

CASS COUNTY CLIPPINGS

October 1, 2009

CASS COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

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

Education at Ah-gwah-ching

Education is very important, and it was no less important if you were in a State Sanatorium taking the cure for tuberculosis. Patients were encouraged to continue their education. A trained teacher, Corinne Anderson began work with the patients on January 4, 1937.

In the spring of 1939, the State Board of Control agreed to provide the qualified high school teachers for instructional service, the necessary instructional facilities, and to grant credits based upon local passing marks and an examination approved by the State Department of Education. In December 1939, the State Department of Education sent a memo to all Superintendents of Schools in Minnesota urging them to accept credit for high school work completed at the Ah-gwah-ching Sanatorium.



Each year there was an average enrollment of about fifty students. About forty of these finished the year completely. The others dropped out because of illness, transfers, or other legitimate reasons. In 1939-1940, the school had an enrollment of 83, thirty of whom were Indian elementary pupils. Through the W.P.A., the sanatorium was able to hire an Indian teacher, Mrs. Elizabeth Rock, to take over the teaching of the younger Indian children in June 1939.

Mrs. Rock described her introduction to this school: "When I came and found each patient in bed, I was a little puzzled as to procedure.... I made a survey of the patients and made a list of those who were in the different grades. This list I submitted to the doctor who decided which ones were eligible for schoolwork.

As they are all bed patients I do not congregate them in a schoolroom, but I go to each individual pupil and give instruction in elementary subjects. Only a few may be moved in wheelchairs from one room to another thus making possible for me to teach for instance, one 6th grade class of three girls, and one 1st grade class of five boys. The rest of my pupils are each alone at class. These patients are on three floors and all go to school about two hours a week.

These patients look forward to their classes and never shirk in their work. There are no disciplinary problems and on the whole class times mark happy problems in their lives at the sanatorium. (continued on page 4)

Needed: Members willing to serve on the Cass County Historical Society Board of Directors for the coming years. Please call Renee at 218-547-7251.

Volunteer Projects

We have some really neat projects that we'd like to get accomplished this winter. If you have any expertise or just would like to be involved, please let us know by giving us a call or dropping us a note.

We would like to develop trunks filled with local history that can be used by county elementary teachers to introduce their students to local history.

2009 Historical Society Programs



Three History Walks took place along Cleveland Boulevard in Walker this summer. One walk took place each month from June through August. Don and Sue Eikenberry played the roles of Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Walker. Nita Frank-Eagle and Vonnice Beckman carried the role of Mary Hemingway. Willard Arens and Chrissy Mraz portrayed the roles of Mr. and Mrs. Chase of the Chase Hotel.

A series of walks is planned again for next summer. We are looking for volunteers to play the character parts as well as to help with costumes for the activities.

Cass County Historical Society Board of Directors

Dan Eikenberry, Pres.
Lois Orton, V-Pres
Cecelia McKeig, Sec
Elsie Nelson
Diana Kramer
Otto Ringle
Tom Williams

Alexis Hadrava - Treasurer

Cass County Research Center

The research center is staffed by the Cass County Historical Society at the Cass County Museum in Walker. Through the winter, research help is available by appointment. The research library, obit indexes, newspaper microfilm, and other archival materials are accessible for a \$10 research fee for non-members.



The Cass County Historical Society meets on the second Tuesday of each month in the summer at 6:30 at the Museum.

The next meeting is scheduled for Oct 13, at 6:30 pm



Remember Carlson's Store at Brevik? Before the development of Carlson's Resort about 1945, August & Mettie Carlson were owners of the Carlson Store where there was also a post office for the area. They sold Texaco gas (note Texaco pump). During WWII, August worked in the iron mines during the week, and Mettie tended the store. Peter Brown of San Diego, California, was reminiscing through his family photo album and sent us this photo to reproduce for our files at the museum.

Farm Building Razed at the State San (1959)

The farm buildings at Ah-gwah-ching were razed just fifty years ago in December of 1959. Five trustees from St. Cloud headed by an overseer worked at leveling what were once some of the finest farm buildings in northern Minnesota.

The barns and silos were built in 1925. For 35 years, they were visited by thousands of people. The San's herd of purebred Holsteins was the first accredited herd in the area. Many a Cass county farmer bought his first registered Holstein from the State San Farm.

Probably the final and decisive blow toward the maintenance of the farm was when the 40-hour week was launched. Cost of labor had to be increased as the cows insisted on operating on a seven-day basis, no matter what hours their masters worked. Then as the cost of their own produced milk was increased, the legislators, noting that they could buy milk cheaper than produce it, ordered the farm discontinued and the registered cattle removed to a state institution at Red Wing. (From the "Weekly Scratch Pad" by Clem Plattner, *Cass County Independent*, Dec 11, 1959)

Minnesota State Sanatorium Cemetery

Over the years, hundreds of patients died while at Ah-gwah-ching Sanatorium for tuberculosis. Most were transported home and buried in their family plots. A few were buried at a small cemetery on the grounds of Ah-gwah-ching. Forty-eight lots were set aside for Catholic burials, and forty eight were set aside for Protestant burials. Between 1940 and 1951, there were fifteen burials on the property. These were moved to Greenwood Cemetery in Walker in 1959. The deceased and their death dates were:

John Anderson (Feb 9, 1940)
John Hauser (Feb 12, 1940)
Leonard Ingersoll (May 25, 1940)
Howard DeWaine Sigman (Dec 17, 1940)
August Lahti (May 16, 1951)
Marshall James Gibson (Oct 3, 1941)
Carl Otto Hillman (Oct 11, 1941)
Mile Stevan Glumicich (Oct 22, 1941)

Frank Londo (Dec 26, 1941)
Mrs. Carmen Martinez Cervantes (Dec 27, 1941)
Henry Marshall (March 7, 1942)
Angel Ramos Guzman (Dec 28, 1942)
Wilbur Allen (Apr 21, 1944)
Matt Mannikko (Jan 21, 1945)
George Vokes (June 21, 1951)

Education at Ah-gwah-ching (continued from page 1)

Doing school work here will enable patients when discharged from here as well people to go back home to their respective schools to step into classes ahead of where they left off when they came here, and a few will even have kept up with their classmates at home.”

The Senior School Program in 1940-1941 included German, Latin, American History, English, Geography, Chemistry, Algebra as well as business courses such as Business Law, Bookkeeping, and Shorthand.

In March 1942, the students were eagerly awaiting the completion of the schoolroom in the D building. Several new classes were added to the Indian school program, which at that time comprised over 50% of the sanatorium education program. (Taken from the Moccasin”, June 1940, and reprinted in 100 Years of Caring, pg. 12)



This concludes our 2009 series on Ah-gwah-ching. The next year of Clippings will focus on a new topic.

Individual (\$10)

Judy Laverne Arens
Karin Arsan
Dale Barto
Francis Bean
Bob Bean
Vi Blackburn
Margaret Dewey
Karen Kezele
James O. Mans
Elsie Nelson
Frank Olson
Diane Pitzen
Dr. Otto Ringle
Robert Rogers
Tom Salwasser
Elizabeth Sauer
Erma Schantle
Arthur Shenk
Jeanette Silbaugh
Claudia Srok
Glenna Tappe
David Yde
Betty Zaffke

Family (\$15)

Doug & Lynda Birk
Dick & Donna Evenson
Alice Groth
Steve & Kay Johnson
Bob & Betty Kangas
Glenn & Patricia Mechelke
Glen & Jocelyn Reus
Bob & Esther Rupp

Business (\$50+)

Acorn Hill Resort
Anderson's Grand Vu Lodge
Anderson's Spirit of the North
Anderson's Cove
Anderson's Northland
Chippewa Lodge
Hummingbird Press
D. W. Jones, Inc.
Orton Oil Company
Leech Lake Lumber
May Creek Senior Living Campus
Frizzell Enterprizes

Membership - 2009

Benefactor (\$20 - \$99)

Virginia Abullarade
Charles & LaVonne Beckman
Clarence & Bonnie Byersdorfer
Audrey Chelberg
Tom & Sarah Cox
Gordy & Liz Dahn
Leland & Dorothy Delger
Mike & Karla Elsenpeter
Jack Fitzgerald
Don Flyckt
Jerry & Renee Geving
Dick Hein
Nancy Jacobson
Don and Karen Jensen
Bob & Shirley Jewell
Diana Kramer
Cecelia McKeig
Steven Mecklenberg
Pat Munkel
David Nieman
Norbert & Rosemary Ochs
James & Leona O'Neal
Chris & Dorothy Opheim
Oliver Opheim
Glen & Joycelyn Reus
Carole Sargent
Dana & Bev Sheldon
Dick & Kathie Stoneking
Gary & Margaret Trimble
Bob & Ann Winegar
Harry & Martha Winter

Sponsor \$250-\$999

First National Bank of Walker
Bob & Nita (Eagle) Frink
Ron Libertus
Lois Orton

Friend (\$100-\$249)

Willard Arends
Carl & Judy Berg
Dr. Steve & Sharon Bilben
Don & Margaret Brown
Jim & Shirley Dowson
Dan & Sue Eikenberry
Betty Hutt
Harry Loger
Dr. Noel Mills
Jerry & Greta Steelman
Tom & Doris Williams

Cities & Townships

City of Bena - \$100
City of Chickamaw Beach - \$25
City of Federal Dam - \$50
City of Lake Shore - \$50
City of Walker - \$500

Blind Lake Township -- \$100
Boy Lake Township - \$250
Fairview Township - \$1000
Kego Township -- \$250
Leech Lake Township \$200
Loon Lake Township -- \$100
Pine Lake Township -- \$200
Pine River Township - \$100
Powers Township - \$150
Rogers Township -- \$50
Salem Township - \$30
Shingobee Township -- \$1300
Smoky Hollow Township - \$100
Sylvan Township - \$85
Torrey Township - \$50
Trelpe Township -- \$150
Turtle Lake Township - \$500
Wilkinson Twp -- \$25
Woodrow Township -- \$50

A limited number of Ah-Gwah Ching **BRICKS** were salvaged after the buildings were torn down at the site and delivered to the county garage as promised. These bricks are for sale as a fundraiser for the Cass County Historical Society. The price for each brick is \$10. Please contact Renee Geving at 218-547-7251 to purchase a brick.



Cass County Historical Society
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Walker, MN 56484

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Assistant: Jolene Safranek

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Winter Hours: By Appointment