



# The Little White Paper

The Monthly Newsletter of the Golden Valley Historical Society

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**April meeting...**

## Who shot down Admiral Yamamoto in WWII?

Strategic World War II briefing on a top secret mission in the Solomon Islands of the Southwest Pacific, a Naval Command area of operations:

Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto was the commander in chief of the Japanese Combined Fleet and mastermind of the attack on Pearl Harbor. U. S. Naval Intelligence picked up information from radio transmissions that he would be flying from Rabaul on New Britain Island to visit bases on Bougainville.

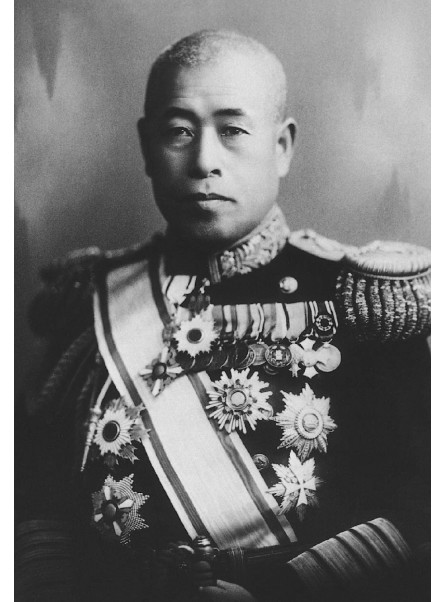
The closest U. S. base was Guadalcanal, where navy fighter aircraft did not have the range to complete a successful mission, so the mission to intercept the Admiral was assigned to the Army Air Corp and a P-38 squadron. The P-38's had to be specially equipped with belly gas tanks to give them the "legs" necessary to complete the mission.

On April 18, 1943, this high-risk mission was successfully completed. Yamamoto was killed when his Mitsubishi bomber crashed in the jungle of South East Bougainville. An interesting twist in this story is controversy over who shot down Yamamoto. The killer flight

leader's claims were contested and led to a second effort to adjust the original findings.

Presenting the strategic brief will be Bob Laskey, assisted by Bob Provost, past president of our Golden Valley Historical Society, and chairperson of our program committee. Laskey is a retired Regional Services Manager of the IBM Minneapolis operation and a past president of the Minneapolis Rotary Club. He is linked to the mission through his wife's uncle, George Chandler, a WW II P-38 Ace pilot. A retired banker, Chandler became part of the ongoing effort to correct the controversy over who shot down Admiral Yamamoto.

The general membership meeting will be held at the Society's Historic Church, 6731 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley at 7:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served following the program. The meeting is free and open to the public. Invite a friend and ask them to join our Society.



Admiral Yamamoto

## Matching fund challenge news

Where does it stand?

You betcha, we are at 68% of the \$5,000 grant match goal! Thank you to all of the members and friends of the society who have submitted donations. If you have not yet made a contribution, please, please do so now. We need everyone's participation to meet our goal.

**Follow GVHS online:**

<http://goldenvalleyhistoricalsociety.org/default.aspx>

## GV Fire Department, part 2

The national Civil Defense was organized after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Fletcher Olson, owner of the local lumber company, was named local director and along with George Homberger, village constable, recruited over 40 volunteers to serve as Golden Valley air raid wardens and firemen. Blackout drills were held and it was necessary to organize and equip an effective fire department quickly since, until that time, Golden Valley's only fire equipment consisted of several fire extinguishers in the basement of the old village hall. Using his position as Civil Defense director,

Olson organized a volunteer fire department and Lee Lovering was elected the first fire chief. Drills for the new department took place behind the village hall and a retired Minneapolis fireman began teaching the rookies the art of firefighting. On March 2, 1943, the village passed an ordinance providing for a volunteer fire department that was signed by Council President Raymond Rascop and Village Recorder Gail Wilson. The ordinance called for firemen age 21 and not more than 55 years. Today, 50 male and female volunteers and 5 full time employees staff the department.

Review/preview...

## Membership meeting notes

The **March 11** general membership meeting featured Carol Rudie, docent from the Russian Art Museum of Minneapolis. Ms. Rudie made a very professional presentation about the history of the Russian Art Museum, the only Russian Art Museum in North America, its building renovations, on-going art displays and the history behind those displays. Thirty-three members and guests enjoyed the program.

The **May 13** general membership meeting program will feature Gedney Tuttle who will present information from his book on the history of the Gedney Pickle Company of Chaska.

The **September 9** program

will bring back Society member Doug Ohman of Pioneer Photography who will show photos from his latest book, "Historic Libraries of Minnesota".

### Welcome our New members

**Gene and June Blanski**, 5800 St. Croix Avenue, C330, Golden Valley, MN 55422

**Homer and Virginia Hauke**, 600 Utah Avenue South, Golden Valley, MN 55426



## Cleanup of Church yard on April 17

Once again it is time to call for volunteers to help clean up the winter residue on the Historic Church yard. The time for this fun activity is Saturday, April 17, from 9 until noon. Bring work gloves, lawn rakes, leaf blowers, pruning shears and some ambition for outdoor activity. Your hosts for the event will be our grounds keepers, Jerry Breth, Betty Crews, Nancy Azzam and Cathy Waldhauser. If we are lucky, we will have a break for coffee and treats from George and Jane Martinsen. See you there!

## Volunteers needed for GV Days, May 22

The Society will again participate in the Golden Valley Festival with some "vv's" (vintage vehicles) in the parade and our tent in the City Hall parking lot with historical displays. We need volunteers to staff the tent booth in two-hour shifts running from 9:30 to about 3:00. If you can help out, call or email Secretary Don Anderson at 763-588-8578 or maryanddon3030@aol.com. Newer members are usually paired with veteran Society members.

Our sympathy goes to the families of Dean Van Horn and Dorrine Johnson who passed away recently.

Get well wishes to Edward Jordan who fell and broke a hip.