



The Little White Paper

The Monthly Newsletter of the Golden Valley Historical Society
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December 8 meeting ...

Rubenstein will describe the start of the Civil War

The American Civil War began 150 years ago, in 1861. Dr. Mitchell Rubenstein will describe that event and the situation existing at that time at the Society's December general membership meeting.

Dr. Rubenstein is Vice President of the Twin Cities Civil War Roundtable. He is retired from a career as a researcher, policy analyst, and administrator in higher education for various state agencies. Most recently he served as Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at St. Cloud State University. Dr. Rubenstein is a historian by training, earning an A.B. from the University of Illinois Chicago and M.A. and

Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities with a specialty in European diplomatic history. He developed an interest in Minnesota and is co-author of "The Dakota and Ojibway," appearing in *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the*

The previously scheduled speaker, Bill Ewald, who was planning to present the history of Ewald Bros. Dairy and the Ewald family of Golden Valley, had to postpone his presentation due to a business conflict. He will be rescheduled in the spring.

State's Ethnic Groups published by the Minnesota Historical Society Press in 1981. Over the years he also has written several book reviews for the Society's quarterly journal, *Minnesota History*. His work in Minnesota history evolved into an interest in the Civil War in which he has several research interests, including Abraham Lincoln's role in foreign affairs.

The general membership meeting will be held in the Society's historic church and museum on Thursday, December 8, at 7:00 p.m. The meeting is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served following the program.

Golden Valley settlers volunteered for Civil War duty

In 1860 more land had been cleared and crops were becoming stabilized but news was spreading of the trouble between the North and the South. The people of Hennepin County were strongly northern in their sympathies. There was only one side to the issue of slavery as far as Minnesotans were concerned.

In April 1861, when Fort Sumter was fired upon, Minnesota's Governor Alexander Ramsey was in Washington. Upon hearing that war had been declared, he offered 1,000 men from Minnesota to help put down the rebellion. His offer was accepted by President Abra-

ham Lincoln and the first volunteer troops for the suppression of the rebellion came from Minnesota. Although the settlers of Golden Valley were busy clearing their land, many young men volunteered to serve in the army. They are listed in the military records of *History of Minneapolis and Hennepin County* edited by Atwater and Stevens.

The Eighth Minnesota Volunteer Infantry was then organized. It had several Golden Valley men in the ranks. Among them were: William Bofferding, Peter Bofferding, John Bofferding, Henry Yentsch, Owen Keegan, Thomas Gaffney, Joseph Gaffney, James Sweeney,

S. L. Bohanon, U. R. Wilson, Carl Moser, William Jones, John Jones, Charles Nassig, Carl Nassig, Capt. Henry R. Putnam, W. H. Varner, J. B. Johnson, Friedrich Becker, Friedrich Bies, C. M. Johnstone, H. Kleffler, and John Wetzel. At the end of the war they were mustered out and returned to Golden Valley to continue developing the new community.

Eight men who served in the Civil War are buried in the Golden Valley Cemetery. They are: Friedrich Becker, David Bies, Friedrich Bies, C. M. Johnstone, H. Kleffler, Carl Moser, Carl Nassig and John Wetzel.

Crews donates replica bull buffalo

Betty Crews has donated a bull buffalo from her large collection of artifacts. The bull buffalo is a toy replica of the animal that has become almost extinct. She thought that the buffalo would be an appropriate gift to the Society to display on the occasion where the buffalo

robe is brought out for the public to view. The robe was donated to the society by Jack Ewald who said that the robe was actually used by members of his family when they traveled in a horse and buggy in pioneer times of Golden Valley. Thank you Betty for thinking of the Society.

Golden Valley Cemetery founded by earliest settlers in the spring of 1869

On the corner of Winnetka Avenue and Medicine Lake Road there is a small cemetery known today as The Golden Valley Cemetery. This cemetery was founded on May 17, 1869, by 12 of the earliest settlers. They were: Henry Yentsch, Sr., Henry Yentsch, Jr., Frederic Boldt, Peter Bofferding, Ignatius Becker, Charles Nassig, William Younker, Frederick Bies, David Bies Mathias Messerschmidt, William Roggermann, and John Roggermann.

At the time, David Bies owned the land where the Midland Shopping Center is now located. He offered to donate one half an acre of land for the cemetery. In Germany, the homeland of all the founders, it is a tradition that all cemeteries face the east. Because the Bies' property did not have the proper slope, the offer was turned down. Instead, the men accepted a donation of one half an acre from Henry Yentsch, Sr., who owned the property where the cemetery now stands.

According to the records, the cemetery was first organized under the name of the Crystal Lake and Minneapolis Township Cemetery. On May 20, 1907, at the annual cemetery association meeting, the name was changed to The Golden Valley Cemetery.

The first person to be buried in the cemetery was Caroline Bies who died November 13, 1869, at the age of 25. She was the daughter of Mathias Messerschmidt, one of the charter members of the association. The second grave belongs to her 20-year-old brother, Friedrich Messerschmidt, who died December 8, 1869.

At the June 5, 1939 annual meeting, members agreed that the association should buy another half acre of land adjacent to the cemetery. On June 7, 1939, additional land was purchased from John Swanson for \$150.00. The money was taken from the cemetery's general fund leaving a balance of \$147.05.

Because the cemetery was small and times were hard, funds were not available for many of the improvements so desperately needed. Between the years of 1950 to 1967, meetings were rarely held on an annual basis. Due to the lack of interest by the directors and many of the members, the appearance of the cemetery had greatly deteriorated. After several years, the City of Golden Valley took over responsibility for the cemetery.

Program schedule through March 2012

January 12: Dr. David Rhees, Executive Director, Bakken Museum at 3537 Zenith Avenue South, Minneapolis. The history of Earl Bakken and the Bakken Museum.

February 9: Roxanne Gould and Jim Rock, Native Americans in the Golden Valley area in pioneer days.

March 8: Minnesota Supreme Court Justice Paul Anderson's reenactment of a Civil War General.

Society receives memorial gifts

The Golden Valley Historical Society appreciates the memorials it has received in the memory of several Golden Valley residents: Shirley Schultz, Bert Putnam, Robert Provost, Chick Horn, and Lenny Lewicki.

Our sincere condolences to the family of each of the residents.

New members

Kathy Rogers and Rick Korah, 4940 Markay Ridge, Golden Valley, MN 55422

Fred and Linda Blaisdell, 2035 Ordway, Golden Valley, MN 55422

Give our newest members a warm welcome at our next general membership meeting.

Officers elected to Board of Directors

At the November 16, 2011, meeting of the Society's Board of Directors the following officers were elected: President Kenneth Huber, Vice President John Colwell, Secretary/Treasurer Donald B. Anderson.