

ATKIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



**DEPOT
HIGHLIGHTS**

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 3

Fall 2009

Administrator's Comments

Summer is quickly coming to a close and I have learned a lot about the operation of our Museum and all the work that it takes to keep it going. I have had the opportunity to write articles for the local papers, be interviewed on KKin radio, write advertising for the Museum, submit news articles to the news media, put together events for the Museum, and attend Chamber meetings to network with fellow Chamber members to help the Museum. But, the biggest thing that I learned was how important all the volunteers are to the operation of the Museum. Without these volunteers the Museum could not operate. A great big thank you goes out to all of the volunteers that make my life so much easier.

Volunteer opportunity coming up with Festival of Adventures held on September 18th, 19th and 20th. Call the Museum at 927-3348 and see what you could do to help out with this event.

Don't forget about our Cookie Walk on December 5th. Start thinking about what kind of cookies you will be making this year. We need all of our members help to make this event bigger and better this year.

Keep selling those Raffle tickets. We have many great prizes to give away on December 5th. Including, a golf outing for four at Cuyuna Golf Club for 2010, Chanhassen Dinner Theater for two, Great River Gardens gift certificate for 2010, and the Rialto Movie Theater gift certificate.

Greg Leach

2009 MEMORIALS

\$25.00 In Memory of Jim Florek, longtime Wealthwood resident
\$10.00 in Memory of Kenneth Lyons
\$95.00 in Memory of Jack Christianson
\$25.00 in Memory of Anita Jackson Ruddell
\$25.00 in Memory of Larry Fyle husband of Lois Ritter Fyle
\$45.00 in Memory of Henry Fageroos husband of Alice Fageroos

2009 EVENTS

Weeks of August 10th and 17th – Pioneer Camp – Children, ages 8-13, will join our staff as they portray Aitkin's first non-Indian family. These are hands-on experiences that help the children learn what it was like to live in Aitkin in the 1870's. Registration forms are available at the Depot Museum.

September 18th, 19th, & 20th – Festival of Adventures – Held at Aitkin's city park, Friday the 18th is for school children only. On Saturday & Sunday the public is invited to experience the sounds, sights, smells and tastes of a rendezvous. Come for the music, stay for the biscuits and gravy and fry bread at our booth.

December 5th – Spirit of Christmas/Open House/Cookie Walk/Raffle – Join us as we open our Depot Museum to cookie buyers and guests. Our special Christmas displays created by member and volunteer Jo White are always a treat to see. Start looking for those special Christmas Cookie recipes and get geared up to start baking for our Open House.

GENEOLOGY CHANGES DAY OF MEETING

BECAUSE OF NUMEROUS SCHEDUALING PROBLEMS WITH THE HOLIDAYS, GENEOLGY MEETINGS WILL BE CHANGING TO THE SECOND SATURDAY OF THE MONTH AT 10AM. COME TO OUR NEXT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 12TH AT 10:00AM

HELP NEEDED UPDATING MUSEUM FILES

We need your help updating and completing our files. If you are on a cemetery board, make sure we have a complete listing of persons buried there. We need histories of the Cities, Townships, Schools, Churches and Organizations in Aitkin County. Do we have a copy of any family histories that have been done? Does your family own a business in Aitkin County now or in the past? Please give us a history of that business, including dates opened, by whom, product or service offered. Maybe you have some old promotional items for that business. (matchbooks, pencils, calendars, etc.) How about old photographs, great grandparents, riverboats, trains, ice cream socials or other events that took place in Aitkin County. Bring them in and we will make copies for our files. Remember, everything is important to completing Aitkin County History. So, when cleaning out those junk drawers, don't throw away any history.

Old Maps, Phone directories, and Plat books are welcome.

GREAT SUMMER TREAT

Strawberry Banana Salad

- 1 – 3.25 oz. box (cooked) tapioca
- 1 – 3 oz box vanilla pudding (cook & serve)
- 1 – 3 oz box strawberry jello
- 1 – 8 oz. container Cool Whip
- 1 – pint (or more) strawberries, sliced
- 2 – 3 bananas, sliced

Bring 3 cups of water to a boil. Dissolve pudding, Tapioca, and jello in the water. Let set in fridge 4-6 hours or overnight. Using a hand mixer, beat in the Cool Whip. Mix in the strawberries and Bananas shortly before serving.

Every time I have made this, I double the recipe
Because it's always a hit.

From the kitchen of Ron Wendorff

RAFFLE TICKET PRIZES

EARLY BIRD DRAWING

1. Eddy's Resort - \$150.00
Package for two – includes
hotel stay, 4 hours of Fishing,
and meal.
2. Minnesota Twin's Autographed
Baseball – Scott Baker
3. Seasons In Time – Pictorial
History of Aitkin
4. Aitkin County Naturally –
Nature & Bird Book

The Early Bird drawing was held on July 31st and the Winner's were:

EDDY'S RESORT – LaVonne Fox - Aitkin

SCOTT BAKER BASEBALL – Jim McKersie - Arizona

SEASONS IN TIME – Bob Troje - Aitkin

AITKIN COUNTY NATURALLY – Alice Fageroos - Aitkin

DECEMBER DRAWING

1. Cuyuna Country Club – (\$224.00 Value) 4-18 Hole Rounds of Golf + Cart.
2. Chanhassen Dinner Theater – Meal & Show (\$130.00 Value)
3. Picnic Table & Benches – (\$100.00 Value)
4. John Deere Traveling Sprinkler – (\$90.00 Value)
5. Rialto Theater - \$50.00 Gift Certificate
6. Great River Gardens - \$50.00 Gift Certificate
7. Large (36”) Doily made by Marlene Kingsley
8. Shawl made by Connie Petterson
9. Therapist Select Shiatsu Massaging Cushion donated by Alice Dotzler
10. Minnesota Remembrance 4 – books (\$40.00 Value)
11. Ozark Trail Quad Chair (\$10.00 Value)
12. Season's In Time Book (\$10.00 Value)
13. Aitkin County Naturally Bird Book (\$5.00 Value)

COST OF POSTAGE CONTINUES TO RISE

What can you do to help us at the Depot Museum? Do you have an email address that we can send the Newsletter too? This would not only save us postage but would cut down on our printing costs as well. If this is a possibility, email us at achs3348@embarqmail.com.

ANNUAL REPORTS MISSING

We are missing several Annual Reports in our files. They are: 1997, 1996, 1995, 1991, and everything before that. If you find any of these in your files at home please bring them in so we can make a copy of them. Help us to complete our files of Annual Reports. Thank You!

NEWSLETTERS MISSING

While going through our files I find that we are also missing many Newsletters. It would be nice if we could have a complete set of our own Newsletters on file. While looking for our Annual Reports, also look for any Newsletters. We are missing too many of these to mention.

AITKIN COUNTY EVENT BUTTONS

I would like to see that the Museum has a complete set of Festival of Adventure Buttons and Riverboat days buttons. So if you run across any buttons from years past please bring them in. Once we get a complete set together we could put together a display. Also, if you run across any other souvenirs of events from Aitkin County please consider donating them to the Depot Museum. It is all part of our history. Let's make sure to preserve that history for future generations to enjoy!

We have the following buttons:

Palisade Mid-Winter Festival - 92-95
Palisade Area Lions Health Fair - 92, 93
Tamarack Hey Day Buttons - 07, 08
Aitkin Riverboat Days – 93, 96, 00, 03, 06, 07, 09
Festival of Adventures – 93, 94, 01, 05, 06
I Love My Jacobson Fire Dept. – 94, 95
I Love My Palisade Fire Dept. – 92-95
I Love My McGrath Fire Dept. 93-95
I Love My McGregor Fire Dept. 93-95
I Love My Hill City Fire Dept. 93-95
I Love My Aitkin Fire Dept. 93-95
Aitkin County Fair - 09

HENRY (HANK) A. FAGEROOS

6/16/1926 – 7/21/2009

AITKIN COUNTY FAIR 2009

This year we moved our Old Time School display to the County Fair and it was a big hit with our visitors to the Log Cabin. 1331 people signed in at our display building and many others did not sign. We sold 13 Seasons In Time, 12 Aitkin County Naturally and 3 sets of Bob Harder books at the Fair. We also sold 101 Raffle tickets. A big Thank You to Cheryl Meld, the chairperson of this event this year, who assembled the display and made sure that we had people to man the booth. Thanks go to all the volunteers, who helped to man the building during the Fair. We had people from all over Minnesota visit us plus people from Florida, South Carolina, Colorado, New York, California, Iowa, Utah, Texas, Wisconsin, Illinois, Washington, Indiana, and Arizona. Also, I would like to thank Joann and Ron White for helping with a tour at the Museum on Saturday and Alice Fageroos for making cakes for the tour group.

FROM OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER DATED JANUARY 1970

Aitkin School District No. 1 was organized February 13, 1873, embracing the entire county.

During the two years that followed, classes were taught in various available places in Aitkin, for a time in the home of the teacher, Mrs. C.C. Knox.

In 1875, half a dozen public spirited citizens decided a schoolhouse was long overdue and built, with their own labor, a log cabin school on the present site of the Aitkin Flower shop in downtown Aitkin.

Constructed without cost to the school district with work and materials contributed, the cabin school was three days a-building, its logs chinked with mud in the "good old fashioned frugal way" reports the Aitkin Republican.

In 1876, the demands of advancing civilization in Aitkin Village prompted the construction of the first frame schoolhouse in Aitkin County on the present site of Skogmos store on Minnesota Avenue. The little frame school was far from pretentious, but sturdily built, and early Aitkin families were proud of their contribution to the community.

Years later, Aitkin's first frame school, following moves to the present school grounds and subsequently to north-western Aitkin, was converted into a residence and at present the sturdily built structure, completely remodeled, continues to serve as a handsome dwelling.

HOT DAGOS

3 lbs. fresh pepperoni sausage	1 ½ lbs. hamburger	1 lg. can tomato juice
18 hamburger (or hot dog) buns	1 Onion (chopped)	1 15 oz can of tomato paste
1 lg. can whole tomatoes (chopped)	2 t. salt	½ tsp. pepper
1 tsp. basil	1 tsp oregano	2 garlic cloves

Mix sausage and hamburger together, shape into patties and brown in pan.

Mix sauce ingredients together, add to hamburger patties and cook for six hours.

From the kitchen of Betty Johnson

One of the Rudder's from the Andy Gibson is now mounted on our trailer and will be able to be pulled in future parades. The Andy Gibson hauled freight and passengers up the Mississippi from 1883-1892. The Andy was 140' Long, 32' Wide, with a draft of 2'. It was a Stern Wheeler, with three rudders that could haul 150 passengers and 100 tons of freight. Purchased by the Potter Co. in 1891 and retired in 1892. Its boiler was used for the heating system of the Potter Co.

The Andy Gibson by Eddie Huse

In northern Minnesota, where the rippling waters flow, flows the mighty Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. And when I look back in the past, to when they used to be rolling through, the smoke and steam of the riverboats I see.

For 50 years they moved along back there in their day. From Aitkin to Grand Rapids they went along their way. 1870 was the start, 1920 the last. That marked the end of steamboat days, back there in the past.

Now the Andy Gibson was the fastest in her day. Her paddlewheel a rollin' as she moved along the way. Farmers, settlers, lumberjacks and freight sometime I know, through northern Minnesota a long time ago.

They say 140 was her length and 30 feet her beam. Her paddlewheel a rollin' she moved along on steam. One hundred weary passengers and one hundred tons of freight, coming to Potter's Landing was Boness as her mate.

The biggest, fastest riverboat back there in her day and burning wood to build up steam, she'd move along the way. With Captain Boness at the wheel turning to and fro, up the Mississippi that riverboat would go.

They launched the Andy Gibson back in 1884, with 150 passengers they were the rich and poor. For 8 long years they rode along, with captain and its crew then one sad day it met its fate in 1892.

ANNUAL GARAGE SALE HELD JULY 17TH & 18TH

For two and a half months we collected and marked items for our Annual Garage Sale. On Monday July 13th the tables and shelving units were set up in the building at the Fair grounds. Tuesday July 14th was moving day for the Museum. STS sent a crew over and all the items for the sale were moved to the sale building. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday were set up for the sale days. This event requires 100's of man hours to collect, mark, set up and sell. Special thanks goes to Evertt and Shirley Davies, Myron and Donna Larson, Jon and Nancy Jacobson, Ron and Jo White, Doug and Mavis Olson, Lael Carlstrom, Alice Fageroos, Lorraine Liljenquist, Cheryl Meld, Gerald Hedberg and the STS crew. Thanks, also goes to all the other workers who helped with the sale and donated items for the sale. It is our largest fund raiser of the year. Please remember us next year when you are cleaning out your house. All donations for this event are Tax Deductible.

MUSEUM VISITORS JANUARY - JULY - 500 + FAIR 1331 = 1831

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR MEMBER BUSINESSES

AITKIN INDEPENDENT AGE
CUMMINGS AUTO SALES
GOBLE'S SEWER SERVICE
MILLE LACS ENERGY COOPERATIVE
SECURITY STATE BANK
PAULBECK'S COUNTY MARKET
AITKIN COUNTY ABSTRACT COMPANY
EYECARE CENTER OF AITKIN & MCGREGOR
HOMETOWN BUILDING SUPPLY
LUNDBERG PLUMBING & HEATING
ARVIDSON TAX & ACCOUNTING
AITKIN IRON WORKS
JIM BLAKESLEY ENTERPRIZES
AITKIN FAMILY CHIROPRACTIC
GREAT RIVER GARDENS
RIALTO MOVIE THEATER

MEMBERS COOP CREDIT UNION
ENBERG T.V.
GRAVELLE PLUMBING & HEATING
PEOPLES NATIONAL BANK
RITTER SEWER & EXCAVATING
AMERICAN LEGION POST 86
AITKIN AREA CHAMBER
GARRISON DISPOSAL
AITKIN MOTOR COMPANY
HUDRLIK CARPET
AITKIN FLOWERS & GIFTS
INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS
CUMMINGS OIL COMPANY
KKIN AM & FM
CUYUNA COUNTRY CLUB

Riverboat Heritage by Jack Christensen from the Archives

Steam boating as a means of commercial transportation on the upper Mississippi river between Aitkin (Mud River) and Grand Rapids began in 1870.

By 1920 it was a thing of the past. It is no coincidence that the same years mark the beginning and the end of large-scale lumbering in northern Minnesota, since steam boating in the area was largely a by-product of the lumber industry. It rose with lumbering and died with it.

Logging along the upper Mississippi in the late 19th century was "big business." All this took manpower, mule, and ox power. At the beginning of one season more than two thousand men were reported to have passed through Aitkin on their way upriver to work in the logging camps. It is obvious that large amounts of supplies were needed to provide sustenance alone for men and work animals.

In the fiscal year ending June 30, 1880, upstream commerce from Aitkin totaled more than five and a half million pounds of groceries, feed, hardware, coal and salt. In that year there were only 366 permanent residents in the entire area of Aitkin County. Clearly, most shipments were for use in the logging camps.

RIVER BOATS THAT TRAVELED THE 175 MILE, ROUND TRIP BETWEEN GRAND RAPIDS AND AITKIN (Some of the 12 Total are Listed Below)

ANDY GIBSON – 1883-1892 – 140' long, 32' wide. Stern Wheeler hauled 150 passengers and 100 tons of freight. It caved in many banks of the river as it was too long for the sharp bends of the river. When retired in 1892 its boiler was used in the heating system of the Potter Co.

IRENE – 1900-1908 – 70' long. Carried 5,500 passengers in 1906 and 6,000 tons freight. Built by Charles Viebahn & William Puntenev, named in honor of Irene Hodgedon. Burned in 1901, rebuilt and sank in 1908 at Verdon's Landing.

FAWN – 1882-1894 – 85' long, 14' wide. Made trip to Grand Rapids and back in one week. The last two years it was used by Weyerhaeuser Co. towing logs and breaking log jams. In 1894 it struck a snag below Swan River and sank.

SWAN – 1894-1898 – Burned at the mouth of the ripple River. Captain Wm. Hay.

BOARD BABBLE

Greetings from your board of trustees! This represents my first report to you since assuming the office of President of the ACHS Board of Trustees. I hope to become more regular in the future. It is a pleasure for me to report to you at this time that the ACHS is a healthy organization due to the hard work of dedicated members who volunteer numerous hours of their time and talents. From the ever-changing displays at the Depot Museum to the events and fundraising activities, we are fortunate to have people who believe and demonstrate that truly "History Matters." Much as I appreciate their hard work and dedication, I can't help being concerned about them becoming burned out. I'd personally like to see more of our current members take an active role in the mission of ACHS. No one need try to be involved in every facet. Volunteering for one or two activities or volunteering to sit at the desk and greet visitors and answer the phone for 2 or 3 hours here and there is more helpful than you can imagine. If the society is to continue to show that "History Matters," we are going to do more than just grow in numbers. Not everyone can do a lot, but everyone can do a little.

Speaking of activities, the society had a fantastic month of July. The fair exhibit had one of the largest turnouts I've witnessed. My hat is off to Cheryl Meld and everyone who assisted her in developing the early school exhibit. It was about as you can get. If you didn't get a chance to visit the log cabin, you really missed something. Also, Mega KUDOS to the volunteers who worked to conduct the annual garage sale at the fairgrounds. It appears to have generated the largest gross income to date. Finally, the number of visitors to the Depot Museum has increased this summer, shows in yet another way how much "History Matters." I hesitate to mention names of people who deserve special thanks for their contributions to the mission of ACHS for fear of forgetting someone. These people know who they are, and I'm confident they know that they are much appreciated. If you haven't been especially involved recently, why not give it a try? Just give Greg a call or stop by and talk to one of the frequently present volunteers. We've got the fall events to look forward to. The society needs more than just your name on the roster and your membership dues. It needs YOU! Let's continue to work together to show the generations to that "History Matters."

Bill Stimac
President
ACHS Board of Trustees

Our next newsletter will come out the middle of November. We are now sending out a ten page newsletter so I need your help filling up the pages. Submit your articles, recipes or anything else by the end of October. Help me make our newsletter more fun and interesting. What are your memories of the past? Do you have any funny stories to share with the membership? Don't wait, share them now.

**AITKIN COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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Web site: www.aitkin.com/achs/

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2009

GENEALOGY

Because of conflicts at the Museum, Genealogy will now meet on the Second Saturday of the month. The next meeting will be held on September 12th at 10am.

FESTIVAL OF ADVENTURES

Dates for this years festival is September 18th, 19th, and 20th. Come into the Museum and sign up to help with this event. Experience the sounds, sights, smells, and tastes of rendezvous. Don't miss out on this fun event.

ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE/COOKIE WALK

This year's event will take place on December 5th at the Depot Museum. Start dusting off those Christmas Cookie recipes so that you will be ready to bake up some cookies the first week of December for our annual cookie walk. We need all of your help to make this event successful. Raffle Drawing will be at 2 pm.

MUSEUM HOURS

JUNE THROUGH AUGUST

Tue., Wed., Fri., & Sat. – 10:00am – 4:00pm

SEPTEMBER THROUGH MAY

Wed., Fri. & Sat. – 10:00am – 4:00pm

Editor: GREG LEACH