

MECCA NEWS AND DUES

Museum Encompassing Canby Community Area
A Nonprofit Corporation

Volume 4, Issue 1

April 2009

Current Directors:

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

Special Events:

Daily Tour Schedule:
Summer Months
Wed-Sun 2-4 PM

Group Tours: available

Visit our website:
www.CanbyMuseums.org
for complete details on
events including:

Annual Meeting:
June -Details in The
Canby News in June

Ice Cream Social:
July -watch The Canby
News for date

Revisiting Old Values in a New Century...

As the current economy changes and economic times are not the best, it is time to remember how much our ancestors provided us with tenacity, invention, and took daring steps few of us today would be willing to take.

Over 100 years ago, people left their entire family behind, loaded up a small trunk of valuables including durable clothes, a few food staples, some seeds, and moved West to build a better life. Canby was settled by Scandinavian immigrants. Those brave people crossed an ocean with no idea what was before them and no way to turn back. The family who stayed behind in the 'old country' waved goodbye and perhaps didn't hear from their loved ones again for months, sometimes years, sometimes not at all. Unless very lucky, they did not see each other again.

Since immigrants traveled by train,

Canby was a destination for many. Canby had churches, a creamery, bakery, butcher shop, hotel, grain elevator, cafe, hospital, carpenters, craftsmen, a blacksmith, pharmacy, newspapers, farmers to provide food, and Central Park for entertainment. And of course, a real estate business named Lund's Land Agency.



Lund-Hoel House
Est 1891

John G. Lund met those immigrants at The Depot with a Brass Band to welcome the newcomers. Canby community provided the safety and opportunity the newcomers were seeking. Immigrants brought a trade,

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Garden Update...

The Victorian Gardens were designed and developed by Kay Qualley when MECCA purchased the Lund-Hoel House in 1975. Working from old pictures and sources, Kay created a miniature of a garden which once encompassed an entire block. The Victorian atmosphere has been carefully tended and maintained by devoted members since that time. Thirty five years later, Kay is taking a fresh look at the gardens.

Beginning this summer the Lund-Hoel House will experience a renovation of the garden areas. The project will start with a

re-assessment of what is growing nicely and those plants who either need to be moved, removed, or replanted due to changes in shade & sun areas.

Equally as important as the House itself, the gardens represent outdoor life as it was in the 1800s. The Garden will feature vintage flowers, plants, and trees in their natural settings.

Please feel free to browse the gardens and enjoy the peaceful surroundings and a grand view of Central Park as it was in the old days.

Local Tales & Memories

By Bill Wiest

Among Bill's childhood memories were playing in the Central Park and running through the sprinklers all summer long. Alex Knutson managed the park. Bill remembers the big checkerboard built into the ground there and the large checkers—double for kings and singles for queens—with wire handles. These were stored at the park in a small building and the kids could use them any time. The checkers were always there. The checkerboard was covered over when the current shelter was built.

Uptown Canby had a lot more stores at the time with many cafes and grocery stores. Chris Olson had a large double front store where the bank parking lot is today. Also for a short time there were two newspapers, *The Canby News* and *The Canby Press*. Stores were open both Wednesday and Saturday nights and the streets were full of people. There was a big watering place for the horses in the area which is now the main intersection. A little to the East of the intersection was a hitching post for the horses.

Bill's dad worked at the rollermill, where Doug's Marine is today, until it burned down. He then went to work for Pelstring-Erickson Creamery located where the High School parking lot is today. Later he went into business with Herb Sherlin, creating Canby Produce. Rip's sons, Bill & Jim Wiest, worked with them running a country route, bringing eggs and cream in. At certain times of the year, they went out to the farm places to catch chickens that farmers wanted to sell.

Bill remembers the Commercial Hotel which was located on the corner where the Sioux Valley Canby Clinic and Sanford Hospital is today. His aunt, Kate Horner, (who was his dad's sister), ran the hotel and employed many women to cook and serve many meals and clean the rooms each day. The hotel was a half block away from The Depot and many trains came through Canby every day. Many salesmen would get off the train and stay overnight at the hotel. They would play cards and smoke cigars, making the air very smokey. Sheriff Snortum would stop in to make sure everything stayed peaceful. A man named Clair Thomas would meet the trains and put the salesmen's baggage on a large cart and bring it over to the sample house located behind the hotel. The salesmen would spread their samples out for the local businessmen to look over and place their orders. Kate Horner sold the hotel to Otto Peterson. The last owner was Hilda Erickson. Then the hotel was torn down to make room for Senior Haven.

Most kids didn't have any spending money. Bill had a daily and Sunday paper route for the Minneapolis Tribune, and he had about 200 customers. The Snortum kids, Millard kids, and Qualley kids also had paper routes for various other papers. The papers were delivered to the post office which was located where the current bank is now. The kids would fill their bike baskets with papers, deliver them, and return for more.

When Bill went to school, there was a normal training school and the students would come over to the high school for teaching experience. He recalled one Latin teacher who probably didn't know more about the subject than the students.

Bill also remembered Robert Wadlow, considered a giant in size. When this man visited Canby, Ed Maertens, a very tall person, couldn't reach Mr Wadlow's head. When Mr Wadlow held a glass of pop in his giant hand, it looked like a miniature.

At that time the American Legion owned the Fairgrounds property. Dances and roller-skating were both held in the Argonne Pavilion in nice weather. This building was used for many years for the YMC County Fair exhibits, before being replaced by the current building.

Bill Wiest was born in Canby on May 23, 1924 to Emil (Rip) and Clara Wiest. He has a sister, Lorraine, and a brother James. Bill went into the Cities Service Station in 1961 until he retired in 1998. Previous to going into business at the station, he had been in the Army, having went in when the 47th Division was activated during the Korean Conflict. He was part of Service Battery, 175 Field Artillery Battalion, a National Guard unit in Dawson, MN. Bill married LaMorne Benner from Gary in 1949, and they have spent most of their married life in Canby.

~Additional stories available on the website
www.CanbyMuseums.org.

Familiar Places and Old Times!

(Continued from page 1)

skill, ingenuity, new ideas, and a traditional work ethic while building businesses and farms. The immigrants worked together, and in return, the community supported them. Buildings on Main Street (St Olaf) today look remarkably the same as it did in 1896. A testament to the durability of the immigrant imagination and work ethic.



The Lund-Hoel House was a modern marvel with its gas lamp fixtures lighting up the house and powered by methane created right on the grounds. There was no waiting for the gas company to build a pipeline. Water was provided to houses by a cistern catching rainwater from the roof, and the water was pumped by hand. Travel was 1 horsepower strong, maybe 2. In the winter heat emanated from the parlor and kitchen solidifying the family values with togetherness.

Even into the Great Depression of the '30s the immigrant influence continued creating a community where children felt secure and growing up meant having good memories of the times no matter how hard they were. Bill Wiest's memories on page 2 addresses life during that period.

So even if we leave everything behind, we can still survive and flourish in the end. Our ancestors handed down ingenuity, determination, tenacity, cooperation, bravery, and good will. It's called Community.

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

History is the witness that testifies to the passing of time; it illumines reality, vitalizes memory, provides guidance in daily life and brings us tidings of antiquity.

~Cicero (106 BC - 43 BC)

A Word from the Board

Greetings Members,

Another winter has past, and spring is once again in the air! The Museum volunteers have already been working and organizing to open the Lund-Hoel house. Experienced and capable members donate many hours of time and effort beyond the call of duty.

With your membership, comes a privilege of bringing guests to the Lund-Hoel House. Please feel free to visit and bring your family and friends. Our history is important, and the Lund-Hoel House is at the center of Canby's place on the map. The 'Green Lady' is a place guests remember forever!

We would like to thank everyone who contributes a 'little extra' to their Museum. Our Green Lady is aging gracefully, and her makeup and clothes require freshening every now and then. We love to look our best for our guests!

Sincerely,
MECCA Board of Directors

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.

Spotlight on Members

Groundskeepers: Spencer and Scarlet, the children of Laurie & Mark Thorston, can often be spotted at the Lund-Hoel House during the summer months helping to keep the grounds of the Lund-Hoel House looking beautiful and inviting.

Spencer has been a great asset to the museum spending many summers with us mowing, raking, fertilizing, trimming, watering, and maintaining the grounds. This year, Spencer is turning his job over to his sister, Scarlet, who will carry on his duties working with the board members to create a truly fabulous and relaxing garden experience. We welcome Scarlet onboard!

The Board wishes Spencer the best of luck! Many thanks to the Thorston family for their dedicated service over the years. It is greatly appreciated!

BOARD MEMBERS NEEDED

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



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.