April 1, 2007

CASS COUNTY CLIPPINGS

CASS COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

P.O. BOX 505 201 MINNESOTA AVENUE W., WALKER, MN. 56484

Cass County's First State Park

Schoolcraft State Park, opened in 1964, can be reached by going northeast of Remer about 18 miles on Hwy. #6. Besides the beauty of the park and its excellent accommodations, it has many historical associations.

It sits on the banks of the Mississippi where nesting waterfowl were found in abundance in great vistas of high grasses and wild rice. Deer were plentiful in this area, with the black bear seldom seen. Best of all, the park is the focal point for many river trips, leading through chains of lakes and connecting with other streams and rivers.

The park was named after Henry Rowe Schoolcraft. The park was one of his stops while searching for the head of the Mississippi River in 1832. Schoolcraft, a 27 year old student of minerals and Indian life, is credited with finding the source of the Mississippi in 1832. The first trip with Lewis Cass in 1820 ended with the same conclusion as Zebulon Pike, and Lake Cassina was named as the source of the great river. Schoolcraft, 12 years later, again traveled to Minnesota leading a party of soldiers, Lieutenant James Allen, Dr. Douglass Houghton, and missionary Rev. William T. Boutwell. Schoolcraft had been instructed to make peace between the Dakota and Ojibwe and gather information about the fur trade and the condition of the people he met along the way. He traveled to Cass Lake and from there sixteen men in five canoes were guided by an Ojibwe, "Yellow Head" up the river to Lake Bemidji and from there the party portaged to Elk Lake (Lac la Biche), presently

named Lake Itasca. Taking the advice of his Ojibwe guide, he declared this body of water to be the source of the Mississippi River.

French fur traders led by Jean Baptiste Cadotte in 1792 were in the area trading for prized beaver pelts, which were found in abundance. At that time buffalo and elk were also common. Early explorers paddling birch bark canoes on the river wrote of times when the low country was flooded with water to a depth of sixteen inches and short cuts could be taken from Pokegama Falls to Cass Lake. Schoolcraft's party all kept diaries but all differ as to whether the site of the picnic ground was the section of the park where the first church services were held. Schoolcraft had married Chief Waub-o-jeeg's granddaughter. Her mother was the Chief's daughter and had married an Irish explorer. Together they educated their child in Ireland. When this child grew to womanhood, she returned to her grandfather's home where she met and married Schoolcraft.

Located on the south end of the park, the Vermillion River flows into the Mississippi. Camping sites, picnic areas and a harbor were created. The park is a short distance from the Mud-Goose game refuge and about two miles from Day's High Landing refuge.

As of June of 1964, \$14,000 had been spent preparing the park site. The idea for this park came about because members of the North Grange needed locate a new picnic

Story continued on page 3

Cass County Has New Board Member

Kelly Nelson has agreed to be our newest board membr. Kelly and his wife Jeanne own and operate Gramma Jo's, a home for the elderly in Walker. He has taught sixth grade at Walker/Hackensack/Akeley elementary for nearly 20 years. A Lieutenant Colonel in the National Guard, Kelly is also active in the Walker community, is a Walker Lions member, and participates in the Hope Lutheran choir.





Items from the Native American collection

In reading the obituary notices from the <u>Cass Lake Times</u>, one thing is a constant. Babies are born and babies die. In early days, a birth announcement depicted such a happy time -- families gathering, baptisms, naming the newborns. Very disheartening to Renee is when she reads through to the next year, only to read the obituaries of these tiny beings. When she came across this article, she saved it, hoping to use it someday.

Cass Lake Times, May 22, 1941. Cass Lake Gets a Baby Incubator. The Cass County Welfare Board and NYA have made three incubators for the care of premature infants and have presented one to each of the following hospitals, the Cass Lake General Hospital, the Walker Hospital and Pine River Hospital. Cass Lake is fortunate to have this new equipment, as very few small communities up to the present had incubators available."

Cass County Historical Society Board of Directors

Eric Myhra
Cecelia McKeig
Audrey Chelberg
Sandy Pauly
Dan Eikenberry
Diana Kramer
Kelly Nelson

Cass County Research Center

The research center is staffed by the Cass County Historical Society at the Cass County Museum in Waker. Someone is available to assist you in your research Tuesday-Friday from 10:00 - 5:00 from May 15-Sept 15. Research is also available by appointment through the winter. The research library, obit indexes, newspaper microfilm, and other archival materials are accessible for a \$10 research fee for non-members.

One of our immediate goals is to expand the microfilm collection of newspapers and census records as we have the only microfilm reader/printer available for public use in the county.

The Cass County Historical
Society meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 at the Museum. The next meetings are May 8th & June 12th.

site. When a resort was developed on Day's High Landing, they lost access to their original location. When they requested an access from the state, no funding was available. Commissioner of Conservation Selke and Representative Renner got involved and were instrumental in setting aside the property for a state park.

The North West Company was formed in 1784 and in 1792, the North West Company established a wintering post on White Oak Point on the Mississippi just five miles away. It was one of the first five trading posts in the territory.

The first logging in the area took place about 1879. A fine stand of pine was left untouched by the axe and was allowed to remain in its natural state in the 130-acre park. Remains of the Torrey Lumber Camp, from which Torrey Township received its name, can be seen across a bend in the river just north of the campground. Dobson's Point shows remains of a way station where the lumberjacks would stop when they brought the rafts of logs down the Vermillion River.

In 1964, one of the oldest white pine landmarks in the park was estimated to be over 300 years old. When the tree was young, lightning had split its trunk. The Andersons dubbed it the Schoolmarm, and she stood over the river, watching Indians and fur traders for at least a century before Schoolcraft explored the area.

While digging to plant trees where the original Dobson's Half Way House was located, a group unearthed fifteen different kinds of horseshoes, medicinal bottles, lanterns, logging stamp hammers, axes and other items. Close to the location of the lumber camp, the ruins of a house were found which belonged to Abraham Dobson, who died at the age of 90 years in February 1912. The Stoltz family inherited the property but had never lived there. This area was originally known as Dobson's Point and was a place where loggers stopped on their way to camps further in the forest. They could come down the river or by a tote road from Day's High Landing to Grand Rapids.

Local youth were employed on the NYC project and helped unearth all the articles from the lumber camp. They were working at the park that summer and because of their help seeding, mowing, sodding, hauling fill and removing stumps, the park development moved along at a steady pace. These boys were Myron Severson, Glenn Bullock, Theodore Jacobson, Eugene Brown, David Cleveland and Roy Robbins, under the supervision of Floyd Bolieau.

Alverna Anderson, a local historian and wife of the park ranger, George Anderson, told of a member of their family who pioneered the country and carried in a Jewell cook stove. He brought the lids and any removable parts seven miles on his back to his homestead and then walked back to carry the iron frame of the stove the seven miles back again. These were the days of tough, determined pioneers.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers are urged to meet again on a regular basis at the museum to read newspapers and abstract the pertinent information and put it on 3x5 index cards. Obituaries from the <u>Cass Lake Times</u> have been completed from 1899 - 1973. Please call for information on dates and time.

Volunteers are also needed to file material into our archival collection. This involves completing a collection information form and determining which file to enter the information into.

What Do You Get for Your Membership?

Free admission to the museum and the research facilities Four newsletters a year Opportunity to support your county museum

What Does your Membership do for the Cass County Historical Society?

Your membership helps keep the doors open. We need every resident of the county to take ownership of the county museum.



Mystery Tour Visits Museum

A tour bus from Southern Minnesota arranged with Renee Geving for a stop at the Cass County Museum on Saturday, April 21st. Thirty-six people were on the Mystery Tour and enjoyed the scheduled stop.

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Our website will be one year old in May. Traffic to the website increased as of January 1st, when we added the obituary index. We expect to add early deaths in Cass County 1896-1904 within the near future. Please visit us at:

www.casscountymuseum.org.

A Review of Our History

The Cass County Historical Society was officially organized in April of 1949 when eleven members of the Walker Ladies Civic Club created a historical society. Reorganization occurred again in 1956 with 20 members. In 1968 the group rented rooms upstairs in the Conservation Building in Walker, which is now on the National Register of Historic Places, and opened the Cass County Museum. We became legally incorporated as a non-profit, tax exempt organization in 1971 and after several fund-raising projects county wide and using county revenue sharing funds and donations, we put up a building of our own on the east side of the Pioneer School house in 1982. Today, this houses the Cass County Museum and the Cass County Research Center as well as an office for the Cass County Historical Society. For many years, volunteers from throughout the county operated the museum. In 1985, Renee was hired part-time, on a salary for 4 months out of the year. She is still here and beginning her 22nd year and still on a salary for only four months of the year. Cass County lets the Historical Society use the building rent-free, but salaries, utilities, office supplies and maintenance are paid from museum admissions during the summer memberships, months, donations. The museum is officially open to the public from Memorial Day to Labor Day and other times by appointment. The Research Center keeps the same hours.

Over the years, we have become more involved in genealogy and historical research for books, publications, newspaper articles,

schools, townships, and cities. We have a library collection, which includes older books, and a number of county histories from Minnesota and other states. We have microfilm of newspapers from 1894 to 2004. Our obituary index has nearly 15,000 names of Cass County residents, and we have over 3,500 photographs in our archives. For a fee, we will search out information researchers, and those fees supplement our admissions income. Personal information printed in the old newspaper gossip columns or featured articles such as marriages, add a personal touch to any person's family history in Cass County.

Please come to use the facility and invite others to visit the museum and utilize our wonderful resources.



Several new books have been donated to our library.

Revolutionary War Bounty Land Grants.

The Great Northern Railway.

History of the Northern Pacific in Minnesota.

Illustrated History of the Vikings

Land of the Free – A Journey to the American Dream.

Electrifying a Century, 100 years of Minnesota Power 1906-2006.

Membership

Sponsor

Don & Margaret Brown Dan & Sue Eikenberry First National Bank of Walker Marcella Fisher Gramma Jo's **Betty Hutt** Kelly & Jean Nelson

Lois Orton Dr. Otto Ringle

Tom & Doris Williams

Underwood Family Foundation

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Virginia Abullarade Cindy Alto Jim and Shirley Dowson Dick & Donna Evenson Jerry & Renee Geving Nancy Jacobson Molly MacGregor Richard Myhra Chris & Dorothy Opheim **Bob & Sandy Pauly** Sylvia Peterson John Risteau Dana and Bev Sheldon Bob & Ann Winegar **Bob & Germaine Yochum**

Donations

Leader Lions Club Cass County Home Council

In Memoriam for :

Dale Wilbur Geving

Thanks to our book donors:

Tom Williams Cecelia McKeig John C. Lueck Minnesota Power

Individual

Frances Bean **Bob Bean** Vi Blackburn Margaret Dewey Bessie Engebretson Don Flyckt Mary Louise Isakson Nancy Jacobson Karen Kezele Diana Kramer Elsie Nelson Frank Olson Mary Paskvan Diane Pitzen Howard Prushek Irma Schantle **Bob Shelton** Arthur Shenk Jeanette Silbaugh Sherry Wagner Betty Zaffke

Cities & Townships

City of Bena City of Chickamaw Beach City of Federal Dam City of Lake Shore City of Longville City of Remer City of Walker Blind Lake Township Boy Lake Township Deerfield Township Fairview Township Inguadona Township Kego Township Leech Lake Township Lima Township Loon Lake Township Otter Tail Peninsula Pine Lake Township Pine River Township Poplar Township Powers Township Salem Township Smokey Hollow Township Shingobee Township Turtle Lake Township Wabedo Township

Patron

Audrey Chelberg Tom & Sarah Cox Leland & Dorothy Delger Tony & Pat Doughty D. W. Jones Cecelia McKeig David Nieman Norbert & Rosie Ochs Carol Sargent Jerry & Greta Steelman Dick & Kathie Stoneking Gary & Margaret Trimble Harry & Martha Winter

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Business

Dr. Steve & Sharon Bilben Walker Animal Hospital Eric Myhra Ford Frizell Enterprises, Inc. **Hummingbird Press Huddles South Shore Resort** Leader Lions Club Little Apple Bookstore Norm's Auto Body & Fiberglass Orton Oil Company Relative Research by McKeig

Memberships have been slowly trickling in. Many have not renewed but still have time. Don't miss future newsletters. It's a benefit of your membership.

Wilkinson Township

2007 Membership Drive

May/Our Diadra for 2007 man	na ha wa hisa 🗥 🗘		
My/Our Pledge for 2007 men in the Cass County Historical	•		
Category Single Family Friend Patron Business Donation or Me	<u> </u>	<u>Pledge</u> \$10 \$15 \$20 \$50 \$50	
Please renew your members PO Box 505, Walker, Minnes	•	with check to the Cass Cou	nty Museum,
Cass County Historical Society PO Box 505 Walker, MN 56484			
Staff: Renee Geving, Director Asst: Jolene Safranek			
Website: www.casscountymuseum.org			
Email: casscountymuseum@gmail.com			
Newsletter: Cecelia McKeig Renee Geving			
Museum Phone: 218-547-7251 Summer Hours: Tues-Friday:			

10:00 - 5:00

Or by Appointment