



# HISTORY 21



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*Front Cover: Sub-Cofferdam - Taking Out Ice (From Island) Construction of Coon Rapids Dam 3-28-13. Object ID: P2874.1.85*



## From the President

Happy New Year! As the new year is upon us, let's recognize we all come from different backgrounds and experiences. Suppose you live by the idea that we are always living in interesting times. In that case, all our perspectives are important to us, and how we remember and preserve these topics help shape our "history journey" in Anoka County. We want your story and your thoughts! Go to [anokacountyhistory.org/contact](http://anokacountyhistory.org/contact) and fill out the

easy-to-use form. You can Adopt-An-Artifact which will help us preserve our history. When you go to the "About" section and click on the "Blog" page, you'll hear fascinating, award-winning History 21 podcasts about current Anoka County history directly from the guests that lived it. You'll remember some of these stories, some might be new, and some could give you more information. Whatever the reason, it's great to see and hear where Anoka County has made its mark. If you remember a particular story, give us your comments about it. Where were you? What do you remember? What did it mean to you or other family members? These podcasts provide a listener a unique perspective on those stories, past and present. I encourage you to donate and become a member of ACHS. Your contribution will provide programs, displays, and history delivered with new technologies. Make a fresh start with ACHS and discover how you can make a difference in Anoka County History.

Richard Oxley, ACHS President

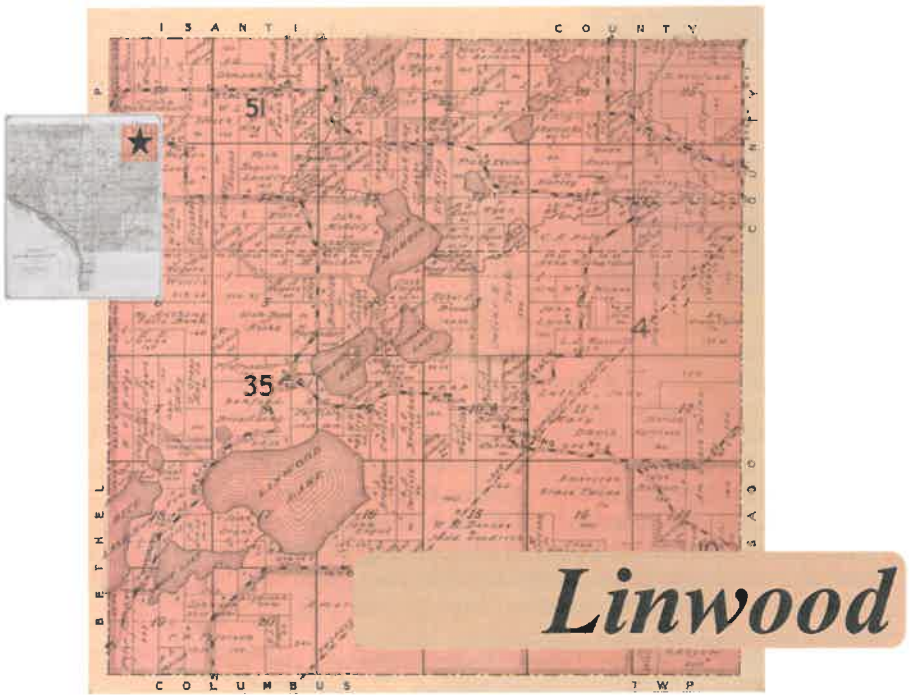
## From the Director

Wait! Don't throw out those cards you received over the holidays! If they represent families in Anoka County (and they're ok with it) bring them in for our collections. Those little snippets of time become invaluable years down the road. We would also enjoy pictures of the kiddos on school break playing in the snow, opening gifts, or watching movies. What traditions do you observe? How did you take time together? Don't forget the goofy New Years pictures with those headbands that declare "2023" on them. Last but not least...snow pictures. We haven't had piles of the white stuff like this in awhile and I'm sure you took a couple snapshots of them. Maybe those tree branches laden with fluffy, sparkly beauty or someone pulling a grumpy face after spending hours shoveling.



Above all, thank you for supporting local history for yet another year! We're here because of you, for you, and with you. HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Rebecca Ebnet-Desens, Executive Director



1914 Plat Map of Linwood Township

*The joy (and pain!) of history is found in the never-ending trail of stories and connections a researcher discovers along their journey. This kernel of information only makes sense if you know that tidbit, and together, they make the third seemingly unrelated thought understandable. The web grows as new names and shared experiences fall into place. Add that to more significant state, national, and world events, and suddenly any story becomes a case study for our world.*

*This particular research journey begins with genealogist and volunteer Jane LaMusga agreeing to tackle the story of the Linwood Grange for a new display in the National Register section of our exhibit hall. If you happened by ACHS on a Friday afternoon recently, you likely saw Jane tucked away behind a computer, map book, or census printout. She often emerged victorious, brandishing a pencil and her reading glasses to regale staff with news of the latest Grange charter member who lived HERE and did THIS after coming from HERE and being related to THEM. And by the way, we're putting these two maps together and ignoring the county line because it's just close enough.*

*We're excited to share some nuggets of Jane's research—a couple of people, some contextual information, and a quickie lesson on how to read a township map—as a teaser for the exhibit opening later this spring. **The Linwood Historical Society remains a vital asset to preserving the township story, and we encourage you to connect with them for upcoming programs and ways to volunteer.***

As white explorers and settlers moved over land held by the native tribes, it took on new names and ownership. The United States claimed parts of present-day Minnesota to the east of the Mississippi at the end of the Revolutionary War through the Second Treaty of Paris. Twenty years later, the Louisiana Purchase added lands west of the river. As settlement expanded, surveyors made a note of the lands, and control of it fell to the territorial governments, including the Minnesota Territory, in 1849 after Wisconsin gained statehood in 1848.

Plans for military roads were established to connect different parts of the new area. Near Linwood was the Point Douglas–St. Louis Road ran along the west side of the St. Croix Valley to the falls on the St. Louis River, not far from Lake Superior. Point Douglas was at the convergence of the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers, southeast of Fort Snelling, where the Minnesota River joined the Mississippi.

Survey crews were active from 1847 through 1854, receiving final approval from the General Land Office in 1855 for the Linwood area of Anoka County. The sale of public lands raised much-needed revenue for the government. Surveyors mapped out the land in standardized measurements, starting from a baseline running east-west and a meridian running north-south. From these locations, they created plat maps and kept land transaction records. The land was divided into square parcels six miles by six miles wide, each called a township. These townships were subdivided into 36 sections measuring one mile by one mile wide—the equivalent of 640 acres. These squares were further subdivided into halves (160 acres each) and quarters (80 acres each), thus setting the public land up for the General Land Office to grant title to individuals.

Anoka County had eight original townships in 1857 (Anoka, Bethel, Watertown, Round Lake, Columbus, St. Francis, Oak Grove, and Centerville), time has left Linwood as the only Township government remaining within its borders.

The **township** map is designated by T # N, the number sign representing the tier (horizontal row) north of the baseline. The measurement off the meridian is called the **range** (vertical column), designated R # W, indicating how far east or west it is. This rectangular survey system has been in use since 1785. Linwood Township, the northeast corner of Anoka County, was organized September 5, 1871, from portions of Bethel and Columbus Townships and is all T33N with two tiers of T34N in Range 22W.

The area represented by the surveyor’s mapping system is flat and low in the southern portion, a part of the Anoka Sand Plain formed by a large glacial outwash deposit. A chain of relatively shallow lakes stretches from the southwest corner through the center, going northeast. They are now known as Linwood, Island, Tamarack, Martin, and Typo. The marsh, woodland, and fields cleared for farming are habitats for fish, wild rice, and diverse wildlife.

LINWOOD SECTIONS						
R22W						
30	29	28	27	26	25	T34 N
31	32	33	34	35	36	
6	5	4	3	2	1	T33 N
7	8	9	10	11	12	
18	17	16	15	14	13	
19	20	21	22	23	24	
30	29	28	27	26	25	
31	32	33	34	35	36	

*While the rest of Anoka County cities start with section 1 in the NE corner, the Linwood sections have a different pattern.*

According to records from the Bureau of Land Management [BLM] and the General Land Office [GLO], early transactions for Linwood sections 4 and 5 of T33N R22W were made in 1860 to William Dickens and 1861 to Samuel Ridge, while sections 32 and 33 of T34N R22W were made in 1859 to Andrew J. Clark and in 1860 to Dickens and Clark. These early landowners likely called their new home "Linwood" after the linden (basswood) tree, which is native to the area.

Ridge was born in England in 1812 and married Ann Walker in November 1837. They emigrated with four children, Joseph, Sarah, Mary, and William, arriving in New York on the ship *Liverpool* on November 1, 1850. The 1855 Illinois census records note the family in Aurora, Kane County, with a third daughter, Elizabeth, having been born in New York. They had arrived in Bethel by 1860, but the two oldest children were no longer home. Another son, Samuel Jr, was born before they left Illinois and appears in this census. By 1870 only Elizabeth, Sam Jr, and the youngest son, John, are counted. Ridge became

Postmaster of Linwood in June of 1865. Ann died three years later, followed by her husband in 1899. They are buried in the Linwood Township Cemetery. Their daughter, Sarah, married Dickens in 1863, in Anoka County.

Another boost to the settlement of Linwood was the 1870 completion of the Lake Superior & Mississippi Railroad from St. Paul to Duluth, which ran through western Chisago County, roughly six miles away. The line changed ownership and names over the years, being known as St. Paul & Duluth Railroad Company until 1900, then Northern Pacific Railway until their merger with Burlington Northern in 1970.

The 1870s saw more families taking up land, including Fergus McGregor and Patrick Ryan in 1870, J.G. Green in 1872, his brother Denison Green in 1873, Sanford Broadbent in 1874, and Michael Ryan, son of Patrick in 1877. James McGregor, son of Fergus, and John Grant, added holdings in 1882. According to the 1870 agriculture census, Samuel Ridge, the Green brothers, and McGregor had horses, milk cows, other cattle, sheep, and swine. They reported winter wheat crops, rye, Indian corn, and oats.

This agricultural base of income made a new organization called the Grange a natural



*The Ridge Farm was photographed as part of the Agricultural grant received from the Legacy funds. (7861 217th Ave NE, Linwood)*

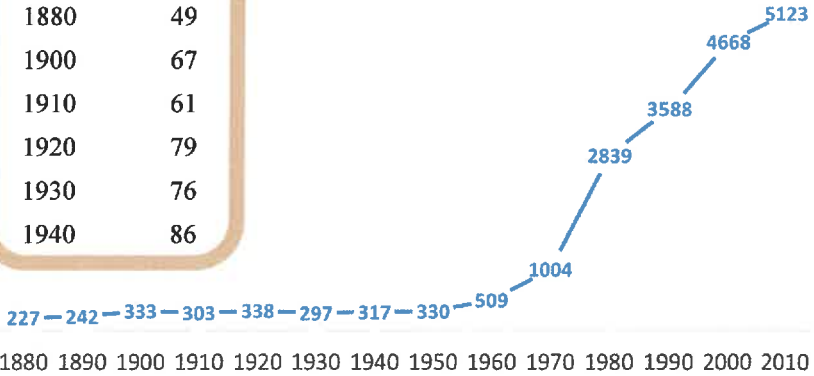


*Sanford Broadbent's buffalo and beaver coat, and bear skin gloves kept him warm on long trips from Linwood to Anoka. Artifact adopted by Barbara Broadbent Ulvin.*

## POPULATION

### HOUSEHOLDS

1880	49
1900	67
1910	61
1920	79
1930	76
1940	86



extension for the people of Linwood. Oliver Kelley, farming in nearby Itasca (Ramsey/Elk River), and six associates founded the National Grange and Order of the Patrons of Husbandry in 1867. Local Grange organizations then formed to educate farm families, create a social network, and trade information regarding crops and livestock. These groups also built marketing coops to sell their products. Minnesota had the first State Grange established in the country. By 1874, 450 Granges existed in the state.

Minnesota's Crescent Grange #512 was organized in 1874 by 20 charter members, including J.G. Green and Sandford Broadbent. On February 23, 1881, the group approved a motion to build a 32 x 20-foot hall on land donated by Green (*see image, below*). The following month, Grange members met to cut pine wood from a nearby forest. They hauled the timber to George Haskell's sawmill near Typo Lake, where they cut it into lumber for building. Construction began in earnest at Twp 33, range 22, section 4 of Anoka County, on the first Saturday in June. Over the summer, members absent from the project were fined one dollar. The original architectural plans were modified during this period to include sufficient kitchen space.

Members held their first formal celebration in the hall on July 4, 1882, but work on the structure continued for several years. In 1916, W.W. Wittig created alcoves on each side of the building—the front alcove began to serve as an entrance; the one in the rear contained decorative stained glass. Further modifications to save heat and improve acoustics occurred in 1949 when the ceiling was lowered.

The hall contains a meeting room, an auditorium, and a kitchen, creating a space for members to exchange ideas, share collectively owned equipment, and engage in social gatherings. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1979.



## COLLECTIONS CORNER

While organizing the Adopt-An-Artifact program, we are rediscovering the stories and connections of items within the collections at the History Center. The stories bring objects to life in a new way. It's not just a painting or a chair, but one that connects to us **today** because of the person who lived here **before**. When you visit the museum, you'll see an entire wall dedicated to the people adopting and helping promote and preserve these items for the future. Thank you to all who have become adopters, and if you're looking for adoption inspiration, these stories captivated us this month.

Learn more about Adopt-An-Artifact at [AnokaCountyHistory.org](http://AnokaCountyHistory.org).

### **“Field of Flowers” by Marie DeGraff**

Marie Degraff [1873-1964] was known to many people as “Miss Degraff” from her years teaching first grade at Franklin Elementary School in Anoka. She lived within walking distance of the school at 302 Fremont Ave almost her entire life.

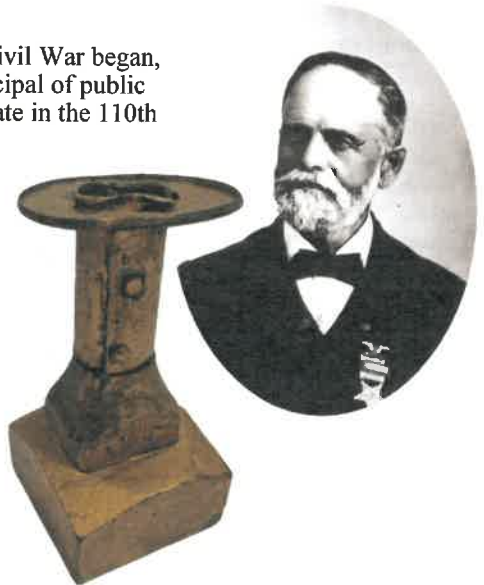
In addition to teaching, Marie taught piano lessons, painted, and cultivated an extensive garden in her back yard which included champion irises, gladiolas, and peonies, as well as her experiments in cross-breeding. She combined her interests with this painting in 1931. It hung in Franklin Elementary School's hallways for years, even after Marie retired in 1938.



### **Lemuel P. Storms' Candleholder**

Born in New York in 1831, when the Civil War began, Lemuel resigned as superintendent and principal of public schools in Fulton, NY. He enlisted as a private in the 110th Regular U.S. Volunteers, where he was sent to New Orleans under General Banks. Lemuel served as a quartermaster, was promoted to lieutenant, and moved to the 95th U.S. Regular Volunteers. In November of 1863, Lemuel was still serving under General Banks as the Union tried to secure a foothold on the Mexican border with Texas.

Lemuel was stationed on Mustang Island, an outer island off the coast near Corpus Christi, Texas. Lemuel picked up pieces from a damaged Confederate transport ship, the *William Bagley*, when they washed ashore on the island. He made this candleholder and kept it as a





souvenir of his time during the war. The *Bagley* was first captured from the Confederates in the Gulf and converted by the Union Navy to move troops.

When the war was over, Lemuel returned to New York and served another seven years as Captain of Company B, New York State National Guard. In the spring of 1883, Lemuel moved the family west to Anoka, where he went into business with his brother, George. He was active in the Grand Army veteran's post in Anoka, sang in the choir, and taught Sunday School at the Baptist Church. In 1905, Lemuel decided Minnesota winters were frigid and went to Cuba and Florida to spend the months there. Lemuel was in Florida when he passed away quietly away in 1918 at the age of 87 years. His daughter Orié remained in the area, married, and was an early supporter of the Anoka County Historical Society. She provided the stories and artifacts to keep her father's Civil War experiences alive.

### Joyce Chapel Pulpit

In 1900 James Carter and his wife Laura organized a Sunday school class in a schoolhouse in Anoka Township (present-day Coon Rapids.) They wanted a church closer to home for farmers who lived in the Coon Creek area. In consult with Anoka Methodist Church's minister, Joyce Chapel was incorporated on December 28, 1901. The name, Joyce, honored the Methodist Episcopal Bishop of the time, Isaac W. Joyce.

Benjamin Shattuck donated an acre and a half of land for the church building and cemetery, and within a month, the church's cornerstone was laid. The labor was all donated by community members who came to work on the church building. The work went quickly, and the first service was held as soon as they could. Their pulpit for that first service was a nail keg, but that only lasted a week. The Reed and Sherwood Lumber Company of Anoka donated an actual pulpit in time for it to be installed before the following Sunday's sermon.

Parishioners brought chairs from home to sit on during those first services.

Bishop Isaac Joyce declared the church building free of debt on July 17, 1902, a little over six months after the congregation had been incorporated.

By 1949, Joyce Chapel was bursting at the seams. The congregation decided to build a new church to better accommodate their needs. They obtained land about a mile or so south of here near the intersection of Hanson Blvd and Coon Rapids Blvd, where the new church was built, and the first service in the new building was held on Palm Sunday, April 11, 1954.

The name was changed to the Coon Rapids United Methodist Church, and the pulpit was used in the new space until it was replaced. It spent some time in a garage when Colleen Graber rediscovered it and brought it to ACHS as a unique piece of Coon Rapids and Anoka County history.



# Welcome Cassandra—New Collections Manager



Hey there! I am excited to be back at Anoka County Historical Society permanently as an archivist. I was here in summer of 2021 as one of the special collections interns for Federal Cartridge Company collection, which to date is still one of my favorite projects that I had the opportunity to be a part of. During that time, I was also a graduate student at Minnesota State University Mankato. I just recently graduated in December with my MS in History and I am excited to put my newly minted degree to good use. My fondness for all things history goes back much further, beginning with my family history. I am originally from Glencoe,

where I grew up on a farm that has now been in my family for seven generations. Story telling was always a central part of my childhood, which guided me to choose to get both of my degrees in history. With local historical societies and house museums' family histories like my own, so it seemed only natural for me to choose a career as a museum professional.

I have worked in museums on and off for the last seven years—fresh out of undergrad I was hired as a collections intern with the Siouxland Heritage Museums in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. My next museum adventure was working as a seasonal historical interpreter for the Minnesota Historical Society at the Oliver Kelley Farm in Elk River. After experiencing the full range of museum professional work, I knew my heart was in collections, so I applied to graduate school with a goal of being hired as an archivist not long after graduation. Serendipitously, the ACHS team was on the hunt for a new archivist and I was eager to work with them again—the rest is history.

My plan for the ACHS's collection going forward is to continue to foster a collection that uses familial and personal stories to reflect the county's communal history, because I have always cherished this type of history. When I am not wearing my archivist hat, I am spending time with my husband and our five cats and one dog on my family farm. A few of my favorite pastimes are reading, cooking, and Scrabble. I look forward to serving the Anoka community to the best of my abilities and making meaningful connections with its residents!

Kassandra Mackenthun  
Collections Manager

# Cemetery Tour Reveal



Forest Hill,  
Anoka



Forest Hill is the first cemetery we will visit on the 2023 Cemetery Tours! The area was called “woods” before the City of Anoka officially organized it as Forest Hill Cemetery on February 25, 1890. The first person to be buried in Forest Hill was Olive Stimson eight months later, in October, when she was disinterred from Oakwood cemetery and moved to Forest Hill.

Wanting to have a “nice” cemetery that fit with the permanence the City desired, the council voted that only “granite” markers would be accepted in Forest Hill. This eliminated any wooden crosses or homemade markers and made way for unique monuments such as the ones for the Emerson family.

Jonathan Emerson erected two stones in 1893 when his wife Melissa died at 66. One was for her [right]. Her obituary noted her as a hardworking, faithful woman who “had suffered more than an average share of this world’s sorrows and misfortunes.”

The second was a placeholder for himself, with Jonathan’s name, year of birth, and an additional 1,500 words painstakingly carved into it. The inscription contains advice Jonathan wanted to leave for the world. On it, he rails against secret organizations, quotes many Bible verses, tells of a preacher who was a member of the Masonic Lodge and how he died during initiation rites, about loving his children, and more. He even added a citation: “If you want to learn the secrets of the lodges send for books to National Christian Association, 221 West Madison Street, Chicago.

Jonathan died in 1899, and his obituary said he died of pneumonia at 80. He was buried at Forest Hill, but the grave marker was never updated.



**Members will receive advanced notice for ticket sales and a discount code!**



## ACHS Remembers



To those members, volunteers, friends, and neighbors who are no longer with us—you will be missed.



### **DEE ANN CHRISTENSEN, ACHS BOARD MEMBER**

*“Our mom, Dee Ann Christensen, left this world with grace and beauty. If you knew our mom, she had a zest for life. She was an activist, feminist and equal rights opportunist. A one-of-a-kind political big wig in the state of Minnesota. Our mom sat on several boards of directors locally. Helped to raise funds and drive many political campaigns. Recently she had a strong passion to do her part in reversing climate change. She was the gutsiest, dog heartest, most energetic, lively, enthusiastic, supportive and loving person. Her quick wit, sense of humor and playfulness touched the lives of so many. That same Grace that she brought to everyone’s life is the same way she left. She fought to the bitter end with grace, humor and kindness. We are*

*honored to call this amazing warrior our mother. The one lesson we must take from this excruciatingly painful event is to continue her legacy in the same way she did. Live large! Play a big game! Be a Dee!”*—Dee Ann’s Daughter

### **ACHS receives partnership award**

The League of Women Voters ABC chapter presented ACHS with a Friend of the League Award on Nov. 14 at the Andover City Hall (left). After the presentation by LWV-ABC President Gretchen Sabel, ACHS Director Rebecca Ebnet-Desens spoke on the “Power of Personal History.”



“How do you see yourself?” Desens asked.

“Answering that question will go a long way

toward what you will save, as well as where and with whom you will save it. Your legacy is in your hands—quite literally. But it’s also in your head. And your house.”

The Board of Directors champion the idea of personal storytelling. They welcome the donation of oral recordings, written memoirs, or pictorial collections to the archives of ACHS.

*We truly mourn the passing of DeeAnn. As a board member, she demonstrated her ferocious opinions and loyalty to progressive thought. Her last act for ACHS was to moderate the LWV-ABC meeting where we received the award. She will be missed.*

## VOLUNTEER WORLD

It takes a certain brain to be able to decipher the handwriting and power through a multitude of pages to transcribe diaries that are over 130 years old. Volunteer Dave has been tackling just that job. Alice Starrett, daughter of Anoka Post Master and Civil War Veteran Samuel Starrett, kept diaries that described the mundane aspects of her life. The entries aren't grand stories, but they lend a view to what life was like for her in Anoka, and the humans that she interacted with.

*"Sunday Jan 30*

*Very cold. I staid home all day. Grandma was here. Will Case & Myra came for me to go to church but it was too cold.*

*Monday Jan 31*

*Mabel gave me a painting lesson this afternoon. Papa came home to night. Went to Mrs Herseys in the evening.*

*Tuesday Feb 1*

*Didn't have any school because they were plastering the room. Mabel was here to supper*

*Wednesday Feb 2*

*We had school today in the two recitation rooms.*

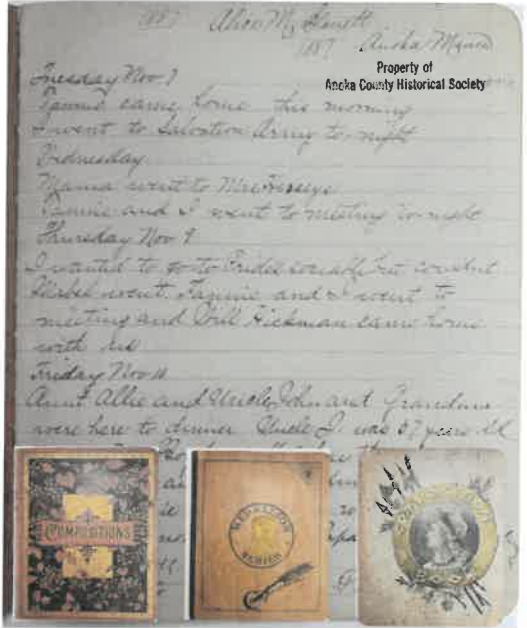
*Thursday Feb 3.*

*Went to Johnsons & saw the proof of our picture horrid of Carrie but good of Fannie & I. Frank Goss was up here this evening."*

We are looking to harness the power of history lovers through the winter on projects that can help move us forward, and can be worked in volunteer relay—one person moving it forward and passing it on to the next one until we hit a victory. Projects like helping us make duplicate copies of our most used research resources, scanning photographs, or becoming Cassandra's archivist assistant for a couple of hours.

See what shifts are available online on our digital sign-up sheet with Sign-Up Genius. Choose between computer or non-computer focused tasks. Let's see what we can get done together!

Find calendar link on social media, at [AnokaCountyHistory.org](http://AnokaCountyHistory.org) or scan the QR code.



Sara Given  
Volunteer Coordinator  
[Sara@AnokaCountyHistory.org](mailto:Sara@AnokaCountyHistory.org)

**THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS** All lists are current to December 29, 2022

**General Donations**

Jim & Molly Bauer  
Blaine Festival  
Barb & Gene Case  
Jennifer Conlon  
May Jo Davich  
Jean Day  
John & Sharon Freeburg  
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Roger Giroux  
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**New Members**  
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**Adopt-An-Artifact**

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Orville Lindquist  
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Anoka Knights of  
Columbus Council  
2018  
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Fifth Avenue Dental  
Forward Real Estate  
Consulting LLC  
KU-MA-IN  
Nowthen Historical  
Power Association  
Nate Otto  
Peterson Shoes  
Pierce Refrigeration



**HISTORY 21 THE PODCAST!**

The first and third Friday of each month.  
Subscribe and never miss an episode.

Don't miss the latest episodes of the ACHS Podcast:

MONTHLY

**History Center Hours—WINTER HOURS**

Closed Sunday, Monday and Tuesday

Wednesday—Saturday 10-4 p.m.

Call us for a research reservation or to schedule shenanigans!

**ACHS Board Meetings**

Second Thursday of each month. 6:30 p.m. via Zoom

Open to membership and the public. Find the link to attend digitally at AnokaCountyHistory.org on the calendar.

—**Journeys We Take.** We'll share three stories of life-changing journeys with ties to Anoka County: a French Catholic priest who came to a new land and lived through some harrowing events; a Civil War soldier who roamed far afield but was able to come home; and a young man determined to see how far he could get in a home-made kayak.

**When:** February 8, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

**Where:** Sandburg Education Center : Room TBD

Please register online at <https://ahschools.ce.eleyo.com/course/8839/adult-winter-2023/new-journeys-we-take> or by calling the Community Education office.

Take a break in your day and have lunch with the director. This is a great opportunity to share your ideas as members on strategic planning goals, what types of programs you would love to attend, or ask that niggling question your curious about.

**When:** November 15 at noon

**Where:** Zoom (a link with be emailed to the membership prior to the event and posted on our calendar at AnokaCountyHistory.org)

**Keep up with the  
Fun at ACHS!**



Anoka County  
Historical Society



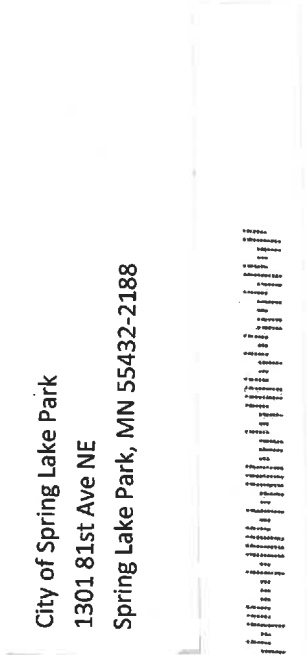
AnokaCoHistory



Anoka County  
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 AnokaCountyHistory.org

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