



ON THE COVER: *The 1850s original survey map of Wilton Township shows a town platted on the Little LeSueur River. Inset: Mert Schwarz is a longtime resident of Wilton Township. He walked the Trail with Joan Mooney.*

INSIDE: Ice Harvest pics | New Lift Completed | What's next in 2013? How old is WCHS? Who were the founders? | Who's coming to lunch? | WCHS 2012 Annual Report online | Walk the Stagecoach Trail in Court House Park

History Notes is a publication of the Waseca County Historical Society ©2013
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 314, Waseca, MN 56093
Street Address: 315 Second Avenue N.E.
Phone: 507-835-7700, Fax: 507-835-7811

www.historical.waseca.mn.us

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Staff:

Joan Mooney, Co-Director/Programs & Research
program@historical.waseca.mn.us
Sheila Morris, Co-Director/Development & Exhibits
photo@historical.waseca.mn.us
Pauline Fenelon, Artifacts/Library
collection@historical.waseca.mn.us
Vanessa Zimprich, Artifacts/Website
artifact@historical.waseca.mn.us
Linda Taylor, Researcher
research@historical.waseca.mn.us
Nancy Nelson-Deppe, Bookkeeper
account@historical.waseca.mn.us

WCHS HOURS:

Closed Mondays, Open Tuesdays-Fridays, 9-5



The Minnesota Historical and Cultural Grants Program has been made possible by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the vote of Minnesotans on November 4, 2008. Administered by the Minnesota Historical Society.

Events Calendar

Visit: www.historical.waseca.mn.us

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2013 Spring Luncheon-Lecture Series “Waseca County Boys & a Girl Come Home”

March 28—Newell Searle

SSA grad, Naturalist, Historian, Author, Public Policy Consultant, and Non-Profit Advocate speaking on *American History: Reflected and Discovered Through Family History*



**April 5—Childhood Fair, 5-7 p.m.,
Intermediate School**

April 25—David Welna

Waseca HS grad, Award-winning Journalist, NPR (National Public Radio) Congressional Correspondent, speaking on *How Growing Up in Waseca Shaped My Story: The Importance of Narrative*



May 23—Rachael Hager Hanel

Journalist, author, Waseca HS grad, University of Minnesota Press published, *We'll Be the Last Ones to Let You Down—Memoir of a Gravedigger's Daughter*, booksigning to follow.



May 30—Larry Hofmann

Janesville HS grad, Rock Musician, Fine Artist, Historian, speaking on *The Evolution of a Waseca Rock 'n Roll-er*

Be sure to reserve early for this outstanding series. Paid reservations due before each Luncheon date. Make checks payable “WCHS”



**Questions? Call 507-835-7700 or email:
director@historical.waseca.mn.us**

From the Co-Directors . . .

Dear Members . . .

All right, who's ready for Spring? We are! We are so tired of snow, ice and construction dust, and not having the museum available for events during these winter months.

But, our **2013 Spring Luncheon-Lecture Series** line-up is great. We want to emphasize that we are presenting **FOUR** luncheon-lectures this year. By this writing you may have already attended the March 28 Luncheon with Newell Searle. We urge you to call and reserve for the rest of the Series—David Welna on April 25, Rachael Hager Hanel on May 23, and Larry Hofmann on May 30. As WCHS is a keeper of our cultural history, these presentations fulfill the importance of remembering and sharing through writing, music and art.

ADA Compliance Project—finished

The new Lift became operational on March 13 in plenty of time for the March 28 Luncheon-Lecture. And our new main floor rest room was designed to mesh with the 1917 look of the museum building—it looks like it has always been there. Thus, last month the Waseca Area



Chamber Ambassadors came to visit and present WCHS with a Progress Award acknowledging these improvements.

Ice Harvest great fun for 240 students

This year we added kick-sledding into the mix of educational and fun experiences for the fifth and sixth graders who participated from the Waseca Charter School and New Richland Area School. The weather cooperated this year with 15 inches of ice. Kids learned to score, cut and haul the ice blocks to the ice house that was already packed with sawdust. Come to Chautauqua next July and see if the ice is still there! The students also learned some winter survival skills, then took a horse-drawn wagon ride, and a sled ride down the Clear Lake Park hill. All in all, it's a good day outdoors away from television and computers. See photos on page 6.

WCHS receives another Legacy grant

WCHS received word early in January that our request for funding an Interpretive Exhibit Plan for the Timeline was approved for \$7,000. This enabled WCHS to hire an exhibit design consultant, to create the plan based on research and initial work by the WCHS staff. With the Interpretive Exhibit Plan in place, more grant requests can be made to fund the implementation phase to be installed on the balcony. With full ADA access now completed, this

will make the Waseca County History Museum truly complete. *The Minnesota Historical and Cultural Grants Program has been made possible by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the vote of Minnesotans on November 4, 2008. Administered by the Minnesota Historical Society.*

May is Preservation Month.

The Waseca Preservation Commission has been meeting regularly and very actively educating the public. During the month of May, they are planning a tour, "Upstairs Downtown"! Still in the planning, check our website for more details.

WCHS Birthday Cake and HerTERS at the Fair

This is early, but we are planning a WCHS 75th Anniversary Party at Hodgson Hall during the Waseca County Fair in July 2013. Free ice cream and cake on a day at the fair yet to be determined. We will also be collecting HerTERS stories, information, and artifacts. If you worked or shopped at HerTERS, let us know. HerTERS put Waseca on the map as the first to sell sporting goods world-wide in a catalog. We want this exhibit to be a community participation event with a full museum exhibit in 2014.

Annual Report 2012 online

2012 was an exciting year. It was about one year ago when WCHS received word of our

largest bequest. The Dorothy Moriarty bequest went into the Frank and Barbara Goodspeed Memorial Endowment Fund, effectively doubling the overall principal balance of WCHS's seven funds in the Waseca Area Foundation.

In the works, an Archeology Day

Mankato State University's Archeology Department grad students will visit WCHS in April to assess found objects from Waseca County. We will be inviting the public to bring in such finds and curiosities for possible identification. Check our website for the date and time. In the meantime, what have you found while walking around our lakes, rivers, fields and parks?

Thanks everyone! Sheila & Joan

NOTE: We are looking for about six large-scale items purchased at HerTERS—boats, snowmobiles, or other items to display at Hodgson Hall during the Waseca County Fair. Call Joan or Sheila, 835-7700.

We have received many wonderful comments about the last issue of *History Notes*, featuring the Nelmoor Stables. From Sally Forrest, a life-time neighbor of the Nelson family, “Congratulations on the article regarding the Nelsons’ stable. The grounds were well kept, the beautiful horses well groomed and fed by our children with our back yard apples. I hope there will be more such articles.”

While many other historical societies around the state have gone

to communicating via email only, or reducing their newsletter to a one-sheet piece, we ramped up with a magazine-look last year. We believe that we can’t afford NOT to present our history and happenings in the most compelling way. As we begin 2013 we will tell our own organization’s history. This first issue will focus on the first 25 years, 1938-1963. What were the events and who were the people who decided that WCHS was a good idea?

Read on . . .

In 1938 a group of residents wanted to be sure Waseca County’s history would be remembered. They started a museum for you.

1938 | the mission To collect, preserve, interpret and disseminate the history of our county and citizens, and to create excitement and interest in our past.

THE FOUNDING BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

- Herman Panzram, president
- Martha Cummins, vice-president
- Charles Bailer, treasurer
- Robert Hodgson, secretary
- Dana Wobschall
- Judge Fred Senn
- Mrs. F.A. Wood

The other charter members included Arthur Brisbane, Albert Bartelt, R.T. Barry, L.N. Brandvold, W.A. Clement, J.P. Coughlin, Jean Latham Day, G.P. Madden, Norman Peterson, Arnold Runnerstrom, F.A. Wood, Pansy Panzram, and Mrs. R. Percy Ward.

On February 26, 1938 the Waseca County Historical Society was organized, meeting in the courthouse in the chambers of Judge Fred Senn, beginning with these 20 charter members. Annual membership was \$1. *Today there are nearly 500 members and the basic individual membership is \$25.*

Early artifact donations were exhibited in a space in the courthouse. In 1940 John Oleson, sole surviving Waseca County Civil War veteran, and Samuel Anderson donated hand-hewn logs from their properties. Neither cabin being in good shape, the best logs from both sources were transported to the courthouse grounds and reconstructed as a pioneer dwelling. To house the growing artifact collection, a concrete block annex was built behind the courthouse. This, too, proved inadequate for

1950s | the growing collection

the growing collection. At the same time, the county offices needed to expand, and the decision was made to move the log cabin to the Waseca County Fairgrounds and enclose it in the new Hodgson Hall. This is how WCHS existed for many years, collecting mostly settler artifacts, oral and written histories. In 1963 WCHS found a new home with the help of the Johnson families.

Who founded WCHS? Herman Panzram is considered to be the “founder of the Society”. There is the plaque on a museum office door honoring him. He served in the Spanish-American War in 1898. He was a life long educator, serving as superintendent during the turn of the twentieth century. Panzram was born in 1877 in Olmsted County, but lived in Alton Township, Freedom Township and eventually Janesville, where he graduated from high school. As an early promoter of the county’s agriculture, young Herman Panzram hosted the Waseca County booth at the Minnesota State Fair. He was married to Pansy Jenkins in 1905.

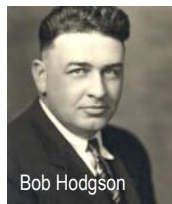
TO BE CONTINUED



Judge Fred Senn



Jean and Fred Day



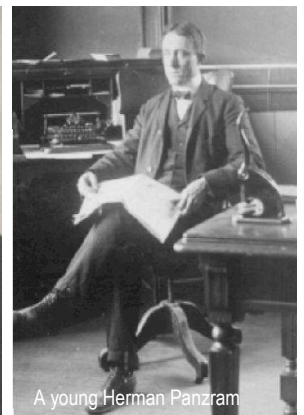
Bob Hodgson



Dana Wobschall



Herman Panzram

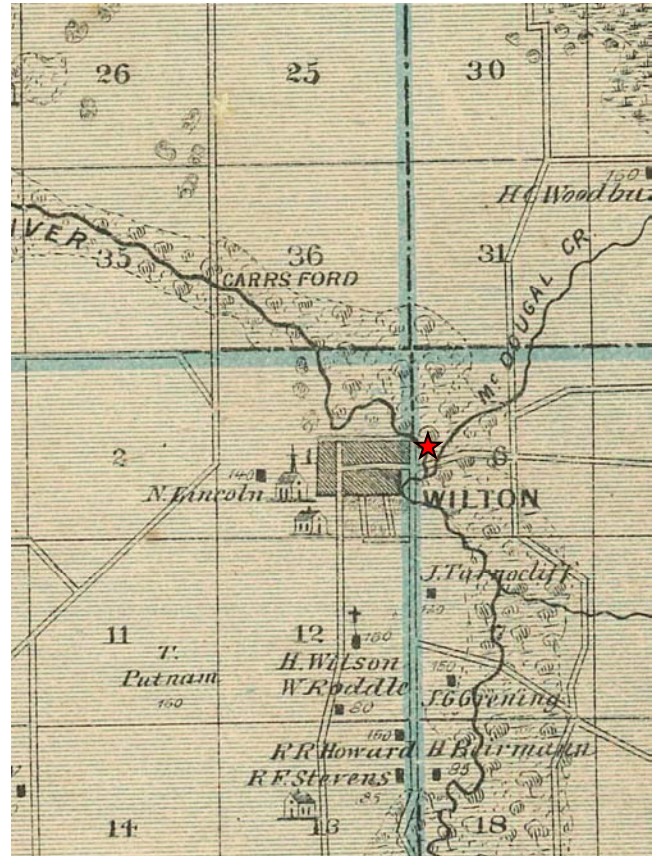


A young Herman Panzram

The Village of Waterlynn

James E. Child tells the story of Otisco Township that prior to 1858 included all of Vivian, Byron, New Richland, the south one third of Wilton and the south one third of what is now Otisco.

In the year of 1856 early settlers George and William Robbins sold the claims to two speculators, named Watters and Chamberlain. They laid out the village of Waterlynn on the east side of the Le Sueur River across from the Wilton Village site. (SE quarter of Section 6) A store, a sawmill and a hotel were built. The hotel was destroyed by fire in 1858. The hotel was moved to the village of Wilton. By 1858 Waterlynn was all but gone.



Court House Park Stage Coach Hike Saturday, April 20



Join WCHS on an adventure hike through historic Court House Park on **Saturday, April 20, 10 a.m. to 12 noon**. We will be following the stagecoach route that once ran through the park to the town of Wilton. Along the way we'll explore the vernal ponds and identify many woodland flowers only present in the spring. Transportation to the park is not provided. Appropriate footgear for muddy hiking recommended. Children must be accompanied by an adult. **To register contact Waseca Community Education. The fee is \$3.00 per family. Meet at the Court House Park picnic pavilion at 9:45 a.m.** Rain date for this event is **April 27**.

Cori Sendle, Executive Director
Waseca Community Education/Recreation
501 E. Elm Avenue, (507) 835-5626



THE 2013 ICE HARVEST



Waseca Boys & a Girl Come Home:

Four Spring Luncheon-Lectures



The Waseca County Historical Society is presenting *four* speakers this year in its annual Spring Luncheon-Lecture Series. It just happened that Co-Executive Director Joan Mooney happened onto the common bond of these successful people—*they all grew up in Waseca County*. The first speaker, scheduled for March 28, is **Newell Searle**, a naturalist, author, public policy consultant, nonprofit advocate, and Southern School of Agriculture graduate. He will talk about *American History, Reflected and Discovered Through Family History*. Searle lives in the Twin Cities, and still has family in Waseca County. His sister, Linda Grant, a Waseca businessperson, Healing Hands Wellness Center; and his father, Rod Searle, former 1979 Speaker of the House, Minnesota State Legislature. Newell Searle contributed in the production of *Minnesota: A History of the Land*, a historical perspective of the settlement and development of Minnesota. Newell Searle has researched his family roots all across the country, from New Jersey to Arizona, as well as his mother's family roots in Janesville.

The second luncheon will feature award-winning journalist and National Public Radio's Congressional Correspondent, **David Welna** on April 25. Welna is a Waseca High School graduate. He will speak about *How Growing up in Waseca Shaped My Story—The Importance of Narrative*.



The third luncheon speaker is **Rachael Hager Hanel**, a graduate of Waseca High School, who was recently published by the University of Minnesota Press, with her account and reflections of growing up in Waseca, the daughter of Digger O'Dell, also known as Paul Hager. The book is entitled, *We'll Be The Last Ones to Let You Down: A Memoir of a Grave Digger's Daughter*. Hanel will speak on Thursday, May 23.



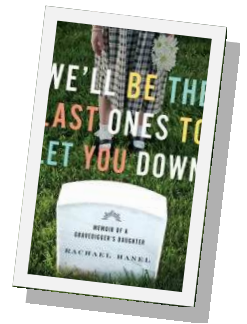
And finally, the fourth speaker is Larry Hofmann, Janesville native, and son of well-known bee-keeper Charlie Hofmann. He will talk about his *Evolution as a Waseca County Rock 'n Roller* on Thursday, May 30. Larry is also the family historian. Friends will remember his guitar playing; and others may not know what a gifted landscape painter he is. **To reserve, call 835-7700. Tickets \$12 for WCHS members, \$16 for non-members. Luncheons served at 12 noon. Paid reservations are due two days before each event.** The Waseca County Museum located at 315 2nd Avenue N.E., Waseca, MN.

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This activity is funded, in part, by the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council with an appropriation from the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the State's general fund.



Thanks to so many—WCHS couldn't exist without you!

As of 12/8/2012 to 03/15/13

Space does not allow printing the entire membership list. These are quarterly new/renewed members, donations, acknowledgments. See the WCHS Annual Report for a list of all members.

MEMBERSHIPS

Lifetime Members

\$1,000 Donations to the WCHS Lifetime Endowment Fund providing ongoing interest support for operations.

* New in 2013, + Deceased

Allen, Mary
Britton, Joe & Marjorie
Brown Printing
Brown, Wayne "Bumps"
Brynildson, Gladys
Cooper, Gus
Corchrn, Liz
Dahl, Robert M.
Fette, Leo J. & Shirley
First National Bank
Fischer, Larry & Marian
Fitzsimmons, Francis M.
Fostveit, Donna
Fuller, Boyd
Gerding, Dr. James & Josephine
Gores, Marjorie L.
Haley, Sharon L.
Hecht, Sigr
Homer, Margaret
Johnson, Ronald J.
Kopischke, Gerald & Barbara
Lewer, Henry & Phyllis
Markus, Richard
McCarthy, George B. & Jean M.
Moriarty, Dorothy
Oelke, Neta
Pommerenke, Gloria/Lori
Rethwill, W.H., Jr.
Roundbank
Rutledge, Jerry & Linda
Searle, Rod & Ruth
Sheeran, Betty & Bob
Smith, Keith & Wilda
Strand, Mel
Swenson, Virginia
Tippy, Jim & Moira
Wendland, Ken & Helen
Webber, Wendy
Wick, Bruce & Lorraine
Winegar, Sharlene & George
Wynnemer, Don & Margaret

Renewing Members

Barber, James and Edith
Battenfeld, Myra
Blixt, Charles and Nancy
Byrne, Robert
Byron, Paul
Ford, Carol
Freeman, Janie
Goehring, Pam and Larry
Grams, Rosalie
Guggisberg, Jane
Hasslien, Margaret
Hunter, Jan
Kinkade, James and Jennifer
Lucas, Chuck
Miller, Lorraine
Raymond, Ellen
Roesler, Neil
Sankovitz, Tom and Gretchen
Schultz, Kent and Diane
Tumquist, Helen
Tisselman, Alan D.
Velett, Laurie
Walker, Roger and Roberta
Ward, Lisa
Welna, Jeanne
Witt, Eugene and Fauniece
Wolff, Dennis and Beth Ann

New Members

Armentrout, Marlene (AZ)
Britton, Valerie (MN)
Byron, Mark (MN)
Conway, Tammy (MN)
Hagen, Robert (MN)
Hildebrandt, Jeanne (MN)
Jirele, Susan (MN)
Kramer, Jerry (MN)
Kugath, LeAnn (MN)
Osheim, Katherine (MO)
Perdew, Chloe (CA)
Rathmann, Duane and Cheryl (MN)
Southwick, Mike (MN)
Wilkening, Rita (MN)

New Sustainer \$100

Joyce, Ron
Welna, Jeanne

New Lifetime \$1,000

Pommerenke, Gloria & Lori

MEMORIALS

Unrestricted Memorials

In memory of Betty Fitzsimmons
by Donna Fostveit

Remembering W.G. Ward

by Paul and Doris Ward,
for the Annual Fund

In memory of Millie Yess

by Donna Fostveit

In memory of Clarence Prehn

by Donna Fostveit

In memory of Sigr Hecht

by family and friends

Restricted Memorials

In memory of Sigr Hecht

by Janette Larson/JoAnn Sutlief,
for the Bailey-Lewer Research Library
by Margaret Sinn,
for the WCHS Endowment Fund

GRANTS

Unrestricted Grants Received

\$500—Exxon-Mobil Foundation, matching volunteer hours of Don Wynnemer

Restricted Grants Received

\$4,800—Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council for Spring Luncheon-Lecture Series, expanded this year to FOUR speakers—Searle, Welna, Hofmann, and Hanel.

\$6,500—Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grant for the Hofmann Honey Farm Evaluation for National Register designation

\$7,000—Minnesota Historical and Cultural Heritage Grant for the Interpretive Exhibit Plan for Waseca County Timeline

OTHER DONATIONS

In-Kind Donations

ALM Builders: For materials to repair the Ice Harvest storage shed.

Contributions

To Henry and Phyllis Lewer:
For additional \$791.84, for Bailey-Lewer Library signage

VOLUNTEERS

Ice Harvest Volunteers: February 6

Austin Root
Marita Wadd
Mark & Mrs. Wegner
Marlin Gekeler
Harlan Gekeler
Deputy Jay Dulas
Deputy Joe Linde
Scott Roemhildt
Amy Roemhildt
John Pribble
Jeff Huelsnitz
Steve Melcher
Jolene Gunderson
Mark Bartelt
Waseca County STS crew
Akorn Creations Consulting
Farmamerica
Associated Lumber Mart
Tesch's Automotive Center
Southside Wood Recycling
Centennial Lakes Park, Edina, MN
City of Waseca Parks Dept.
Waseca County Sheriff's Dept.
Ken Borgmann
Monika Snyder
Chad Borgmann

Sleigh & Cutter Festival Parade-Feb 9

For the first time in many years:

Ken Borgmann
Tom Piche
Audra Nissen-Boyer
Olivea Boyer
Evelyn O'Brien
Dwight & Mrs. Smith
Clear Lake Signs

For oral history interviews

Carol Wobschall

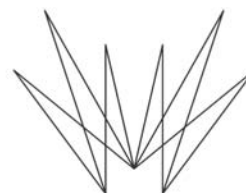
For moving and heavy lifting

Greg Klingerman & STS crew

HISTORY PARTNERS | Pledges of \$1,000 per year for three



JERRY AND LINDA RUTLEDGE



Grant Recipient
MINNESOTA HISTORICAL
& CULTURAL GRANTS

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Waseca County Historical Society

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Membership Renewal Date

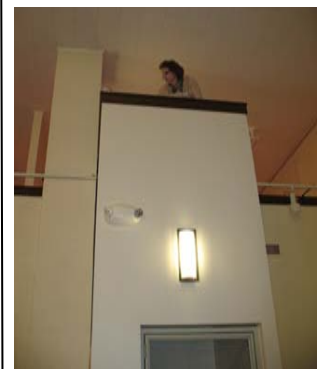


Member Support in Lots of Different Ways

1. Give to our Annual Fund.
2. Make a donation toward ADA Compliancy Project.
3. Donate to any one of seven Endowment Funds for an endless gift.
4. Plan a bequest.
5. Be a Sustainer with a \$100 new or renewed membership.
6. Join or renew starting at \$25 annually.
7. Be a History Partner by pledging \$1,000 per year for three years.
8. Give a WCHS Membership to a friend or to a family member.
9. Patronize or sponsor a fundraiser to benefit WCHS.
10. Visit our website regularly.
11. Advocate for your Waseca County history by talking to neighbors, friends, family members and funders!



New lift and main floor rest room—designed to look as if they'd always been there!



WCHS is the history center for all of Waseca County—past, present and future!

Contact Sheila Morris, (507) 835-7700