



# The Little White Paper

The Monthly Newsletter of the Golden Valley Historical Society  
Mailing Address: 7800 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, Minnesota 55427  
Historic Church and Museum: 6731 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley

June, 2016

Don Anderson, Editor

763-588-8578;

email: maryanddon3030@aol.com

## **SOCIETY'S MONTHLY GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS ARE SUSPENDED UNTIL SEPTEMBER 8TH, 2016.**

The Society's by-laws dictate that the general membership meetings are suspended during the months of June, July and August. The annual meeting will be held on Thursday, September 8th at 7:00 p.m. at the historic church. At this meeting elections to the board of directors will be held.

The program presentation will be by Steve Marking on the history of the logging industry on the Mississippi River. This is a fascinating talk and power point about how millions of logs were brought down the Mississippi on lumber rafts by brave and daring men. This was a boom and bust era that saw the beginning of log rafting, the introduction of steamboats and the end of the beautiful white pine forests, all in the span of one man's lifetime.

## **ACCESSIONS:**

As sometime happens, people drop off items at the historic church or at the reception desk at the Golden Valley City Hall, without giving us any information about the items or their names. A person dropped off at City Hall several newspaper clippings about the Golden Valley queen candidates.

## **THANKS TO THE GOLDEN VALLEY GARDEN CLUB:**

The Golden Valley Garden Club has again purchased flowers to plant in the historic church garden area, and it looks like the weather is going to cooperate. Let the planting begin!

Also, thanks to the Golden Valley Golf and Country Club for approving their grounds keepers to cut the grass at the historic church and do the snow plowing of the parking lot, sidewalk and driveway. In return, their employee's cars can park in the historic church parking lot when the GVGCC has an over-flow of guest's cars.

## **THE SOCIETY WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE FIRST ANNUAL GAY PRIDE FESTIVAL WITH A BOOTH:**

The first annual Gay Pride Festival is being organized and will be held at Brookview Park on Sunday, June 12th, from noon to 4:00 p.m. The Society board requested the exclusive use of the small picnic shelter for the canopy, displays, and second generation Golden Valley street signs. President Ken Huber is checking his schedule to see if he is available to bring his kids collection of antique riding toys for the little ones to enjoy riding around the concrete floor of the shelter.

## **IN REVIEW:**

On May 12th Kirsten Boehne spoke about her experience with a private collection of prehistoric artifacts that she and her father donated to the Science Museum of Minnesota. The artifacts were from a site in southwestern Minnesota where she grew up. She, just the day before her presentation, finished inventorying the artifacts at the Science Museum as a volunteer, some 8,500 artifact items. She was impressed by the Society's bison skull and horns that was a donation to the Society by Ralph and Sharon Schulz. Boehne said that bison horns were prevalent in her growing up territory but the full skull and horns were not. Very interesting story about harvesting artifacts.

## **VOLUNTEERS MAKE QUICK WORK IN CLEANING UP THE HISTORIC CHURCH YARD:**

On Saturday, April 30th, a group of members armed with leaf rakes, leaf blowers, trimming shears and canvas work gloves worked in cleaning up the debris from the winter and hauled tree branches to the curb for the city pickup. The helpful members were: Ken Huber, Linda Loomis, Jim Nielsen, Larry Fonnest, Jacob Breth, Tina Breth and Justin Breth. Thank you all for your help.

# MEMORIES OF GOLDEN VALLEY BY FRED WANDERSEE WRITTEN DOWN IN JUNE, 1982

(Fred Wandersee was president of the Golden Valley Historical Society in 1977 -1983; 1985-1986; and 1989-1993.)

A few histories of Golden Valley have already been written and certainly other professional and amateur authors will continue to write their own version of how and when the early pioneers came here and settled in this farming community.

Readers of these histories are prone to say, "Golden Valley doesn't have a history."

What they really mean, "There were no great events or even an Indian battle, and if there had been a notorious criminal, how could his picture be posted when there was no post office in the village? (ED. Note: The early settlers had to travel to the post office in Robbinsdale for their mail.)

The first settlers were probably squatters who illegally entered the area, built a shack, and eked out a living on a small farm. The Village of St. Anthony was near enough to provide a market where farm produce could be traded for manufactured goods.

Lands west of the Mississippi River were opened for legitimate settlers after the Indian treaties of 1851. On July 23, 1851, Wahpeton and Sisseton bands of the upper Sioux ceded their lands at Traverse de Sioux. On August 5, the Mdewakanton and Wahpetute bands of the lower Sioux ceded their lands at Mendota. Most of the land west of the Mississippi was to be opened in four years.

White settlers did not wait four years. In September of 1852, the Billy Jones and John Gearty families claimed land in the vicinity of Noble Avenue. The land was claimed under the

required that settlers pay for their claim after it was surveyed by government surveyors. The usual price was \$1.25 per acre.

Within a couple of years other families followed the Jones and Geartys. Roads and lakes were named after many of these people, but because village councils and planners were practical minded, many picturesque names were dropped.

In changing these names much of the historical lore was lost. How are you wisely going to tell your grandchild how Florida Avenue or Rhode Island Avenue got its name. But couldn't you make an interesting story about an old road called Nauman's Cartway, a discarded name that was once used in neighboring Plymouth. Of course, it was appropriate to name a lake after Theodore Wirth. Long ago it was Keegans Lake.

Let's concede that Golden Valley does not have an exciting history but it does have a creek. Bassett Creek drains an area that extends to the west and north of Medicine Lake and flows out of the south end of the lake. It passes through a portion of Plymouth and enters Golden Valley between Olson Highway and Wayzata Boulevard. From here it meanders through Golden Valley and finally enters Minneapolis in the vicinity of Glenwood Avenue. From its source to the point where it disappears into a sewer, it has dropped approximately 75 feet. Its underground course to the Mississippi has long been hidden from view.

The creek was named after Joel B. Bassett who with several

partners built a lumber mill and pail factory at the junction of the creek and the Mississippi River. It was built in 1856 and was the first private mill on the west side of the river. Mr. Bassett built his home near the mill and was active in lumbering and community development throughout his life.

Indian lore mentions trails on the creek and places where they pole vaulted across. A ferry was operated by Sweeneys near the present Golden Valley Road. Nineteenth Avenue passed through typical Minnesota farming country. "The Point" in Golden Valley was the junction of Nineteenth and Sixth Avenues North. Hub Schuller had a tavern on that point until the late 1920's. A three sided stable on the north side of the Point provided shelter for horses.

West of Schullers the old village hall, the Oren Lumber Yard, the Lionstone Store, the blacksmith shop were the focal point of village activities.

Eloise Butler Park did not exist as it does today, but there was a path through the wooded hills. A sign on the path said, "FOR PEDESTRIANS ONLY". As elementary age school kids, we did not know what pedestrian meant, but my friend said, "My folks are Presbyterians. Lets ride it anyway."

## WELCOMENEWMEMBERS:

Pamela London and Delores Oehler, 15700 Rockford Road, #1-108, Plymouth, MN 55446. Pamela served on the Society's board of directors some years ago. Welcome back.