

# CASS COUNTY CLIPPINGS

October 1, 2010

CASS COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

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

## Century Farms

The Century Farm recognition program, sponsored by the Minnesota State Fair and the Minnesota Farm Bureau recognized 114 Minnesota farms as 2009 Century Farms. To be recognized as a Century Farm, the farm must be: 1) at least a century old as shown by a land patent, deed or court record, 2) owned continuously over that length of time by one family, and 3) be fifty acres or more in size.

Century Farm families receive a commemorative sign as well as a certificate signed by the Minnesota State Fair and Minnesota Farm Bureau presidents and Gov. Tim Pawlenty. Since the program began in 1976, more than 8,700 Minnesota farms have been recognized as Century farms. Memorabilia and anecdotes pour into the State Fair offices which tell of proud farm families.

Cass County currently has eleven Century farms. The farms are listed by family and date of original purchase by a member of the family.

Kenneth and Janet Rasmusen	1893
Albert Dennemeyer	1894
Lewis and Phyllis Munson	1894
Martin and Elva Melin	1896
Brian and Joyce Alt	1898
Russell and Mabel Wetherell	1898
Gordon and Gail Martin	1902
Lorna Kay Stefke-Harber	1905
The Foster Family	1906
Janice and Kris Olson	1907
Margret Anderson	1907



Rasmus Rasmusen was born in 1860 in Horson, Denmark and came to the US at age 22. Rasmus, a street car conductor in St. Paul, bought 120 acres in Becker Township in 1893 and named his farm "The Long Lake Stock Farm". Rasmus and Mary raised six children there. Martin stayed on the farm and added more acres to the home place. Ken and Janet Rasmusen continued to farm the home-place and in 1993, received the Century Farm Award, the first in Cass County. The photo is of the Rasmusen barn in 1916.

## History Walk

The second annual History Walk took place on July 20th and on August 24th. This year's walk covered the historical development of Front Street from 1896-1920. The walk started at 7:00 p.m. from the Cass County Museum and explored Front Street history. Twenty-three people attended each event.

Have you ever checked out our website at [www.casscountymuseum.org](http://www.casscountymuseum.org)?

During the month of August, we had 828 visits to the website from 764 unique visitors. In addition to an updated obituary file, we have lists of county information such as past postmasters, early county divorces, box holders at Ah-Gwah-Ching, and a list of the family histories in the Longville Centennial History book. Also available are the first fifteen pages of the History of Federal Dam. Our current newsletter as well as past issues of Cass County Clippings since July of 2000 are archived on the site. We have a list of publications, resources, and some photos. If you haven't taken time to check out the site, try us out this winter.

## STATE FAIR TROPHIES WON BY CASS COUNTY

Within the county museum are two fine trophies won by the county at the State Fairs of the past. The first was won by Cass County for its agricultural exhibits in 1915, 1916, & 1917. Its detail can best be viewed and admired by a personal visit to the museum.

The second was won in 1918 by the Walker Automobile Club. The inscription on the cup reads: *This Club Cup Was Presented By The Minnesota State Agricultural Society To The Minnesota State Automobile Association To Be Awarded To The A.A.A. Club Totaling The Largest Mileage In The 1918 State Fair Automobile Club Tour And Was Won By The Automobile Club Of Walker, Minnesota.*

The Walker Auto Club was formally organized in June 1915, with the assistance of members of the Akeley association who filled twenty-one autos and came up ninety strong to assist in the launching. The meeting was held at the opera house. Election of officers resulted as follows: President — Dr. F. L. Wilcox; V-Pres. – W. T. McKeown; Sec-Treas. – Fred Grindall. The Board of Governors consisted of Dr. LaDue, Tom Barker, Owen Morical and Odin Naustvold. The organization started out with a membership of twelve charter members.

In 1917, the officers were Dr. Wilcox, Gust Kulander, W. T. McKeown, and Austin O. Sarff. The Board of Governors consisted of R. F. Ross, Mack Kennedy, Thomas Hammond, Odin Naustvold, and W. H. Allen. Three of the members passed away during 1917: Frank B. Davis, Farley A. Dare, and George E. Crow.

The Auto Club was a very active touring and social organization in the early 1920's. Anyone who had an automobile belonged. The Sunday tours in

## Cass County Historical Society Board of Directors

Dan Eikenberry, Pres.

Lois Orton, V-Pres

Karen Keener

Elsie Nelson

Sue Eikenberry

Don Beadle

Martha Winter

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, obituary indexes, newspaper micro-film, and other archival materials are accessible for a \$10 research fee for non-members.

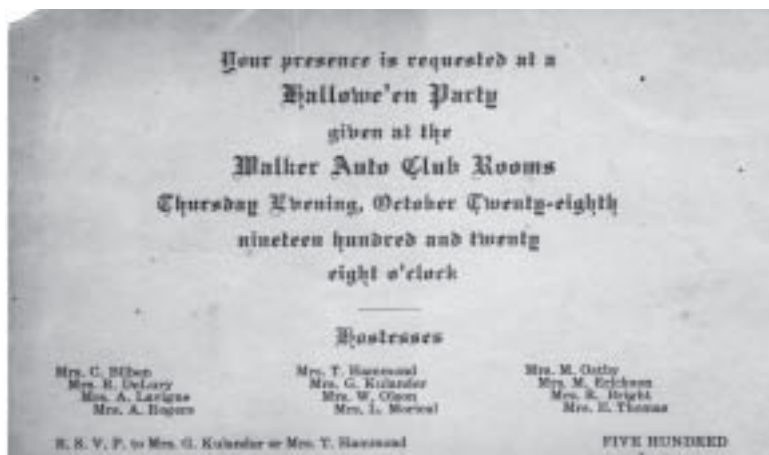


summer were fabulous! All the way to Breezy Point at Pequot Lakes, Nan-A-Ba-Shu Lodge in Cass Lake, to Itasca State Park, and the annual big trip – to Bemidji. These were round trip tours that were completed in one day.

There were terrific picnic lunches at the turn-around point. Lunch generally was delayed by the late arrivals. Although the cars could go 40 miles an hour, they were often delayed by items such as horseshoe nails and other sharp objects puncturing the tires. Flat tires were fixed on the road. Tire and other repair facilities were in the towns only.

Close order driving was done when a sudden big rainstorm came up. Bridges over streams or low places were a rip-rap contraption made up of two logs spanned by trimmed saplings, or a small brush pile. If a car got bogged down in mud or water, there was plenty of pulling and pushing power needed to get back on high ground.

Basically there was no car driving in the winter. However, the social calendar of the Auto Club kept the members hopping throughout the Off-Season. During the winter the doctors tried hanging on to the modern conveyance, but only succeeded to a point. In those days of “house calls,” the doctors often started out in their cars, but out in the country, that usually meant going to the end of the track into a farm yard and finishing the call by sleigh.



Photos: Both trophies are on display at the museum. The photo at the bottom of the page is a portion of a larger photo of the 1918 Auto Club and is displayed near the trophy in the transportation section of the museum.

## Harrowing Experience

### Lost in the Forest - 1907

Hopelessly lost, Miss Nellie O'Dowd, the 19-year-old teacher of District No. 2 in Gould township, wandered twenty-five miles through the wildest part of Cass County, in constant danger of losing her life in the swamps or through attacks by wild beasts. Her friends had no reason to believe her lost, and she was saved only by happening to find the shack of a homesteader who took her to better shelter. Later she was borne five miles on a stretcher. She has been laid up for a week as the result of her experience, but will reopen her school Monday morning. Miss O'Dowd had planned to accompany a Miss Nelson to a party at the home of Charles Armbrust, and a little before 2 o'clock in the afternoon she called at the Nelson home but found her friend unable to go. However, she decided to make the trip alone after Miss Nelson told her how to reach the Armbrust place, and she started to follow the trail through the woods. Miss O'Dowd had no difficulty for some time, but the way became indistinct, and she hurried along to pass the place. Suddenly, she found that the trail had entirely disappeared. She retraced her steps but could not find it again, and with a constantly increasing fear, she hurried forward in what she believed to be the right direction. After almost running for some time, she did not know how long, she realized that she had lost her way completely, but the nervous strain which she was under impelled her to keep moving, though she had no idea where she was going. The part of the county that she was traversing is one of the wildest sections in Northern Minnesota, and she knew the dangers of being out in the woods all night. The region is cut up by swamps, besides being the home of nearly every kind of wild thing native to the state. As it got toward evening, the thickness of the woods increased and she stumbled about, doing her best to keep in one direction, though she had no idea where her course would lead her.

At 7 o'clock, she came upon the home of Lars Nelson, a bachelor homesteader in the Bear River country, twenty-five miles from the house from which she had started at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The man hitched up his team and took her to the home of Mr. Wyereneman, who occupies a homestead about five miles away with his family. Miss O'Dowd's friends in her home district supposed that she had stayed with Miss Nelson, and the latter thought the teacher had gone to the party, so none felt any anxiety about her. The first that was known of her having been lost was on the following morning when they met and compared notes. A search was begun at once, the men scouring the woods in the vicinity in which Miss O'Dowd had started out. During the afternoon, word was received that she was at the Wyereneman homestead, and a party with a team went after her. When they had got within five miles of the homestead, it was found that the team could be taken no further on account of the swamps and rivers, and several of the younger men walked to the homestead and brought the girl back on a stretcher, as she was unable to help herself on the journey. She was taken back to her boarding place in the township of Gould. Miss O'Dowd was prostrated for a day after returning home, but she has practically recovered from the shock and exposure. Those who know the woods best cannot understand how the girl could travel twenty-five miles in that region in the five hours between the time she left Miss Nelson's home and that at which she arrived at the lonely homestead. (*Cass Lake Voice*, May 4, 1907)

Nellie O'Dowd continued teaching. In 1910, she was a teacher at Wolford in Pierce County, North Dakota.

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### **MARY ADELAINE HEATH LIVED 100+ YEARS**

One of Cass County's residents who achieved the status of a centenarian was Addie Heath near Jenkins. Mary Adelaide Heath was born in 1857 just as war clouds were gathering. She married Rufus Heath on March 22, 1876. One of the annoyances experienced by the Heath family back in 1901 and later was the fording of the River with their team and wagon for their shopping trips into Pine River. She recalled that so many times the river was full of logs, and they had to tie up their team, wade the river and walk the five miles to town. She was an expert midwife. For a half century, she assisted in bringing children into the world, usually with no doctor present. Addie Heath died on March 12, 1959, just short of her 102<sup>nd</sup> birthday. She is buried at Norwood Cemetery south of Pine River near the farm of her son Merle Heath.



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## Blueberry pie

The Ojibwe language is one of the most interesting languages that can be studied, and the more that it is studied, the more respect one has for it. The language is very melodic and descriptive. The word for blueberry pie in Ojibwe is *Bah-tay-me-ne-bash-ke-me-ah-see-gun-e-bah-quay-zhe-gun*, and is the longest word known in Ojibwe. “*Bah-tay*” in Ojibwe means dried, or in other words, picked off the bush. To make a pie, the berries must be picked. The word “*me-ne*” means blueberry and *bash-ke-me-nah-see-gun* means that the berries have been cooked, have broken open and have been made into sauce. The word “*bah-quay-she-gun*” is the word used for flour, cake or pie. It literally means “a piece cut off,” as the Indian knew nothing about pie, cake or bread until the white man introduced it to him and then it was cut off and given to him. Now putting the phrases all together we have *Bah-tay-me-ne-bash-ke-me-ah-see-gun-e-bah-quay-zhe-gun*, or blueberries picked off the bush, cooked until they have broken open and formed a sauce and put between a crust made with flour, a very simple word, self-explanatory, a recipe and a history all in one. (Cass Lake Times, Sept 22, 1927)



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Above: Birchbark container for gathering blueberries. This was fastened at the waist so that the gatherer could use both hands to pick blueberries. This is part of the birchbark collection at the Cass County Museum and was made by Isabelle Marshall.

Left: One of the magnificent pieces of Ojibwe beadwork at the Cass County museum which includes the blueberry in its design.

## George McGinn, Pioneer Logger Remembered

George McGinn was born at Coe Hills, Ontario, on October 26, 1869 to Sarah and John McGinn. He came to the United States in 1887, living first at Rochester, N.Y. After working on the construction of the Erie Canal, he moved to North Dakota and worked in the harvest fields there. Turning to woods work, he followed the timber drives from North Dakota to Remer, eventually settling and working in the Walker area in 1896. He served two days and nights as a sentry in the fall of 1898, when the 3rd Infantry was headquartered at Walker during the Battle of Sugar Point.

On October 16, 1932, he married Elizabeth McNeil at Remer. His work in the Walker area included a talented hand at building the original M & I depot. He revisited the depot sixty-one years later to witness its surrender and dismantling in favor of a new N. P. building.

He was known as a spinner of tall tales, particularly during the annual Christmas party held for the older guests at Aunt Mary's. He died at Aunt Mary's Rest Home at Walker, Feb 20, 1956. Old friends who served as pallbearers were Donald Johns, Everett Knight, I. W. Sanborn, Floyd Raines, and Del Armstrong, all of Remer, and Sheriff F. B. Simpson of Walker.

## **Membership - 2010**

### **Individual (\$10)**

Virginia Abullarade  
Karin Arsan  
Francis Bean  
Bob Bean  
Vi Blackburn  
Margaret Dewey  
Marvel Fisher  
Dick Hein  
Karen Keener  
Karen Kezele  
Joyce Lotze  
Casey MacDonell  
Steven Mecklenberg  
Elsie Nelson  
Frank Olson  
Diane Pitzen  
Robert Rogers  
Tom Salwasser  
Elizabeth Sauer  
Erma Schantle  
Arthur Shenk  
Jeanette Silbaugh  
Gloria Stewart  
Glenna Tappe  
David Yde  
Betty Zaffke

### **Business (\$50+)**

Acorn Hill Resort  
First National Bank, Walker  
Hummingbird Press  
Orton Oil Company  
Little Apple Book Store  
Huddle's South Shore Resort  
D. W. Jones, Inc.

Cass County - \$2,250.00

**Thank you for renewing your membership for 2010.**

### **Benefactor (\$20 - \$99)**

Charles & LaVonne Beckman  
Clarence & Bonnie Byersdorfer  
Audrey Chelberg  
Chad Converse  
Tom & Sarah Cox  
Gordy & Liz Dahn  
Leland & Dorothy Delger  
Mike & Karla Elsenpeter  
Dick & Donna Evenson  
Don Flyckt  
Jerry & Renee Geving  
Alice Groth  
Nancy Jacobson  
Bob & Shirley Jewell  
Cecelia McKeig  
David Nieman  
Norbert & Rosemary Ochs  
James & Leona O'Neal  
Chris & Dorothy Opheim  
Oliver & Virgie Opheim  
Lloyd Peterson  
Tony & Helen Plattner  
John B. Ristean  
Carole Sargent  
Dana & Bev Sheldon  
Dick & Kathie Stoneking  
Gary & Margaret Trimble  
Bob & Ann Winegar  
Harry & Martha Winter

### **Family (\$15)**

Don & Tanis Beadle  
Bob & Dodie Burdick  
Steve & Kay Johnson  
Robert & Betty Kangas  
Keith & Janice Matson  
Glen & Pat Mechelke

### **Sponsor (\$250-\$999)**

Anderson Family Resorts  
Bob & Nita Frink  
Dale & Harriet Jones  
Lois Orton

### **Friend (\$100-\$249)**

Willard Arends  
Steve & Sharon Bilben  
Don & Margaret Brown  
Jim & Shirley Dowson  
Dan & Sue Eikenberry  
John & Thelma Grimley  
Betty Hutt  
Gramma Jo's House  
Harry Loger  
Kelly & Jeanne Nelson  
Bob & Sandy Pauly  
Stan & Gerry Peterson  
Tom & Doris Williams

### **Cities & Townships**

City of Federal Dam - \$50  
City of Lake Shore - \$50  
City of Longville - \$50  
City of Walker - \$500

Blind Lake Township -- \$100  
Boy Lake Township - \$100  
Deerfield Township -- \$200  
Fairview Township - \$1,000  
Gould Township - \$100  
Kego Township - \$500  
Leech Lake Township - \$200  
Loon Lake Twp - \$100  
Pine Lake Township - \$200  
Pine River Township - \$100  
Ponto Lake Township -- \$200  
Powers Township - \$150  
Rogers Township -- \$50  
Salem Township - \$30  
Shingobee Township - \$1,000  
Smokey Hollow Township - \$100  
Sylvan Township - \$85  
Torry Township - \$50  
Trelipe Township - \$250  
Turtle Lake Township - \$500  
Wilkinson Township -- \$250  
Woodrow Township - \$50