

**ROSEAU COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2003**

---

The Roseau County Historical Society has been designated the official county society by the Minnesota Historical Society. It was organized seventy-seven years ago on April 22, 1927. It is 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 a certain extent Northwest Minnesota as per Article 11, section 1, 2, and 3 of the Society's by-laws. This includes written materials, electronic data/media, photographs, and three-dimensional items. The Roseau County Historical Society is sole owner of all artifacts in the collection.

The Roseau County Historical Society (here after referred to as RCHS or 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 Society serves the people of Roseau County and surrounding area. Visitors to the Roseau County Museum in 2003 were from 29 of the fifty states, four Canadian Provinces and included foreign visitors from such countries as Norway, Sweden, Japan, India, Russia, and Scotland. A total of 6,653 individuals made onsite visits to the Museum. Onsite visitation included **students**, nursing home residents, research scholars, genealogists, and the general public. Off site visits were approximately 26,500 which included visitors to the Roseau County Fair booth, out-reach school programs, annual meeting, all photographs and the Land O'Lakes exhibit in the Reed River Trading Company building, plus other programs and exhibits sponsored by RCHS.

### **2003 HIGHLIGHTS**

#### ***Roseau County Historical Society Strategic Plan***

In February 2003 RCHS hired Linda Hamilton a planner from Red Wing Minnesota. Hamilton's credentials included a background as an elected trustee on the Board of Directors for the Ontario (Canada) Museum Association, conducting exhibit design seminars throughout museums in Ontario including the distinguished Royal Ontario Museum. She had previously been employed by the Thunder Bay Ontario Museum as an exhibit designer, fundraiser, volunteer manager, and public relations.

RCHS set up several meetings with Hamilton designed to help the organization with short and long rang planning. Community leaders from across the county meet in June to exchange ideas on what RCHS' future plans should entail.

***Seven areas of focus came out of the plan.*** They include the following

1. Develop an effective and productive organization.
2. Develop a marketing program to increase visibility and public awareness.
3. Become a financially stable and sustainable organization.
4. Secure a permanent home for the Roseau County Historical Society Museum.
5. Broaden programming to meet the needs of Roseau County over the next 10 years.
6. Develop community partnerships throughout Roseau County
7. Increase membership and volunteer base.

Each focus area was designed to meet the needs of the Society. Our immediate goal was to set a priority as to the areas that should be concentrated on first and the committees were organized with this in mind. The first two areas to be organized were a building committee and a marketing committee. The building committee's purpose is to assist RCHS with plans for a new museum which will be housed in a new City of Roseau facility provided funding is available. The moving out of the building was deemed necessary after the 2001 Roseau River flooded and the Army Corps of Engineers planned for a new flood plan that would include demolition of the museum/library building. The marketing committee will be responsible for

increasing the visibility of the Society to the public. Community representatives from across the county were enlisted to become members of the committees.

### Annual Meeting

Roseau County Historical Society celebrated their 76<sup>th</sup> year of operations with an annual meeting held April 25 in the Roseau School Commons Area and Theater. Four board members up for re-election were Darrell Borgen, Glenn Holm, Sheila Winstead, and Robert Nelson. Robert Nelson chose not to remain on the Board but will continue to work with the Society on cemetery projects with Milt Sather. The *Leave a Legacy* video explaining planned giving was shown to members.

Following the opening meeting a living history program entitled "Orphan Train Riders" was presented by author Dorothy Lund-Nelson. The program offered the audience the opportunity to see first-hand what it was like to a part of that era of history when young orphaned children from New York City were transported to families in other areas of the United States who adopted them.

### Preserving a Sense of Place

The Society is an active member of the Minnesota's Historic Northwest consortium. For the past 4 years they have sponsored a spring tourism seminar. On April 11, 2003 another seminar entitled "Preserving a Sense a Place" was given. It involved educating those involved and interested in Northwest Minnesota tourism. Some the areas focused on were Living History, Folklore, Cultural Intimacy, Show and Tell, Character Portrayal, Minnesota Arts board, and grant funding. Approximately 40 individuals attended this event.

### Bridal Review and Reception

A Bridal Review of wedding fashions from the late 1800s to the present took place on April 12. Mary



Ross, Sandy Flagstad, and Chris Wahlberg were the co-chairs of the event with Aliza Olson narrating the style review. Families from throughout the county participated in this event by wearing their own wedding dress or a daughter/granddaughter wore the bridal clothing from their wedding or the wedding of a grandmother. Present day bridal clothing was fashioned by Monique's Bridal of Roseau. Styles from the 1800s to the present day made the occasion one to remember.

A "reception" followed the style review. Many area businesses donated decorations, supplies, wedding cakes, and other refreshments for the event. Over 40 volunteers assisted in

making this event a success. Approximately 250 individuals attended the event.

### Sixth Grade Minnesota History Contest

Six schools from across Northwest Minnesota participated in the annual Minnesota History Contest sponsored by the Society; this was held at the museum. The top three students in their sixth grade classes in each of the following schools took a Minnesota history test: Badger, Goodridge, Grygla, Karlstad Tri-County, and Warroad. First through sixth place winners received savings bonds; trophies were awarded to the top three students, Mike Grove (1<sup>st</sup>), Warroad, Nathan Snyder (2<sup>nd</sup>), Warroad, and Anthony Sourdif (3<sup>rd</sup>), Warroad. Sponsors of the event were three local banks, Border State Bank of Badger, Greenbush, and Roseau; Citizens State Bank, Badger and Roseau; and Security State Bank of Warroad. Each of these banks donated savings bonds for the event.



### Scandinavian Festival

During the 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> of June, Roseau hosted its first ever Scandinavian Festival. RCHS participated by holding three Scandinavian genealogy seminars put on by the Minnesota Historical Society. These seminars presented materials on how to search for one's family in both the United States and in Scandinavian Countries. These seminars were well attended with individuals making many comments afterwards about how helpful they were in giving them guidance in their family history searches.

Another way RCHS participated in the Scandinavian Festival was with museum exhibits. Several individuals loaned items in their collections for this exhibit. Bell Pulls, beer bowls, folk art, and a Hardangar fiddle are just some of the items that were displayed.

### Auto Tour

In July the Society participated in an Auto Tour sponsored by the Minnesota's Historic Northwest Consortium of historical societies. This tour offered historical society members from across northwest Minnesota the opportunity to visit seven museums in the area, including Roseau. Trustees from four societies visited the Roseau Museum along with several others. They participated in an Old Fashioned Ice Cream Social sponsored by Schwan Ice Cream and Roseau's Dairy Queen.

## EXHIBITS/ COLLECTION/ ACQUISITIONS

### Projects

The following projects were accomplished in 2003

#### **Collection Care:**

In 2002 an item-level **inventory** was begun and was completed in the spring of 2003. This project was supervised by Denise Hendrickson under the direction of Director Charleen Haugen with Minnesota Historical Society Conservator Robert Herskovitz providing guidance.

- Approximately 13,000 items were checked for condition, cleaned as necessary, and their location was verified. Digital photographing of the collection also took place. The inventory gave RCHS an opportunity to rotate exhibit items so items that had not been on exhibit for several years could be seen by the public. Due to the inventory the museum has some additional unique items on exhibit. One of these items is a waffle iron used on a wood stove. Digital photographs of the collection were also taken at the time.
- Both long-span and regular **shelving** were purchased for the storage area. With additional items in the collection being moved into storage due to the flood of 2001 shelving needed to be purchased. Four long-span (4 foot by 8 foot) units and 8 regular museum storage shelving units were purchased.
- Over 7,000 photographs in the collection were placed in archival protective sleeves. This gives the photographs long term care and gives researchers the opportunity to handle them without the worry of damage.

#### **Old Pine Creek Lutheran Church:**

Board member Glenn Holm's involvement with ensuring that the Pinecreek project continues to move forward took another step toward completion in 2003. The Roseau County Sentencing to Service crew assisted in the delivery of rocks for the foundation. These rocks will be placed around the foundation base of the building at a future date.

### Acquisitions

Over 238 items were donated to the museum collection in 2003. Some of the notable items are scrapbooks from the Lady Slipper Garden Club, church history booklets from the east to the west end of the county, a set of the Alvin "Ole" Swanson Roseau County booklets, a wonderful collection of Minnesota High School State Hockey Tournament programs, wedding apparel and evening clothing, a child's baptism dress, men's dress clothing from the 1970s, a 1920 red wool swim suit, Oscar Larson's Strathcona glass plate photograph collection and many photographs and albums.

### **Exhibit**

A **Photograph exhibit** titled “When the Temperature Hits 80 it is Summer in Roseau County” featured the many summer activities enjoyed in northern Minnesota such as fishing on Lake of the Woods, swimming in area lakes, rivers and swimming pools, fair time, parades, and festivals.

#### **Exhibit Design:**

- Volunteers Jeanie Hammess and Deanna Hovda were instrumental in renovating exhibits. Jean designed and set up an early 1900 bedroom exhibit while Deanna redid the 1890 kitchen exhibit. They used many items that interpreted that time period. Researching and going through the collection brought out many items that had not been placed on exhibition for some time, such as a waffle griddle for a wood stove.
- Many exhibits within the museum have been renovated and updated. Several new exhibit labels were designed including a new post office label. John and Virginia Loukas of Loukas Creative volunteered to design two of these large labels; Kofstad Signs printed these posters and several photographs for the medical exhibit.
- Virginia Loukas scanned approximately 300 photographs for the photograph exhibit stand so original photographs could be replaced by copies.

**Roseau County Fair Exhibit:** Over 5,000 individual visited the Roseau County Historical Society fair booth this year.

- The Fair was held the third week in July. An exhibit featuring posters, memorabilia from two of Roseau County’s hockey greats - Dave Christian and Neal Broten were exhibited including a hockey helmet worn by Neal during his youth hockey days and the hat Dave wore during the 1980 Olympics when both he and Neal played a pivotal role in the United States receiving the gold medal.
- Several photograph albums were available as well as old county atlases, newspapers and, a rural school album which included information and photographs of former Roseau County rural schools. Other photograph albums were also available including one with photographs that needed identifying. Scrapbooks and newspapers were also available for visitors.

**Scandinavian Exhibit** – see festival information

### **RESEARCH CENTER**

The Roseau County Historical Society’s Research Center is a major source of Roseau County History. All items in the center are available to the public. Whether a person is searching for their family history or is a scholar the center can answer many questions.

In 2003, Milt Sather and Robert Nelson worked to update and catalog cemeteries in the county. As these are updated they will be made available to researchers. Many volunteers from the county have worked on transferring the cemetery records to an electronic database that will eventually be placed on the internet. Approximately 50 percent of this project has been completed.

2002 bound editions and prior years microfilm editions of the Greenbush Tribune, Roseau Times-Region, and Warroad Pioneer newspapers were purchased for the center through generous donations from Border State Bank, Lake County Chevrolet, Buick, Pontiac, Inc., and the Patrick Moren Law Office.

The development of a patron list from the 1935 County atlas was a project undertaken by Society member Arlene Seydel in 2003. This list will be placed on a CD and made available to researchers.

Research on various projects for future exhibits has been undertaken as well as updating regular museum exhibits.

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

The Society manages four areas of focus: the Roseau County Historical Museum and Interpretive Center, preservation/conservation of the collection; research; publications; and the Old Log Pinecreek Lutheran Church at the Pioneer Farm and Village. Staff administers the first three areas.

Volunteers play an important role in the Society. The Society benefited from over **1,200** hours of volunteer time in 2003. Volunteers assisted with many projects including making a quilt rack, working in the research center, making protective sleeves for the photographs, fixing computers, doing exhibit designing, assisting during programs, and making the bridal review so successful. The Society would not be able to accomplish many of the projects without this wonderful help. We appreciate and thank volunteers who contribute in any way.

### **Board of Directors**

A twelve member Board of Directors governs the Roseau County Historical Society. At the beginning of 2003 the following individuals were members of the Board of Directors: **Aliza Olson Novacek** – Wannaska, **Darrell Borgen** – Badger, **Glenn Holm** - Roseau, **Neal Johnson** – Roseau, **Robert Nelson** – Greenbush, **Ann Novacek** – Greenbush, **Ida Novacek** – Roseau, **Bruce Olson** – Badger, **Irene Olson** – Roseau, **Shirley Flick** – Warroad (replaced Angie Brewster-Battles) , **Milton Sather** – Greenbush, and **Sheila Winstead** – Roseau. At the annual meeting in March Darrell Borgen, Glenn Holm, Sheila Winstead, and Robert Nelson were re-elected to the board with the plan to replace Robert Nelson in the near future. In May the following directors were elected officers: Co-Presidents, Glenn Holm and Aliza Olson; Irene Olson - Vice-President, Sheila Winstead - Secretary, and Neal Johnson - Treasurer, were elected officers. In June, Aliza Olson, a board member since 2001, stepped down and Glenn Holm became President.

2003 brought a change to the board when several directors retired. Ann Novacek had served the Society since 1992 and was secretary for many of those years. Aliza Novacek stepped down permanently when she was approached to teach at Northland Community Technical College. Her leadership and volunteerism was a great asset to the society. Although Robert Nelson, Greenbush, has retired from the board, he continues to assist with projects. Shirley Flick of Warroad served as a board member until December. This presented an opportunity for others to become board members. Ann Erickson replaced Ann Novacek (1992) and Lola Grafstrom replaced Robert Nelson (1997),

The Roseau County Historical Society's Board of Directors is a dedicated group of individuals whose service is visible through its commitment to preserve the history of the county in various ways. Some of the ways include Irene E. Olson's narration of the history of the county to the KJ102 radio audience for the past eight years, Glenn Holm's commitment to improving the Pinecreek Church structure, and Milt Sather's ongoing interest and service in recording cemeteries in the county.

In September 2003 Irene Olson was recognized for her service of 10 years on the Society's board of directors.

### **Administration**

In 2003 RCHS staff consisted of three full-time employees and one part-time employee.

**Charleen Haugen**, the director/curator, implements board policy, administers the budget, and represents the institution to the public and to a variety of funding sources. As curator she is responsible for management, exhibition, student educational programming, and manages and updates the research center, writes a column for two newspapers at least bi-monthly, and is the general museum and research center administrator. The director and staff manage the museum and the collection. The director reports to the Society Board of Directors monthly.

**Toni Anderson-Donarski**, assistant to the director. She managed memberships and museum visitation, recorded all registered artifacts into a database, maintained the Military History program, scanned photographs, presented educational student tours, and assisted the director as needed. Donarski recorded all objects into PastPerfect software database. She worked extensively with the item-level inventory locating objects and entering new locations of artifacts. Toni resigned from her position in October 2003.

**Barbara Wood**, assistant to the director, was in charge of acquisitions, she registered and cleaned all incoming artifacts; presented educational tours; and assisted the director as needed. Wood assisted in supervising federal flood grant employees and assisted with the inventory. Wood resigned in April 2003. Due to a lack of funding Wood position was not replaced.

**Marie Kompelien**, employed through the federally funded Experience Works program, 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 does genealogy requests.

**Dana Skime**, assistant to the director, was hired in December 2003. Skime will oversee the registration of the collection, including cleaning all incoming donations; she will also present educational tours, and assist the director as needed.

### **Historical Society Volunteers**

Volunteers played an important part in historical society and museum programs and flood rehabilitation efforts in 2003. In the fall of 2003 LaVonne Johnson stepped forward to become the volunteer coordinator for the Society. Though her efforts we hope to gain a working volunteer staff that will assist the Society in student educational programming and other areas in which we wish to expand. We have refrained from listing volunteers due to the possibility of accidentally excluding someone. We want to express our appreciation to the volunteers and businesses who have assisted the society in the past year.

### **Volunteer Projects included:**

- Transferred cemetery information into a computer data base program and checked the accuracy of the transfer.
- Assisted in the Research Center documenting, clipping and filing historic county happenings. Worked on updated cemetery records, updated the website.
- Assisted with Society programs, such as the Bridal Review, genealogy seminar, and annual meeting.
- Video taped programs for classroom use and the museum.
- Cleaned exhibits.
- Setup exhibits in the lobby and at the Reed River Building.
- Manned the Fair booth.
- Designed museum posters and labels.

### **Financial Report**

Hayes and Czeh Certified Public Accountants, who provide monthly and year-end statements and compile tax returns, completed Roseau County Historical Society 2003 Financial Report.

A financial audit was conducted by Brady-Martz in the fall of 2002. For a copy of the report please contact Charleen Haugen at the museum.

Roseau County Historical Society general operations funding come from Roseau County appropriations, memberships, publications, admittance, grants, memorials, donations, etc.

In February 2002, the director applied for an Institute of Museum and Library Service (IMLS) General Operating Grant, which was awarded to the Society in October 2002. This is a two year grant under General Operating Support. 2002 was the last year for this type of grant due to a change in grant policy with IMLS. This grant paid half of salary of one employee and assisted in the purchase of needed office supplies archival storage materials for collection objects.

Generous contributions were received in memory of many deceased individuals from their families and friends. All memorial funds are placed in the Roseau County Historical Society endowment fund through the Northwest Minnesota Foundation.

### **Contributors**

Major general operating funding sources for FY2003 were:

- Roseau County appropriation - \$36,000
- Institute of Museum and Library Services Grant - \$8,123 (received in October 2003 for 2004 general operating)
- Hartz Foundation - \$10,000

- Roseau Community Fund and the Northwest Minnesota Foundation - \$7,500, Strategic Planning
- Roseau Community Fund and the Northwest Minnesota Foundation - \$20,000, Flood recovery

For in-depth financial information please see the year end report at the end of this report.

#### Memorial and donations

- Donations - \$585
- Memorials - \$800
- Membership donations - \$3,960
- Border State Bank - \$1,342 (computer for office for exhibit/graphic design)
- Donations Northland Safety Products - \$300
- Events - \$976
- Roseau PTO - \$250
- Farm Credit Services - \$49.50 (for an event)

#### **Roseau County Historical Society Endowment Fund**

The diverse and innovative activities summarized in the preceding pages make it clear that the Roseau County Historical Society pursues its mission of collecting, preserving, and disseminating the knowledge about the history of Roseau County and relates it to the history of the state of Minnesota. These are important steps in assisting residents and visitors in understanding Roseau County history. Those who visit the Society's museum, read its publications, and browse its World Wide Web site each year gain an appreciation for our county and what it represents to the people who have lived here, presently live here, and will live here in the future. It is through private support, channeled through the Roseau County Historical Society Endowment Fund through the Northwest Minnesota Foundation, that it becomes possible for the Society to go beyond minimum expectations and share the unique aspects of Roseau County's heritage with a greater audience.

The Roseau County Historical Society Endowment Fund, started in 1995, is a well-planned giving program that secures private gifts that will support the short- and long-term goals of the Society. As one seeks to achieve financial and philanthropic goals, planned giving will help you to obtain a charitable income tax deduction, reduce or avoid capital gains taxes, prevent probate costs, assist in reducing estate taxes or federal income taxes. These gifts, whether through planned giving via insurance policies, inheritance trusts, memorial gifts, or other private donations are vital funding for future initiatives as they help us plan for the future, protect the collection, interpret and share the historical stories of Roseau County.

The Society is pleased to recognize and thank donors who generously provided support during the 2003 fiscal year. We are gratified to have earned the support of the many Roseau public and private organizations and individuals who share with us a passion for preserving Roseau history. Their gifts assist the Society in initiating new programs, completing successful ones, and providing long-term, dependable support for the organization. For more information contact the Museum. Thank you.

The 2003 Annual Financial Report follows this report.

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