



PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2014

Fall

Old Fashioned Christmas

On Saturday, December 6th from 2-5 pm, the Plymouth Historical Society and the Plymouth Park & Recreation Department are co-sponsoring the 28th Annual “OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS IN PLYMOUTH”. *Note this is a change; the event has been moved from Sunday to Saturday!* The purpose of the event is to provide some old fashioned holiday 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. The children can also see Santa’s reindeer and go for a hay ride pulled by Belgian horses with bells jingling. The rides are free, hot cider and cookies will be provided; carolers and making Christmas decorations are other activities for the children.

This year we again have our great story teller back. Bob Gasch will be telling holiday stories in the Carriage House, something you don’t want to miss! Also the Armstrong Chamber Singers will be singing holiday songs and delighting the children young and old.

On Friday, December 5th starting at 6:00 PM, we will decorate the old fashioned Christmas trees and the building. We are looking for help in bringing unique items that could be borrowed for the day to add some more old fashioned Christmas spirit.

Bring your friends, relatives, neighbors and kids ages 1 month to 100 years young. The annual event has attracted large crowds with some families having a perfect attendance record with their children since it started in 1987. We had a great time last year as we do every year.

Activities include:

Visit with Santa

Live Reindeer

*Old Fashioned Hay
Ride*

Hot Cider and Cookies

*Old Fashioned Xmas
Decorations*



Old Toy Train Display

Crafts

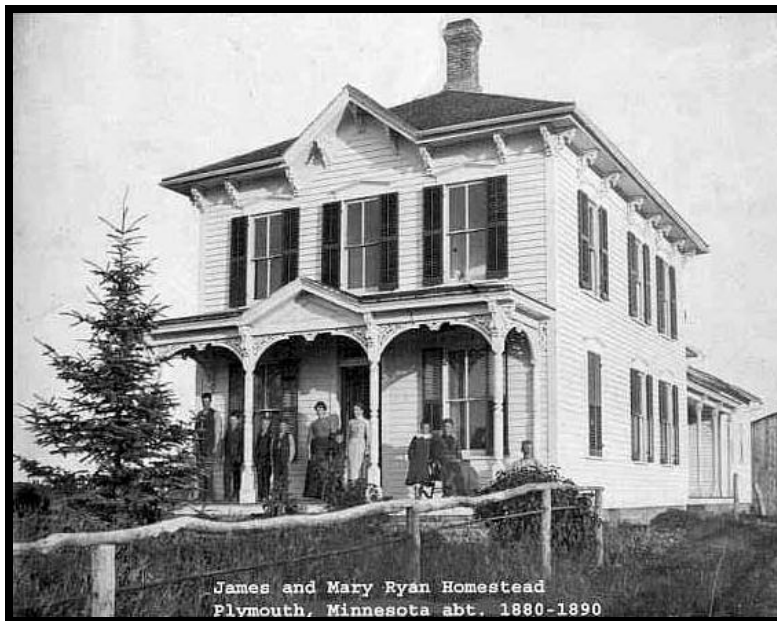
*Story Telling by
Bob Gasch*

*Music Groups
Armstrong Chamber
Singers
Messiah Recorder
Ensemble*

Plymouth History – A Tale of Two Houses

Plymouth from its beginnings in 1858 and for the next 100 years was dominated by farms. In the 1960's it was rapidly changing and farms were disappearing. Plymouth has a number of farm homes that have survived but most did not. This tale of two farm houses that by circumstances of their location had very different outcomes. Both were very elegant "Ladies" of their time and today we would probably call them "McMansions". Many farm houses were big as they may of had two or three generations living in the house. These houses were certainly the envy of their farm neighbors.

The Ryan farm house is pictured below. The pictures show that that James and Mary Ryan were successful farmers who raised 11 children. The children were Mary Elizabeth, Bridget, Catherine, Janie, John, Annie Cecelia, Ellen, Lawrence, Michael, Thomas and Theresa – whew!



The picture was probably taken by a traveling photographer who would sell photos and hand colored framed pictures as he traveled from farm to farm. He might have also sold the Ryan's postcards with a picture of the farm so they could send them to their relatives showing how successful they were in the far away place called Plymouth. We do the same thing today but much faster by sending photos via E-Mail, Texting, Facebook, etc.

A photographer took this view below showing the farm buildings in 1913 and if it was today he would be standing in the middle of 494. The photograph was hand colored and probably sold to the Ryan's. A Ryan descendant has the original picture which is mounted in a beautiful oval frame.



The above panoramic picture was cropped from a digital copy of the original hand colored framed picture.

The house was later owned by the Condon family who farmed the land for many years and later sold for development. The following is a cropped aerial photograph from 1967 and the farm is still being farmed. You can see Interstate 494 which was just built between Hwy 12 and Hwy 55 and opened in 1966. The Carlson Parkway interchange has yet to be built as it was completed in 1984. The new bridge and Carlson Parkway angled to the northeast and the farm house was located south of the Holiday Station. It is interesting to count the cars and trucks on the larger aerial photo on the newly opened section of 494. Oh for the good old days; it appeared there were only two trucks and 8 cars on 494 when the aerial photo was taken!



The picture below was taken in April 1980 by Dennis Jacobson, James and Mary Ryan was his grandparents. The forlorn elegant “lady” has lost the front porch, shutters, ginger bread and all the farm buildings and sits awaiting its fate.



All traces of the farms are gone today having been replaced with 494 Interstate Interchange, gas station and office buildings. The original 160 acres extended from just north of Carlson Parkway (Cty. Road 15) south to the 394/494 Interchange and into Minnetonka.

The Sandhoff Farm is our second farm house that faired better and today is Plymouth’s oldest house. Herman Sandhoff married Amelia Smith in 1863. Herman had built a log cabin on the south shore of

Lost Lake. In 1865 he built a two story house just south of the log cabin. As the family grew with seven children he kept adding on with a west wing and east wing. The following is a picture of the “Grand Lady” in all its glory at 74 feet long. Back then the front of the farm house faced south.



Herman Sandhoff brother’s and other Sandhoff relatives owned almost a section of land in Plymouth. Herman had 160 acres and when his brother Ferdinand was struck by lightening and died in 1875 he bought his 125 acres. Herman certainly had one of the largest farms in Plymouth. Herman died in 1911 and in 1913 the original 160 acres including the farm were sold. Herman’s son Ed Sandhoff cut off the east wing before the land was sold and moved it about ¼ mile east. We don’t know who the family was that purchased the farm but with a little digging at the Hennepin Cty Govt. Center the ownership lineage could be determined.



Above is a 1956 aerial photograph that was cropped from larger one and you can see the farm and Ed Sandhoff’s house is in the upper right hand corner of the picture. To help you determine where they were located; that is Revere Lane coming from Old Rockford Rd heading south. The east – west road to the farm is now 40th Ave N which now continues on around the south side of the lake.



Plymouth is changing fast as this is a 1967 aerial photograph of the same area. The old Sandhoff farm house is surrounded by new homes and fronts 40th Ave. N. Ed Sandhoff's house and 40 acres were sold when he passed away. Prior to that his sister Ida Sandhoff and niece Ida Koehne lived at Ed's house, none of the three were married.



The original Sandhoff house had several owners since 1913 and we are very fortunate that it wasn't torn down. In 1988 Marta and Steven Volbrecht purchased the house and have lovingly restored it. In 1999 they added back a somewhat smaller east wing. *We wonder if they have ever heard any strange noises in the night of someone trying to saw off the east wing and move it again?*

It is such a wonderful treasure here in Plymouth; Marta and Steven are to be commended for their great effort. Since it is the oldest house in Plymouth it can truly be called:

“The Grand Lady of Plymouth”

Resources

What did it look like where your house or business is today? Plymouth Historical Society has a website and one section is titled “Resources”.

<http://plymouthmnhistoricalsociety.com/>

There are some great sites for maps and aerial photographs. One of the best is located at the Univ. of Minnesota. It is interactive and you can filter the years you would like to view. You can download a copy of a map so you can zoom in a look at an area in greater detail.

<https://www.lib.umn.edu/borchert>

At the bottom of their home page is a link to the interactive aerial photographs. The link is shown below.

<https://www.lib.umn.edu/apps/mhapo/>

Early Models of Logging & Trapping

Our model maker Gene Heezen has again excelled at his hobby of model making and wood carving. Gene donated these two exquisite models depicting fur trade era in the 1850's and model of Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox, the folk lore of Minnesota's logging history.



2nd Grade Class Tours

Again this October the Plymouth Historical Society hosted second grade classes from Birchview and Oakwood Elementary Schools. The event was organized by Bob Gasch – story teller. The children arrived by bus with adults for each six students. They are very well organized into smaller groups and toured the museum, carriage house and Bob Gasch took them for a story telling walk in the “Big Woods” between raindrops. Kay Bertrand, Betty Jacobson, Dennis Jacobson, Vern Dotseth, Ben Broman, Paul Ellefson and Gary Schiebe dressed in period clothing hosted the young visitors. It is a great test of one’s vocal chords as every 15 minutes you have to repeat the oral historical narrative of your respective area on the tour. Great fun for everyone and here are couple of the traditional pictures taken of the tour classes.



Website

The Plymouth Historical Society website is:

www.plymouthmnhistoricalsociety.com

Check us out!

Note: All past newsletters dating back to 1986 are available on-line in PDF format for viewing or printing.

Donations

Donated by Genevevie Lane:

- Numerous pictures and fancy framed marriage certificate from 1893 between Anna Ernst and H. Mengelkoch.

Donated by District #284 Wayzata School District for history tours:

- \$150

Donated by Jennifer & Kevin Weist:

- \$40

Donated by Kay Bertrand:

- Late 1940's – early 1950's Township map of Plymouth with street names.

Donated by Jim Eckert:

- Several boxes of 1976 Bi-Centennial artifacts that Jim had collected.

Donated by Betty Gustafson:

- Block Plane & Cold Chisel

Donated by Janet Leaf:

- Satin Dress and Vanity Set
- Set of wooden shaft gold clubs and bag
- Two 1920-30's fly fishing rods
- Box of letters



Meetings

New - The Museum is also open the 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month in the afternoon from 1:00 to 3:00 PM during the Spring, Summer and Fall.

The monthly business meetings are held on the 4th Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Plymouth Historical Society Building, located at 3605 Fernbrook Lane North, Plymouth, MN.

Open by special appointment in January, February & March

Current Officers

The following are the present officers:

President	Dennis Jacobson	763-972-0988
Vice President	Kay Bertrand,	763-249-0138
Secretary	Betty Jacobson	763-972-0988
Treasurer	Gary Schiebe	763-473-4889



Mailing and Membership List

If you are not a member and want to sign up or if you have any questions, please call: Kay Bertrand, 763-249-0138.

The 2014 annual dues are:

Individual	\$10.00
Family	\$15.00
Individual Lifetime	\$100.00
Family Lifetime	\$150.00

If you would like the newsletter delivered via E-mail please notify Kay Bertrand or send an e-mail to: info@plymouthmnhistoricalsociety.com

If you do, it is a plus for both of us. When you receive via e-mail it will be in color. When sent by mail it is in black and white and costs PHS about \$2.00 per copy to print and mail.