

would haul milk and cream, which got the nickname of the Milk Shake.

Just before the Great Depression in the mid-thirties the Toonerville Trolley and many other railroads disappeared. The advancement of planes and cars became the dominant way of transporting people around. The Toonerville Trolley was a one of a kind trolley that is unique today. They is no evidence of anything that was similar to the trolley's design. The trolley had three windows with the middle window being the longest, and the trolley was connected to a box car. Today trains are still used to transport goods and people daily.

The Recruiting Station

By Taylor McMillin

The Recruiting Station in Wasioja was built in 1857 by C.H. Moses. The recruiting station is the only station in Minnesota still standing. It is also one of the three buildings associated with the Civil War in Minnesota. When it was built, it was



Civil War Recruiting Station

intended to be a bank but was used as a law office by James George and S.C Pierce. In April of 1861 the building was converted to a recruiting station. When the Civil War started Minnesota was the only state to send troops to aid and fight in the war. At the outbreak of the war, students at the old school in Wasioja lined up at the building to enlist to fight in the war. From the Wasioja recruiting station there were over 200 recruits ready to fight. Colonel James George led the army to the battle of Chickamauga. When the war ended the use of the recruiting station did not end. It was soon used for a jail, office, storeroom, post office, and a private residence place. The building was bought by the Dodge County Historical Society in the early 1960s. The reason it was purchased was to keep the remaining recruiting station since it is the only recruiting station still standing in Minnesota. This building now is a reminder of the people from Minnesota who fought in the war and sacrificed their lives.

The Devil's Staircase

By Logan Adank

The Devil's Staircase is located in Wasioja, Minnesota in the back of the Wasioja cemetery. As the story goes, the Staircase was got the name from the Native Americans in the area because they believed the Devil lived at the bottom of the enormous gaping hole in the earth. There are

many different stories of things that have happened at or on the Staircase. One story of the Devil's Staircase was an Indian chief had a daughter that mysteriously died and he visited her at her grave every day at sunset until the day he died. He would walk down the Staircase to the Zumbro River below every evening in his buffalo cape and antler headgear which made his silhouette look like the Devil. It is said that you can see the ghost of this chief once a year at the Staircase at dusk. Another story is when a group of Native Americans were chased to a small cliff by the Devil's Staircase by federal soldiers. The soldiers forced the Native Americans to jump off the cliff or be shot so the Indians jumped and were never seen again. If you go to the back of the cemetery near the Staircase it is said that you can see a large black abyss in the water which is rumored to be the entrance to hell, known as the Devil's Staircase. These are just two examples of the endless stories of the rich history of the one and only Devil's Staircase. Go out to Wasioja and visit the Staircase, you won't regret it! Or, will you?

Civil War Days 2013

By Ryan King

The goal of the group called the "Friends of Wasioja" is to provide an educational, entertaining, historical, and fundraising event featuring the Dodge County and Wasioja Townships. The names of these members are Don Smith, Sandy Gochbauer, and Tom Jensch.

Wasioja is full of rich Civil War history. Minnesota was one of the first states to send troops for the Union and the second group sent from Minnesota was recruited from Wasioja. This group was called the Second Minnesota. There were 68 men who served in this group, most of which were students at the local seminary. From this recruiting station, there were over 200 recruits sent into battle. A local memorial called the Dodge County Civil War Veterans Memorial was constructed in 2010 honoring the men from Wasioja who served in the war.



Fife and Drum Corps at Civil Wars Days 2011

This history, along with it being the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War, led the "Friends of Wasioja" to create a three day event called the Wasioja Civil War Days. It was held from June 24th to the 26th on a total of 36 acres in Wasioja, Minnesota. These members with their hard work and money sponsored the event. They even constructed a house that was modeled after the McLean House where General Robert E. Lee signed the surrender of the Confederacy to General Ulysses S. Grant.

The "Friends" received more attention than they had originally expected receiving 500 soldier re-enactors and 250 civilian re-enactors. They had set up a cavalry, artillery, and two encampments, one for each army.

The first day of the event consisted of a re-enactment of the Battle of Chickamauga. This battle was when Company C of the Second Minnesota played a role in stopping a major advance by the Confederates. The second day was a re-enactment of the Battle of Bull Run, also known as the First Battle of Manassas. This was the first land battle of the Civil War and it took place near Manassas, Virginia. The third and final day was the Battle of Appomattox where General Robert E. Lee surrendered to the Union Army under the command of General Ulysses S. Grant.

If you missed out on the first opportunity to view the Civil War Days, you are in luck. There are two ways to live the excitement again. You can go to www.civilwarmn.com and purchase the DVD from this historical event. The "Friends of Wasioja" are also putting on the second Civil War Days on June 15th and 16th, 2013 in Wasioja, Minnesota. The web site www.civilwarmn.com has details on the event.

Special Thanks

Writers Alex Hurchward, Joey Hyde, Taylor McMillin, Logan Adank and Ryan King are students in Tom Jensch's history class at Kasson Mantorville High School. Thanks for your help.

Dodge County Historical Society invites your membership...

As a member of Dodge County Historical Society you participate in preserving the society's historical assets and the story of Dodge County and its citizens.

It's Spring Cleaning Time...

Cleaning dates for the museum buildings have been scheduled for Friday, April 19, 1 to 5 pm, Saturday, April 20, 9 to 5 pm with alternate (rain) date of Saturday, April 27. Many hands can make it a fun experience. Anyone is invited to help: we will need muscles as much as dustcloths!

And, It's Almost Summertime

The Museum will open for the summer season on Thursday, May 16. Hours will be 10 am to 4 pm, Thursday through Saturday. Available other dates and times by request.

Welcome assistance

Dave Dubbels has joined the staff at the DCHS Museum. He comes to the Dodge County Historical Society through Experience Works and will usually be at museum Monday-Thursday. Welcome, Dave!

DCHS gets Legacy Grant

DCHS has been awarded a Legacy Grant through the Southeast Minnesota Arts Council for production of "A Mother's Story," playwright Sandra Miller's original one-act play, to be presented twice daily during Wasioja Civil War Days.



Dodge County Historical Society

615 N. Main, P.O. Box 456

Mantorville, Minnesota 55955

507.635.5508 • dchs@kmtel.com

Memberships now run for 12 months from the month you join rather than by calendar year. Check your label to see when you should renew. 9999 means you have a lifetime membership.

Membership Form

Dodge County Historical Society
P.O. Box 456, Mantorville, MN 55955-0456

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Membership Category: Renewal New

Annual-\$20 5-Year-\$50 Junior Historian-\$5

Volunteer Opportunities

I would be interested in helping with:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grant Writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Projects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Repair | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Raising | <input type="checkbox"/> Office Projects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Collection |

Please complete this form and send it along with your check to the address above.

Thank You and Welcome!

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Thoughts From the President

The willow branches are turning yellow; spring is nearly here! What a relief that will bring. Up at the museum, we are eagerly waiting to see what new flowers may poke through. I'm hoping all our lovely new plants that were planted during Carefest survived.

Speaking of the flower beds, we would welcome any aspiring young gardeners or experienced green thumbs to help us this summer with our gardens. There is also a kitchen garden that is bare for someone to adopt.

Stop on up and visit sometime. Mary Ann is still volunteering and Dave Dubbels is working too.

It was nice to see so many friends, old and new, at the soup supper in Dodge Center in February. Thanks for your support, and thanks to the Legion for allowing us to use their facility.

We on the Board appreciate the wonderful donations that have been made to the Museum as a result of our annual fundraising letter. Your generosity is greatly appreciated and will allow us to move forward with some repairs and changes at the Museum.

If any of you have ever thought of running for the Board, please complete an application. Scott French has completed his second three year term and must go off the Board for the present time. The other two offices are held by Dale Morris and Gregg Nelson who, I expect, will seek re-election.

I'm hoping to see many of you at the Annual Meeting. We're trying something different this year, in hopes of getting a larger turnout. The Old School Café will offer a special dinner for us on Saturday, the 13th of April in conjunction with our meeting. We also will host guest speaker Tom Hosier of the Olmsted County Civil War Roundtables. Be sure to mark your calendars now and plan to attend!

Until then, I remain your humble servant,

Faye Richter

Dodge County Historical Society 2012–2013 Fund Raising Campaign Donations

Roberta Middleton
Claremont Chamber of Commerce
Jim Buehler
Judy Severson
Doug and Sandy Gohnauer
The Thorntons
Don Alberts,
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Robert Law
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Ron Durst
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Lynn Knutson
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Arlen Scherger
Thank you to all donors.

Grand Army of the Republic

The GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) was established in Illinois in 1866 and was composed of Union veterans of the Civil War.

Most of Dodge County men heeded Lincoln's call and wore the blue uniform proudly from the 1st Bull Run to Gettysburg and on to North Carolina. Ten percent of them would never return. And of those who survived, the majority would carry with them weakened bodies from disease or exposure of a wound received in hand-to-hand combat. Dodge County's first casualty was Joe Garrison, who was wounded and captured at the 1st Battle of Bull Run. He was taken to Andersonville prison camp where he died.

Initially, the GAR faced a rocky road ahead. Many veterans were sick of war and wanted nothing to do with each other. They had put away their medals, their uniforms, their diaries and their memories to get on with their lives. But as the years went by, many more found that they needed and wanted to be able to "talk about it, reunite with their comrades." The GAR was prominent in being there for them, and time was a great healer. The GAR was there when the veterans realized the power there was in uniting again. By 1880, the GAR was the prime advocacy group in American politics, advocating veteran benefits and pensions, supporting right for black veterans, lobbying Congress and supporting Republican candidates. Their endorsements were highly sought after and they helped elect Presidents Ulysses S. Grant and William McKinley.

By 1890, the GAR had 490,000 members (Membership was limited to honorably discharged veterans of the Union forces who had served from April 1860 and April 1865.) The huge organization had three levels. The first was a local "Post" named for a deceased veteran. There were Posts in every state as well as overseas. Overseeing the local Posts were state "Departments," with a delegate from each Post, and who met at annual "Encampments" to discuss the larger questions and procedures. They were so successful that, from 1866 to 1949, there were "National Encampments". These Encampments were held each year at major cities – Minneapolis or Washington D.C. for example – and were three-day affairs with all the excitement they could muster, rivaling any political convention ever held, complete with brass bands.

More important to the veterans, though, were the local Posts and by 1890 there were 41 in Minnesota. These Posts were where veterans could get together once a month and share memories of the past and plans for the future. Local Post #95 in Dodge Center was the Garrison Post, named for Joe Garrison, and had 95 members. Post #167 in West Concord was named Post #167 Orcott. It was located in West Concord with 65 members, Post #32 Burnside, located in Kasson, was named for (can't find information) and had 110 members. 471 men from Dodge County served in the Civil War, the oldest being Sam Burwell, at 57 years of age, and the youngest, Gilgen Klopenstien at 14 years old.

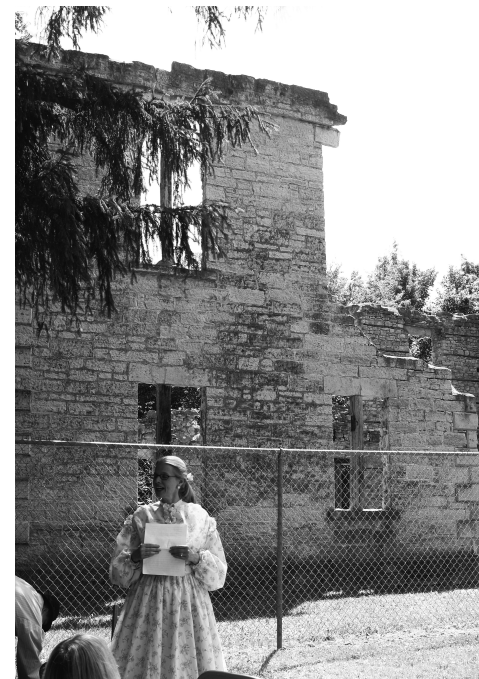
Joseph Orcott – Corporal captured at Kenesaw

Mountain, GA. Died in Andersonville of diarrhea.

Legacy of the GAR. Decoration Day, now Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, and was first observed on 30 May 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war

Traditional observance of Memorial day has diminished over the years. Many Americans nowadays have forgotten the meaning and traditions of Memorial Day.

There are a few notable exceptions. Local Veterans organizations still hold ceremonies at all cemeteries and each hold a special program in their chosen location. The Veterans Organizations along with the Boy Scouts place flags on Veterans graves.



DCHS historical tour program at Wasioja Seminary

The Seminary

By Alex Churchward

The Wasioja Seminary was originally built due to heavy Free-Will Baptist support and the Baptists maintained control over the property for several years. The Seminary was to be built of limestone, a mineral native to the area, and construction began in the year 1858, though an early hail storm delayed construction as farmers tended to their crops. The construction was finished in 1860 and the building was dedicated in 1861, the speech made at the dedication was made by Col. James George who had been a prominent figure in nearby Rochester, MN. The building was original-

ly to be called the Minnesota Seminary, though it was quickly changed to the NorthWestern Seminary within a year. In its first year open over 300 students signed up for the opportunity to attend the College, though when the Civil War began many of the students and some of the teachers trekked to the nearby recruitment station to join the fight. Some believe that this great support of the war was what inevitably stunted the growth of both the Seminary, and Wasioja's populations as little over twenty of those that left ever returned. The school continued though and offered fall, winter and spring semesters with terms that lasted approximately twelve weeks. The facility offered a variety of classes at varied prices, one such class was Common English which was offered at a rate of four dollars a term, a cost roughly equivalent to ninety nine dollars today when adjusted for inflation. Though the school averaged one hundred students in its winter courses alone, it changed hands many times over the years for one reason or another. In 1868 the Free Will Baptists sold the property to Reverend L. E. Allen, who renamed the seminary the Groveland Seminary. Rev. Allen owned the property for four years before deciding to sell the property. The Seminary was then bought in 1872 by the Wesleyan Methodists for a fee of \$10,000, which would be close to \$190,000 if the same deal was made today. The Seminary finally closed its doors in 1894, and soon after in 1905 it was burned to the ground. The culprits were a band of hoodlums who started a fire under the stairs; this first fire was discovered and extinguished before considerable damage was done. This did not deter the vandals, however, as they later returned to set a second fire in the attic. This second fire, unfortunately, did manage to complete the task it was created to do, the seminary was severely damaged and never managed to recover from this disaster. Rev. Gould, a student of the seminary, procured the ruins and upon his death it was donated to be a public park.

Toonerville Trolley

By Joey Hyde

The Toonerville Trolley is a railroad car that traveled from Mantorville to Eden. The trolley got its name from the single panel comic strip by Fontaine Fox. The Toonerville Folks cartoon strip was a daily look into the town of Toonerville. Fontaine Fox was one of the most popular American cartoonists. The cartoon was syndicated from 1908 to 1955. The Toonerville Trolley was operated by Jim Cooper. The trolley was a railroad wheel car that could adjust to travel across railroad tracks. The trolley was a vehicle that was hooked up to a box car pulling freight and passengers. The trolley was a long passenger car with three side windows.

The main purpose of the trolley was to transport passengers to Mantorville and Eden. Passengers would take the train for joy rides, to go on a picnic, and journeys to leave the state. People would take the trolley to Eden to get on the Great Western Railroad. The trolley would travel from Mantorville to Eden twice a day. The trolley also

Dodge County Historical Society Annual Meeting

5:30 p.m., Saturday, April 13, 2013

Old School Café in Mantorville

Schedule

Social Hour at 5:30

Dinner at 6:30

Meeting at 7:15

Program at 7:30

Cost for Dinner: \$17.00

There is no charge to attend the meeting. All DCHS members are encouraged to attend the business meeting and program.

Menu

Stuffed Pork Loin

Ham Loaf

Horseradish and Barbeque Sauce

Red Potatoes

Vegetable (carrots or green beans)

Angel Food Cake with Lemon Sauce

Coffee

Cost \$17.00

Gratuity not included

Reservations are requested. Call or e-mail the Museum dchs@kmtel.com or 507.635.5508

Program

The Dakota US War

Presented by Tom Hosier

Tom is the president of the Wood Lake Battlefield Preservation Association and the Minnesota Veterans & Emergency Services Museum and a past president for the Rochester and Winona Civil War Round Tables. He is also the program chairman for the Scott Hosier Veterans Museum.