Welcome back! We missed you.

After a 15-month hiatus, the Nicollet County Historical Society is excited to welcome you back through our doors. Thank you for your continued support and patience during this unprecedented time. Each familiar face we see through the front doors brings a smile to our faces. We hope to make your visit as enjoyable as possible while adhering to our health and safety protocols.

Keeping us all safe.

We’ve put safety measures in place to protect the health of our visitors, staff, and volunteers:

- We are conducting enhanced cleaning of high-touch surfaces and providing hand-sanitizing stations for visitors.
- Masks are encouraged to protect our visitors who cannot be vaccinated.
- We still recommend keeping your distance between other groups or visitors.
- If you feel sick, have flu-like symptoms, or have been in contact with someone who has recently had COVID-19, please visit us another time.
- Many interactive components have been removed for safety reasons.

Traverse des Sioux

The Many Rivers Chapter of the Prairie Enthusiasts continues their efforts to restore the prairie on Traverse des Sioux. The volunteer group has been diligently fighting invasive plants that are encroaching on the young prairie plants now showing beautiful signs of their success.

Despite a hot summer so far, the prairie looks much better this year, with more desirable prairie plants over the weedy ones. Burning was not possible this spring. Instead, it was mowed mid-June to prevent annual weeds from setting seed and allowing more sun to reach the perennial prairie plants.

Stop out to the prairie soon and take a stroll through this beautiful, living exhibit.
Members
Thank you to the following renewing and new members of NCHS as of 23 July 2021.

Renewed Advocate
Business Member: Brighton Township
Renewed Sustaining Member: Mark & Frani Anderson
Elia Cornell
Renewed Patron Members: Marci Gustafson
Lori Ann Lahum
Bill & Duren Pedersen
Lawrence W. Potts
Harold Rodning
Dean & Jane Wahlund
Renewed Supporter Members: Nita & Paul Asen
Renewed Family Members: Katha & John Chamberlain
Arden & Marilyn DeBoer
Charles & Carol Eggert
Lisa Isenberg & Philip Friedlund
Stuart D. & Mary Ann Hanson
Dave & JoAnne Johnson
Robert & Sally Lambert
Phyllis & Malcolm Maxwell
Dale & Kay Mowbray
Thorild & Ardhild Nelson
Karen & John Smithers
Renewed Individual Members: Eric Annexstad
Brian Fremo
Renewed Senior Members: Peg Bindner
Joan F. Gieseke
Bradford Johnson
Donna Kowai
A. Loren Lindsay
Harriet Mason
Margaret Muchow
Ron Roselli
Mary Ann Scharf
Eve Swenson
Judy C Teigen
Bernard Thiemann
Jerry Wedly
Barbara Wilkinson
Nancy Zins
New Family Members: Barb Church
Diane Lochner
Joel & Ryan McCormack
Kathryn Roberts
New Senior Member: Andru Peters
Steven Poncin

We make every effort to provide an accurate listing of membership renewals and donors. If we have made an error, please contact us at (507) 934-2160 or office@nchsmn.org and we’ll make corrections.

Monetary Donations
received by NCHS as of 23 July 2021.

Monetary
Mildred Anderson
Anonymous
Frani & Mark Anderson
Estate of Ralph P. Odegard

NCHS Board...
Executive Board Officers
Kate Martens, President, St. Peter
Tami Skinner, Vice President, St. Peter
Loren Sundboom, Treasurer, St. Peter
Tim Bartelt, Secretary, St. Peter

Directors
Dana Melius, St. Peter
Ray Jacobson, St. Peter
Matthias Lyer, North Mankato
Joe Metzen, St. Peter
Ken Rossow, St. Peter
Bob Sandeen, St. Peter

NCHS Staff...
Executive Director: Jessica Becker
director@nchsmn.org
Research Coordinator: Ruth Einstein
researchcoordinator@nchsmn.org
Bookkeeper: Barb Church
office@nchsmn.org
TSHC Museum Assistants:
Sara Busse & Erica Smith
TSHC Janitor: Robert Weber
Cox House Manager: Kate Roberts

NCHS Sites information...
Treaty Site History Center
1851 N. Minnesota Ave.
St. Peter, MN 56082
Phone: 507-934-2160
General info via e-mail: museum@nchsmn.org
or research@nchsmn.org

E. St. Julien Cox House *
500 N. Washington Ave.
St. Peter, MN 56082
Phone: 507-934-2160
General info via e-mail: cox@nchsmn.org
* This site remain closed temporarily due to community coronavirus concerns

Traverse des Sioux
1851 N Minnesota Ave.
St. Peter, MN 56082
adjacent to the Treaty Site History Center
Open dawn to dusk year-round

Now you can purchase or renew memberships online!
Visit nchsmn.org/membership for details.

KNUJ AM 860
• 860AM • knuj.net • 97.3 FM •
“Your Friend in Southern Minnesota”

Tune In!
Hear Executive Director Jessica Becker on Community Affairs every fourth Tuesday at 9:15 a.m. on KNUJ Radio! Turn your dials to 860 AM, 97.3 FM, or listen online at knuj.net.

Director’s Column
Welcome back, friends! After being closed for 15 months, we opened our doors to the public on Thursday, June 17th, for a soft opening. Right now, we’re open three days a week, Thursday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and I’m confident we will continue that schedule through the rest of the year. We held our grand reopening on Saturday, June 26th, offering free admission to the museum. Thank you to everyone who stopped by that day, especially since the weather was less than cooperative.

Speaking of stopping by, attendance has been outstanding so far. We welcomed 113 visitors over the six days we were open in June. We’re seeing steady visitor traffic so far in July as well.

I strongly encourage you to visit us this summer because our current exhibit roster is impressive. Besides our renowned permanent exhibit about the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux, we are exhibiting three other temporary displays. The Fort Ridgely banner exhibit, previously displayed in the commissary at Fort Ridgely historic site, is shown in the Melva Lind Gallery. Held over from spring 2020, Educational Excellence: Saint Peter School District 508 is on display in the Schmidt Gallery. And our newest exhibition, Marian Anderson: Her Artistic Process, is situated in the Dahl Gallery. So we have something on display for everyone to enjoy.

As we’re settling into a groove at the museum, we’re also looking forward to other pre-pandemic activities like the Nicollet County Fair. We’re anticipating an excellent turnout for the fair’s 150th anniversary this year. NCHS will be in the Wetherill Building, so please stop by and say hello. Also, if you’re feeling helpful, we are looking for volunteers to take a shift at the booth to help with outreach. Shifts are two hours each Wednesday through Sunday. If you’re interested in volunteering at the fair, please contact me at director@nchsmn.org or call 507-934-2160 in early August.

Thank you for your continued support.

Jessica Becker
Executive Director
President’s Report

Kate Martens, President, NCHS Board of Directors

WE ARE BACK! It is so nice to be able to say (type) that! Executive Director Jessica had prepared elegant plans for re-opening under Covid restrictions, including a comprehensive one-way self-guided tour with signage and disinfection stations to preserve the health of all staff and visitors, including an efficient appointment set up. And then we didn’t need it. We were able to complete the Pollinator Plant Sale with open order pick-up rather than the appointment schedule that had been arranged. Everyone was happy to get the personal tutelage of Genevieve Brand (Seed to Site, LLC) on how best to care for their new plants.

We were also able to open the doors to drop-in visitors and then hold a Free Day to celebrate the Marian Anderson exhibit. It was so gratifying to see our community come in and reacquaint themselves with the Museum. As we look to the Fall, the Board is doing a second-half of the year review of the budget. We were able to make many refinements of our technology and planning and have made good use of the time we weren’t able to welcome you into the History Center. Continued membership renewals and your support have made a huge difference.

Now we look forward. The Nicollet County Fair and the Mahkato Wacipi are on our calendars, and hiSTORY hangout, Documentary Film series, and our social media presence will continue as they did through the past year. The value-added components we were able to develop during the shutdown won’t go away; we just have a larger toolbox with which to fulfill our mission of collecting, preserving, and disseminating Nicollet County History.

However, our main excitement will be seeing you members come into the History Center to browse around and say hello! Remember, as members, you have no admission fee, so come view the exhibits. The Cox House will also be planning for your visits, so watch the website for information. You will notice that the invitation to participate on committees with the Board is in the Volunteer Opportunities section of The Crossing, as is the call for Board member applications. A vital, engaged Board of Directors is crucial to the organization’s success, so consider your potential contribution and apply soon!

CALL FOR BOARD MEMBERS

The Nominating Committee is currently accepting applications for three new members of the Board of Directors to start in 2022.

Being a member of the NCHS Board of Directors provides you with a unique opportunity to help make history accessible for learners of all ages. While our Board of Directors provides oversight and financial leadership, we also expect board members to take an active role in helping the Society grow and thrive.

Directors are expected to:
• Attend bi-monthly board meetings.
• Actively participate in planning, governance, and fundraising.
• Serve on committees.
• Be ambassadors, volunteering your time and talents at our historic sites or within our communities.

The best candidates have:
• A passion for history.
• Connections that can help promote NCHS.
• Experience in law, fund development, or facilities management.
• And the will to make a difference in the community.

The deadline for consideration is Friday, November 5, 2021. If you would like to apply or would like more information visit our website at nchsmn.org/nchs-call-for-board-members. If you have questions, please get in touch with NCHS Board President Kate Martens board@nchsmn.org or 507-934-2160.
As Led Zeppelin memorably sang, “It’s been a long time, been a long time / Been a long lonely, lonely, lonely, lonely, lonely time / Yes, it has.”

Since reopening, we have been deluged with research requests and offers to consider materials for donations from so many of you. We are deeply grateful to know that the Research Center and archives have been on your mind during these many months. We have been waiting patiently, or sometimes not so patiently, to be able to assist you personally with your requests.

The Research Center area is small, and we’re short-staffed, so we are welcoming researchers and donors by appointment only. To make an appointment, please contact Ruth Einstein, Research Coordinator, at research@nchsminn.org or 507-934-2160. Appointments are available Thursdays and Fridays between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Online research services are still available, and our website has an abundance of resources available for free.

We are looking forward to meeting new friends of the Research Center and reconnecting with our NCHS family!

**Artifact & Archival Donations**

to 23 July 2021:

- **Nita Aasen:** Materials reflecting the history of the home located at 720 N. Third Street in St. Peter, in which the Aasen family lived for many years. The materials include information about the house, its former residents, and the history of St. Peter.

- **Frani Anderson:** Downtown St. Peter Retail Market Analysis, 1987.

- **Estate of Marian Anderson:** Photographs of North Mankato; materials used for researching her painting for the North Mankato Centennial.

- **Steven Anderson:** Pocket diary belonging to George Anderson and carried with him during his Civil War service, 1861–1865.

- **Bernadotte Lutheran Church:** organizational records and photographs.

- **Mary Compart:** Scrapbook of newspaper clippings regarding soldiers from St. Peter, including Oliver Compart, stationed at Ft. Rocker, Alabama, during the Korean Conflict.

- **Millie Adams Dosh:** genealogical materials relating to the Adams/Maher family.

- **Barbara and Connie Frey:** Photograph of Martin John Frey, Jr., in his barber shop in Nicollet, c.1905; digital images; Frey and Witty descent charts.

- **Marcia Gustafson:** Sterling dish given to Adele Gustafson by Amy Turner in June 1975 after the retirement of Pastor Herbert Gustafson and their move to Massachusetts. The dish was given to Amy Turner’s parents in 1906 as a gift for their 25th anniversary; correspondence from Amy Turner to the Gustafsons, 1979; two newspaper clippings about Amy’s trip to New York City in 1979, at age 96.

- **Gustavus Adolphus College Archives:** District 13 High School Basketball Tournament program, 1940.

- **Julie Wills Harris:** Burlington Basketette, a gift from maternal grandparents, Ervel Bode and Loma Bode, used by Julie and her siblings, rural Nicollet, 1960s; doll; photographs of members of the Wills family.

- **Merrilee Jacobsen Kinney:** Materials relating to the Thomas Owens family.

- **Ruth Klossner:** Materials relating to the communities of Courtland, Klossner, Lafayette, and Nicollet, including digital and printed photographs and documents.

- **Mary Krugerud:** Pages from a scrapbook kept by Marilyn Roberts during her hospitalization at the Ah-gwah-ching tuberculosis sanitorium.

- **Joan Kuereme:** Organizational records of the Central School Task Force.

- **Peters Langsjoen:** “Langsjoen: Building a Legacy”

- **Joyce Lendt:** Directories and anniversary publications of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Nicollet.

- **John Luepke:** Reproduction of a photograph of Art Axelson.

- **Ginny & Tuff Miller:** Grannie’s Parlour restaurant jacket belonging to Tuff Miller; photographs and menus of Pizza Villa restaurant, St. Peter, 1959–1983; Cherry Creek Theatre Company, 1984.

- **Marcy Muchow:** Receipts from Nicollet County businesses, 1961–1963.

- **Char & Todd Nelson:** Cemetery records, Clear Lake Methodist Church.

- **New 2 You Family Thrift:** Framed display of Traverse des Sioux Commemorative Encampment medals.

- **Nicollet County Health and Human Services:** Materials relating to the department’s COVID-19 vaccine clinics, 2021.

- **Brian Oviatt:** 1900 Encampment sign; ticket to the 1908 National Democratic Convention in Denver, at which John A. Johnson was a nominee for president.

- **Andru Peters:** “History of Camp Lakeview National Guard Training Camp, 1881–1931, Lake City, Minnesota” by Andru Peters.

- **Cathleen Peterson:** St. Peter High School Class of 1939 reunion photos and newspaper clippings, 1964–1965; invitation to wedding of Betty Noren to Warren Fuller and a photograph of the bride and bridesmaids, 1942; confirmation certificate of Lloyd Noren; photograph of the fire raging at First Lutheran, St. Peter, 1962.

- **Marlin Peterson:** Envelope addressed to A. Harkin with British stamp, 1876; Ft. Ridgeley souvenir; Veteran of the Month certificate issued to Maurice Wheeler, former resident of North Mankato who died of died of pneumonia in Dieppe, France, 1918; postcard of drawing “New Ulm, Minn., Prior to Indian Massacre of 1862,” 1904.

- **Linda Rist:** Records of the Hebron Methodist Church of Belgrade Township, Nicollet County, 1880–1903.

- **Harold Rodning:** “My Life Story: Harold Rodning Family History” and “Peterson-Swenson Genealogy” by Arthur B. Halverson.

- **David Schmit:** “Descendants and Ancestors of Julius Schmit and His Wife Margaret Morson of Nicollet County, Minnesota.”

- **Donald Schoob:** Reproduction of a letter from Michael Schoob and sister Marie Schoob in St. Peter in 1860 to their family in Switzerland and translation in English.

- **Martha Smetana:** Photographs of St. Peter High School sports teams, 1943–1945.

- **Evelyn Swenson:** Promotional items, Nicollet County businesses; booklet: “Fallout Protection for Homes with Basements”, Dept. of Defense, July 1966 with results of O. Swenson survey and insert, “Last Minute Fallout Protection for Livestock”; 4-H scrapbook of Olive Peters, 1923–1968; country school art projects and maternity clothing made by Evie; Mathias and Martha Olsen family history.

- **Donald E. Watts:** Digital documents and images relating to Elza Watts (1808–1887) and family, former residents of Traverse des Sioux and St. Peter.

- **Rick Wright:** Organizational records, Willow Lawn Creamery, Traverse Township.
Do you want to attend this event FREE OF CHARGE?
Volunteer to be a guide! Costumed guides lead groups by lantern light along the trail. Guides must be old enough to tell time and able to pace the group's movement to each stop.
If interested, contact Jessica at 507-934-2160 or director@nchsmn.org.

Registration and advanced ticket purchases are highly recommended.
Memorials
received by NCHS through
23 July 2021.
In Memory of
Eunice Amos
Given by
Duane & Brenda DeBieic
Ken & Patsy Rosso
In Memory of
Paul Lindfors
Given by
Lori Lahlum
In Memory of
Bernie McGuire
Given by
Marshall & Janet Anthony
In Memory of
ReVae Nygard
Given by
Ed & Bev Wetherill

We remember…
with honor the following
individuals whom we lost
since our last newsletter.
• Carl Aanonsen
• Ken Albrecht
• Joan Nimps
• Merton Wenner
• Thomas Witty

Historical Society Event…

Announcing the 2021–22
Documentary Film Series at Home

The Nicollet County Historical Society in Saint Peter Community and Family Education presents our 13th season of documentary films! These documentaries are designed to inform, challenge ideas, and create conversation.

This fall, our films will not be shown in person. Instead, we are providing the links for you to view these films online for free at home. Links to stream the films are provided on our website at nchsmn.org/events.

After watching each film, we encourage you to participate in an online discussion in the Documentary Film Series Discussion Page on NCHS’s Facebook page.

Documentary Film Series

Minnesota 13: From Grain to Glass
Minnesota 13 explores the little-known history of an elite moonshine produced in the heart of Minnesota during Prohibition, and the modern-day attempts of a micro-distillery to resuscitate the brand as a craft whiskey. NR, 1 hr. 14 min. Recommended viewing date: Thu., Sep 2.

Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution
On the heels of Woodstock, a group of teen campers are inspired to join the fight for disability civil rights. This spirited look at grassroots activism is executive produced by President Barack Obama and Michelle Obama. Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution premieres March 25th. NR, 1 hr. 47 min. Recommended viewing date: Thu., Oct. 7.

The Warrior Tradition
The Warrior Tradition tells the astonishing, heartbreaking, inspiring, and largely untold story of Native Americans in the United States military. Why would Indian men and women put their lives on the line for the very government that took their homelands? The film relates the stories of Native American warriors from their own points of view – stories of service and pain, of courage and fear. NR, 55 min. Recommended viewing date: Thu., Nov. 4.

Becoming Big League
Becoming Big League explores how sport was changing in 1960 and how that changed Minnesota. From Olympic hockey to High School hoops, from pro-sports origins in Big Ten titles, Becoming Big League is a retro sports page come to life that illustrates how 1960 might be the most dynamic year in Minnesota Sports history. A Twin Cities PBS Original production. NR, 58 min. Recommended viewing date: Thu., Dec. 2.
TREATY SITE Current Exhibits

• 1851 Treaty of Traverse des Sioux

The Treaty Site History Center’s permanent exhibit interprets the 1851 Treaty of Traverse des Sioux as a watershed moment in Minnesota history. The consequences for both Dakota people and Euro-Americans are explored through large graphic panels, hands-on activities, artifacts, and a portion of Twin City Public Television’s Dakota Conflict.

• Educational Excellence: Saint Peter School District 508

Put on your saddle shoes and lace up your PF Flyers to take this stroll down memory lane. We’re going back to school and the subject is the history of Saint Peter Schools. Reminisce about your teachers, hot lunches in the cafeteria, FFA, pep fests, cheering on the home team, and much more.

• Fort Ridgely

Although only open for fourteen years, Fort Ridgely drastically impacted the State of Minnesota and the American frontier. Through its short tenure as a military post, Fort Ridgely’s soldiers, their wives, and the accompanying civilians contributed to the transformation of this region.

Built on land that was once the traditional ancestral home of the Dakota, Fort Ridgely saw conflict with the Dakota, was home to men, women, and even slaves. This exhibit explores and gives voice to the diverse populations that experienced Fort Ridgely.

• Marian Anderson: Her Artistic Process

Inspiration has always been at the heart of Marian Anderson’s work. Growing up in the woods and marshes of Nicollet County set in place a lifelong love of nature, and it was the natural world that fueled her creativity in adulthood. A self-taught and self-published artist with no formal training, Marian’s legacy continues to live on in her art and the inspiration it brings about in fellow artistic souls.

Marian Anderson: Her Artistic Process recognizes the nationally acclaimed artist and displays her unfinished works alongside completed pieces. We hope you come away from this exhibit with a motivation to pursue your own unique artistic talents.
The "Welcome New Neighbor" exhibit explores the resettlement of European refugees in Minnesota at the end of World War II. Unable to return to their homelands, Displaced Persons sought a safe place where they could rebuild their lives and support their families. The 1948 Displaced Persons Act required DPs to have evidence of a job offer and a place to live before they would be granted permission to come to the United States. The Minnesota Displaced Persons Commission coordinated with volunteer social agencies to identify sponsors for families emigrating from Europe. The images and documents presented in this exhibit come primarily from the Lutheran Church Archives at Gustavus Adolphus College and the Displaced Persons Program Files at the Minnesota Historical Society.
**Govenaires are Preserving their History**

**Emily Stark, Alumni Group Director, Govenaires Alumni Group**

The Govenaires Drum and Bugle Corps, of St. Peter, Minn., are collecting drum corps artifacts and pictures! This fall, they will be holding an archiving event to scan photos and documents related to the corps to build a collection in advance of the corps’ 100th anniversary in 2027. If you have artifacts or photos that we could scan, contact Emily at emilystark47@gmail.com to learn more about this event or set up a time to learn more about your items. The Govies are proud of being the oldest competing drum and bugle corps “in the world” and are excited to start gathering items showcasing their history.

**hiSTORY hangout:**

If you love talking about history and looking at old photos and maps, please join us for hiSTORY hangout, a free discussion group about local history topics. Each hangout will take place on the second Monday of each month at 10 a.m. The September 13th topic will be *Schools in Nicollet County*. For more information and a link to join, please visit our website at nchsmn.org/events.

**Visit the NCHS Online Catalog:** Researchers can explore some of the Nicollet County Historical Society’s cataloged collection online. Don’t see what you’re looking for? Contact the Research Coordinator at research@nchsmn.org or 507-934-2160.

**Find us on Facebook:** Our history is full of little tidbits that haven’t made it into our exhibits yet. What are they? Check out our Facebook pages to find out!

**Shop our Online Gift Store:** We are offering curbside pickup! Shop from the comfort of home and bring history home with you when you pick up your order. Visit our website and click “Shop” in the upper right corner.

*We appreciate everyone who helps keep Nicollet county’s history alive, and we look forward to seeing you soon.*
Volunteers Needed at the Nicollet County Fair

The Nicollet County Historical Society will once again be present at the Nicollet County Fair. This year’s fair is August 11–15 and we are always looking for volunteers to help us at our booth! We'll be in the Wetherill Building greeting passersby and talking with folks who stop at the booth for information or to see the Fair's anniversary display. Two-hour shifts are available throughout the fair. If you’re interested in volunteering at our booth, please contact the Society at 507-934-2160 or director@nchsmn.org.

150 Years at the Nicollet County Fair / 1871–2021

On October 4, 1871, the Nicollet County Agricultural Society held the first annual Nicollet County Fair. Much like today, fairgoers saw horses, pigs, cows, locally made furniture, fruits, vegetables, flowers, paintings, and photographs. According to an advertisement, even Governor Horace Austin was scheduled to address the visitors.

Since the annual celebration did not yet have a permanent location, the Fair was held around Nicollet County during the 1870s. They took place in St. Peter in 1872 and 1873 and Nicollet in 1874, 1875, and 1878. According to local newspapers, visitors were pleased with the site when it was held at Scandinavian Grove in 1877. But by 1880, the Fair moved back to St. Peter, where the Fair committee had constructed new buildings and a racetrack.

Over the years, the Nicollet County Fair offered a variety of activities for visitors to attend. They had horse races with “trotters” and “runners.” Men played baseball games at the Fair as early as 1890, and fireworks displays occurred at least as far back as 1900. The 1895 Fair program announced that there would be chariot races, horse races, balloon ascensions, and band music. The 1915 Fair promised to have bicycle, motorcycle, and automobile races. Acrobats, gymnasts, and comedians were also listed in the advertisements.

Even during tough times, the Fair continued. During the Great Depression in the 1930s, the Fairs continued to attract large numbers of visitors. Between 8,000 and 9,000 people attended the 65th Annual Nicollet County Fair in 1934. Mrs. W. H. Holz was one of the three people who each won a prize of $100. Despite many people leaving the county to serve in the military or serving in other capacities elsewhere, the Fair took place during World War II. However, the 1946 Nicollet County Fair was canceled as a precautionary measure to reduce the spread of polio, which was a severe problem for many years.

What would the Fair be without Nicollet County 4-H? Nicollet County 4-H Clubs were impressively represented in 1956 when 469 members out of a total membership of 555 exhibited at the Fair. “Livestock, dress revue, corn, potatoes, small grain, and garden exhibits were judged and placed at the county Fair for state Fair competition,” according to the St. Peter Herald. The August 8, 1968 issue of the Herald reported: “Record 4-H Displays At Fair More Than 3,000.” This was an “all-time high” for the number of project exhibits that were judged.

The Fair saw other anniversaries over the years, including its centennial. Gloria Benson wrote and directed “A Time to Remember,” a pageant for the 1971 Centennial Fair in which more than 60 people participated. It described selected events in the county’s history during the previous 100 years in its two-hour performances. Mrs. Benson also wrote and arranged a Bicentennial pageant with 150 participants for the 1976 Fair. In addition, special permission from the singer John Denver, who married St. Peter resident Ann Martell, was obtained to use an altered version of one of his songs.

The fairgrounds also grew, modernized, and changed over the last 150 years. The wooden grandstand, which was at least 80 years old, was demolished in July of 1985. It was replaced...
with an aluminum and steel structure. And in 1998, when a tornado blew through town, the fairgrounds suffered severe damage. At least 13 buildings were destroyed. But as with the rest of the town’s salvageable buildings, repairs were made, and the Fair was held early in August 1998.

One thing that never changes is the Fair’s importance to our small rural communities. Whether it’s 4-H contests, exhibits at Johnson Hall, or local entertainment, there are so many different things to see and do at the Fair that are unique to Nicollet County. But that is what makes county Fairs so meaningful to our communities.

Our founding fathers and mothers came to our region and used their hobbies and interests to make a living. Even though their interests are broad, the fact that they happened here makes them special to us. Many of these hobbies and interests have translated into fair events we experience today.

The Nicollet County Fair’s importance must continue to live on for another 150 years and beyond to demonstrate the importance and vital role the county Fair plays in the community for all ages.

2021 Calendar of Events:  

All events are subject to public health recommendations.

**Event/Program information:**

**TSHC:** Treaty Site History Center events are free for NCHS members unless stated otherwise.

**continuing**   
Educational Excellence: Saint Peter School District 508  
to March 2022  
an exhibit celebrating the history of Saint Peter schools  
Treaty Site History Center

Marian Anderson: Her Artistic Process  
to Sept. 2022  
Treaty Site History Center

Aug. 9:  
CANCELED hiSTORY hangout

Aug. 11–15:  
Nicollet County Fair, Wetherill Building  
Nicollet County Fairgrounds

Aug. 24:  
Community Affairs on KNUJ, 9:15 a.m.

Sept.:  
Film Series at Home: Minnesota 13: From Grain to Glass,  
(see details page 6), Free  
Watch from Your Home

Sept. 13:  
hiSTORY hangout: Nicollet County Schools, via Zoom  
The link to join can be found at nchsmn.org/events

Sept. 17–19:  
49th Annual Mankato Wacipi, Learn more at www.mahkatowacipi.org  
Land of Memories Park

Sept. 25:  
Marian Anderson: Her Artistic Process closes

Sept. 28:  
Community Affairs on KNUJ, 9:15 a.m

Oct.:  
Film Series at Home: Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution,  
(see details page 6), Free  
Watch from Your Home

Oct. 1 & 2:  
Shadows at the Crossing:  
Spirits of Old Traverse des Sioux, 6:30-8 p.m.,  
(see details on page 5)

Oct. 2:  
Welcome New Neighbor exhibit opens

Oct. 26:  
Community Affairs on KNUJ, 9:15 a.m.

Nov.:  
Film Series at Home: The Warrior Tradition  
(see details page 6), Free  
Watch from Your Home

Nov. 5:  
Board of Directors candidate application deadline

Dec.:  
Film Series at Home: Becoming Big League,  
(see details page 6), Free  
Watch from Your Home

Please watch the NCHS website, Facebook & Twitter and MNHS website for further events and details for additional programming.
Your membership dollars at work…

NCHS Membership Application

Name _______________________________________________________

Address ______________________________________________________

Phone ( _______ ) _____________________________________________

E-mail _______________________________________________________

My check is enclosed □ Please debit my credit card □

Authorized Signature ________________________________________________________________

Yes! I would like to support my Nicollet County Historical Society in 2021 at the following level (please check one).

☐ Senior (65+)                                   $ 30

☐ Individual                                       $ 40

☐ Family                                                $ 50

☐ Sustaining                                       $ 75

☐ Patron $ 100

☐ Benefactor $ 500

☐ Life Member                                   $ 1,000

Business Memberships

Please make checks payable to:

Nicollet County Historical Society

Membership applications should be mailed to:
Nicollet County Historical Society
1851 North Minnesota Avenue
St. Peter, MN 56082

PAPERLESS?? Now you can purchase or renew your membership online! Visit nchsmn.org/membership for details.