



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

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Don Anderson, Editor

763-588-8578;

email: maryanddon3030@aol.com

FABULOUS HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHER TO PRESENT HIS LATEST CREATION AT THE JANUARY GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:



DOUG OHMAN

“Minnesota from the Road – part #1 – Travel with photographer/ storyteller Doug

Ohman as he photographs many of Minnesota’s most interesting landmarks and icons. Doug will share the stories of how these landmarks became so famous. His pictures and stories will be sure to entertain and bring new interest in more road trips around our great state. (Part #1 will focus on Northern Mn.) The presentation will be on January 11, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. at the Society’s historic church at 6731 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, MN.

UP-COMING PROGRAMS

50 years ago the Minnesota State Legislature created the Metro Council which is the appointed body by the Minnesota Governors that is in charge of the 7 county metro area’s sewage, light rail transportation, metro mobility transportation, development with in cities, and more. At the Thursday, February 8, 2018, there will be a joint meeting of the Golden Valley Historical Society and the Golden Valley League of Women Voters. 7:00 p.m. at the Historic Church. The presenter

will be Pahoua Hoffman, Interim Executive Director of the Citizen’s League.

THANK YOU BEST WISHES FLORAL (Frank Bohlander and Mark Hall) for donating two winter floral arrangements for the flower pots in front of the Society’s historic church. Best Wishes Floral is located at 689 Winnetka Avenue North, Golden Valley. They are GVHS members.

YEAR END STATS ABOUT THE GOLDEN VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY:

Here is a partial review of the Golden Valley Historical Society as of the end of the Society’s fiscal year August 31, 2017:

Number of members; 170; New individual and family members in the fiscal year – 9; In-kind donations by members and friends of the Society of goods, time and volunteer talent dollar value - \$24,506.50; Number of general membership meetings – 8; Number of weddings held in the historic church – 10; Average wedding attendance – 52; Number of meetings of the Board of Director’s 11; Secretary Don Anderson wrote 12 issues of the Society’s newsletter which were published by volunteer Chuyue Zhang, a student at the University of Wisconsin Stout; The Society’s website was managed by volunteer Da Yin, graduate student from the University of Wisconsin Stout, now residing in California; Current Society Board of Directors are: Ken Huber, president; Steve Schmidgall, vice president; Don Anderson, secretary; David Kuball, treasurer; directors: Nancy Azzam; Jenny Brookings; Nancy Kochenderfer;

GOLDEN VALLEY FIREMEN STARTED OUT AS AIR RAID WARDENS AFTER PEARL HARBOR:

Credit for spearheading the initial organization is generally given to Fletcher Olson, owner of the local lumber yard that was located on the NE corner of Winnetka and 6th Avenue North (now Golden Valley Road). After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the U.S. entered into WW II, Civil Defense was organized nationally. Fletcher Olson was named as local director and along with George Homberger, village constable, recruited over 40 volunteers to serve as air raid wardens and firemen.

As Civil Defense began to take shape, blackout drills were held. It was necessary to organize and equip an effective fire department quickly since until

that time, Golden Valley's only equipment consisted of several fire extinguishers that were kept in the basement of the old village hall, next to the lumber yard. 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.

The ordinance creating the department, dated March 2, 1943, provided for a "Chief engineer, two assistant engineers and as many firemen of the age of 21 years and not more than 55 years at the time of their election to the

membership, with the minimum number to be 20." Although the goal was a 30- member department, the number of active firemen often dropped to 12 or 15. Many men signed up, but when they found out how much time and work were involved, they soon dropped out. Of the original charter members only 3 remained until retirement: Neal Rydmark served 23 years, Harvey Fahrendorff served 25 years, and Gene Thotland served 33 years. Ernest Reiss served as assistant chief for 23 of his 24 years of service. (Source: Golden Valley, MN 1886-1986, published by the Golden Valley Historical Society.)

PROJECTS ON PARADE: AN OVERVIEW FOR 2018: By Crystal Boyd, Chairperson of the GVHS Museum Development Committee:

Building an exhibit...
Cataloging collections...
Designing a website...Digitizing photos...These are all happening at GVHS in 2018!

GVHS is finding new ways to pursue its mission "to discover, preserve, and disseminate historical knowledge about Golden Valley, Minnesota." This year, GVHS is working on five main projects. They include three grant-funded projects totaling more than \$170,000. *These projects have in part been financed with funds provided by the State of Minnesota through the Minnesota Historical Society from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.*

First, GVHS continues working on its permanent museum exhibit. The final phase – fabrication – is underway, and the exhibit will open in spring, 2018. Many thanks to Museology Museum Services for bringing the exhibit to life. Second, GVHS is updating its collections. We're working with contractor Dr. Christina Chang to catalog 557 three-dimensional objects before March, 2018. Contractor Barbara Bezat will catalog all the archives by December, 2018. Both projects built on the foundation laid last year when we conducted a collections inventory.

Finally, GVHS is improving its online presence. The Board of Directors has approved funds to design a new website, and GVHS is partnering with the GV Fire Department (GVFD) to digitalize photos from our archives. We look forward to celebrating the GVFD's 75th anniversary this year. If you have any questions, please contact project manager Crystal Boyd at crystal.boyd@colorado.edu. Thank you for your support and look forward to sharing this exciting year with you.