



# PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DECEMBER 1991

VOLUME VIII

NUMBER 2



## OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS IN PLYMOUTH

On Sunday, December 8th from 2-5 pm, the Plymouth Historical Society and the Plymouth Park & Recreation Department are co-sponsoring the Fifth Annual

"OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS IN PLYMOUTH". The purpose of the event is to provide some old fashioned Christmas spirit and activities for families in Plymouth. Children can visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus will be right there to help the Elves hand out candy canes. A sleigh/hay ride pulled by Belgian horses with bells jingling will be giving rides (\$.50 per person), hot cider and cookies will be provided, storyteller, carollers and making Christmas decorations are other activities for the children.

On Saturday, December 7th, starting at 9 am, we will decorate the two old fashioned Christmas trees and building. We are looking for help in decorating and bringing items that could be borrowed for the day to add some more old fashioned Christmas spirit.

They can be items as follows:

- Old fashioned antique ornaments
- Old fashioned toys to put under the tree
- Poinsettias
- Evergreen roping

If you can help or bring decorations, please call Myrtle Eckes, 545-6168 or Gary Schiebe, 473-4889.

Attached is a flyer describing the event so bring your friends, relatives, neighbors and kids ages 9 months to 90 years young. We had a great time

last year and this year it will be even better.

We thought you might be interested in some of the specific volunteer help and businesses involved to help the Plymouth Park & Recreation Department and the Plymouth Historical Society put on this event.

Santa	-	Phil Collins
Mrs. Claus	-	Mable Swanson
Elves	-	Giri Scout Troop
Storyteller	-	Bob Gasch
Singers	-	Armstrong Chamber Singers
Hay Ride	-	Firstar Metro Bank-Plymouth and Bunker Hill Stables
Cutter	-	Bob Paylor
Wreaths, Trees & Garland	-	Dundee Nursery
Candy Canes	-	Tad Jude
Cider	-	New Market
Cookies	-	Plymouth Historical Society



## MAILING AND MEMBERSHIP LIST

If anyone would like to become a member of the Plymouth Historical Society, please call Alberta Casey, 559-9366. The annual dues are: Individual \$5.00, Family \$7.50 and Lifetime \$100.00.

All of the people who have previously signed our guest book have been added to the mailing list. You will have to pardon us if we didn't get your name or address exactly correct. If you have any additions or corrections, please call Gary Schiebe at 473-4889.

## MUSEUM DONATIONS

A single bottom plow, steel wheels and a bean sorter were donated by Mr. Faber. Contact Barb Rasmussen, 533-8444, if you have historical items to donate.

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## OFFICERS

The following are the present officers:

President	Gary Schiebe	473-4889
Vice President	Vern Doseth	559-3777
Secretary	Sharon Anderson	475-1974
Treasurer	Harvey Schiebe	545-6127

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

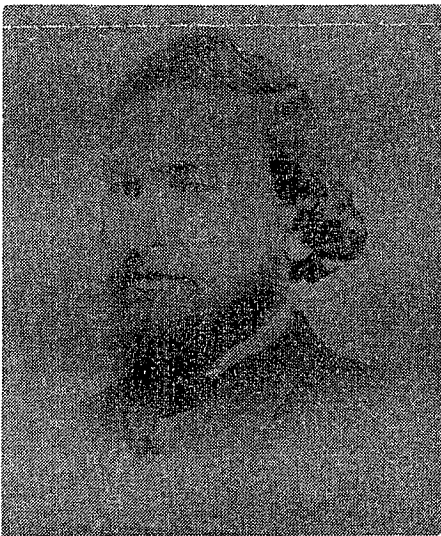
The following is the present Board of Directors:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>Term</u>
Ben G. Broman	559-5721	1991-1994
Vern Doseth	559-3777	1889-1992
Myrtle Eckes	545-6168	1990-1993
Sharon Anderson	475-1974	1991-1994
Edith Hopperstad	473-3427	1990-1993
Bea Jordan	Unlisted	1989-1992
Jack Malmstedt	473-4493	1990-1993
Joyce McCaughey	544-2656	1990-1993
Vern Peterson	559-2317	1989-1992
Dick Pouliot	569-9275	1990-1993
Barb Rasmussen	533-8444	1991-1994
Gary Schiebe	473-4889	1990-1993
Harvey Schiebe	545-6127	1990-1993
Adeline Schmidt	559-2459	1991-1994
Mable Swanson	545-7705	1991-1994

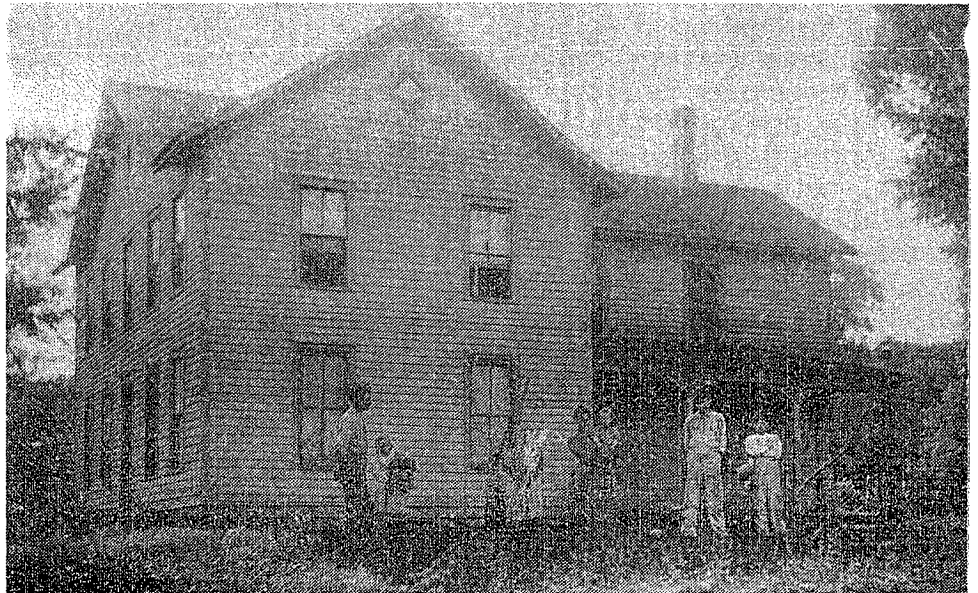
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## FAMILY HISTORIES

The Plymouth Historical Society has quite a few family histories on file. We welcome people to come and look at them, which may help you trace family roots. The following is a copy of one of the histories on file.



Jonas Howe



**JONAS HOWE**

Rather an unusual family migrated to Minnesota Territory in 1854 and 1855. Jonas Howe and his brother, Benjamin, were artists of real ability as was an aunt who was teacher of painting. Jonas was a fine miniature painter, interested in education and fine arts. His acquaintance with Whittier and others of renown is a recorded fact. His early years were spent in Boston, acquiring his education and art instruction, where he met his friend Margaret Swindell whom he married. From then on, he lived in Petersham, Massachusetts and in time, had a family of five girls. Due to ill health, he desired a change of living and the idea of

pioneering in Minnesota Territory took his fancy.

In 1854, Jonas arrived in Minnesota alone, to view the land and conditions, and in 1855 he sent for his wife and five daughters, who came by train and boat under adverse circumstances landing in St. Paul. They traveled from St. Paul to St. Anthony, thence by wagon with a stranger to Plymouth Township. Jonas evidently did not know when they would arrive as he did not meet them.

A log house 16" x 16' and been built by Jonas, among

beautiful maple and elm trees, some of which are still standing. A small creek flowed through the farm which delighted the children. The location of the cabin was such that it was in the line of travel from St. Anthony to the west. It enabled them to see and meet travelers with news or messages. The cabin was very crude, but Margaret, his wife, made it homey and livable. She had been used to fine homes and beautiful furnishings, so it was quite a change from her mode of living.

With all the hard work and crude furnishings, they managed to find entertainment and simple pleasures in games, little trips on holidays and enjoyment in reading good books or articles from papers which were sent from the east. Jonas Howe was a great patriot and made care to observe national holidays, the Fourth of July in particular. One Fourth of July mention is made of a trip to what is now Wayzata Bay, with his wife and children and a family who were neighbors, going by ox team, July 4, 1856. Another celebration was mentioned in the Minnesota State Newspaper, July 7, 1862. *"At the July 4th celebration at Medicine Lake Hotel, salute of 34 guns was fired by Francis Day Esq...The Declaration of Independence read by Jonas Howe and seven baskets of food were left over."* Neighbors were friendly and helpful, for Margaret Howe knew very little about knitting, spinning and home making as some country women were versed in, and they taught her how to do these things which were so necessary. Even shoes, brooms and bullets were made at home by Jonas. As they lived in the center of a maple woods, of course, maple syrup and sugar were made - ending in a frolic.

In the summer of 1858, the children went to their first school and to the Township's first school, District #51, on the present Rockford Road. The school was held in an old building belonging to a Mr. Huot. They marched single file through the woods and tall grass to get there, one helping the other, always on the lookout for snakes and animals. They seemed to have no fear of the Indians as they seemed quite friendly. Jonas Howe was a firm believer in education. His eldest daughter, Cora, became deaf and dumb at the age of four, due possibly to a childhood disease. In 1860, he and another man from St. Paul, went before the legislature and petitioned them to institute a state school for the deaf and dumb. The bill was passed and Cora was one of the school's first pupils. Articles from newspapers were read and copied by Jonas Howe, on subjects of interest, particularly pertaining to slavery, farming, philosophy and working conditions. He copied many of the articles and clipped them from papers to put in a ledger for further reading. He also wrote protesting or

complimenting editors on what they wrote. He was a fine orator and spoke at many political sessions in the town of St. Anthony. Jonas was very much opposed to capitalism and if he had lived now, would have been considered a great social reformer. He was also a dreamer, visualizing improved agricultural conditions and as a member of the Plymouth Grange, he would prod the members to change conditions to improve the crops and themselves.

Not only a great social reformer, he was an ardent patriot. When the Civil War broke out, his resolution for encouragement for enlistments for the Town Board to advertise, was an article almost comparable to the Gettysburg Address. He was drafted in the Army, bought his release, and enlisted. He was on duty for some time at Fort Snelling and in Tennessee in 1864. His release from service was in 1865, when he returned to his home and was elected to the House of Representatives.

In 1873, the old log house burned and the new frame house was built. About ten years ago this was sold and the house, part of which is still standing, was remodeled. Jonas and Margaret needed a large house as they had ten children. Cora died in 1898. Angeline, George and Jonas died of Typhoid in 1864 - within three days of each other. They were buried on the farm and disinterred when the property was sold and laid to rest in Parker's Lake Cemetery. Benjamin, died in 1926, Annie (Mrs. Thomas Best), Gertrude (Mrs. Gus Dow), Laura (Mrs. Walter Carpenter), Carrie (Mrs. Wm. Dallas), Minnie (Mrs. Cecil Carpenter) are all deceased. Jonas Howe died in 1898 and his wife, Margaret, died in 1906. Jonas and his wife are buried in Parker's Lake Cemetery.

Jonas Howe purchased his pre-empted farm at Forest City on November 22, 1860, Section 27, NW 1/4 of NE 1/4, 40 acres and Section 22 W 1/2 of SE 1/4 and SE 1/4 of SE 1/4, 120 acres, totalling 160 acres in all. He held office as town clerk almost continuously, until unable physically to do so and kept very accurate and up to date records.

Of many people who settled in Plymouth, Jonas was one who contributed much to the town in way of good living, culture and advanced farming methods, a feeling of pride in ancestry and was farsighted enough to preserve records of the past to use in the future. It was he who helped organize the first town board meeting, mapping out parliamentary procedure and gave advice concerning legal aspects of such procedure, thus being unexpendable. Plymouth should most certainly be proud of having such a pioneer, whose caliber and integrity played such an important part in the progress of our community!

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# OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS IN PLYMOUTH

SUNDAY - DECEMBER 8th  
2:00 - 5:00 PM

PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUILDING  
PLYMOUTH CREEK PARK  
3605 FERNBROOK LANE  
PLYMOUTH, MN

- VISIT WITH SANTA
- OLD FASHIONED SLEIGH-HAY RIDE
- HOT CIDER AND COOKIES
- SEE OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS TREES
- MAKE CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS
- STORYTELLER
- STROLLING CAROLERS
- SEE OLD FASHIONED TOYS

Co-Sponsored by Plymouth Historical Society  
and  
Plymouth Park & Recreation Department

