



COTTONWOOD

County Historical Society

Monday—Friday 8 am— 4 pm and Saturday 10 am—4 pm

WINTER 2022

In the Remick Gallery:

Give It Your Best Shot:

Focus on Cottonwood County Roads

2022 Photo Show

January 16 – March 19, 2022

The exhibit in the Remick Gallery features photographs of Cottonwood County taken by local photographers. The theme this year is “country roads”. On display are 29 great shots from throughout the county! Stop by and vote for your favorite photograph!



2021 Photo Book Now Available

The 2021 photo show book “Give It Your Best Shot: Focus on Cottonwood County Signs” was printed earlier this year. The book features 20 photos relating to the theme of ‘signs’. The hard cover book is \$35 and the soft cover is \$25. Stop by and pick up your copy today!

New Ornament & Mug Available

Limited Edition Ornament
Eighth in a Series
Old Westbrook Lutheran Church

Back reads:

Families of northern Cottonwood County organized the first congregation of the county in 1870. The church was built at the present site in Ann Township in 1883. It was enlarged in 1907. Other improvements made include; basement in 1917, education unit in 1959, pipe organ built by Pastor A.O. Aadland in 1970, entry in 1980 and an elevator in 2014. An engraved field rock was installed to commemorate the 150th Anniversary.

Festival of Trees Recap

Throughout the month of December, visitors enjoyed viewing 13 beautifully decorated Christmas trees in the Remick Gallery. Below is the list of those who designed trees in 2021:

Windom Cotton Quilters

Windom Service Club

HyLife of Windom

The Compassionate Friends of Windom

Pam Gahler

First United Methodist Church

Pat Elness Brandt

Sons of Norway

FFA

Cottonwood County Development Achievement Center (DAC)

Southwest Crisis Center

Mountain Lake Christian School

Windom Area Chamber of Commerce

Voting was accomplished by placing quarters in can by the tree you liked the best. The 2021 winner by popular vote is the Mountain Lake Christian School with their colorfully decorated tree featuring handmade Christmas ornaments made with paper, paint



and Play-doh by students from Pre-K and Kindergarten. Coming in second is the Windom Cotton Quilters with ornaments handmade by their members and titled "Gingerbread Dreams". The third place winner went to the First United Methodist Church whose tree was decorated with handmade wooden crosses as ornaments and was entitled "The Gift of Giving". Thank you to all who designed trees this year! It was a great year with 13 trees in all. Thank you also to those who visited and voted for their favorite tree. The top three winners were given Windom Chamber Bucks. The remaining proceeds benefit the Cottonwood County Historical Society.

What is a Lakerette?

When I was first starting this story, someone asked "What is a Lakerette?" It took me a second to realize the Lakerettes were not as well-known as I had thought. They were the only group like this in the area, and not only were they unique, but they were talented and entertained at basketball games, football games, wrestling meets, parades and school events. This group was high kicking, pom-pom shaking, choreographed dancing and highly practiced. They were the Mountain Lake High School Lakerettes, and here is their story.

In 1970, a new young teacher was hired at ISD 176. She came from St. Paul and had been in pom-pom units since 9th grade. After high school, she was a member of the Winona State Warriorettes and became one of the choreographers. When arriving in Mt. Lake, she saw a need for girls activities other than cheerleading and twirling. So, in 1972, Principal Dennis Litfin, gave her the Ok and that was all she needed. Meetings were held for interested girls, 2 co-captains/choreographers were selected and try-outs were scheduled. This is a picture of the original unit and the Captains Gail Kipfer and Karen Heddons.

Uniforms were figured out and moms and others helped with sewing them. Mt. Lake's school colors were at the time, Black and Orange, so a jumper type uniform with a black blouse was constructed. Black and Orange large pom-poms were added and white socks and tennis shoes completed the look. This first unit had 15 girls and they first performed at a football game. I think people were kind of shocked to see this in the conservative community. High school girls in short skirts, kicking their legs high in the air to pre-recorded music was not something they had ever seen. But they were a hit!

Try-outs were held every year and we tried to have between 12 and 18 members. There were also 2 alternates selected who would practice with the team and could fill in if someone could not perform. The Lakerettes practiced almost every day after school until about 5:00. Because the gyms were being used, they practiced in the hallways, and had to put up with the wrestlers running through them was frustrating. Warm-ups consisted of 20-40 high kicks and the theme "Think High" was taped to the door. At times there would be a string or ribbon suspended from the doorway to the classroom, and the goal was for everyone to be able to kick it on the way into the room! They also worked on being able to do the splits at the ends of routines.



Continues....

There were several things the girls did that had never been done before them. One thing was performing in the St. Paul Winter Carnival Grand Day Parade. Getting ready for that parade consisted of practicing outside in the street in late December and January. They would practice the marching routines with their drummers, and yes, it was cold at times! Just the experience of being in the parade was one of a kind, even though several of them said the only thing they remembered was the freezing cold! They did wear black pants, their Lakerette jackets, earmuffs, gloves and tennis shoes. And were on television!

Another thing they did in 1976 was participating in the Town Bicentennial Parade in Hastings, MN. Not only did they march in the parade, they got to spend the night camping on an island on the Mississippi. They had a houseboat ride down and back from the camp site.

They also danced a routine at the Cottonwood County Talent Show one summer. They had several routines, and the one they performed at the fair was choreographed to Hawaii 5-0. It was high energy and employed a double off-beat kick line. So many routines over the years including their annual Christmas performances. The girls used black canes, black top hats, white flowing tops with three big black button cut-outs on the front and a large black bow. Black tights, white turtle necks and white tennis shoes completed the uniform. They usually threw out candy canes at the end.

Having fun with the unit was always a priority. Yes, they worked hard to perfect their routines, but they also took time to have a clinic to teach elementary girls the basics, and even sponsor a 50's day at the school. Many classmates took to dressing up with the 50's theme and a sock hop was held that evening in the old gym with a 50's era band. The girls had done a routine to "Rock Around the Clock" and hit the floor when the band played it!



Meet Your New Board Members:

The following Board members were newly elected in November. We thank them for agreeing to serve on the Cottonwood County Historical Society Board! Welcome!

Lindsey Cartwright is our new 1st Vice-President. He is a retired teacher from Windom and his current project is managing the building of Gove Acres.

Earl Enstad is our new 2nd Vice-President. He is a retired farmer from the northern part of the county. He enjoys digging into local history as his roots in the county run deep.

Laura Williams is our new Secretary. She recently retired from the First United Methodist Church as their church secretary.

Pam Gahler is our new Treasurer. Born and raised in Windom, Pam assisted with the financial records at Smith Appliance until her daughter and husband sold the business and moved up north.

General Fund Donations:

Donations made between October 23, 2021 thru January 25, 2022

Karen Kremmin in memory of Barb Axford; Rosie Davis in memory of Russell Fransen; Dr. Ron & Diane Kuecker in memory of Melvin Wojahn & Kenneth Arnsdorf; William & Marilyn Peterson in memory of Russell Fransen; Rosie Davis in memory of Russell Fransen; Michael & Marjorie Eichner in memory of Char Meier; Linda Fransen in memory of Russell Fransen; Lowell & Nancy Tjentland in memory of Jerry Thompson; Earl & Judy Enstad; Michael & Marjorie Eichner in memory of Gail Barlow; Larry & Becky Stevens in memory of Wayne Peterson; Roxanne Potter in memory of Jerry Thompson; Deanne Thompson in memory of Jerry Thompson; Romelle Wojahn in memory of Chuck Severson & Robert "Bob" Turner; Christianson family in memory of LaVern Christianson

Memorials for August "Wig" Wiggans Turner:

Joseph & Barbara LaCanne; Lowell & Nancy Tjentland; James & Coralee Krueger; David & Beatrice Muller; David & Marilee Strom; Dr. James Miller & Dr. Mary Olson; Gary & Jody Vanderwerf; Barb & Duane Pingeon; Dianne Beens, Dr. Thomas & Terry Tegels; Roxanne & Jack Potter; Greg & Linda Kockelman; Romelle Wojahn; Mike & Linda Eisenmenger

Year-End Donations:

Carol Kissner & Claude Buettner; David & Donna Sippel; Pam Gahler; Bruce & Elizabeth Pankonin, Char & Doug Woizeschke; Geof & Leann Johnson in memory of Irene Loewen; Paul Turner; Amy Gudmestad; Julie Gudmestad; Phil & Mary Anderson; Jeanette Mantie; Ron & Margo Torkelson; Lylas Eigenberg; Norma Loewen; Maria Fitzgerald in memory of Patrick Fitzgerald; Duane & Barb Pingeon; August "Wig" & Wanda Turner; Anthony & Heather Smith; David & Marilee Strom; Ernest Woizeschke; Daniel Woolsey & Sandra Solem; Doug & Priscilla Jacobson; LaVern & Carol Christianson; Richard C. Olson; Dawn Bondhus Mueller; Kevin & Lynel Stevens; Ernest & Judith Dellinger; Tyrone & Deidra Steen; Ronald & Carol Vought; Barb & Eddison Christians; Roger & Pat Christensen in memory of Art & Norma Christensen, Arlan Christensen, Curt Christensen, & Philip & Karen Christensen; Don & Jean Hoppe; Jack Elness; Carolyn Bondhus; Joanne Meyer; Romelle Wojahn; Leland & Sigrid Johnson; Dr. Peter & Marion Franz; William & Caran Riggs; Ruth Wohlfel

Year-End Donations designated for 2022 Projects (Security System & HVAC Upgrades):

David & Beatrice Muller; David & Phyllis Werness; Leland & Marilyn Erickson in memory of Peggy Onken, Don Jackson, Loretta Jackson, Dick Jeffrey, Lavonne Fett, Eva Schmidt, Scott Fredin, Deanna Voth, Diane R. Johnson, Brent Johnson, Lula Leverenz, Helen Haugen, Howard Davis, Randy Riebe, Rosella Smith, Dr. Harold & Marjorie Basinger, Betty Brown, Alice Marsh, Marlis Engen, & Russell Fransen; Laura Williams; Marilyn Wahl; David & Donna Sippel

CCHS Membership

CCHS Welcomes New Members:

Robert & Tamara McMenimen; Kevin & Lynel Stevens

CCHS Thanks Members Upgraded to Lifetime:

Murl & Mary Rupp

CCHS Thanks Our Annual Renewals:

Dean R. Larsen; Joan Giese; Joyce Nielsen; Mary Kellen; Romelle Wojahn; Marlene Smith; Lorin & Becky Epp; Les Knutson; Judi Ray; Margaret McDonald; Michael & Marjorie Eichner; Daniel Woolsey & Sandra Solem; James & Sarah Wronski; Lee & Sandy Peterson; Diane & Ted Johnson

CCHS Thanks Our Annual Patron Renewals:

Linda Mix; Sonya Buller; Cheryl Hanson; Ruth Steinfeldt; Geof & Leann Johnson



Cottonwood County Historical Society

812 4th Avenue
Windom, MN 56101
cchs@windomnet.com
www.cchsmn1901.org
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2022 Exhibits in the Remick Gallery:

“Give It Your Best Shot: Focus on Cottonwood County Country Roads”

January 16 – March 19

Cottonwood County Student Art Show

March 27 – April 23

“Genius Loci: Real & Imagined”

by David Strom

May 1 – September 3

“Festival of Trees”

December 1-23