housing crunch Moorhead faced after World War II afflicted much of the country. Congress passed the 1949 Housing Act. The Act was originally intended to create new housing through systematic redevelopment of "blighted" urban areas but it also allowed for other land uses, like municipal and commercial development.

It worked like this. A city could apply for a federal loan to pay for planning a redevelopment project. The project had to be part of a comprehensive city plan. Once the Feds approved the plan, federal grants were available to help purchase the properties involved. The city had to pay 25% of the expense but could apply infrastructure costs to its share. The city then would sell the land to a private developer to finish the project. No federal funding would go toward redevelopment construction, only purchasing and clearing the land. Adequate housing for those displaced had to be provided. The feds could pay for that.



A local sign company erected this billboard on top of the Comstock Hotel to explain to visitors why so many Center Avenue storefronts were standing vacant. The Comstock was boarded up because of fire damage. (c. 1968)

In the 1950s Fargo had embarked on what was roundly hailed as a successful Urban Renewal project. The often-flooded neighborhood bounded by the Red River, 1st Ave

N, 5th St N and the Great Northern Railroad tracks had been leveled and was now home to a new Civic Center, city hall, parking lot, proposed new library and commercial developments. Moorhead eyed Fargo's project with envy.

In January 1962 *Red River Scene* publisher Jim Peterson ran a front-page editorial urging

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Moorhead to begin an Urban Renewal project of its own. He focused on the low-lying "Point" area. Now home to the Hjemkomst Center, the Point was Moorhead's original residential neighborhood. By the 1950s nearly annual flooding had driven out most residents who could afford to move. Peterson recommended using federal dollars to create commercial development in the area.

Public meetings on the idea followed that spring. The river gave urban renewal a boost by cresting four times in 1962. After the third crest, some Point residents did not bother to move back. But federal restrictions allowed only parks to be placed in flood plains. Parks are great but don't add much to the tax base.

Many Moorhead residents perceived a decline in their commercial downtown. Some store owners deferred maintenance on their buildings. Residents saw shoppers flocking to downtown Fargo merchants. With the completion of the new Interstate Highway 94 across the Red River, two new shopping centers, Brookdale and what would become the Holiday Mall, were scheduled to open later in 1962 on the city's south side. Folks were concerned that downtown would not be able to compete. City officials began to see Urban Renewal as a way to not only redevelop the Point area but to revitalize Moorhead's commercial core.

In July, at the urging of the Planning Commission, the City Council voted unanimously to go ahead with creating a "workable" Urban Renewal plan for submission to the Feds. The city first needed a comprehensive plan, still uncompleted since 1958. The Planning Commission hired local architect Robert J. Roberts to draft the arrangement. That fall the city established an Urban Renewal Authority to oversee the implementation of the eventual project.

Meanwhile, the Planning Commission got busy. In July 1963 they presented city officials with a bold two-phase Urban Renewal program. The first phase (dubbed R-1) called for leveling nearly everything north of the Northern Pacific Railway tracks and west of 8th Street, encompassing nearly 97 acres. A civic center, new city hall and police station, commercial redevelopment and parks would be

built. The second phase (R-2) called for leveling and redeveloping the area from the NP tracks south to 4th Ave S and from 8th St to the river. The Woodlawn Park area would become a 44-acre lake.

The *Fargo Forum* writer Wayne Lubenow reported that the audacious plan "made some hair stand on end and it drew gasps – but everybody loved it." Moorhead Mayor B. T. Bottolfson gushed "Great! I wish I were 30 years younger to see it through." Other Council members expressed similar excitement. Lubenow pointedly ended his piece by saying that though the plan had a good chance of being approved by the city, "now it must be sold to the people."

Indeed, despite local and federal officials' repeated pronouncements about the importance of public input and involvement, the public had little opportunity to comment on the plan, much less influence it. This lack of public buy-in would haunt the program throughout its evolution.

In August 1963 Moorhead's "workable program" received preliminary approval from the federal Housing and Home Finance Agency. But this was just the beginning. Roberts was hired as Urban Renewal Authority's Executive Director late in 1963. In following June the URA received 174,000 federal dollars to complete a series of necessary surveys looking at housing needs, assessment of properties and the marketability of the land to be purchased. The surveys took over a year to complete.

The surveyors came to some uncomfortable conclusions. In early 1965, Larry Smith & Company of Chicago, hired to do the marketability study, issued a preliminary report. It said fear of competition by Moorhead retailers was one factor responsible for lack of development in downtown. URA Director Roberts agreed. In a *Fargo Forum* interview he said that "not only do Moorhead retailers fear competition . . . but their efforts over the years to prevent the development of stores similar to theirs in the downtown area have thwarted development."

The report also stated, "A second point concerns the apparent reluctance of Moorhead to do anything about becoming other than a secondary retail area,

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Urban Renewal continued ...

leaving it to Fargo to dominate the retail sales in this metropolitan area." Roberts said "a woman shopper . . . doesn't buy from the first store she goes into, but shops where there are several stores to chose from" - like in downtown Fargo. Moorhead Chamber of Commerce President Curtis J. Johnson said there were other factors affecting lack of growth, but he also had to agree with the report: "This is pretty much the case, I'm sorry to say . . . It's true of other towns and it's true of Moorhead." He saw the Urban

Renewal project as "probably the only way to get the town moving again."

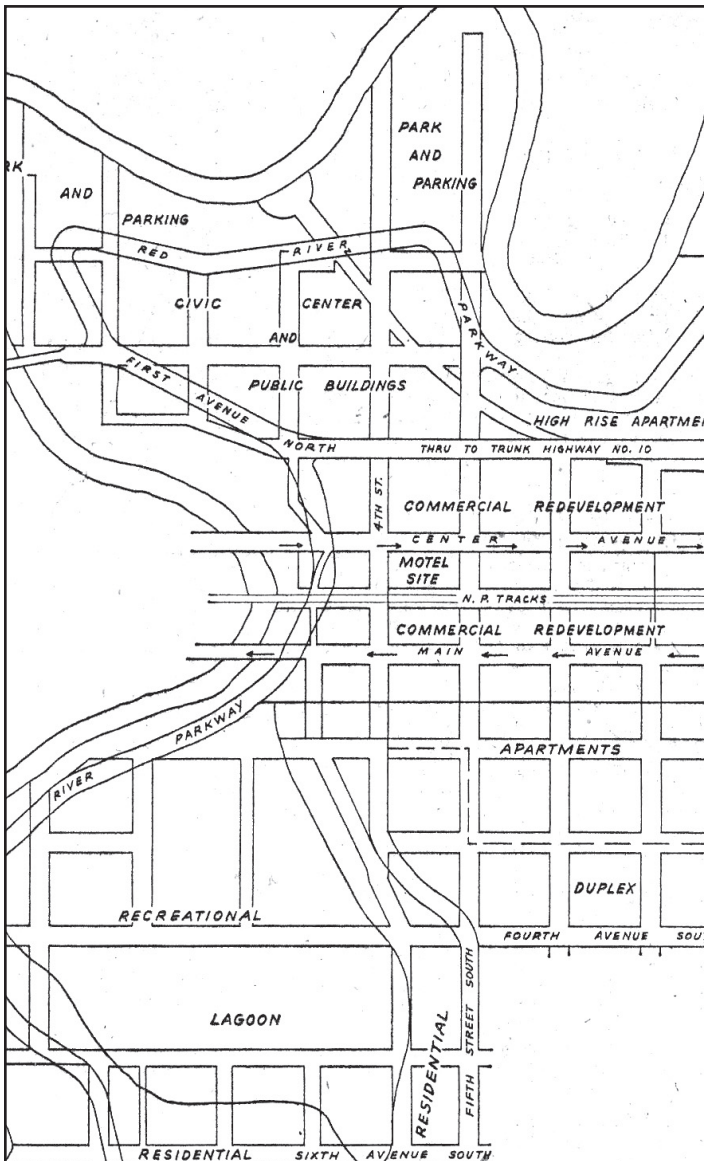
Smith & Company's final report concluded the Moorhead's Urban Renewal land "is highly marketable - but only if Moorhead vigorously pursues and supports the proposed redevelopment." Its success would be dependent upon the attitudes and actions of individual retailers. "Only through the close coordination of the retail community and the renewal program can the available potential of downtown Moorhead be realized." The report also "stressed the need for a king-sized department store as the hard core of a downtown shopping district."

Later that year Roberts finished the city's comprehensive plan. With that finally in place, the city needed only a plan for housing the approximately 172 families who would be displaced by the plan. Moorhead officials hoped to utilize existing housing for this, but the feds insisted on new public housing. The City Council reluctantly agreed in December 1965 to apply for a 150-unit project, the smallest the feds would allow. With that final hurdle behind them, the city officially applied for federal funds for the project.

Formal federal approval of the Moorhead Urban Renewal plan came in December 1966. After four years Moorhead seemed poised, finally, to move ahead on the 9.7 million dollar project, but two years of little action followed. Buy-outs came slowly. Moorhead adopted a no-negotiating, take-it-or-leave it approach to the properties. But the resulting condemnation proceedings took time as did complicated federal rules on assessments. Some progress had been made on finding the Point residents new housing. Construction began on low-rent housing units and a high-rise for them along 8th St, north of the Fairmont Creamery.

With the delays, frustration mounted downtown and especially among Point residents. In July 1965 folks there had received letters from the URA saying that their properties would be bought by January and that they should spend no money on refurbishments. Three years later they were still waiting, with no way to borrow against their property and no way to sell to anyone else.

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In July 1963 the Moorhead Planning Commission proposed this bold, two-phase Urban Renewal plan for the city. The first phase called for leveling and redeveloping nearly everything north of the NPRy tracks and west of 8th Street. The second phase would have flattened the near south side and turned Woodlawn Park into a 44-acre lake. Fargo Forum, July 17, 1963.

On Center Avenue, businesses stood next to empty store fronts. A local sign company placed a huge billboard on top of the Comstock Hotel reading "Under the Hammer, 96 acres, Downtown Urban Renewal" to explain to visitors why the area looked so dismal.

By late 1968 no developers had come forward. In most Urban Renewal projects, outside developers submitted bids to buy the cleared land and build the entire project. Moorhead businessmen, concerned that an outside interest would control the city's entire commercial core, wanted another track. In August 1965 local businessmen started Park Central Development Association, hired a consultant to put together a proposal and planned to bid on the development. Nothing came of their plans.

The Moorhead Urban Renewal Authority (now the Moorhead Housing and Redevelopment Authority) hired a Milwaukee consultant, Herbert Friedlen, to recruit major department stores to join the project and to secure places in the project for displaced businesses. After several unproductive years, the HRA sacked Friedlen.

Roberts entered into secret negotiations with developers around the country to take over the development phase. When downtown businessmen fumed over his inability to recruit a developer, he complained that developers he had brought to town were less than impressed with the attitudes of local businessmen.

The program did move a bit in 1969. Homes in the Point neighborhood came down in January. The ruins of the Waterman Department Store building on Center Avenue and 6th St, destroyed in a 1967 fire, also came down. That summer the HRA announced they had succeeded in finding a developer, Moorhead Development Company - headed by the previously sacked Herbert Friedlen.

In February 1970 the officials at the federal Housing and Urban Development cried foul, claiming Friedlen's previous role constituted a serious conflict of interest. HUD demanded that the city open the project to public bids. HUD had already stopped

any land purchases because of irregularities in the assessment process and was investigating deficiencies in Moorhead's relocation efforts.

The HRA fired Roberts in March, hired Robert Colestock to replace him and adopted an open bidding process. They hired consultants to conduct new surveys and prepare a new "workable plan" The HRA persuaded HUD to allow the land purchases to resume. The HRA basically started over from scratch.

By spring 1971 a local group, Moorhead Center Development, headed by Lowell Wagner, floated plans for a scaled-back downtown mall incorporating a multi-story city hall. As they were the only ones expressing interest in the project, the HRA sought and received HUD permission to rescind the open-bidding process and sold them the land in November. Demolition soon followed and construction began on the city hall.

Acquisition of final pieces of property and decisions about the eventual locations of Scheel's Hardware and American State Bank created minor delays. The last properties fronting Center Avenue went down in March 1973. The Moorhead Center Mall held its grand opening the next month. After eleven painful years Moorhead's Urban Renewal project, for better or worse, was finally complete.



A Northern Improvement demolition crane demolishes the Moorhead Theater in March 1973. These were among the last of Moorhead's old buildings to be torn down for Urban Renewal.

Stein Farm Inspires Another Local Artist

In the latest Clay County history exhibit, *Prairie Daughters: The Art and Lives of Annie Stein and Orabel Thortvedt*, paintings by Annie Stein showcase her Stein Family homestead in the early 1900s. She documented the building of it with her camera and painted several pieces with the house as the main subject.

A hundred years later, Donna Chalimonczyk, another local artist, found inspiration in the Stein Family farmhouse to paint two paintings as it relates its more recent history.



Donna painted this piece for her friend Jan Prichard Scott who grew up in the house after the Steins sold it. The house is white with a bright red roof. Jan said that her father loved the color red and changed roofs on all of the building to that color.



Marlis Ziegler, another friend of Donna, lived on the Stein Farm after the Prichards. A new gray roof was added to the home. Donna painted the house as it would have been when Marlis lived there with the traditional gray roof and the vibrant red trim.

The Boom: 1945-1960 exhibit at the Barnesville Library!

On display now through May!

Clay County's post-war "Boom" live on thanks to our friends at the Lake Agassiz Regional Library. Panels from last year's county history exhibit *The Boom: 1945-1960 in Clay County* will be on display at the Barnesville Public Library from now through May, 2013.



While you are at the library you can check out free passes to see the brand new Clay County history exhibit *Prairie Daughters: The Art and Lives of Annie Stein and Orabel Thortvedt*. The Check Out the Museum program is a collaboration between HCSCC and the Lake Agassiz Regional Library system to make sure our museum at the Hjemkomst Center is available to everyone in Clay County. The Barnesville Public Library, the Hawley Public Library and the Moorhead Public Library each offer six free tickets to our museum every week. Spread the word!



In Search of Rhine Gold The Wines of Germany

March 30

2-4 pm

\$20 per person (seating limited)

Call Tim Jorgensen at 218-299-5511 ext. 6737



Spend two hours on a Saturday afternoon exploring the wines of Germany. We will cover Germany's 13 wine regions, grape varieties, viticulture, wine making and labeling. We will sample four wines of vastly different types, each from a different region ranging from dry to sweet and in styles from sparkling, table white and red to dessert. We will accompany the wine tasting with a sampling of delights to refresh the palate including regional cheeses and a dessert.

About the Instructor, Sam Wai:

Instructor Sam Wai began studying fine wines in the early 1970's. He has led wine tastings and taught wine appreciation courses for the last 25 years, specializing in wine regions of Europe. He believes that every fine wine has a story to tell. You will particularly enjoy his wine selections and learning about the wines and the regions in the context of the broader culture and history of the wines of Germany.

Sponsored by:

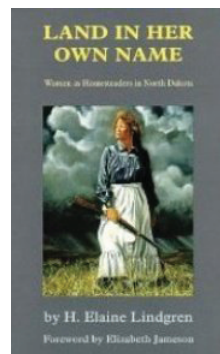


Behind the Pages

Author Presentation and

Book Signing

Free and Open to the Public



Land in Her Own Name

by H. Elaine Lindgren

March 2 at 2 pm

Dr. Lindgren will discuss her research of women homesteaders of North Dakota. Copies of her books are on sale in the Heritage Shop and will be available at the book signing.



The Teacher

a novel by Roger Quam

March 5 at 10 am

March 5 marks the 100th anniversary of the Dist. 53 school shooting near Glyndon. This tragic event was the basis of Roger Quam's latest novel, *The Teacher*. It is a story of courage, faith and above all, love. Mr. Quam will discuss the facts behind his book and his process in writing.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Diane Wray Williams began volunteering just this past year as a tour guide of the Stave Church. Like friend and long-time volunteer Margaret Callsen, Williams looks forward to the once a month treat of monkey bread as it makes coming to work all the more sweet. A good step away from her former eight-year career serving on the Moorhead City Council, Williams says she was determined to volunteer at one of the "City of Moorhead's treasures." She likes the job so much that she even joked that she wouldn't mind paying to do it.



With a true passion for learning, Williams says that she is not only a politician but also a teacher. She loves to spin a yarn for her groups and especially appreciates tourists from Norway because she gets a chance to pick their brains. Williams believes that the museum encourages community and that it isn't just history but also the present and the future that can be seen here. History is meant for us to learn from, and not only does volunteering here provide her with the chance to spread her love of the Red River Valley's heritage, but it gives visitors a chance

to benefit from a spirited and knowledgeable guide who always hopes to learn more.

Williams calls the Hjemkomst center a "Place of Dreams" and she always starts her tours by asking the group about theirs. By the end of the tour, Williams hopes to encourage the dreams of her group by example, showing them that making your dreams a reality isn't impossible if you have the will for it, just like Robert Asp and his family.

Heritage Craft Workshops

Hosted by the Heritage Shop at the Hjemkomst

Fraktur Calligraphy Workshop

Saturday, March 23

1pm – 4 pm

\$25 all materials are included

Fraktur or Gothic script, was used throughout Western Europe from 1150 to 1600s. This class teaches the fundamental techniques to writing in this medieval script.

Registration due: March 16

Instructor: Anne Kaese

Call Kelly at 218-299-5511 ext. 6731 to register.

Pysanka (Ukrainian Egg) Workshop

Saturday, March 30

10am – noon

\$25 all materials included

A Ukrainian folk art, pysanka, is decorating eggs using a wax-resist method and dyes. This class teaches the fundamentals for making pysankas. Students will be able to decorate their own egg and take home the stand used in the class.

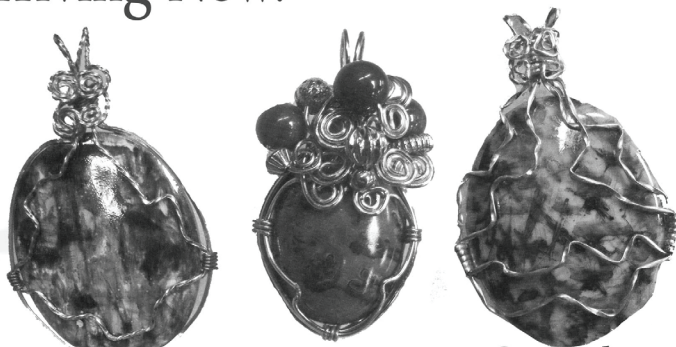
Registration is due: March 23

Instructor: Kim Jore

It's Spring in the Heritage Gift Shop!

wood turnings by
Kurt Anderson

New Spring Inventory Arriving Now!



Jewelry by Pat Otremba

Stop in and
check out dozens of
New and Unique
Gift Items

Beeswax
candles



Baskets from Ghana

2013 Exhibition & Event Calendar

Current & Upcoming Exhibitions

Prairie Daughters: The Art and Lives of Annie Stein and Orabel Thortvedt.

Open throughout 2013

The untold story of early female artists in Clay County as illustrated through these women's lives and works of art.

A Woman's Perspective On Ritual

February 1 – March 30

Local female literary, visual and performing artists explore the meaning of ritual in various mediums and exhibition venues.

Land in Her Own Name

January 30 – March 6, 2013

An exhibit based on Dr. Elaine Lindgren's book about women homesteaders of North Dakota. Learn of the joys and sorrows of these independent women who forged a new life on the wild prairie.

Electrifying Minnesota

March 13 – May 27, 2013

Imagine lighting your home with the flick of a switch—for the first time! Electrifying Minnesota, an exhibit from the Bakken Museum and the Minnesota History Center, combines film, photography and hands-on activities to demonstrate the amazing ways electricity has shaped life in Minnesota.

FMVA Big Art Show

April 6 – June 3

FMVA Big Art Show is a wide variety of art (2D and 3D) from both emerging and established artists. **Public Reception: April 16 from 5-7 pm.** The reception is free and open to the public.



Prairie Daughters exhibit

Upcoming Events

History Sundays with Steve Stark, 1 pm

The presentation is free but there is an admission fee to see museum galleries.

February 24: Propellers & Pantaloons: Female Aviators

March 10: Bonanza Farms (**Rescheduled**)

Fraktur Calligraphy Workshop

Saturday, March 23

1pm – 4 pm

\$25 all materials included

Fraktur, or Gothic script, was a script used throughout Western Europe from approximately 1150 to well into the 17th century. This class teaches the fundamental techniques to writing in this medieval script.

Registration due: March 16

Instructor: Anne Kaese

In Search of Rhine Gold: Wines of Germany

Saturday, March 30

2pm – 4 pm

\$20 per person limited to 30 people

Instructor: Sam Wai

Tantalize your palate with the wines of Germany. In two hours, Sam Wai, a wine specialist will present four different wines representing the vineyard regions of Germany. The wines will be paired with appropriate German bread and cheeses from each region for the participants to enjoy.

Pysanka or Ukrainian Egg Workshop

Saturday, March 30

10am – noon

\$25 all materials are included

A Ukrainian folk art, pysanka, is decorating eggs using a wax-resist method and dyes. This class teaches the fundamentals for making pysankas. Students will be able to decorate their own egg and take home the stand used in the class.

Registration is due: March 23

Instructor: Kim Jore

Annual Meeting

Thursday, May 2

6-8 pm

At the Garrick Theater in Hawley, MN. Catered by the Whistle Stop Café. Call Tim at 218-299-5511 ext. 6737 for reservations.

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Artifact and Archival Donations – September-December 2012

Donors: Anonymous; Steve Aakre, Fargo; Augustana College, Rock Island, IL; Maurice Floberg, Moorhead; Joan Frey, Moorhead; Wayne and Sandra Gjervold, Hallock, MN; Evaughn Hovelsrud, Hawley; Celeste Johnson, Fargo; Don Kaspari, Markus Krueger, Moorhead; Alice E. "Jean" Langseth, Fargo; Marilyn Mills, Fresno, CA; City of Moorhead; Laurine Muhle, Lake Park, MN; Kim Murphy, Moorhead; Hayzell Olson, Ulen, MN; Helen Olson, Hawley; Parkview Terrace Apartments, Moorhead; Dorothy Powers, Moorhead; Richard and Annie Skrei, Bella Vista, AK; Claudia Souba, Moorhead; Brock and Jennifer Stenberg, Moorhead; Ruth Wibe, Moorhead

Artifacts: (2) sheets of blueprints for residence at 906 11th St S, Moorhead; military uniform, dog tags and medical kit, used by Raymond Treese of Hawley, MN, copies of CCC and military service papers for Treese; wedding suit, dress and going-away outfit of Rudolph Thompson and Clara Nelson; (5) child's dresses worn by Marie Nelson of Parke Township; U.S. flag, presented to City of Moorhead by CPT Cheryl Wachenheim in recognition of the community's 2009 flood fight efforts; bodice of wedding dress worn by Olga Holie for marriage to Albert Johnson; quilt made by Johanna Thompson who lived for a time in the "tent" house in Glyndon; (1) PC computer game, "Indy: Indiana Jones & The Last Crusade"; (1) volume, Clay County atlas, circa 1950; (1) issue, The Farmer journal, June 1, 1902; (1) issue, Capper's Farmer magazine, February 1950; 4-piece chamber set used by Adam Stein family of Georgetown, MN; (1) pencil and watercolor sketch, "School & Chapel, Moorhead, Minnesota" St. Joseph's Catholic School and Chapel; (2) paintings by Orabel Thortvedt: 1) watercolor, still life, 1934; 2) oil, horse and rider, 1966; papers and records of the Hawley Livestock Shipping Association, ca 1915-1944; medals, maps and cloisonné pin from Hawley, MN Volksmarch, ca 1980-1998; (2) volumes, catalogs and recital programs from

Hope Academy, Moorhead, MN, ca 1888-1896; (5) calendars, premiums from "Gilbertson & Olson" and "Olson Economy" Stores, Hawley, MN, 1930, 1935, 1943, 1958, (1) calendar, Hawley Lutheran Church, 1931, (1) edition, special, Country Press, 13 Sep 1940, and glass photo negatives, Olson and Dahl families of Hawley, MN; (1) volume, 1913 Fargo-Moorhead city directory and *(1) volume, Cass County in World War I; (1) volume, Sharing Our Best: Parkview Terrace Apartments, 2011 cookbook; (2) boxes, papers from Howard Binford: college, military and publishing; (1) box and medals, World War II and laminated wallet size copy of discharge papers US Army; (1) box of (41) 35mm slides, August 1980, Hjemkomst ship; clothing pieces worn by Jean Langseth and family, (1) green satin and black velvet dress, historic reproduction made for Glyndon Centennial by Harmony Homemakers, and (2) boxes Dist. 102 school records; clothing pieces ca1950s-1960s from LaVonne DesJardins; *clothing pieces worn by Mrs. Game and Mrs. Omer Heys of Glyndon and *(1) unfinished quilt top.

* Indicates materials added to education collection rather than permanent collection.



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To preserve, interpret and present the history and culture of the Clay County community and its neighbors.

History never looks like history when you are living through it.
~John W. Gardner

