



PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2013

Summer

Preserving History

The City of Plymouth is cleaning house. They are going through stored documents and digitizing the material. As a result they have been on the look out for any material that might be of interest to the Plymouth Historical Society and have saved some gems.

- The first one was copies of the Plymouth Voter that was the forerunner of the City of Plymouth Newspaper we all receive today. It was started in 1958 and published by a group of private citizens funded through donations. They stopped publishing in 1970's. PHS had quite a few of the Plymouth Voters but this now completes the set and can be viewed at PHS. The Plymouth Voter provides a glimpse into the happenings in Plymouth's past. Everything on local interest was reported on just like today.
- A request a few months ago by our local newspaper that was putting together an article about City/Village Managers in Plymouth since Laurie Ahrens was retiring. Everybody knew the first Village Manager died soon after he was hired but nobody could remember his name or the circumstances surrounding his death. The old Plymouth Voter of October 1970 came to the rescue. It was Angus Crawford who was hired August 25 and died December 5. Jim Willis was then hired as reported in the May 1971 Plymouth Voter. Here are excerpts from the Plymouth Voter.

CRAWFORD DEATH SHOCKS VILLAGE

Plymouth Village Administrator, Angus Crawford, died unexpectedly December 5 of an apparent heart attack while refereeing a wrestling match at Concordia College in St. Paul. He was 42.

Mayor Hilde expressed the following feelings about Mr. Crawford: "The entire council and staff is grief stricken over the loss of Angus. He fulfilled all our hopes for an outstanding manager, which we had kept before us during our recruiting. In the short three and one half months which he served as Plymouth's first manager, he did a remarkable job of taking over in the midst of several large projects, many changes and a heavy load of activity. Angus had gained the confidence and respect of the staff, Council and citizens.

Since he was a boy he had desired to serve his fellow man in some direct and meaningful way, as a teacher or in government. He chose the field of local government over state and federal because he felt it was the best means to be closer to the people and to serve them in the most direct fashion. We intend to honor him as Plymouth's first Village Manager with some suitable memorial, which will be determined and announced by the Council in the near future."

Several Voter staff members had the opportunity to work with Mr. Crawford. We appreciated his helpful cooperation, and we express our heartfelt sympathy to his family.

At a special Council meeting Sunday, December 6, it was decided that the search for another administrator would begin immediately. In the meantime, Dewan Barnes will resume the position of acting manager, the position he held before Mr. Crawford was appointed.

Willis Accepts Challenge

"I'm very impressed," exclaimed newly appointed Village Manager James G. Willis, "with the area, the friendly people, and the calibre of the elected leadership. We are most excited about moving to Plymouth."

Mr. Willis will assume the duties of Village Manager May 3 and feels that his position will be most challenging. Mayor Hilde referred to Willis as a "young, bright, enthusiastic, aggressive, and rather exceptional person" who was hired as a result of a comprehensive effort. Hilde said, "It is the feeling of the Council that Plymouth needs a top quality manager now, at the beginning of their growth, rather than later when everything has been laid out. The taxpayer gets more for his tax dollar by having a highly competent person like Mr. Willis."

Willis, 33 years old, was born in San Diego, California. He did his undergraduate work at Simpson College in Iowa and received his master's degree from the University of Michigan. He has been the City Manager of Battle Creek, Michigan, and is leaving there because of a desire to advance professionally. He considers Plymouth to be a community with outstanding potential for planned and orderly growth and sees his biggest challenge to be planning for that balanced growth. He feels that the Planning Commission and Council have been wise to push the utility expansion as a top priority project and is looking forward to working with them.

Mr. Willis stated that he was impressed with the interest the citizens of Plymouth take in their village through neighborhood groups and other civic endeavors which he learned much about by reading the VOTER. He hopes that he will be able to provide a high level of service to the people. Mr. Willis reiterated that as "a very newcomer" the entire



James Willis

area is quite impressive and he, his wife Barbara and daughter Susan are excited about becoming a part of it.

- A big thanks goes out to City Staff who are keeping a sharp eye out for these historical artifacts. In cleaning out storage box there were two ledger books in the bottom. These ledger books were used by the Town Clerk/Treasurer to list all income (from County, dance hall licenses, etc) and disbursement of the Township of Plymouth for services rendered. One of the books was from 1895 but in the back listed payments from 1881 to 1895 and the other covered 1931 to 1936. The ledger books identified all payments made for roadwork, charity, supplies, gopher bounty, etc.
- They provide a wonderful glimpse into Plymouth's past. The list of expenditures isn't large but you can be sure the discussions about taxes and spending probably weren't very different than they are today. The majority of expenditures were for road maintenance e.g. grading, bridge repair, hauling gravel, replacing culverts and road planks for wet/soft areas. The most interesting items were the significant amount of charity expenditures provided during the depression. The so called "Good Old Day" when life was simple but very hard. The person or company is listed that was paid by check and the services provided. In the last column is the payment for those services. In some cases they mentioned the individual receiving the charity.
- The old Town Hall was 10 years old in 1895 and Thomas Ditter was paid \$23.00 to paint it. The Ditter farm was just SW of the Town Hall approximately where the Plymouth Creek Center is located. It should also be noted in a few lines above the reference to painting the town hall was the assessor's 1895 yearly salary of \$66.00 for John Hughes which was a part time function. Below that are other items of interest. The cleaning and scrubbing of the Town Hall cost \$4.00 and Insurance was \$1.46. The Town Hall was heated with wood and periodically a full cord of wood at \$7.00 per cord would be delivered.

Year.	Month.	Day.	To Whom Paid.	On What Account.	Amount.
1895	June	24	John W. Hughes	assessor's salary 1895.	66 00
			Thomas Ditter	Services as Supervisor	17 85
			Peter Schmitz	Furnishing 20 Guide Posts	2 50
			Thomas Ditter	Painting Town Hall	23 00
			Timothy McGowan	Constable's fee	3 10
			J. B. Howe	Justice's fee	1 90

June 1895

.. 27 - 168 -	Beauf Leullie -	Cleaning & scrubbing Town Hall	4 00
.. 30 - 169 -	M. Jordan -	Cash paid Ins on Town Hall	1 43

June 1932

✓ ✓ 446 -	John Coanagh -	Cord of wood for Town Hall	7 00
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June 1935

- Gophers must have been a big problem after the land was cleared for farming. In the summer there are many listings of gopher bounties being paid but don't know much was paid for each gopher tail. These are excerpts from one ledger page of payments made in June 1932 with the family names that many will recognize.

June 10 - 145 -	Ed Hughes	-	Work on Rds No 3.	15 00
" 10 - 146 -	Oscar Kruger	"	" " " No 1	33 82
" 25 - 147 -	Math Altier	-	Services as Overseer #3	47 40
" 27 - 148 -	Victor Kinnert	-	Catch Gopher's	3 02
" 27 - 149 -	Ray Jennings	"	" "	1 57
" 27 - 150 -		"	" "	1 48

" 28 - 163 -	Robt Begin	-	Catching Gophers	27 2
" 27 - 164 -	Merle Judy	"	" "	4 2

" 30 - 171 -	Philip Adams	-	Catching Gophers	1 56
" 30 - 172 -	Vernon Roehl	"	" "	28

" 30 - 180 -	Ralph Reimer	-	Catching Gophers	1 35
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- During the depression times were tough and Plymouth Township took steps to help their neighbors who were down and out. One example is the Town Hall was a "food shelf" during the depression. Per the Ernst Family remembrances of the depression. Sacks of beans, flour, sugar, potatoes, etc. were made available by the Federal Govt. once a month. The basic commodities were hauled to the Town Hall and people in need were notified to come and pick up the food. Pride made some reluctant to let their neighbors know they were in need. As a result when the majority of staples were distributed, then Catherine Ernst would haul the rest to a store room they had at their farm. She was on the school board and knew of families in need. Also she would discretely contact others in need and have them stop by for coffee and visit awhile. She then was able to distribute the balance of the basic food supplies. The 1931-1936 Town Clerk book has many examples that covered everything from food, rent, fuel, medical services, and children needing shoes, clothes and even burial services. If we didn't have these records we wouldn't know about our caring citizens looking out for one another so long ago.

Dec 10 340	H. L. Sterling	-	Room Board and Care John Holmberg	30 00
" 341	H. L. Sterling	-	" " " " " " " " " " " "	30 00

Room Board and Care

Jan 3-1935	346 - Albert Schiebs	Milk furnished	710
"	347 Northland Milk Co	" "	795
"	348 - John McCluskey	" "	459
"	349 - Bergstein Co	Beats furnished Mrs Demm	2000
"	350 - John Teekes	Food for Mrs Roach	700
"	351 - Hector Scott	Gas furnished	175
"	352 - J. Tolstrom	Clothing for Mrs & Teekes	200
"	353 - Golden Valley Lbr Co	Coal furnished	3355

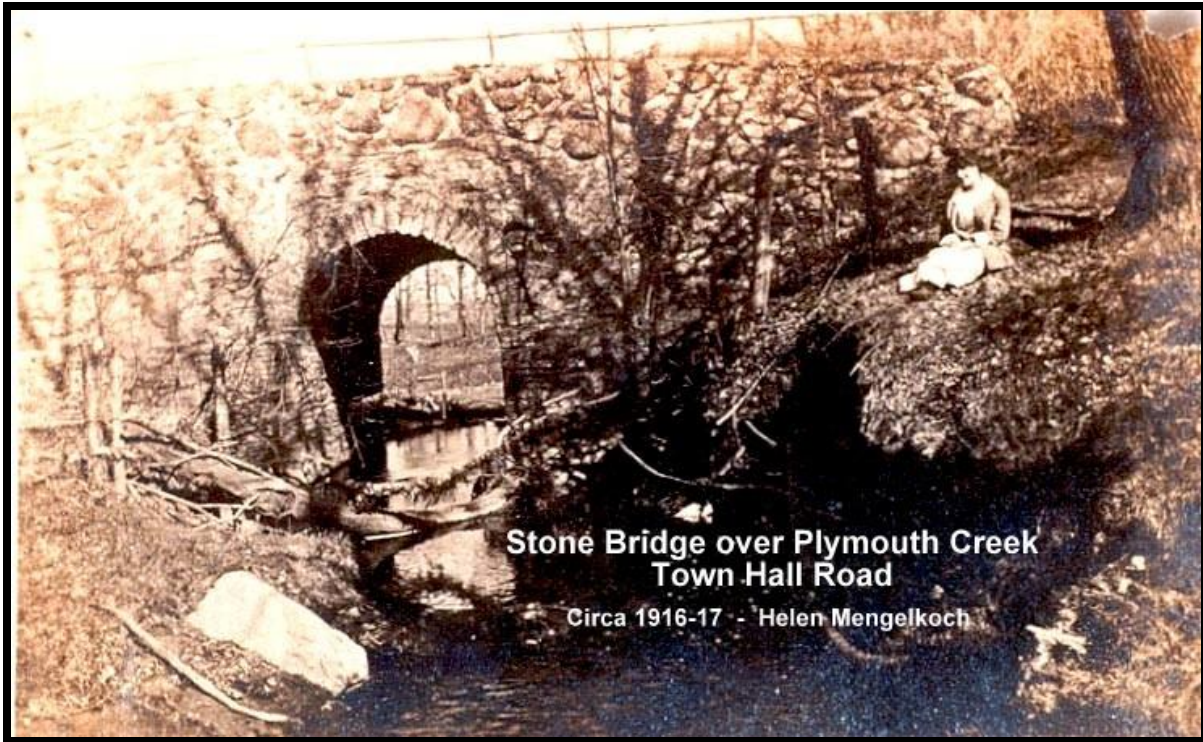
"	449 - E. M. Schiebs	Groceries furnished	2882
"	450 - Leonard Schiebs	Milk "	1125
"	451 - Howard Lbr Co	Relief coal "	1430
"	452 - Tolstrom Store	Clothing "	1000
"	453 - Ayers Grocery	Groceries "	534
"	454 - John J. McCluskey	Rent for Norman Johnson	500
"	455 - Golden Valley Lbr	Relief coal furnished	2987
"	456 - Northland Milk Co	Milk furnished	1161
"	457 - Hayata Drug Co	Medicine furnished	125
"	458 - Bullon R. Sawyer	Rent for A. Roelke	300
"	459 - Hector Scott	Groceries furnished	750
"	460 - Turner & Link	One cord wood "	700
"	461 - R. H. Moses	Rent for Mrs Roach	1000
"	462 - John E. Scott	Groceries furnished	1100
"	463 - Ted Lucien	Rent for Gilbert Engen	1000

Charity provided January 1935

"	340 - Squid Kettinger	Funeral acct of John Anderson	7875
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"	374 - Parkers Lake Cemetery	Grave for John Anderson	1000
"	375 - Herb Johnson	Opening and closing grave of J.A.	800

Charity Burial of John Anderson



Stone Bridge over Plymouth Creek
Town Hall Road

Circa 1916-17 - Helen Mengelkoch

- This is the only picture taken circa 1916-1917 that PHS has of the stone arch bridge on Fernbrook Lane (Town Hall Road). It was located just south of the Old Town Hall and Plymouth Creek flowed under the bridge. It was a well constructed bridge and lasted about 80 years up until the 1970's. That was when Fernbrook Lane was widened and sewer/water installed under the road and creek.
- We now know that it was constructed in August 1894 and who worked on the building of the bridge. The following are a few excerpts from the Town Clerks payment register. It appears that Henry Mengelkoch was the primary stone mason as he was paid \$121.50. It appears the total cost of the bridge was around \$350 - \$400 as there were other payments for planks and hauling around that time but the register didn't specifically mention the stone arch bridge.

Aug	16	Paid Clemens Roehl for furnishing and hauling stone for the arch bridge near Town Hall	No 41 \$23.70
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Aug	16	Paid August Roehl for hauling sand, cement, lime, and lumber for bridge and work on bridge near town hall	No 48 \$47.90
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Aug 14 Paid Robert Ernst for work
on stone arch bridge near Town Hall 1644 \$3.75 ✓

Aug 16 Paid William Donohue for
work on stone arch bridge near
Town hall 1647 \$6.00 ✓

Aug 16 Paid Jacob Roths for furnishing 33
loads of sand for the stone arch
bridge near Town Hall 1653 \$3.30 ✓

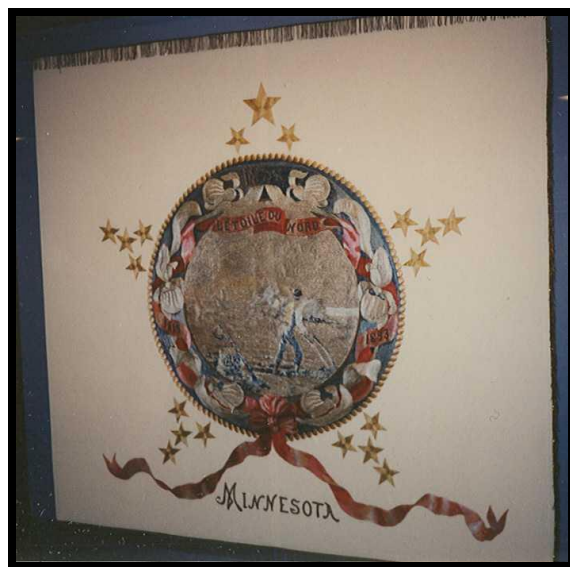
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1894 Aug 16 Paid Henry Mengelkoch for building
the stone arch bridge near Town Hall
and other work billing the same 1654 \$121.50 ✓

Aug 20 Paid Catharine James Per John
Jermakes for furnishing 16 perch
of stone for footing for stone arch
bridge near Town Hall 1645 \$40.00 ✓

Aug 20 Paid Twin City Lime & Cement Com-
pany for furnishing cement and
lime for the stone arch bridge 52 ✓ \$52.00 ✓

Minnesota Flag History



The first flag of the state of Minnesota was adopted in 1893; at that time a prototype flag was commissioned from the local embroiderer Pauline Gerhardin Fjelde, which won a gold medal at the Chicago World's Fair.



The 1893 flag, designed by the Amelia Hyde Center of Minneapolis,¹ was white on one side and light blue on the other. In the center was the state seal wreathed with white moccasin flowers, on a blue field. A red ribbon in the seal bore a motto, *L'étoile du nord* (French for "The North Star"). The years 1819 (establishment of Fort Snelling), 1858 (statehood) and 1893 (adoption of the first state flag) appeared in gold around the state seal. "Minnesota" was written under the state seal in gold and 19 gold stars arranged in clusters to form the points of a star, representing the fact that Minnesota was the 19th state added after the original 13 states. 87 circles around the seal represent Minnesota's 87 counties.

The flag was redesigned in 1957, eliminating the different-colored sides in favor of a blue field on both sides. This made the flag less expensive to manufacture and also more durable in high winds. This opportunity was used to correct an error of the flowers used on the seal; instead of a Pink and White Lady's Slipper, the 1893 flag showed a variant that was not native to the state.



Source: Wikipedia

Lumber Jack “Wanabes”

After the spring storm one of our PHS members Gene Heezen had a large tree come down in the back yard. He thought it would be interesting to see how well large antique saws would work on the tree. He offered to sharpen the antique saws but needed two lumber jacks to handle the tough job. It didn't take much convincing as we have two members, Ben & Vern that wanted to turn back the clock and become “Wanabe Lumber Jacks”. They even dressed the part but found out just how hard of a job it was to earn a day's wages in the “Good Old Days”. Just like the olden days the Lumber Jacks carried a rifle just in case they encountered an angry bear. I think they might have been a little jumpy as there hasn't been a bear in Plymouth for probably more than 75 years. They thought they heard a bear and jumped into action but it was a false alarm.



Lease Agreement

The Plymouth Historical Society has renewed a ten year lease agreement of the Old Town Hall with the City of Plymouth. It is a continuation of the partnership with the City to preserve the history of Plymouth for generations to come. The cost to PHS is one dollar for the ten year lease. PHS is required to have a General Liability insurance policy which brings PHS within the guidelines established for like organizations.



Diane Evans – City of Plymouth accepting PHS lease check
Gary Schiebe – PHS receiving signed lease agreement

New Open House Days

Attention -- The Plymouth Historical Society Museum has added additional open house days. We will be open the 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month in the afternoon from 1:00 to 3:00 PM starting June 2nd and running through October. Don't miss out on this great opportunity to see the new exhibits and learn more about Plymouth's wonderful history.

The Museum is located at 3605 Fernbrook Lane N, Plymouth, MN in the "Old Town Hall".

Website

The Plymouth Historical Society has a web site. The address 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 the Mel & Betty Mastley Estate:

- Black Fur Muff from 1890 in perfect condition
- 1940's era Baby Buggy

Donated by Gene Heezen:

- Model of Grandma’s Kitchen
- Wall hanging of Mission Farms
- Stable Nativity Scene

Donated by City of Plymouth:

- Copies of the Plymouth Voter starting from 1958 when it was first published.
- Town Clerk Treasurers books from 1931-1936 and 1895 with disbursements listed from 1881 to 1895.
- Framed pictures of the current City Hall before the major addition to house the Police Dept.

Donated by Bill Sieloff

- 78 RPM Record Albums from the 1930’s & 1940’s
- WWI Army Helmet and misl. buttons and other items

Donated by: Vern Peterson:

- Plymouth's first, second and third fire paging monitors
- Jon Pahl property flooding papers

Donated by Plymouth Lions Club:

- \$500



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 2013 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 \$1.50 per copy to print and mail.