

The Prairie View

EDEN PRAIRIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUMMER & FALL 2013



its party time! this is going to be soooo much fun!

THE CALICO BALL: A FUN-FILLED PERK OF MEMBERSHIP

The Eden Prairie Historical Society Board

is Reviving a 125 Year Old Tradition.
Come and Celebrate Our History
at the

CALICO BALL

Generously hosted by
Sunhi Ryan & Steve Schussler
at the newly renovated

GREEN ACRES EVENT CENTER

(Previously the Goodrich-Ramus barn built in 1942)
14150 Pioneer Trail, Eden Prairie, MN

Sunday, September 22 4:00-7:00

Attire: think "Barn meets Bling"

Barn Dancing to "Light of the Moon"

More Details: edenprairiehistory.org

Please RSVP: Kathie Case 952.949.0915

Our revived Calico Ball is a gift to you, EPHS members! We appreciate your new and continued support more than we can say. This party is our special thank you, truly a fun-filled perk of membership. Enjoy soft drinks, a light supper and the first wine or beer free.

Please remember that this is a members-only party and only members will receive invitations in the mail next month. Not a member yet? Just \$20.00/ household. Contact membership chairman Chris Honaas-Wildfang at 952.974.4377 or visit us at www.edenprairiehistory.org. Parking for all guests will be at Grace Church; SouthWest Metro will shuttle us to the barn. We will have volunteers in the parking lot to assist with your new or renewed membership ... but who wants to wait

in line before getting on the bus? Join today and get the details taken care of before you arrive for the party. A special thank you to the Lions Club, photographer Rick Pearson, Marshall's Farm Market and Eden Prairie Woman of Today for their contributions and support.

the back story

THE BARN: BACK FROM THE BRINK

1942 Goodrich-Ramus barn is built on land first settled by the Goodrich family

2006 The design for a storm water pond to accommodate the expansion of Pioneer Trail is discussed.

2007 Hennepin County acquires the Goodrich-Ramus farmstead from the Sjosstrand family with the intention of placing the storm water pond where the barn sits. Soon thereafter the Cultural Resources Unit of MnDOT instructs the County to have an architectural history evaluation done of the Goodrich-Ramus barn to evaluate its National Register eligibility.

(continued on next page)



THE BARN: BACK FROM THE BRINK CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

2008 State Historic Preservation Office and the Cultural Resources Unit agree that the barn is historically significant. It is one of a few remaining examples of a two-story, Gothic arch-roofed dairy barn constructed using Rilco Laminated Products, which leaves the 2nd floor haymow entirely free of trusses and braces ... and yes, gothic cathedral-like. MnDOT redoes its site plan, sparing the barn but removing the other buildings on the property. A third-party consultant is brought in to development re-use scenarios; the preferred strategy is preservation-in-place, an alternative calling for relocation of the barn. If all else fails, the barn will be razed. A July *Star Tribune* article asks in its headline, "Always Wanted A Picture-Perfect Midwestern Barn?" Neither the City nor the County want the barn for themselves nor are there any offers to purchase.



2010 The barn is at its eleventh hour, face-to-face with a demolition ball. Steve Schussler reads a *Star Tribune* article about "the barn that nobody wants." He makes an offer (his being the only bid!) and becomes the new owner, planning to use it for storage.

2010-12 The barn is windowless, the silo roof is caved in and its filthy. Schussler rebuilds the roof, adds insulation and electricity, installs an elevator and makes changes to get health and historical preservation approval. The barn renovation takes on a life of its own, Steve having fallen in love with the building, its significance and its potential. Upon completion and more than a million dollars later the barn is ready to open and Steve is presented the **2012 Barn of the Year for Best Non-Agricultural Adaptive Re-Use Award** by the Friends of Minnesota Barns.

The rescued Goodrich-Ramus barn is now the Twin Cities' premier event center, Green Acres. No ordinary event center, experience "barn meets bling" with crystal chandeliers, a collection of antique jukeboxes, an extravagant Italian water fountain, an old fashioned player piano and cozy seating areas around warm fireplaces. Green Acres Event Center a destination-without equal, therefore the perfect setting for the Eden Prairie Historical Society's Calico Ball on September 22!

reuel long's peek into the past

PICNICS ARE TIMELESS, TASTY AND GOOD FUN

For decades picnic suppers were **the** warm weather social event in Eden Prairie. To be outdoors, with friends and family sharing a good meal was a treat. What's not to love? Picnic suppers were an important part of many church socials, harvesting celebrations, boating and horseback riding adventures, dating and even the annual Calico Ball.

Reuel Long remembers picnics in the 1930s. "As a family we participated in quite a few picnics with other Eden Prairie farming families. What was unique about them was that many times we ate right amongst the food we were eating for our meals, such as corn on the cob, watermelon, bib lettuce, radishes, squash, parsnips and new potatoes. Eating near the fields and gardens where that food was grown made it extraordinarily fresh. There were most often hot dogs and lemonade was usually the drink of choice. Then as we ate, we turned the ice cream crank, a big mealtime favorite. We had to coordinate the ice cream preparation with the melting of our blocks of ice brought from our home ice box supply. In the summer when school was out, my mother made us three kids bag lunches that we could take down by Anderson Lake for an picnic outing. They consisted of sandwiches, fruit and cookies. Often a spring flower would hide away in our sacks. We never tired of any of our meals outside."



there would be no ephs without member volunteers

HOW & WHY TO GET INVOLVED

The Eden Prairie Historical Society is an all-volunteer organization in its purest sense. Since 1969 when Helen Holden Anderson formalized the group, volunteers have been the ones to set goals, manage large projects and small, advocate for Eden Prairie heritage and get the job done. And as hard and as passionately as our volunteers work, I know as a volunteer, that one always and gains more than one gives.

2013-2014 promises to be banner year. Last year (our year runs May-May) we made huge strides with funding and goal-setting for our top priorities. We think you'll be excited when you read what the chairs for each project committee have in store for this coming year and how you can play a part. So much to learn, so much to be done and so many new friends to make.

Everybody helps at the **History Center and Museum** in one way or another. There are so many interesting areas of focus: becoming familiar with our archives and resources so you can assist others with their historic research, guiding guests around the museum and planning for new display vignettes. Because of a 2012 Legacy Grant, a new committee is emerging chaired by Museum Curator, Ann Higgins. The grant, awarded in April, has funded a "Conservation Assessment and Long Range Plan" for the Historical Society's wide-ranging collection of papers and objects. The **Conservation Committee** will work from the resulting report, its recommendations and guidelines relating to storage, cataloging and data management of the collection. This is a timely and important long-range project that can use many, interested volunteers. Chair: Ann Higgins. "Let me know if you'd be interested in being on the committee or helping with other History Center and Museum efforts; ann.d.higgins@gmail.com"



Cummins Phipps Grill House (CPG House): The **CPG House Committee** has been meeting since the Historical Society became the historic house's passionate caretaker in 2010. Since then, the National Register of Historical Places-designated house has undergone major restoration and rehabilitation. With the end of construction in sight, we're hoping to be granted funds to refurbish the second floor then focus on plans for that added space's future. In addition, the committee will continue engaging the community with fun and educational programs, grow our rental program and research a long-term corporate sponsorship initiative. Meetings are at the CPG House 8-10 times a year. Lots of time to get up-close-and-personal with the house's past, present and future. Chair: Jan Mosman. "Let me know if you'd be interested in being on the committee or helping at events; janicemosman@gmail.com"

Having just received a start-up grant, the new **Oral History Project** is just beginning to take shape. The grant allows for us to purchase equipment, hire an advisor to oversee the project, develop interview outlines and train volunteers. The Oral History Project will take a one-on-one traditional approach - a systematic collection of living people's testimony about their own experiences and memories, recognizing that if we do not collect and preserve those memories soon, the stories may disappear forever. The **Oral History Committee** members will participate in the training to conduct interviews and use the equipment, discuss and research our target interviewees and do the interviews. The committee will have to get together with our advisor to understand the timing and scope of work. Chair: Betsy Adams. "Let me know if you'd be interested in being on the committee; betsyadams@comcast.net"

Come join the fun.

pioneer trail: an eden prairie road with lots of history
GOODRICH HOME HOST TO CALICO BALLS

Horace Goodrich, his wife Harriet and seven children came to Eden Prairie from Vermont in 1867; two more were born in Eden Prairie (Orville, John, Eva, Jenette [Nettie], Josephine [Josie], Harriet [Hettie], Fred, Losety and Albertie). Their land ran from Staring Lake almost to the Minnesota River bluffs, straddling Pioneer Trail.

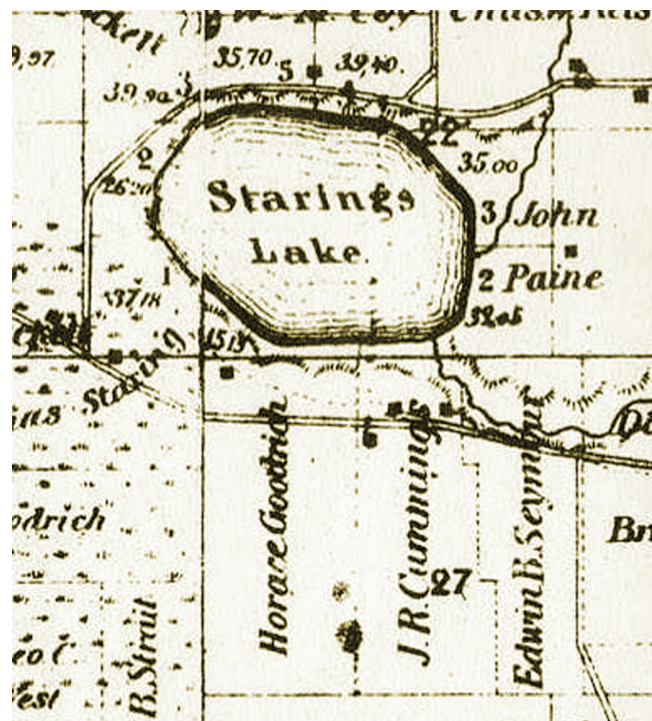
Goodrich built a beautiful house on the south side of Pioneer Trail from which he operated a store and post office (below, in 1880s). His post office was one of four in



Eden Prairie; Jonas Staring was postmaster for 14 years followed by Goodrich's son, Fred. Above the store was the Goodrich Hall used for gatherings, both political and social. What Eden Prairieites really loved was dances: for holidays, housewarmings, church socials, barn raisings, weddings ... any excuse would do. For a number of years during the 1880's, there was a special annual event, the Calico Ball, held at Goodrich Hall. Young ladies and old excitedly sewed new party dresses for the event, and yes, often of pretty calico prints. Helen Anderson writes in *Eden Prairie, The First 100 Years*, "The Calico Ball was a happy occasion. They danced, they laughed, they visited. There were flirtations of all degrees of seriousness. There were scheming mamas maneuvering daughters into paths of youths with prospects. When not twirling their partners, the fathers were deeply engrossed in talk about the

prospects for that year's crop. Grandmas and grandpas sat in their chairs along the side of the room and seemed pleased as they looked on at this second generation."

Across from the family home, on the north side of Pioneer Trail two Goodrich sons, Fred and John, built their homes. John operated his home as a summer hotel for many years. Summer vacationers would come to the Goodrich Hotel to relax with croquet in the front yard, swimming and boating on Staring Lake and to feast on the hotel's famous chicken dinners.



Above is a portion of an Eden Prairie 1874 map. You can see Staring Lake, Pioneer Trail, the Goodrich property and next door neighbor, J. R. Cummins' property. No Goodrich buildings have survived but we're proud to say that the Cummins house flourishes today as the National Historic Register-designated Cummin-Phipps-Grill House.

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.

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