

Spring 2025

The Prairie View

EDEN PRAIRIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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www.edenprairiehistory.org

President's Message

Dear Members,

2024 was an incredible year for the Eden Prairie Historical Society! We hosted wonderful events at the CPG and Geisler-Dorenkemper House and participated in the Eden Prairie Schools 100-Year festivities. A special highlight was the return of the Eden Prairie Players to the CPG House for three sold-out performances of "Reviewed to Death," a play written for the house in 2001. It was thrilling to bring it back, and we hope to do it again!

We are grateful for the outstanding donations from our community. A special thank you to Dwight and Ken Picha, who donated their father's (Albert's) original EP school athletic letter. After sketching the design during his senior year, Al earned and received the very first letter given out, which is now beautifully framed and displayed in the museum.

On September 28, we proudly joined the Citywide 100-Year Parade celebration at the High School stadium. It was heartwarming to see children from all of our EP Schools participate in the festivities.

Another exciting update: Prairie Village Mall used several of our historic photos to create an informational collage on its walls years ago. As they remodeled, they called to offer the canvas prints to us. Many will find a home in the museum, while others will be loaned to the school district to be displayed in the 1924 Historic Gym.

We also want to recognize a special part of Eden Prairie's history. The former children's tuberculosis camp, now known as CAMP EDENWOOD - "TRUE FRIENDS," is an incredible site that continues to serve children with special needs. We are happy to share in their celebration! All are invited on September 9 at 5:30 pm to join in the celebration of their 100th anniversary and enjoy tours and refreshments.

Lastly, please join us for our annual meeting! This is a membership event—annual membership is just \$20 per household.

We will also have a table at PeopleFest on July 27th. Come by and learn about Eden Prairie History!

As always, we are deeply grateful for your continued support. Your dedication helps us preserve, protect, and celebrate Eden Prairie's past, present, and future.

We look forward to seeing you all soon!

Warmly,
Kathie



With the responsibility to protect its past, the Society's mission is to: gather, preserve and protect Eden Prairie's historic artifacts and memorabilia; share the stories of its people and places with audiences of all ages; and foster an understanding and appreciation for historic preservation.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kathie Case, President; Paul Thorp, Vice President; Chris Honaas-Wildfang, Treasurer & Membership Chair; Mary Meier, Secretary; Thomas Achartz, Museum Curator; Kelley Regan, Chair CPG House; Suzanne Berg, Bob Prince, Bob Bowes, Devyn Stanton, Duane Hookom



Preserving History: New Donations Enrich EPHS Collections

Among the notable items recently donated to the EPHS museum are two photos of the Wye from the 1950s, a flapper wedding dress from the 1930s, and, a most unusual item, a funerary hair wreath. (See article in this newsletter). In addition, we are deeply indebted to the Schwartz family for their donation of a large number of family photos including photos of Jesse and Irene Schwartz when they were young. The Schwartzs owned the Wye Cafe and Gas Station which boasted the famous Flying Red Horse. The Flying Red Horse kiosk should be up and running on the corner of Flying Cloud Drive and Town Center Place sometime this year. These donations to the museum serve as a valuable reminder of a forgotten past. These items are not only historical artifacts but also cherished family heirlooms that have been entrusted to us for preservation. We extend our deepest gratitude to those who have contributed and invite others to consider sharing their pieces of history.

Stop By and Say Hello!

We welcome the public to explore the museum and immerse themselves in the stories of those who came before us. If you have historical artifacts, photographs, or documents that you would like to donate, please contact the museum. Together, we can continue to preserve and share our history for generations to come.

The Eden Prairie History Museum is open most Mondays from 11AM-1 PM. It is located in the lower level of the Eden Prairie City Hall-8080 Mitchell Road, Eden Prairie. Messages may be left at 952-949-8580.



Photo donated by Randy Autsin

Janet Holasek Worrall has written a new book about life on her family's Eden Prairie Farm. In this historical memoir, Janet Holasek Worrall traces several generations of her ancestors leaving Bohemia in the 1850s and settling on farmland in Minnesota. It details daily life from the mid-1920s to the 1960s on Richard and Evelyn Holasek's farm, where the author and her sister Dorothy grew up. For decades, the Holaseks made a living having dairy cows, growing strawberries and raspberries, and raising chickens for eggs. In addition to being a wife and a mother, Evelyn worked side by side with her husband, pitching hay, husking corn, picking berries, and tending her large vegetable garden. While the Holasek farm is now erased from the physical landscape, Janet Holasek Worrall documents its place in history for future generations. She draws upon personal letters, diaries, newspaper articles, official documents, and her mother's records. Enriched with numerous photos, *A Czech Farm in Minnesota* is a compelling historical exploration of immigration, women, agriculture, and family. Janet's book can be found on Amazon.

A CZECH FARM IN MINNESOTA



Janet Holasek Worrall



The Museum of Art and History tells us more about this practice: Hair art first started in the 17th and 18th century in England, and it reached a high in popularity during the Victorian era (1837-1901). Queen Victoria wore a hair necklace of her husband, Prince Consort Albert, when he passed, which sparked interest in hair art (National Geographic). In the United States, hair art popularity grew with the high tolls of the Civil War. It became customary to make art from hair as a memorial for the deceased. Hair would be taken from the dead and used in jewelry, tokens, and hair wreaths. In addition to the remembrance of the dead, such art was also made from hair of the living as tokens of friendship. For example, locks of hair were taken from friends and left in autograph books for sentimental remembrance. Hair art was a way to signal one's sincerity in remembrance of someone both alive or dead, while also remaining in "fashionable style" (Smithsonian Magazine).

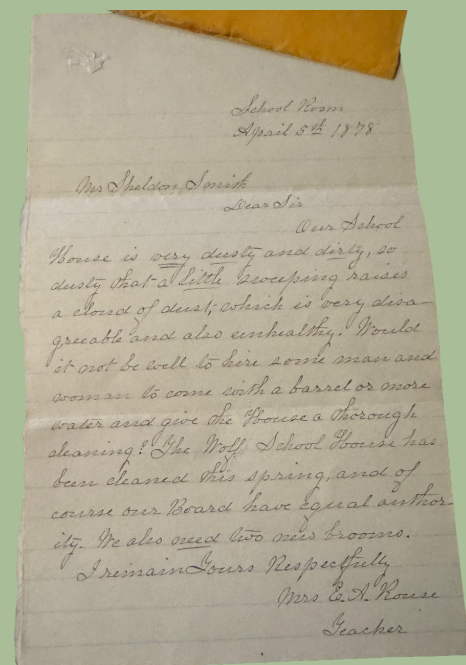
After the Victorian era, the tradition of hair work faded. Historians have speculated that this change may have come from the advent of funeral homes, which removed death from being a home focus. Its decline can also be linked to changes in fashion as well as new ideas about hygienic practices (National Geographic). Still today, parents often keep a lock from their child's first haircut. Those traditions bring back the memory of Victorian hair art.

School Room April 5th, 1878

Mr Sheldon Smith

Dear Sir, our school house is very dusty and dirty, so dusty that a little scooping raises a cloud of dust, which is very disagreeable and also unhealthy. Would it not be well to hire some man and woman to come with a barrel or more water and give the house a thorough cleaning! The Wolf School House has been cleaned this spring and of course our Board have equal authority. We also agreed to two new brooms. I remain Vours Respectfully
Mrs. E.A. Rouse, Teacher

In 1999 after Earl More's death, and prior to the decision by the city on what to do with the Smith-Douglas-More home, I was given a trunk and two boxes of letters found in the attic. The letters were dated 1877 to 1881. They were letters to Amie and Etta Smith, and a few to their parents Sheldon and Mary Smith. Reading these many letters gives a snippet of Eden Prairie at that time. Also, tragic as I know that Etta (Ettie) died of TB in 1881 at age 16. Their father Sheldon was acting Depot Agent, and had his beautiful red brick home open to travelers to stay, and was also the supervisor of the four one-room schools. I found this note from the Teacher of the Jarrett school, which was on Eden Prairie Road where the ball fields are today. The letters had not been read by anyone until they were given to me. It's very emotional to read them, and also interesting. Their lives were not so different from today. Joy, sadness, weather, and good friends. I plan to share more of them with you all.





The City of Eden Prairie presents an award each year to recognize an individual, family, or business who has made an outstanding contribution to the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and use of Eden Prairie's heritage resources. This year four individuals were awarded. John Gertz (former Historic Consultant with the city), Sasha Allen (wrote videos about EP's unsung heroes, Marcia Kolb and Johnny Severson (restored an 1880s Moran homestead on Mitchell Lake)

CONGRATULATIONS, and THANK YOU!

Set up an appointment to meet Carol Kissner and Lisa Seery. Lisa Seery contributes a new layer of help to your genealogy. Lisa is a DNA search angel and has helped many people find family through DNA and building out their unknown family trees based on their DNA connections. Carol Kissner continues to be available to teach you to use the tools available online such as online newspapers, FindAGrave and Familysearch.org image searches for original county records. This is a free service, call Kathie at 952-221-2560 to set up an appointment.



Our Board Member Bob Prince has been gathering a lot of plastic bags. The bags turn into beautiful durable benches. Two are at the Cummins-Phipps-Grill Homestead and now one donated to Smith's cafe. Thank you Bob.

UPCOMING EVENTS



CUMMINS FARMHOUSE MARKET AND Vintage Sale

May 9th & 10th
Friday, 12PM - 7PM • Saturday, 10AM - 3PM

CUMMINS-PHIPPS-GRILL HOUSE
 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
 13600 Pioneer Trail • Eden Prairie

The Eden Prairie Historical Society invites you to shop & tour the historic house.

11th ANNUAL SALE!

FEATURING:
 Antiques and vintage finds from **The PROP Shop**

★ **FREE ADMISSION** ★
www.edenprairiehistory.org

CPG HOUSE
 Cummins-Phipps-Grill House
 EDEN PRAIRIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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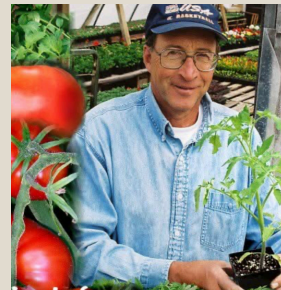
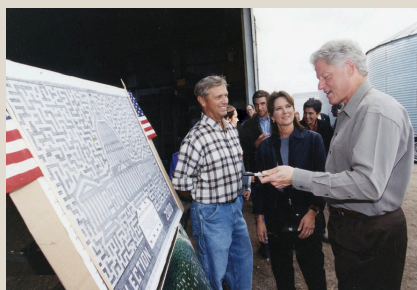
EDEN PRAIRIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Annual Meeting May 15 @ 6PM

Farmers from Eden Prairie

Cummins-Phipps-Grill Homestead
 13600 Pioneer Trail, Eden Prairie, MN 55347

Speakers: Terry Picha, Carrie Marshall,
 Sever Peterson, and Mike Rogers



Edited by Prima Sisinni (2025 edition)

Many thanks to Brianna Collett for her work on the 2023 and 2024 editions.