

BLOOMINGTON 1892 OLD TOWN HALL

**HISTORY MUSEUM & RESEARCH CENTER, Penn and Old Shakopee Road
NEWSLETTER ~ November, 2010 and ANNUAL REPORT**

A PUBLICATION OF THE BLOOMINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING ~ November 7, 2010 ~ 1:30 p.m.

ELECTION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2 p.m. ~ Speaker Lyndon Griffin presenting "Women in Command"

ATTENDANCE AND VISITORS

Greetings from the Bloomington Historical Society Board of Directors! We are so pleased to report that the year 2010 has been another successful year as we welcomed visitors to the Old Town Hall from England, Izumi City, Japan (Sister City student delegation); Toyko, Japan, Sweden, Germany, Norway, Hong Kong, Honolulu, Hawaii, Boston, MA; Seattle and Richland, WA; Sherwood, OR; New York City, NY; Glendale, AZ; Santa Rosa; San Francisco, Palm Desert, Qualzall, Oceano, & Lakewood, CA; Green Valley, WYO; Weatherby, MO; Colorado Springs, CO; East Lansing and Ovid, MI; Collegetown and Houston, TX; Mundelein, IL; Cedar Rapids, IA; Omaha, NE; Hudson and Middleton, WI; Shawnee, KA; Tampa, FLA; Concord, MA; Haltor, ND; from MN cities of Byron, Edgerton, New Prague, Center City, St. Michael, Nerstrand, Cedar, Minnetonka, Apple Valley, Cottage Grove, Rosemount, Maple Grove, Burnsville, Lakeville, Edina, Burnsville, Shakopee, St. Paul, Mpls., Richfield, Egan, Owatonna, Savage and of course many visitors from Bloomington!

Since the grand reopening of the restored Old Town Hall on Bloomington's Sesquicentennial Celebration on May 11, 2008, approximately 10,325 people have visited up to the present! Bloomington residents proudly bring their out-of-town guests here; visitors drop by for "history chats" on a regular basis; programs and activities are well attended.

EXHIBIT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Our great team of research and development historians are busy year around seeking out materials for the society's ongoing research needs for special topics for future exhibits and publications. Students from Jefferson and Kennedy High Schools assist with exhibit research. Our historians conduct interviews of long-time Bloomington residents, continually adding to our history data base. Stan Danielson, Larry Granger and Mary Vavrosky collect information, documents and photos, spending an extensive amount of time at the museum, the Minnesota Historical Society, on the internet, and elsewhere. Work includes Genealogical research on Bloomington's earliest families. There are almost 2,000 names on the data base. Thought is being given to study of nationalities, English, German, French, Irish, etc. Information will be sought through the Historical Society website on old houses, early families, business centers at Bloomington Ferry, Oak Grove, Cedar and Old Shakopee Road, Portland and more on Oxboro. The Cemetery Transcription project has about 1,800

names in the data base with 1,200 more to be added, thanks to Kermit Frye & Stan Danielson. High School and students from Olson Middle School, along with Scouts have worked diligently to clean away the turf from around the headstones at the cemetery preparing them for military holidays ~ Memorial Day and Veteran's Day.

SPEED HOLMAN AND OXBORO HEATH EXHIBITS

Research and development resulted in an impressive exhibit about "Speed Holman", 1st Pilot for Northwest Airlines and renowned stunt flyer, currently on display at the Bloomington Civic Plaza exhibit case in the Fine Arts lobby; the Oxboro Heath exhibit was funded by a Bloomington Rotary grant and was completed in time for display at Bloomington Heritage Day Heritage tent on September 18th at the Applebees/US Bank plaza, which was attended by 5000-6000 people. Larry, Stan and Britta staffed the Oxboro Heath exhibit. All three worked on the exhibit which is impressive, and lists many "gone but not forgotten businesses" that have located along Lyndale in the Oxboro Heath/Clover area since the 1940's and 50's. A "Work in Progress" to be sure. The more we search, the more we find! About 200 businesses have been identified along Lyndale from about 94th Street to 101st.

BLOOMINGTON HERITAGE DAY ~ attended by 5000-6000 people

The Historical Society is a member of a committee of approximately 30 Bloomington non-profit organizations that promoted the First Annual Heritage Day event to bring awareness of the community's historic legacy. We kicked off the opening of the History Clock Tower Time Capsules from 1990 on September 18th at Heritage Day. Steve St. Martin joined Vonda Kelly and Larry Granger on stage, along with the Reverend Gideon Pond (portrayed by Jay Ludwig) for the opening by Steve of the Time Capsule purchased by Belle Pond St. Martin back in 1990. Belle's packet contained precious one-room school memorabilia. The Bloomington School District purchased 15 Time Capsule Boxes and three packets back in 1990. All have been delivered to the schools which opened them at assemblies. In addition, 17 Time Capsule boxes and 61 packets were purchased by individuals in 1990 ~ these families enjoyed opening their time capsules. One creative individual put some Twinkies inside, hoping to prove the claim of longevity. I'm not sure I'd want to taste one after twenty years! Helen Roedecker assisted with the Time Capsules Project. Helen, Ann, Don, Chuck, Mary, Priscilla & Vonda were very busy in the tent on Heritage Day!

At the Heritage Day History Tent, over 90 people participated in three pie eating contests, sponsored by Baker's Square and coordinated by Ann Bormes. Bakers Square has stated they would sponsor the pie eating contest for September 17th, 2011 for the 2nd annual Heritage Day celebration. Keep the date on your calendar so you can get in on the fun of eating yummy pies...1st prize is "guess what"? A Baker's Square Pie! Popular folk musician Jack Pearson entertained us on stage; Ole Olson, Norwegian Immigrant and the Viking Age Club were there; Iris Smith organized old fashioned games including gunny sack and 3 legged races; tug of war and other relays; Laurie Dahlgren's Olson Middle School students conducted pumpkin and face painting. Mini-Jacks supplied by Ann! Crafters included candle making (Mary); spinning and quilting demonstrations, Priscilla Pearson's

talent as a seed artist was inspiring to the young people who tried their hand at the art. We sold a number of our items-for-resale in the History tent, including books, blankets, note cards. Our history timeline exhibits reminded the community of our historic legacy!

2010 EXHIBITS:

In addition to the Speed Holman and the Oxboro Heath Exhibit, other exhibits during the year included the following themes: Civil War and President Lincoln; Minnesota Twins; Two Volunteer Missionaries - a "book report" about Gideon and Samuel Pond in their work through Fort Snelling with the Dakota Indians at Lake Calhoun, Bloomington, Shakopee, Lac Qui Parle, and surrounding areas. This exhibit coincided with the Chataqua at Oak Grove Presbyterian. A Constitution Day exhibit and military exhibits in recognition of Memorial Day; Independence Day and Veteran's Day are an ongoing part of each year. A December exhibit will be jointly sponsored by the Bloomington Continental Ballet Company, the Minnesota Valley Doll Club and the Historical Society which will feature Nutcrackers & dolls, reminiscent of Tchaikovsky's beloved Nutcracker.

2011 EXHIBITS will include an exhibit by the Bloomington Fire Department and the former Rescue Squad; A Bloomington Police Department Exhibit; research is beginning on a farm exhibit, beginning with the Veness farm at Bush Lake. The Historical Society will feature an exhibit on the Civil War starting in 2011 for the commemoration of the beginning of the Civil War and will highlight Bloomington men who served during the Civil War.

FUTURE EXHIBITS: an exhibit about Bloomington's Early Hospitality Industry; Blacksmiths in Bloomington; Airports in Bloomington; Big League and Booming; Bloomington's One Room School Days; Bloomington Parks and Recreation; Bloomington Civic organizations; American Indian Presence in Bloomington; Farms in Bloomington ~ at one time 300; there are many more subjects waiting in line to be on exhibit, including about our founding families.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR: DUGOUT CANOE EXHIBIT OPENING - September 12, 2010

Our newly opened Antiquity Exhibit featuring the society's significant 1600 circa Indian Dugout Canoe just recently restored by Terry Brown of Museum Professionals, Loretto, MN., is attracting interested visitors to the museum. The dugout is placed on a archival mount resembling a river bank. A graphics panel provides the history of the use of dugout canoes. Gil Williams, long time Bloomington resident, is the primary sponsor of the project. Olson Middle School students raised funds through car washes and sales, assisted by Laurie Dahlgren, teacher. The dugout was authenticated by the Minnesota Historical Society in 1967 after being discovered by Stan Danielson and George Hopkins on the Hopkins property. Our heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Williams, Ms. Dahlgren and the Olson Middle School. Promotional articles have been in the Bloomington Sun and the Star Tribune. The dugout went through a year and a half long stabilization and conservation process. Prior to the restoration of the Old Town Hall, the dugout had been on exhibit in the basement!

MUSEUM EXHIBITS INCLUDE: Gideon Pond and Dakota Exhibit Case; Kiosk displaying ancient artifacts, including arrow heads, copper artifacts & more; History Timeline depicting 10,000 years of Bloomington History; Norling Photo exhibit; Dan Patch exhibit; Minnesota River exhibit with information about Ferry crossings and the History of Steamboats on the Minnesota River; Circa 1600 Indian Dugout Canoe exhibit with graphic panel; One-room School setting. Stop in for an overview of Bloomington history!

PROGRAMS HELD IN 2010 ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- ~ Feb. 14 Author Bob Showers, book signing of *The Twins and Met Stadium*
- ~ April 16 Spring Gala at the Minnesota Valley Country Club, featured Chuck Chalberg as Bobby Jones, with Michael and Stephen Chalberg as the young Bobby Jones and Watts Gunn. Dinner and silent auction, along with musical entertainment, made for a lovely evening. Substantial funds were raised for the Society.
- ~ May 4 Int. Kids Club at the Museum, hosted by Bloomington School, Rotary, NCC
- ~ May 11 Township Day with Olson Middle School, Laurie Dahlgren, Teacher
- ~ May 23 Custer's Last Stand ~ the True Story, presented by Lyndon Griffin
- ~ May 31 Memorial Day Parade to Bloomington Cemetery. Scouts placed flags.
- ~ June 7 Society accepted donation from Bloomington Rotary for Oxboro Exhibit
- ~ June 27 Bridgeman's Ice Cream Social & John Philip Sousa Band at Pond Dakota Park
- ~ July 3 Summer Fete
- ~ July 11 Mission Sunday at Lac Qui Parle
- ~ July 9-18 Gideon Pond 200th Anniversary events - history tours to Lake Calhoun, Chief Cloudman's village site; Pond cabin, Dakota internment, out-state tours
- ~ July 17 Chataqua at Oak Grove Presbyterian Church in honor of Gideon's 200th birthday
- ~ July 9-16 Gideon Pond's 200th Birthday celebration, co-sponsored by the City of Bloomington, Pond Dakota Heritage Society, Bloomington Historical Society, Oak Grove Presbyterian Church, 19th Century Researchers Group, Wood Lake Battlefield Preservation Association; Cloudman Village Committee.
- ~ August 7 Bloomington guided history bus tour from Bloomington Ferry to Cedar
- ~ August 26 Pancake Breakfast benefit for Bloomington Historical Society at Ebenezer
- ~ Sept.18 Bloomington Heritage Day at Applebees/US Bank Plaza
- ~ Sept.20-25 River Rendezvous - Pond Dakota Mission Park
- ~ Sept. 26 Bloomington Richfield Old Timer's Celebration - KC Hall - 350 people attended
- ~ Sept. 28 International Kids Club, sponsored by School Dist., Normandale, Rotary
- ~ Oct. 23 Harvest Fest at the Old Town Hall, sponsored by Historical Society,
- ~ Oct. 26 Int. Kids Club sponsored by School District, Normandale College, Rotary
- ~ Nov. 7 **Annual Meeting - 1:30;** Lyndon Griffon presents "Women in Command" - 2:00
- ~ Nov. 21 Fred Johnson book-signing of *Suburban Dawn* - 2:00 p.m.
- ~ Dec. 12 - Holiday Program at 2; Hardingfele (Hardinger) Fiddlers; Fjell og Fjord Dancers Join us in Norwegian dancing. Enjoy the holiday decorations and the fiddlers!

FUND RAISING is ongoing, with sales of books, Bloomington History tapestry (\$60); History clock tower note cards (\$15 for 8); History Clock Tower time capsules to be opened in 2030 (\$50/box; \$25/packet); Book: "Suburban Dawn: Emergence of Bloomington, Richfield, Edina" by Fred Johnson (\$32); Book: The Twins at Met Stadium by Bob Showers (\$35); Book: the Minnesota North Stars by Bob Showers and Lou Nanne (\$35); Book: Nine Mile Creek Watershed District by Deborah Morse Kahn (\$10); Book: Bloomington on the Minnesota (\$50); Book: Suburban World by Brad Zellers, with (Irv Norling photos), published by the Minnesota Historical Society (\$28); The Historical Society is pleased to have assisted the authors and publishers with historical content, documents and photos used in the publication of the above listed books.

HISTORY BRICK PLAZA: Approximately 435 laser engraved bricks will be in place in the history plaza with the placement of the latest 13 bricks. **PLEASE CONSIDER THE GIFT OF A BRICK FOR THE HOLIDAYS.** IT IS A MEANINGFUL WAY TO REMEMBER A LOVED ONE OR A SPECIAL OCCASION. An 8X8 brick is \$175 with six lines of 18 spaces/line; a 4X8 brick is \$100 with three lines of 18 spaces/line. The next deadline for ordering is February 14th. You may order a Certificate to present if giving a gift for the holidays.

VOLUNTEERS: Thanks to the many volunteers who assisted all year! Thanks to our Board member hosts who keep the Old Town Hall Museum open for public open house hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays; Thursdays and Saturdays from Noon to 4 p.m.; Sundays: 1-5 p.m. Advance appointments may be made for tours; research; meetings, etc. by calling 952-881-4327 or 952-881-4114.

SPECIAL APPRECIATION TO THE BLOOMINGTON CITY COUNCIL AND MAYOR GENE WINSTEAD; CITY MANAGER MARK BERNHARDSON AND CITY STAFF FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF THE BLOOMINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO SPONSORS: BLOOMINGTON ROTARY AND RICHFIELD BLOOMINGTON CREDIT UNION. THANK YOU TO OUR MANY DONORS TO THE FIRST ANNUAL SPRING GALA AND TO OUR GENERAL MEMBERSHIP FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: The members of the Bloomington Historical Society Board of Directors are: President: Vonda Kelly; Vice President: Priscilla Pearson; Secretary: Mary Vavrosky; Treasurer: Don Stiles; Board Members: Ann Bormes; Chuck Chalberg; Laurie Dahlgren; Larry Granger; Helen Roedecker; Iris Smith. Sincere appreciation to all for their outstanding dedication to the Historical Society. Thanks to Stan Danielson, Larry Granger and Mary Vavrosky for their outstanding contributions to the society in the research area.

UP FOR REELECTION: Laurie Dahlgren, Priscilla Pearson, Helen Roedecker, Iris Smith, Don Stiles. Continuing members: Mary Vavrosky, Ann Bormes, Chuck Chalberg, Larry Granger, Vonda Kelly

BLOOMINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY WEBSITE: www.bloomingtonhistoricalsociety.org

If you have questions, please contact us at 952-881-4327 or 952-881-4114

Vonda L. Kelly, Executive Director