

The Hanover Historical Press



www.hanoverhistoricalsociety.org

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Documentary & Book Updates

The documentary filming is progressing on schedule with filming this past fall consisting of a re-enactment of Jacob Vollbrecht canoeing up the Crow River to establish a homestead in what would eventually become Hanover.

Many other exciting stories and historical details will be captured later this spring and summer under the direction of Marty Waters and a professional film crew. The documentary will be completed in time for this year's 125th celebration of Hanover's incorporation, and will be shown during the celebration festivities.

Meanwhile, most research has been completed on the history book, entitled *Planks of History: Hanover's Old Iron Bridge*, and Mary Coons is well underway writing the narrative. *Planks of History* will focus on the history of the Crow River, our historic iron bridge and the company that built it, as well as serve up first-account stories of individuals directly and indirectly connected with incidents and events surrounding the river, bridge, and dam throughout the decades.

The book will be available for sale this coming summer in time for the city's 125th celebration.

If you would like to be a part of the Help Fund the Book Program and have your name mentioned in the back of the book as a result of a monetary donation, please call one of the officers listed at the right for additional information.

There is also information available on the website, as well as our Facebook page (Hanover Historical Society of Minnesota) explaining in detail what the program is all about.

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2016 Meetings

January 7	February 4
March 3	April 7
May 5	June 2
July 7	August 4
September 1	October 6
November 3	No Dec. mtg

Contact Us

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Hanover Historical Society is to identify, preserve, and disseminate knowledge about the history of Hanover through collections, preservation, distribution of historical information, as well as advocate for preservation of historic buildings, monuments and markers.

If you are a member, we really need your help! Ongoing opportunities include database input, storage inventory, and event assistance. Please consider volunteering to help us out.

Own a Piece of Hanover History

Safe From the Outside World: A Social History of Hanover, Minnesota by Mary Coons is now in its second printing. The book is available at the Hanover BankWest location, which has autographed copies, as well as the River Inn and Hanover City Hall. The book costs \$17.

Xcel Energy Foundation Dollars

Thanks to Xcel Energy Foundation Dollars for Doing Program for donating \$1,000 to our organization on behalf of Mike Kehn's volunteer hours during 2015.

Meeting Date Change

We are now meeting on the first Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at City Hall. Please make a note of the change.

Caroling Event A Huge Success

The weather was perfect and hundreds of residents came out to help celebrate the start of the holiday season. Santa, choirs, the horse and sleigh, bonfires and hot refreshments marked the evening.



If you enjoy this newsletter as well as being a member of the Hanover Historical Society, spread the word by passing this along to a friend and promoting the Society, now in its 12th year. Volunteering is fulfilling and rewarding.

Young and old comprise our membership, as well as new residents mixed in with life-long Hanoverians. Take an active role in activities or assist behind the scenes if that's your comfort level. Yearly membership is only \$12. Please use the application form on the next page.

A Brief History of Winter Innovations

Minnesota was known for its cold winters - particularly back in the 1800s - but during the dead of winter, how did people survive?

During the winter, farmers reverted back to using horses for transportation as cars could not get through the snow. A number of farmers came up with an improvised snowplow to clear the impassable main road linking Hanover to Albertville's rail station. This road was a lifeline whereby animals and goods were transported to the train station, and from where goods and materials arrived from Minneapolis, the closest large city.

The Hanover Milling Company built a large V-shaped snowplow from heavy wood. They hired farmers to pull the plow with their workhorses. The horse-drawn V-plow required 12 horses to pull. "In the V was a platform where sandbags were placed to hold the front end down," explained Emil Bethke, "otherwise when the horses pulled it, the front end would go over the snow instead of through it."

Once automobiles finally replaced horses, delivery trucks mounted sleigh runners on the front and had a track on the back to maneuver through the snow. However, some reverted back to the old ways; for instance, in

Hanover the mail was delivered in the winter once again by horse and sleigh.

Otto Middelstadt, a traveling salesman, purchased an innovative car in 1926 that had skis on the front and four tires on the back to navigate the snowy country roads. These were very rare, recalls his daughter Vernetta Zimmerman.

Other residents simply drove their cars on the frozen river to get to nearby towns or relatives' homes. "I remember being bundled up in the car with big buffalo robes tucked around us," says Bernie Lieder. "We'd leave the car parked out on the river and walk up to the house. I know we weren't the only car that drove on the river ice to get to the next town."

With no refrigeration, it was a challenge to keep perishable food and liquids chilled. Businesses in town had to put up ice. Icehouses became a popular means of refrigeration. "Men went out onto the frozen Crow River and cut ice in square blocks about two feet thick. Horses brought the ice to the icehouse where it would take two days for the men to put up. They'd cut it with a saw and stack it in the icehouse," recalls Bernie Lieder. "The ice lasted all summer until the next winter."

Ordinary folk bonded together as an extended family adapting to Minnesota's winters.

Membership Application/Renewal Form - Hanover Historical Society

Name _____

Address _____

email _____ telephone _____

Annual dues: Individual/Family - \$12; renewable in January of each year

Renewal _____ New Member _____

If you itemize deductions on your income tax forms, you may qualify for a deduction.

I am interested in helping with: cataloging collecting artifacts

fundraising committee publicity programs for meetings

Please clip and mail your application, along with a check to the Hanover Historical Society, P.O. Box 13, Hanover, MN 55341. Thank you for your support.

As I Remember Hanover....Early Businesses

These informal memories are excerpts of information from Safe From the Outside World: A Social History of Hanover, Minnesota

"Mr. Swanberg of Buffalo organized a bank here the past week. The stock has almost been sold, and the first meeting will be held Friday, Feb. 22. Temporary quarters will be in the building adjoining Mrs. W.L. Haefer's store," proclaimed the news brief in the Feb. 23, 1907 issue of the *St. Michael News*.

July 1, 1907 marked the day Hanover established its first and only bank - the Hanover State Bank. The first president was C.A. Fared, and F.A. Diethert, vice president. H.E. Kirscht was the bank cashier.

The March 9, 1907 edition of the *St. Michael News* updated the construction progress stating "Albert Boerner of Buffalo has the contract for building the bank. He has a number of teams hauling rocks for the foundation."

Reportedly, the red brick building measured 24x38 feet and contained a fireproof vault, burglar-proof safe, time lock and "all the necessary appliances for the prompt and safe handling of all funds entrusted to them," stated *The Great Northeast Magazine*, December 1909 edition.

The article went on to report that two years after opening, the bank had \$80,000 in deposits, capital of \$10,000, and loans of \$79,000. In 1909, H.S. Swanberg became president while H.E. Kirscht remained cashier. Later Kirscht became bank president.

"Shareholders owned it; I know my grandmother had money in there and lost it when it went broke. At the most there were two or three people who worked there; a gal to do the typing and a cashier and banker," Mike Vollbrecht recalled.

The bank closed during the Depression in 1930.

125th City Celebration

If you would like to be a part of Hanover's 125th birthday celebration committee, please contact John Vajda at 612-804-5110 to be added to the group. Meetings will begin later in January. The 125th celebration is tentatively scheduled for the weekend of the Hanover Harvest Festival in August.

BankWest Display

The new display is now at BankWest waiting to be viewed.

This quarter's theme is electricity and pre-electric times in Hanover's history.



Bridge Work Update

This fall tuck-pointing was completed on the stone foundation of the bridge approach, and most of the planks removed. Because bearings have seized on the bridge, the bridge will be lifted and bearings replaced. Bridge jacking is scheduled for January 18.



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