



# The Little White Paper

The Monthly Newsletter of the Golden Valley Historical Society

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Historic Church and Museum: 6731 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley

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Thursday, April 14, 7 p.m. program...

## Panel to discuss history of racial tolerance in GV

Christopher Jordan, Chairperson of the Golden Valley Human Rights Commission, Marion Helland, GVHRC Commissioner, will present a program titled, "Linking the Past to the Present," with former mayors Rosemary Thorsen and Mary Anderson, and Gene Sylvestre, former consultant to the GVHRC.

In 1970, Golden Valley faced turmoil like it had never known. Blacks, joined by liberal whites, were charging that the city was, in effect, "closed" to minorities. A new City Council, vowing to make the nearly all-white suburb more racially tolerant, had just been swept into office following an emotional election. An unknown black musician named Oliver Lyle was about to become a cause célèbre for winning a federal civil rights suit that accused Golden Valley's police of "a pattern of prejudice" in arrest-



Christopher Jordan

ing blacks. Golden Valley officials would later acknowledge that one of every five arrests made in the city in 1970 was of a black person – although only 59 of its 24,246 residents were black. The city issued a community-wide newsletter in the 1970's entitled, "It Happened in Golden Valley," which bluntly detailed its past racism.

The Society's general mem-



Marion Helland

bership meeting will be held at the Society's Historic Church at 6731 Golden Valley Road on Thursday, April 14, at 7:00 p.m. It is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served following the program. Come and hear about Golden Valley's past and present.



A Golden Valley  
125th Anniversary  
theme program.

### March review...

## General Mills history draws crowd

The March 10 general membership meeting featured Suzy Goodsell, Manager of Internal Communications and Archives for General Mills, who presented the history of General Mills. Many "ooo's and ah's" were heard from the audience as Ms Goodsell showed pictures of past events and people of General Mills. Interesting facts included that "Betty Crocker" was

not a living person but only a fantastic advertising gimmick, which has lasted for generations. Also, General Mills designed and built a submarine during WW II that is still in operation today, but almost all of its original parts have had to be replaced. The 35 members and guests present enjoyed learning about the history of one of Golden Valley's largest employers.

## Cleanup date is Saturday, April 16

Saturday, April 16, from 9 – noon, volunteers are asked to bring rakes, weed wrenches, saws, leaf blowers, work gloves and trimming shears to help clean-up the Society's historic church yard. Reservations are not needed. Thanks for your help in this semi-annual event.

## **GVHS makes progress toward museum goals**

The Society purchased the oldest church in Golden Valley on July 1, 1997, for the purpose of preserving the building and eventually having a city museum for the display of archival materials. Here is where we have come from up to now:

**1997** – The historic church was connected to the city sewer system – the cost was \$4,000.

**2000** – A handicap accessible ramp was built on the East side of the church. A \$7,500 matching grant was received from the Minnesota Historical Society, which partly funded this project.

**2004** – Two handicap accessible rest rooms were built on the first floor of the historic church and the hallway widened. Matching grant funding was received from the Minnesota Historical Society, which partly paid for this project.

**2005** – A six-inch diameter water line was installed from the building to the street water main as a dedicated water supply for a fire sprinkler system. Funding of this project came from the building restoration funds of the Society.

**2005-2006** – A fire sprinkler system was installed on both floors of the historic church building at a cost of \$26,000. Funding was provided from the building restoration reserves. The system is monitored 24/7 by Gilbert Mechanical Company of Edina at an annual cost of \$450.00 plus the cost of phone lines.

**2008** – The historic church was damaged by a hailstorm, which required the roof shingles to be replaced. This was covered by the Society's insurance policy. Damage to the front stain glass windows was not covered and new window panes were provided by the same Indiana manufacturer that made the original glass in 1882. The cost was covered by the restoration reserve. The first floor chapel area was repainted pro-bono by Classic Home Builders of Elk River, the firm that was hired to replace the roof and repair other storm damage.

**2010** – The Minnesota Historical Society granted the Society \$7,000 of Legacy funds for an Asbestos Contained Floor Tiles Abatement Project in the lower level of the building. The Grant partly paid for the project. The floor tiles were laboratory tested and found to contain enough asbestos to require a HASMAT-licensed company to remove the tiles and underlying mastic to a hazardous waste disposal site. The project cost was \$10,000 and the difference between the grant and cost came from restoration reserves of the Society.

Next planned project: Two bids have been received for drain tile installation along the inside basement walls with a sump pump pit and electric pump to control and manage basement water seepage. The bids run from \$10,000 to \$12,000. It is hoped that 2011 Legacy Funds will again help pay for this project.

The general public has found the historic church a “cool” place to have a small wedding. The Society has hosted 80 weddings during its ownership of the historic church. Rental fees have helped pay for utilities and maintenance of the facility.

## **Society looking for 75-year residents of Golden Valley**

Committee members Nancy Azzam, Betty Crews, Leone Johnson, Jerry Breth and Don Anderson are trying to find individuals who have resided in Golden Valley for 75 years or more, to invite them to an honoree's luncheon on September 7 at the Golden Valley Golf and Country Club. Please contact Nancy Azzam via email (Shazzam45@aol.com) or Don Anderson, 763-588-8578, with your nominee's name. Honored individuals will also be invited to bring a guest to the luncheon.

## **Fellman donates three artifacts to Society collection**

David Fellman of St. Croix Circle, Golden Valley, has donated three artifacts: A Golden Valley plat map circa 1898 from Hennepin County, which shows the names of the land owners and the acreage owned; An original map of Minneapolis Park from 1923, showing contemplated acquisitions West of Glenwood Park and Sunset Hill; and a 14"x22" poster for the Eleventh Annual Golden Valley Picnic at Schuller's Grove, on Sunday, August 12th at 1:00 (No year was given). Thank you David Fellman for thinking of the Historical Society for your donations.

The Spirit of Hope United Methodist Church has donated an oak Memorial Display case, with a glass top, which was used to display memorial programs for deceased church members. Thanks to The Spirit of Hope Church.