



ON THE COVER: The 1959 Herter's Mark III "Flying Fish" Runabout was featured at the Waseca County Fair in WCHS's Hodgson Hall, along with a Herter's 1979 snowmobile and a Herter's Golf Cart. What was going on? We "stirred the pot" to find Herter's collectors, former employees, and customers to tell us stories about working at Herter's, knowing George Herter, or getting his catalog in the mail. Herter's pretty much put Waseca on the map. Next summer "Herter's of Waseca" will be on exhibit at the museum with special programs and events.

INSIDE: WCHS 75th Birthday Annual Supper / Collecting Herter's, a Swap Meet, Craft Beer-Tasting, and Rock 'n Roll Review next Summer / Stitchers-in-Time Quilt Guild's 25th / SROC Centennial / Think Grain Dona-

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WCHS HOURS:

Closed Mondays, Open Tuesdays-Fridays, 9-5



The Minnesota Historical and Cultural Grants Program has been made possible by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the vote of Minnesotans on November 4, 2008. Administered by the Minnesota Historical Society.

Events Calendar

Visit: www.historical.waseca.mn.us

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September 19—SROC's Centennial Open House
The Southern Research and Outreach Center celebrates with an even grander open house than before on the SROC grounds. *And WCHS will be there! See our display of WCHS's 75th!*

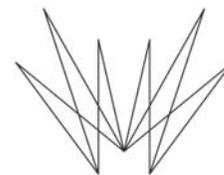
September 21—Waseca Marching Classic
Waseca High School and the community host a band festival with parade and field competition. The whole town greets visitors to this 26th annual community-wide event!

September 24—Another Archaeology Night
with Professor Schirmer, 6:00-8:00 p.m. Free event
Bring what you've found.

October 14—WCHS Annual Supper Meeting
We'll be back at the Museum for this year's Annual Supper Meeting to end our 75th Anniversary Celebration. **Paid reservations due October 10.** Call 835-7700 and mail in your check, \$15 per person for a Turkey Dinner with Dressing, Salad, and Dessert. Hear about the new Balcony Exhibit Plan, and next year's Herter Swap Meet, Craft Beer-Tasting and Rock 'n Roll Review—on a summer weekend in 2014. Do you have a Herter story?

December 7 & 8—Holiday Open House & Exhibit:
“Visions of Sugar Plums”

Questions? Call 507-835-7700 or email:
director@historical.waseca.mn.us



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MINNESOTA HISTORICAL
& CULTURAL GRANTS

Made possible by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the vote of Minnesotans on November 4, 2008. Administered by the Minnesota Historical Society.

From the Co-Executive Directors . . .

Dear Members:

Summer's Over! That was a hot one! Our cool, wet spring relented to humidity and heat. Regardless, WCHS had a great "social season" this year.

The Spring Luncheon Lecture Series marked the beginning. The 2013 series featured four extremely interesting hometown guest speakers. Newell Searle in March; David Welna in April; Rachael Hager talked about her recently published book in early May; and Larry Hofmann wrapped up the Luncheon/Lecture Series in late May. It was a great reunion for the speakers and for the many people who knew and appreciated their individual successes.

Chautauqua 2014 had an attendance of 500 people of all ages. We are pleased to see returning visitors as well as new visitors to this event. The weather was somewhat hot but the biggest obstacle was the mosquitos! The absolute worst we ever had! The City of Waseca sprayed the site for the event but the bugs won. Activity in the woods had to be relocated to the main grounds. We will not be hosting Chautauqua next summer. The WCHS Fund raising event will be held in late August. We will be in high gear preparing for the event! Chautauqua will return in 2015.

The Waseca County Fair was an example of how hot our Minnesota summers can get. We all survived and had a great time with our *Remembering Herter's* exhibit. More Herters to come in 2014. (See cover photo.)

Wrapping up our summer events was the opening of the **Waseca Garden Tour** and the **Stitchers in Time Quilt Show**. Both events were held on August 4th. Approximately 300 people visited the Bailey-Lewer House gardens that day. Every two years the Stitchers in Time Quilt Club displays their beautifully crafted quilts. Their wonderful exhibit was on display through August. The



Bailey-Lewer Library historic gardens are open for viewing as long as weather permits.

Thanks to everyone who volunteered and participated. Your support contributes to our efforts in bringing quality programs and exhibits to WCHS.

What's Next? All WCHS members—We invite you to attend the

Annual Supper Meeting on Monday, October 14 at the WCHS Museum, beginning at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15

per person for a turkey dinner with all the fixings, plus birthday cake. **Paid reservations are due on October 10.**

We will share the year's highlights, the new Exhibit Plan for

the balcony and our events planned around the Herter Exhibit in 2014. You've been hearing for years that we're doing it. Be a part of making this happen. We want to hear your Herter's stories, better yet-write them down!

Last year we had to cancel the Holiday Open House due to construction of the lift. This year we will present "**Visions of Sugar Plums**" and hot coffee and cider—on House Walk weekend, Saturday and Sunday, December 7 & 8, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Volunteers are appreciated for this festive event. *It's been a good year for WCHS. We're grateful to all of our donors, supporters, volunteers and members!*

—Sheila & Joan



In this 75th year of the Waseca County Historical Society we are examining our own history. This issue will deal with building and technological changes.

As the Society was managed by volunteers only for about 40 years, it was time to hire a paid executive director to instill professional museum standards. The collection had grown to such an extent that it was difficult to access the information for staff, let alone visitors and researchers. **Donna Fostveit** was the first paid director. Donna still does a great deal of research and assistance as a volunteer. **Peggy Korsmo Kennon** was the second paid executive director. During her tenure she worked with the new State Historic Preservation Office to get EIGHT historic sites designated in Waseca County. She went on to lead at the well-known Bell Museum of Natural History at the University of Minnesota .

Next came **Sherry Jones**, who was able to get Mankato State College intern assistance; and brought WCHS into the computer age with record-keeping on the first computer in the museum.

Our recent past begins in 1989 with the hiring of **Margaret Sinn** who served until the end of 2006, making her the longest executive director to serve to date. She asked the Board to help her create a research library. The Bailey-Lewer Research Library is housed in the P.C. Bailey house built in 1868, named to the National Historic Register in 1994. The Lewer family donated the house for WCHS, but it was entrusted in ownership to Waseca County. Sinn was successful in obtaining a \$30,000 Minnesota Historical Society Capital Grant, and of course, hours and hours of volunteer labor by a team led by Don Wynne, board president at the time.

In 2000 the WCHS part-time staff expanded to create more programming, including the annual Chautauqua at Maplewood Park, process more artifacts, coordinate exhibits, and communications.

Seven Endowments Benefit WCHS : It's a little unusual for a non-profit in the town the size of Waseca to have seven endowment funds. These will continue to sustain WCHS always. They include the Edgar F. and Ethel Johnson Fund, the Jerry and Linda Rutledge Heritage Fund, the Wes and Carol Rethwill History Fund, the Phil Allen Memorial Fund, the Frank and Barbara Goodspeed Memorial Fund, the Waseca County Historical Society Fund, and the WCHS Lifetime Endowment Fund.

WCHS joins the age of the internet: In 2000 WCHS launched one of a handful of the first searchable websites by a local historical society in the state. Adding records, adding digital photographs, writ-

ing and researching the metadata, processing each artifact and putting it into archival storage—is ceaseless; as is the indexing to make it all searchable. Then there is the upgrading of hardware, servers and software, the internet connection, memory and backup systems. This is what is meant by “maintaining a collection.”

The Museum Runs Out of Room: In 2005 it was clear that the museum building was out of room, the collection was stored inefficiently and there was not enough shelving. Aisles were filled and as the computer records were showing duplications, it was decided to review and re-evaluate the entire collection. For the next five years that was accomplished. And as every artifact was photographed and re-stored, it went to a more efficient storage system. Aisles were cleared, and every artifact can now be found in its permanent place. This effort has made room for even more artifacts.

In 2007 the WCHS Board moved up two of its employees to Co-Executive Directors—**Joan Mooney and Sheila Morris**. That brings this brief overview of WCHS history up to date. Two important accomplishments were achieved to date under Morris and Mooney: 1) the Capital Campaign of 2007-2009 raised \$168,000; and the annual event schedule and financial support was maintained through what is now called the Great Recession. Many non-profits did not survive. Beyond Waseca County, the other greatest impact on WCHS was the creation of the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. Joan Mooney wrote and got \$48,000 to bring the museum building up to ADA compliancy with a lift to the balcony and a main floor rest room. Another \$7,000 in Legacy funds was received for a research consultant to get the Hofmann Honey Farm designated to the National Register of Historic Places, and still another \$7,000 was approved for a design consultant to create a Timeline Interpretive Exhibit Plan for the museum balcony spaces.

And finally the planning for 2014 will include more grants to fund the implementation phases of that Exhibit Plan; and a fundraiser around a “Herter’s of Waseca” Exhibit. We will present a Herter’s Swap Meet, a Craft Beer-Tasting, and a Rock ‘n Roll Review. Stand by, we’re just picking up speed. We hope you will want to come along as a member for sure, and as a contributor in what ever way to keep Waseca County history here and accessible for all time.

Think about how you want your history available and accessible—in the museum, in the research library, browsing the website, on a tablet or on your smartphone? Tell us what you think.

—WCHS Staff & Board of Directors

1980s | historic places

1990s | a research library

2000 | WCHS goes online

Collecting Herter's, for Those Who Don't Know . . .

Herter's was based in Waseca, MN. And was once the largest distributor of outdoor hunting and fishing equipment in the U.S. It was the first to offer a catalog that was sent all over the world. George Herter, founder and author, was born and raised in Waseca.

In 1937 George Herter took his father's dry goods store and turned it into a mail order sporting goods business, selling hunting and fishing items through a catalog. The Herter's catalogs reached nearly every corner of the globe, peddling not only a massive array of products, but subcon-



George Herter at age 17, fishing on Clear Lake, Waseca, Minnesota in 1929.

sciously promoting Minnesota as the hub of sportsmen's knowledge and innovation.

George Herter later opened retail outlet stores which pioneered the style of outdoor goods stores now used by Cabela's and Bass Pro Shops. The company left Waseca in 1977, and eventually filed for bankruptcy in 1981.

George Herter's best known books are the *Bull Cook and Authentic Historical Recipes and Practices* series, published in three volumes. Herter self-published and sold the books through his stores. He created most of the illustrations himself. The *New York Times* describes the *Bull Cook* series as his "magnum opus". . . "a wild mix of recipes, unsourced claims and unhinged philosophy that went through at

least 15 editions between 1960 and 1970." *How to Get Out of the Rat Race and Live On \$10 a Month*, despite its title, is an encyclopedic 656-page collection of outdoor and survival skills. The *Bull Cook* series and *How to Get Out of the Rat Race* credit Berthe E. Herter, George's wife, as co-writer.

NOTES ON HERTER'S

From the 2013 Waseca County Fair by Don Knauff

These notes were taken during interviews with visitors of the Waseca County Historical Society's "Collecting Herter's" display during the 2013 Waseca County Fair, July 19-22. Some were former employees, some were friends or relatives of former employees, and some—just had a Herter's story to relate.

Gerald Schroeder: Gerald started with Herter's in June of 1956, right out of high school, and continued for 13 months to September 1957 when he went into the armed forces. He claimed to have worked on 1956 Flying Fish, but didn't recognize the 1956 model picture. He did say that they had a difficult time removing the deck sections from the molds because of the fins. I believe he was working on 1957 models.

Special Thanks to Don Knauff for sharing his research and hosting the exhibit as well as presenting the Flying Fish Run-about to our Hodgson Hall visitors during the Waseca County Fair. Also, thanks to our other exhibitors, Lowell Root and his mint condition Herter's Snowmobile; and to D&M Body Shop for new tires, engine repair, canopy repair and general spiffing up of our Herter's Golf Cart. It was great fun!



Bob Miller: Bob worked an eight-hour day during the summer at a non-boat job, and then after supper he worked four hours at night on the boats. Bob started working in the 1950s. One of Bob's most interesting stories was that Herter's sent two boats up to Minneapolis for a boat race. He thought it was Lake Calhoun or Lake Minnetonka. I suspect it was for an Aquatennial event. One boat was a Flying Fish with a Scott Atwater. He was unsure of the size, and he thought the other was a fishing model with a 40 HP Scott Atwater. Both boats were completely stocked. The race was two hours long. Bob was the "riding mechanic" in the Flying Fish, and his job was to change gas tanks. The rest of the time, he said he hung on for dear life. Neither boat won.

Eugene Meyer: Waldorf, MN, Eugene started with Herter's in 1970 at the New Richland facility making snowmobile and minibike parts. In 1973 He was working with 14- and 15-foot fishing boats at New Richland. New Richland boats were able to be identified by color. They were either dark olive, light blue or white. Later they copied a Troy-Bilt roto-tiller and built a Herter's version.

Gary Burmeister: Gary started working in 1973 in the archery shop, cutting out wooden bow blanks using aluminum templates, and then he finish-formed the bow. Archery was in the north quonset hut and then moved to the new block building along with gunstocks. Gary left Herter's about 1977. He said they had strong orders for archery equipment, but they didn't have material. This was after the Chicago buyout so it was probably a cash flow problem.

Randy Hofmeister: Randy's father worked 41 years in the boat division for Herter's. Randy worked from 1974 to 1980. He spent a lot of time before that doing odd jobs in the boat assembly area with his dad. He has more comprehensive information on the later boats, but does remember quite a bit about the FF development because his dad made the molds.

Denny Hofmeister: His dad worked in shipping. He said that often workers were allowed to take work home and work on a piece part basis. This was often done with duck calls. He said employees were allowed to work in the evening building their own boats, usually small fishing boats. He also stated that he worked in archery and there was still heavy archery production in 1972.

Bruce Tappe: Bruce worked in New Richland in the early

1970s. A number of fiberglass parts for snowmobiles, golf carts, etc. were made in a building just north of the grain elevator. Bruce thought that parts for the roto-tillers were also made there.



Larry Born: Larry is an auctioneer. His uncle worked for Herter's in a management position and Larry said that his uncle often took boats home to "test" them and he was always getting rides in them. He also related a very interesting story, but it could have been more rumor than fact. He said that when it became apparent that the old

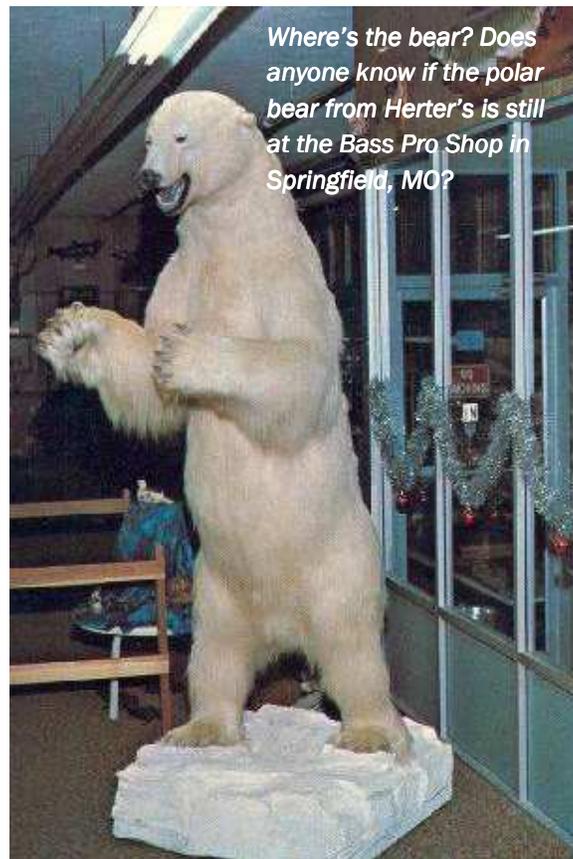
Herter's canvas duck decoys were becoming collector items commanding a handsome price, George rounded up the older workers who originally made them and the original materials they used and had a large quantity made. Then he arranged to "inadvertently" find a pallet full of them that had been "lost" in the warehouse and then sold them for a nice return. They couldn't be called "reproductions" because they were built by the same company, the same workers, and used the same material. It was just "a very long interruption of production."

Edward Battenfeld: Edward started in 1959 and worked a 5:30 p.m. to 4:30 a.m. shift. He mainly installed fittings and trim on the hulls of the fishing boats. The decks of the runabouts were done by someone else on the crew. I asked how they were able to buck the rivets on the rub rails of the runabouts with everything being

so tight. He said they used the smallest person they could find to come in and do that job when they built runabouts. Edward also stated that Cortland Metal built the boat trailers.

Craig Schuster: Craig started in the summer of 1968 and left when the company closed. He worked with fiberglass boats, snowmobiles, golf carts and canoes, and eventually ended up working at inletting gunstocks. He said most of the fiberglass work was done on the north end of the new building and the south end was a snowmobile showroom. —END

This is just the beginning of telling the story of Herter's in Waseca. Call or stop by with your stories and artifacts from Herter's. Watch for more news about this event!



Thank You!

As of 06/15/13 to 09/20/13

These are quarterly new/renewed memberships, donations, acknowledgments. See the WCHS Annual Report for a list of all members.

MEMBERSHIPS

Lifetime Members

\$1,000 Donations to the WCHS

Lifetime Endowment Fund providing

ongoing interest support for Operations.

* New in 2013, + Deceased

Allen, Mary
Britton, Joe and Marjorie
Brown Printing
+Brown, Wayne "Bumps"
Brynildson, Gladys
Cooper, Gus
Corchran, Liz
Dahl, Robert M.
Fette, Leo J. and Shirley
First National Bank
Fischer, Larry and Marian
Fitzsimmons, Francis M.
Fostveit, Donna
*Fox, Jim and Elaine
Fuller, Boyd
Gerding, Dr. James and Josephine
Gores, Marjorie L.
Haley, Sharon L.
+Hecht, Sigr
Homer, Margaret
Johnson, Ronald J.
*Kastner, Bonnie
Kopischke, Gerald and Barbara
Lewer, Henry & Phyllis
Markus, Richard
McCarthy, George B. and Jean M.
+Moriarty, Dorothy
Oelke, Neta
*Peterson, Arlene
*Pommerenke, Gloria/Lori
+Rethwill, W.H., Jr.
Roundbank
Rutledge, Jerry and Linda
Searle, Rod and Ruth
Sheeran, Betty and Bob
Smith, Keith and Wilda
Strand, Mel
Swenson, Virginia
Tippy, Jim and Moira
+Wendland, Ken
Wendland, Helen
Webber, Wendy
Wick, Bruce and Lorraine
Winegar, Sharlene and George
Wynnemer, Don and Margaret

Renewing Members

Amsrud, Mary (MN)
Arvesen, Eileen (MN)
Barnes, Darcy (MN)
Bickell, Eva (MN)
Blume, Marilyn, (MN)
Bom, Rodney (MN)
Buchler, Laura (MN)
Buesing, Orville (CA)
Burger, Carrie, (CT)
Byron, John (FL)
Coy, Cindy and Scott (MN)
Forsythe, Rick and Diane (MN)
Gasner, Eunice (MN)
Gauger, Barb (MN)
Gilleland, Beth Ann (MN)
Graham, Barbara (WI)
Hand, Larry (CA)
Harguth, Dorothy (MN)
Hoffman, Betty (MN)
Jerabek, Barbara (MN)
Johnson, Maureen (OH)
Linnihan, Michael (MN)
Madden, Patrick (MN)
Miller, Alvin and Donna (MN)
Miller, Jean (MN)
Miller, Kathleen and Andrew (MN)
Morrissey, Mike (ND)
Pettengell, LeEllen (CA)
Prail, Robert and Janet (MN)
Reak, Bonnie (MN)
Roessler, Karen (MN)
Schultz, Janet (MN)
Schuster, Bonnie (MN)
Searle, Newell (MN)
Selvik, Bruce and Debbie (MN)
Staley, Jayne (MN)
Suemnick, Phyllis (MN)
Searle, Alan J. (OR)
Tully, William, (CA)
Welch, Eugene (MN)
Welch, Janet (MN)
Wildgrube, Barb (MN)

New Members

Blomquist, David (MN)
Connor, Matt (MN)
Connors, Mary (MN)
Erickson, Jeshua (MN)
Fogal, John (MN)
Gahler, Fr. Robert E. (NY)
Hatfield, Carol (IN)
Petersen, Kathryn (PA)
Robertson, Karen (MD)
Shorter-Smith, Jennifer (MI)
Smith, Donald (WA)
Smith, Marilyn (MN)
Tinker, Kathryn (TX)
Tuttle, Deb (MN)
Veit, Anita (NC)
Winters, Brandon (MN)

New Sustainer \$100

Suemnick, Phyllis

MEMORIALS

Memorials, Unrestricted

In memory of Earl Dimmel
by Class of 1956 Janesville High School
by Doris Berger

In memory of Dr. Wes Rethwill
by Neta Oelke

by Donna Fostveit
by Pam and Larry Goehring
by Carrie Rethwill Burger

by Rod and Ruth Searle

In memory of Eugene P. Miller
by Donna Fostveit

by Gene and Kathy Rosenthal

In memory of Virginia Dolmen,
step-daughter of Leroy Shield

by Jack and Mary Williams

In memory of Joe Britton

by Donna Fostveit
by Sherry and Bruce Jones

In memory of Melvin Jeddleloh
by Donna Fostveit

In memory of Patricia Gaustad
by Bruce and Sarah Miller

by Larry and Pam Goehring

In memory of Ethel Wollam

by Donna Fostveit
by Lorraine Carlson

In memory of Dick Roessler
by Donna Fostveit

by Gene and Kathy Rosenthal

In memory of Marlene Jensen
by Dan Jensen

by Kathy and Gene Rosenthal

In memory of Janice Priebe
by Kathy and Gene Rosenthal

by Lynne Swenson
In memory of Marcia Mittelstaedt

by Linda Grant
by Rod and Ruth Searle

Memorials, Restricted

In memory of Don Siems
to the Waseca County Historical Society
Endowment Fund
by Don and Fran Zwach

In memory of Dr. Wes Rethwill
to the Wes and Carol Rethwill History
Endowment Fund

by Jack and Mary Williams

GRANTS

Grants Received, Restricted

Museum Lighting Replacement Project:
\$1,500 from the Roy and Jeannette
Tollefson Fund of the Waseca Area
Foundation; \$1,500 from Waseca VFW
Post 1642; Approved: \$1,500 from Alliance
Pipeline Foundation

DONATIONS

Don and Margaret Wynnemer
Itron Used Book Sale (Karen Lechner)
for Bailey-Lewer Library
Janesville Community Chest
Tom Sankovitz
Freeborn Co Historical Society
George and Jean McCarthy
S.E. Markey
Waseca Garden Club
Alton Township
Blooming Grove Township
Byron Township
Freedom Township
New Richland Township

Otisco Township
St. Mary Township
Vivian Township
Woodville Township

VOLUNTEERS

Chase Roberts
Charlie's Hardware-Brendan & Logan
Kiesler's-Kristi Corchran
Gene Miller
Robert Schmidt
City of Waseca, Parks Dept/Mark Bartelt
Rod & Ruth Searle
Barb Friedl
Kate Youngberg
Karen Lechner
David Pope
Kathy Rosenthal and daughter
Jan Hunter
Gary & Linda Taylor
Jerome Broughton
Edie Barber
Helen Wendland
Paul Dressler
Jim Ferch
Quinten & Karen Pettigrew
Barb Gauger
Bruce Boyce
Lorraine Harter
Jon Zimprich
Karl Jones
Tom Piche
Donna Fostveit
Don Wynnemer
Neil Fruechte
Don Zwach
Dale Huelsnitz
Jeff Huelsnitz
Maynard Breck
Tom Sankovitz
Joe McCarthy
Carol Wobschall
Diane Forsythe family
Dave and Melissa Dunn
Rick Morris
Jean Lundquist
Waseca-LeSueur Counties STS Team
Katherine Reick
Kristin Maxon
Jim & Barb King
Henry Lewer
Audra Nissen-Boyer
Doris Berger
Michael Hecht
Millie Neidt
Mark Wolff
Lowell, Brian & Brad Root
Don Knauff
Steve Schussler, Schussler Creative
Mike Hintz
John Underwood
Dan Swenson
Trevor Kanewischer
Bob Kipp

Stitchers in Time Quilt Guild:
Coordinators of the Silver Threads exhibit:
Kit Haag
Ruth Schoenfeld
Marilyn Teskey
Millie Neidt
And all the members who participated!

HISTORY PARTNERS | Pledges of \$1,000 per year for three years



Jerry and Linda Rutledge



Waseca County Historical Society

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Membership Renewal Date



WCCHS Annual Supper Meeting, October 14

All Waseca County Historical Society members are invited to attend the Annual Meeting & Supper (and birthday cake!) to cap off 2013 and the Society's 75th Anniversary—5:30 p.m. at the museum. What a year!

