



# PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

August 1985

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+ + + WE ARE CELEBRATING + + +

OLD TOWN HALL IS ONE HUNDRED YEARS OLD THIS YEAR and we are celebrating! Located at 3605 Fernbrook Lane (formerly Town Hall Road), the small white wood frame building pictured above originally served as the official town meeting hall and office until 1958. The building now serves as museum and meeting hall for the Plymouth Historical Society.

THE PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY WAS FOUNDED 10 YEARS AGO and we are celebrating!

We are commemorating these two events on Sunday September 15 from 2:00 to 5:00 pm on the Museum grounds. Our main purpose is two-fold: to provide an afternoon of family fun and to make the public more aware of the rich history of Plymouth. There will be amusements for everyone - having your picture taken with an old buggy, a fish pond for the kiddies, a VCR tape on old Plymouth and some of its early settlers, popcorn, food and much more. The Museum is also open for tours and a chance for long time residents to "remember when..."

A crazy quilt and \$50 cash will be raffled, and \$50 in cash prizes will be given away on the grounds.

A light meal of sloppy joes, ice cream, bars and beverages will also be available in addition to the goodies at the bake sale and farmers market.

To help get some of the inactive members involved in the activities of the Society, we are asking all members to donate items for either the bakesale or farmers market, wrapped and priced.

All proceeds will go towards materials used for restoration and preservation items for the museum.

Put Sept. 15 on your calendar and come help us celebrate!

CELEBRATE 100 YEARS - GET YOUR SOUVENIR MUG

Souvenir mugs with the pictures of the Old Town Hall and new City Hall will be available at the Centennial Celebration. A five dollar donation is asked for these high quality mugs that you can take home as a reminder of the century of Plymouth's progress.

PARTICIPATE IN THE PICTURE HUNT

At the Museum for the next several months is a board with about a dozen pictures that pose riddles - Whose father is he? Were you in this class picture? Was this your family home? We don't know who these people are either.

Be sure to see this display on your next visit and help the Society solve the mysteries.

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OLD HOUSES- OLD MEMORIES - UPDATE ON HISTORICAL SITES SURVEY  
by Bea Jordan and Alice Mellen.

Two hundred miles and eight rolls of film later we have nearly finished identifying and photographing about 150 homes built in Plymouth before 1920.

Now comes the most difficult part of our project - trying to fill in the blanks of who lived there and what those people were like.

Even as we were doing our initial assessment, two buildings were demolished before we got much more than a photograph of them.

What can you tell us of the building that used to be at 5750 Vicksburg Lane, pictured at right?



After reading Jim Sazevich's item in the July 14 Mpls Star & Tribune about the length of time to do a complete house history, we wonder if we haven't taken on more than we can handle, but we are going to keep on it any how. A labor of love is a hard thing to give up.

On a recent visit to read and interpret an abstract, we found some 1930s Minneapolis Journals that had been used insulation in the attic; the present homeowner gave them to the Society and also offered to do further research into his home to assist us.

If you have an abstract or any momentos of an old home in Plymouth that you would share with the Society, please contact Alice Melleen 473-2846. We are trying to retell the story of Plymouth's early days through pictures, family stories, and by histories of her old buildings and early businesses.

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ANNUAL MEETING NEWS

At the Open House and Annual Meeting last May about 50 people heard Grace Swanson's talk on the Hinkley Fire. Her slide presentation generated many questions and comments. Thank you Grace for an interesting evening.

Also at the meeting, officers were elected for the coming year. Their names and a brief description of their duties are as follows:

Bea Jordan - President. Bea's primary function will be to

(Annual meeting news - Con't)

preside at the monthly meetings; she will continue her work on the Historical Sites Survey and with the city government on restoring names of streets to the original.

Alice Mellen - Vice President. She will continue doing publicity and newsletter for the Society, and will also continue working on the Historical Sites Survey with Bea.

Ginny Ohman - Secretary. Ginny is continuing in this capacity and is also assists with artwork for publicity.

Harvey Schiebe - Treasurer. Harvey pays the bills and invests the funds from mug and rummage sales. He also interacts with the city officials regarding city funding of some of our utility payments and building maintainance.

Other Board Members with specific functions include:

Mark Eckes serves as liaison with Plymouth City officials and Public Speaking Coordinator; he has also put together a slide show on Plymouth's history and VCR tape with the help of Duane Ford.

Jack Malmstedt continues to keep track of membership.

Edith Hoperstad is Accessions and Cataloging Chair. She and her committee work identifying and marking artifacts, and setting up displays.

Vern Peterson has informally assumed responsibility for care of the Old Log Cabin on County Road 6.

Joyce McCaughey works with the West Medicine Lake Garden Club to beautify the grounds of Old Town Hall.

Other Board Members also actively participate in the monthly meetings and support the Society however they can; they are Adeline Schmidt, Margaret Faue, Vern Dotseth, Florence Kardong and new members Mabel Swanson and Duane Ford.

This board and a handful of faithful members (Fern Schiebe, Gil Hopperstad, Mary Malmstedt, Myrtle Eckes) work very hard each month to help preserve the history of Plymouth and maintain the Old Town Hall. These are but a few of the total membership of 50 that do support the organization and what it stands for.

Where does the rest of the membership fit in?  
You showed enough interest to pay your dues. Do you care enough to want to help preserve our history and see that your ideas to better the Society are acted upon? Come to the monthly meetings help us plan for a bigger and better future of preserving Plymouth's past. Call Jack Malmstedt (473-4493) for membership information or Alice Mellen (473-2846) for program information.

#### WE'VE GOT A BUGGY IN OUR ???

A two-seat horse-drawn buggy was donated to the PHS by Jayne Hilde. It will be shown at the Centennial Celebration and is presntly being stored in Vern Peterson's barn.

To store both the buggy and other artifacts that are beginning to overflow the museum, the PHS will be talking to the Plymouth city officials about the possibility of putting some sort of storage building on the Old Town Hall grounds. A suggestion was made to possibly get a barn from an old homestead that was about to be demolished, thus saving nother portion of Plymouth's history.

CELEBRITY IN OUR MIDST

New Board member Mabel Swanson was chosen to be one of the ambassadors in the Aquatennial Parade; she was nominated for Senior Queen and was sponsored by the Golden Valley A.A.R.P.

NEW ACQUISITIONS

Recently acquired from the Heidelberger family are several farm implements including corn sheller and wood auger. We have also gotten some pictures of the old Webb Dance Hall on Bass Lake from Edithe Munn. Thank you for your donations.

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To those who have helped in our research for the historical sites survey and have expressed an interest in the Museum or Society activities, complimentary copies of this year's newsletters are being sent to thank them for their interest and cooperation. We welcome their continued support. The Plymouth Historical Society also exchanges newsletters with other Societies in the western suburbs.

MARK ECKES' NAKED LADIES!!!! (a tale for everyone)

In the process of picking up several unused, soon to be demolished display cases from the warehouse of a local department store, Mark Eckes, genial scavenger for the Society, asked if the store had any mannequins that were surplus. Much to his surprise, he was shown many cartons of parts and was told he could have them all, free for the taking. Soon he had a 12' box van and his pickup truck full of boxes.

He unloaded them into his garage and the fun began of trying to put the parts together. After several hours of here-a-leg, there-an-arm, several were assembled in Mark's driveway, unbeknownst to his wife. When she looked out the window, there was Mark with a naked lady!!

Eventually he also found enough parts for four more women, several children and a man (all of whom were similarly dressed).

These end result are many mannequins to display items of clothing donated to the Society and many tales to be told. Thanks to Mark for his efforts.

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Our sympathy is extended to the family of former Board President Vern Dotseth on the recent death of his mother.

1885



1985

In the early 1880s the rapidly growing town of Plymouth came to realize it needed a public building from which to carry on its official business.

It was probably in the fall of 1884 that Clem Menglekoch and Tom Ditter were asked by the Town Board to see about building a town hall. Clem was a carpenter and Tom a lather and plasterer. After much thought and planning they drew up plans for a modest white frame building that could serve the purpose.

The total cost was agreed upon at \$2625 for everything, from 6" wide shingles to a stove; this amounted to about \$3 per square foot, and was paid for completely from local taxes.

The idea of building this town hall was overwhelmingly approved by the townsfolk at a special meeting held on the lawn of Dan Parker's house. Those voting yes were asked to stand on the west side and greatly outnumbered those opposed standing on the east side.

As the two men studied a map of Plymouth, Clem flicked the ash from his cigar and pointed a long bony finger at the geographic center of Plymouth and proceeded to sell Tom on the logic of that being a good place to build a building. After this site was chosen, Charles Farrington donated some pasture land with the agreement that a fence be put up to keep his cows from making slippery spots near the building. The road in front was soon to be called Town Hall Cross Road.

Construction methods were quite simple compared to today's complicated ways. No survey was needed and the building was located by driving corner stakes so that the least number of trees would be removed. Neither architects plans or inspections were required.

All material had to be hauled by teams of horses or oxen and many hands put up the structure at a traditional "Building Bee".

Construction on the building began in the spring of 1885 and was completed in the late fall of the same year.

As you wonder the Old Town Hall, try to picture yourself in in the mid 1880s.....think of the issues the town fathers who met there voted on.....savor the sights and memories of yesteryear!

## PLYMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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