

MINNESOTA CITY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MEMBER NEWSLETTER – Volume 9, Issue 6: June, 2015

“Minnesota City: A Past that we honor; a Present that we give meaning; a Future that we build together”

Mark your Calendars!

June 13: 9:30 a.m.; MCHA meeting; Archives, 140 Mill Street
(no July MCHA meeting)

June 25: 6:30 p.m.; Minnesota City Community Readers; Former Minnesota City School, 115 Iowa Street; Selection: Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Notice:

Minnesota City Community Readers do not meet in July .

MCHA does not hold a monthly meeting in July.

There will be no newsletter in July.

Minnesota City Day Events Attract Varied Audience

Good food, good books, interest in history and churches provided the right mix for an audience that left the Minnesota City Day events with new information and friends. Although Gerry Okland, because of health issues, was not able to present on his great great grandparents, the Cottons, Marv and Gen O'Grady and Andrea Church substituted with visual aids of technology and print, a number of them provided by Bob Bambenek, Winona County Recorder. Charlene Kowalewski Egge brought with her and showed (where was that photographer?) the silver dollar that was in the collection discovered by her father when remodeling in the Kowalewski home on land previously owned by the Cottons. Gale Haase lives on land formerly owned by Cotton, Clare Denzer provided her property abstract which showed the Cotton ownership and Michael Kleinschmidt, County Surveyor who had signed some of the abstract papers, was in the audience. These added to interest. Actual connections with the Okland family included the Spittler and Risser names. A map with sites of Cotton property locations is provided on Page 4. The Book Giveaway again drew a number of takers. An unmet need at the Book Shelf is the category of Children's Books. If readers have these to share, please know that they will be appreciated for the Book Giveaways.

Restoration of First Baptist Church Wall Completed



Foundation restoration near completion. Original stones reused with cement mortar after replacement of most of the floor joists.

The long search of the First Baptist Ladies Aid for construction personnel to realign the right wall of the historic Baptist Church has come to an end with the project completion by the R. J. Jaworski Construction Company of Whitehall, Wisconsin. The Historic church, the first in Winona County, constructed in 1875, now appears ready to withstand the challenges of age and environment well into the century. First Baptist Ladies have now replaced the photos, the eight day clock, and again welcome

visitors to view the unique baptismal tank and the indoor outhouse. Watch for announcements of future events related to the church. Minnesota Citizens and all area humanitarians welcome the restoration of this building which continues to put Minnesota City on maps and retains memories of former members and residents.



Visiting about First Baptist Church at Former Minnesota City School, relocation site of Minnesota City Day open house.

History of Minnesota City Promoted by Local Media

Local Media have been particularly helpful in the weeks preceding Minnesota City this year; the abundance of information provided by Winona Post and the Winona Daily News has informed readers of observance of events as well as history and meaning attached to them. The histories of the churches, which were significant to this year's celebration, were highlighted in both papers. The First Evangelical Lutheran Church has been in Minnesota City for 125 years, the First Baptist Church for 140 years, and the Catholic Church for ninety years. All churches hosted open houses; these were announced by media.

MCHA Extends Sympathy to:

The family and friends of Paulette Paulsen, 65, Denzer Road resident. Paulette was born in Arcadia, WI and died on May 7, 2015 in Winona.

The family and friends of William "Bill" Saehler, 90, lifelong resident of Minnesota City, who died on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 in Winona.

The family and friends of Marianne Mastenbrook, Whitman Deering Road, who died at her home on Saturday, May 23, 2015. (See Page 3)

The family and friends of Wayne Anderson, Sr., 87, who died in Winona on May 27, 2015.

For Minnesota Day 2015 contributions, MCHA THANKS:

- All attendees and organizers of events and friends and family
- Robert Bambenek, Winona County Recorder, for materials related to Cotton Family, early settlers in Minnesota City
- Andrea Church for on the scene and off the scene technological help
- Gerald Okland for motivating for Cotton presentation
- Don Evanson for the use of the former Minnesota City School Building for several events
- Minnesota City Fire Department for installation of signs on railroad bridge
- Horihan Insurance and Lyle's Flooring America for posting Minnesota City Day sign on the marquee
- Clare Rader Denzer and Charlene Kowalewski Egge for materials related to Cotton presentation
- Garvin Brook Disaster Relief Fund for sponsoring the Waffle Breakfast that brings many people to Minnesota City Day
- Winona Post and Winona Daily News for publicity for Minnesota City Day

Historical Conversation about Cotton

From the *History of Winona County, 1883*. "On a farm about a mile below Mr. Dilworth there is now living another member of the association, who, like his neighbors above, remained in the colony, and has secured the home in his old age for which he left New England and came west more than thirty years ago. This farm is now owned and occupied by S. E. Cotton. When the members of the Association made choice of farms by their numbers, this locality was chosen by John Iams, and purchased from him by E. B. Drew. This was the first claim sale in the colony. Mr. Drew as assistant surveyor had taken a liking to the place and when he learned that it had been selected by Mr. Iams he offered him \$10.00 for his number or right to it. The offer was accepted and the claim given up to Mr. Drew, who held it and entered it at the United States land office when the land was surveyed. It was held by Mr. Drew until 1857, when he sold it to Mr. Cotton.

When Mr. Cotton first landed at Rolling Stone he built a log house on his village lot previously selected, and made it his home. After the collapse of the association he retained his location and when the land was surveyed by government, he made a claim of eighty acres and pre-empted the village lots as a homestead. He sold it in 1857 and moved to his present home. His claim in Minnesota City is now the farm of James Kennedy."



Marvin O'Grady comments on Early Rollingsstone Colony Maps at Cotton Conversation

Marianne Mastenbrook, loyal MCHA participant, dies on May 23, 2015 Gen O'Grady

When I first began to do research on Minnesota City history at the Winona County Historical Society, the helpful archivist for me was Marianne Mastenbrook. She would later send additional material on topics I had researched. In the first years(2007) of the MCHA archives, Marianne donated specialized archival items (pencils, gloves, boxes, envelopes) that introduced us to some preservation skills. Marianne attended every MCHA event that she was able to get to. She was a regular attendee at monthly meetings, and she offered opinions on most items of business. Marianne will be missed for many reasons—family and friendship presence, Humane Society and County Historical Society contributions, Rollingstone Township business. For the last annual township meeting, which she missed because of illness, she emailed asking us to get her copies of all distributed communications. We did. The afternoon before Marianne died, we were able to visit and to say goodbye. In the conversation, I remarked on our different positions on many issues; her gracious response was, “we all walk to our own drummer.” Marianne’s drum sound will be missed at meetings and events of MCHA.



Marianne (center) with friends Cliff (deceased) and Janet Hill Seabern at MCHA Oakland Display in 2009.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Minnesota City Commemorates 125 Years, 50 years, and Continuing Service

Documents compiled by Pastor David Eckert for the First Evangelical Celebration included a 125th celebration booklet, a Fiftieth anniversary celebration booklet, and an Official Acts Booklet which lists previous pastors, Baptisms, Confirmations, Weddings, and Funerals drawn from church histories. The repetition of family names obviates the significance of this church in the village through the years. The lifelong connections of church members emerge with familiar family names. Gilbert Stewart was baptized at the church in 1941, confirmed there in 1952, married Barbara Durnen there in 1965, and was buried there in 2010. The material also reveals the contributions of congregation members that made a continued existence possible in spite of fire, financial and organizational challenges. Historical details provided by Pastor Eckert make these booklets interesting reading. These materials will now be at the MCHA archives filed under Churches: First Evangelical Lutheran. The church was established by German speaking Lutherans in the Minnesota City area sometime in the 1870s. The Minnesota City Day weekend celebrations informed visitors about both the 50th anniversary of the present church building and the 125th anniversary of the congregation founding. *Winona Post*, May 13 edition, reported on the church anniversaries.

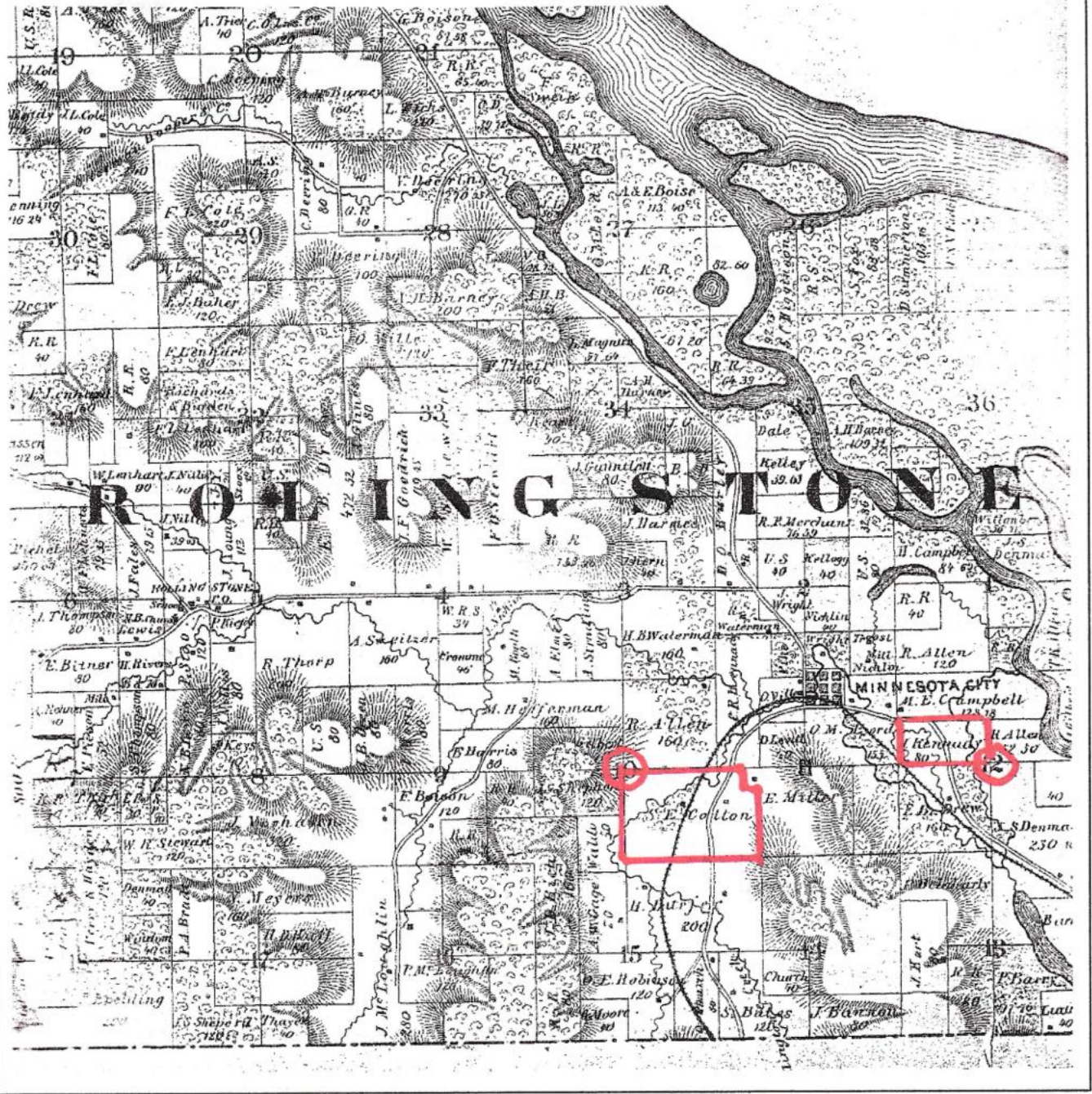
Minnesota City June in 1947

“There will be no Bible class meetings during the summer months.

Mrs. And Mrs. Thomas Larson and Mr and Mrs. Lawrence Bung, Racine, WI were recent visitors of Mrs. And Mrs. Emil Norbye and other friends in Minnesota City. Mrs; Pauline Witt returned home after visiting Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Green and Karl Witt and family at Minneapolis, Winona, were Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Glen Alleman. Weekend guests of Mrs. Emma Donehower included Mr. and Mrs. Edward Wamhoff and son, Karl, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Nichols Jr., Winona, Mrs. Dora Long, Mauston, WI. and William Long, Los Angeles, Calif. Mr. and Mrs. George Church attended a picnic at Merrick State Park, Fountain City, WI. Sunday. The Lutheran Ladies Aid society will not meet this month. Children of St. Paul’s parish, Minnesota City will receive first Holy Communion Sunday. The women of the parish will serve breakfast in the parish hall after Mass.” *Winona Republican Herald*, June 18, 1947.

Cotton Map Information

From 1867 Winona County Platbook. (Note Rollingsstone spelling error).
Cotton land in Sec. 10 and Sec. 11 (200A.) now owned by Jacobsen, Haase,
and Church. Cotton land in Sec.12 (80A.) now bus area, Kowalewski
addition.



No Newsletter in July