

Serving Scott County:

Belle Plaine
Blakeley
Credit River
Elko
Lydia
Jordan
Marystown
New Market
New Prague
Prior Lake
Savage
Shakopee
St. Benedict
St. Patrick
Belle Plaine Township
Blakeley Township
Cedar Lake Township
Credit River Township
Helena Township
Jackson Township
Louisville Township
New Market Township
Sand Creek Township
Spring Lake Township
St. Lawrence Township

Hook, Line, & Sinker Exhibit Makes a Big Splash

by Jada Hansen

On Thursday May 12th we had our big opener for the latest exhibit at the Scott County Historical Society, *Hook, Line and Sinker: Fish Tales of Scott County*. If you attended the opener that night you know just how much fun we had—whether you learned all about the natural history of Scott County, added a story to our fish tales board, or reeled in a whopper in our hands on area, there were smiles abound.

evening's end the streets of Shakopee had begun to quiet, but inside we began an impromptu story session. Many visitors offered funny, interesting or seldom heard fishing adventures.



With all the excitement surrounding the exhibit we will surely have new things on display throughout the run of the show. Many of the people present on opening night offered some relics from home for us to exhibit. If you thought all the good stuff was out before, wait until you see what we have

Our evening began with food, conversation and tours of the museum; everyone was anxious to see our assemblage of fishing artifacts. By

coming up! *Hook, Line, and Sinker: Fish Tales of Scott County* will run through September 30th, 2005.

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Thanks to all who helped make this exhibit possible!!

The Bell Museum of Natural History	Hirshfield's of Shakopee
Steve Blake	Steve Karsseboom
Crary Company	The Minnesota Fishing Museum
Brad Eller	MN Lake Views by BojoMa LLC
Jon Hendricks	MN Valley Electric Cooperative
PETsMART	MN DNR, Division of Fish and Wildlife
	Gene Simpkins

THANKS TO GENEROUS DONORS MORE HISTORY SAVED, PRESERVED, SHARED

Here are just a few recent acquisitions:



De-railed train near Jordan on the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railway.

- 4 photos of a train wreck near Jordan, ca. 1940s.
- A WWII soldier's trunk from Prior Lake
- The wedding dresses of a Shakopee mother and daughter, from 1915 & 1945, respectively
- Mdewakanton Dakota (Sioux) census, 1885-1940, microfilm
- Farm equipment from Credit River, including a homemade butter churn
- Personal history of Mudbaden
- Oral history from Steve Karsseboom on Prior Lake fishing
- Jailhouse key from old Shakopee Jail

Call for items:

We are always looking for interesting items to add to our collection, these may be photographs, textiles, kitchen implements, books, records, etc. If you have something that pertains to Scott County, please bring it in! A few things we are looking for in particular are:

- **Souvenirs.** These may be just about anything, from something that was picked up at the 1933 World's Fair in Chicago, to a knick-knack with a personal story behind it.
- Kitchen **cooking** and **eating implements** and items related to food and **packaging.**
- Items from the early **Sears, Roebuck & Co.** catalogue especially as they pertain to Scott County.
- **Photographs** from Scott County floods such as the 1965 flood.
- **Photographs** from **Savage**, known to history as Hamilton village and Glendale township. Photographs of early Hamilton are especially welcome.
- Photographs of the **Pond Gristmill**

Thanks to all those who donated items to the museum recently: Clarence Johnson, Steve Karsseboom, Brenda Hoen, Arnold Storm, Robin Cody, St. Louis Park Historical Society, Harold Severson, & Shirley Hennen.

Thanks to Mary Vaccaro & Bill Wermerskirchen for their financial contributions!

VOLUNTEERS!

Did you know that the value of a volunteer hour has been estimated at \$17.55? Volunteer time for March, April, and May totaled 537 hours! That's worth \$9,424.35, though the expertise and camaraderie of our volunteers far surpasses this figure. Thanks for all your hard work! In May, brave volunteers staffed a tent in the Stans Garden Park to sell spring plants, with the proceeds benefiting the Historical Society. Despite 30-degree temperatures, a biting wind, and soaking rain, business was good and volunteers stayed cheery!



Gerrie Heiland and Betty Dols staffing the tent for our plant sale.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR
BY KATHLEEN KLEHR

ROAD TRIP

This summer SCHS is taking the museum on the road! With a generous grant from the Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative—*Round-Up* program, we are developing traveling exhibits—spin-offs of our new exhibit *Hook, Line & Sinker: Fish Tales of Scott County*, an in-depth look at the world of fishing and resorts in our own backyard. These traveling exhibits will help us bring SCHS to all corners of the county.

We also anticipate meeting and greeting Scott County residents on their own turf at city festivals that span the summer & early fall, as well as at the Scott County Fair. Look for our booth and take part in a fun hands-on activity, and pick up SCHS information flyers so you won't miss any of our events, exhibits or programs. Additionally, look for our display at

the Stocker Family Century Farm in Jordan during the City to County Tour in September.

Although exhibits will be “on-the-road,” at the museum we are deep into planning for the upcoming year. New exhibits, including *Souvenirs* and *Agriculture* are being researched. Development of fall workshops is underway in partnership with various city community education staff. Our collection is being scrutinized for treasures to highlight at Lunchbox Lectures and Coffee Talks. And we are working on plans for a special Halloween family hands-on history day in October.

I am excited for a summer of road trips, making new friends, and sharing SCHS with a wider audience, as well as eagerly anticipating our new projects.

If you are interested in volunteering at any of our road trips, please contact Patrick Rodgers or Kathleen Klehr to add your name to our volunteer roster (952-445-0378 or info@scottcountyhistory.org).



7th Annual City to Country Tour

A drive-it-yourself tour hosted by the University of Minnesota Extension Service – Scott County and the Scott County Historical Society.

Saturday, September 24, from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

4 sites promoting the importance of agriculture in Scott County through demonstrations, activities, and displays:

- **Crofut Family Winery & Vineyard, owned by Don Crofut, 21646 Langford Avenue, Jordan.** Learn about a variety of grapes, take a walking and/or hayride tour of the vineyard and taste fresh grapes. The renovated Fehlandt homestead on the property will also be open. Children can pick and crush their grapes, press the juice and play with the farm animals.
- **Kaos Kennels, owned by Mandy & Paul Meyer, 1311 Langford Trail, New Prague.** See gun dog training demonstrations, learn about Minnesota’s service dog organizations and watch demonstrations of dog agility. Face and paw painting activities for the kids. Tour the cat boarding and all-breed dog boarding and training facility.
- **Cedar Summit Dairy, owned by Dave & Florence Minar, 25830 Drexel Avenue, New Prague.** Tour the organic, grass based dairy farm and creamery, sample products, talk to the Minars, and learn about their sustainable farming practices.
- **Stocker Family Dairy Farm, owned by Rick & Ann Stocker, 3216 W 220th Street, Jordan.** See all the machinery and equipment it takes to operate a dairy farm. Take pictures with your child by a tractor, a cow, or a calf. Milking demonstrations and hay rides throughout the day. *Look for SCHS display at this historic century farm!*



Moo!

On the Road!

Look for SCHS at these upcoming festivals:

BBQ DAYS—Belle Plaine, July 16

THE SCOTT COUNTY FAIR—
July 27-31

TASTE OF SHAKOPEE—August 4

LAKEFRONT DAYS—Prior Lake,
August 6

HEIMATFEST—Jordan, September 10

DOZINKY DAYS—New Prague,
September 17

Wish List

*Microfilms:

* LeSueur County Federal Census, 1857, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1910, 1920, 1930.

* LeSueur County State Census, 1865, 1885, 1895, 1905

*General merchandise catalogues from all eras (Sears, Wards, J.C. Penney, etc.)

*Microfilm reader/printer for the research library—ours are getting a little long in the tooth!

*Mobile exhibit cases

*Sponsorship for a subscription to Ancestry.com.

*Two newer computers for the research library, one with internet access for researchers, the other with updated version of MS Access for volunteer data use.

From the Research Library: Gambling in Shakopee

by Betty Dols

This article was originally written for a Shakopee newsletter in December of 2002 but the subject of the article applied to most of Scott County, as well.

The failed experiment of Prohibition in 1919 resulted in closing the good breweries and encouraging illegal stills and the sale of “moonshine” in back rooms and “speakeasies.” While Prohibition lasted 13 years in the United States, it lasted only two years in neighboring Canada, and Minnesota’s proximity to Canada led to a lot of bootlegged liquor passing through our area. It was a wild and reckless time often referred to as the “Roaring Twenties.”

Anyone over sixty years of age can remember when there were slot machines in every bar, restaurant, store and cafe in Shakopee. Not only in Shakopee, but throughout many counties of Minnesota. A Jordan resident was quoted in the Prior Lake American (issue of July 30, 1980) as stating “Scott County was the most wicked in the entire state of Minnesota.” I doubt that was true, but it is understandable how that impression came about. Scott County in general, and Shakopee in particular, was well located south of Minneapolis and St. Paul, with an established tradition of providing good food and entertainment at the St. Paul House and the Rock Spring.

According to my encyclopedia, the forerunner of the modern slot machine was invented in San Francisco in 1899. It obviously took some time to arrive here but when it did, it was everywhere. When Prohibition ended in 1933, liquor was again legal and at least 26 bars opened in Shakopee and most of them were selling hard liquor as well as the non-intoxicating liquor (3.2 beer) they were licensed to sell. And they all had slot machines.

In 1940 a group of self-appointed reformers calling themselves The Minnesota Law Enforcement League headquartered in Minneapolis, and led by

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the Rev. Henry J. Soltau, came to Shakopee with a number of complaints seeking warrants against alleged operators of gambling devices. When Municipal Judge Schwartz refused to sign his warrants, Soltau, his lawyer, and four others invaded the apartment of Justice of the Peace Siebenaler, who also refused to sign, and asked them to leave as it was his mealtime. Siebenaler then filed charges of disorderly conduct against Soltau and his attorney Bergstrom. They obviously were able to obtain enough attention to have their charges heard because the next article in the local paper states the cases came before Judge Schwartz on October 25. He set Nov. 4 as the trial date.

Then, on October 27th, in the evening, F. T. Wolf who claimed to represent the Minnesota Law Enforcement League, appeared at the home of Attorney Harold E. Flynn, president of the Shakopee Chamber of Commerce. He proposed that the anti-slot machine raids could be called off if "the boys" would pay \$6,500.00 cash and \$400.00 per week. After some discussion, the demand was reduced to \$3,000.00.

On November 4, Wolf and his attorney returned to Flynn's home where Attorney Flynn had taken the precaution of having a secretary concealed in the house to transcribe the conversation and the house was surrounded by local law enforcement officials. When the \$3,000.00 was handed over and the men started to leave, they were arrested and jailed on charges of extortion.

In the following weeks, the local newspaper was filled with bold headlines concerning the attempted extortion and the charges of the Enforcement League against the local officials. F.T. Wolf was

sentenced to Stillwater State Prison, Wallace was admonished and fined, and others of the League were admonished. One had to read the articles very carefully to find that 16 Scott County men (most of whom were from Shakopee) were fined about \$200.00 each for violating state gambling laws. But there was some fall out. In July of 1941, Governor Harold Stassen ordered the removal of Sheriff Mesenbrink, for failure to enforce gambling laws.

One of the favorite stories of the locals was to walk down Lewis Street on a Saturday night where both sides of the street in front of the Rock Spring were lined with cars with Twin Cities license plates. When they looked in the window, there was no one at the bar except the bartender and one person (the lookout). Everyone else was downstairs, playing the machines.



Scott County Sheriff J.P. Wermerskirchen and Deputy Sheriff Rip Schroeder smashing slot machines with an axe in 1942.

Deputy Sheriff J.P. Wermerskirchen was appointed as acting Sheriff and for a time the slot machines all disappeared, but gradually found their way back although never again as open and blatant as before. In the Dec. 11, 1947 *Shakopee Valley News*, was quoted an article from the then current issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*. Rufus Jarman, *Post* writer was quoted as saying, "In the Twin Cities region, Governor Youngdahl's law enforcement is felt most emphatically at Shakopee, a small town about twenty miles away, where residents of Minneapolis and St. Paul used to go for their Sunday cocktails, which they couldn't buy at home, and to dine at one of several restaurants that featured thick steaks and slot machines."

This time with the additional enforcement of the liquor laws, reducing the number of liquor licenses from nine to five, Shakopee's reputation as "Little Chicago" came to an end.

FAMILY DAYS A HIT!

Our Family Day on April 30 drew a sizeable crowd to our May basket making activities.

Join us October 29 for a spooky Halloween-themed Family Day, featuring apple bobbing and Halloween crafts. Come to the museum in your costume and mingle with our spooky staff!



Our Stans African Gallery was transformed into a bustling workshop space on April 30 for our May Day basket program. Thanks to Sandi Andersen for leading the workshop!

Curator's Corner

by Patrick Rodgers

After 165 text panels, 42 artifacts, 4 hands-on activities, and two weeks of installation, our exhibit on fishing in Scott County, *Hook, Line, & Sinker* is now open. While members and visitors are just starting to enjoy our latest offering, we've already starting planning for our next exhibits in 2005 and 2006.

Replacing the fishing exhibit in October of 2005, will be an exhibit on souvenirs. Most of us collect or purchase items that will connect us with a significant place and time in our lives, and some of those objects have ended up in the Scott County Historical Society's collection. A souvenir can be anything from a mass-produced piece of advertising to a pebble you picked up from the shore of a special lake. Even some hand-carved statues that Maurice Stans bought in central Africa in the 1950s were actually produced for a tourist market.

Through their objects, we'll visit some of the places Scott County residents have traveled or have made for people who traveled here.

On the heels of our souvenir exhibit, we will install a display on agriculture in Scott County in April 2006.

This exhibit will feature a recently-acquired collection of early 20th century farming equipment. This exhibit will act as a precursor for the Smithsonian traveling exhibit *Key Ingredients: America by Food*, which SCHS will host in July of 2006.

Education programs have been moving along swimmingly (and not just because of the fishing exhibit)! The school year came to a close with two trips to Belle Plaine Elementary in early June. Since January, SCHS staff have helped bring history to more than 1300 students throughout the county. In the words of one recent 2nd grade thank-you card writer, "Thank you for teaching us about pioneering. We learned a lot. We epresheatie."



2nd-graders from Pearson Elementary had fun angling on a tour of *Hook, Line, & Sinker*.



Jada helps Shakopee Catholic School students test their butter-making might with an old-fashioned paddle churn.

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



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Sat. 10:00—3:00
Sun., Mon., closed
Major Holidays

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Collections
Jada Hansen, Collections Assistant

What's ahead at the Scott County Historical Society:

Thru. Sept. 30 *Hook, Line, & Sinker: Fish Tales of Scott County Past & Present.* Learn about Scott County's natural advantages for fish, anglers, and resort-goers. Try reeling in some "mystery fish" and rummage in our historian's tackle box.

July 16 **BBQ Days, Belle Plaine**

July 27-31 **Scott County Fair**

Aug. 4 **Taste of Shakopee**

Aug. 6 **Lakefront Days, Prior Lake**

Sept. 10 **Heimatfest, Jordan**

Sept. 17 **Dozinky Days, New Prague**

Oct. 20 **Exhibit opening**—Souvenirs of Scott County. See what county travelers collect from across the nation and the world.

Oct 13 **Scott County Annual Meeting**

Oct. 14 Prepare for belly-laughs, toe-tapping music, and tasty treats at our *County Roast* fund raiser, headlined by Dick Jonckowski.

Oct. 29 **Halloween Family Day**—Spend a Saturday afternoon at the museum decked out in your Halloween costume. Halloween crafts and activities, plus some spooky Halloween stories from the county.

**THE SCOTT COUNTY HISTORICAL
SOCIETY MISSION**

*Searching, Saving and Sharing the history and
cultural heritage of Scott County.*

History and cultural heritage infuses every aspect of our lives, so please, when you're cleaning out the attic, basement or garage, think of us.

Upcoming Workshop!

***Saving Stuff: How to Care for and
Preserve Your Collectibles, Heirlooms,
and other Prize Possessions***

Book Signing & Workshop

Don Williams,

Senior Conservator at the Smithsonian Institution

Thursday, **June 16, 2005, 6:30 PM** at SCHS, 235 S. Fuller St. in
Shakopee. FREE ADMISSION!!

Bring your collectibles to this informative and fun workshop! A hands-on demonstration will follow Don's lecture.

Presented by the Scott and Carver County Historical Societies



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