

# Heritage Happenings

Woodbury Heritage Society

Volume 26 No. 4 Spring 2009



Annual Meeting  
April 16th

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## Annual Meeting Announced: Featured Speaker-Jean Garbe Brown

The annual members meeting will be held at half past six in the evening on Thursday, April 16th. The site of the meeting will be the Salem Lutheran Church. The church is located at 7825 Bailey Road, just west of the round-a-bout intersection of Radio Drive and Bailey Road.

The evening activities will

include a short business meeting. The agenda includes the annual reports of the secretary and treasurer. This portion of the meeting will conclude with the election of the society's officers and board members.

The highlight of the evening

*(continued on page 2)*



The Paul Garbe farmstead, located east of Woodlane Drive and north of Bailey Road. The house still stands. (circa 1950) Photo courtesy of Evelyn Garbe and daughter Bette Garbe Hellerud.



*Annual Members Meeting (cont'd)*

will be a presentation by Jean Garbe Brown entitled "The Garbes of Woodbury." Jean will trace her family's roots and contributions to the history of Woodbury. Her presentation will include numerous pictures of the Garbe family and farm.

This is a must see for all who want to learn about and preserve the heritage of our city.

Just to whet your appetite for the program, a few more Garbe family photos are included below.



Garbe farmstead with two "lawnmowers."

(undated photo courtesy of Wayne Schilling)

Ben and Louise Garbe relaxing on the front porch

(circa. 1910)

(photo courtesy of Wayne Schilling)



Father Ben Garbe with wife Louise and sons Paul and Bob

(circa. 1913)

(photo courtesy of Wayne Schilling)

*Heritage Happenings* is distributed quarterly by the Woodbury Heritage Society

President -John Seemann  
Vice President-Bud Urtel  
Secretary-Ruth Duncan  
Treasurer-Richard Pribnow

Special thanks to Kathryn Ho for proofreading the *Heritage Happenings*. It is with her help that this issue is minus many errors.

*Heritage Happenings* is edited and published by Bill Schrankler.

Contributions from members and other interested parties are welcomed. Contact Bill at 651.738.1836 or email: [bschrankler@comcast.net](mailto:bschrankler@comcast.net). Email or snail mail is preferred in the interest of accuracy.

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*So Many Bales*  
Alex Amble Gravdahl  
Photo Contest Winner



# We Need You!

Dear Woodbury Heritage Society Members,

We are not trying to recruit you for the armed services. But we do your help and support to continue and enhance the work of the Heritage Society. The Society has an election for Board members coming up at the annual meeting in April.

The Board consists of eleven members and we will be electing four this year. We have had two retirements this time around. Bud Urtel and Earl Rath have decided to step down from the Board so we have an extra special need to invite members to step forward and serve on the Board.

The Board meets on the first Thursday of each month. We spend about 2 ½ hours

reviewing the previous month's activities and looking ahead to plan the future. We are becoming more active in the community; reaching out to schools to visit our House and Garden each Fall, sponsoring an Antique Appraisal event and recently produced a "Barn Calendar" for 2009. We have now partnered with other civic groups in a photo contest, highlighting Woodbury, and this may serve as the basis of future calendars.

We are attracting more members and now must enlist some of these to become active in these various projects. You do not have to be on the Board to be involved in these projects. We need both new Board Members and new volunteers to assist the Board in our mission....to preserve and document Woodbury's history and to help residents of our community learn about Woodbury's early years.

Please seriously think about joining us as a Board member or as a volunteer (or both!). I guarantee that serving in any capacity is both an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Seemann".

John Seemann

President, Woodbury Heritage Society





(Notes from interview with Earl Rath)

When the Rath family talks about “Hangin’ the Green” they are not talking about decorating for St. Patrick’s Day. For them, it is meeting at the Heritage House to decorate their ancestral home for the holiday season. The family gathers on the Saturday after Thanksgiving to festoon the house and grounds with garlands, boughs and wreaths.

Woodbury owes a large thank you to the family for making the corner of Radio Drive and Lake Road a very special spot during

the holidays. It is like a real life Christmas card.

The tradition was started about eight years ago by Elmer Rath when he provided the funds for the decorations. Since then, over thirty descendants of Fredrick and Sophia Rath gather annually at the 1873 house to celebrate their roots. After the decorating chores have been completed the entire clan meets at Champps restaurant for a pre holiday dinner and to catch-up on the family gossip.



### A few of the decorating elves!

Left to right: Bob Duncan,  
Ruth Rath Duncan, Elmer  
Rath, Mary Kay Rath  
Niebuhr, Bob Niebuhr

