



Heritage Happenings

Newsletter of the Woodbury Heritage Society



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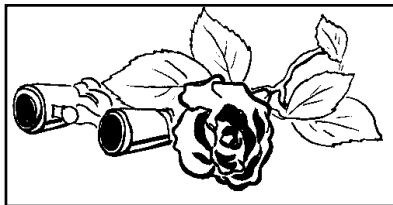
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What is the Future of the Past?

The Miller barn has been saved and restored to its past glory, and is the centerpiece of the new Valley Creek Park. The Heritage House, which has long been delighting guests and teaching history in Marsh Creek Park, has been refurbished. It would seem that our work is done, right?

Well, the Woodbury Heritage Society doesn't think so. We believe that the better our society understands the past, the better we can make the future. So we have been making plans for the Future of the Past.

The pandemic delayed a lot of projects, and disrupted our lives, and, to an extent, is still doing so. But we want to move forward and continue to illuminate the history of Woodbury. And we could use help in doing so.

We have been working on our future plans, which include things like historical signage for the trails in the Valley Creek Park, our research library at the Pubic Works building, continuing our historic displays, and expanding our teaching efforts.

We are looking for two or three new members for our board of directors to help us diversify our outlook and achieve new goals. If you are interested in being a board member, please contact us (see our contact information on the left).

We would also welcome suggestions of ways we could improve our city and society. Do you know any historic sites that might be preserved? Do you have any items from the past that might enhance our educational displays? Perhaps your neighbor has an old artifact in their yard or garage that they might donate?

We would also welcome volunteers to help with projects, even if you don't want to be a board member. Help us preserve our past and enhance our future!

New Board of Directors Members Wanted!

The Woodbury Heritage Society is seeking interested individuals for our Board of Directors. The Board of Directors governs the nonprofit organization and makes decisions regarding its future. They have the responsibility of ensuring all the activities that take place will benefit the organization in some way.

Job Description for a Board Member:

- Responsible for faithful observance of the organization's mission, vision, and values.
- Attend the monthly board meeting (usually 1-1/2 hours) to discuss and vote on issues pertaining to the organization.
- Provide guidance to the organization's culture, effectiveness, and financial sustainability.
- Serve as ambassadors and advocates for the Woodbury Heritage Society.

Board Members serve a three-year term.

Memberships Needed!

Due to Covid and the changes to many of our routines, we find our membership is down. Membership fees help to pay our operating expenses and help us maintain the Heritage House and the Miller Barn. Many exciting things will be happening through the rest of this year and in 2023, and we would love to have you be a part of our organization as we preserve and promote the history of Woodbury! Contact Rick Osborn at sandyrick44@gmail.com or mail in the form at the end of this newsletter. Thank you for your support!

Website Update

We are still working to improve our website. You should now be able to use the website to become a member or renew your membership. We hope this will make it easier to interact with the WHS, and improve your experience.

And Then There was Light!

By Laura W. Berglund
(copyright January 2022)

Laura Berglund is a former Afton area resident who writes post-depression stories of her childhood living in rural southern Minnesota. Her husband, Harold, (other than two years in the Army), has spent his entire life in the St. Croix Valley/Afton area, never living more than 12 miles from his birthplace.

It was 1940 when we heard that REA (Rural Electric Association) was coming to our area. We could see big changes coming to the farm but we had no idea how much we would enjoy the privilege of electric service.

We had been given advance notice, so we thought we were ready. My parents had recently had an anniversary and were given a lamp and a toaster (those are the only appliances I remember; they may have received more). We were not, however, prepared for the changes our home was about to experience.

Huge trucks came into the farm yard, each carrying two electricians and their equipment. They had ladders, ropes, coils of wire, etc. Two workmen came to the house; two went to the barn and outbuildings. They cut holes in walls and strung the wire through the holes, hiding them from view. The holes were covered with "cover plates." One type of cover plate was for the switch and the other for electrical outlets. The men worked quickly - obviously they had done this type of work before.

I was a kid and had nothing better to do, so I watched the men at their work. They were busy and efficient and did not seem to mind that a kid was watching what they were doing. They brought their lunch in a lunch pail and sat on the porch steps to eat.

When they finally finished, they gave instructions to my mom as to how to operate the switches and outlets. My sisters and I listened in on the lesson. When they left, we were all over the place checking light switches, trying the toaster and the lamp. We even made a trip to the barn to see what had happened there.

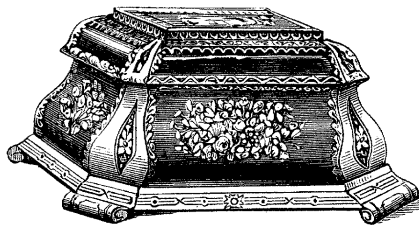
Now began the job of gradually buying appliances and slowly learning to use them. My sister, Dorothy, learned early on not to put her finger into the light socket of the lamp. She felt quite a jolt so we all got a lecture about what "not to do."

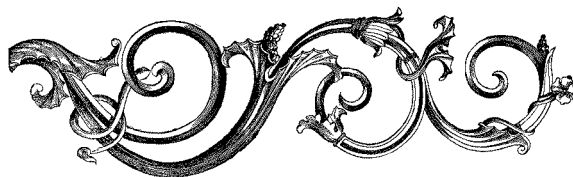
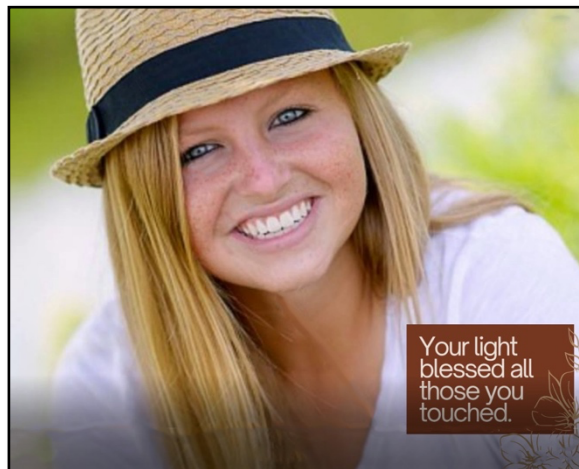
It took some time before we made complete use of electrical service because we did not have all the appliances. My mother insisted that she would very much like to have a refrigerator, so dad bought her one. It was white and sat between the kitchen windows where it was right at home. It was called a Frigidaire and I loved to sit by it and look inside when someone opened the door to get something out or put something in. No longer did we need to have Uncle go to the windmill for the butter or the milk, etc., where they were stored inside the well. Most of our neighbors had an ice box to do the work of cooling the food, but we never had one.

No longer did we need to carry lamps from room to room to light the way. Now we had only to flick a switch on the wall and there was light. We learned how to use the outlets for the lamp and toaster and looked forward to having more appliances in the home. Ceiling lights in the barn were a wonder and such a relief not to have the fear of fire from lanterns.

There were switches in all the outbuildings, as well. In addition, there was a yard light at the top of a pole in the center of the farm yard. It had two enclosed lamps, each with the ability to throw light over the entire house and barn yards. It was amazing!

Dad was smiling, mom was happy and the entire family was learning what a great blessing electricity had brought to our lives. There were some things we missed, like the flicker of the lamp light or the soft glow from the lantern in Dad's hand as he walked to the barn (that vision lives with me always). But the convenience was a big plus to all of us.





In Memoriam

We would like to honor two very special people in the life of Bill Schrankler and the many who knew and loved them. Bill was a longtime Vice-President of Woodbury Heritage Society. He currently serves as our Board emeritus. During the past two-months, Bill's beloved wife Mary and his granddaughter

Laura passed away. Laura left us too early, an unfortunate victim of COVID.

Mary Schrankler was a teacher and administrator in education. She had a love of gardening, travel, reading books and spending precious time creating lasting memories doing arts and crafts with her grandchildren. Family was the most important thing in Mary's life. She and Bill made a point of gathering the family each summer at resorts in northern Minnesota. She always said she wanted the cousins to really know each other, and she accomplished that goal.

Mary was a great supporter and beloved friend of the Woodbury Heritage Society. Over the years she attended many functions of the society with Bill.

We would also like to share part of Bill's granddaughter beautiful eulogy by Molly Haus, her dear friend that celebrates her life:

"I was lucky enough to become friends with Laura in high school and then continued to be college roommates at UMD with her for all four years. Laura was my best friend, as she was to many. My favorite thing about Laura is the way that she loved people. You knew she loved you just by the way she looked at you, smiled her big, beautiful smile, and laughed with you.

Laura used to share stories of her family and all the things they did together — that is what the Schrankler's call "forced family fun" — even though, by the way Laura talked about it, you knew there was no forcing necessary for her to love being able to spend time with her family — whether it was at the lake, in Lutsen or just at the Schrankler family home.

Laura touched so many lives and she was always there for anyone in need. She never spoke poorly of anyone and was always the first to find the best qualities in people. Her love for adventure was strong and she was never afraid to go somewhere new, meet someone new, or try something new. I will always admire Laura for her kindness, faith, and the love she radiated every single day in everything that she did. Laura made me want to be a better person. She led by example and not explanation and I cannot express how thankful I am to have had Laura as a best friend and confidant over the years."

If you know Bill, please let him know you are thinking of him.

Miller Barn Dedication

On August 16, Woodbury's city council members, mayor, the WHS Board of Directors, and community members attended the dedication of the Miller Barn.

The evening additionally included a special tribute to Bill Schrankler, our former Vice-President, who for over five years diligently worked with many organizations and the city to acquire what was needed to save and restore our beloved Miller barn. Bill was unaware that he was to be honored that night. His family also attended the event which was a wonderful surprise for Bill!

The following text is from the newly installed plaque in front of the barn:

Text of the Plaque in Front of the Miller Barn:

"The Miller barn, located in Valley Creek Park, was built in 1921-22. The barn, originally built by August Miller, is a prime example of the early 20th century barns that were an integral part of the agricultural heritage in Woodbury and greater Minnesota. The Miller barn is distinct in its architectural expression, combining a gambrel, or "Dutch," roof and a "bank style," which is when the barn is built into a hill and the upper and lower floors can be accessed at ground level.

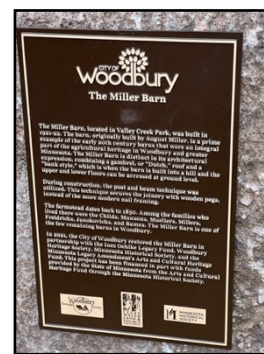
During construction, the post and beam technique was utilized. This technique secures the joinery with wooden pegs, instead of the more modern nail framing.

The farmstead dates back to 1850. Among the families who lived there were the Childs, Munsons, Muellers, Millers, Freidrichs, Janokovics, and Bames. The Miller Barn is one of the few remaining barns in Woodbury.

In 2021 the City of Woodbury restored the Miller Barn in partnership with the Inez Oehlke Legacy Fund, Woodbury Heritage Society, Minnesota Historical Society, and the Minnesota Legacy Amendment's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. This project has been financed in part with funds provided by the State of Minnesota from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the Minnesota Historical Society.



**Bill Schrankler celebrates with
Wayne Schilling**

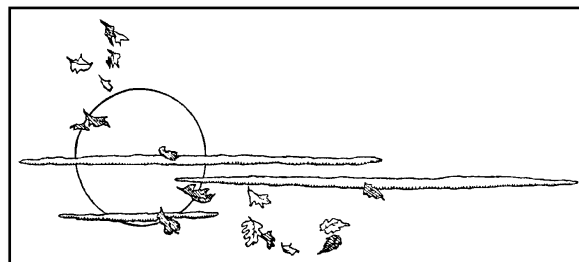


The Miller Barn Plaque

Valley View Park

The new Valley View park, located on the corner of Settler's Ridge Road and Valley Creek Road, has an amazing trail system, a pleasure to walk or to ride a bicycle on. In 2023, Woodbury Heritage Society will design historical plaques with QR codes to be placed along the route to educate visitors about the park and the history of Woodbury. We invite you to experience the trail and the fun playground for the children!

Some pictures of the new park and playground:



Exciting Happenings

The Woodbury Heritage Society had a delightful exhibit at the Washington County Historical Society located in Stillwater. This week our display has been moved to the R.H. Stafford Library at 8595 Central Park Place, Woodbury.



In partnership with the library, throughout the year our display will be swapped for different historical items and their stories. Stop by to visit this wonderful addition to the library!



The team that moved the exhibit from The Washington County History Center. Mission accomplished, thanks team! Left to right: Emily Krawczewski., Bob Flohr, Brent Peterson, Steve Hallis and Wayne Schilling.

Woodbury Days

We would like to thank everyone who attended the annual Woodbury Days celebration, and especially those who visited us or helped us man the booth.



A Glance to the Past – Turn Of the Century

Life in Woodbury – submitted by Joyce Flynn. Excerpt taken from “Woodbury: A Past To Remember” by the Woodbury Heritage Society.

In 1916 the people of Woodbury witnessed three eclipses of the sun, and one of the moon. The moon passed across the sun on February 9, 1916, at approximately 8:30 in the morning. Near total darkness lasted only a few moments.

The Woodbury band was formed about 1912. Woodbury has always enjoyed music; and this band was for enjoyment. The band did their practicing in Salem’s parochial school, but in the winter they met at various homes. It disbanded around the year 1918.



Weddings were an excitement all through the years. Many customs prevailed, but probably the one that started around the turn of the century was the charivari. Most receptions were held at the bride’s home; and after 1950 when receptions were often in the church or in halls, the charivari was discarded. First it included only men but later women went too. A charivari consisted of making enough noise so the bride and groom would appear and pay the captain. This could be with cake and ice-cream, money, or beer.

Noise makers included such things as cow bells, hammering on a circular saw or, in later years, automobile horns. Woodbury had many marriages where two of one family would marry two of another family. There were even marriages of three in a family marrying three in another family. Gone is the old German tradition of giving a daughter a cow when she married (this practice was discarded in the early 1920s).

Journey's End

I used to yearn for reckless roads
and vistas clad in sky.
I used to bear my many loads
and never wonder why.

Once I savored city lights —
the hosts and the romance.
I loved the monumental sights,
the music and the dance.

But now I seek my hearth and home,
for peace is my desire.
My dogs, a blanket, and a tome
beside a friendly fire.

Carl James Anderson

Help us Preserve our Heritage!

The Woodbury Heritage Society will gladly accept donations to help us preserve our history. We have agreed to help the city with the maintenance costs of the Miller Barn after it has been restored.

We would really appreciate your assistance!

Volunteers Needed!

The Woodbury Heritage Society is looking for volunteers for three positions:

Office Worker: We need a person to open our research library for a short time at least once a week.

Events Committee Person: The events committee needs help with fundraising and event planning. For more detailed information contact Joyce at: joyce_flynn@msn.com.

Non-garden Landscaper: Maintain the lawn and flowers around the Heritage House. Knowledge of tradition flowers would be a plus.

How is one to say exactly where history begins or ends? It is all slow oscillations, curves, and waves which take so long to reveal themselves... like watching a tree grow.

— Gretel Ehrlich, "Heart Mountain" (1988)

Annual Meeting

We are still working on plans for the next annual meeting. If it occurs before the December issue, we will notify the membership via email.

A History of Powers Lake

By Larry Morgan

(The first section of this history was published in our June 2021 issue, the second in our September issue, the third in our December issue, the fourth in our March, 2022 issue, and the fifth in our June, 2022 issue). This is the final section of the article.

Amenities on the property included a tennis court; a 9-hole, par-3 golf course; a log home; and a ski hill with tow rope. The barn, which was built by the previous owner as a milking barn, was used to house the family's riding horses.

The Kindy Mansion was sold to a Mr. Jim Hauge in 1970. He transformed the home into a psychic fitness center focusing on yoga and other physical, mental and spiritual practices which originated in ancient India. The center was called Harmony Hills. Mr. Hauge was quite pleased to have a world renowned Indian yogi, Swami Rama, visit Harmony Hills. Swami Rama gave it a glowing report. The center was featured in a Saint Paul Pioneer Press article on Sunday May 1, 1970.

Mr. Hauge's venture into the study and application of psychic activities and phenomena failed and in 1977 it was purchased by The Jane Dickman Center-Granville and used as a chemical dependency treatment center for women age 16 and older. This use continued until the year 1996 at which time the mansion was demolished and the 3.8 acres it sat upon were made available for the construction of five residences.



The LeVin home, which was located just to the west of the Kindy Mansion, was built in 1957. It was also designed and built by Herb Bloomberg.



Betty LeVin, the lady of the house, was a personal friend of Norma Kindy and one of the first female professional photographers to work for the St. Paul Pioneer Press. Betty LeVin was also the official photographer of the Chanhassen Dinner Theater for many years. Photographs of many stars including Arnold Shwarzenegger, Johnathan Winters and Ray Bolger (star of the Wizard of Oz) were taken by Betty during her career.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE POWERS LAKE PROPERTY

The Powers Lake property was developed by Mr. Edward Lockner of Lockner and Associates. After doing some review of the property and the lake, Mr. Lockner made an offer of \$130,000 to Mr. Hauge for 214 acres (The 219.6 acre parcel less the properties occupied by the Kindy Mansion and the property occupied by the LeVin family.) The offer was accepted.

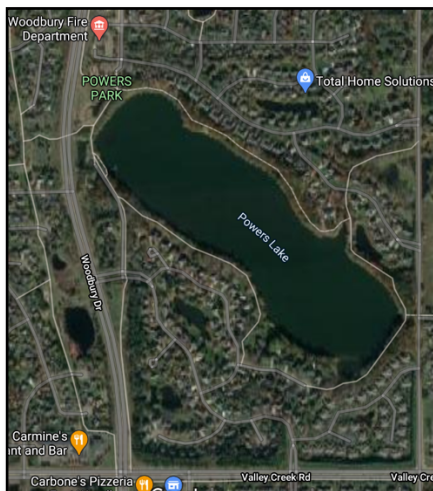
Ed's first activities in the development were to team up with the firm of Contractor Property Developers Company of Brooklyn Park and submit a request for a Planned Unit Development (PUD)

to the City of Woodbury Planning Department. That request was submitted on April 27, 1994 (See application on the following page). The 214 acre property was to contain three components: 135 acres of housing, 60 acres of lake and 19 acres of park land. The City of Woodbury Planning Department spelled out the City's requirements for the project.

Unlike many properties, the Powers Lake property was torrens property. The lake bed was owned by the Mr. Lockner not by the State of Minnesota as is usually the case here in Minnesota. Mr. Lockner met with then Director of Planning, Mr. Dwight Picha. The City of Woodbury has for many years put great emphasis on preserving the natural character of the City. Hence, the request was made for Ed to deed the 60 acre lake and a swath of land extending out from the lakeshore an average of 75 feet to the City of Woodbury for public land.

That was a tough request for Ed to comply with and some heated discussions ensued. Eventually, Ed realized it was the City's policy that applied to all developments and he did indeed comply. The City of Woodbury now controls the lake and the city outlots surrounding it.

Engineering plans for the streets, sewers and storm water ponding basins were prepared by the civil engineering firm of Dahlgren Shardlow.



POWER'S LAKE RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION –
Lockner and Associates sold lots to contractors interested in the development. The first home in the development was completed in 1996. The lot containing the barn and caretakers residence was cleared by a barn restoration company who dismantled the barn and erected it on another property. Today the Powers Lake development includes a total of 170 single family homes ranging in value from \$700,000 to \$1,500,000 and 60 townhomes ranging in value from \$350,000 to \$420,000.



8301 Valley Creek Road
Woodbury, MN 55125

Woodbury Heritage Society

2022 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

(Please print)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ Email _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY (Please check appropriate line)

_____ \$30 per individual (Annual Dues for the Calendar Year)

_____ \$35 per household

_____ \$1000 lifetime membership

_____ Additional Gift

Areas of interest: _____

Donations are tax deductible. Send application & check or money order to:

Woodbury Heritage Society
Rick Osborn, Membership Chair
City Hall
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