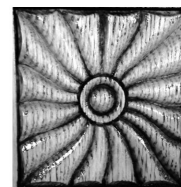


# MURRAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Murray County  
Historical Society

Winter 2018

## *Thank you to Our Outgoing MCHS Board Members & Welcome to Our New MCHS Board members*

We want to thank our two outgoing board members, Dorothy Bloemendaal and Margaret Kluis, for their many years of service to the Murray County Historical Society. Board members are called upon for many tasks. Dorothy and Margaret have always stepped up to what ever chal-

lenge the Museum could pose, whether that meant helping develop a long term strategic plan or baking the worlds best cookies and pies for events. Margaret and Dorothy have seen and done it all. We are eternally grateful for their years of service.

Stepping into their shoes are Kelly Muldoon of Slayton and Kyle Vos of Hadley. Kelly and her husband, Joe, moved to Slayton in 1992. Kelly works as part of the literacy team at MCC elementary. She and Joe have two grown children. She has served for 8 years on the

SW Arts Council and 16 years on the Friends of the Slayton Library board. Kelly also serves on the board of the Prairie Music Association. She believes a "Community is only as good as its volunteers."

Kyle Vos is a recent graduate of SDSU in the Agribusiness field. He farms near Hadley with his family. Kyle has long had an interest in history, and especially the history of farming, encouraged by his great- uncle, Case Vos. He couldn't have had a better teacher. We welcome Kelly and Kyle and look forward to their contributions.



*Dorothy Bloemendaal  
and Margaret Kluis*



*Kyle Vos and Kelly Muldoon*

## In This Issue

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- 2017 in Review
- Exhibit updates
- Lunchbox Series
- EOL News

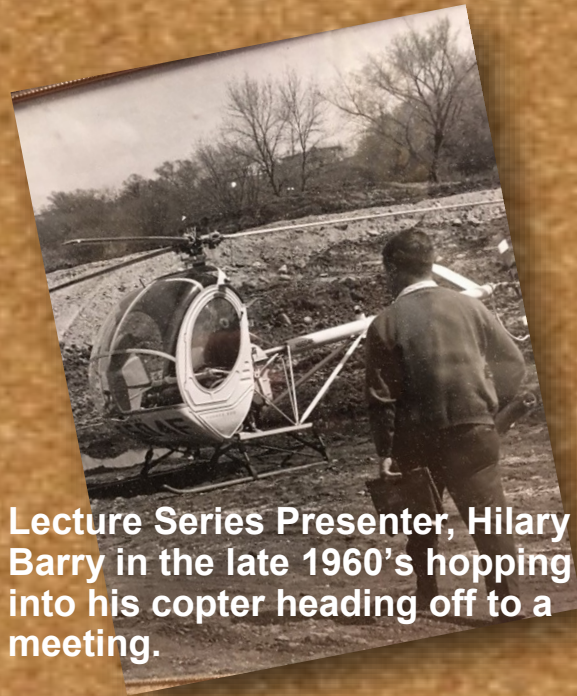




# MCHS Bulletin Board

Thanks to the folks who helped us put up and take down the Dinehart Christmas Trees this winter!  
We couldn't do this program without you! Think of yourselves as the creators of the canvas upon which the Christmas Artists paint!

A Toast to you!!!



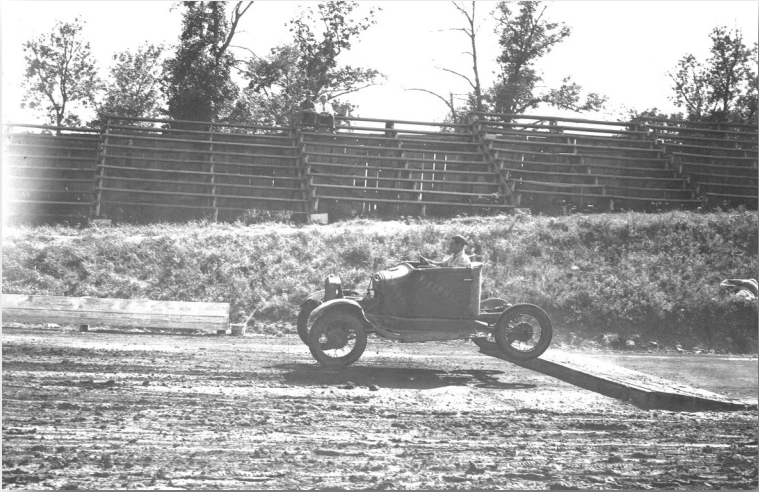
Lecture Series Presenter, Hilary Barry in the late 1960's hopping into his copter heading off to a meeting.

Christy Riley and her Shires giving two lucky ladies a ride in her Amish sleigh (with wheels!) during the Holiday Open House





## Upcoming Lecture: Halcyon Days on Valhalla Island



Valhalla Island is an iconic spot in Murray County with a long history of recreation. From the 1890's to the present, this little 11 acre paradise has offered families a place to play along the shores of Lake Shetek. Did you know that the island is named after the legendary Norsk hall where fallen warriors go when they die?

At any given time the island has had a full sized baseball field, a car race track, a ferry, a rollerdrome, a lodge, campgrounds, cabins, marina, steakhouse, dance hall, and restaurants.

Car races were popular in the early 1900's.  
Here Fireball makes it across the finish line!

Lecture on Thurs. Feb. 8, at  
noon in the 4-H building, MC  
Fairgrounds. Presented by  
Janet Timmerman.

Here, people picnic  
near the Valhalla  
Pavilion, circa 1910.



## Many Thanks for Donations and Memorial Gifts

### Donations:

Linda Moehnke, Banks, OR  
Shalom Hills Farm, Westbrook  
Slayton American Legion Auxiliary for Dinehart House  
Chat N Chew Extension Club for Dinehart House  
Shetek Lutheran Bible Camp for Dinehart House

### Memorials:

Janet Timmerman In Memory of Bill Bolin  
Ron Kuecker of Windom, in Memory of Bill Bolin  
Dennis and Karen Moore of Redwood Falls, in Memory of Bill Bolin  
Janet Timmerman in Memory of Eleanor Berglund  
Family of Eleanor Berglund in her Memory for the purchase of a new Exhibit Case



## Temporary Exhibit Still Up Rain Before Seven: Weather in Murray County August 2017– July, 2018

Murray County's weather is changeable and unpredictable.. Temperatures can soar in the 100's and dash down to 30 below. We have one of the highest daily wind speeds in the United States. So weather history is pretty deep here. Stop

by and experience the stories of the Armistice Day Blizzard, the Drought of "76," or the drifts of 1917. Turn on the mini-tornado-in-a- bottle to see how a tornado forms from the clouds.

There is always something new to see at the Museum!

## New Exhibit Coming this Summer:

Gateway to Fun: Recreation  
Around Murray County's Lakes



### Dinehart Lunchbox Lecture Series

Thursday February, 8, 2018: *"Halcyon Days on Valhalla Island."*  
Janet Timmerman, Murray County Historical Museum Coordinator

Thursday, March 8: *"Sioux Falls Stockyards History"* Jennifer  
Hoehsing, Stockyard Museum

Thursday, April 12: *"The Tracy Tornado: Fiftieth Anniversary"*  
Scott Thoma, author and editor



## From the Director's Desk.....

*In the New Year, never forget to give thanks to your past years because they enabled you to reach today!  
Without the stairs of the past, you cannot arrive at the future!"*

— Mehmet Murat ildan Turkish writer

Thinking back on 2017, it seems like it was a year of loss for the history community. We have lost three of the county's premier historians all in one year.

Theirs are the shoulders upon which we stand as historians. We are so thankful for their lives and the special contribution each one made to preserve Murray County History.



In April, we lost Currie's grandmother of railroad history, **Louise Gervais**. Louise had worked to preserve Currie's railroad history since 1972 and still played a crucial role at the End O Line Park, serving on the advisory committee up until she passed. She was the institutional memory for the staff there. If we had a question, Louise had an answer. Her complete dedication to historical preservation was an inspiration to younger generations. Her legacy lives on at End O Line and the stories told there.

**Bill Bolin** was a historian's historian. He loved nothing better than do research and pair it with his own experiences and home grown stories. His column "History is Life" produced for the Sailor Magazine is a testament to his wide interests and deep knowledge of this place. He gave us reasons to be proud of the place we call home. I am proud that we got to work with him so intimately on the Town Ball Exhibit. To be truthful, Bill's motto could have been "Baseball is Life."



Every researcher who walks in the door of the museum is thankful for the work of **Eleanor Warren Berglund**. Her dedication to saving and organizing the history of the county topically has resulted in new knowledge being produced about the county on a regular basis. She designed a series of scrapbooks that tells the stories of people, places, businesses, events, and towns. She sat on the board of the Historical Society for many years and helped modernize its files. She was involved up until her last days. Her daughter, Kathy, brought in the last few newspaper clippings that Eleanor had been working on only days before her passing. We will miss them all.



# Deaccessioning 3.0



**How would you handle this?**

In some of our previous newsletters, I talked about the process of deaccessioning items from the collection that are either a duplication, have questionable provenance, no longer fit with the mission of the museum or are in such a poor condition they are a risk to the rest of the collection. As you can see by the photo above, the museum has a duplication problem in some areas. What would you do if you had this problem in your household?

In the next few months the museum staff will be continuing a deaccession process. All deaccessioning must be done according to the Museum Collections Policy. Any items deemed acceptable for removal from the collection will be vetted by the collections committee and approved by the MCHS board. Upon final approval each item will be offered to the original donor or any living relative of the original donor (if we can find such.) If not, then it will be offered to a like institution. If that is not successful, it will be offered for public sale. No member of the Museum board, or staff can bid on any item. This public sale might be on-line or at an auction house. If any item is not sold, it will be discarded appropriately. Any money raised from the sale of items can only be used for the care of the remaining collection or to purchase an item deemed critical to the collection.

This is a long and arduous task and we do not take the process lightly. People offer items to the Museum in good faith and we are bound to care for artifacts in-perpetuity. This assures that everything in our care is there for a reason and helps tell the story of Murray County and its people.

So as a reminder, if you want to donate an item to the museum ask yourself these questions before you call. First, ask do any of my family members want to keep it in their own personal collection. Did this item originate or was used extensively by residents of the county? Does this item help tell the story of Murray County's history? Will this item be extremely difficult or expensive to preserve?

Thank you for your patience and consideration of this process as we make this transition at the Murray County Museum. Our goal is preserving our relevant history and making room for new artifacts for the future.

## News from End-O-Line

By Jakob Etrheim

This January, I will be completing my sixth month as Site Coordinator at End-O-Line. These six months have been a great learning experience for me and I am excited for the park's future. Here is some news and some of our goals for the park in 2018:

Park attendance for 2017 was 2,235 visitors. This number is slightly more than in 2016 and about the same annual attendance for the past 3-4 years. 43% of visitation came from school tours which included about sixteen different school groups visiting the park. One of our goals for the summer is to get more accurate attendance numbers to include different visitors than just those who take a tour. Some examples of different visitors include the special groups that rent out the picnic shelter, congregation members who attend church at the park, or visitors who look around the park but don't take a tour.

Another change in 2017 included the way we gave guided tours at the park. Originally, if you paid for a tour, we would take you through eight of our historic buildings including the Grand Trunk Western Caboose and a ride on the turntable. These tours would take about 90 minutes. For some people (especially young children) it is difficult to keep attention for that long. So, in August, we condensed the tour to just our railroad themed buildings (Engine house, Currie Depot, Hilfer's Depot, and Foreman House) as well as the GTW Caboose and Turntable. This changed the tour times to about 45-60 minutes long. The other buildings that we call "the village," are unlocked during business hours and are available for self-touring. The village consists of the Currie General Store, Grist Mill, Schoolhouse, Church and Courthouse. We ask a free will donation to take the self-guided tour while the guided still has an admission fee. We had some mixed reviews, but overall were positive. Our goal for 2018 is to install interpretive panels in each of the village buildings to offer more history of the building.

Our most exciting news of this winter! We received a Legacy Grant from the Minnesota Historical Society to hire a railroad track repair company to restore two hundred fifty feet of track line to stabilize and support the track underneath two of the park's more iconic artifacts: a 1923 American Locomotive Company 4-6-0 Georgia Northern steam engine and tender and a rare 1940's era Minneapolis and St. Louis side bay window caboose. The engine was brought to the park in 1993 and the caboose in 2008. Since that time the track underneath the engine and caboose has deteriorated and buckled so that the engine is beginning to lean and very few ties can be seen above ground. We will soon be publishing a Request for Proposal and sending RFPs out to different track repair companies for bids on the project. Our hope is to start project in the fall of 2018 after the park has closed for the season. *This grant is funded by the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment made possible by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the vote of Minnesotans on November 4, 2008 and is administered by the Minnesota Historical Society.* For more information, please contact myself or Janet at the Museum.

This year we are fundraising for new playground equipment. The current playground set, located next to the schoolhouse, was built in 1994. The set is starting to show its age. It is made of wood, which is no longer recommended for public playgrounds. We are requesting estimates for playground set designs with train themes. If you have any suggestions or would like to donate towards this cause, contact Jakob or Janet at the Museum.

I look forward to another great summer at End-O-Line. If you have any suggestions and ideas for the park, don't hesitate to contact or visit me here at the museum.

## Membership updates

You may have received a letter in the mail recently asking if you want to renew your membership to the Society. We would welcome you back and thank all who are members for their contributions and work on our behalf. The MCHS Board has decided to move memberships so they all start at the beginning of the year, rather than running through out the year.

This will take us a year to get completed but should be easier for everyone to remember after that. At the end of 2018 we will send a membership renewal notice to all active members.

If you are a lifetime member, you will receive as annual donation letter. Memberships and donations are critical to caring for the collections, providing programming and new exhibits.

Thank you.

### Hours:

**T-F 10-5 and S 10-2PM**

### Contact us:

**507-836-6533**

**[museum@co.murray.mn.us](mailto:museum@co.murray.mn.us)**

**[murraycountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://murraycountyhistoricalsociety.org)**

Find us on Facebook too!

### MCHS Board Members:

**Brian Harmsen**

**Linda Wing**

**Brad Bergerson**

**Christy Riley**

**Kyle Vos**

**Romane Dold**

**Rachel Dreeson**

**Kelly Muldoon**

**Ruth Hoyme**

**Dennis Anderson**

**County Commissioner**

**representative: James Jens**

**Murray County Historical Society**

**PO Box 61**

**Slayton, MN 56172**