

The Prairie View

EDEN PRAIRIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY SUMMER-FALL 2017



we thank jim and jim's thank you to ephs volunteers

HERITAGE PRESERVATION AWARD

"Former Eden Prairie Police Department Chief Jim Clark was presented with the 2017 Heritage Preservation Award 'for going above and beyond to promote Eden Prairie's heritage' during the Tuesday, May 16, Eden Prairie City Council meeting," wrote the Eden Prairie News. Congratulations Jim!

Jim Clark has deep roots in Eden Prairie. His ancestors arrived from Ireland in the 1880s. One of his grandfathers was the town-ship's first constable and the other its first city clerk. Jim has been a volunteer with the Eden Prairie Historical Society and served on its Board of Directors for many years, pushing us gently into the technological 21st century. And now, as an Honorary Board Member, he is webmaster at www.edenprairiehistory.org.

President Kathie Case received this letter from Jim:

You have assembled a wonderful group of hardworking volunteers to take the Historical Society to the next step and I wish to thank them, so if you could pass this on I would appreciate it. Through the work of the Historical Society, as well as the Historic Preservation Commission, Eden Prairie's history is much more visible to our community than it has ever been. As I often say, people can't underestimate the power of history; our future is guided by what we did in the past. Thankfully, the City of Eden Prairie has supported preservation for many years so that we have many tangible examples of that heritage.

You know I have a soft spot in my heart for the Historical Society. You all do great things and it is hard work at times but we have so much to show for it. So I want to thank each and every member of the Historical Society for this award, I truly share it with all of you because you are very much deserving of the same recognition. I was humbled by the nomination and the award. I have to admit I had a hard time accepting the award as I firmly believe there are many others who do wonderful work for our City. But I convinced myself that I would accept it and share it with all of you. It may sit on a special place in my house but I will always look at it as a group award that reflects the hard work of the members of the Society.

Jim



Sharing in the celebration with Karen & Jim Clark (& Piton) are members of the Heritage Preservation Commission, City Staff & Historical Society.

Mark Your Calendars

Glen Lake Sanatorium Exhibit Opening and book launch of "Interrupted Lives" by Mary Krugerud at Hennepin History Museum, 2303 Third Avenue South Minneapolis: October 1 from 1:00-4:00.

Dorenkemper Open House and Fall Harvest Celebration at Riley-Jacques Farmstead: October 7 from 2:00-5:00. Featuring live entertainment, cultural and historical displays, concessions and activities for kids.

Ghost Walk: October 21 at 7 pm. Guests will meet at the Cummins-Phipps-Grill House, travel by trolley to both Eden Prairie cemeteries, then back to the house for refreshments. Watch for more details on our website (www.edenprairiehistory.org) and Facebook (CPG House EP). Calling all actors/actresses who'd like to work with the EP Players to portray various EP settlers. If interested, contact Jeanne DeSanctis; jkdes2@aol.com /612-910-2850.

edited from the oral history transcription

ARLENE MARSHALL TALKS TO LYNDA MURRAY

"Today is August 27, 2014 and my name is **Lynda Murray**. I am interviewing **Arlene Marshall** for the Eden Prairie Historical Society's Oral History Project, entitled *Eden Prairie Remembers Its Mid-Century Transformation*. Welcome Arlene and thank you for participating."

Lynda: Arlene, when and where were you born?



Arlene: I was born in 1930 in Duluth, Minnesota; grew up Minneapolis. My husband Bill and I moved to Eden Prairie in 1970 when the population was about 7500. It was the era when some of the large farms weren't being used for farming anymore and people were buying them to turn them into hobby farms, and that's exactly what we did.

Lynda: Where was your farm in Eden Prairie?

Arlene: The farm was on Pioneer Trail near Dell Road, and the place had been homesteaded in 1855 by a man named Geisler and later was owned by Roland and Marion Rogers. We deduced that the living room of our house was the original homestead cabin, as it was around 16 feet by 16 feet, built on four large boulders.

There were actually six buildings altogether—the house, the chicken coop, a couple garages, a corncrib, a huge barn and a machine shed. We had three children and at the time we moved out to Eden Prairie, my oldest, Diane, was 14. My son Wade was 12 and Pam was 7. Pam was actually in the first graduating class from the new Eden Prairie High School. Wade loved working in the machine shed. He could work on cars, snowmobiles and motorcycles. He could go all over Eden Prairie. Diane was the horsewoman. To tell you how different it was in those days, Pioneer Trail was not a busy street like we know it. Diane would ride her horse to horse shows at Red Rock Ranch and come home after dark, riding along Pioneer Trail, holding a flashlight! And, for a while, I collected, bought and stored a lot of antiques in the upper part of the barn. Then later, I actually used the chicken coop from which to sell some antiques.

Lynda: How much land did you farm?

Arlene: Well, we started with the five acres around the house and then we purchased the apple orchard next door that had been started by North Grow, and that was around 100 acres. We called it Eden Apple Orchard (entry pictured, right) and we had around 13,000 apple trees with eight varieties. We had strawberries and raspberries and we hired a wonderful manager that knew what to do. We had a lot of Hmong people that came in and helped to pick. For about two weeks a year we would rent big hives of bees to pollinate everything. I learned where that saying came from ... about "busy as a bee"; those bees wouldn't even notice you if you were walking around in the orchard. And later, the beekeeper would bring in jars of honey to sell. Our orchard was mostly pick-your-own but we did wholesale some to the Rainbow Stores. And then later on, we used our 40 acres of woods that was adjacent to the orchard to start a Halloween hayride called Witch's Woods. At the height of the season we could have as many as 10,000 people there on a weekend!"



These excerpted tales and impressions of Arlene and Bill's lives in Eden Prairie are what the Historical Society's Oral Histories is all about. Nine oral histories have been taken and transcribed. The transcriptions are verbatim so some tidying up makes each more readable. We will continue to share other oral histories in subsequent newsletters. As we can, we will post the edited versions on our website, www.edenprairiehistory.org. The original audio recordings and verbatim transcriptions will also be available for research through the History Center and Museum.

president's message

RIGHT NOW WE NEED VOLUNTEERS AT THE MUSEUM

Thank you to our outgoing Board Member Jill Hules. Your time on the Board is greatly appreciated. We welcome new Board Members Jan Lacy and Norm Rogers.

The EPHS has acquired a lot of meaningful artifacts over the years. Our early donations were primarily from descendants of Eden Prairie's early pioneers. In that spirit, we continue to gather photographs, letters, documents and artifacts that we believe are important to Eden Prairie. Our number one priority is "Preservation". Help is always needed in the History Center & Museum at City Hall. If you are willing to lend a hand, please give me a call at 952-221-2560 or kc.casecomcast.net for more details.

We now have our friend Curt Connaughty's new book, **The Right Place at the Right Time**, available at the History Center & Museum (open Mondays, 11-1:00). Curt began the Eden Prairie Football program in 1957 and the Track program in 1969. Read about the impact Curt and his wife Mary have made within our education system on students and families over the many years they were teaching.

The Historical Society Board continues to work with the City's Heritage Preservation Commission on grants for the CPG house, as well as an application the City has put forth for the National Register at the Smith-Douglas-More House (RUSTICA). Lots going on! Join us!

then and now: different but the same

GLEN LAKE CHILDREN'S CAMP

On October 1, in collaboration with the Hopkins Historical Society, **Interrupted Lives: The History of Tuberculosis in Minnesota and Glen Lake Sanatorium** will be the focus of a book launching and exhibit opening at the Hennepin History Museum. The exhibit will focus on the experiences of people involved with Glen Lake Sanatorium: patients, families of patients and employees, with photos, stories and artifacts from the institution. Author Mary Krugerud, will give a short talk and sign her books.

Mary Krugerud wished to visit Eden Prairie's Glen Lake Children's Camp site. She has been researching the Glen Lake Sanatorium for over 27 years but had not been to the adjacent children's camp for many years. The upshot was that Mary plus a congenial group with a common interest in the history and future of the Glen Lake Children's Camp site were treated to a tour on July 10. Folks from the Hennepin History Museum, City of Eden Prairie and Eden Prairie Historical Society joined Camp Edenwood's Jerry Bahmiller for a fun and informative walk-around.

As we walked up the dirt drive passing the 1925 stone entrance monument, the camp's most prominent buildings come into view. The restored Dining Hall and Dormitory extend across the length of the hillside overlooking Birch Island Lake. We talked about the fact that the woodland camp, now Camp Edenwood and operated under the non-profit agency True Friends, is still being used to benefit children and adults with disabilities. And we talked about how it all got started.



The Glen Lake Sanatorium and the Glen Lake Children's Camp have very important stories to tell. By the end of the 19th century, tuberculosis had become a medical crisis in Minnesota. In fact, the State Board of Health reported that between 1887 and 1899 over 20,000 Minnesotans died of the disease. It had become clear that state and local governments had to assume a role in the prevention and treatment of TB. Hennepin County began construction of the Glen Lake Sanatorium in 1914 on land spanning the Eden Prairie/Minnetonka border. The first TB patient was admitted to Glen Lake Sanatorium on January 4, 1916, arriving by sleigh. Glen Lake would become the largest sanatorium in the state. In 1925, Glen Lake Children's Camp, a permanent tubercular children's camp just south of the Sanatorium over-

looking Birch Island Lake in Eden Prairie, opened.

The discovery of antibiotics in the 1940s was the beginning of the end of TB in Minnesota. The Glen Lake Sanatorium complex, having provided care to more than 17,000 people, was eventually demolished. Miraculously, Glen Lake Children's Camp was spared. In 1983, the woodland Camp property was transferred from Hennepin County to the City of Eden Prairie. In 1999 Glen Lake Children's Camp was awarded the country's highest historic recognition, listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

recent donation

FAMILY CHAIRS RETURN TO EDEN PRAIRIE

On behalf of her family, Anita Ratwik donated two beautiful arm chairs to our Historical Society collection.

“My great-grandparents, explains Anita, “Charles and Sara Peterson, emigrants from Sweden, bought a farm on the west side of Anderson Lake in 1884 and lived there for many years. Some time during those years, these two ‘fancy chairs’ were left with our family by a relative moving out west, who was going to come back to get them later.

“Their son, my grandpa Harry, changed his name from Peterson to Preston just before he married my grandma, Emma Peterson, because the postman told him there were too many Petersons on that route and it was too confusing!” (Photos of Emma and Harry, taken at the time of their wedding in 1908.)



They lived with Charles and Sarah Peterson until 1917 when Harry built a house nearby, where the Viking Training Ground is now. The unclaimed chairs moved with Harry and Emma then were passed down in the family to Anita’s mother Muriel Preston Anderson and finally to Anita herself.

After delivering the chairs to the Eden Prairie Historical Society Museum, Anita shared these words in an email to Kathie Case, *“It felt strange to leave them, but your enthusiasm and help has encouraged me to get going on my projects with pictures and family stories.”*

Thank you Anita. Hope to see you at the Museum often, visiting your chairs and sharing more stories.



Preston Chairs now on display at the Museum. As you can see, they are not identical. Anita’s mother did the needlepoint seats covers.

collections task force

PRESERVATION

“The ultimate goal of the new Collections Task Force,” say President Kathie Case and Museum Curator Ann Higgins, “is to catalog everything owned and being protected by the Eden Prairie Historical Society.” That would include the contents of: EPHS History Center and Museum; the Dorenkemper House; the Cummins-Phipps-Grill House; the Riley-Jacques Barn and outbuildings; and the Smith Douglas More House.

The Committee will be using PastPerfect Museum Software for our collections archiving. PastPerfect operates with four basic catalogs for sorting collections material. There is the Archive Catalog for inventorying and storing documents, the Photograph Catalog for inventorying and storing photos, tintypes, paintings, etc., the Library Catalog for cataloging books and the Objects Catalog for inventorying and storing information about three-dimensional artifacts. The directive to the new Collections Task Force is to begin their monumental task by compiling a complete inventory of the last group, the objects, which includes: when and from whom an object came into the collection; family information; where the object is stored or displayed; and additional history. The courageous Collections Task Force members are: Valerie Ross, Jan Lacy, Kati Simons, Tracy Hope, Paul Thorp, Kathie Case and Ann Higgins.

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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