



AITKIN COUNTY HISTORY & ANECDOTES



IT'S THE GIVING SEASON!

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“Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both.”

~C. Wright Mills

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OPEN HOURS

October-April
Tuesday-Friday
10am-4pm
May-September
Tuesday-Friday
10am-4pm
Saturday 10am-2pm



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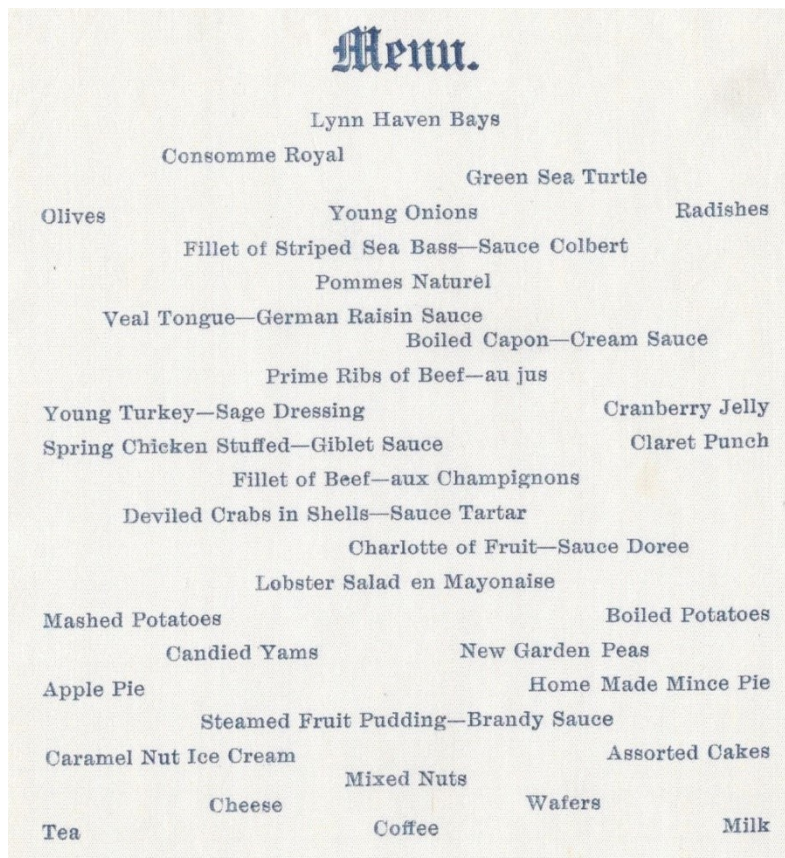
COLLECTIONS INVENTORY

We are at the halfway point in our inventory! What other amazing artifacts will we discover to share on Facebook?

Collections Needs: if you have one lying around or want to donate funds towards one-

- *De-Humidifier x 2*

FROM THE COLLECTIONS



Printed on ribbon-textured cloth, this menu, inside the booklet cover below, was the holiday menu for Thanksgiving of 1904 at the Willard Hotel. The Hotel had two structures— the original white wooden structure, and when that was destroyed, the upper levels of the brick Potter-Casey store building. Each structure can be seen from postcards and photos in our collection on the opposite page.



DONATE TOWARDS FACILITY UPGRADES

History cannot give us a program for the future, but it can give us a fuller understanding of ourselves, and of our common humanity, so that we can better face the future.
 ~Robert Penn Warren

Your support will help us to preserve our home, the Depot, and local history for the next one hundred years, as well as helping to make the building more accessible.

One penny may seem to you a very insignificant thing, but it is the small seed from which fortunes spring.
 ~Orison Swett Marden



Above, 1911 Below, right: Each of these images dates between 1900-1910.



Left dates to 1966, at right circa 1917

WHAT'S YOUR AITKIN COUNTY HISTORY?

In the 1980s-90s, ACHS accomplished an oral history project. Interviewers, armed with cassette tape recorders, asked older Aitkin County residents to describe their early lives and careers (the interviewers included Lael Carlstrom, Janet Miller, Ann Nelson, and Mark Jacobs). In 2000, I transcribed these precious interviews. The resulting documents are available to the public on our website www.aitkincohs.org/transcriptions.html. These transcriptions give us a glimpse of life in the early days of Aitkin County.

In the 1970s, Studs Terkel wrote a book called "*Working: People talk about what they do all day and how they feel about what they do.*" Mr. Terkel interviewed working people from all walks of life across America. They opened themselves to him, talking about their jobs, their fears, their happiness, and their problems.

Perhaps we think our everyday doings are not worth noting; they are so commonplace to us that surely there is no need to describe them. But try to envision someone 20 years from now, or 50, or 100, wondering what life was like here. How we live today might seem as outdated to them as what we have learned from those ACHS oral histories. For example, most kids today have never used a dial phone, but I remember well our family's rotary phone and the party line we shared with the neighbors back in the 1950s.

You don't have to be a Studs Terkel to ask your relatives about their lives and take notes. Or if you have even a bit of time, to jot down your own memories. It could be anything from your schooldays to what you did at work today, or even what you buy at the grocery store. It may seem trivial to you, but someday someone will read it and be fascinated about life in Aitkin County - especially if you offer ACHS a copy!

- Jennie Hakes, ACHS Volunteer

MILLINERS & HABERDASHERS

Hats have power. Hats can change you into someone else. ~Catherynne M. Valente

In a recent *Aitkin Independent Age* article, I discussed hats and why the wearing of them in everyday life dropped out of fashion. And that got me thinking about women's fashions and the businesses that catered to them. In particular, those who are milliners and those who are haberdashers. Do people today know what a milliner or haberdasher is or does?

Customarily, a milliner is a hatmaker. How is this different to a hatter— a.k.a. the Mad Hatter ala *Alice in Wonderland*? The key difference is who the hats are made for. Milliners cater to women's fashions, while hatters focus solely on men's headgear.

A milliner's shop might also contain other small items regarding women's dress— buttons, flowers, ribbons, lace, and so forth. These would usually only be items regarding the decoration of fashion, not the piece of clothing. The trimmings rather than a glove or shirt.

By selling these extra goods, a millinery might be confused by some for a haberdashery.

Back in the days when making your own clothes and fabric arts were common practice, a haberdashery was a mainstay store. A haberdasher is a business or person who sells small articles for sewing, dressmaking and knitting. These include such items as buttons, ribbons, lace, and zips. A sewing kit might be called a haberdasher's box as it contained many of these small items.

This was a haberdasher in Britain and olden times. Nowadays, a haberdasher in America specializes in men's clothing.



Opposite: Interior of a milliners (hatmakers) shop. Proprietor was Mrs. William Hoffstead (1917-1920) then sold to Helen Romansey who operated it for 15 -20 years. They are L to R: Hazel Soderman, Mrs. Bertha Edstrom, Mrs. William Hoffstead.

Thank you to all ACHS Donors, New and Renewing Members August-October

New and Renewing Members

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 Bob & Gayle Janzen
 Judy Sutherland
 David Strand
 Elert & Chris Johnson
 Security State Bank
 Julie Hansen
 Terry Carter
 Virgie Van Horn
 Gary & Gloria Rogers
 Joe Fellegly
 Eye Care Centers of Aitkin & McGregor
 Paul & Rose Boucher
 Robert & Janice Kolodji
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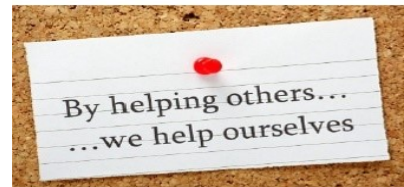
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Paul & Luanne Beyreuther
 Kenneth McKellar on behalf of
 Dorothy McKellar Trust

In Memorium

Connie Petterson, in memory of
 Rich Liljenquist
 Jennie Hakes in memory of Donna
 Appel



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Seeking Volunteers to do a variety of tasks:

- Sort items removed from display– artifacts separated from items purchased for display
- Carpenter to build simple shelves from plywood and 2 x 4's
- Carpenter to rebuild and weatherize outdoor sign kiosks
- Someone organized to sort and purge library files– clean out duplicates, locate archival artifacts
- Organizer to safely store and house old Aitkin Age issues in boxes

Contact Heidi at (218)927-3348 or achs@aitkincohs.org to volunteer or learn more!



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



This year's funding went towards the purchase of UV-filtering film to install on the Depot windows, protecting the artifacts inside from damage. It also purchased fluorescent bulb filters to install in our storage building, protecting everything not stored in archival boxes, such as paintings and furniture.

Aitkin County Historical Society
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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

Board of Directors:

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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 before renewing.