The Little White Paper
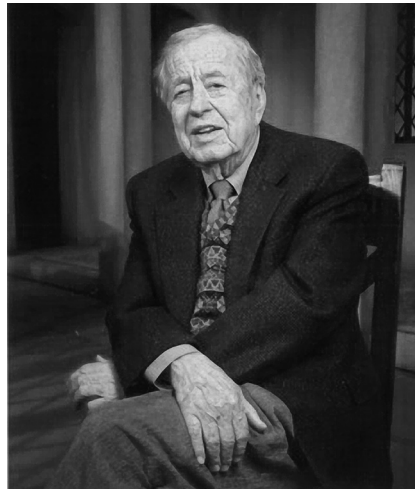
February meeting...

Theater, media pioneer Stolz to address Society

Actor, writer, producer, and director Don Stolz is best known as the guiding force behind the Old Log Theater, but he is also a radio veteran and played a pioneering role in the growth of television in the Twin Cities. His broadcasting career began in 1938 at WKY Radio in Oklahoma City, where he starred in the network program Devil's Roost.

Stolz bought the Old Log Theater in Excelsior in 1946 and soon became heavily involved in the Twin Cities broadcast scene, acting for WCCO Radio and directing all the television commercials produced by Campbell Mithun.

Author of his book, "The Old Log Theater & Me," Don

Don Stolz

Stolz will be the program presenter at the Golden Valley Historical Society general membership meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 11, at the Historic Church of the Society, 6731 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley.

The Society's meetings are open to the public without charge. Mark your calendar and plan to attend to hear the best-known theater icon in the United States. Ask a friend to share this opportunity with you and ask your friend to join our Society. Refreshments will be served following the program.

Remember GV movie theater?

Today the City of Golden Valley is surrounded by other cities that have movie theaters, but Golden Valley's only theater was lost to the competition from the new media–television. In 1948, Hobart Williams and Joseph Powers purchased a garage building owned by the Medicine Lake Bus Company, across the road just south of the Point Restaurant, in what is now the "downtown" area of Golden Valley. They converted the bus garage to a theater, which opened in 1949 with a gala event and a sellout crowd. Flowers and well wishes from Hollywood filled the foyer, but the competition from the new media, television, was a disaster for many theaters, Golden Valley Theater included. The building was subsequently sold to Dahlberg Electronics, was remodeled, and was home to one of the first organizations in Golden Valley with a national and worldwide business–Miracle Ear Hearing Aid.

Match the city grant

Our thanks to the Golden Valley City Council for providing the Society with a $5,000 matching grant for 2010. Many members and friends of the Society have already sent contributions to match the city's grant, for which we thank you. We have some distance yet to go before we can report our results in the challenge grant to the council however. Please send your matching grant check to the Society as soon as possible. A self-addressed envelope is enclosed.

First NW metro history round table held

Under the leadership of Brooklyn Center/Park Historical Society member, Diane Sannes, the first meeting of other North/West metro area historical society board members and staff met at 9 a.m., on January 2, 2010, at the Embassy Suites Minneapolis, Brooklyn Center, for the purpose of sharing challenges and ideas for the future success of their respective organizations.

There were about 25 representatives of 12-15 different historical societies in the North/West metro area in attendance who shared the history of their city and told about their organizations. The History Round Table was so well received that it was decided to continue meeting on the first Saturday of each month. The next meeting will be at 9 a.m. on Saturday, February 6, at the Embassy Suites Minneapolis in Brooklyn Center. Secretary Don Anderson represented GVHS at the meeting.

We get questions: Ice arena and theater

Doug (DAH210@aol.com) has asked if the GVHS has any pictures of the Golden Valley Ice Arena, which he recalls was located on the Northwest corner of Wayzata Boulevard and Highway 100. Our archives do not have any information about an ice arena in that location. If you remember anything about that arena, please contact us (maryanddon3030@aol.com or 763-588-8578).

Jeanne Andre, Golden Valley Assistant City Manager, has asked if the Society has information about when the Golden Valley Theater was built. (See the article on the first page.) If anyone has a photo of the GV Theater we would appreciate an opportunity to make a copy for our archives. Please call (763-588-8578) or send the photo to the GVHS at 7800 Golden Valley Road, 55427.

West entertains with stories of Axel

Julian West, author of "WHAT A CARD! The Story of Clellan Card and Axel and His Dog," presented the life of one of the important figures in Twin Cities broadcasting from the 1930's to the 1960's at the Society's January 14 general membership meeting. In his research, West interviewed over 116 people, some more than once as noted in his presentation. Sometimes people's memories were not as accurate as he would have liked and they were re-interviewed to verify their story. West's presentation, which included video and audio clips was well received by the 32 members and guests in attendance.

Boulevard songbook donated to Society

Rebecca Templeton of LeSueur, Minnesota wrote that she is pleased to be able to donate to the Society a songbook from " the new Boulevard Café, 5530 Wayzata Boulevard, in beautiful Golden Valley…7 minutes from downtown Minneapolis. Call Liberty 5-8847 or 5-8848". The songbook was copyrighted in 1959 by Charlton Publishing Corporation, Charlton Building, Derby, Connecticut.

Rebecca said that she found the songbook while cleaning her attic but does not remember how she got it. Thank you, Rebecca, for thinking of the Golden Valley Historical Society so we can add the songbook to our Boulevard Café artifacts.

Jacob Breth earns Eagle Scout honor

Boy Scout Jacob Breth, grandson of Society director Jerry Breth, was awarded the honor of Eagle Scout at an Eagle Court of Honor in mid-December. Congratulations, Jacob, on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout, a rank that very few young men reach in their scouting careers.