



# *North Chisago Historian*

*North Chisago Historical Society,*

*Chisago County, Minnesota*

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*It's here. We have a museum! An actual building! And it is open.*



350 South Eliot Avenue, Rush City

And we have “stuff” inside to see. We held an open house on May 9 with around 80 people coming through to visit us! The first items exhibited were wedding gowns, old men’s and women’s hats, small ladies accessories, antique

toys and original watercolors. New items are forthcoming.

We spent all winter and spring getting the museum ready to open. A construction company de-constructed some of the interior rooms so that we have an open commons area and three smaller exhibit rooms. We put in two handicapped equipped bathrooms. The Rush City Fire Chief, Bob Carlson, advised us on



safety equipment we needed and we got that done.

In the front of the building, we have a library, a research room and an office. The library has several chairs so you can come and sit and read. The research room will have a microfilm reader.

The museum is currently **open 9am-4pm** on Saturdays this summer. **At 1-4pm on Wednesdays** is the ‘telling old stories’ and they are being recorded. We plan to have a computer in the research room to play all recorded stories and as well as the monthly membership/education meetings held on the first Tuesday of each month.

If a member or a person needs to view the exhibits or use the library or research room, an appointment may be made by calling one of the phone numbers listed for the Board.

Written by Larry Hendrick



**Message from the President, Carl Heinrich**

At last, North Chisago Historical Society has a home!

Dr. James and Pat Guptill donated to the NCHS his

dental office building at 350 South Eliot Avenue in Rush City, MN. It is 36’ X 60’, round roof, stucco building built in 1946-47 era for use as a plumbing shop for Albert LeMon Plumbing.

After the plumbing shop closed, Dr. Joseph Halpin purchased it and moved his doctor’s office from the second floor of the old First State Bank building to it. There was also an office for attorney Harry Sherman in the building.

Dr. John Olson also moved his dental office from the second floor of the bank building to 350 South Eliot. When Dr. Olson retired, Dr. Guptill took over his practice and purchased the building. Then it stood empty for five years when Jim and Pat donated it to NCHS.

JSB Construction was hired as general contractor for renovation and for installing two bathrooms. East Central Sanitation donated the use of a 20-yard roll-off. East Central Electric Round-Up gave NCHS a grant to purchase a computer and software for the office. North Metro Signs designed and installed the new sign on the southwest corner of the building. Many people have given materials and time to give the interior a fresh, new look. But there is still work that must be done.

It is important that we keep in mind our mission statement in the NCHS Articles of Incorporation which states, “The specific purpose of this Corporation are to discover, preserve and disseminate knowledge regarding the history of North Chisago County and the State of Minnesota.”

The history of our area has mostly been ignored. This is why the “North” chapter of the Chisago County Historical Society was started in the mid-1970s. Once, one of my daughters gave me a book for Father’s Day called “Minnesota’s Lost Towns – Central Edition, (2015 ed.)”, about ghost towns in Minnesota. Under Chisago County, Franconia had 69 lines of text, Stark had 4 lines and Rush Point had 5 lines. Neither Dale nor Rushseba areas were listed.

This society has a lot to do to make correct history known.

**Monthly Member Education Programs**

The North Chisago Historical Society’s monthly educational and informative programs are the first Tuesday of each month. They are held in Rushseba Town Hall at 7 p.m. unless otherwise stated. During these presentations the general membership and the public can attend programs on a variety of subjects drawn from the local history of our area. An important part of this effort is the gathering of stories about the people and places of our region. There are times when

the broader national themes are highlighted such as the recent observance of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Civil War and the anniversary of World War I which gave an opportunity to review how these have impacted our local area and people. A program in April that was of a statewide focus was in collaboration with the Chisago County Historical Society featuring the history of milling in Minnesota and how it related to our county in particular as outlined by historian Dr. Robert Frame, our speaker from St. Paul.

We welcome ideas and suggestions for future program topics and speakers who may be contacted.

Written by Marvel Anderson

### **Independent Order of Good Templars (I.O.G.T.)**

The Independent Order of Good Templars was founded in 1851 in Utica, New York, as a fraternal society for teetotalers. Members were requested to do all in their power "to promote total abstinence of intoxicating beverages both



through the enforcement of laws and through their own way of life."

The Nytt Ljus (New Light) No. 63 of

Summer, 2015

Rush Point met as early as 1905; and had its own hall located East of the Rush Point Store on the south side of County Road #7. They met on the second and fourth Thursday of each month.

People requesting to join were screened and voted upon before allowed to become members. Beer was not allowed at the meetings. Annual dues collected were, it seems, 50 cents for men and 25 cents for women. During 1921-22, fifty-one people from Rush Point, Rush City, Stanchfield, Grandy and elsewhere are listed as members. Alfred Dahlin served as secretary; and Jennie Nyblom, John Dahlin and John Ostrom served as Program Committee. Programs consisted of Basket Socials, card parties, Christmas events for children, skating parties on Malmquist Lake (located South of Rush Point). The yearly report of 1920 notes that the district Order had paid out \$1,037.47 to help for sickness, \$250 for burials, and had a year-end balance of \$2,734.63.

Other Good Templar Societies in this area were: Blomman (Flowers) #27 at Isanti; Majblomman (Mayflowers) #29 at West Rock; Stjarnan (Stars) #41 at Andree ( Northwest of Braham) and Engelbrekt #53 at Maple Ridge. In a hand written newspaper dated January 7, 1914 was written "The Klub meeting was quite interesting on Saturday night at the Good Templar Hall. They discussed what has done more: the new pen or the plow. They came to the result that the pen had done more that is new." Also, "A good Templar lodge has started in Braham, Minn. which is called "Loyalty." They will have their second meeting on Thursday evening, the 8th of January; and will have a visit by two from the head Lodge."

The first Rush Point I.O.G.T. building was sold on June 6, 1930 to Nessel Township for a town hall for the sum of \$607.45. A Lodge building also stood on the John Johnson property where present County #6 meets County #4, just northwest of the present Nessel town hall. We know this as we have a picture of a tall building with the letters I.O.G.T. on it taken at the funeral of Andrew E. Waxberg who died in early 1917. Others identified in this picture include Frank Lindstrom, Alfred Dahlin, Andrew Dahlin (father of Alfred), Mr. and Mrs. Carl Olson, Nels Waxberg and Eddie Eng. This building was sold to the Challeen Brothers; and they used the lumber to build two cabins at the Challeen Resort.

Written by Marian Eklund

### **Esther Howard - First year as a Rural School Teacher, 1933-1934**

In June of 1933, our class of twelve students graduated from the Cambridge Teacher Training Department. All twelve were hoping to find a school where they could teach. Each of us had six weeks of training in a rural school in Isanti County. There were nearly 30 pupils in the school. I was to practice teach. It was so wonderful. Now to find a job!

All of us had hoped to find a teaching position not too far from home. The Depression was a difficult time for teachers looking for a job.

There was a school north of Rush City near the St. Croix River that had an opening. We had to apply in person so my father took me to the interview at the appointed time. A large number of applicants came. Each of us was interviewed by the School Board. The wait was long. We were told the job would pay \$32 per month and

room and board would cost \$12 per month. We would stay in a private home high on a hill above the river. Mr. and Mrs. Sharp would care for us - "Board and Room" it was called.

We would walk to the school and it was quite a distance in the winter. We would need to build a fire in the big, black, round stove so it would be sort of warm when the students came. It all sounded so interesting and all of us were hopeful. I did get the job! It had all sounded wonderful- and it was!

The Sharp family were fun people and we became good friends. Mrs. Sharp was a good cook - and a good 500 player! I discovered the house, being on a high hill, I could walk to school through the woods. It seemed warmer, too (the 1930s had a very cold winters) and it wasn't as far from school.

Several Native American families lived



along the St. Croix River. They often stopped in the school to get warm when they were hunting rabbits.

In school, the six students and I had many fun events. We gave several programs for different holidays and we had a Basket Social, too. When we had our school picnic in early June, there was still snow in the woods.

The beautiful six school children and other little visitors made every day a fun learning day. All of them were good readers and all subjects were interesting. The children were



School 1933-34

**Esther Howard ( Schmidt ) Teacher**

She received 32.00 a month & paid \$12.00 room & board  
she walked 2 miles to school and in the winter made the fire.

very creative. In the different seasons we studied nature, birds, trees, flowers, the St. Croix River, etc.

Our bathrooms were the outhouses! One for

the boys and one for the girls.

The County Superintendent, Mr. Cederholm, visited this little school often. He seemed to like the little school and all we could do to make school fun. Please take time to look at the beautiful children in the picture.

Because of the cold winter, the School Board closed the school during the month of January. The school was closed for two years after 1934 and reopened for two more years and then closed again.

The Lord has blessed me every day and year since I was hired to teach at the School with six children. What a wonderful beginning to a life long career of teaching until I became 81. I retired after ten years of teaching Minnesota History at the Cambridge Community College. I retired at age 81 because of hearing loss. I am now 94.

Written by Esther Howard Schmidt

### **It's a Tea Party**

On June 30, a Tea Party fundraiser occurred at the museum. The tea was not poured into Boston Harbor nor Rush Creek but in individuals' tea cups. Fancy and antique teapots, cups, dishes and napkins were used to create a nice ambiance for the tasty treats served to all. Three kinds of tea were served with a tasty scone, 3 kinds of petite sandwiches and later 3 kinds of dessert bars with 2 kinds of ice cream served with rosettes. Most of the food was made by members or volunteers. Around 35 people attended. Chisago County Master Gardener Sue Humble presented the group with information about annual flowers. Thrivent Financial gave a grant that defrayed expenses. Many favorable comments were made about the event as everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.



Workers were: Set up: Carl and Beverley Heinrich, Larry and Janis Hendrick, LaVonne Foster, Delores Mold, Linda Prosen and Marian Eklund, Workers on Tea Party Day: Beverley H., Marian E., LaVonne F. Delores M., Janet Heinrich, and Gwen Swenson. Tissue flowers were made by Mary Blumke. Small sandwiches were made by Ilene Holmberg, Irma Ekstrom, and Bev Heinrich. Bars were made by Gwen Swenson, LaVonne F., Delores Mold, and Pam Meissner.

Thanks to the committee of Marian, Ronnie, Bev and others for making this a successful event.

Taken from Marian Eklund's report.



**Next Monthly Meeting – August 4, 7pm**  
**Three of our Area One-Room Schools Inspire**  
**the Children of our Local Families Each**  
**Summer**

Did you know that each summer the school bell rings out to welcome students of the area for “a step back in time”?

At our monthly NCHS meeting **on August 4, 7 p.m.**, at the Rushseba Townhall you will hear from teachers and students of 3 area one-room schools: the Pioneer School in Taylors Falls, The Rural School in Pine City and the West Riverside Museum School near Cambridge. We will provide an overview of the history of this major movement that helped educate early settlers all through the Midwest with the dvd presentation entitled “COUNTRY SCHOOL -- One Room, One Nation”: The Life, Death & Rebirth of an American Icon.

One of the early missions of NCHS was to document the one-room schools of the area it serves and a map will be available for reference as to their locations.

Written by Marvel Anderson

**Biography of our museum benefactor, Dr. James Guptill**

James D. Guptill was born and raised in Hinckley, MN, where he attended school and graduated H.S. in 1956. He became acquainted with the dentist in Hinckley and decided he would like to do dentistry for a living.

After working in Minneapolis the first summer, he decided to join the U.S. Navy, where he became a Dental Technician. After three years, he immediately entered the U. of M. and received his Bachelor of Science Degree and then was accepted into Dental School, graduating in 1965 with a D.D.S. Degree. He married Pat Lyseth in December of 1960 (also from Hinckley, class of 1958). Since there was no GI Bill during those peace-time years, the two of them worked and paid the tuition as it came due.



Pat & Dr. James Guptill

Joni (1962) and Jim (1965) were born during Dental School Years. They were able to live in the WWII barracks units on Como Ave. with low rent for students. They were blessed with Jeanne in 1968 (born in R. C. aided by Dr. Luther Nelson and R. N. Brownie Dahlstrom).

Dr. John Olson invited Jim to work with him in Rush City, where he bought the practice after four years. Dr. Guptill was a member of the Minnesota Dental Association and was invited into the Minnesota Gold Foil Academy, the American Gold Foil Academy, the Minnesota Restorative Academy and the American Academy of Operative Dentistry. He was asked to teach on the Clinic floor at the University of MN Dental School and became an Assistant Professor. He taught one day a week for twenty three years.

While in Rush City he was a Charter Member of the Rush City Lions (still a member) and held many offices. He received the first Melvin Jones award given by the R.C. Lions. He was on the First Lutheran Church Council, was Treasurer and also taught Sunday School.

He retired Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> of 2001. He had many wonderful people work with him: Maddy LesSard, Inez Engler, Nancy Knackstedt, Julie Carlson, Julie Rice, Cheryl Scheff, Wendy

Beachem, Mandy Fomengo, Joan Hischer and Pat Guptill.

He enjoyed hobby farming, flying and fishing in Canada with family and friends. He and Pat took all of their children and grandchildren on fishing trips, and are still doing so, loving every minute of it.

Written by Pat Guptill

### **Membership Renewals**

Starts June 30; be sure to get your renewal in soon. Individual annual membership is \$15; family membership is \$20.00, still pretty cheap. Pay to: NCHS.

Why renew? Apparently you were interested in the history of the area; we can collect pieces of local history and exhibit them to anyone interested. We need your membership to run the society and the museum.

We continue to receive items of interest from residents in the area. In late June, a resident walked in and gave us a WWI uniform and copies of the soldier's papers. People in the area have things they think are worth preserving and we are the logical group to do so.

So help us out so we can continue to do this!

### **Purpose**

The NCHS was organized to discover, preserve, and bring to life the area's fascinating history. The North Chisago area generally lies north of highway 95. This includes the area of North Branch, Sunrise, Harris and Rush City, and the surrounding townships and communities.

**Board of Directors:**

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Non-Board – Pat Moulton, Treas, Rush City  
651 983-3534

**Mailing address:**

North Chisago Historical Society  
PO Box 556  
Rush City, MN 55069

**Current Email Address:**

nchsrc@outlook.com

Phone – should come soon.

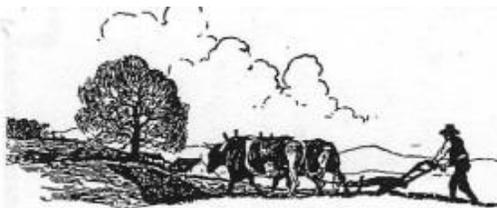
Website – should come soon.

Issue Editor – Larry Hendrick

**Museum Address:**

350 South Eliot Avenue, Rush City

Give this newsletter or this sheet to a neighbor or someone you know and ask them to join us. Below is a membership application.



**NORTH CHISAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**A 501c3 ENTITY  
MEMBERSHIP FORM**

Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Dues:

Individual: \$15.00  
Family: \$20.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to North Chisago Historical Society and send to:  
NCHS Treasurer, P.O. Box 556, Rush City, MN 55069