



# Chanhassen Historian

Vol. 7, No. 2

A Publication of the Chanhassen Historical Society

Fall 2015

## HISTORY BITS

**September 1864:** With her husband, Engelbert Schneider of Chanhassen, serving in the Civil War, Anna Schneider, living alone in the woods with four children, wrote to her parents that in one week "I threshed 300 bushels wheat, 80 bushels barley and 200 bushels of oats. Have all the grain laying there yet...I have 18 head of cattle and six nice hogs. At times I can hardly bear it."

**April 1915:** Grocery specials at A.M. Pauly's Store included a large can of sauerkraut for 7 cents, a can of sliced pineapples for 12 cents, a package of maple corn flakes for 6 cents, and a package of rolled oats for 18 cents.

**October 1923:** A special election was held in Chanhassen to determine if the residents wanted electricity. The vote of approval was overwhelming, 73 to 9. Bonds were then issued by the town to erect poles and street lights. The first places to get electricity were the bank and grocery store, followed later by the St. Hubert Church and School.

**1953:** The American Legion built a hall on Chanhassen's main street. The Riviera took over the hall and opened it as a private bottle club in 1959 and served as a popular dinner and night spot. Today, after extensive remodeling, it is Axel's.

## Coffin Nails Death of sailor mourned by townspeople

**By Ron Roeser**

Sometime in the early spring of the last century, a sailor died.

A boy from the plains of Minnesota – a sailor who had never really sailed.

A boy who, when he reached a certain age, enlisted in the Navy

with his cousin and their friend,

His cousin and their friend sailed from New York, leaving the sailor in a military hospital, a victim of the sickness that ravaged the world when the century was new – called "the Spanish Flu".

The sailor died.

His body was placed in a wooden coffin,

And was sent back to the town in Minnesota the sailor called home.

It was a very small town.

Everyone in the Village gathered at the station  
**COFFIN NAILS to page 2**



**Lorraine (Jorissen) Roeser** (pictured in her younger years), often shared the story about standing by the sailor's coffin as it was opened.

The Chanhassen Historical Society  
invites you to attend our 6th Annual

## SeptemberFest

Sunday, September 20th, 2015

Lake Ann Park, Al Klingelhutz Pavillion

3 pm - 5 pm

Join fellow Historical Society  
members & guests at this informal gathering to  
share music, stories, food.

We want to thank you, our members, for your support!

Family and friends welcome!

Dinner served at 4pm



The cast from last year's Cemetery Walk represented a colorful array of well-known and little-known individuals from Chanhassen's history.

## Cemetery Walk set for Saturday, Oct. 3

Chanhassen history comes to life as we walk through Chanhassen Pioneer Cemetery and St. Hubert's Cemetery. Actors from the Chaska Valley Family Theatre will portray past citizens and share stories of Chanhassen history and pioneer life.

We will meet on the plaza in front of historic St. Hubert in downtown Chanhassen and board a bus to begin

the tour. For those who may find it difficult to walk through the cemeteries, a performance has been added at the Chanhassen Senior Center.

**The Cemetery Walk is a FREE event, but registration for the guided tour is required. Please call 952-227-1100 to register.** Each tour is limited to 50 participants.

The event is co-sponsored by the City

of Chanhassen and the Chanhassen Historical Society.

### Saturday, October 3

10 a.m. seated indoors, Chanhassen Senior Center, 7700 Market Blvd.

1 & 4 p.m. bus/walking tours Meet at Historic St. Hubert Plaza, 381 West 78<sup>th</sup> Street, Chanhassen

## Coffin Nails Continued from page 1

to meet the coffin.

It was World War I, and the sailor had died to make the world safe for democracy.

The service would be held at the small town's church.

It was a solemn occasion.

Farmers did not work that day.

Shops and taverns closed.

Lunch would be served in the convent school, in the "big room".

School benches would be stacked in the hallway.

At the train station the people watched as the sailor's coffin was unloaded.

Girls from the school in their white dresses and white gloves, holding flowers, were in the front row.

A rumor had spread that a coffin had recently returned from the War, containing not the body of a soldier, but the leg of a horse.

It was decided by the Village elders that the coffin should be opened.

The local undertaker would open the coffin.

As he removed the screws from the coffin, he handed the screws to the tall, red-haired girl in the front row.

The cover was removed.

The people saw the gaunt, sad corpse of a sailor from the plains of Minnesota –



Sally Atkins portrays her great grandmother, Lorraine (Jorissen) Roeser, and recounts Lorraine's story of the coffin nails during the Cemetery Walk.

the sailor who had never sailed.

The undertaker replaced the cover on the coffin.

The procession moved to the church.

The sailor was Martin Roeser.

His friends were Clarence Geiser and Frank Roeser.

The tall, red-haired girl who held the screws was my mother,

Lorraine Jorissen Roeser.

# President's notes

It hardly seems possible that the summer is in it's final days. It sure went fast. We'd like to thank everyone who participated in putting together the historic St Hubert church



**Lynn Murphy  
CHS President**

tours in August. Everyone involved worked hard to present these tours and they were received to a most appreciative crowd. We've heard nothing but good things about the tours and it was fun to share the church's history and hear first hand memories of it's past with long-time and new residents. We all had fun with the project -- spiffing up the interior, assembling facts and stories

and were happy to contribute to making the open house a success. The church is certainly a great treasure in Chanhasen's history and we hope to be able to share it for many years to come!

With Fall comes two important events and we want you to save the dates. The annual SeptemberFest community picnic on Sunday, September 20th will be at Lake Ann Park to show appreciation to our members for your support, so please RSVP by returning the enclosed cards;. The Historic Cemetery Walk program will be held Saturday, October 3rd.

We hope you can make these events. Enjoy the cool autumn weather!

Until next time -- Lynn Murphy



The Kelm House (also known as the Pauly or Yanisch House), one of the most recognized homes in Chanhasen, recently sold at auction for between \$110,000 and \$111,000. The new owners are reportedly committed to restoring the house to its original condition. The home sits on the corner of Frontier Trail and West 78th Street, across from Chapel Hill Academy and St. Hubert's Cemetery.



St. Hubert's Church and the Chanhasen Historical Society hosted an Open House Aug. 16 at Historic St. Hubert's Church as part of St. Hubert Parish's 150-Year Celebration. Visitors were taken on a short tour of the facility by members of the Chanhasen Historical Society. Pictured here are volunteers Claire (Klingelhutz) Robling and Mary Jo (Knott) Kamerud.



## Join the Chanhasen Historical Society

Your membership will help with the preservation and restoration projects of Chanhasen's historic buildings, plus educational programs about our community's history. You also automatically become a member of the Carver County Historical Society.

### Membership Application

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Individual: \$15; Family: \$25; Bronze: \$50 - \$100; Silver: \$101 - \$250; Gold: \$251 - \$500; Platinum: \$500 - \$1,000**

**Make checks payable to: Chanhasen Historical Society, P.O. Box 941, Chanhasen, MN 55317**



**Chanhassen Historical Society member and past president Paula Atkins portrayed Susan B. Anthony in the Chanhassen Rotary's First Annual Historical Characters competition for the Chanhassen 4th of July Celebration. She won first prize and a ride in the parade. (Photo courtesy of Chanhassen Villager.)**

## From Carver County Historical Society

### Restored German Reading Society banner to be unveiled

The Carver County Historical Society (CCHS) will unveil the newly restored German Reading Society banner on Sept. 12 between 10 a.m. and noon at Church by the River in Carver.

The Deutscher Leseverein was one of the earliest libraries in Carver County, housed in the City of Carver. When the group disbanded, their remaining collection and banner were donated to the CCHS. Over the years, time has been rough on the banner. After the event on Sept. 12, the banner will be moved around the county before being placed permanently on display at the government center in Chaska. This project was made possible by a grant from the Minnesota Legacy Fund.

### Annual membership meeting held

The annual General Membership meeting of the Chanhassen Historical Society was held April 23, 2015 at the Chanhassen American Legion. Officers and members of the Board of Directors remained unchanged.

The program, titled "Kept it all these Years," was moderated by Ken Smith. Stories and items were shared including tools brought over from the Old Country, dolls, a doll buggy, matchbooks, vintage skis, hats, and postcards. Participants included Rita Rojina, Rosemary Pauly Mingo, Tom Pauly, Mary Goetze, Lynn Murphy, Ron Roeser, Sandy Rodenz, and others.

Door prizes awarded included Chanhassen Dinner Theater tickets to Mary Poppins.

## Chanhassen Historical Society

P.O. Box 941

Chanhassen, MN 55317

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lynn Murphy, President

Phone: 952-353-4547

contact@chanhistorical.org

Ken Smith, Vice President

Claire Mitchell, Secretary

Nancy Simpson, Treasurer

Tom Pauly, Claire Mitchell,

Art Mason, Paula Atkins, Mary Goetze

Newsletter Editor: Claire Robling

Chanhassen Historical Society Website:

chanhistorical.org