

The Prairie View

EDEN PRAIRIE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUMMER 2010

a step back in time, a step into the future

THE HISTORIC CUMMINS PHIPPS GRILL HOUSE

For more than 30 years the City has welcomed the community to the home of pioneer settler John Cummins. The Eden Prairie Historical Society is pleased to announce the signing of a lease agreement with the City of Eden Prairie which will guarantee that the tradition of hospitality and

accessibly continues and will enable more volunteers the opportunity to work and socialize at this spectacular house and site. We are committed to restoring and re-energizing "this old house." The house offers a visible and accessible location for Eden Prairie Historical Society's meetings, community programs and non-profit organization uses while spotlighting the historic importance and exciting future of an irreplaceable communal asset.



As the new caretakers of the Cummins Phipps Grill House the Task Force and the Eden Prairie Historical Society Board invite everyone to our first event, **An Old Fashioned Picnic at the Cummins Phipps Grill House** (see your invitation below).

Upcoming improvement projects for the house and grounds will be on display at the picnic, as will the City of Eden Prairie's landscaping plans for the surrounding grounds. The Cummins Phipps Grill story reminds us of times that were simpler and when values were grounded in America's pioneering and entrepreneurial spirit. Get on board with the Historical Society and work with us to bring this building up to its full potential!

Jan Heinig Mosman, CPGH Task Force Chair

You're Invited To

An Old Fashioned Picnic at the Cummins Phipps Grill House

Saturday, May 22 from 1:00 to 3:00

Bring a lunch. Bring a picnic blanket. Bring the family.

We'll provide dessert and beverages.

Softball, pitch and putt contest, bocce ball, etc.

Rain or shine (indoor activities will be available if it dares to rain)

greetings to members & guests
FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is hard to believe we've just enjoyed our 2010 Annual Meeting. Time really does fly. It was our pleasure to welcome Justice Paul Anderson who brought to life true Eden Prairie pioneer, Justice Loren Collins. Anderson felt right at home in the Consolidated School's historic gym, built in 1924, the same gym in which he himself ate lunch daily, played basketball, attended prom and graduation!

At the meeting, we remembered and honored the years of service and dedication that Eden Prairie Historical Society founder Helen Holden Anderson graciously gave to the Society, we reported on the happenings of the past year and we invited and encouraged everyone to participate in next year's projects and events.

A special thank you interim Board Member Arlene Marshall, who once again offered her time and generous wisdom to the Society this past year. I am proud to serve with my fellow Board members. All are deeply dedicated to the continuous growth of the Society. As we move forward the Historical Society Board carries on with its mission to Gather, Preserve, Protect and Share the rich History of our Community. Thanks to all who help with these efforts.

Kathie Case, President

curator's corner
HISTORY CENTER NEWS

The History Center had a wonderful winter and is now gearing up for summer. We will be keeping the open hours of Mondays, 11:00-1:00 for the upcoming months. We're also in the process of changing some displays around as we move more pieces out to our historic home sites.

New things we'll have on display for the summer include a donation recently made by Shirley Warren. Shirley is the Treasurer of the Everett McClay American Legion Auxiliary #409. They no longer have a Post here in Eden Prairie but for many years they were a vital part of the community. Some of the items that will be on display are several scrap books that document the group's activities over the years, a copy of the original Auxiliary Charter and Army items belonging to Art Miller from World War I. Art Miller was the group's first Post Commander in 1920.

We are happy and thankful to have been given these items. As the City's designated collector of historical information and artifacts, we're always looking for new "old" things to add to our collection. If you have something you'd like to donate to the Eden Prairie Historical Society, please stop by and see us on the lower level of City Hall on Mondays from 11:00 - 1:00, or give me a call at 952-934-5995. Thank you!



Kim Carlander, Curator

mark your calendar
YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS THE GOOD TIMES

May 22	1:00-3:00	An Old Fashioned Picnic at the Cummins Phipps Grill House
May 22	7:00 pm	Riley-Jacques Barn Twilight Special & Dorenkemper Open House (open before and during intermission)
May 23	2:30	Bearpath Tea, reservations required
June 12	7:00 pm	Riley-Jacques Barn Twilight Special & Dorenkemper Open House (open before and during intermission)
July 24	7:00 pm	Riley-Jacques Barn Twilight Special & Dorenkemper Open House (open before and during intermission)
Aug 14	9:00-4:00	Eden Prairie Antique Fair at Dunn Bros Coffee, Smith Douglas More House
Aug 28	7:00 pm	Riley-Jacques Barn Twilight Special & Dorenkemper Open House (open before and during intermission)
Sept 11		Sunbonnet Day & Dorenkemper Open House at Riley Park

a peek into the past

REMEMBERING THE OLD HOMESTEAD

When standing in the front yard of the Cummins Phipps Grill homestead on Pioneer Trail the prairie, Eden's prairie, will stretch out the three directions of south before you. That an airport shares this location with soccer fields and rows of corn attests to its flatness.

Prior to the airstrip, in the 1930's the Grill family grew asparagus along with other produce which they sold at their farmer's market, the Vegetable Grill, on nearby Highway 169, now Flying Cloud Drive. Martin (nickname "Pappy") Grill would proudly truck in the first ripe watermelons from the south, but you could dicker with him on price, my father discovered. I remember his wife Mildred Grill and her beautiful peony gardens. Though not attending, she would send quantities of blooms to our Eden Prairie Presbyterian and Methodist churches to grace the worship services.

Prior to the Grills, the Phipps family occupied the dwelling; being Mildred Phipps Grill's parents. In 1908 Edwin and Harriet Phipps bought the farm from Mr. Cummins plus other

land which increased the farm to about 385 acres. Edwin, a vegetable gardener from North Minneapolis grew asparagus as his specialty and became know as the "Asparagus King of Hennepin County." He employed local residents to tend and harvest his crops such as Signe Peterson, daughter of Severin Peterson (the first) during her youthful years.

J. R. Cummins purchased the land in 1855 and built a log house south of Pioneer Trail. Cutting down a grove of butternut trees he used the lumber to build the present house across the road using Chaska brick for the exterior. He grew wheat, oats, lima beans, cabbage, buckwheat and potatoes. Mr. Cummins also experimented with apples that could withstand the cold Minnesota winters.

This home and its story have considerable historical significance and we are thankful for its preservation that the heritage may live on.

A graduate of Eden Prairie High School, class of 1942, Reuel Long is a Director of the EPHS

bits & pieces

THAT MIGHT BE OF INTEREST

A GOOD RESOURCE: The Minnesota Historical Society Conservation Department recently added practical collections care information to their website. Find information and videos on storage materials, handling and cleaning practices, basic preservation and much more. www.mnhs.org, click on resources, then conservation.



IN FULL BLOOM: Did you know that Harriet Phipps planted her now-famous peony garden in about 1920. According to her daughter Mildred Phipps Grill, Harriet put in 500 plants and then sold flowers in season. It is believed the plants were purchased from a Chinese grower at the Minneapolis Farmers Market but no record of the purchase or names of the peony varieties survives. Harriet's peony garden should be in full bloom the first week of June!

CONGRATULATIONS to Aubrey and Jake on the birth of their first child, Adelyn Parker Hookom, born March 14th. Aubrey is Secretary of the Historical Society Board of Directors. She follows her husband Jake's grandmother, Allene Hookom, as an EPHS board member.



What was once called Hwy. 169, then 212 and now Flying Cloud Drive, and what would become Flying Cloud Airport, 1936. The Grill farmhouse is nestled in the trees, circled, on Pioneer Trail, just south of Staring Lake.

who is that frocked man?

PAUL ANDERSON AT ANNUAL MEETING



Nineteenth century Minnesota Supreme Court Justice Loren W. Collins returned to Eden Prairie recently for the Eden Prairie Historical Society's Annual Meeting on April 29th thanks to good friend, Associate Supreme Court Justice Paul H. Anderson. Through questions and conversation with Ron Case, Justice Collins talked about Minnesota's first 50 years as a state, his years living in Eden Prairie and his career in law and public service.

Paul Anderson grew up on a farm in Eden Prairie. He is a 1961 graduate of Eden Prairie High School where he was

an all-conference basketball player as well as a 4-H'er. (He showed his cow at the State Fair in 1956.) Anderson has long-established family roots in Eden Prairie dating back to the 1850's when his great grandmother immigrated from Scotland. It was with pleasure that we presented him with a copy of the newly reprinted Eden Prairie: The First 100 Years, written by his mother and Historical Society founder, Helen Holden Anderson and a replica of an Anderson Schoolhouse school bell.

what can we do

FOR YOU?

The Eden Prairie Historical Society wants to know what we can do for you. The strength of the Historical Society is its members. Yes, we hope you will volunteer when we put out the call but primarily we want you to enjoy being part of a great organization.

Our members tell us they join for a variety of reasons: friendships, informative seminars and mailings, community involvement, fun events and opportunities to volunteer at historic sites, to name a few. Going forward, we would like to know what motivates you, what programming would interest you and how we can grow our membership. Let's think fun!

Comments encouraged. Thanks.
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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.

Richard Moe, Past President, National Trust for Historic Preservation, said, *"Because it necessarily involves the conservation of energy and natural resources, historic preservation has always been the greenest of the building arts."*
"When you strip away the rhetoric, preservation is simply having the good sense to hold on to the things that are well designed, that link us with our past in a meaningful way and that have plenty of good use left in them."