



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

## NEWSLETTER

# Historical Society's Fundraiser & Social

**Thursday, June 16, 2016**

**6pm - 9pm**

Come and enjoy a fun filled evening at the  
NP Event Space (the old blacksmith shop).



### MISSION STATEMENT

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

### STAFF

*Pam Nelson  
Director/Administrator  
Newsletter Editor*

*Margaret O'Rourke  
Assistant Administrator*

*Sue Duda  
Administrative Assistant*

### Experience Works Staff

*Bonnie Novick*

**Food • Silent Auction - The late Brainerd Mayor James Wallin's black amethyst glass and black glass collection • Area Historians • Meet and greet "Andy Walsh" creator of the Facebook page "Share History and Stories about Brainerd Lakes Area" • Historical artifacts on display • Fun for the kids**

(More information on Page 3)

Proceeds will go towards the restoration  
of our historic buildings at the fairgrounds.

**THIS EVENT IS PART OF BRAINERD HISTORY WEEK**

## President's Report

Spring and summer are here, and I would like to welcome all the new members to the Historical Society. We are steadily growing, which is a benefit to helping make our work at the Museum successful. Our staff does a great job in improving our displays, and showing the public a great deal of history in Crow Wing County.

The Annual meeting held at the American Legion was attended by 111 members and supporters of the Society. Following the dinner, the program was given by Amy Gray, Brainerd Restoration board president and Mike Anglund, who summarized the efforts of the rejuvenated organization to revitalize Brainerd, starting with the 4 square blocks of downtown. In the business meeting, by acclamation, Ron Crocker, Shirley Jensen and Camille Naslund were elected to the board. Camille is a new member. The raffle drawing for the twisted star quilt throw was won by Elaine Axtell. Raffle proceeds are earmarked for the restoration of the Wohl House at the Crow Wing County Fairgrounds.

History week is coming soon, and our Historical Society is taking an important and active part in all the activities. On June 16, we are holding a fund raiser at the old railroad building. We're hoping for a large turn-out. Remodeling of the third floor of our building will soon be underway, so that area will be closed during this time, which should be during the month of June. We have wonderful volunteers and could always use more. If you can help us out, please call Pam at 218-829-3268.

Have a great summer.



Amy Gray (Brainerd Restoration Board President)



## Crow Wing County Fair

**Aug. 2 - 6**  
**10 am—10 pm**

**Volunteers Needed!**  
**See you at the fair!**

## Greetings

**From Pamela Nelson,  
Director/Administrator**

Since my last newsletter, we have a new face in the business office. Margaret O'Rourke, already working here through Experience Works, has filled Lynda Hall's position as Assistant Administrator. Margaret has computer and office skills and is doing a great job! Lynda is currently volunteering at the museum.

Before the first of the year, we received a large donation of black amethyst glass that belonged to the late Mayor James Wallin, by his wife Minna. This beautiful, impressive collection consists of dishware, vases, and interesting shaped pieces. I asked Minna, "How did James get into collecting the glass?" She said, "Well, it started when his interest in the glass was piqued when he eyed her aunt's amethyst glass." Over the years, he just kept collecting. Minna could entertain during the holidays with many pieces to choose from! There was a special room in their basement to house the collection as well as cabinets upstairs. The society will keep a small collection in honor of James. Some of the pieces were auctioned off during our Annual Meeting held in April. The remainder of the collection will be auctioned off in a silent auction held at the Northern Pacific Event Space on Thursday, June 16 during Brainerd History Week. See more details on next page.

Work on the store fair building took place in May, thanks to the Brainerd Snodeos Snowmobile Club. The society can't thank them enough for their generous donation of hard labor and supplies to make the building secure from dirt, debris, and critters.

Memberships are growing. We are close to getting 50 new members since we announced a membership drive last summer! Please help us out and encourage your relatives, friends, and neighbors to become a member.

It is with deep regret that I inform you that John Van Essen has resigned from the Board.

Brainerd History Week is coming soon! Check out all the events planned for Tuesday, June 14, and throughout the rest of the week ending on Sunday, June 19. We have a fundraiser scheduled on Thursday, and on Friday there will be two events taking place at the museum.

Hope to see you during History Week and at the fair!

**Crow Wing County Historical Society “Happenings” during Brainerd History Week  
(Tuesday—Sunday ~ June 14—19)**

**Fundraiser *and* Social  
Thursday, June 16, 2016**

**6pm - 9pm**

**Where: The Northern Pacific Event Space  
located just south of the NP clock tower building  
in the old Blacksmith shop**

**Reservations:**

**Please call the Museum at (218) 829-3268  
(space limited)**

**You may purchase tickets at the door  
or at the Museum.**

**\$15 for adults  
\$7.50 for kids 5-12  
under 5 free  
\$50 family fee**

**FEATURING • Food (pizza and drink) • Silent Auction •  
Area Historians • Meet and greet “Andy Walsh” creator  
of the Facebook page “Share History and Stories about  
Brainerd Lakes Area” • Historical artifacts on display •  
Fun for the kids**



Some of the unique glassware from James Wallin’s collection that will be part of the silent auction.

**We thank the Sponsors:**

**Prairie Bay, David Hutton, and Minna Wallin**

**Friday, June 17, 2016 at the Museum**

**10:30-Noon**

**The Flintlock Rifle Buttstock Relic  
of Lower Hay Lake**



**(Minnesota’s-Oldest Rifle Artifact)**

Local gunsmith and historian, Ray Nelson, will present the research on the “curious” relic Flintlock Rifle Buttstock from **10:30 a.m. – noon**. The historical artifact will be displayed alongside the 1st “grandchild” rifle made by Ray to replicate, complement, and honor the old relic’s very unique architectural story.

**2:00-5:30**

**Exploring Danish History and Culture**

The Danish Sisterhood, Amber Lodge #186, is hosting a reception on Friday, June 17, 2:00 – 5:30, featuring their Danish History and Culture exhibit. They will be telling Danish children’s stories (3:00 and 4:00), making Danish crafts, as well as serving Danish aebleskiver and other Danish treats.





By: Lucille Kirkeby

### POSTMORTEM PHOTOGRAPHY

Genealogists and family historians treasure photographs of their ancestors. It's great to have photos of grand parents and great grandparents. Unfortunately, we cannot go

back too many "greats" before we come to a time when photography was in its infancy. Before photography, painted portraits provided the likeness of that long deceased ancestor. Having a portrait painted was expensive and out of reach for most middle class and lower class individuals. The invention of the daguerreotype in 1839 offered a cheaper and quicker method of memorializing loved ones. By the 1860s there were even more advances in photography. The middle class could now afford to have photos of their loved ones. It was still a time when having a photo taken was not an every day occurrence, but a special occasion. Families just did not have photos of their children growing up.

Once photography became more accessible to more people, it became a common practice during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century to photograph not only the living but also the dead. Postmortem photography was very common and popular especially during the Victorian era.

Why would a practice that many today consider creepy be the norm many decades ago? We must realize that it was a different day and age. People looked for things that they might have as a memorial to a loved one. They saved items treasured by their loved ones. They had no snapshots of their children. A photo postmortem was probably the only ever taken of that child. A postmortem photo was a way to remember that child, since memories tend to fade as time passes by. Since in many instances, close family members were far off, even across the ocean, a photo of a family member, whether dead or alive, was a way to keep the family together in memory. In the early day there were no undertakers, families took care of their own dead. There was a different attitude toward death. It wasn't considered creepy.

A large number of the postmortem photos are of children. Children were photographed individually, with siblings or even with the family group. One can find these photos on the Internet. One example of a family group shows a family of five posing for a photo with two infants

in cradles. They appear as if sleeping. Some flowers indicate a memorial to the dead. In another photo, three children pose in a chair with a dead baby. One photo shows a dead child sitting in chair with four dolls. Occasionally, color was added to the photo, as in a photo of a child propped up in a chair and holding a carnation.

Finding and identifying postmortem photos of children does not seem to cause too much controversy. It is a little different with adults. Many people refuse to believe that adults could be photographed standing up. Their unbelief stems from the fact that early photography required people to stand very still-not moving at all, not smiling, not blinking their eyes. Thus, early photo showed people not relaxing, but looking stone faced. There also was a belief that smiling made a person appear silly or foolish. Early photos of live people didn't appear natural or at ease, which is not much different from the deceased. There even was a stand built to help people maintain their stance for a photo. When this stand shows up in a close up of a photo taken of an adult thought to be postmortem, people immediately point out it could be a living person who just needed help in maintaining his pose for a photograph that required a long exposure time.

If your photo collection has a photo that you suspect might be taken postmortem, how can you tell? With children, it is easy to tell. They are usually photographed lying down, propped up, and appearing quite lifeless. Usually a flower or flowers appear near the body. Adults could also be photographed postmortem. That photography stand mentioned earlier, or one similar and perhaps more sturdy, would hold up the body. Perhaps, photo taking might be timed with rigor mortis. An extremely rigid pose made the person look like a wooden soldier-such as the eyes not looking normal-closed or the lack of dilating of the pupils when others in the photo appear to have dilated pupils. Skin tones can also offer a clue. Perhaps, the hands look extremely dark when the face appears normal in tone. Many postmortem photos in later years were taken of the person in a casket, so there is no question of authenticity.

You may wonder about photographers willing to take these photos. Photographer has no problem with taking these photos. The long exposure time made deceased individuals easy to photograph. They weren't going anywhere. The photographer could charge more. After all, he had to go to the subjects rather than the other way around. Since these types of photographs were in high demand, there was no problem in charging what the market could bear. **(Continued on Page 6)**

## What Used To Be...

By Brian Marsh

In this continuing series about towns that sprung up in Crow Wing County as the result of iron ore mining, but only to decline when the mines shut down, we now take a look at Cuyuna.

On July 3, 1907, the Rogers-Brown Ore Company of Buffalo, New York leased some property near Rabbit Lake from the Orelands Mining Company for the purpose of mining iron ore. In 1908, the company started drilling a shaft, which would be known as the Kennedy mine, named after the company's president, S. A. Kennedy. It would be the first successful mine in the county.

Also in 1908, about a mile west of this mine, a village popped up. It would be named Cuyuna, in honor of the iron range of which it was a part of. The name Cuyuna came from early mining pioneer Cuyler Adams, who took the first three letters of his name and combined them with the name of his dog, Una.

Even before the village was officially platted in later 1908, a waterworks, sewer, and well were installed along with dirt streets. By the time Cuyuna was incorporated on July 7, 1910, it

boasted a population of 700. By the end of 1910, the town had a hospital, two theaters, three grocery stores, a butcher shop, two barber shops, a funeral parlor, two saloons, a jail, a hardware store, a doctor, a veterinary, two restaurants, a steam bath and sauna, and two boarding houses. The mining company provided free entertainment at the Cuyuna Theater.

On April 11, 1911, the first shipment of ore from the Cuyuna Range, some 147,649 tons, left the Kennedy mine in 42 cars via the Soo Line Railroad. But, mine played out and closed in 1925.

By 1970, the population of Cuyuna had dwindled to 82 residents. However, by 2010, it had rebounded to 322 citizens.



(Continued from Page 4) According to one source, the role of the post mortem photographer was much like that of the undertaker in today's world. His job was to try to restore the appearance of life. It could be compared to embalming. The intent was to make a presentation for the gaze of the observer. Both acts rejected the finality of death. The work of the photographer was simply more permanent.

As cameras that would take snapshots came into being, people had numerous snapshots of their child, so there was no need for postmortem photos. Casket photos still remained, however. Many family photo collections still contain casket photos taken in the mid, early, and even the late 1900s. They remain as private images.

A postmortem photograph of President Lincoln was taken in his casket, but was suppressed because it was deemed inappropriate for the time. There were violent anti southern feelings that were provoked by the assassination, and such a photo, it was believed, would inflame the public even further. Secretary of State Stanton ordered the destruction of the negatives. A full size plate was destroyed immediately, but a smaller one was kept with the hope that Stanton would change his mind. Since Stanton did not rescind his order, this plate was eventually destroyed. After Stanton's death a print made from that plate was found in Stanton's papers. That photo was finally published in 1952 in a picture biography of Lincoln. Casket photography is still practiced in Eastern Europe. These photos are not kept away from the public eye. Pictures of persons considered very holy are circulated among the faithful Eastern Catholics, Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Christians.



### Supporting County/Municipalities

City of Baxter ☐ Crow Wing County

\*Townships:

Crow Wing	Long Lake
Daggett Brook	Nokay Lake
Fairfield	Platte Lake
Garrison	Oak Lawn
Ideal	St. Mathias
Irondale	Roosevelt

\*(Donations were designated for the restoration of our fair buildings.)

### NEW MEMBERS

We thank you for your support!!

#### Booster

Patrick MacLeish-First Impression Printing  
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#### Sponsor

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## Thank you for donations

### Monetary

Mark & Cathy Gray

State Farm Foundation (Lois  
Jubie's volunteer hours)

John Van Essen

### **GiveMN contributors:**

**Lester & Lucy Franz**

**Kathleen Maloney**

**Richard Esser**

**Julia Ingleman**

**Carl Faust**

**Carol Wermter**

### In kind

The Snodeos Snowmobile Club  
Work on the store building  
at the fairgrounds

Ray & Carolyn Frisch  
Humidifier donation

## Memorials

*Thank you...* to the following people  
who have given gifts to the Society

### **In Memory of...**

**\*James Saboe**

Given by:

Julian Anderson

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Robert & Pearl Bergad

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Mary Vetscher

James Youngquist

Will & Ruth Wilwerding



Snodeo members  
working on the store  
building at the fairgrounds.



\*James Olav Saboe graduated  
from Brainerd High School in 1963. His  
most beloved place on earth were the  
cabins at Scott Lake and the quarter  
section of land in Crow Wing County on  
which they stand.



# CROW WING COUNTY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
MUSEUM & LIBRARY - EST. 1927

320 LAUREL STREET PO BOX 722  
BRainerd, MN 56401

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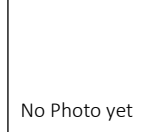
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No Photo yet

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THE CROW WING COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM,  
SHERIFF'S RESIDENCE AND RESEARCH LIBRARY  
IS LOCATED NEXT TO THE HISTORIC COURTHOUSE

PHONE: 218-829-3268 FAX: 828-4434 E-MAIL: [history@crowwing.us](mailto:history@crowwing.us)

WEB: <http://www.crowwinghistory.org>

HOURS: TUESDAY THRU SATURDAY 10 AM - 3 PM (Closed Major Holidays & Holiday Weekends)

Call the museum to schedule appointments or tours after hours.

## CWCHS Yearly Membership Levels:

\$500.00 - Patron	\$50.00 - Sustaining
\$250.00 - Benefactor	\$40.00 - Family or Non-Profit Org.
\$100.00 - Booster	\$30.00 - Supporting Individual
\$75.00 - Sponsor	\$20.00 - Individual

To become a member of the Society, send your name, address, and telephone number along with your membership dues to the **Crow Wing County Historical Society, P.O. Box 722, Brainerd, MN 56401**. If you would like to give a gift membership to the Society, please send the name and address of the person for whom the membership is intended. Memorials of loved ones are also accepted. Donations can be sent to the same address and are tax deductible. Membership forms are available on our website or at the Museum. You may also choose to pay on line using our website PayPal account.

## VOLUNTEERS THANK YOU!

Bill & Sandy Ash	Irene Jensen
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