

NEWSLETTER



**Crow Wing County Museum
& Research Library
Restored Sheriff's Residence**

MISSION STATEMENT

*The Crow Wing County
Historical Society
is committed to
preserving the history
and telling the story of
Crow Wing County.*

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Newsletter Editor*

Lynda Hall
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YOU ARE INVITED
TO OUR
HOLIDAY
OPEN HOUSE

3 DAYS OF OPEN HOUSE!!!

Thursday, December 6th - 10 am to 6 pm

Friday, December 7th - 10 am to 6 pm

Saturday, December 8th - 10 am to 3 pm

- *Bake Sale (Thursday until gone)
- *Shop our Gift Shop
- *Hot Cider, Coffee, Punch & Cookies
- *Free Admission
- *Open to the Public

President's Report

Well, another year is coming to an end and a lot has been accomplished by the Historical Society. After considerable time and much effort by our staff and volunteers, the 3rd-floor expansion is almost finished. The expanded area will allow us to display many artifacts that have been stored for years. Carpet will be installed in this new area, in time for the Holiday Open House. We are planning to carpet the ramp, the railroad exhibit, and the logging exhibit areas later.

We are still trying to resolve the problems concerning the Carbine House at the fairgrounds. As part of the process of resolving the problems, we are seeking bids which will allow us to apply for a grant to help us finance this project.

The Crow Wing Historical Society is still involved with the Historic Preservation of Brainerd Ad Hoc Committee. The goal of this Committee is to preserve Brainerd's historic landmarks, making them available to residents and visitors to the area.

Remember to mark your calendar for the CWCHS Holiday Open House on December 6th, 7th and 8th. Hope to see you there!

Don Samuelson,
Crow Wing County Historical Society
Board President



HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, Dec. 6
10 am - 6 pm

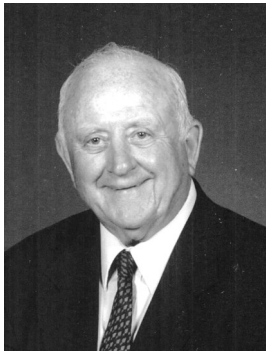
Friday, Dec. 7
10 am - 6 pm

Saturday, Dec. 8
10 am - 3 pm

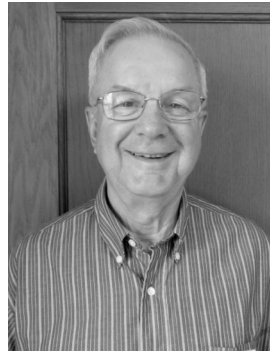
Cider, Coffee, Punch
and Cookies

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Crow Wing County Historical Society/Museum BOARD OF DIRECTORS



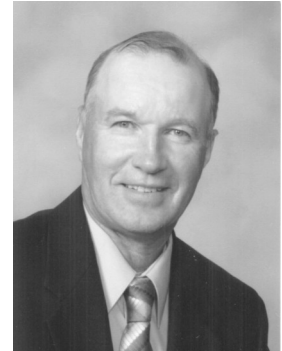
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Greetings From Pamela Nelson, Director/Administrator

The museum is in the process of renovating and creating room for new exhibits. The Crow Wing County Historical Society's Museum was formally dedicated in September 1983. It is now 2012, and 29 years later the time has come to replace carpet and paint the walls. Because the expansion project on the upper level required the installation of carpet, we also decided to carpet the ramp and replace the carpet in the Railroad and Lumbering exhibit areas. The plan is to have the upper level open by the Holiday Open House. The large farming implements that were displayed on the upper level have been moved to the jail cells during the renovation project. If time permits they will be back on display for the open house and the jail cells will be open.

We are currently working on a new exhibit called "Power to Paper". The paper mill, which played an important role in the history of Brainerd, once employed several hundred workers.

We were fortunate to receive a very large painting featuring Paul Bunyan and Babe on roller skates. This painting was on the wall at the Pladium Roller Rink on Washington Street in Brainerd from 1949 to 1969. The painting is located on the 2nd level. If you look closely you will see that the roller skates resemble railroad flat cars.

Thanks to Jolene Bradley, Branch Manager of the Brainerd Public Library and a grant from the Legacy Program, which provided funds from the vote of the people of Minnesota which dedicated funding to preserve Minnesota's arts and cultural heritage, a free Railroad Symposium was held in September at the Northern Pacific Industrial Center Blacksmith's Shop. The speakers at the Symposium were Doug Birk, Jeremy Jackson, and John Luecke.

The Crow Wing County Historical Society made its presence known in a historic way at the Railroad Roundhouse Symposium by sounding the old railroad's steam whistle. Do you remember hearing



the steam whistle that used to blow at several different times a day from the shops? They were mounted up high on the railroad's steam power plant. The young people who lived in the city had to high tail it home at 10 pm when the curfew sounded. I think parents must have certainly appreciated the whistles. We were able to get one of the original three whistles to blow for the symposium. When I say "we" I really mean four guys that were very generous with their time and talent. Jeff Anderson, Carl Faust, Ron Nelson, and Reid Thiesse provided the knowledge and the efforts needed to make the whistle work. Because steam was not an option a 150 gallon tank was filled with 105 pounds of pressure using an air compressor. It was awesome! These whistles are now on display in our railroad exhibit in the museum. Visit our website and you can watch the video and hear the whistle blow!



We will be closed to the public in January, although our research library will take research requests via phone and e-mail and our museum staff will continue to work regular hours. Closing the museum in January allows us to get projects done that we don't have time for during the months we're open.

LOOKING AHEAD

In the near future we plan to publish a book about Brainerd. The Arcadia Publishing Company, one the nation's major publishing companies of local and historical books, contacted the society and has offered us a great opportunity to write a book about early Brainerd. Currently you can't buy a new book about Brainerd.

We are anticipating that the large portrait of Lyman P. White (The father of Brainerd) will be on display this summer in our new upper level. Hope to see you at the open house.

Pam





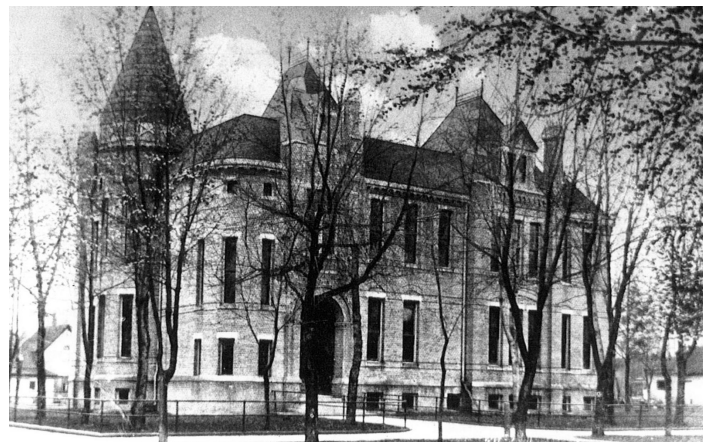
By: Lucille Kirkeby

This past week a neighbor asked me if the museum wanted an afghan that had been produced as a money maker for the high school class of 1950. The afghan depicted a dozen different Brainerd buildings and/or landmarks. Seeing pictures of such old

buildings as the Armory, the Public Library, the NP Depot and the Paramount Theater, made me think that perhaps our readers might like to reminisce a little about what was and in most cases no longer exists.

We at the museum frequently get questions about Brainerd buildings and landmarks. Here are a few questions that will take you from the past into the present.

- Beginning with Brainerd's earliest days, 1871-1872, how many different jails have there been? For whatever reason, there has always been a need for a jail and a bigger and better jail after a few more years. The first jail was built in early 1872 on 5th Street between Laurel and Maple. It included a sheriff's office and courtroom. The second jail was built in 1888 on Main Street (now Washington) on the northeast corner of North 4th. The third jail and sheriff's residence was built in 1917. That building now houses the Crow Wing Co. Museum. In 1979 the Sheriff's Dept. and jail was moved next door into the Law Enforcement Center. A final move took place across the street to the new Judicial Building in 2007. The jail as well as the court rooms are there now. If one counts city jails as well as county jails, we could add two more, a city lockup built in 1888 and a city jail built along with the city hall in 1914.
- When was the Court House next door to the museum built and what happened to its predecessor? What is now known as the Historic Court House was built in 1920. Part of the county offices are still there. Bonds for the very first court house were issued on 3 July 1882. The location was Kingwood and North 4th. The building still stands.



Court House photo taken sometime before 1922

• Did Brainerd have a YMCA before the current one? The first YMCA was located on the N.W. corner of 6th and Front Street and opened in 1889. It was built by the NP Railroad. In 1946, an attempt was made to effect a restoration, but nothing came of that attempt. The current YMCA was built on the corner of Oak and 6th in 1962 with an addition in 2002.

• Where was the first post office? The first post office was built on the corner of 6th and Maple. The building housed the post office for 50 years, beginning 1 April 1910. In Sept. 1960 the postal facilities were moved to the current location on the south west corner of 5th and Laurel. The old post office building was demolished and the space became a parking lot.

• The first high school burned. Where was it? When was it replaced? Is that building still in use? In Jan. 1885, the first high school building was completed. It was added to in 1903. On 30 March 1928, the building burned to the ground. The building was located on the south side of Oak, between 8th and 9th Streets. On 15 Dec. 1928, the first actual work was begun to build the new Washington High School. It served as a high school until 1968 when the move was made to the new Brainerd High School. Washington then became a middle school until Forestview Middle School was built. After the middle school moved out, it became district offices.

• Older residents of Brainerd remember the NP Depot that was torn down. Was that the very first depot? The NP built its first depot in 1872. It was located where the concrete water tower stands. Fire destroyed it in 1917. By August 1919, a new depot was completed. In Oct. 1968, the building was demolished.

• I remember the Greyhound Bus Depot and the National Guard Armory. What happened to them? Greyhound built a bus depot in 1945. It even had a cafeteria. It was located on the south east corner of 5th and Laurel. When ridership sank, the depot was no longer needed so it was demolished. The Armory was built in 1936 and used until 1996. A new Armory was built on Wright Street. The old building was demolished.

• What happened to the Northern Pacific Hospital? The building was demolished after the NP moved its hospital to St. Paul on 21 Sept. 1921. Originally the NP Hospital was the hospital for the entire NP. Patients were brought in from all along the NP line. Several factors led to the demise of the hospital. Passenger car repair went to the Como Shops in St. Paul. Brainerd was removed from the main line of the NP by the Staples cutoff. The first NP Hospital was the Immigration Hall or Colonist's Reception House. It was converted into the hospital in 1882. It burned the next year and was replaced.

• What happened to Brainerd's downtown theaters? There were two. The Brainerd Theater was in the Baehr Building that was built in 1936. A Dec. 1964 fire ripped through the building. The building was finally torn down in Feb. 1999. **(continued on page 5)**

SOMETHING TO CROW ABOUT...



DARLA SAYS. . .

Holey Moley! You've got to see these . . . Have you ever had a confusing day and felt like you had holes in your head where your brain cells must be leaking out? Well, I was feeling like that at the time I was trying to decide what to write about for this newsletter. I said to myself, "Darla, you must have holes in your head!" Then I thought about the bison head that we recently put in the mining exhibit. It's even older than I, by about 12,000 years! It has holes in its head, too. Of course, it doesn't have as many holes as the colander from the 1930's in



the kitchen. Also in the kitchen is a cup dating back to the 1820's. It's teal green with gold enamel paint trim and the words "Think of me." I know this doesn't technically have a hole, but it does have one through the handle, of course! This cup

was part of the table service at the home of Allan Morrison, an early settler in the village of Crow Wing. He opened his trading post in 1823, and also operated a ferry across the Mississippi River. Oh – speaking of holes and Old Crow Wing, another well-known person there was Chief Hole-in-the-Day. We have lots of information about him in our research library.

(continued from page 4)

The second theater was the Paramount, originally the Park Opera House. It was demolished in 1995. There was talk for awhile to convert it into a performance and visual art center, but nothing came of it.

- What has Brainerd done with buildings that have out-lived their usefulness? The school district has recycled some of its buildings. Washington became district offices, Edison was sold to the Ladestadian Church which converted it to apartments and uses the gym for church services. Franklin School became an Art Center with studios, a gift shop, and apartments. What will happen with Whittier is still up in the air. The Carnegie Library built in 1903-05 was converted into an office building. The Brainerd Lumber Company's main office built around 1890 was moved and became Van's Café and now Sawmill Inn.

- What are the oldest buildings in Brainerd and still in use?

One would be the First National Bank Building built in 1881-1882. Remodeled at least four times, it now houses a business called Consign and Design. The first court house built in 1882 is now the Newell Apartments. The Congregational Church which was originally built in 1872, but burned in 1881. It was replaced in 1882.

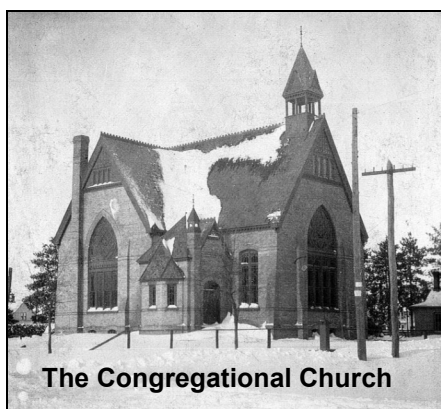
Now, what else has holes? Well, a salt shaker does. We have a beautiful silver and hand blown glass castor set on the dining room table with cruets, as well as salt and pepper shakers.

Upstairs in the sheriff's residence we have some hat pin holders. Their holes contain some elegant hat pins, some of which look quite dangerous! Near the hat pin holders are hair receivers. They each have a hole in the top large enough to stuff your excess hair into until you have enough to make a piece of fancywork. If you haven't seen hair work, c'mon in and we'll show you some. It's amazing!

I have not yet counted all the eyelet holes in a pair of woman's high top white leather shoes. There are other pairs of shoes with buttonholes. I'm so glad that we don't have to use a buttonhook today just to fasten our shoes! In another bedroom there is an old metal erector set. The pieces are full of arrays of holes. The donor played with it in the late 1930's and early 1940's.

In the museum logging exhibit there are whittled wood objects. Included are wooden chains and a pair of scissors, both of course with holes. Whittling was a pastime enjoyed by many lumberjacks. Look at the bog shoes, also in the logging exhibit. They were worn by horses while making roads over bogs. Holes in them allow airflow and help to distribute weight to the outer edges.

Please don't tell me if you find any holes in story, or I'll just want to go crawl into a hole!



The Congregational Church

The Museum has pictures of many of these buildings. To read about them, you may consult a number of different sources. The museum and public library have copies of the book that aids you in taking a walk through Brainerd and viewing its

buildings and landmarks. Ask for "A Walk Through History" to take the walking tour. The museum and public library also have copies of "Brainerd 1871-1946" written by Carl Zapffe Sr. The Brainerd Dispatch published a book called "Out of the Woods"; it has many pictures of early Brainerd. The museum has a loose leaf binder "Significant Buildings and Events in Brainerd, MN. done by Ann Nelson. It really gives us a thorough picture of Brainerd's history pertaining to buildings, fires, and businesses. It uses newspaper articles to tell the story that can now be found online on our website:

www.crowwinghistory.org

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for your support!

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PLEASE CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING!

We need someone who is friendly to greet visitors and answer the phone. Just one day a week for a few hours would be great! We especially need someone on Saturday from 10 am - 3 pm. Please call the museum at 829-3268 and ask for Pam or Lynda.

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website: www.crosslakehistoricalsociety.org

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Phone: (218) 545-6178 or (218) 545-1166

Website: www.cuyunaheritage.org

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AND GIFTS IN KIND
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Thank you to our Volunteers !

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Bake Sale



If you're a baker & would like to donate to the **Thursday, December 6th** bake sale, you may drop off your goodies at the museum on Wednesday from 9 am - 4 pm or Thursday morning at 9 am. We need a variety of baked goods to sell and serve. Please ring the west door bell if the doors are locked. Cash donations are always welcome & proceeds go to the Society.

CROW WING COUNTY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MUSEUM & LIBRARY - EST. 1927

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