



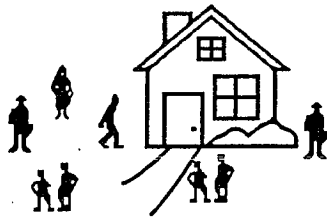
PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

September 1993

VOLUME XII

Number 2

Plymouth Historical Society



**Wednesday
September 22
7:30-10 pm**

The free seminar will be by Terri Thompson Neby on "Preserving Your Photos"

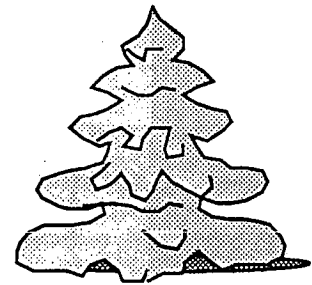
The schedule is as follows:

- Short business meeting at 7:30 p.m.
- Seminar starts at 8:00 p.m.

WANTED!!

We need the following donations to Plymouth Historical Society:

- Large antique leather or wood arm chair (suitable for Santa at Christmas event)
- Picture framing services
- Help on relabeling artifacts on display
- Help on Sundays when we have the Plymouth Historical Building open for visitors.



It's not too early to plan ahead and mark your calendar for the Seventh Annual

"Old Fashioned Christmas in Plymouth", Sunday, December 5th, co-sponsored by the Plymouth Historical Society and Plymouth Park & Recreation Department. It will be bigger and better than last year, so watch for future announcements!



MAILING AND MEMBERSHIP LIST

Attached is the 1993 Membership Dues Form. 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
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.

PLYMOUTH HISTORY TIDBITS

Did you know????

- The first settler in the Plymouth area was Antoine LeCount who located on the east shore of Medicine Lake in October 1853.
- The first log hut school was built in 1856 at the farm of Francis Huot (Section 14) with Miss Shaw as the teacher.
- On April 10, 1858 the County Board met to determine the boundaries of the Congressional Township 118-22 and named it Plymouth.
- The first town meeting was held on May 11, 1858 at the home of Francis Day.
- The next meeting was held on June 21, 1858 to change the name to Medicine Lake because people were dissatisfied with the name Plymouth.
- The next year, on April 5, 1859, the call to meeting was issued under the name of Medicine Lake and business transacted under that name.
- The following year, on April 3, 1860, the meeting was held under the name of Plymouth and no records show how the name was changed other than County Officials never recognized

OFFICERS

The following are the present officers:

President	Gary Schiebe	473-4889
Vice President	Ben G. Broman	559-5721
Secretary	Sharon Anderson	475-1974
Treasurer	Harvey Schiebe	545-6127

MUSEUM DONATIONS

- Piano, Circa: Early 1900's
Donated by: Robert D. McLeod
- Books
Donated by: Florence Kardong
- Framed Medicine Lake Picnic Invitation
Donated by: Minnie Larson
- Schiebe's Corner Calendar Plate
Donated by: Warren & Kay Chapman

To help the Plymouth Historical Society ensure donations are properly credited, we ask the donor to identify the name of the item, description, who used it, description of use, date or era. Sign a Gift Agreement Form and have it signed by a member of the Board of Directors. Each donor will receive a copy of the donor form as an acknowledgement of receipt. If you have donated any item within the last six months and have not signed an agreement form, please contact **Barb Rasmussen, 533-8444** or Edith Hopperstad, 473-3427 or a member of the Board of Directors so we can update our records.

Thank you!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The following is the present Board of Directors:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>Term</u>
Sharon Anderson	475-1974	1991-1994
Ben G. Broman	559-5721	1991-1994
Alberta Casey	559-9366	1993-1996
Vern Doseth	559-3777	1992-1995
Myrtle Eckes	545-6168	1993-1996
Edith Hopperstad	473-3427	1993-1996
Bea Jordan	Unlisted	1992-1995
Joyce McCaughey	544-2656	1993-1996
Vern Peterson	559-2317	1992-1995
Barb Rasmussen	533-8444	1991-1994
Gary Schiebe	473-4889	1993-1996
Harvey Schiebe	545-6127	1993-1995
Adeline Schmidt	559-2459	1991-1994
Mable Swanson	545-7705	1991-1994

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, along the pictures, on file.

THE DENNIS SCHMITZ FAMILY

Dennis Schmitz was born in Goblentz, Germany, April 29, 1827. His father was a farmer who lived in a village having a strip of land to work, to which he had to travel like most other farmers of that day. Dennis, at the age of 18 years, entered the German Army in which he served until 1850. In 1852 he decided to come to America, which he did, settling in Michigan. While there he lumbered and worked in the saw mills. After three years, he came to Minnesota and settled in Plymouth Township when Minnesota was still a territory. A land boom was on in 1855, when more settlers arrived at that period than at any other time in history of Plymouth Township. As on all preempted land, it was necessary to live on the chosen plat and to show good intentions of becoming an American citizen. His choice was Section 19, East 1/2 of Southeast 1/4, E 1/4 of NE 1/4, Section 30, 160 acres which was entirely wooded. As wood was so carefully used by natives of Germany, due to either scarcity or forest conservation, where they were only permitted to pick up twigs and branches in designated areas, so it is presumed that an unlimited amount of timber was considered a great asset. It was on November 22, 1860 that Dennis Schmitz purchased his land, walking perhaps to Forest City, Minnesota, near Litchfield, where the Government office was situated. Other men of Plymouth Township who made purchases the same day were James H. White, Section 1, Francis Day, Section 15, Henry Smith, Section 20 and Joan Howe, Section 22 and 27. Therefore, it is probable the above men went as a party to register for land. The records of the purchases are recorded in "Abstract of Lands", Hennepin County, the first book of Abstracts in Hennepin County. By law, they paid \$1.25 per acre - the amount of land not to exceed 160 acres.



Gertrude Schmitz, mother of Michael, Peter, Henry, Dennis, Katherine, Eva and Elizabeth.

The brothers and sisters of Dennis Schmitz evidently came from Germany with his parents later and on December 12,

1861, Michael Schmitz made a purchase of 160 acres in Section 20, SW 1/4 and another brother, Henry, made a purchase of 40 acres in Section 20, SE 1/4 of NE 1/4 on November 22, 1860. All purchases have certificates signed by either President Buchanan or Lincoln.

The parents of Dennis Schmitz lived with him almost on the boundary of the Dennis and Michael Schmitz farm. The present owner of the Dennis Schmitz farm is his son, Peter, and of the Michael Schmitz farm, Charles Trittelwitz (1953). A log house was built on a knoll on the east line and in this cabin the family lived until 1875, a period of approximately 20 years. In 1875, the present home in which Peter Schmitz lives was built. Peter Schmitz was born almost immediately after the house was built and occupied. To cut the logs for the roof boards of the log house, Peter recalls his father telling him a hole was dug in the ground and rollers were laid

across the pit. The log to be sawed was laid on the rollers and a man in the pit and one overhead used a cross cut saw to rip the log as it was rolled over the above logs.

In 1860 Dennis married Susan Galnor of Crystal Township. She came from Prussia between 1855 and 1860. John Galnor, Susan's father, was born in 1808 and died in 1884. Anna, the wife of John, was born in 1810 and died in 1874. The Galnor family settled in Crystal near the old St. Mary's Cemetery and church about 1/4 miles north of Rockford Road and two miles west of Robbinsdale. The old Galnor home was taken apart in the year of 1884 and was moved to the Dennis Schmitz farm, reassembled and used for a grainery. It is still in use now in 1953. Dennis and Susan were married in St. Paul on the same day and place as Jos. and Archie Pouliot's father and mother.

Dennis Schmitz's father, Gehrig, was buried in Minneapolis

and his mother at Holy Name Cemetery at Medina. The Gainor family was buried in St. Mary's on the Rockford Road.

Dennis Schmitz was quite a politician. He was very much interested in public affairs and figured in settling quite a few arguments concerning line fences, etc. People came to him to iron out difficulties. As Jonas Howe's daughter states in the memoirs of her father, the German settlers in Plymouth were good settlers who liked good roads but not on their own land.

Plymouth Grange #355 was organized in 1874 and it was in this organization that Dennis was Financial Secretary. The Grange was active until 1878 when it was discontinued, the building being moved finally to the farm of Mr. Malmstead on Road 74 and #7. Dennis Schmitz was road overseer many times and was active on the town board. It was on February 23, 1860 that he was elected as County Commissioner. He was the first and only one since to be Commissioner from the Township of Plymouth. The following excerpt is from the County Commissioner's Journal 1858-1863, page 205.

"Record of proceeding of the County Commissioner of Hennepin County. R. W. Cumming, H. Fletcher, Dennis Smith (Schmitz) and I. B. Hinkley four of five elected as Commissioners of Hennepin County pursuant to an Act entitled an Act to provide for County organization and government. Approved February 22, 1860 met at office of the Auditor of said County June 4, 1860 and having taken the oath of office, organized by the election of R. W. Cumming as Chairman."

In the same Journal, page 179, March 23, 1860, D. C. Schmitz and Coleman were added to the Special Committee to settle with the Register of Deeds. Signed: D. C. Smith (Schmitz), John Coleman and George Odell.

The following children of Dennis Schmitz and Susan were born in the old log house, Emma (Mrs. Gardner); Gertrude (Mrs. Kenyon); Mrs. M. Hansman; Anna, John and Mary. Peter and Henry were the only two born in the present home on Highway 101 and 24.

The land on the farm was cleared by cutting down trees and grubbing. Work on the farm was done with the help of oxen. Peter thinks his father had a horse in about 1871 though it might have been sooner. Vegetables, potatoes and possibly a little grain was planted. The first grain was flailed in a depression in the ground. The sheaves were bound with strands of the plant and it was hard work to cut and bind the grain. It was winnowed on windy days by holding a container of grain four or five feet above the ground and pouring it while the wind blew the chaff away. It was probably taken to Burwell Mill at Minnetonka Mills to be ground into flour.

Dennis often told his children of the Indians coming from Mille Lacs on their way to war to Shakopee. At one time he

counted 152 marching along. Only about 12 returned. The Indians begged food and wanted to sharpen their knives off the grindstone. Dennis traded guns with an Indian who insisted on doing so. The Indian loaded Dennis's gun too heavy and shot it off, crippling the Indian. Then the Indian demanded his own gun back. Dennis's mother insisted that Dennis return the gun to him as she was very frightened.

For good times, dances at homes were held on Name Days. Relatives came in wagons or sleighs whichever the weather permitted and stories were swapped, games played and a general good time had by all. Groceries were purchased by barter in St. Anthony or St. Paul, money of course being scarce. Dennis, to economize or carry out an old custom, wrapped his feet in strips of cloth similar to the manner of wrapping leg bandages, instead of using stockings. Socks were knitted and woolen cloth woven as Peter remembers a spinning wheel which ended up being made by him into a bicycle, using a wheel barrow wheel in front. The pedals were of wood. The most he could get out of it was to travel down hill.

In Mr. Jonas Howes' memoirs mention is made of a man stopping in to tell him about the news of Lincoln's assassination. In another book written by another of Howe's daughters mention was made of the same man as being Dennis Schmitz. Mail was delivered to the post office twice a month and Peter remembers walking to Parkers Lake to Jas. Parkers home for it. Peter remembers the Farm Stock and Home Magazine when he was a child and also of his mother getting a Free Press German paper. Susan Schmitz taught Peter to read the German paper and he taught her English. Gertrude Kenyon, a daughter of Dennis and Susan, bought and saved the New York Times which she received twice a month and saved for her mother. There was little reading matter otherwise. Dennis was on the school board and was very insistent his children attend school. The term seemed to be from November to April for the larger children who had to work when seasons permitted and the younger children attended a session which started after April and went on into the summer, possibly June.

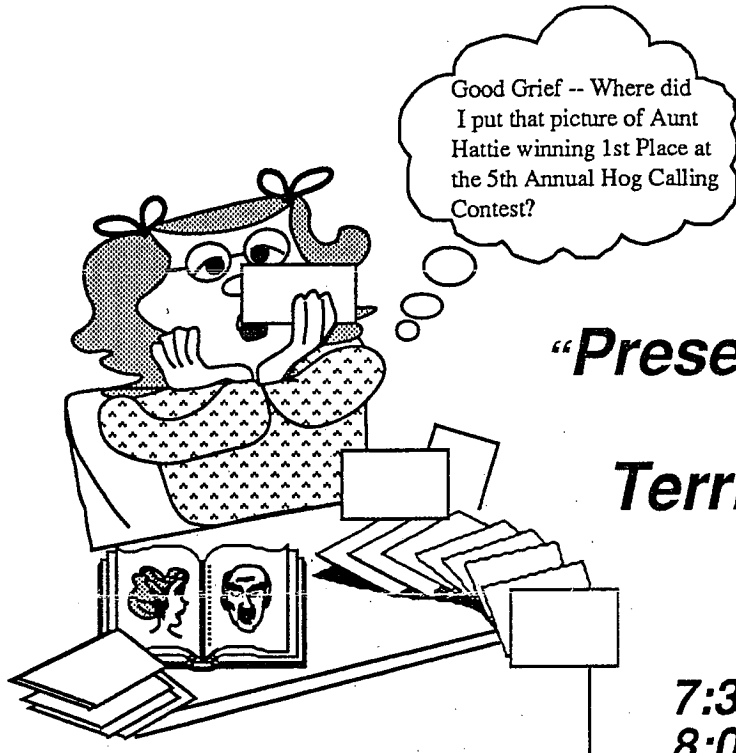
Dennis Schmitz died in 1901 and was buried at Parker's Lake Cemetery. Susan died in 1914 and is buried there as is John (1946), Gertrude Kenyon (1946), Henry (1950) and Anna (1931). Kate Hansmanis was buried in Moorhead, MN in 1938 and Emma Gardner in Crystal Lake Cemetery in Minneapolis in 1920. In 1953 Peter and Mary Schmitz are the only survivors.

Brothers of Dennis Schmitz were Michael, buried in Minneapolis; Henry, buried in Holy Name in Medina; Peter, buried in St. Joseph's Cemetery in Plymouth; Eva (Mrs. Moliter) buried in Sauk Center, MN; Katherine (Mrs. Ruetelstorf) buried in Minneapolis; and Elizabeth, Mrs. Schmitz (married a man named Schmitz) buried in California.

PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OPEN HOUSE

Wednesday, September 22, 1993
7:30 - 10:00 PM



PROGRAM

"Preserving Your Photos"
by
Terri Thompson Neby

SCHEDULE

7:30 - Business Meeting
8:00 - Seminar

LOCATION: PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL BUILDING
3595 Fernbrook Lane
Plymouth, MN

Are your photos stuffed in shoeboxes, drawers, their original envelopes... or worse, in one of many popular albums that chemically destroy the images they should be protecting? Years from now, will your family recognize their loved ones in your photos? Come and join Terri Thompson Neby, Photo Preservation/Creative Memories Consultant in learning safe, fun and creative ways to preserve and store your photos and memorabilia. Learn photo managing basics, quick organization tips; marking photos safely; gift giving and why and where to keep negatives.

MUSEUM OPEN -- REFRESHMENTS SERVED