



# MCLEOD COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Historical Society Newsletter

February 2013  
Vol. #33,  
Issue #1

380 School Road NW  
Hutchinson, MN 55350

Visit our Website: [www.mcleodhistory.org](http://www.mcleodhistory.org)  
phone: 320-587 2109 e-mail: [asa@hutchtel.net](mailto:asa@hutchtel.net)



# Singing Valentine

## Fundraiser

*Send A Song & A Rose on Valentine's Day!*  
For just a \$50 donation to the Historical Society  
*Thursday, February 14th- 9 AM to 5 PM*

The McLeod County Historical Society and Crow River Floral & Gifts want to create the perfect Valentine's Day for your loved one or friend! With just a \$50 donation to the Museum, you can send a Singing Valentine and a long stemmed red rose on Valentine's Day. If your sweetie lives outside of Hutchinson, but still in McLeod County, no worries, just add an extra \$10. Choose from three songs to express your love: *"Let Me Call You Sweetheart", "You Are My Sunshine", and "Side by Side"*.

If one rose is not enough, and it never is! Crow River Floral can upgrade your Singing Valentine with their Tender Trio for \$19.50 or a half dozen bouquet for \$32.50 plus the \$50 Singing Valentine delivery. Have your Valentine gift hand delivered with a song by Crow River Floral and Gifts and the McLeod County Historical Society!

If you book a Singing Valentine with the Museum between February 1st-14th you will also be entered into Crow River Floral & Gifts' *"Flowers for a Year Contest"*! (Contact Crow River Floral for full contest details.)

### *Crow River Floral & Gifts*

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## McLeod County Historical Society

### Mission Statement

The McLeod County Historical Society is dedicated to connecting with the past, understanding the present and making informed choices about the future by finding, preserving, explaining and sharing McLeod County history.

### Membership Fees

Individual \$20, Family \$35  
Business \$200  
Individual Lifetime \$500

### Board of Directors

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### McLeod County Museum

380 School Road NW  
Hutchinson, MN 55350  
(320) 587-2109

[www.mcleodhistory.org](http://www.mcleodhistory.org)  
e-mail: [asa@hutchtel.net](mailto:asa@hutchtel.net)

### Museum Hours

Monday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Thursday and Friday:  
10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Saturday: 1 to 4 p.m.

### Also available by appointment

Closed:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Sunday  
Research assistance available  
during Museum open hours.

The McLeod County Historical Society Newsletter is published eleven times per year, monthly except for December/January.

### Board of Director's Meeting

Fourth Monday of each  
Month at 7 P M  
Museum Research Library



## Director's Review:

As I sit down to write this February Newsletter it's like I'm doing it for the first time. Even though I have done it almost every month for the past six years, I have never been so thankful and excited to do it as I am today. Why? Because I almost gave it all up.

I was approached by a great, new organization that was starting up in New Ulm, MN where my family and I live. They made me a very tempting offer and I was all set to take it, when the McLeod County Historical Society board, membership, volunteers, and staff stepped in. I have to say I never fully realized how much I was appreciated and loved until now. I was blown away by the letters of support, the well wishes, and the gratitude for all I had done here at the McLeod County Historical Society and Museum. Each and every one of you helped me to see that it was not my time to leave, and that there were projects that needed to be finished and new projects left to plan and implement!

Now I know that this extraordinary organization would continue to flourish and grow with or without me. This is obvious to anyone who has spent time at the Museum, working with the outstanding staff, dedicated volunteers, and supportive board of directors and membership. But I realized something, in my heart, I didn't want the Museum to go on without me!

Through this experience I have gained a new vigor and excitement for what we do here at the McLeod County Historical Society. I am inspired by how I have helped in small ways to make each and every bit of all our successes happen.

So here I am, writing the first newsletter of the new year, just like I have done for the past six years. But this time I'm not doing it because I know I have to and I know I need to let everyone know about all the great things that the Museum is doing. I'm doing it because I can't imagine doing anything else and there's nothing else I'd rather do! Thank you for letting me stay!!!



Left & Above: Guests at our Annual Christmas Auction Fundraiser & Potluck Dinner! Thanks for a great night!

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## 2013 McLeod County Historical Museum Theme:

# Murder & Mayhem in McLeod County:



*The McLeod County  
Historical Society will be  
researching the topic of  
Murder for our 2013 theme!*

*Through the research  
done by board member and  
McLeod County Sheriff, Scott Rehmann, the Museum  
has compiled a number of the most sensational crimes  
to occur in our boundaries. Each month, the  
Museum will feature an excerpt from our theme  
booklet, "Murder and Mayhem in McLeod County",  
which will be available for purchase in the Museum's  
gift shop on March 1st. The booklet will cover  
McLeod County's earliest Murders in the 1800s,  
through the 1950s. Each case has its own mystery  
and historic lore to explore and we hope you will join  
us as we play detective and learn more about a small  
part of our County's notorious and tragic past.*

---

*Taken from The Glencoe Enterprise Newspaper  
on June 8th, 1881:*

### **MURDERED**

James E. Chesley, of Hutchinson, is Beaten with a  
Pitchfork in the hands of Charles Hayes and Dies  
from his injuries.

A Cruel and Brutal Deed Causes the Death of one of  
the oldest and Most Respected of our Citizens.

### **FULL PARTICULARS**

Death is always an unwelcome visitor... Such  
was the case last Saturday when it became known late

in the evening, in Hutchinson, that James E.  
Chesley, one of the oldest citizens of the village and  
among the most upright and honest citizens of our  
county, had died from injuries and wounds inflicted on  
him by Charley Hayes.

The news spread rapidly from mouth to mouth  
and in a few hours had reached Glencoe where it  
caused little less surprise and consternation than it did  
in Hutchinson. People were surprised and wondered,  
because it seemed as if it could not possibly be true. He  
was known to be an inoffensive, quiet and harmless  
man, ever a friend to the unfortunate, and how he could  
have met his death at the hands of one who knew him  
and his character could not be understood. Failing to  
get definite information and desiring to lay the exact  
facts before our readers, the ENTERPRISE reporter  
visited Hutchinson Monday to learn from those who  
knew the circumstances the full particulars of the sad  
affair. We found Hayes in a room at the Railroad Hotel  
and being closely guarded by Sheriff Hopper and his  
deputies. He is a man a little over forty-five years of  
age, rather slender, of medium height, florid complex-  
ion and apparently of a very nervous and excitable  
temperament.

When we first visited him he treated us  
courteously but refused to be interviewed regarding the  
unfortunate affair. Before leaving town, however, we  
were informed that he desired to make a statement of a  
few things for publication but when we then called to  
see him he had again changed his mind, but after some  
friendly conversation, we gleaned from him that he was  
a native of New Hampshire, being raised in the same  
neighborhood with the murdered man, Mrs. W. T. Bon-  
niwell and W. W. Pendergast. He came to Hutchinson  
about fifteen years ago and, with the exception of a  
three or four years residence in Minneapolis, has lived  
in the neighborhood ever since. He stated that he had  
rented Chesley's farm but had frequent difficulties with  
him in making a satisfactory division of the crops. He  
claimed that Chesley was passionate and unreasonable  
and that to avoid words or trouble with him on this oc-  
casion, while they were threshing the wheat, he had on  
Friday took his place to cut bands for the machine and  
Saturday he worked on the straw pile, delegating his  
right to assist in the division of the grain to some one  
else. He supposed this would so separate them that a  
quarrel or a personal encounter could be avoided. He  
further stated that when he saw Chesley coming  
towards him he supposed he meant to attack him and  
knowing that he was unable to maintain himself in a  
fight with so large a man, he determined to make use of  
the pitchfork he was working with and warned Chesley

not to come near him. The striking he claims was done in self-defense. He did not seem to expect or desire any mercy at the hands of the law and spoke in a very careless and unconcerned manner of the whole affair.

The particulars of the sad affair, as gleaned from friends of both parties, are, as near as we can state them, something as follows: Chesley was among the wealthiest men of the community. He lived in the village but owned a farm about one mile east. Hayes is a very poor man and his condition and that of his family is such as to excite the sympathy and often to call forth the charity of the community. To better his condition, Chesley allowed Hayes to occupy and operate this farm, receiving his pay in a stipulated portion of the crops. There have been various misunderstandings in the division of the products of the farm and matters were allowed to run along without a settlement until one satisfactory to both parties could not be agreed on between them, and a board of arbitration was formed. This was composed of Daniel H. Lynde, Oliver Pierce and John Dean.

After taking all the testimony and comparing accounts, they agreed that there was due Hayes from Chesley \$193. The matter was then brought before Judge McDonald and the decision of the board of arbitration was approved. Chesley employed H. J. Peck, of Shakopee, as his attorney and steps were taken to procure a rehearing. This seems to have angered Hayes and he was often violent in his denunciation of Chesley and his conduct, but no further trouble occurred. Matters rested in this shape until they came to threshing and dividing the grain, last Friday and Saturday. Those who were present state that Hayes claimed on Saturday that Chesley should take his share of the grain entirely from a part of it that was wet and damaged. Chesley replied that he would take his portion of that kind but no more. At this time some words passed between them and Hayes friends claim Chesley told him he was a liar, but there was no evidence to that effect at the coroner's inquest. Hayes appeared to get in a towering rage and called Chesley a son of a b-ch, Chesley started toward him and Hayes held the pitchfork menacingly in front of him, with the prongs forward, threatening to hurt Chesley if he came near him. Chesley paid no regard to this but went directly forward and commenced climbing up on the straw stack. Hayes then struck him with the pitch-fork partly felling him but Chesley rose and again advanced. Hayes again struck him two or three blows before they could be separated, and about the time they were parted he struck him with his fist.

Chesley was found to be bleeding badly and was at once put in a carriage and taken home. Dr.

Wakefield was called and found a few bruises about the head of the injured man with two large scalp cuts and a wound cutting entirely through the cheek, each of which had doubtless been made by the tines of the fork and apparently by jabbing it into his head. The patient complained of a severe pain near the top of his head but was perfectly conscious.

Dr. Wakefield examined thoroughly but could find no fractures of the skull and pronounced the injuries to be merely scalp wounds and not of a serious or dangerous character. The affair happened about eleven o'clock Saturday forenoon and this was shortly thereafter.

About two o'clock in the afternoon the doctor was again summoned and found the patient unconscious. He took off the bandages and made another searching examination but could find no fracture. The patient continued unconscious and to grow worse until twenty minutes past six that evening when he expired. Coroner Weihl was at once sent for, also Dr. Kennedy of Litchfield, with Sheriff Hopper and County Attorney Fitch, of Glencoe. These all arrived Sunday. A post-mortem examination was then made, by sawing off the top and into the skull, when on the right side and near the temporal bone, a fracture was found which could not easily have been discovered from the outside. Along the fracture and between the skull and the brain there was an accumulation of clotted blood about four inches long and one inch thick. This produced compression of the brain and death was the result. This fracture seems to have been of the inner part of the skull and some distance below where the blow was received, showing it to have been produced by concussion and in such a way as not to discover itself to the surface.

After the post mortem the coroner and others repaired to the school house where an inquest was held before a jury composed of D. G. White, John Grover, Murdock McKenzie, Dr. John Benjamin, Daniel Nobles and J. T. Higgins. The evidence taken showed the facts to be about as we have stated. The jury found that the deceased came to his death by blows struck by a pitchfork in the hands of Charles Hayes. Almost the universal sentiment of the community seemed to be that the affair was one for which there was neither provocation or justification. Chesley was a man of great personal courage but not cruel or quarrelsome.

The murdered man was one of the very first settlers of the town and the townsite was deeded by him to the village. He leaves a wife and four children. The funeral was held Monday afternoon in charge of the Masonic fraternity... *to be continued.*

### Log Cabin Home:

*In honor of Bev Wangerin from Jan & Larry Phillips and Lanny & Kay Sanken*

### General Fund:

*Lori Pickell-Stangel; Tuesday Breakfast Club; Thomas Solberg from Lecanto, FL; Amy Dopkins, Glenwood City, WI; In memory of Judy Katzenmeyer from Ron & Karen Sommerdorf; Bonnie Fimon; Margaret Perry; Anonymous donor; In memory of Hazel Slipka from Leroy & Darlene Karg; Sharon Miska; Dian Schwarze; Crow River Floral & Gifts; Hilda Fenske; Sorensen's Sales & Rentals*

### Archives:

*In memory of Lugene Dressell from Annette & Orville Zimmerman*

### Heritage Garden:

### Endowment Fund:

*In Honor of Rick, Vicki and Kelsey Linder from George Quast; In memory of Cordelia Zaske, Lugene Dressel, Edna Schilling from Ron & Karen Sommerdorf*

### Christmas Donation Fund:

*In memory of Harvey Getz from Dorothy Getz; Darlene Fasching; Dan & Rachel Murphy; John Bernhagen; Thomas & Gloria Classen; Cheryl Rusch; Lowell Ueland;*

*In memory of Howard & Helen Christensen from Joyce K. Johnson; In memory of Cyril and Bruce Donnay from Leona Donnay; Marlys Fredrick; Emmy Lindeman; In memory of Donald Benjamin and Warren Sytsma from Marie and Roger Klinghagen; Julie Jensen; Betty Pulkrabek; Mary Alsleben; Elaine & Richard Radunz; In memory of Jim Urban from Juanita Urban; In memory of Mr. & Mrs. E. C. Birkholz from Delores Gustafson; Norm & Isla Perrill; Karen Hendricksen & Ron Makovsky; Ann Calvert; Vel Mayer; Martha Anderson; Donald & Helene Spletstazer; Joyce & Les Young; Maury McNeil, MD  
In memory of JoAnn Oliva from Wallace Oliva; Gerald & Ida Karstens*

### Christmas Silent Auction Business Donations:

*Karen Hendricksen & Ron Makovsky; Liz Schwarze; Hutch Café; The Village Shop; Clay Coyote Gallery; Zella's; Liquor Hutch; Genesis Salon; Domino's Pizza; Family Video; Ace Hardware; Lang's Meat Market; Lillian's; Hager Jewelry, Inc.; Kentucky Fried Chicken; Bursch Travel; Dundee Floral; Crow River Winery*

## Welcome New and Life Members:

**Amy Dopkins, Glenwood City, WI; Bridget Block, Hutchinson; Helen Guggemos, Winsted, MN; Erica Strauss, San Diego, CA; Alisyn Johnson, Cambridge, MA; Terry Christensen, Hutchinson**

## Museum Artifact Donations: *The society thanks you for your donation!*

|                         |                        |                           |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Dorothy Lindeman</i> | <i>Martin Johnson</i>  | <i>Sharon Haberkamp</i>   |
| <i>Nancy Greve</i>      | <i>Katherine Trcka</i> | <i>Robert Peterson</i>    |
| <i>Marjorie Ruzicka</i> | <i>Julie Jensen</i>    | <i>Dave Gassman</i>       |
| <i>Kay Voigt</i>        | <i>Janice Ardolf</i>   | <i>Jay P. Morgan</i>      |
| <i>Mary Ebent</i>       | <i>Joe Schermann</i>   | <i>City of Plato</i>      |
| <i>Joanne Keilen</i>    | <i>John Beck</i>       | <i>Chippewa County</i>    |
|                         |                        | <i>Historical Society</i> |



## Artifact/s of the Month:

**Donor:** Katherine Trcka-Cutlar Family Collection

**Accession #:** 2013-0005-001

**History:** Heirloom crazy quilt made by Cornelia Cutlar (1853-1929) and her daughter C. Delany Cutlar (b.1879, m. Harry D. Convis/Converse 3/26/1901). Cornelia Delany Nobles Cutlar was

the great-grandmother of donor Katherine Trcka and grandmother of Earlin Cutlar, whose father was Noble Irwin Cutlar. The quilt is totally hand stitched of mostly plain & plaid cotton, wool, & suiting fabrics with a variety of gold thread decorative stitches between pieces. Large squares were joined together for the quilt top with a brown flannel backing and no batting. The initials "C.D.C." are stitched in one corner and the year "1912" in the opposite corner. "Sumter" is stitched in another corner and "Minn" in the opposite corner. Cornelia Delany Nobles came with her parents (Jeremiah (b. 1828) and Sarah Hulett Nobles) and other relatives to Minnesota territory in 1856 when she was three years old. Coming overland and by boat they landed at Carver, came on to Glencoe and settled nine miles west of Glencoe in Sumter township. A log cabin was their first home. At the time of the Indian Uprising, the family with other settlers, went to Carver, but after a few days returned to Glencoe where the women and children lived until all danger was past.



# MCLEOD COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM'S HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS RADIO SHOW

*Tune into A M 1260 KDUZ the last Friday  
afternoon of each month to catch the latest in  
Museum Programs & Events,  
Local History, and special topics on Preservation*

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Thank you!*

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**McLeod County  
Historical Society**

*Where the Big Woods Meets the Prairie*



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