



V A L L E Y G R O V E N E W S L E T T E R

APRIL 2002

BY THE VALLEY GROVE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

A STEEPLE UPDATE

As you read this newsletter, carpenters from River City Builders & Millworks are using a 120 foot crane to install cedar shingles on the steeple. While at the peak, measurements will be made for the future creation of a finial replica. Don Hope, a board member, brought a photo of how the present finial was placed on the steeple. The photo showed two men (without safety harnesses) at the top of a ladder, which was really three long ladders lashed together, end to end. Needless to say this approach would not meet present day OSHA standards! In other steeple work, RCBM cabinet maker Steve Erickson has hand carved and replicated the beautiful fan and arches that adorn three sides of the steeple. More improvements: the window behind the organ, long blocked out, has been rebuilt and will be re-installed in its original spot on the south side of the church.

A REAL FAMILY TREE

The restoration plan calls for only 150 trees to grace our newly blooming prairie. Sponsoring a Valley Grove tree for someone you love is a rare and literally once in a lifetime chance, a way to leave your mark in the world, shelter birds, replenish the valley and become a living legacy in a historic landscape. Ken's Grove is the start-three bur oaks on top of the hill planted in honor of board member Ken Sahlin. If you would like to sponsor a tree or a group of trees, stay tuned: we hope to plant them after the first prairie burn in spring 2003.

SIGNS ALONG THE WAY

Our new carved wooden sign is installed at Hwy. 246 and Cty. Rd. 29 with decorative finials like those on the VG steeple to come later. Thanks also to artist and Valley Grove neighbor John Maakestad, who has also hand carved another sign that will be placed near the site.

GOT PAINT? WE DO!

We were granted the primer and paint we requested from the Valspar company through the Initiative Fund of Southeastern and South Central Minnesota. *Valspar's Minnesota Beautiful Picture It Painted* program helps non-profit groups preserve their treasured buildings. Many thanks to the Fund board!!

WELL ENOUGH, THANK YOU

Not only will the well be dug this spring, but hydrants will be installed around the perimeter of the cemetery, which will allow us to water the prairie trees more easily. Thanks again to the The Frederick & Margaret L. Weyerhaeuser Foundation for the generous donation.

FAREWELL TO VALLEY GROVE FRIENDS

Arnold Rudninger of Faribault, a Valley Grove Preservation Society board member, passed away in March. He lived in the Valley Grove community during his younger years. After retiring from Owatonna Tool Co., he enjoyed woodworking, inventing and Sons of Norway activities. His many contributions to our Society will be missed.

Juel Halverson of Northfield passed away this winter. He also spent his early years in the Valley Grove community. Juel was active in the society in the early 90's. He was a very generous contributor to the Valley Grove Land Preservation Fund.

TRACKING YOUR ANCESTORS

Al and Cynthia Mallery of Buffalo, Minnesota were researching the family tree when they discovered Valley Grove last fall and found his great-great grandparents Ole and Ingebor Bronson of Hallingdahl, Norway are buried there. The Mallerys came to Christmas Eve service at Valley Grove-their first time. If you have any genealogical information about the Bronsons or their descendants the Narems, there is a family reunion this summer. Please call Al at 612-242-4026.

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MUSIC IN MAY

The Carleton Pro Musica with director Tony Holt will offer an informal spring concert at Valley Grove at 1 p.m. on Sunday, May 19. Pro Musica is a group of Carleton students who are early music singers and instrumentalists. Tony Holt received bachelor's and master's degrees from Oxford University. A singer since age 7, he was included as one of the choristers at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. He has sung professionally in a Cathedral Choir and in the BBC Singers, and more recently was a founding member of the King's Singers, an internationally renowned, six-voice male vocal ensemble. Since 1987 he has divided his time among professional soloing in oratorio, writing record jacket notes, producing records, and being a classical disc jockey.

ART IN JUNE

Wine, cheese, music and art will mark the summer solstice at the Valley Grove "Earthly Beauty" art show. The event will focus on regional and rural landscapes and nature images. The show opens Friday, June 21 at 7 p.m. -remember the sun is up past 9 p.m. -and continues all day Saturday, June 22. A special prize will be given to the best image of Valley Grove itself; so start shooting, painting, weaving or drawing it now. For more information on the show, please contact Linda Schneewind at (507) 664-9140.

COUNTRY SOCIAL AND JELL-O CONTEST

The Second Annual Valley Grove Country Social and Jell-O Contest will be held on Sunday, September 15. Minnesota Supreme Court Judge Joan Lancaster, a St. Olaf graduate, Jell-O pro and Northfield native, will be on the prestigious Jell-O Judging Panel. There will be music, food and a quilt show in the works, too.

MISSING PARTS DEPARTMENT

Things have drifted away from Valley Grove over the decades. If you have a part of the original chandelier from the stone church, for example, we need one if we are going to reproduce that chandelier. We are also seeking old photographs of Valley Grove or events at Valley Grove, such as photos taken the day the bell was pulled from the stone church to the white church. Please contact us if you locate such items. We would love to copy them for our archives and displays and be able to share them with everyone.

PROTECTING THE PAST

Our archives have been inventoried and moved to the American Norwegian Historical Association at St. Olaf College for safekeeping and permanent storage— thanks to the diligence of VG board member Mary Jones.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Valley Grove Preservation Society annual meeting will be held Thursday, April 18th at 7:30 p.m. The meeting will take place at Valley Grove Church.

VALLEY GROVE CALENDAR

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| April 18 | Annual Meeting - 7:30 p.m. |
| April 20 | Spring Clean-Up - 9:00-12:00 |
| May 4 | Brouillet-Clausen Wedding |
| May 18 | Borene-Graff Wedding |
| May 19 | Carleton Pro Musica - 1:00 p.m. |
| June 1 | Somdahl-Larson Wedding |
| June 29 | Feldman-Bilmore Wedding |
| July 7 | UCC Northfield Service |
| July 21 | Dennison Vang Church Service |

STAY IN TOUCH

Our new web page is www.valleygrovemn.com. Write us with your Valley Grove church reminiscences, your fundraising suggestions, your recollections of people and events past at Valley Grove and your ideas for its future.

Valley Grove Preservation Society
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