

ROSEAU COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2004 ANNUAL REPORT

The Roseau County Historical Society is the official county society as designated by the Minnesota Historical Society. Organized seventy-eight years ago on April 22, 1927, it was incorporated as a private non-profit organization under section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The mission of the Society is to collect, preserve, and disseminate knowledge about the history of Roseau County and to relate it to the state of Minnesota as per Article 11, section 1, 2, and 3 of the Society's by-laws. This includes preserving written materials, electronic data/media, photographs, and three-dimensional items. The Roseau County Historical Society is sole owner of the collection.

The Roseau County Historical Society (here after referred to as RCHS or historical society) operates the Roseau County Historical Museum and Interpretive Center, which houses the county archives and artifact collections, and serves as the hub of the Society's activities.

The Historical Society serves the residents of Roseau County and surrounding area. Visitors to the Roseau County Museum in 2004 came from nineteen of fifty states, four Canadian Provinces and foreign countries, such countries as Norway, Sweden, and Germany. Over six thousand individuals made onsite visits to the Museum. Onsite visitation included over 900 students from various schools across Roseau County, nursing home residents, research scholars, genealogists, and the public. The historical society reached over 30,000 individuals through off-site programs and exhibits during the Roseau County Fair and the Polaris 50th Anniversary Celebrations. Additional programs the historical society sponsored include educational out-reach school programs, RCHS annual meeting, and the Scandinavian Festival, etc.

2004 HIGHLIGHTS

The Roseau County Historical Society continues to develop its strategic plan. Board members, staff and volunteer coordinator LaVonne Johnson organized and accomplished several projects and programs during the year.

Annual Meeting

On April 23 about forty individuals attended the annual meeting of the Roseau County Historical Society at the Evangelical Covenant Church in Roseau.

A business update about the year's museum activities was given. Copies of the 2003 Annual Report were made available to the public. The following three board members were re-elected: Bruce Olson-Badger, Irene Olson-Roseau, and Ida Novacek-Roseau.

Following the meeting, Lavonne Johnson and Julie Elick entertained the attendees with a humorous and informative presentation about their 2003 Norway trip. Several volunteers made the evening enjoyable by decorating the tables and serving a delicious lunch.

Frost Bite Days

Volunteers Julie Elick and LaVonne Johnson designed a historic Sno-Mo-Cade exhibit for Frost Bite Days at the Polaris Experience Center. They used historic photographs, newspaper articles, and other historical memorabilia to depict Sno-Mo-Cade races and activities from 1960s, 70s, and 80s. The exhibit was seen by anyone who visited the Experience Center for the months of February, March, and April. A larger Sno-Mo-Cade exhibit was shown at the Roseau County Fair.

Museum assistant, Dana Skime, took several photographs of the weekend. These photographs will be of great value to future Polaris researchers.

Sixth Grade Minnesota History Contest



On Friday, May 14th, the historical society sponsored the annual Northwest Minnesota Sixth Grade Minnesota History Contest which took place at the Badger School. Five schools participated: Badger, Grygla, Karlstad Tri -County, Lancaster, and Warroad. This was the first year Lancaster students participated. Contest participation is limited to sixth grader students who study Minnesota History. Fifteen students were eligible for the contest. Students placed as follows: 1st -Adam Shaugabay, Warroad; 2nd - Aaron Rasmusson, Warroad; 3rd - Tony Sang, Tri-County; 4th - Brett Coffield, Lancaster; 5th - Miranda Pearson, Warroad; 6th - Bret Johnson, Grygla; The contest was also sponsored by Border State Bank, Citizens State Bank, and Security State Bank.

Polaris Birthday Parade and Celebration

In June, Polaris Industries celebrated their fiftieth anniversary in Roseau with several events held in Roseau. RCHS President Glenn Holm and Curator Charleen Haugen participated in the parade by pulling a float with one of the snowmobiles from the 1960s in a winter scene. The Historical Society banner was on display behind a horse-drawn carriage driven by board member Bennie Heppner of Warroad. The museum photographed many events during the festivities for future historical reference and received many photographs from other individuals who also photographed the events of the festivities.

Strathcona Centennial Celebration

In August, the City of Strathcona celebrated their centennial. The city celebrated the occasion with several events. The historical society proudly participated in the parade, displaying their banner on a carriage. Many photographs were received from this celebration.

Holiday Open House

Over 225 individuals attended a Holiday Open House at the museum on November 28. The museum took on a festive atmosphere after historical society board members Jeff Pieterick and Lisa Hanson decorated and planned the event.

Door prizes included several museum publications and other items. Two exhibit openings marked the event; they included Barbie Dolls and G. I Joe toys from the past and present.



Through the diligent efforts of Pieterick and Hanson, funding for the decorations and the trees came from Border State Bank, Central Boiler, Citizens State Bank, and Security State Bank, as well as many residents from across the county donating decorations. The Badger first grade class made green and red paper chains. Squid's Super Value and U-Save supplied other items for the event. Wally's Super Market supplied the cookies and ice cream.

Old Pinecreek Lutheran Church Restorations

Work continues on the old log Pinecreek Lutheran Church. In 2004, several individuals began the arduous task of designing a rock foundation around the base.

This church was the first church in the county. The logs were originally to be used for building a fort for protection against what was thought to be an upcoming Indian uprising in the late 1800s. When this didn't materialize, the logs were used to build this church in the Pinecreek area.

EDUCATION

Educational Programs and Tours

The museum uses several types of programs to educate county students. Students range from pre-school age through high school ages. The museum strives to educate the children of Roseau County through a variety of activities, some of which are educational tours, the development of research skills, participation in educational detective hunts, and utilization of outreach kits.

Adult educational programming is also important. Historic stories presented through radio broadcasts and newspaper articles offer a wide variety of life experiences in early Roseau County. Genealogy classes inspire both present and would-be family historians to delve deep into their past. Museum programs provide them with the tools they need to do their research.

Two outreach kits are available to local schools. P. O. Fryklund, an early county relic and natural history collector, gathered items from all over the world. One of his contributions is a marvelous fossil collection. Museum staff have put together a kit that is used in the classroom when fossils are studied. The kit includes two boxes of fossils. One box allows the students to match vertebrae and skeletal properties. Teachers can use the boxes in whatever way they find useful. This kit comes with three Eye Witness books on fossils.

The Birds of Prey – Owls outreach program was used again in 2004 when local teachers educated their student about birds of prey. Various species of owls have been produced on video by amateur wildlife photographer Mark Hegvik and are part of the kit. Teachers from the Roseau School used the kits in 2004 although they are available for any school in the county.

Each April, the Roseau eighth grade class uses the museum for an in-depth research project. The students are required to interview a Roseau adult and provide a time-line of events that happened during that person's teenage years. Students learn valuable techniques about how to use research center equipment (reader-printer and a copy machine) and materials for doing in-depth research similar to what they will use at a university campus. This program assists the schools in meeting eighth grade graduation standards.

Northland Community and Technical College Minnesota History Instructor Aliza Olson exhibited the P. O. Fryklund collection of projectile points to her class in Thief River Falls in January.

In 2004, over 900 students from across Roseau County visited the museum for various educational tours or programs.

Detective Hunts

A new children's program was initiated in August. For three weeks, the museum and Dairy Queen sponsored a "Sleuth Hunt" (detective hunt) for children thirteen and younger. The children had to locate three different objects in exhibits daily. The program attracted approximately 150 children from across the county. The museum conducted a "Christmas Sleuth Hunt" for several elementary classes during December.

Radio Broadcasts and Newspaper Columns

Two areas of focus provide the public with first hand information about the historical society.

RCHS board member, Irene E. Olson, has been broadcasting stories about people, places, and events that are part of Roseau County's history. This weekly radio program "A Look Back in Time", which is heard on KJ 102 radio, has been running for approximately nine years. Her diligent efforts have given the radio audience opportunities to understand how the county developed and how the residents contributed to that development. She also informs the public about upcoming events, programs, and other RCHS developments.

For the past 3 years, Curator Charleen Haugen has written or used historic stories from Society archives, publications, and the radio broadcasts for a weekly newspaper column. The Greenbush Tribune and Roseau Times-Region publish these articles.

Minnesota's Historic Northwest Consortium

RCHS is a member of the Minnesota's Historic Northwest consortium. This group, comprised of nine historical societies on Northwest Minnesota, works toward developing educational programs for area residents, provides professional development for its members, and promotes tourism in the area.

In the spring of 2004, the organization produced a newsletter. The theme of the newsletter was the 1918 Influenza Pandemic. The newsletter gave readers an understanding of how this pandemic affected Northwest Minnesota. The newsletter reached over twenty-five percent of the households in the Northwest Minnesota. Roseau Electric Co-operative sponsored our portion of the newsletter.

The Beito Foundation of Thief River Falls provided grant funding for professional development for consortium members, using the Minnesota Historical Society to facilitate the education. MHS organized two workshops. One focused on archival collection care (including all records, even government records) in a research center of a museum or historical society. The second focused on the care and protection of photographs, negatives, glass plates, and digital collections. The workshop also covered photograph copyright issues.

Genealogy Seminars

For the past two years, the Roseau County Historical Society has sponsored a genealogy seminar during the Scandinavian Festival. In 2004, Duane Swanson, Reference Specialist for the Minnesota Historical Society, conducted the seminar at the Roseau School Library. The seminar dealt with government records, including state and local records, and the information they provide to genealogists.

EXHIBITS/COLLECTION ACQUISITIONS

Exhibit

Information on the exhibit developed for the Polaris Experience Center is in 2004 Highlights, Frost Bite Days – Polaris Experience Center.

Prior to the Holiday Open House two children's exhibits were displayed. Two Greenbush residents lent their Barbie collections to the museum. Brenda Sather's collection had over 30 dolls from the nineties to the present while Karen Janousek brought in her 1960 era dollhouse and Barbie dolls with their accessories. These delightful collections were a hit with the young girls.

The second exhibit was a collection of 1980s GI Joe toys on loan from James Haugen. This collection contained all the gear that came with each part.

Collection

In 2004, staff cataloged over 3,000 objects, photographs, archival manuscripts, family histories, etc. Over 13,000 items can now be searched through the PastPerfect Museum Software database. An updated network version purchased in December now makes it possible to access the information on up to five computers in the museum. Networking will now allow museum volunteers to enter data into the program.

The historical society adopted a new numbering system for cataloging last spring. It follows the National Park System's recommended procedures for accessioning a collection. The system incorporates the year of the donated artifacts into its catalog number. This policy makes it easier to access items in the database and gives staff the ability to catalog donated items immediately upon receipt.

Acquisitions

Thirty-two donors added a variety of memorabilia in 2004. They show how Roseau County is affected by its past. They include objects, photographs, manuscripts, and archival items that tell a story of the people who inhabited our area.

A sampling of the items brought in include a World War II ration book, a burning permit receipt book from Deer Township, a Ross Township (1892-1906) and a Roseau Farmer Co-op Elevator(1955–1972) minute record books, and a projector from Redeemer Lutheran Church of Badger. Also received were historical scrapbooks kept by individuals from across our county including one from Greenbush, and a 1929 Greenbush school yearbook, entitled The Mast.

Photographs present a wonderful historic record of the county's changes through the years. Photographs received this year were from as early as 1908 to the present. A few examples of historical photographs donated to RCHS are the 1908 first train into Roseau, 1916 dedication of the Greenbush Episcopal Church, 1917 Roseau Girl's Basketball team, 1919 parade in Greenbush, 1949 Ford promotion in the Roseau City Auditorium, and several photographs of the recent Polaris Fiftieth anniversary celebration.

Please continue to contribute items you have in your attics, closets, and basements to the historical society so we may have a past and present collection of historical items for posterity. These artifacts are a biography of the county. They educate and entertain old and young. Remember that objects tell stories, the stories of our past!

RESEARCH CENTER

Newspapers

This year, as in the past, local businesses assisted the society in purchasing necessary items for the Research Center. Major research items in the center are the county newspapers. Over the past three years we have been able to purchase both the bound editions and the microfilm copies. These are made available to the researcher due to the generosity of the Border State Bank, Greenbush; Lake Country Chevrolet Olds, Warroad; Moren Law Office, Roseau; and Security State Bank, Warroad.

Citizens State Bank Calendar

The Historical Society is proud to have been a part of the centennial festivities at Citizens State Bank. All photographs except one in the Citizens State Bank Centennial calendar were from the museum collection. Our staff worked with Allen Olson to locate historic photographs of Roseau. The result is a historic look at Roseau's past.

Greenbush Centennial Project

During 2004, several researchers from Greenbush researched information for an upcoming centennial book. The big plans for Greenbush included an area Centennial book. The museum scanned many photos from the museum collection and from Greenbush residents. These photographs will be of benefit to the museum far into the future. One of the most memorable scans from a Greenbush resident is a glass plate of the first train into Greenbush.

Our research center and museum will benefit from future incoming research as a result of the publication of the Greenbush centennial book.

Strathcona Centennial

In 2004 the Strathcona Centennial Committee published a centennial book. The committee prepared for this historical book by doing some of the research at the Roseau County Museum research center.

Polaris Photographs

Three Polaris scanning projects were undertaken this past year: the David Johnson collection, the Bob Eastman collection, and the Bob Przekwas collection. Although the Historical Society does not have the copyrights, these collections have brought a wealth of Polaris history to the museum. There is no way we can express our appreciation to these individuals and their families for sharing this history.

BOARD of DIRECTORS, STAFF, AND VOLUNTEERS

Board Members

A twelve member Board of Directors serve the Historical Society. Board members served unlimited three-year terms. 2004 board members included Glenn Holm (Roseau) - President, Irene Olson (Roseau) - Vice President, T. Neal Johnson (Roseau) - Treasurer, Sheila Winstead (Fox) - Secretary, Bruce Olson (Badger), Anne Erickson (Moose Township and area), Bennie Heppner (Warroad vicinity), Darrell Borgen (Badger), Ida Novacek (Roseau), Jeff Pieterick (Greenbush), Lisa Hanson (Greenbush), and Lola Grafstrom (Salol).

The Historical Society welcomed three new board members in 2004: Jeff Pieterick - Greenbush, Lisa Hanson - Greenbush, and Bennie Heppner - Warroad. Milt Sather from Greenbush, retired from the board of directors after serving for twenty-eight years. Milt had served as Treasurer from 1995 to 2000. Milt remains an active member through Emeritus status, continuing to work on the county cemetery project.

On April 9, 2005 Milt passed away. His influence on the museum was tremendous and he will be greatly missed. He was instrumental in organizing the research center. He and his wife, Irene, recorded over 50 county cemeteries. Their activities with Pelan Park and the Greenbush history center in their home have benefited the people of the area. He will be long remembered for his contributions to Roseau County history.

Administration

RCHS staff consists of three full-time employees and one Experience Works (Green Thumb) federally funded employee.

Charleen Haugen, the director/curator implements board policy, administers the budget, and represents the institution to the public. The director and her staff manage each area of the museum. The director reports to the Society Board of Directors monthly.

In 2004, Haugen initiated an educational Detective Hunt program. Over 300 children participated in the event over a three-week period prior to school starting. Haugen looks forward to educating the public through programming and interpretive exhibit design.

Dana Skime, assistant for the first half of the year, managed membership and assisted in educational programs and tours, took the majority of photographs during the Polaris Fiftieth Anniversary celebrations. Dana moved during 2004 and therefore resigned. She was a vital part of scanning many photographs that represent the history of Polaris' early snowmobile racing days.

Toni Anderson-Donarski, assistant to the director, manages memberships and museum visitation, records all registered artifacts into a database, maintains the Military History program, scans photographs, presents educational student tours, and assists the director as needed.

Marie Kompelien, research center specialist, works under Experience Works, a federally funded program. Kompelien indexes all obituaries, marriages, and births for genealogy purposes as well as indexing important historical information. She also assists patrons and researchers in research and genealogy requests.

THE FUTURE

New City Center

For the past 27 years, the museum has inhabited the Museum/Library building. During the 2002 flood, the building was damaged. Although the greater part of the collection was undamaged due to the quick action of volunteers and staff, the museum is now in an uncomfortable position. Due to the downsizing for the past three years, the museum has had to rethink the way it conducts programs and gives educational tours. We look forward to being able to have the room for a full museum, plus space to hold programs and activities.

Staff has had to arrange the museum to accommodate the downsizing of exhibits and the loss of storage space.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Major funding is provided by Roseau County, with additional financial support coming from memberships, donations, and serviced provided by RCHS to the public, such as the scanning of photographs.

Several businesses and organizations supported the events and activities in 2004 either with a financial donation, supplies, or an in-kind donation. These donations gave the Historical Society the opportunity to do several new and different things, such as the Holiday Open House and the Detective Hunts.

Fund Raising Programs

Quilt Raffle

During the winter of 2003, RCHS member Lillian Nelson donated a beautiful quilt to the historical society for a raffle. Through this effort over \$500 was raised for collection care. Lillian has been an avid supporter for many years. Her concern for the historical society is seen through the many artifacts she donates and the various programs she supports.

Fund Drive

The Historical Society initiated an annual fund drive in November. The monies from the drive were divided between the General Operating and the Research Center accounts. The Research Center account pays for equipment contracts, repairs, supplies, and the purchase of new equipment. One of the goals of the Historical Society is to purchase a second reader-printer (the present reader-printer is a 1988 model. The ten-year-old copy machine also needs replacement. This equipment is vital to a researcher.

Historical Society Accounts

The Historical Society has four financial accounts plus an endowment fund. The **General Operating** account is used for day-to-day expenses. The **Northland** account was set up for the research center. All sales of the following books published by the society: Pioneers! O Pioneers! (books one and two) and Remembrances are placed in the Northland account. Centennial Book sales, memorials, and specially designated donations are placed in a **Border State Bank** account and then transferred into the society's endowment with the Northwest Minnesota Foundation. An account has also been set up for the **old Pinecreek Lutheran Church** repair and maintenance. This church is the oldest in the county and is located at the Pioneer Farm and Village.

Roseau County Historical Society Endowment Fund

In 1995, the Roseau County Historical Society established an endowment fund through the Northwest Minnesota Initiative Fund (now the Northwest Minnesota Foundation). The beginning balance at that time was \$8,000. Due to the generosity of several individuals, as of December 31, 2004 the fund's balance was \$133,330.59.

As the Historical Society looks to the future, the endowment fund offers the society a chance to become financially stable. Although this will not happen in the near future without a major donor(s), smaller donations from memorials, general donations, and families providing planned giving in their estates, will help us work toward reaching that threshold. As the fund develops, the Historical Society will use the interest for projects and other necessary expenses. Please help us reach that goal.

Individuals considering financially assisting the Historical Society in maintaining the collection, preserving, and disseminating the history of Roseau County may do so by including the Historical Society in their wills and/or supporting the fund through memorials. For more information, contact the Historical Society or talk to your financial advisor.

Please refer to our Annual Financial Statement at the end of this report for additional financial information.

The board of directors expresses appreciation to those who have supported the Historical Society with financial contributions and historical artifacts. These contributions offer educational opportunities to all within our county.

The Roseau County Historical Society apologizes for any oversights or errors in this report.