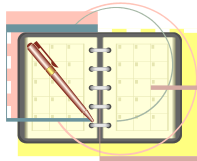


Heritage Happenings



Woodbury Heritage Society

Volume 27 No. 3 Fall 2010

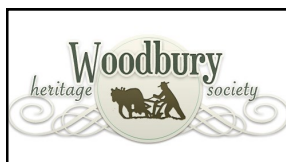


**4th Annual Antique
Appraisal Fair
Sunday Oct. 3rd
Central Park
2—5 pm
Members get 2 free
appraisal**



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Click on the WHS website
for the latest information.

www.woodburyheritage.org

CITY HALL QUASHES PLANS FOR WOODBURY HERITAGE VILLAGE



The Woodbury Heritage Society is admitting that you cannot fight City Hall. After months of planning and attempting to obtain a site for the Heritage Village the WHS board is totally frustrated. The project, was envisioned to include the Bielenberg farm house, Woodbury's first post office, a historic barn, a one room schoolhouse and possibly the Community Club all located on an easily accessible and highly visible site. Except for the

Community Club, the owners of other buildings were most willing to donate them. The two locations favored by board were the Bielenberg Sports Center and the Community Club site.

The city staff and administration were made aware of the project and the desired venues over a year ago. An early meeting was held on January 20, 2010 with Robert Klatt and a representative from Maplewood's Bruentrup Heritage Farm and WHS board members at which time the project and sites were discussed. Klatt listened and agreed to study the proposal. A follow-up meeting was held February 3rd with Dwight Picha. Mr. Picha, in the opinion of the board members who were in attendance, seemed receptive to the proposed sites. Little was heard from City Hall until Mayor Hargis requested a meeting with WHS board members. The meeting with the mayor took place on July 21st. The mayor listened and seemed to be open and supportive of the project and the proposed locations. He suggested that we make a formal presentation to the entire council at their workshop on the evening of September 15th. Based on the encouragement received at that meeting the WHS Board voted to hire a landscape architect to develop drawings to be used at the September 15th meeting. Paul Miller of Paul Miller Designs, Inc. (Northfield, Minnesota) was contracted, at a cost of \$1,500.00 to have the drawings ready by the day of the workshop meeting. Miller, a former Woodbury resident, had done the design work for the Heritage House site.

Then the roof fell in! As Wayne Schilling replied in a letter to the city; "A meeting hastily called by the city held on August 25 attended by City Administrator Clint Gridley, Park and Recreation Director Bob Klatt, and Mayor Hargis as well as Heritage Society Members Wayne Schilling and

President John Seemann informed the Heritage Society that the city had decided that the proposal was not viable and none of the sites were acceptable for development of a heritage village. Heritage society members were told "that if people of Woodbury were interested in history, they could visit another community's heritage parks."

The WHS Board at its meeting on September 2nd notified Paul Miller to stop working on the plans as the city had rejected the proposed sites and offered no other ones. WHS Board Vice President Wayne Schilling attended the September 15th meeting to answer questions. This meeting resulted in no change of position on behalf of the city. The WHS believes that the stance taken of the city is ill-founded and does not reflect the views of Woodbury citizens regarding the need for historical preservation and educating it's children and youth regarding the city's roots.

Time is rapidly running out. Several of the historic buildings will not be available after December 31st and will likely be demolished to make way for "progress."

(see editorial on page 7)

The Great Depression of the 1930's

By Bernice I. Fredin

Use it up -- wear it out.

Make it do -- or do without.

Just a little verse but it sums up how we lived back during the 1930's -- the years of the Great Depression, the Drought Years, the Dust Bowl and the Grasshopper Invasion. Those were difficult years to say the least. I grew to adulthood during that time and I learned to be happy and content with what I had, I knew the difference between 'want' and 'need'. I never went to bed hungry for which I've always been thankful. Don't misunderstand me, we didn't have gourmet meals by any stretch of imagination but mom was an excellent cook and could make even the simplest things seem special.

Almost everything we ate came from the farm, so we always had food. Maybe not always what we would have liked but we didn't starve. Dad had dairy cows

so we had milk and he also raised some hogs for meat. Mom had her laying hens so we had eggs. We always had a large garden from which we got our fruit and vegetables, except for the years when everything dried up from the intense heat and no rain. We canned whatever we could to help us through the long winter months. Mom made all our bread as well as other baked goods. The folks bought flour and sugar in 100 pound bags. Our weekly groceries would have easily fit into one of today's paper grocery bags.



We never wasted or threw away anything that could be used in some way -- foods, clothes or whatever. Leftovers from one meal (if there were any) were always incorporated into something for the next meal. Children's clothes were passed down to the next in line, the youngest sometimes feeling a bit cheated because they never got anything new. Adult clothes were worn, patched and worn some more. A good wool dress, suit or coat that was showing signs of wear, was taken apart, washed and made into a garment for a child. Most women, with a sewing machine, could do amazing things. Any vegetable scraps were fed to the chickens or hogs. If you didn't have either they were buried in the vegetable garden to decay into fertilizer. There were no garage sales or big church sales as we have today -- no one would have had anything to donate. Everything was worn or used till there was nothing left.

There was once a saying I remember, "A farmer



can fix most anything with a piece of baling wire." That may have been a little exaggerated but there still was some truth there. Some folks had more 'fix-it' knowledge than others, but if something broke down, you figured out a way to fix it or get along without it. There was no money to buy a replacement.

The price a farmer got for anything he sold was so little, he was almost giving it away. I remember hearing of one farmer who hired a trucker to haul some hogs to market, but when he got his check and went to pay the trucker, he found his hogs hadn't brought enough to pay for the hauling. I also recall oats selling for eleven cents a bushel.

Mom had her Wyandotte laying hens, which she gave the best possible care. She always hoped there would be enough eggs each week to pay for the groceries. Eggs sold for ten cents a dozen. If there was a little change left over after the groceries were paid, that was her money. She would immediately put it in a cracked cream pitcher that she kept on the top shelf of the kitchen cabinet. That was her rainy day fund -- even just a few pennies would be added -- because it all counted up. There were so many people out of work and looking for a job. There was always a group of men by the creamery and the feed store waiting for a farm truck to drive in. As each truck drove in, they'd hurry to ask the farmer for a job. Some were even willing to work just for their meals. Some would ask for food for their family. Top wages for an experienced farm hand was eleven to twelve dollars a month. Young farm couples who bought their farm during the better days of the 1920's were confident they'd be able to make the payments. But when the depression hit suddenly in October of 1929 everything changed, and after struggling and working hard to save their farm -- they lost everything.

Along with all the hardships of the depression the 1930's also brought years of merciless heat when the temperature was one hundred degrees or higher day after day, and no rain at all. There was very little to harvest, everything just dried up. We also lived through the 'Dust Bowl'. That's when the ground was powder dry from lack of moisture. The wind blew hard every day and it was blowing all the good top soil

Heritage Happenings is distributed quarterly by the Woodbury Heritage Society
President -John Seemann
Vice President-Wayne Schilling
Secretary-Patty Minehart
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. Email or snail mail is preferred in the interest of accuracy.

How many miles

1875 - Woodbury had 30 miles of road, not including Military Rd, Bailey Rd, or Afton Rd

1950 - Woodbury had 37 miles of road

1964 - Woodbury had 57 miles of road

1991 - Woodbury had 142.6 miles of road

2007 - Woodbury has over 464 miles of road

2009-and a roundabout



from the fields. Doors and windows were always kept closed. Folks hung sheets or blankets over the doors and windows trying to catch that fine, gritty dirt that was blowing in through any cracks. We'd wash the oilcloth off on the kitchen table when we'd cleanup after a meal. An hour later you could write your name in the dust on the table again. When we set the table for a meal we'd put the dishes upside down to keep them clean till we were ready to start eating. Food was always served in covered dishes.

The women tried to have their laundry hung on the line by day break so it would be dry before the strong winds and dust started for the day. That was before folks had automatic washers and dryers.

Besides all that, we were invaded by grasshoppers. Anything still green that had survived the heat and drought was immediately devoured by the grasshoppers. When there wasn't anything else for them to eat, they started eating the wood fence posts. Even though there was little or no money for entertainment of any kind, folks still found ways to relax and have a little fun occasionally. People didn't eat out as they do today. In fact, there were no restaurants or eat places in Woodbury then. Young folks may have a soda or malt at the drug store in St. Paul when going to a movie. Occasionally a



Bernice's Home

meal would be shared at a friend's house and later the men would play horseshoes, the kids would take off to the pasture for a ball game, while the women enjoyed a slow walk through the garden and most likely going home with



Fred and Erna's Home

some new flower cuttings. In winter board games and jig saw puzzles were enjoyed. Folks even exchanged jig saw puzzles with neighbors; that way having a new puzzle to put together without any cost.

That's a glimpse of what life was like in the 1930's. Oh, I forgot to mention – there were no credit cards – they hadn't been invented yet. If you didn't have the cash you just didn't buy it. But there was some good to that; you weren't unknowingly running up a huge credit card debt. So much for life during the Great Depression of the 1930's. Don't forget to appreciate the many things we have today and just take for granted.



**Family tree
of Bernice
Fredin**

*Bernice Ida Riemenschneider (Fredin) 1917 –
Born in Woodbury, Minnesota
Married in 1941*

to

*Lowell Gordon Fredin 1920 – 2001
Born in Bach, Minnesota*

Parents

*Erna Alma Rath (Riemenschneider) 1894 –
1983
and*

Fred Carl Riemenschneider 1893 – 1978