



P.C.H.S

Volume 2006

Pennington County Historical Society

Number 1

In Search of Thief River Falls

One of the goals of the Pennington County Historical Society is to research the history of Thief River Falls and make it available to the public--an endeavor that often requires considerable effort and ingenuity on the part of the investigators. For example, framed lists of mayors, council members, and city clerks once hung on the walls of the Council chambers in the auditorium. When the City moved its offices to the depot, however, those lists were missing. Roger DeLap, former City Clerk, located the documents and allowed the Society to copy them. That information is now on the Society website.

The past two issues of the newsletter explored the history of the police and fire departments, but comprehensive information has been hard to find. Although early city directories listed the names of the chief of police, fire chief, and some other employees, no official records were found. In a visit to the vault of City Hall, however, researchers discovered early volumes of council minutes which have proved to be a treasure trove. The first volume begins in 1890 when Thief River Falls had not yet been incorporated and was still a part of Polk County. Along with

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names of police and fire department officials, these early volumes included the payment of salaries and fees for services. The names of constables, dance matrons, and fire chiefs were also listed. The Society has secured permission from Jodi Torkelson, City Clerk, to scan those minutes. At the present time three volumes have been scanned.

The Advisory Council has generously agreed to transcribe them, but it is a formidable task. In most cases names were handwritten, and the ink has faded over the years. With the revolutionary impact of digitalization, reading cursive has become a lost skill; and in some instances the terms used are not in today's language. For example, the minutes use the words "to wit," meaning "namely," and at the end of many

pages there is a line stating that the Council was adjourned "without day." This is a translation of the Latin "sine die," meaning that no future meeting date has been set.

Although words are not always spelled correctly, the task of the group is not to rewrite history, so no corrections are being made to the original document. Eventually the transcribed minutes will be digitized so that they are searchable, and a link to the original documents will be available on the Society website.

The Advisory Council meets every Thursday morning at 10 a.m. in the Engelstad Village Office. Current sustaining members of the group are Art Buringrud, John Jaranson, Inez Mostue, Stuart Nelson, and Fern Williams. They welcome assistance from anyone interested in this project.



Remembering

The Endowment Fund was established to secure the future of the Peder Engelstad Pioneer Village. Only the interest from this fund can be spent. The current balance in this account is \$8,500. Please consider the Historical Society in your memorials, charitable giving, and estate planning. The Society is a non-profit institution, so all donations are tax-deductible.

Russell Williams
 Hazel DuChamp
 Jan Haider
 Glenn Carlson
 Katherine Strong
 Kermit Finstad
 Marion Hoglo
 Torjus and Sophie Larson
 Kevin Swanson
 Val Chommie
 Marian Williams
 Junes Race
 Lucille Spyhalski
 Dr. John Beebe
 Myrtle (Jensen) Johnson
 Alice Lendobeja
 Randall Noper
 Earl Engelstad
 Peter Stensgaard
 Perry Borgie
 Bill, Sadie, and Jerry Bugge
 Carol Ann Huber
 Marge Swenson
 Dorothy (Jansen) Johnson
 Celeste Gerardy
 Marie Larson Vevea
 Petra Larson Nigl
 James Wells
 Russ Molldrem
 Gertie Joppru Johnson
 Lenore Lieberman
 Lloyd Nereson
 Leona Peterson
 Luella Holen
 Erland Anderson
 N. Erwin Muzzy
 Curdis Nelson
 Bernard J. Wold
 Mike Frankenberg
 Helen Nomeland
 Madelyn Robarge
 Phyllis Caldis Gustafson

Knute Larson
 Constance Hicks Rossman
 Rose Needham
 Hannah Hornseth
 Millie (Pederson) Olson
 Gote Anderson
 Opal Bjerken
 Jerry Fessler
 Genevieve Ring
 Orlene Reed
 Lloyd VeVea
 Edla Holmberg
 Oscar Odegaard
 Ralph Engelstad
 Inga Geving
 Cora Alvina Olson
 Robert Looker
 David Kringsberg
 James Engelstad
 Clarence O. Swanson
 Earl Halvorson
 Marlene Johnson
 Myrtle (Bugge) Nelson
 Peter Hess
 Douglas Stewart
 Avis Hoium
 Joseph Armstrong
 Rolland Sande
 Mary Thompson
 Irene Ellingson
 Mel Carlson
 Patricia Henning
 Sophie Marie (Jensen) Sevre &
 Donald I. Sevre
 Bernard Myers
 Roger P. Mickelson
 Ruby Huseth
 Lois (Klennert) Jung
 Millard Nelson
 Bertha Schlenker
 Clifton Mattson
 Cliff, Margaret, & Dick Bjorkman

Marion (Geving) Adolphson
 Kenneth Pearson
 Bob Bredeson
 Marion Cork
 Marcella Hanson
 Helen Beebe
 Melva Lee
 Rebecca Berg Grayson
 Betty Dow
 Pearl Wold
 Woodrow Craik
 Bob Bergan
 Carrie Lunke
 Verna Myhrer Ehrle
 Caroline Brunelle
 Lloyd Hogenson
 Alice Brubakken
 Milton Davidson
 Paul Kayser
 Ernest Helgenset
 Lester Muzzy
 LeRoy Bugge
 Gini Engelstad
 Orin Green
 Harold Burrell
 Orville & Gay Johnson
 Elsie Johnson
 Leonard Furuseth
 Darlene Forsberg
 Richard Mosbeck
 Albert Koop
 Stan Gibson
 Harold Storhaug
 Kathryn Peterson
 Sami Haj
 Cleo Mae Engelstad Groslie
 Violet Ellen Larson
 Melvin & Olga Evenson
 John G. & Alma Jaranson
 Theodore Hellie

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Council first meeting in the
 Village of Thief River Falls was
 on the 26th day of May A.D. 1890
 all members present
 except recorder

M.V. Evenson was duly
 appointed recorder Pro Tem

The recorder William G. Porter was
 authorized to procure such Books & Blanks
 as is necessary for said Village
 on Motion

That Treasurers Bond be one Thousand
 Dollars carried
 on Motion

Chas. Meyers was duly appointed Pondmaster
 for said Village

Council adjourned

To meet May 27th 1890 at 7:30 Pm
 M.V. Evenson Carl Kretzschmar
 recorder Pro Tem President

Minutes from the first council meeting of Thief River Falls

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All members present except recorder.

M.V. Evenson was duly appointed recorder Pro Tem.

The recorder William G Porter was authorized to procure such Books & Blanks
 as is necessary for Said Village. On motion the treasurers Bond be one Thou-
 sand Dollars, carried.

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Council Adjourned.

To meet May 27th 1890 at 7:30 Pm.

M.V. Evenson
 Recorder Pro Tem

Carl Kretzschmar
 President"

3

June 09. 1890

On motion M.V. Evenson and Philip Zeh was appointed Street cominty.

On motion Carl Kretzschmar and Chas. A. Robbecke was appointed ceme- tery cominty.

January 15, 1891

On motion and carried that the council will allow the cornet Band \$5.⁰⁰ provided that the instruments shall belong to the Village of Thief River Falls.

Excerpt

Appointed Recorder from item

June 8, 1891

On Motion. John Christianson was appointed Village Marshal of the Village of T. R. F. until his successor be Elected and Qualified.

Motion seconded & Carried That the Recorder Order a Marshals Star Policemans Baton and a pair of handcuffs for the Village of T.R.F.

Blanchy

June 23, 1890

Motion was made and carried that there be a culvert put in on Main Street 32 ft. long 16 in high & 44 in wide inside measure.

Same let to F.A. Wendt for \$5.00 to do work on same culvert and placing it in good shape.

on

June 6, 1891

On Motion. The Recorder was ordered to procure 50 dog tags for the Village of Thief River Falls.

to make may 20 1890

M.V. Evenson

Carl Kretzschmar

Recorder from item

President

Snippets

Pitch-In Day Saturday, May 20, 2006



Anyone who is willing to assist in cleaning up the Peder Engelstad Pioneer Village for the season is invited to come to the Village anytime from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Supplies will be provided for cleaning buildings and grounds. Lunch will be served at noon in the basement of the Asphult Church in the Village. Anyone willing to help is asked to call 681-5767 and leave a message indicating the number of people coming. Volunteers are asked to wear old clothing and to bring any cleaning supplies and equipment that are preferred.

Moccasin Garden Club Sale Saturday, May 20, 2006



The Moccasin Garden Club will hold its annual plant sale in the Engelstad Building at the Village starting at 10 a.m. Club members will also be selling plants in the parking lot and surrounding grounds. In past years most of the plants were sold by noon.

Postcard Book Monday, June 19, 2006



Thief River Falls and Pennington County, published by Arcadia Publishing, will be released for sale on June 19, 2006. The book contains copies of 197 postcards from Pennington County. The book will be available for sale at Barnes & Noble, Books-a-Million, Borders, Wal-Mart, Eckerd, and other sites. In Thief River Falls the book will be sold at H.D. Floral Design Studio.

The total cost of the book will be \$21.29. Mail orders and e-mail orders will be accepted by H.D. Floral. Within the continental United States the cost, including shipping and handling, will be \$25.

Mailing address for H.D. Floral:

119 3rd St. E

Thief River Falls, MN 56701

E-mail address:

hdfloral@wiktel.com

Toll-free phone number:

1-800-804-4013.

Please watch the local news media for further details about the sale of the book.



Family Festival Saturday, June 24, 2006

Each year the Historical Society honors pioneer families. Very simply, the criteria are that the family has lived in the county for many years and members still reside here. The Syvert Hanson family of Silverton Township has been chosen for 2006 and will be honored at a program on Saturday afternoon. Please watch the local news media for details of the celebration.



"Barn Again!"[®] Celebrating an American Icon"

The report to the Smithsonian Institution on the exhibit that took place last summer at the Engelstad Pioneer Village has been submitted. Faye Auchenpaugh's daughter, Marisa, and her son-in-law, Wade Benson, have produced a video that was presented at the Society annual meeting in March. Although the DVD is not for sale, the narrative will be shown in the Engelstad Building throughout the coming summer.

Membership

A membership renewal envelope is included in this newsletter. Renew your membership, increase your contribution, and invite a friend to join the Society. The Historical Society publishes this newsletter, does research for individuals, and researches the history of the county and its cities throughout each month of the year. It also owns and maintains the Peder Engelstad Pioneer Village. Funds are always needed to keep up the Village, even when it is not open. The membership envelope contains an error that somehow eluded proofreading.

Charges for Archival Research

Over the past few years the amount of time spent by the Village staff in pursuit of requested information has increased exponentially. The Society Board of Directors has approved the following procedures and fees for research in archival and computer files. Research will be done by a staff person on Monday through Friday between 10 a.m. and noon. Once a task has been defined, the cost of the research will be \$15 per hour. Five photocopies will be included in any fee of \$15 or more. Photographic inkjet prints on photo-quality paper will be provided upon request for \$2 per print. Society members will receive a 10% discount on all fees charged.

The Website & How One Thing Leads to Another

Andy Filer has added a new data analysis feature for the Society website (www.pvillage.org). The website currently is receiving 108 visitors a day. In the past eight months there have been over a quarter of a million "hits" to the site by 11,300 visitors.



One recent researcher was Michael H. Johnson, from Vermont, who viewed the site and sent an e-mail inquiring about his ancestors. One of the family names was Johnson, and the other was Hestekind.

Although there are many Johnsons in the website database, Village staff were able to locate the homestead that he was seeking. Coincidentally, Gerald Hestekind had just stopped at the Society office and left three diaries which had belonged to Ole Hestekind. Eventually the two men spoke to one another by phone and found that they are indeed related. As a result of the connection, Michael has loaned the Society original photographs of his relatives to be scanned and put on the website.

On one visit to the website Gerald happened to spot a copy of a picture that was pinned to the bulletin board. Previously the photo had been identified as the Gully School, but Gerald was positive that it was the Holt School. He was right. He and Vernon Reier-son are currently working to identify the children pictured on the steps of the school. One thing has led to another. Who knows where it will end up!

September 15, 1890

on motion and carried that re-
corder draw up specifications for a log
lockup or jail and see what he can get
said lockup or jail built for.

P. C. H. S. Board of Directors

Charles Naplin—President
Pat Swanson—Vice President
Jim Dalager—Treasurer
Fern Williams—Secretary

Penny Langland
Eugene Rondorf
Dale Wennberg

P.C.H.S. Staff

Volunteer Staff:

Archivist—Caryl Bugge

Village Employed Staff:

Village Director—Unfilled to date
Village Manager—Unfilled to date
Maintenance Manager—Unfilled to date
Gardener—Beattie Mickelson

Volunteer Newsletter Staff:

Editor: Caryl Bugge
Formatting: Hannah Filer
Proofreading & Editing: Barb Hauger
Reproduction: T.R.F. Park & Recreation

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