

The Hourglass



Published by the Historical & Cultural Society of Clay County | ISSN #: 2153-5876

Helen Keller Exhibit Now Open

Helen Keller has often been selected as among the most admired Americans in all of history. Her story of becoming blind and deaf through illness as a child and her struggle to learn to communicate with the world was an award-winning play called *The Miracle Worker*, which also produced two great film versions. Many people wonder how she was able to go on to be educated, graduate from college with honors, become a professional public speaker, and rise to the status of national treasure in her own lifetime. Our current traveling exhibit, *Child in a Strange Country: Helen Keller and the History of Educating People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired*, tells that fascinating story by explaining and showing the specific techniques for teaching reading, writing, science, geography, and math to people who cannot see.

It may surprise you to know that just within the Fargo-Moorhead community, six people who are blind use service dogs; many more get around using the traditional white cane. Within the nine-county Lakes Region, over 3,700 people report having some vision impairment. And these are just the individuals who self-identify. Many more are losing their vision to macular degeneration and may not even know that there are services available and accommodations that can make their lives better.

This exhibit explores the methods by which different techniques for teaching and learning these educational topics have developed over time. Using sound and tactile features as well as readable

text, visitors will learn a great deal about how this often invisible segment of our society becomes educated. Do not miss the opportunity to share with your children and grandchildren the mystique of Helen Keller and how her story opened up the world to people who are blind or have low vision, many of whom used to live their whole lives in institutions. This hands-on exhibit will provide a memorable learning experience – guaranteed! This exhibition will be up through Oct. 31.



We thank the following Lions Clubs for their support to bring this exhibition to town: Horace, Hawley, Dilworth, Moorhead, and Fargo Gateway. The Lions answered Helen Keller's call to become "the knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness" in 1925 and have been serving people with vision challenges, among many other causes, since 1917, as one of the largest international volunteer organizations in the world.



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

HCSCC News

President's Message From John Dobmeier



Welcome to a new season. I am honored to serve this noble organization, and I personally thank you for your part in its success.

In 1970 my family purchased a beautiful lake lot on Lake Lizzie. This began my lifelong love affair with open water and sailing vessels, thanks to my father's love of sailing. Our first boat was a 14-foot tri-hull with a main mast and a functional jib. Many wonderful hours were spent on that boat with

only the sound of the wind as it filled our sails and our presence on the surface of the water.

The 1982 voyage of the *Hjemkomst* was of particular interest for me because I graduated from Barnesville High School in 1973 with Glen Morken, the younger brother of Boatswain Mate Dennis Morken. Like many, I followed the voyage as the ship and crew made their way from Duluth to New York and finally on to Bergen, Norway on July 19, 1982. You could say I first came to the *Hjemkomst* Center to see the ship.

It was years later that I came to truly appreciate another important component of the Center: The Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County. The Society has the unique honor and privilege of carrying out the mission to collect, preserve, interpret and share the rich history and culture of Clay County.

I will conclude in thanking you all once again for your continued support, in whatever way you are able to contribute. Together we will continue to bring ideas to life. As I look at all of the supporters we have, I am reminded that many of you are like me: "We came for the ship and stayed for the history."

Be Well ~ John Dobmeier, HCSCC Board President

Please Send Us Your Addresses!

Are you going away for the winter or coming back for the summer? Please send your alternate address to Tia.Stenson@hcsmuseum.org to make sure you receive all the up-to-date information from us!



www.facebook.com/hcsc



www.twitter.com/hcsc

HCSCC News

Crowdsourcing Hawley History a Hit

This spring, Hawley-area residents helped HCSCC identify hundreds of photographs that ran in the *Hawley Herald* from the 1950s to the 1980s. The *Herald* donated a couple thousand prints to HCSCC in the early 1990s, but few were identified. In March, HCSCC museum assistant Petra Gunderson selected nearly 700 prints, numbered and photocopied them, placed the copies in binders and delivered them to the Hawley Senior Citizens Center. There, seniors and others paged through the photos writing names and other identifying information on the copies. The binders then went to the Hawley Library where patrons added IDs. The good folks of Hawley gave at least partial identification to 55% of the photos!

The next step is to enter the names and photo numbers into a database for easy retrieval. HCSCC can also provide scans of the photos for \$5.00 each. For further information, contact Archivist Mark Peihl at Mark.Peihl@hcsmuseum.org or (218) 299-5511, Ext. 6734.

Our thanks go out to the folks at Hawley and Petra for making this collection much more accessible and valuable!



Thrivent Members Can Choose HCSCC


Are you a Thrivent member? If you are and have 2015 Choice Dollars® available in your account, you can direct those dollars to HCSCC before a March 31, 2016, deadline. Choice Dollars are how Thrivent Financial members recommend where the company's charitable grant funds go.

To designate those dollars for HCSCC, visit the Thrivent website at Thrivent.com/thriventchoice and log in. Choose "Direct Choice Dollars" and search the catalog of organizations, then check the box to direct all Choice Dollars, or enter an amount, then choose "Direct Now." If you'd rather allocate your dollars by phone, call 800.847.4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" when prompted.

Remember, your dollars can be designated until March 31, 2016. Thank you for your help.

Amazon Smiles on HCSCC

The Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County is now a part of the Amazon Smile Program. Instead of going to Amazon.com to do your regular online shopping, visit Smile.Amazon.com and choose the Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County as the charity you are supporting.

When you choose us, Amazon will donate 2% of every purchase you make to the HCSCC. For more information, you can go to Smile.Amazon.com and sign in with your regular Amazon.com login information. 



Newsletter Archive Now Online

Want to go back in time? The HCSCC is in the process of adding all of the back issues of our newsletters to the internet archive. There is a wealth of Clay County history in our old newsletters written by past and current HCSCC staff.

To browse the archive, go to our website, www.HCSCCOnline.org, and use the Research link on the menu to find the newsletter archive. You can also go directly to the archive by visiting <https://archive.org/details/historicalandculturalsocietyofclaycountynewsletters>.



Message from Executive Director Maureen Kelly Jonason

Should members' and donors' names be printed for public consumption? That is a matter up for debate among non-profit organizations. On the one hand, we so love to celebrate our supporters' generosity by listing names in our newsletters under categories or noting special efforts such as memorials. On the other hand, some people argue that making that information known to the public means those individuals are more likely to receive unsolicited requests for donations in the future from organizations they might never consider supporting. Is that a bad thing? So should members be listed without regard to their level of support? Should donors all be considered anonymous? What do you think? If you have an opinion on this matter, please weigh in by writing me a note by mail or emailing me at Maureen.jonason@HCSmuseum.org or giving me a call at 218-299-5511, Ext 6732. I'd love to hear from you!

These are some of the questions we ponder when things slow down to normal (December, January, and February). Generally, from April through November, staff is working at a running pace with May, June, July, August, and September being the sprinting days. It begins in May when over 1,000 school children have their end-of-year field trips to our museum and then moves on to June prep for the Scandinavian Hjemkomst and Midwest Viking Festivals. This year, over 1,000 YMCA pre-schoolers came to the museum the week BEFORE the festival and several hundred Y-day campers attended the festival. We love to see the children learning about the Scandinavian cultural

heritage that dominates the region. The summer months bring in quite literally one half of our entire year of admissions revenue.

In September nearly 2,000 4th graders come in for the River Keepers' annual Water Festival just before our newly renamed German Kulturfest (the festival formerly known as German Culture Day). This year, come and enjoy all things German and German-American on Sept. 17 10am-4pm, only \$5 for 13 and older, free to children 12 and under, and of course, FREE TO HCS MEMBERS!

We'll wrap up our busiest months with the many tour busses that stop by on their way to or from the Hostfest up in Minot the last week in September and then put the finishing touches on our last big event of the year, Pangea—Cultivate Our Cultures, a free family friendly festival where everyone learns something new about their neighbors' culture of origin. All the year through, we are also kept busy accepting donations of Clay County artifacts and documents for our collections, researching for the exhibit due up in 2018, rehousing artifacts and archival materials as needed, and always cleaning out to make more room for collections.

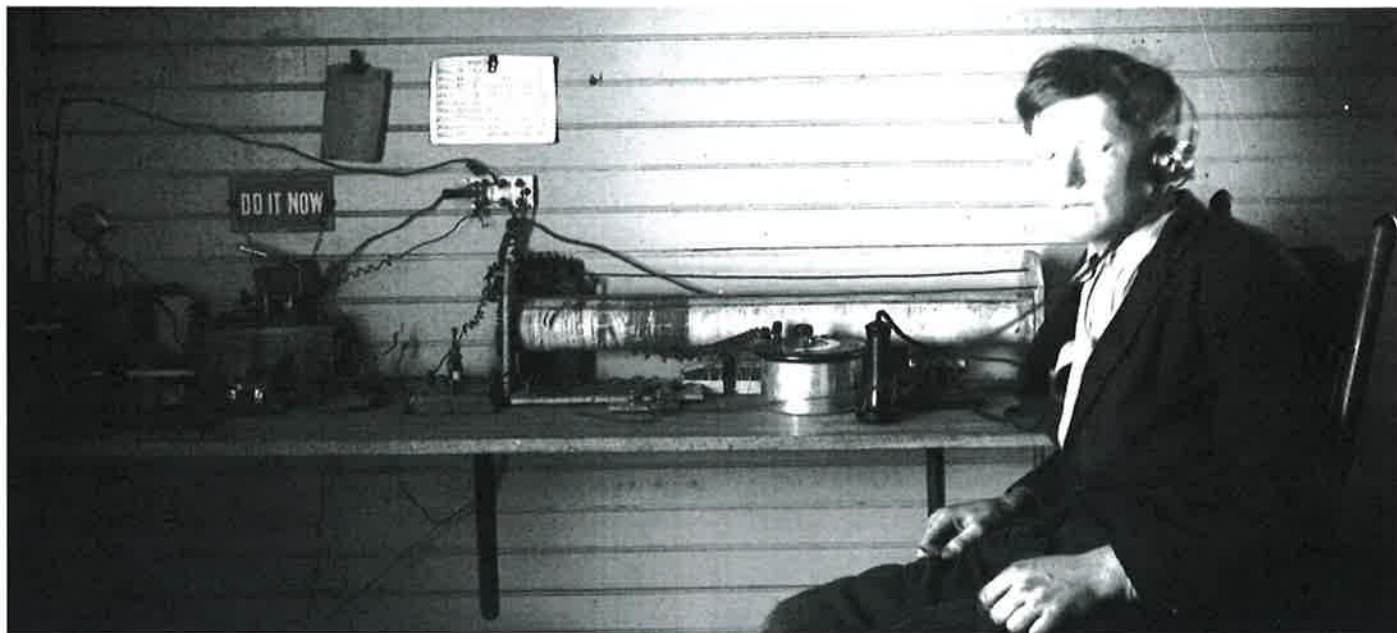
We thank you for your continued support as members and donors and look forward to seeing you at the museum with friends and neighbors whenever you are able to stop by.

Be a Part of Our Community

Are you a member of the Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County? Sign up or renew your membership today! We have several membership levels to choose from:

- Basic – \$40
- Basic+ – \$60
- Booster – \$85
- Patron – \$125
- Heritage – \$250
- Benefactor – \$500

To sign up or to learn more about what each membership level offers, visit our website at www.hcscconline.org/join-support/ to download a membership form or pay online. For more information, you can also contact HCSCC Executive Director Maureen Kelly Jonason at 218.299.5511 Ext. 6732 or by email at maureen.jonason@hcsmuseum.org. Thank you for your support!



Hawley amateur radio enthusiast Purl Wange built his own radio transmitter/receiver from scrounged parts in 1916. His rig was capable of sending and receiving telegraphic messages in Morse Code. Wange later served as an Army radioman in World War 1. Flaten/Wange Collection.

Radio Comes to Clay County – 1922

By Mark Peihl

I've always been leery of technological "firsts." Someone may invent or demonstrate a new gizmo, but it often takes years or decades before the invention actually makes a difference in people's lives. Radio is a case in point. Communication by radio waves was possible for years before a series of events caused the technology to reach a tipping point where the new technology was quickly embraced by Clay County residents in 1922.

In the 1890s Guglielmo Marconi demonstrated that telegraphic signals could be sent over vast distances through the air via radio waves. By 1910 the US government required all American-registered ocean-going vessels be equipped with radio communications.

Early in 1915 the Barnesville High School acquired a radio telegraphy sending and receiving set for educational purposes, likely the first of its kind in the county. A year later Purl Wange of Hawley built his own set from scrounged parts. Purl could pick up telegraph signals from ships on the Great Lakes and communicate with other amateurs.

Radio telegraphy dramatically improved safety on the high seas but required technical know-how and knowledge of Morse code to understand and send the signals. In 1906 Lee DeForest's Audion tube made it possible to transmit and receive audio signals – voice and sound – through the ether. By the early teens a number of experimenters were sharing phonograph recordings and poetry readings with their fellow "radio telephony" enthusiasts. Very few people were capable of receiving them.

During World War I the US government shut down nearly all civilian radio signal communications. Meanwhile, war needs stimulated dramatic improvements in radio telephony. In 1919 the restrictions were lifted and amateurs again began broadcasting. A handful of companies began marketing consumer-ready receiving sets, but with limited opportunities for listening, they faced a difficult situation. With few radio transmissions to hear, customers would not buy radios. With few listeners, it made little sense to invest in broadcasting.

In late 1920 electric appliance manufacturer Westinghouse broke the stalemate when it began broadcasting a regularly scheduled combination of live music and lectures. Within a year the commercial broadcasters and amateurs were interfering with each other's transmissions. In December 1921 the Federal Communications Commission established new rules to systematically allocate radio frequencies. The rules practically eliminated amateurs' signals, and commercial radio broadcasting really took off. In February 1922 there were about 25 licensed commercial broadcasters in the US. By year's end there were over 500.



In July 1922 North Dakota Agricultural College (NDSU) physics professor Sigmund Leifson, center, brought a radio receiver to the Levi and Ingeborg Thortvedts' Moland Township farm. Ingeborg, wearing headphones at left, listens to a radio broadcast for the first time. Her daughter, Stella, at right, waits her turn. Thortvedt Family Collection.

In May 1922 the receiver set retailer Fargo Radio Service Company began broadcasting as WDAY. They were the first commercially licensed station in the area; however, they were beaten in the race by members of the Concordia College Science Club. In February they set up an experimental station in the top floor of the College's Main Administration building. Programing included phonograph recordings, lectures and a live broadcast of a student debate.

Clay County early adopters were not limited to local stations. Early broadcasting was on what's now the AM band. Amplitude-modulated waves can bounce off the ionosphere and be picked up hundreds of miles away, especially at night when conditions are best. Radio programs astonished and delighted listeners. The novelty of hearing live voice and music from long distances amazed folks. In July North Dakota Agricultural College physics professor Sigmund Leifson

brought a radio receiver to the Moland Township farm of family friend Levi Thortvedt. Thortvedt wrote in his diary that Leifson "rigged up a wire from southwest corner of house to a cottonwood tree... and, sir, we heard singing and piano playing from Winnipeg and Denver, Colorado!"

People began buying radios in greater numbers. By early 1922 local newspapers were reporting purchases all over the county. In January the *Barnesville Record-Review* reported that when "Marvin Trovaten and Alfred Haagenson wished to be entertained by a theatre concert or a phonograph selection, it is not necessary for them to attend a theatre or wind up the phonograph. They merely put the radio receiving outfit in operation and concerts are received from different cities." The boys had previously set up a wireless telegraph, but "additional apparatus has just lately been procured for the reception of radio music."

Many early purchasers were business owners hoping to induce customers into their stores. In May Nels Anderson of Hawley Motor Company installed a radio in his garage. Owners of the Garrick Theater also announced radio plans.

Technical problems beset the early adopters. In August H. E. Danner of Barnesville announced his Cozy Café would be the first business place in town to feature a radio: "It will be equipped with a Magnavox three-stage power amplifier . . . and can be heard for miles when turned on full force. . . ." A week later, however, the *Record-Review* reported that the "radio outfit installed at the Cozy Café last week had to be removed as it could not be made to operate satisfactorily. The trouble was caused by the electric wires which pass close to the building."

A chronic shortage of parts, electrical interference from streetcars, sunspots and weather challenged early listeners. Leifson's visit to the Thortvedt farm induced Levi's son, Goodwin, to buy a radio set January 7, 1924. It cost him a whopping \$173.00. That's more like \$2,400 today. Over the next week Goodwin made nine trips into Glyndon or Fargo for parts and/or advice from experts before the set would partially function.

Just installing the antennae was tricky. Levi wrote that "Goodwin and [his future brother-in-law] Hilman put up the aerial wire for the radio from the top of the

highest cottonwood near the old blacksmith shop aided by a 12-foot pole tied to the highest limb - then to the big high cottonwood southeast of the shop. Wire is high up, it runs over the house about 20 feet. Hilman did the climbing."

Goodwin eventually got the thing going. For the next month or so the Thortvedt family hosted a nightly gaggle of neighbors enthralled by the wonders of radio. Because the best reception occurred later in the evening, the gatherings often lasted until midnight and later, a rarity for farm folk. On January 18 Levi wrote in his journal that "Ole and Luverne & May came over. Then T. H. Skrei came. He stayed til 11:30, Ole til 12. Wife and I and G[oodwin] is up too but will go to bed now. Radio has cept [kept] us up."

Even after the initial novelty wore off, the programing remained compelling. Live musical broadcasts, lectures and interviews with newsmakers entertained and informed listeners. As programing became more regular, Levi developed favorites, including Wednesday night broadcasts of Old Time dance music from Jefferson City, Missouri, and concerts from the Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago. Though the Northern Lights were near the low period of their roughly eleven year cycle in the early 1920s, they still caused problems. On January 23 Levi reported his disappointment that the Aurora Borealis interrupted his favorite programs.

Radio brought all kinds of entertainment into the home, some more welcome than others. On January 26, a disgusted Levi wrote, "Radio did not entertain as usual as only static & Jazz-Jazz-Jazz was in the air." But Luther Osborn of the *Red River Valley News* wrote in September 1922 that "the charge that modern taste runs to 'jazz' and barbaric melodies" was unfair. "The radio phone promises to make the best concert music available . . . all over the country. The public of today has not only appetite for good music, but a capacity to appreciate the many different kinds of good music, cosmopolitan taste, which enables an audience to sit down to a musical banquet and enjoy every course."

Programming also featured the practical and educational. WDAY broadcast services from the Fargo Presbyterian Church. In May 1923 the Minnesota Historical Society instituted a series of talks on state history on WLAG in Minneapolis. Government stations transmitted weather forecasts and commercial stations provided farmers with up-to-date market information.

Farmers were among the earliest adopters of radio in Clay County. A news service story reprinted in the *Hawley Clay County Herald* in April 1922 said that "perhaps the biggest benefit from this new and marvelous development will accrue to the farmer in reducing his isolation." In 1920 practically no one had a radio in Clay County. By 1925 213 county farm families (11%) owned a radio. By 1930 it was over 45%. Radio was here to stay.



GERMAN KULTURFEST

SEPTEMBER 17, 2016

10am-5pm | \$5 admission | 12 & under free

HJEMKOMST CENTER

202 First Avenue North | Moorhead, MN 56560
www.hcscconline.org | (218) 299-5511



This activity is funded in part by a grant from the Lake Region Arts Council through a Minnesota State Legislative appropriation.

Exhibits & Events at HCSCC

Child in a Strange Country:

Helen Keller and the History of Educating the Blind and Visually Impaired

July 1- November 1

An exploration of education and ability focused on the remarkable life of Helen Keller. Presented in conjunction with...

Touchable: Celebrate Your Senses

July 1-October 31

An art show presented by the Fargo-Moorhead Visual Artists challenging the limits of art accessibility. Join HCS in learning more about accessibility in particular for people who are blind or visually impaired. How did Helen Keller, who was both blind and deaf, earn a college education and become a world renowned public speaker? How can artists make their art completely touchable and therefore accessible to people who cannot see? Come and see!

Log Cabin Project "Tree Rings, Log Cabins, and History,"

a presentation by dendrochronologist

Dr. Joe Zeleznik, NDSU

Tuesday, July 12 6:30pm, FREE.

Museum admission charged to see the exhibits. Free to HCS Members.

Public Reception for both Child in a Strange Country and Touchable exhibitions

Tuesday, July 19 4-7pm, FREE for all.

"What is Audio-Description?" a public presentation,

Friday, July 22, 7-9pm FREE

Audio-Description Training

July 23-24

Must audition and pre-pay \$100 fee. If this opportunity interests you, please immediately call or text Sherry Shirek, our accessibility coordinator, at 701-781-3055 or email her at Sherrybeth7@gmail.com to learn more.

German Kulturfest

September 17, 2016

We'll be celebrating the variety of German cultures with this fun family event featuring music from Brian Brueggen and the Mississippi Valley Dutchmen. There'll be German foods, crafts, traditional arts and, of course, beer. And we haven't forgotten the kinder, with a lot of fun activities for them, too. Come celebrate your German heritage or just learn more about what it means to be German. Begleiten Sie uns für den Tag! This activity is funded in part by a grant from the Lake Region Arts Council through a Minnesota State Legislative appropriation.

Pangea—Cultivate Our Cultures

November 19, 2016

This event will be Fargo-Moorhead's 22nd annual celebration of cultures, taking place at the Hjemkomst Center. A fun, one-day family event, Pangea embraces the diverse cultures of our community and region. Visitors will be able to enjoy cultural performances and sample a wide variety of delicious foods. But the biggest opportunity is to learn more about each culture and its traditions while celebrating one's own. We'd also like to thank Sam's Club, Moorhead Public Service and Moorhead Rotary Club for their sponsorship of Pangea.

Wet & Dry: Alcohol in Clay County

From the Wild West frontier days to just after Prohibition, alcohol had a profound and lasting effect on Clay County. It financed saloons and speakeasies, instigated shootings and bootlegging, and brought about a push for law enforcement and temperance societies to the area.

The exhibit is open in the second floor exhibit area through January 8, 2018.



Call Markus to book a program on a variety of topics for your club meeting or event: 218-299-5511 Ext 6738.

Presidential: Selections from the HCSCC Collection

Third Floor Hallway, Ongoing

In this year of the 58th U.S. presidential election, we present from our historical collection items that have connections to our U.S. Presidents and presidential elections of the past. Nearly all the items were donated over the years by residents of Clay County. We have also included items from our collection, and loaned from individuals, connected to our local representatives who have served Clay County in state and national arenas.

Want to keep up with new event additions

and schedule changes? You can find out about additions and changes by following our social media posts on Facebook and Twitter. Visit us at www.facebook.com/hcsc and www.twitter.com/HCSCC.

Moorhead's Urban Renewal

By Kate Savageau

In the years following World War II, changes swept across the United States. Between 1946 and 1959, rapid population growth and increasing mobility brought new challenges to Moorhead and its residents.

Large-scale residential construction was under way to meet pressing needs, but one of the largest challenges was in the city's downtown area. Despite the city's growth, it was becoming economically stagnant, which led to the idea of urban renewal as a way to rejuvenate the city.

Beginning the Planning Process

Downtown Moorhead was the traditional retail and business center of the city, but many obstacles restricted its growth. The majority of the land was owned by the railway companies that used the land for train tracks and other facilities, which limited pedestrian flow. Downtown also lacked a major department store to attract people to the area. Many Moorhead business owners were also reluctant to fully invest in the maintenance of their buildings, which became more dilapidated over the years. This resulted in residents increasingly going to downtown Fargo for shopping. An additional concern was that much of downtown Moorhead was prone to flooding from the Red River.

As a response, Moorhead's city council created a planning commission in 1956 and gave it the task of establishing a comprehensive development plan for Downtown Moorhead. The development plan was never finished, as the commission members were overwhelmed as a result of inexperience. When the council pursued urban renewal again in 1958, they learned that a pre-requisite for any federal funds was a working comprehensive plan. Since a comprehensive plan was needed, the City Council agreed to disband the old Planning Commission and create a new nine-member Planning Unit. The task was not completed until 1965.

Rebuilding the City

In 1963, the Planning Committee released its proposal to redevelop downtown and announced their intentions to start the demolition of the majority of downtown by

the end of 1966. The proposal gained approval by the City Council, and the City of Moorhead was awarded \$173,464 in federal funds to begin the necessary planning for the urban renewal project. However, no development company was hired to implement the plan, and since no action was taken, the opportunity vanished by 1967. The hope to finally start on construction failed once again.

This drawn-out process also caused issues for downtown business owners who complained that the city officials told them not to expand or upgrade their buildings until the project was finished. This advice led to many buildings looking run down, making shoppers think the urban renewal process had already started and causing them to avoid the downtown area altogether.

Eventually most of the downtown area was demolished, and it lost many of its historic structures, which were replaced by parking lots and large buildings. The urban renewal saw nearly every historic building west of Eighth Street taken down to build the Moorhead Center Mall. At the time, it was thought of as progress; nevertheless, older buildings needed maintenance and upgrading every few years to keep up with the modern world.



Demolishing a Landmark

In addition to those leveled during Urban Renewal, several other historic buildings were torn down during the 1960s. One that stands out is the Carnegie Moorhead Public Library. The library was a one story Classical revival style building that was built in part to the Women's Club of Moorhead, who persuaded the City Council in 1904 to establish a library fund and

Moorhead's Urban Renewal – Continued from page 9

obtained a \$12,000 donation from Andrew Carnegie for construction of the library. Carnegie's objective was philanthropic, hoping that "free public libraries would allow persons of limited income and educational opportunity to improve themselves intellectually as he himself had done."

Planning for the library started around 1903 when attorney George E Perley acquired a Carnegie grant of \$10,000 to build the library in Moorhead. The only requirement was that the City had to make a site available and maintain the library after construction was finished. In 1904 The Women's Club of Moorhead persuaded the City Council to establish a library fund and obtain a \$12,000 donation from Andrew Carnegie for construction of the library. Moorhead used a Fargo architect, M.E. Beebe, who designed a compact one-story Classical revival style building, with a pediment entry and a central dome. The building had great dignity and architectural quality.

The Carnegie Library, also known as the Moorhead Public Library, opened in 1906 on the corner of Sixth Street and Main Avenue. The Moorhead Public Library offered extension services early in its history and eventually formed the Clay County library, which was formally introduced in 1949 and renamed the Lake Agassiz Regional Library in 1961. In 1961, Moorhead built a new public library on a different site, while in May of 1963, the Carnegie building was demolished and is now a parking lot.

The urban renewal site included the oldest residential area in the city. Many buildings in the flood plain were deteriorating, and the destruction of downtown was justified by the notion that a major redevelopment was needed to modernize the city. At the time community leaders did not recognize the beauty and value of Moorhead's old buildings. Urban renewal was seen as a way to save the city's commercial core.

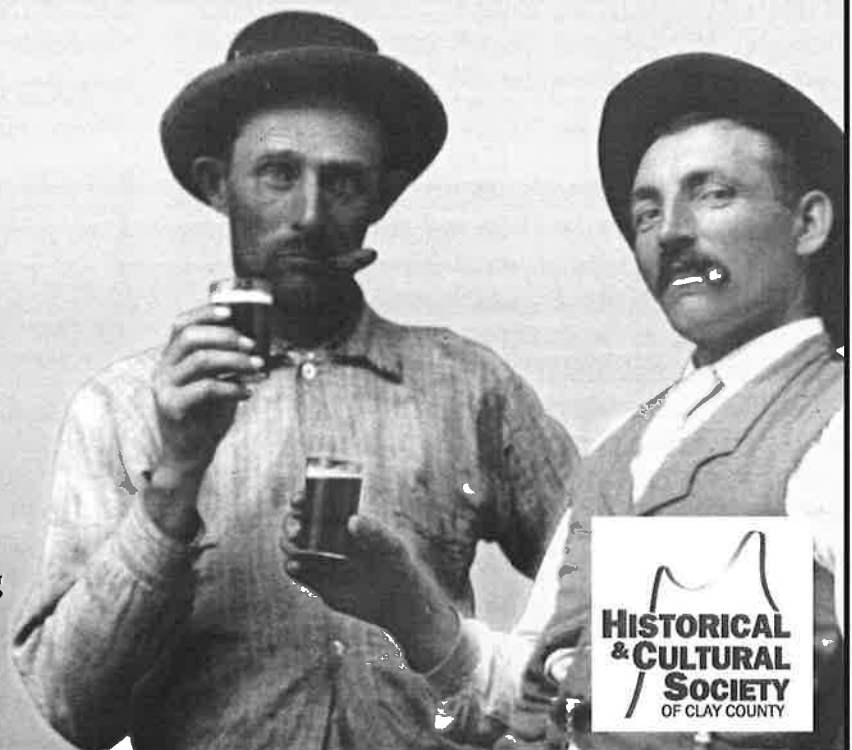
FEBRUARY 16, 2016 – JANUARY 8, 2018



ALCOHOL IN CLAY COUNTY
1871-1937



Hjemkomst Center
202 First Avenue North
Moorhead, MN 56560
(218) 299-5511 | www.hcscconline.org
Monday-Saturday: 9am-5pm
Sunday: Noon-5pm
Open Tues. evening 5-8pm (April-Dec)



This exhibit is supported in part by the people of Minnesota through a grant funded by an appropriation to the Minnesota Historical Society from the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

The Saint John's Bible ORIGINAL Pages Coming in 2017!



On April 20, HCS announced very special plans to bring a very special exhibition to town in 2017. We will have a magnificent exhibition of 64 ORIGINAL pages of *The Saint John's Bible* on display from Oct. 1 through Dec. 31, 2017. This exhibition

will be one of the last of a few chances to see this many original pages unbound before they are sewn together in seven volumes never to tour again.

These pages are the 2-feet by 3-feet 2-page sheets of vellum with brilliantly hand-painted illuminations featuring real gold, platinum, and silver as well as pages of beautifully hand-written calligraphy text. Even if you have seen the prints we had on display in 2011

and the Heritage Edition books in 2013, and even if you have stopped by the Abbey at St. John's University and visited a few pages on display, you have still never seen an exhibition of this magnitude – unless you have travelled to huge metropolises such as Dover, DE; Oklahoma City, OK; or Albuquerque, NM. We are honored that Moorhead, MN, in Clay County was selected as likely the last site to have an exhibition of this scope in Minnesota before the pages are bound forever and going to stay forever at SJU.

If you are interested in supporting this unusual endeavor, we have an Angel program started to accept donations to pay the expenses of renting, transporting, insuring, displaying, marketing, and programming, this splendid and inspirational art exhibition of the millennia. Simply mark SJB 2017 on the memo line and your donation will be restricted to this exhibit only. Email or call Maureen if you would like more details: Maureen.jonason@HCSmuseum.org 218-299-5511, Ext 6732.

Audio-Description Training Comes to Moorhead

As part of HCS's accessibility-for-all initiative, we are offering a rare opportunity to the community. July 22, 23, and 24, we will host an intensive training for people who want to become professional audio-describers. Audio-description is a specific skill that makes the visual vivid to people who are blind or have low vision by describing action, setting, colors, emotions, etc. for everything from plays, films, and dances, to visual art exhibitions. Normally, training like this costs upwards of \$500 per person, but we received grant support to cover the expenses of the nationally recognized trainers to come here to train up to 16 individuals. We STILL HAVE 5 SEATS OPEN.

Everyone is invited to attend Friday, July 22, at 7pm, an Introduction to Audio-Description, a presentation that explains the history and basic process of this accommodation, free of charge. That introduction is followed by Sat. and Sun., July 23 and 24, 8am-5pm intensive training to learn and practice the

specific techniques to begin offering this service in the community. Currently, there is one trained audio-describer in a 100-mile radius while there are thousands of people who cannot see in need of this accommodation.

If this opportunity interests you, please immediately call or text Sherry Shirek, our accessibility coordinator, at 701-781-3055 or email her at Sherrybeth7@gmail.com to learn more.

This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through grants from the Lake Region Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. This project is supported in part by a grant from the North Dakota Council on the Arts, which receives funding from the state legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Keeping Accessibility in Mind

By Sherry Shirek

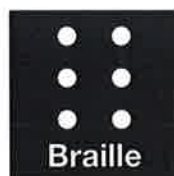
The staff at HCSCC is committed to providing access to our events, festivals and programs for people with all abilities. Since 2013, Sherry Shirek has been working as an access consultant with funding provided by the Minnesota State Arts Board, Lake Region Arts Council, and North Dakota Council on the Arts. Sherry has raised attention and funds to help support our effort towards Universal Access for all of our visitors. She has worked closely with Markus and the staff at the museum to develop and implement audio-described touch tours for children and adults with vision impairments. Additionally, Markus is now able to offer accommodations to visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing by providing assistive listening devices and American Sign Language interpreters with advanced notice. Last fall, as part of a grant, Maureen and Sherry formed an ADA Working Group in partnership with members of the Arts Partnership. We have had a steady attendance of leaders from the arts organizations from the Moorhead/Fargo metro region. Together we discuss and explore various accessibility topics so we can work together and share ideas, equipment and resources.

Sherry has worked to ensure that our 2016 Midwest Viking Festival and Scandinavian Hjemkomst Festival, in addition to the Pangea—Cultivate Our Cultures festival is user-friendly for wheelchair users and those attendees who have mobility aids. She arranged for an audio describer to provide descriptive narrative for attendees who are blind or have low vision. In addition, she recruited volunteers to be human guides to help with navigation, locating food, restrooms and other important landmarks. We had an American Sign Language interpreter on site to provide interpreting services for visitors who are deaf and assistive listening devices were available for persons who have hearing loss. All print materials were available in large print, in Braille, and via email for those requesting these

formats. There was clearly an increase in people with disabilities in attendance at Pangea. We are confident that with the specific accommodations offered, more people with disabilities will attend our festivals and special events. We will continue our effort towards ensuring that all visitors feel welcome and have an equal opportunity to enjoy all the experiences that we have to offer.

July 1 will be a thrilling day at the museum! It will be the opening of the Fargo/Moorhead Visual Artists Constraint Show entitled *Touchable*. The local visual artists will create works of art that are interesting to the senses and are completely “touchable,” creating a unique experience for visitors. Additionally, on July 1 the traveling exhibit *Child in a Strange Country: Helen Keller and the History of Education of People who are Blind or Visually Impaired* is coming to the Hjemkomst Center museum! These two exhibits will run through October 31, 2016. For more information about the Helen Keller traveling exhibit visit <https://www.aph.org/museum/programs/traveling/strange-country/>

July is a busy month for accessibility activities at the museum. Most recently, we received grants from the Lake Region Arts Council and North Dakota Council on the Arts to bring in national trainers from Audio Description Solutions LLC to conduct a two-and-a-half-day training for up to 16 people from arts organizations to learn the specialized skill of audio describing exhibits and live performances. Audio Description is a descriptive objective narrative of the visual elements without interruption of the dialog of theater, live performances, museum exhibits, television, movies or multi-media. We are excited that we will have more trained audio describers in the community to provide accommodations to people with vision impairments.



The Solomon G. Comstock House has Reopened

By Matt Eidem

All of the restoration work is done, the house has been cleaned from top to bottom, and the Solomon G. Comstock House reopened for regular tours the weekend of May 28. You might be asking yourself, "But Matt, it's a 134-year-old home; what could have possibly changed?" Well, Suzy Skeptical, let me tell you.

The first thing that you will notice is the outside. We are undergoing an effort to improve the grounds on the Comstock property as a chance to educate the public and as a way to beautify one of Clay County's busiest roads. All of the plants on the property have origins dating back to the time when the home was built. We will be including a Prairie Garden that will include native flowers that have origins in the Red River Valley preceding the building of the railroads. This is an effort to use the grounds as a venue to tell more of the area's rich history on the north side of the property.

You will also begin to see a lot of activity at the house over the summer. Every Wednesday night we are using all of our wonderful lawn space to hold beginning yoga classes. Who doesn't want to exercise in the shadow of one of Clay County's earliest and most beautiful homes? In June we've begun the inaugural season of the Comstock Lawn Game League sponsored by

Drekker, where folks are coming to the house in the summer and playing a variety of games, all while chasing the dream of winning some dumb trophy that Markus and I found in a thrift store.

There will be a small change inside the house as well. We are partnering with local colleges on research projects this fall to help expand the interpretation of Moorhead. When those projects are completed, one of the rooms will be used for student poster/exhibit space.

The best change, my skeptical friend? Now that the Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County is managing the Comstock House, all of our members will be able to get into the house for free tours. I say again **FREE TOURS!!!** So there is really no excuse not to come out to see the Comstock House next time you're in Moorhead.

Regular tour hours for the house will be Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4. The house will also be open during the week for special events throughout the summer. Check out the Comstock House Facebook page at www.facebook.com/comstock for any details on upcoming events, and please like the page so you get all of the updates sent straight to you.



New and Improved Access to the Clay County Archives

The archival collections of the Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County are now cataloged using national standards and those records are placed online for the convenience of our members and those people doing research from afar. Using this tool, researchers will be able to see what is in the Historical Society's Collections and be much more able to target their search for what they need. While incredibly useful, it should be noted that these are catalog records only. The materials that they refer to are still only available through the archives at the Hjemkomst Center, and these records themselves can only be accessed at the

Hjemkomst Center. Researchers are still encouraged to visit the archives for access or to contact HCSCC Staff if they would like a more detailed look into a particular collection. The Society hopes to use this tool in the future to help provide access to digitized photos for our members. They can start looking for those in our online catalog starting this fall. This unprecedented access to Clay County's history was financed in part with funds by the State of Minnesota from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the Minnesota Historical Society. Go to www.hcscconline.org and Click on the Research tab and click on Archives Catalog.

A Log by Any Other Name...



At the end of 2014, HCS was awarded a grant by the Minnesota Historical Society to partner with Becker County Historical Society (BCHS), the Norman County Historical and Genealogy Society (NCHGS) and Dr. Joseph Zeleznik, NDSU forester and dendrochronologist to devote time in 2015-2016 to explore and inventory all of Clay County and parts of Becker and Norman Counties to find and document the history of as many settlement-era buildings and remnants as possible. The overall goal was to fill in gaps in knowledge by conducting both primary archival research and collecting and analyzing dendrochronology samples directly from early settlement-era logs. Successful completion of all parts of the project resulted in a considerable gain in knowledge that has just begun to be disseminated. We were able to gain more specific dating of the

structures as well as histories of ownership and uses. Two interns were hired to conduct some of the field work and primary research: Chelsey Quiring and Alex Swanson. We want to thank Dr. Joe Zeleznik for contributing hundreds of hours in taking and analyzing the dendrochronology data and supervising the interns. Come and see his presentation on the research on Tuesday, July 12. Free of charge!



Our thanks to Lake Region Electric Cooperative for assistance in removing the bell from the District 3 Schoolhouse and inspecting the cupola and roof. Collections manager Lisa Vedaa discovered that the weight of the bell did not damage the roof, but the cupola is in need of repair and the roof must be replaced in the future.



Scandinavian Hjemkomst and Midwest Viking Festivals a Success



On Friday and Saturday, June 24 and 25, an impressive horde of Viking and Nordic enthusiasts fought through detours and road construction barriers and descended on the Hjemkomst Center grounds to take part in the Scandinavian Hjemkomst and Midwest Viking Festivals. Attendees of the two festivals were treated to a full experience of both traditional and contemporary Scandinavian culture that included food, music, visual arts, crafts, lectures, and demonstrations.

While many familiar faces were present at the festivals once again, some sights, sounds, and flavors made their debut at the Hjemkomst Center. Iceland was the featured country this year, and as such, guests were introduced to the fascinating history of Icelandic horses from Tolthaven Ranch in Pelican Rapids, and popular Icelandic cuisine like skyr, a sweet yogurt-like cheese that Rex Cafe chef Kelly Wambach made using a traditional Viking recipe.

The Vinland Elag of the Jomsburg Vikings were also new to the festivals this year and they

delighted attendees with their live, blunt steel battle demonstrations. The group of Viking history enthusiasts and reenactors came all the way from Montreal on Thursday night and stayed through the weekend, inviting attendees to join in the sword fights and offering a comprehensive glimpse into everyday Viking life.

Ironically, this year's festivals also marked one of the first major challenges to our new accessibility initiatives, as we were slightly waylaid by road construction and progress on the Fargo-Moorhead Area Diversion Project. However, thanks to the wonderful contributions by staff, consultants, and volunteers, the festival was still a popular weekend event. Nearly 4000 people attended and we were able to offer new, improved accessibility features, including golf carts for people with limited mobility and audio description (AD) for people who are visually impaired.

All in all, it was another successful festival and homecoming!

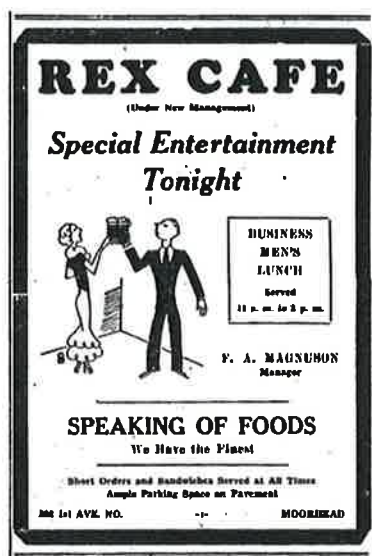
Historical & Cultural Society of Clay County

PO Box 157 • 202 First Avenue North

Moorhead, MN 56561-0157



To collect, preserve, interpret and share the history and culture of Clay County, Minnesota.



Fun Fact: The original café was anglicized, meaning the “e” at the end of the word was left without an accent.

REX CAFE AT THE HJEMKOMST CENTER

TIMELINE

1910 — The Duluth Brewing and Malting Company builds a saloon and hotel at the same address as today's Hjemkomst Center – 202 1st Ave N. The building is named the Rex Hotel after their Rex brand beer.

1913 — The Rex Hotel quickly gains a reputation for being a center of sin in a city known for sin. After the city shuts down the Rex for repeated liquor violations and prostitution, Matt Wambach is brought in to reopen and clean up the place. His great-grandson Kelly runs the Rex today.

1920s — Throughout Prohibition, the Rex's stores and upstairs rooms served as fronts for bootleggers. Owner Frank Magnuson is at the center of an illegal alcohol network that includes many buildings, family members and friends.

1930s-50s — After Prohibition, The Rex Cafe became a popular restaurant and bar. Owner Kenneth Seaburg turned it into one of the best restaurants in town in the 1950s.

1961 — The Rex building burns down. Seaburg reopens the Rex Cafe on Center Avenue.

1973 — The Rex Cafe is destroyed in Moorhead's Urban Renewal project.

2016 — Kelly Wambach reopens the Rex Cafe at the Hjemkomst Center to give us a taste of local history.

The Rex Cafe is now open Saturdays 11:30am-1:30pm!