



# AITKIN COUNTY HISTORY & ANECDOTES

## Re-Opening Soon!

“History is that certainty produced at the point where the imperfections of memory meet the inadequacies of documentation.”

~ Julian Barnes

2020 was quite a year, with the country shutting down, and our state doing so 2x. When the ACHS made the decision to remain closed for the remainder of 2020, it was fortuitous. This decision prevented confusion over re-opening and closing again, but we were still impacted financially by the loss of revenue coming in.

So, a large thank you to those who supported our Annual Fund Drive, our Exhibit sponsors, and those that supported grants for our many needed projects, such as the Kennath Kellar Foundation, Enbridge, and Legacy funding awarded by MNHS. A full list of exhibit sponsors is posted in the Exhibits building. And thank you to our members who stuck by us while our doors were closed.

While it would be unwise to hold a grand re-opening celebration which would involve a bigger group of people than wanted while Covid is still of concern, we will be re-opening our doors to the public.

As of Wednesday, March 3rd, (as we are not open Mondays-Tuesdays), please stop by and check out our exhibit redesign and updated buildings.

Masks required.



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### OPEN HOURS

October-April  
Wednesday-Friday  
10am-4pm

May-September  
Wednesday-Saturday  
10am-4pm

We depend on the support of people like you!



**amazon**smile  
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# SEEKING BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPLICANTS



Looking to serve a worthy cause? Interested in history? Have a skill to share? Consider joining the Board of Trustees of the Aitkin County Historical Society.

What would serving on the Board entail exactly?

- Monthly Board meeting the 4th Wednesday of every month (except November-February) at 10am- no need to give up your evenings!
- Serving on a Board Committee, such as Collections, Fundraising, Garage Sale, etc.
- Participation in ACHS events, such as Garage Sale, Fair, and Cookie walk– help recruit volunteers, do set-up and prep, or serve as help during the event.
- Willing to give of their time as a volunteer– with limited staff, we rely on the aid of volunteers to share their time and expertise to complete various projects at the ACHS!



If you are interested, or simply want to learn more about what it means to be a Board member, please call or email:

Heidi Gould  
 ACHS Administrator  
 (218)927-3348  
[achs@aitkincohs.org](mailto:achs@aitkincohs.org)



Thank you to the Operation Round-Up® program administered by the Mille Lacs Energy Community Trust board.

With the support of this program, the Aitkin County Historical Society was able to purchase a new computer for the Resource room from a 2020 application. The old, refurbished and donated computers were no longer supported and updated. The new computer is more secure and fully operational.

In 2021, we are completing an application for funding to purchase protective UV-filtering film to apply to windows and florescent bulbs to reduce damage to the artifacts we are entrusted to protect. We will announce in future newsletters if this funding was secured and the project completed.

## BUILDING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Last spring, the ACHS was awarded funding for the completion of a Building Conditions Assessment. As the 1916 Depot is on the National Register of Historic Places, this is a necessary document to complete before undertaking any restoration work or upgrades. The company LHB, Inc., of Duluth and Minneapolis, was chosen to complete a full and comprehensive assessment of the current conditions of the structure and provide treatment recommendations and a suggested timeline.

The objective of the condition assessment is to:

- Determine the existing condition of the building
- Identify and prioritize maintenance and repair needs of the building
- Identify and prioritize historic preservation needs of the building
- Review for accessibility and building code compliance

The 75% draft of this report was completed and submitted in October for review by MNHS staff. Upon completion of the final report, ACHS staff and Board of Trustees will follow the recommended rehabilitation schedule to prioritize our grant writing and project completion. This will include fixing uneven pavers in the sidewalk, addition of gutters and downspouts, bathroom upgrades, and making the building ADA accessible.

While we wish to jump into these projects, to maintain the integrity of this historic structure, proper procedure must be followed. So, time and care will be taken, but a beautifully rehabilitated building will be the result.

*This project has been financed in part with funds provided by the State of Minnesota from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the Minnesota Historical Society.*



# ... and we need your help!

As the ACHS reopens to the public and summer approaches, there are many ways the ACHS needs help. Below are a few tasks we need volunteers for. Spread the word if you know someone interested.

- Front desk volunteer– greets visitors, give brief overview of what to see, accept admission fees, do giftshop sales, and misc. assigned tasks when there are no visitors
- Gardener– clean up existing beds, plant where needed, mow small area of lawn, weed whip, keep weeds out of pavers
- Maintenance– perform minor repair and maintenance needs, such as fixing an outdoor sign with rotted wooden leg supports, maintain snowblower
- Organizer– we need someone good at cleaning and organizing to help staff clean and sort garage sale merchandise, unused supplies/cluttered storage to determine what to keep and what to put in garage sale, cluttered research files (duplicates) and file away old Aitkin Age issues

Looking to be of service locally? Want to support a worthy cause? Volunteer with the ACHS!

Contact: (218)927-3348 or [achs@aitkincoh.org](mailto:achs@aitkincoh.org)



**Thank you to all ACHS Donors,  
New and Renewing Members  
November-January**

*New and Renewing Members*  
Roxy Appel Wigton  
R & K Cabinets— Rick and  
Kim Liljenquist

Bryan & Marilyn Johnson  
Joe Fellegy  
Diann Hendrickson

*Donors*  
Aikin Motor Company

**2020-2021 Memorial Donations  
November—January**

- Dr. and Mrs. Charles Kaplan in memory of parents FC Kap and Hazel Kaplan
- Christine Bailey, in memory of Myron Larson
- Bev & Marv Midthun, Charles & Karen Midthun, Chris & Tricia Midthun, and Nancy & David Morgan, in memory of Myron Larson



Orrin McKay, arrested on complaint of his mother last Sunday and charged with incorrigibility, was sent by Judge Williams, who heard the case, to the reform school during his minority. Judge Holland in chambers approved the sentence, and he was taken to St. Paul to undergo his punishment by Sheriff Markham last Wednesday evening.

Wounded dignity of Justice Williams . . .  
*Aitkin Age*, 3-19-1892

A man created a disturbance at the Willard Hotel last Wednesday evening and was promptly run in by Officer Knowler. Two dollars and costs healed the wounded dignity of Justice Williams' court next morning.

**NEWS  
FROM  
THE PAST**

Incorrigibility as an offense?  
Hmm . . .

*Aitkin Age*, 12-31-1892

Return the stolen clothes, or it will be "warm" for you. We will track your footprints in the fresh snow.

*Aitkin Age*, 1-21-1893

Complaints are heard from several quarters that clothes lines are being robbed. One sufferer says he has his eye on parties suspected by him, and will make it warm for the offenders if they do not return the stolen articles. Foot prints in the snow gave him the clue.

Aitkin County Historical Society  
 20 Pacific St. SW  
 P.O. Box 215  
 Aitkin, MN 56431  
 www.aitkincohs.org  
 (218)927-3348

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF MEMBERSHIP \_\_\_\_ new \_\_\_\_ renewal

Individual	\$15.00
Family	\$20.00
Senior (over 60)	\$7.50
Life	\$200.00
Business or Club	\$30.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Membership Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive the newsletter via email instead of US mail  
 I am interested in volunteering  
 Make checks payable to: AITKIN COUNTY HISTORICAL or ACHS

Mail check and application to: **Aitkin County Historical Society**  
**P.O. Box 215**  
**Aitkin, MN 56431**

Board of Directors:  
 Cheryl Meld, Tamarack, *Acting Pres.*  
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 Mark Wedel, Aitkin,  
*County Commissioner Liaison*

Staff  
 Heidi Gould, Aitkin  
*Administrator*  
 achs@aitkincohs.org

*If it's time to renew your yearly membership, or you know someone who should be a member, use this handy form.*

*If you are unsure of your member renewal date, please call (218)927-3348 or email achs@aitkincohs.org*