

New Dessert & Coffee Series

While the popularity of the Lunchbox Lectures continues to grow, not everyone can make it to the noon-time talks. For those who are looking for an evening activity, we are introducing the Coffee & Dessert talks beginning in January.

Sip coffee and eat dessert while listening to Gloria Albrecht discuss women in the circus, Jesse Coghill recite poetry, and Gale Bowler tell folk stories of women from long ago. Watch newspapers for schedule monthly. For more information, call 445-0378.

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Three New Board Directors Elected by Members

At the October 10, 2002 annual meeting of the Scott County Historical Society, members said good-bye to two board members and elected three new people to the board of directors.

Dr. Rolland Pistulka, who received an honorary lifetime membership, decided to step down from the board to pursue other interests after nearly 15 years in the position. Jens Bohn, president of the Dan Patch Historical Society, also decided to leave the position. Both gentlemen contributed their time and talent to the historical society and will be missed.

Newly elected board members include Don Beuch of Lydia, Nicole Murray of Shakopee, and Gene Simpkins of Prior Lake. Don Beuch became involved at the historical society by researching the history of Lydia in the museum's



collection of newspapers. Don is active in the Lydia Historical Society, which is working to build a historical monument for the community. Nicole Murray comes from a museum background having worked at Murphy's Landing and Fort Snelling. Currently working at the Junior High, Nicole is a frequent museum volunteer. Gene Simpkins is well known for his knowledge of Prior Lake resorts and his collection of area photographs. Board member Jay Whiting was reelected.

From Photos to Obituaries: Its All On the Web Site

With partial funding from a grant from the Minnesota Historical Society, the Scott County Historical Society has developed an all new web site.

Members and history enthusiasts will enjoy searching the museum collections on-line. Look closely to find family photographs or images of local events. While already a wonderful resource, the society is always looking for additional donations to the collection.

Another popular feature is the searchable newspaper index database. For the past six years, dedicated volun-

teers have diligently indexed marriages and deaths published in Scott County newspapers. Until now that information was only available at the museum. Through the web, visitors can search the index for listings. Citations include date, newspaper, and page number. It will still be necessary to visit the museum or send in a research request to receive a copy of the actual articles. Entering the information into the database is time consuming and on-going. Continue to check the web site for updates.

For more information, go to the web at www.scottcountyhistory.org

Area Students Visit Stans House and Museum By the Bus Load



While students within walking distance have always visited the museum on field-trips, this is the first year students have arrived by bus. The first week of November, 225 fourth grade students from New Prague Intermediate School made the trip. While at the museum, they learned about early settlers, toured the Stans House, and completed a history scavenger hunt.



Recent Gifts to the SCHS Collections: Thank You Generous Donors



Dr. Larson residence, Mudbaden. Built by John Sunder. Circa 1910.

- Rolland Pistulka: Six Rock Spring bottles in cardboard carrier and four wood Rock Spring crates.
- Rita Sunder: Photographs of John Sunder, his family, and buildings he constructed. Al Sunder political card.
- Ruth MacNabb: Ledger from Henry Heitkamp's blacksmith shop, Jordan.
- Loretta Lebens: Photograph by LeRoy Lebens.
- Cathy Isles: Jacob Ries six ounce glass bottle.
- Jim Oldsberg: Postcards, Shakopee ball park and American Legion.
- Tom Melchior: Wood Rock Spring crate.
- Leo Albrecht: First communion certificates and diplomas from Florence and Harold Albrecht.

From Humble Home to History Museum: The Story of the Stans House

The house that now sits adjacent to the Stans Garden Park on Second Avenue in Shakopee has endured many changes in the last nearly 100 years. Perhaps the only thing that has not changed is the railroad track across the street. Now owned and operated by the Scott County Historical Society, the Stans House is open for tours and home to events including holiday teas and socials.

Construction began on the house in November 1908. The *Scott County Argus* reported, "Excavating began Friday for a new modern cottage, which J.H. Stans will erect on the lot east of the A. Schmits residence on Second Street. The structure will be a one-and-one-half story frame building, the main part 16 x 26 feet, with two wings 16 x 18 feet, and finished throughout in hardwood. H.F. Hecker and Mr. Stans were in Minneapolis Saturday selecting interior furnishings. Frank Buch will construct the cottage which will be built during the winter for occupancy in the spring."

We do not know what furnishings were purchased in Minneapolis. However, we do know from oral histories that the house included a green and white kitchen table, an oak dining room table, a buffet, and a secretary, the only original piece still in the house today.

Frank Buch, who built the house, was a well-known carpenter and contractor who built many homes in the Shakopee area. J.H. Stans was heavily involved in the building process, as a painter and wallpaper hanger by trade this is no surprise.

By May of 1909 the house was taking shape. "The beautiful new home which J. Hubert Stans has been building the past season is rapidly nearing completion and will be occupied next week. It is a handsome improvement to that party of the city... It is 30 by 42 feet in size, a full two story, with hip roof, modern in its outward appearance as well as in its interior arrangement of the eight rooms and bath, with beautiful laid hardwood floors, woodwork in natural birchwood finish, triple front window and big bay window at that side, all adorned with leaded glass. Mr. and Mrs. Stans have enjoyed personally planning and supervising the building of their home, and they are to be congratulated on the success which has resulted from their clever thought and efforts as homemakers. It is one more pretty house added to Shakopee's growing list of im-



Mr. and Mrs. Stans in backyard. 1932.

provements." *Shakopee Tribune*. The family, Hubert, Matilda, Maurice, and baby Loretta, soon after moved into their new home.

The upstairs of the house initially went unfinished, although the children slept there even on cold winter nights. Maurice remembered waking to frost on his covers in the barren attic. Why it took 12 years until the upstairs was finished we do not know but in December of 1921 the *Scott County Argus* reported the new construction. "J.H. Stans is finishing the interior of the second story of his home, and when completed will have four large rooms and a bath upstairs, making it a great improvement."

The Stans continued to live there until Matilda's death in 1950. Chickens were raised in the backyard next to the wash line and the plum tree and Mr. Stans gave music lessons in the parlor. When the children had grown-up and left home, the upstairs rooms were rented to boarders. Sold, the house was repurchased by the Stans Foundation in 1972. (Maurice Stans created the Stans Foundation, a charitable fund, in 1937.)

In 1987, the Stans Foundation began restoration and repairs to the house, which continued until 1991. During that time, work included painting the house inside

Historic House Tells Story of Everyday Shakopee Life 80-Years Ago

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and out, wallpapering the interior, sanding the wood floors, and constructing an apartment upstairs. In a letter to Maurice Stans, architect Foster Dunwiddie wrote, "...the period recommended for historic rehabilitation is the period 1909-1925 during which Maurice H. Stans lived in the house." A separate consultant was contracted to complete the interior decoration, mostly consisting of items Stans recalled seeing in the house while he lived there.

In 1996, the Stans House was donated along with the Stans Museum to the Scott County Historical Society. This past summer, the house was repainted to match the original color according to a paint analysis. In addition, the porch roof was replaced. Now that the exterior of the house is stable, the interior of the house is the focus of attention. A new interpretive plan for the house is being written specifically for school students and adult tours. Historical context for this interpretive plan places the house in the 1920s – a period that most of the items in the house currently fit. In an effort to revisit the furnishing plan and to ensure the 1920s are appropriately illustrated, a number of items still need to be acquired. The Scott County Historical Society is looking for items from the 1920s that appeared on Maurice Stans' original list. We need your help in securing the following items to furnish the house.



Maurice Stans in front of house. Circa 1960.

Front Porch: Two wicker rockers, a small table for newspapers, and a doily cover.

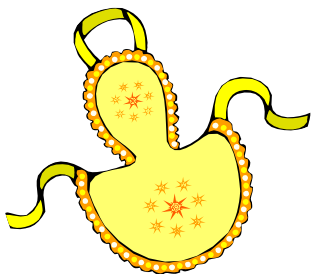
Parlor: Oil painting, religious picture, table lamp, square table with middle shelf.

Back Porch: Foot scraper.

Kitchen: Washing plunger, laundry bench, calendar.

Other 1920s items that would be appropriate include a curling iron, a mantel clock, dresser set, children's toys, musical instruments, music, and magazines.

Aprons and Owners Wanted for Special Women's History Exhibit



Every year the Scott County Historical Society honors Women's History Month with a special exhibit. Past years exhibits have displayed quilts from around the county. The 2003 Women's History exhibit will feature a new component of women's lives—aprons.

For centuries women wore aprons for many different purposes: as a place to wipe their hands, as a pot-holder in the kitchen, or to prevent stains on clothing. However, in the last 30 years, aprons have diminished in use. It is no longer common for women to embroider their own personalized aprons or to own many

different aprons for special occasions.

Remember the apron your grandmother wore for Sunday dinners? How about a smock worn over a dress to school? Whether spotless or stained, utilitarian or frilly, we want to put your apron on display. Aprons from any time period—1850 to 2000—are welcome. At the exhibit opening March 6, apron owners will be invited to wear their apron and share its story in a special style show. We are also looking for vintage apron patterns. To add your apron to the exhibit, call Sandi Andersen at 447-1912 or the museum at 445-0378.

For more information on aprons check out *Aprons of the Mid-20th Century* by Judy Florence, and *Aprons: Icons of the American Home* by Joyce Cheney or the web at www.apronsarecool.com.

How Helena Obtained Its Name According to Shakopee Argus Tribune

"The town of Helena lies on the southern border of Scott County, and embraces congressional township 113, range 23. It was settled by Germans, principally from the Rhine province. William Nachbar was the first settler. He built the first house in the township, on section 5, in November, 1854. After him Jacob and Joseph Schwingler located on section 8. These were followed the next year by Jacob and Sebastian Bauer, Anthony Clows, John Gelchter, John Smitz, Valentine Orth, Adam Pfefer, and Joseph Fromm.

"Vingenz Slawick settled on section 4 in 1854. In 1856 Dr. John Laudenberger was among the arrivals. He established the first store in the town, on section 29 in 1855. John C. Smith settled on section 11 in March, 1855, where he built a house and store. The next year he had his claim laid out in town lots and named the village Helena. Smith is said to have named the village in honor of his wife and an interesting fact in this connection is that the capital of Montana was named after this pioneer Scott County town. This was revealed in an article in the Argus-Tribune some time ago, and we shall touch on it only briefly here. History records that a number of settlers of Helena township went west in the wake of Sully's expedition in the late 60's. Among these was a Capt. Somerville. He and some others located in Montana and when a meeting was called to incorporate the settlement they and established, it was Somerville who suggested the name Helena. The suggestion was accepted. There is this difference between the two names, however. The Montana city is called HeLEna, with the accent on the second syllable, while our township is called HELEna, the accent being on the first syllable. The state librarian of Montana explained some time ago that this arose from the fact that certain officials were not familiar with the original pronunciation and adopted one of their own.

Thus, it appears, the humble wife of a Scott County pioneer gave her name indirectly to a state capital and a well-known western city. The records give us no information concerning this woman, but it is probable that her lot was similar to that of other pioneer women whose experiences we have related. Mr. Smith was accompanied by four other men, Benjamin M. Record, Frank Gilkey, Stephen Barnett, and William A. Fuller. They also became identified with the pioneer community, and in 1856 another early arrival, William

Pewtherer, opened a store in the village. Mr. Smith succeeded in having a post office established there in 1856 and was appointed postmaster. At one time there was a Lawyer Smith and a Dr. Rice in the village, but they did not remain long.

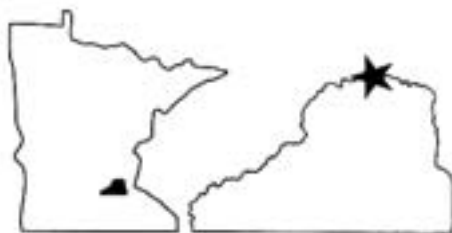
We read: "The village never amounted to much and the post office was removed in a way station, also called Helena, on the Minneapolis & St. Louis railroad, about four miles distant. At present (1882) there are few signs of the former town remaining." J.C. Mock was the postmaster at Helena station in 1882 and the business of the station was represented by one steam and water-power saw mill owned by Mr. Mock.

In the spring of 1856 a meeting was held at the house of William Nachbar to take measures toward erecting a Catholic church. The first religious services were held the following spring at the house of Nicholas Leonard, with Rev. Fr. Weninger officiating. Near that place a log church was erected the following year but it was never completed and a few years later St. Benedictus Catholic church was established about a mile east of the original site on section 17. A frame church was erected there in 1867. Of this church as it was in 1882, we read: "It is commodious and has a good bell." Rev. Father Cassimierus Hueppe, O.S.F. was the pastor in that year.

Reprinted from the *Shakopee Argus Tribune*, January 27, 1927.



**SCOTT COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
searching, saving and sharing the history of Scott County



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Sun., Mon. closed

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Remember to Add These Society Activities to Your Winter Calendar

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| <p>Dec. 10</p> | <p>Holiday Tea at Stans House Museum
Sip tea and sing carols at the historic Stans House. As always, wear your favorite hat. For more information and to register, contact Shakopee Community Ed at 496-5029.
2:00 p.m. Fee: \$5.</p> | <p>Feb. 13</p> | <p>Pie and Poetry with Jordan Writer
Celebrate Valentine’s Day one day early. Local poet Jesse Coghill will read his work while visitors enjoy cherry pie fit for a president.
6:30 p.m. \$3 for non-members, \$1 for members. Please register in advance at the museum.</p> |
| <p>Jan. 30</p> | <p>Dessert & Coffee: Circus Women
The first new dessert and coffee talk, Gloria Albrecht shares her circus life experiences from a women’s perspective. <i>Sorry guys—this is a women only event.</i> 6:30 p.m. Dessert and coffee provided. \$1 members, \$3 non-members. Registration required.</p> | <p>March 6</p> | <p>Apron Style Show & Exhibit Opening
In celebration of Women’s History Month, women’s aprons from the past 100 years will be on exhibit. The opening at 6:30 p.m. includes a style show by the people who own the aprons. To contribute to the display, call Sandi Andersen at 447-1912 .</p> |
| <p>Feb. 12</p> | <p>Lunchbox Lecture: Old Time Medicine
From herbs to leaches, Dr. Pistulka shares his knowledge of nineteenth century medicine as his alter-ego, Dr. Dunn. Noon–1:00 p.m. Free.</p> | | |

