



# MECCA NEWS AND DUES

Museum Encompassing Canby Community Area  
A Nonprofit Corporation

Volume 3, Issue 1

April 2008

## Current Directors:

Bud Qualley 1975  
Dar Snortum 1975  
William Lund  
Betty Hanna 1984  
Lois Hanson  
Don Berndt  
LaMorne Wiest  
Bernie Miller  
Jan Pederson 2004  
Doug Hintz 2006  
Ruth Leppke 1990 & 2007  
Eldeen Baer 2007  
Maynard Hughes 2003 & 2007

## Special Events:

- **Annual Meeting:**  
*Third Wednesday in June*  
June 18, 2008 @ 7 PM
- **Ice Cream Social:**  
*July –usually 3rd Thursday –*  
watch the Canby News
- **VFW Steak Fry**  
*October*
- **Open : Summer Months**  
*Check the website for current events & information:*  
[www.CanbyMuseums.org](http://www.CanbyMuseums.org)
- **Group Tours:** available
- **Daily Schedule:**  
*Wednesday–Sunday 2–4 PM*

## Looking Forward to the Past...

Canby will celebrate in June the return of Helga Estby, a pioneer woman who lived in Canby 100 years ago before moving to Washington state.

The life of Helga Estby, as told by an 8th grade descendent in a school essay, became an inspiration for the book, “Bold Spirit”. Presented by Katherine Ellis Linstrom, a recreation of endurance, determination, and courage will be presented in a one woman show. Ms Linstrom will bring Helga Estby to life on Canby streets, along with the story of Helga’s journey across the US. Her life is detailed in the book, “Bold Spirit”, by Linda Lawrence.

*“In 1896, a Norwegian immigrant and mother of eight children named Helga Estby was behind on taxes and the mortgage when she learned that a mysterious sponsor would pay \$10,000 to a woman who walked across America.*

*Hoping to win the wager and save her family’s farm, Helga and her teenaged daughter Clara, armed with a little more than a compass, red pepper spray, a revolver and Clara’s curling iron, set out on*

*foot from Eastern Washington. Their route would pass through fourteen states but they were not allowed to carry more than \$5*

*each. As they visited Indian reservations, Western boom towns, re-*

*mote ranches and local civic leaders, they confronted snowstorms, hunger, thieves and mountain lions with equal aplomb.*

*Their treacherous and inspirational journey to New York challenged contemporary notions of femininity and captured the public imagination. But their trip had such devastating consequences that the Estby women’s achievement was blanketed in silence until nearly a century later.”*

~Bold Spirit  
-jacket cover



Lund-Hoel House  
Est 1891

## Sesquicentennial Information...

Minnesota became the 32nd state to enter the union on May 11, 1858. This area was eventually settled by many diverse and courageous cultures. The strength of Helga’s Norwegian ancestry is reflected in the fact there are still current reviews being written on Amazon for this book. She is a part of Canby’s history!

Many events in the area will be coordinated with Katherine performing for the Sons of Norway, spending several days in

Canby, along with visits to Gary and Porter. She will also be involved in the Hat Daze Parade and other activities.

Linda Lawrence Hunt, the author of “Bold Spirit” has also indicated she would like to be involved in area activities if her schedule permits.

**The Lund-Hoel House** along with **The Depot** invite you to enjoy the June celebration with old friends and new memories.

## Local Tales & Memories

### By Dar Snortum

#### Kids Play

Another inexpensive way to have fun was to go through magazines and find free sample offers. Paste a coupon on a penny post card, mail it in , and you would receive a sample in the mail. It didn't matter what it was. It was just fun to get something in the mail. We got everything from laxatives to vitamins to tooth paste.

“Big Little Books” were the comic books of our day. Books about 4 by 4 inches and 2—2 1/2 inches thick, hard cover, with a good variety of stories. I loved them. They're collectors items today.

Going to a Saturday matinee Western and then going home and playing “Cowboy” was high on our list of fun things to do. “Captain, May I” was another game we played. Players lined up, the Captain would give instructions to individuals to advance so many steps forward. First one to finish line won. If you forgot to say, “Captain, May I,” you were penalized.

“Aunty I Over” was another game we played. I doubt if it's spelled like that. Players were on opposite sides of a building. As you threw a ball over the roof, you hollered “Aunty”. If it didn't go over you hollered “Pigs Tail”. If the ball came over the roof and you caught it, (honor system) you would run around the building, tag the thrower and win.

Building model airplanes was a favorite pastime of mine. Non-flying model kits contained blocks of Balsa wood and directions to build rather well detailed models. Flying models were much more difficult. Printed Balsa sheets and narrow strips of Balsa were cut and put together much like the framework of a real airplane. The framework was covered with tissue paper, power was a rubber band driven propeller. Kits would cost from 10 cents to 25 cents. The higher priced ones would be quite elaborate. I can remember Friday nights, sitting in my room, studying and memorizing Confirmation lessons as I worked on model airplanes.

The 4th of July was not as wild as what my Dad writes about, but fireworks were legal and relatively cheap. A cap pistol was the first thing we would buy. A cast iron pistol cost 10 cents or 15 cents, a large box of caps cost 5 cents. Firecrackers were 5 cents and 10 cents or a very large pack for 15 cents. Roman Candles, Sparklers, Rockets and set pieces were much like today only much cheaper. One of my favorites was a little cast iron pedestal, set a little rubber ball in a cavity on top, a firecracker in a hole underneath, blow the ball sky high and then try to catch it. The 4th was pretty much unrestricted until Cedric Adams, a popular radio newscaster and newspaper columnist, waged a campaign to restrict everything except cap pistols and sparklers. This I believe was in the 40s. This was probably a good thing as there were a lot of serious injuries from fireworks.

Dad's store had fireworks for sale, but we always had to pay for our own.

We went on family picnics often when we were kids. No parks, tables or fireplaces. Usually we would drive out in the country, find a nice area by some creek, spread a blanket and eat. We did have favorite spots however. One of Dad's favorites was to find a place with a clay outcropping by the creek. He would then moisten the clay and form a ball around potatoes. They were then baked in the coals of the campfire. When done, you'd crack the hard baked clay off and eat. Very good.

~Additional stories available on the website  
[www.CanbyMuseums.org](http://www.CanbyMuseums.org).

## Familiar Places and Old Times! The Central Park Connection:



Two post cards depicting Central Park which were mailed in 1907 & 1908. Most interesting is the postcards are in color. The one to the left was written by Alice Felon (sp) to friends in Wisconsin saying she would be home the last of August.

The post card was published for “Red Cross Pharmacy, Canby, Minn”. It is interesting to note the density of the trees surrounding the park. The tree in the foreground appears to be damaged, appearing to be split in half.

Central Park Postcard, dated as mailed Aug 1907.

The Post Card to the right was mailed in February of 1908. The writing in the center (on the sidewalk) reads: This is the way it looked when I first came to Canby”. The post card is written by Hilda to Miss Emma Sorlien in Granite Falls.

Of particular interest is the abundance of huge colorful flowers, including those growing in the center circle with foliage almost as tall as the street light.



Central Park Postcard, dated as mailed February 1908.

### Membership Dues Information and Benefits

Dear Friends,

We wish to extend a special invitation to join us as a member of MECCA to preserve the Lund-Hoel House for our future generations. Your generous support is needed and deeply appreciated to maintain the museum!

**Annual membership is \$15.00 (tax deductible).**

**Please return your donation in the enclosed envelope. If you receive your newsletter by email, please remit to:  
MECCA, Inc, %LaMorne Wiest, 405 Oscar Ave N, Canby, MN 56220-1337**

In addition: you will receive the following benefits:

- **Unlimited visits for you and your family and guests**
- **Reduced prices on materials and items for sale at the museum**
- **Participation in annual and other meetings of MECCA**

**Please join us in our efforts to maintain this important part of Canby's heritage! THANK YOU!!!**

MUSEUM ENCOMPASSING CANBY  
COMMUNITY AREA  
A NONPROFIT CORPORATION

*Lund-Hoel House*  
*Est. 1891*

*St. Olaf Avenue and 4th Street*  
PO Box 146  
Canby, MN 56220-0146

[www.CanbyMuseums.org](http://www.CanbyMuseums.org)

“The most important lesson of American history is the promise of the unexpected. None of our ancestors would have imagined settling way over here on this unknown continent. So we must continue to have society that is hospitable to the unexpected, which allows possibilities to develop beyond our own imaginings.”

~Daniel J. Boorstin

### A Word from the Board

#### **Greetings Members,**

**This summer's celebration of 150 years of statehood will be very exciting. Many activities are planned in area communities, including the 3 week area tour of Katherine Linstrom on her "Bold Spirit" Tour. We were fortunate to meet Katherine last summer when she came to Canby to do research for her one woman show.**

**We are grateful to The Depot members and the MECCA members who made Ms Linstrom's return visit possible. With the invaluable time and effort of these volunteers, we are reminded of a part of our local heritage exemplifying the strength and endurance of our ancestors. By contributing their time and talent to the community, we will have a window into the living past. The strength and courage of our ancestors was beyond what we could even imagine in these modern times.**

**You are cordially invited to visit with Katherine while she is here in Canby. You will find her very engaging!**

~MECCA Board

## The Canby Depot

Please visit our sister organization, The Canby Depot, when you are in Canby. The Depot contains valuable research materials and also hosts the Visitor Information Center. The Depot is now home to old volumes of the Canby News dating back to 1885. Congratulations on your 8th year!

## Spotlight on Members

**Laurie Thorston** — This spring marks the 20th year that Laurie, a lifetime Canby resident, has held the position as Assistant Treasurer for MECCA. Over that time, she has handled all aspects of the “behind-the-scenes” bookkeeping which includes a host of various duties such as paying bills, creating reports, banking transactions and fielding inquiries about the Lund-Hoel House and its tours. Along with her sunny disposition, she has a husband, Mark, and two children, Spencer and Scarlet, who can often be spotted at MECCA during the summer months helping to keep the grounds of the Lund-Hoel House looking beautiful.

Many thanks to Laurie and her family for your service over the years!



**Tree of Life:**  
Please take time to view the Linden tree in the back yard of the Lund-Hoel House. It is over 100 years old.

## BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED

Although it appears we have a large board of directors, the projects we work on do best if we can have many talents to draw from. If you or any one you know of is interested in serving, please contact a Board member for information.