Thank you for the glorious year of events and advocacy that NCHS has given to people in our region and beyond.

– Roland and Edi Thorstenson
Our Mission

The mission of the Nicollet County Historical Society shall be the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge about the history of Nicollet County and the State of Minnesota.

152,442* Served in 2012

You don’t have to come to one of our buildings to be served by the Society. That has never been more true than it was in 2012. NCHS collections are available anywhere in the world through the Minnesota Digital Library and our own web site. Over 20,000 people encountered our two traveling exhibits in institutions across Minnesota and beyond. Several thousand folks came to one of our programs.

Attendance at sites and use of our archives was up this year as well. All-in-all it was a very good year for NCHS, and for learning the history of the Minnesota River Valley.

NCHS was a leader in remembering the 1862 U.S.-Dakota War. We worked with journalists and scholars from a variety of institutions, including Twin Cities Public Television, Minnesota Public Radio, Star Tribune, Rochester Post Bulletin, St. Peter Herald, Lafayette-Nicollet Ledger, Mankato Free Press, and Independent Public Radio stations. In November we were featured on National Public Radio’s “This American Life.” While this outreach is not reflected in our numbers served, well over 2 million readers, listeners, and television watchers learned about our local history through our interpretation. That’s a pretty big asterisk!
We’re fond of saying that people have been coming together here in Nicollet County for thousands of years. It’s true from the river crossing at Traverse des Sioux, to the 5,000 year-old campsite unearthed at Fort Ridgely, to diners at Spinners Bar in North Mankato. It’s true at the Historical Society too—and 2012 was a great reminder of that.

We’re not just about old stuff. The Society is here to bring people together, foster empathy, and provide perspective. We helped tell the story of community in St. Peter’s sister city of Petatlán, Mexico. We showed the 1946 documentary *Let There Be Light* and had a modern discussion about returning veterans and PTSD.

Our 1862 exhibit, lecture series, and public programs have reached thousands of people across Minnesota, and beyond, to places like Flandreau, S.D. and Washington D.C.

The past 12 months have proved beyond any doubt that what happened here matters. Our story is a national one, and as much as our history shaped the state and the nation, larger forces continue to influence our lives today.

Our county is growing. It is becoming more diverse (again). There are lots of people, like me, who were born somewhere else. We are all finding our place in a shared history. There are lots more stories to save, and to tell.

We did a good job last year, but we have to make sure we do even better in 2013. Let’s make new contacts. Let’s make sure our new friendships grow into partnerships. Let our Historical Society reflect our society. There needs to be something for everyone—because everyone belongs here.

Ben Leonard
Director
Nicollet County Historical Society

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**NCHS 2012 at a glance**

Top left: Remodeling of Museum Bookstore
Top center: New ADA paths installed at Fort Ridgely site.
Top right: Dakota War Exhibit as it was presented at the 2012 Building Bridges Conference.

Center left: Ben in the intro room at the Center.
Center: Letter by a soldier describing battle of Birch Coulee, donated by Marshall Peterson.
Center right: NCHS was represented during a trip to St. Peter’s Sister City, Petatlán, Mexico.

Below center: Harkin Store interior

Photo: Gustavus News Services
Photo: Caroline Yang, Minnesota Public Radio
Photo: Ben Leonard
Photo: Minnesota State Historical Society
The Society is truly blessed with a fantastic Board of Directors. Each meeting is full of thoughtful discussion and energy. Not every challenge has been overcome, but the Society is strong, financially viable for the long term, and headed in a clear direction for the future. We will certainly miss the exceptional leadership of outgoing President Gary Schmidt. Gary has done a tremendous job the last six years—four of those as President. We can’t thank him enough.

Officers

Gary Schmidt, North Mankato
President (2nd term ending 2012)

Jeremy Freeman, Saint Peter
Vice President (2nd term ending 2013)

Marie Dranttel, Saint Peter
Treasurer (1st term ending 2014)

Tami Skinner, Saint Peter
Secretary (2nd term ending 2013)

Steve Baxa, Saint Peter
Historian (2nd term ending 2014)

Directors

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(2nd term ending 2013)

Alma Forst, West Newton Township
(1st term ending 2012)

Scott Hermanson, Saint Peter
(1st term ending 2014)

Patti Kelly, Saint Peter
(1st term ending 2012)

Dr. Lori Lahlum, North Mankato
(1st term ending 2014)

Emilie Lokensgard, Saint Peter
(2nd term ending 2013)

Pamela Morson, Lafayette
(1st term ending 2013)

Anders Ringdahl-Mayland, Saint Peter
(1st term ending 2014)

Bob Schabert, Courtland
(1st term ending 2013)

Sally Webster, Bernadotte Township
(2nd term ending 2013)

We don’t know how lucky we are to have the staff that we do. Spread out over 50 miles, and worth their weight in gold, they consistently give so much effort, expertise, and excitement. Through their hard work and some dedicated volunteers NCHS answered thousands of phone calls and e-mails, talked to audiences all over creation, helped genealogists find lost relatives, preserved historical treasures, and cleaned toilets more times than we care to think about. Any thank you is inadequate, but we’ll say it anyway.

Rose Alsleben
Harkin Store Guide

Jessica Becker
Museum Assistant

Amber Bentler
Museum Assistant

Victoria Clark
Museum Assistant

Annaliese Endorf
Museum Assistant

Ruth Grewe
Harkin Site Manager, harkin@nchsmn.org

Steve Hogburg
Volunteer Tour Guide

Joan Jordan
Museum Assistant

Kristina LeClerc
Office Assistant, kristina@nchsmn.org

Ben Leonard
Executive Director, ben@nchsmn.org

Allen McBride
Museum Assistant

Dick Muesing
Volunteer Research Assistant

Charlotte Nack
Fort Ridgely Site Guide

Wayne Passon
Maintenance Coordinator

Dorothy Polesky
Fort Ridgely Site Guide

Bob Sandeen
Research Coordinator, bob@nchsmn.org

Victoria Steinhaus
Research Assistant

Glenn Stryker
Cox House Site Guide

Loren Sundboom
Volunteer Museum Assistant

Richard Tostenson
Cox House Site Manager, cox@nchsmn.org

Nancy Zempel
Fort Ridgely Site Manager, ridgely@nchsmn.org
NCHS would like to thank Nicollet County for its unwavering financial support of our mission. We continue to diversify our funding overall, but the taxpayers of Nicollet County provide an important and stable base. Our relationship with the Minnesota Historical Society and their historic sites is important. We could not operate Harkin Store, Fort Ridgely, and Traverse des Sioux without their commitment. Earned income, in the form of admissions and merchandise sales, were up significantly from 2011. In 2012 the Society took steps to restructure staffing levels to best serve the public, and make our buildings more energy efficient to decrease utility costs. We should begin to reap those benefits in 2013.

NICOLLET COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY • Expense

NICOLLET COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY • Income
## 2012 NCHS Balance Sheet

**As of December 31, 2012**

### Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Assets</th>
<th>Liabilities &amp; Equity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Checking/Savings</strong></td>
<td><strong>Liabilities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 · CHECKING - GENERAL</td>
<td>33,688.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 · PETTY CASH - RIDGELY</td>
<td>232.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102 · CHECKING - HARKIN STORE</td>
<td>1,357.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103 · PETTY CASH</td>
<td>72.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105 · CHECKING - RIDGELY</td>
<td>416.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108 · MONEY MARKET - PROGROWTH BANK</td>
<td>45,359.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110 · INVESTMENTS</td>
<td>58,707.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116 · CASH - INVEST - MAIRS AND POWER</td>
<td>58,707.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Checking/Savings**: 139,834.68

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Liabilities</th>
<th>Liabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>300 · ACCOUNTS PAYABLE</td>
<td>5,891.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>305 · PAYROLL TAXES - FWH &amp; FICA</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>310 · PAYROLL TAXES - SWH</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>315 · OTHER PAYROLL DED. - PERA</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>318 · SALES TAX PAYABLE</td>
<td>1,760.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Current Liabilities**: 7,652.57

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accounts Receivable</th>
<th>Equity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>120 · RECEIVABLE</td>
<td>116.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Accounts Receivable**: 116.45

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Current Assets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>130 · MERCHANDISE INVENTORY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132 · MERC INV. - DONATED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134 · MERCHANDISE INV. - HARKIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>136 · MERCHANDISE INV. - RIDGELY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Other Current Assets**: 17,659.72

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Current Assets</th>
<th>Equity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>157,610.85</td>
<td>1,331,907.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed Assets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200 · BUILDING &amp; IMPROVEMENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>202 · OFFICE EQUIP &amp; FURN.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220 · ACCUM. DEP. - BUILDING</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Fixed Assets**: 1,184,576.57

**TOTAL ASSETS**: 1,341,987.42
2012 Monetary Donors

The Society owes a sincere debt to each and every member and supporter. It’s an overused expression, but we really couldn’t do this without you. We were especially honored and humbled with the outpouring of generosity in 2012. The Treaty Site’s central gallery is now named after Al and Cathy Annexstad to reflect their significant financial commitment to the Society. Mark and Mary Davis have been super supportive this year. The estates of Alta Nelson and Clinton Lomis made donations, as well as individuals like Beth Russell, whose gift will go toward operating the Harkin Store. Thanks to each and every donor for your special gifts!

3M
Bruce Aiton
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Gary & Geraldine Schmidt
In Memory of
JoAnne Johnson
Given by
Gary and Geraldine Schmidt
In Memory of
Doug Anderson
Given by
Martin and Carol Menk
This past year showcased NCHS's diverse offerings and unique partnerships. We collaborated with Gustavus Adolphus College, public libraries, St. Peter School District, Prairie Enthusiasts, Minnesota Water Resource Center, St. Peter Food Co-Op, Arts Center of Saint Peter, Minnesota Historical Society, Blues Fest, Women Celebrating Women, St. Peter Reads and others. Audiences saw live music, documentary films, lectures on Dakota culture, demonstrations, battlefield tours, Victorian celebrations and lots of other really great stuff.
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Verlin Carlson
Mel & Lavonne Craig
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Kurt & Maren Leonard
Joy Lutzi
Marilyn Peterson
Loren Sundboom

Flag raising at Fort Ridgely.
Your willingness to contribute signifies your understanding of the importance in protecting, preserving, and promoting our shared past.

~ Ben Leonard

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Richard & Janet Wettergren
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