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Following the Paths of our People and Places

Ernie Nevers: Duluth Sportsman

Ernie Nevers began his NFL career in Duluth. On September 19, 1926, the Duluth Eskimos (aka Ernie Nevers' Eskimos) played



Anthony Bush, Historian

their first and only home game of the season. Before a crowd of 6,000, they defeated the Kansas City Cowboys, 7-0. From there, they began their legendary 117-day, 28-game cross-country tour, chronicled by Chuck Frederick in his 2007 book,

Leatherheads of the North.

It was only natural that Nevers, on par with Red Grange as the most famous football stars of the 1920s, would leave baseball's St. Louis Browns (today's Baltimore Orioles) early to join the Eskimos' training camp in Two Harbors.

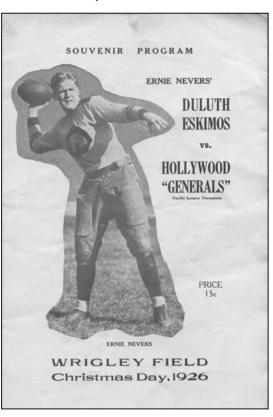
While he played baseball, basketball, and track and field for Stanford, he rose to national fame as a Cardinal football player. In the 1925 Rose Bowl against Notre Dame, he managed 114 rushing yards despite playing on two broken ankles. This was more than the combined efforts of the Fighting Irish's famed "Four Horsemen." He achieved First-Team All-America honors in 1925.

Capitalizing on his stardom, he left school for the professional ranks after the football season. He did it in a big way for he played three pro sports in 1926. First came football. He played two professional exhibition games in Florida where he and Grange headlined opposing all-star teams in January. No sooner than he arrived in the Sunshine State he announced that he'd signed to pitch for the Browns. By the end of the month, he was playing professional basketball for a Milwaukee team - the Swendson Fords. Back to football, Nevers committed to the NFL when Eskimos owner Ole Haugsrud visited St. Louis that summer to sign his friend from their days together at Superior Central High

School.

Ernie Nevers was coming home.

Ernest Alonzo Nevers was born in Willow River, Pine County, on June 11, 1902, although other records say he was born in 1903. In his



youth, his family moved to Moose Lake and then to the Allouez neighborhood in Superior where his father, George, owned and operated an inn. His recorded athletic career began in the fall1918, his sophomore year of high school.

Nevers started at right tackle at home - Superior's Hislop Park - against Duluth Cathedral in the first football game of the season, a 27-0 win. He played at Athletic Park - site of his lone NFL game in Duluth eight years later - in the next game, a 115-0 win against Denfeld. John "Bone" Hancock led the barrage with 49

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

By JoAnne Coombe

On December 6, 2018 the Veterans Memorial Hall Program hosted its 14th Annual Veterans Remembrance Dinner in the Great Hall of the St.



JoAnne Coombe, Society Executive Director with Brig. General (Bvt) Ronald Hein (Ret).

Louis County Heritage & Arts Center. Diners were seated just outside the Veterans Memorial Hall Gallery. This annual celebration of service is always well attended, made more special by the speaker, Brig. General (Bvt) Ronald L. Hein (Ret). Prior to his speaking, colors were posted by the Duluth Honor Guard. As a very active member of the Society Board of Governors, and serving as its Treasurer, Ron spoke about the evolution of armor in the United States Army to at least 114 attendees.

Ron was commissioned as an Armor Officer and served in the MN Army National Guard for thirty-seven years. His military

awards include the Army Commendation Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (w/2 Oak Leaf Clusters), and the Legion of Merit. He was inducted into the Armor Association and awarded the Order of St. George for exceptional meritorious leadership as an Armor Branch Officer. He was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General (Bvt) in December 2016.

Among the sponsors of the dinner were St. Louis County and The Depot Foundation. Other annual corporate sponsors were Darrel D. Johnson Excavating, the Military Order of the Purple Heart of the USA, and At Home Living. Continuing supporters included the David Wisted Zenith City Post #28, Campbell Building Materials, Duluth Honor Guard, Military Officers Association of America and many individual donors. The Arrowhead Professional Chefs Association prepared the dinner, which was ably served by the Air Force ROTC cadets from the University of Minnesota, Duluth.

A highlight during the evening's event was a standing ovation given to Ed Kachinske, a veteran who enlisted in the US Marine Corps and served in the Pacific Theatre during World War II. He was awarded a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star as a result of his service.

The Mike Colalillo Scholarship was awarded to Thomas Olafson, a UMD student.



TOP: Ed Kachinske at the 2018 Vetrans Remembrance Dinner. ABOVE: PFC Edward S. Kachinske, US Marine Corps, 6th Marine Division, served June 1944 through January 1946.





THE DEPOT FOUNDATION

 in support of arts and culture -ENJOY THE MAGIC. SUPPORT THE SPIRIT.

Events

Antique Appraisals – Third Wednesday of the month from January through November, Noon to 3 PM

Lunch with the History People – Ruth Maney Room, January through October, Noon to 1 PM

Exhibits

St. Louis County Historical Society Exhibits are located at the Depot, 506 W. Michigan Street, Duluth, unless specified otherwise.

Generations of Service/ VMH Gallery

Priley Woodcarving Collection/ Fesler Gallery

Albin Zaverl Art Installation/ Depot Board Room

Hill of Three Waters/ Small Fesler Gallery

Old Country Memories Artwork by Albin Zaverl/ Fesler Gallery

A County Built on Iron/ 2nd floor

Depot Square/ Lake Superior Railroad Museum, ground floor

J. C. Ryan Forest History Photographs by William F. Roleff, and four paintings by Dale Lyons/ 3rd floor

History of the Depot Great Hall/ Great Hall, 3rd

Crossroads of the Continent: The History of St. Louis County - 1856 to Date/ 2nd floor

The Immigrant Waiting Room/ 2nd floor

Lake Superior Ojibwe Gallery with Wigwam Children's Interactive Exhibit/ 4th floor

Ivy Vainio American Indian Photo Exhibit/ stairway installation

Melheim Woodcarving/ Fesler Gallery

The Man Behind the Medal: Major Henry A. Courtney, Jr. Exhibit/ 3rd floor

Tiffany Windows on loan from the City of Duluth/ 3rd floor entry.

SLCHS Statues **Honoring Veterans**

David Wheat/ Vietnam, Duluth International Airport

Joseph P. Gomer/ World War II, Duluth International Airport

Albert Woolson/ Civil War, Depot Garden

Traveling Exhibits

Case Exhibit/ Hibbing Courthouse: Women in the Military

Case Exhibit/ Virginia Courthouse: WPA and the New Deal

Albert Woolson Last Civil War Soldier/ James L. Oberstar Terminal, Duluth International

Return to the River/ Lake Superior Maritime Visitor Center

Desert Medics/ 477th Medical Company, Canal Park

The Plan, The People, The Promise and Perspectives: The History of the Erie Mining Company/ Minnesota Discovery Center, Chisholm

The Society Traveling Exhibit Program has 16 exhibits that may be borrowed by organizations or businesses for varying lengths of time. Please contact Kathleen Cargill, kathleen@ thehistorypeople.org, 218.733.7586, for more information, or access the Society's website www.thehistorypeople.org.

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News from affiliates may be found on the St. Louis County website: www.thehistorypeople.org.





LUNCH WITH THE HISTORY PEOPLE

By Julie Bolos

Our 2019 season includes a diverse selection of topics and captivating speakers. Returning to educate and fascinate our audience are Wendy Grethen, Brian McMahon, and Pam Brunfelt. We also welcome a new face, Roger Hellesvig.

Wendy Grethen kicks off our lunch series at noon on May 16. Her presentation explores "Historic Sites of Duluth."





TOP: Wendy Grethen ABOVE: Roger Hellesvig

Wendy, a local writer, educator and filmmaker previously presented on the history of Lakeside, West End/Lincoln Park and Minnesota Point.

On June 20, Roger Hellesvig shares "An Immigrant's Tale." Roger will transform into Norwegian immigrant Ole Oleson, who was actually his great grandfather. Using Ole's trunk, he will take us back to the mid-1800s. His story appeals to audiences of all ages, so bring the family.

During our 2017 season, Brian McMahon intrigued our audience with "Ford Motor Company's Involvement in Duluth and the Iron Range." He joins us again on July 18, when he explains the "Architects Small House Service Bureau," which formed in Minneapolis during the early 1900s. Eventually, it became a national organization "promoting good designs

Pam Brunfelt is back on August 15 to bring further insight

for small homes."

into Iron Range history. Her previous lectures included Iron Range: Minnesota Building America (based on the documentary), "The Minnesota Commission of Public Safety in WWI: Suppression of Free Expression" and "Iron and Steel in

WWII: the Arsenal of Democracy." Now Pam will examine female influence on the Iron Range in her discussion "At the Center of It All: Women on the Iron Range." Her lecture reveals the pivotal role that women played in developing the Iron Range.

Our September and October speakers are yet to be announced, more information will be available in the next issue of Rootprints. Watch for detailed posts on our website at www.thehistorypeople.org and on Facebook at https://www. facebook.com/stlou-







TOP: Brian McMahon ABOVE: Pam Brunfelt

The lunch series runs May through October on the third Thursday each month from noon to 1 PM in the Ruth Maney Room on the first floor, St. Louis County Heritage & Arts Center (the Depot) in Duluth. The event is free and open to the public, but seating is limited and first-come, first-served.





By John Michael Cook

When first I viewed the Grand Canyon, it affected me greatly, as also did walking within the Redwood Forest. So, too, looking out across the ocean for the first time, it became timeless. Throughout my life, I have experienced others who share the same feelings these great wonders have upon them as well. They change our lives, how we live, our choices, and our perspectives

When French voyageurs came to Lake Superior they spoke of how living near and on the waters of the great shimmering silver wonder affected their very soul, changed how they lived in this world. They called it *Effete du Lac* - Lake Effect. Who of us can touch this and also not be forever changed?

Look upon not only the lake, but look upon the city, and look upon its dwellers from all over the world who have become captive to her charm. Duluth is a reflection of the architecture and craft, the hopes and dreams of outcasts - inbound to the heart of America. Those who live here and those who have just come to visit alike feel the *Effete du Lac*. It is not something we bring, it is something we are given, and we take it within us.

My Duluth art and my paintings are a reflection of how my Effete du Lac is palleted and painted, sketched and rendered - looking past this moment to capture a language of why and how, what is there, to become this painter's alphabet, so as to speak something felt that has no words.

EXHIBIT DATES: MAY 7 - JUNE 9 DEPOT GREAT HALL



John Michael Cook is a nationally renowned artist residing in northern St. Louis County. The Opening Reception for his exhibit, Effete du Lac, will be Tuesday, May 14 in the Great Hall at the St. Louis County Heritage & Arts Center (the Depot). The event is free and open to the public.

History In A Pint Continues To Be Popular

By Jay Hagen

St. Louis County Historical Society and its Veterans Memorial Hall program hosts History in a Pint, a talk series which focuses on veterans' history. A guest speaker who is a veteran, a scholar or historian, or who has a veteran's story speaks informally at a local pub. The program pursues the Society's mission of collecting, preserving, and disseminating St. Louis County history. History in a Pint was first introduced in 2012 with its initial speaker Duluthian Joe Gomer, one of the famed Tuskegee Airmen. Since then, dozens of topics have been covered. This program is loosely based on Minnesota Public Radio's recurring series Policy in a Pint. There were five speakers in 2018.

The 2019 History in a Pint season got off to a robust start with 80 people witnessing Saving Pilot Bush: Navy EM Marvin Zeman's story. Other topics to be presented this year include:

Duluth's Tessier family sending 6 sons off to combat in

- WWII and all returned home.
- Duluthian whose uncle served and perished on the USS Indianapolis.
- Official naval photographer who covered the recoveries of Apollo 11 & 12 from the *USS Hornet*.
- Duluthian whose ancestor rowed in the boat across the Delaware River with George Washington.
- Major Henry A. Courtney's Medal of Honor the long road home to Duluth.

Please access the Veterans Memorial Hall website at vmh-hall.org for the spring schedule, or contact Jay Hagen, 218.733.7500 or Jay@thehistorypeople.org. The events are typically on the 3rd Tuesday of the scheduled month for VMH events. Bong hosted events are typically on the 3rd Wednesday of the scheduled months.



Sgt. Hubert Exhibit Coming This Spring

By Pippi Mayfield

The Sgt. James Hubert traveling exhibit is slated to be first installed in the Duluth International Airport this spring in the James Oberstar Terminal. The hundreds of thousands of travelers who use our airport will be able to stop and read about this World War II Marine's ultimate sacrifice.

The Duluth veteran lost his life at the Battle of Tarawa in the Pacific Theatre, but his remains were only found recently and returned to his family in Duluth in 2017. He was interred in Calvary Cemetery on July 15, 2017 with full military honors. Through interviews with family members and reports from History Flight, the organization that recovered his remains, we have been able to piece together Hubert's life story to share with the public.

Thanks to a generous grant through the **Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation**, Paul Nordlund and the St. Louis County Historical Society were able to create an extensive and patriotic exhibit that tells Hubert's story through text and pictures. After being housed at the airport for a period of time, the exhibit will be available for other historical and educational entities to display through the Society's Traveling Exhibits Program.



Sgt. james Joseph Hubert



Hubert Family: Wallace (father), James, Elizabeth 'Betty' (sister, holding Pepper), and Mary Hubert (mother) in Lincoln Park, Duluth.



A Look Back At Who Served 100 Years Ago



By Pippi Mayfield

As I dug through our online veteran stories, I found several from World War I that are of great interest. Visit vets-hall.org for more information on each of these veterans and to read many, many more stories. If you are interested in sharing your story with the St. Louis County Historical Society, please contact Pippi Mayfield at 218-733-7507 or pippi@thehistorypeople.org.

Lydia V. Whiteside - According to an article in the Duluth newspaper from October 1918, Ms. Lydia Whiteside is the only local female service member to have died during World War I. The online military database, Fold3, provided more information. Her address in Duluth was 4409 London Road, and her mother was Ellen Whiteside. She left in May 1918 with Hospital Unit 26 of the Minnesota Ambulance Corps and boarded a ship on June 4, 1918 to serve in France. The official ship record was entitled: Headquarters Port of Embarkation, Hoboken, New Jersey, United States Army Transport Service, Passenger Lists of Organizations and Casuals. She was passenger number 79.

Whiteside was a nurse for the Red Cross, part of a mobile surgical hospital unit near the front, which was nicknamed "The Flying Unit" by General John Pershing. She died of pneumonia, after suffering from influenza, on October 21, 1918, part of the world-wide pandemic.

Alfred Eli Gagne served in the U.S. Army in France during World War I, where he was part of three significant offensives: the St. Mihiel Offensive (the first attack of the US Army), the Aisne-Marne Offensive, and the Meuse-Argonne Offensive. He was also part of the Army of Occupation from December 1, 1918 until January 9, 1919. The Doughboy Center at http://www.worldwar1.com/dbc/stmihiel.htm provides readers a great deal more information.

Gagne originally enlisted in the National Guard on May 30, 1917, in Duluth, and he served in Company C of the 3rd Minnesota Infantry. Company C later became the 125th Field Artillery. He was honorably discharged from the National Guard on August 5, 1917, when he was drafted into the U.S. Army on June 5, 1918. He had been an employee of Minnesota Steel. He was honorably discharged from the U.S. Army on April 23, 1919, at Camp Grant. Illinois.

Ralph (Happy) Linden Kern enlisted in the Navy on June 21, 1917. He was twenty-two years old and not employed at the time. He trained in the Coast Guard in Duluth Harbor from June 22-September 14, 1917. He went on to the Great Lakes Training Station from September 15-October 28, 1917. After that he spent seven months at various training facilities such as Harvard Radio School, London State Pier, and the Armory at New London. He was stationed aboard the U.S. Subchaser #133 (SC 133). See www.subchaser.org/sc133 for more information.

August (Gus) LeMieux served in the U.S. Navy during World War I, where he was assigned to the battleships *USS Rhode Island* and *USS Massachusetts (BB-2)*, both part of the Atlantic Fleet, and an oil tender and submarine tender. He also worked in the Philadelphia Navy Yard and at Norfolk Naval Base in Virginia.

When he died on December 9, 1999, LeMieux was among the last surviving veterans of World War I, and was the last surviving World War I veteran of Fond du Lac Reservation.

Alvin Sjordal - In a letter written by Alvin Sjordal to the Marshall Wells Hardware News (which many of the local men wrote to during WWI), he talked about his past job and what he was doing in the service.

"Am no longer shoving the hardware across the counter, but still look forward to your Zenith Magazine, so if you have any extra copies, will you mail me last month's and also this month's issue. How is everything and do you ever see any of the old gang? Would like to reorganize that same bunch sometime and have one of our "Old Times" but suppose that is impossible. Met Thorson and Wright today, and we certainly talked over old times and the old bunch. I like the life fine and feel twice as well as I did in civil life, as I get exercise. No more sleeping until 8 o'clock."

Charlotte Louise Berry Winters - The *Duluth News Tri-bune* published an obituary April 4, 2007, for 109-year-old Charlotte Winters. She was the last surviving woman to have served in the U.S. military in World War I, and she was among the first women to enlist in the U.S. Navy.

Winters held the rank of Yeoman (F) – the F was for female – from March 1917 to July 1919 and served her entire enlistment as a clerk at the Naval Gun Factory at the Washington Navy Yard.

"She's not No. 1 on the rolls, but she was among the first women to enlist," Jennifer Marland, assistant curator of the U. S. Navy Museum in Washington, said. "Women didn't have to step up and answer the call of their country, but she did."

Winters heard about the possibility of joining the Navy two years after graduating from the Washington Business High School. The Secretary of the Navy at the time, Josephus Daniels, was proponent of women's rights who saw a loophole in the Naval Appropriations Act of 1916. The law, which created what was called the U.S. Naval Reserve Force, established six categories of citizens who could enlist. The women's enlistments allowed men to go to sea as sailors.

Winters was among about 600 women who were on duty by the end of April 1917. By December 1918, there were 11,000 women in the Navy. After her naval service, Winters continued to work for the Navy as a civilian in various administrative positions in Washington until her retirement in 1953.



Duluth's Lost Theatres

By Michaela Lochen

Present-day Duluth has a sprawling and active art scene. The arts have been popular and relevant in Duluth since its founding in the mid-late 1800s. Since the late 1800s, more than twenty of Duluth's historic theatres have been lost to fire or demolition. Only one of these locations still stands as a theater, the NorShor Theatre on Superior Street. Though the loss of these historic spaces has been a tragedy for the history of the Duluth community, work has been done to research and document their stories so that these theatres may be remembered.

The Grand Opera House 1883-1889

The Grand Opera House opened on September 20, 1883 at 333 West Superior Street. The architect, George Wirth, was a native of St. Paul and designed a massive four-story opera house which has been called perhaps the most architecturally adorned building in the history of Duluth. The auditorium seated more than 1,000. Duluth's population was 13,000 in 1883, so the theater could seat nearly 8% of the entire city. Duluth's Grand Opera House was a cultural centerpiece and housed the Chamber of Commerce, the Kitchi Gammi Club, and the Ladies Literary Library which later became the Duluth Public Library. The Grand Opera House's stage was larger than usual for the period. G.H. Carter, a stage carpenter from Chicago, built it 33 feet deep, 52 feet wide, and 35 feet high. On January 28, 1889 a fire destroyed the Grand Opera House. It was not rebuilt, but replaced by the Phoenix Building, which burned down and was replaced by a second Phoenix Building, which stands today housing Starbucks Coffee and Alerus Financial.





TOP: The Grand Opera House around 1855. ABOVE: The fire being put out on January 28th, 1889. (Digital Image: University of Minnesota Duluth. Original: part of the St. Louis County Historical Society's Permanent Collection).



Exterior of the Temple Opera Block photographed between 1889 and 1895, part of the St. Louis County Historical Society's Permanent Collection).



The house of the Lyceum Theatre, 1896. (Digital Image: University of Minnesota Duluth. Original: part of the St. Louis County Historical Society's Permanent Collection)

The Temple Opera House 1889-1895

The Temple Opera House, part of the Temple Opera Block, was opened on October 23, 1889. Architects McMillen & Stebbins, along with consulting theatre architect Oscar Cobb, designed the building that stood at 812 2nd Avenue East. The Temple Opera Block facility was commissioned by the Duluth Masons to replace their first temple built in 1869. The building they replaced was the Grand Opera House, which had housed the Masonic Temple in the same complex. On October 12, 1895, the Temple Opera House burned down, just like the building it had been built to replace. Newspapers reported that the entire building was lost within thirty minutes and described the fire dramatically: "The interior of the building was like a hell. The flames were a perfect cyclone. They shot nearly 200 feet into the air." The building sat in ruin until about 1905, when it was converted into the Temple Rink, a roller rink designed by the architect of the Grand Theatre. The rink's skating surface that was 140 feet by 70 feet. In 1910 Guilford Hartley purchased the property, demolished the rink, and built the Orpheum Theatre. Today, that lot holds the NorShor Theatre.

The Lyceum Theatre 1891-1966

The Lyceum Theatre, a six-story building designed by architects Traphagen & Fitzpatrick, opened on August 3, 1891 after its founder, Andreas M. Miller, noted the success of the Temple Opera House and wanted to construct a large theatre of his own. The theatre was located at 423-431 West Superior Street and seated 1,368 patrons beneath crystal chandeliers and an ornate ceiling. Actors had ample playing space on the theatre's massive stage, which measured 56 feet and 45 feet; the opening of its proscenium was 40 feet wide and 40 feet high. By 1915 the new Orpheum Theatre was drawing patrons away from the Lyceum, contributing to the Lyceum's becoming a movie theatre in the 1920s. Its façade was changed and a theatre marquee was added, and by the 1960s the building, in disrepair, was demolished in February 1966. On January 21, 1966 more than a thousand patrons said goodbye to the Lyceum. The building's final event was fifteen tours led by the St. Louis County Historical Society, Duluth Playhouse, and Junior League. Today, Maurice's inhabits the space where the Lyceum once stood.

The Orpheum Theatre 1912-1939

The Orpheum Theatre was opened at 8-12 2nd Avenue East on August 22, 1912. Architect J.E.O. Pridemore designed the theatre that stood on the site of the since burned-down Temple Opera House. As a member of the nationwide Orpheum Theatre circuit, Duluth's Orpheum was all but guaranteed to book the nation's top entertainers. Famous vaudeville acts included WC Fields and his juggling act, Mary Pickford, the Marx Brothers, Jack Benny, and Charlie Chaplain. In 1926, due to the increasing popularity of the automobile, a



parking garage was added to the Orpheum complex. With the garage added, the theatre was adapted to serve as a movie house and the entrance was moved to 207 East Superior Street, the garage's first bay. As more movie houses popped up in Duluth, it became harder for the Orpheum to profitably operate its large building. From 1934-1940 the building was mostly vacant, and in 1939 the original 2nd Avenue façade was destroyed. Around 1941 the building was gutted and its orientation was flipped 180 degrees so that the stage was on the 2nd Avenue side of the building, where the audience sat in the original Orpheum Theatre. That remodel officially made the building the NorShor Theatre, which is the only historic theatre still operating in Duluth at 211 East Superior Street.

The Grand Theatre (Lyric Theatre) 1917-1976

The Grand Theatre opened August 20, 1914 at 213 West Superior Street. The building, designed by architects John J. Wan-

genstein and E.C. Giliuson, opened to little fanfare considering it was a large vaudeville house that seated around 1,200 people. The building boasted large columns and a steel and glass canopy on its façade. Its stage was 45 feet and 35 feet, and was equipped with a 1,500 pound asbestos fire curtain. Another notable feature was a nursery for children, which included a merry-go-round. Three years later, the Lyric Theatre was built at 116 West Superior Street. When vaudeville started to die in the 1920s, the Grand needed a plan to stay open and remain relevant. In May 1922, the Grand Theatre and the Lyric Theatre merged at the site of the Grand and the building was renamed the New Lyric Theatre. This merger turned the vaudeville theatre into a movie house that would occasionally offer live music. The location operated as a movie house until 1959, when it was closed and remained defunct until demolition in 1976. Today, the Holiday Center and Holiday Inn stand in its place downtown.



The Orpheum Theatre's Second Ave. entrance photographed between 1920 and 1930. Digital Image: University of Minnesota Duluth. Original: part of the St. Louis County Historical Society's Permanent Collection.



The New Grand Theatre photographed around 1914. Digital Image: University of Minnesota Duluth. Original: part of the St. Louis County Historical Society's Permanent Collection.





By Alexis Linder

History has always fascinated me. Every museum I walked into when I was kid, every old house, antique shop and bit of genealogy my grandparents told me, I consumed. I was "that kid" in history class who actually paid attention to the documentary because I was genuinely interested. I drove my family to insanity by insisting on watching one more episode of Mysteries at the Museum. My eyes were glued to the screen while I learned about bizarre artifacts and the history they caused. What I loved the most was how they never chose popular artifacts and some items were as small as a single nail. I liked that that artifacts were not always on display, some were in the archives.

Since my favorite type of history is culture and heritage, I literally gasped in excitement when I learned I would be interning at the St. Louis County Historical Society. I look through the collection records, wondering what each artifact's history is and where it came from. I rely on other employees to indulge me with stories of the people, objects, and history that flow in and out of the Depot. I was asked to look in our collection records at different trunks for a researcher who stopped by and wanted to learn about a Camelback trunk. However, a different one sparked my interest - the one owned by Civil War Colonel Charles D. Bostwick.

The trunk is known as a camp trunk, which can unfold into three sections and has hinges on the shortest sides of the trunk with heavy canvas nailed to the frame to form a bed. This type of bed was famously used by another hero in the Civil War, Clara Barton. The founder of the American Red Cross, she used the camp trunk to help the sick and injured from the battlefield. When her trunk was under conservation, it was discovered that it could also attach poles for mosquito nets. Barton may have used the trunk to harbor the sick and injured; it is most likely that Col. Charles Bostwick just used it as a bed (see photo).

Born July 2, 1835 in Pine Plains, New York, Charles Bostwick was twenty-one when he succeeded his father's mercantile shop. During that time, he also involved himself in local politics, becoming the first supervisor elected on the Democratic ticket in Amenia. In July 1862, he recruited 400 men for the Union Army. According to the 128th Infantry Roster, Charles Bostwick entered, at age 27, as Captain of Company B, 128th New York Volunteer Infantry (N.Y.V.I.). They camped in Baltimore until he received word that his company was requested in Gettysburg to search for Cavalry serving under Confederate States General Stuart.

On May 23, 1863 he accepted a position as Major, First Louisiana Engineers, 95th U.S. Colored Troops. In August 1863





This trunk, donated by Harry D. Bostwick, is part of the permanent collection at the St. Louis County Historical Society.

he was promoted to Colonel of the 90th U.S. Infantry. In 1864, he resigned and served in Washington D.C. at the Quartermaster Department until 1867. He transferred to the Department of Dakota headquartered in St. Paul. In 1870 he moved with his family to Duluth. In 1883, he connected with Mendenhall & Haines along with its successors Mendenhall & Hoopes, underwriters.

In February 1863, Charles Bostwick married Catherine J. Douglas of Amenia, New York. After the war, they had four children: Emily died in infancy; Marion died May 20, 1902 at age 24; Edith H. Bostwick; and Harry D. Bostwick. Further information on Edith and Harry is unknown. However, it was Harry who donated the trunk to the Historical Society, along with two dresses made in 1862 by Catherine Bostwick.

The trunk, along with the dresses, are part of the St. Louis County Historical Society's permanent collection. This trunk is a great reminder of the conflict our country and its people endured. It is a reminder of our nation's history and the state's history. Minnesota was the 32nd state to join the Union during the Civil War - on May 11, 1858. When looking at the trunk we are reminded of our history, and we celebrate our culture and our heritage.



... ERNIE NEVERS from Page 1.

points.

The game scheduled for the afternoon of October 12 against the Student Army Training Corps representing Superior Normal School (now UW-Superior) at Hislop Park almost didn't take place due to a ban on outdoor events caused by the 1918 influenza pandemic. Superior Mayor F. A. Baxter and City Health Commissioner Dr. P. G. McGill lifted the ban the night before the game, citing football as "a healthy outdoor sport [that] is unlikely to lead to harmful results," according to the Superior Telegram. Little did they know that a forest fire would spread throughout the region the next day. The teams played through the smoky haze caused by the Cloquet fire. Nevers attempted a drop-kick field goal early in the contest; he missed. It is entirely possible that the conditions affected his accuracy. The sky grew darker as the game progressed. For the last few minutes, fans could not see the players on the field. Central prevailed, 27-0.

Superior then demolished Two Harbors, 74-0, and Hibbing, 81-0, before taking on arch rival Duluth Central. Neither team had allowed a point all season. Duluth scored first, but Superior stormed back to win, 20-7. Superior then took down Ashland, 61-0, and the previously-unbeaten Eau Claire, 19-0, to secure unofficial state championship bragging rights. The purple-and-white-clad Vikings produced an 8–0 record and outscored their opponents 427-7.

"[Nevers] could open a hole in the opposing line big enough to push Pershing's army through," claimed *The Echo*, Central's yearbook. His teammates voted him to be the captain—as a junior—for the 1919 season.

Nevers started his sophomore year of basketball on the second team. He dominated with 12 points to lead Superior's "B" team to a 20-10 win over Duluth Central's second team on January 31, 1919. His stint on the second team did not last long.

When Superior defeated Denfeld by a score of 45-20 on February 28, the *Duluth News Tribune* did not list Nevers among the starters. However, *The Echo* reported that he led the Vikings by making 11 baskets. He cracked the starting five after that game.

Nevers scored four points as Central downed Richland Center, 20-15, in the opening round of the state tournament at Eau Claire. The following day, he scored six points apiece in the 25-18 semifinals loss to Fond du Lac and the 27-22

consolation loss to Columbus. He earned all-state-tournament second team honors. The Vikings finished the season with a 9–4 record.

Nevers participated in track and field in the springtime. There was no local high school baseball at the time. Among Nevers' track records, he placed second in both the discus and javelin at the 1920 Head of the Lakes meet.

Nevers played left end and did the kicking in the fall of 1919. The Vikings started the football season by punishing Superior's Nelson Dewey High School, 115-0, and Two Harbors, 73-0. Duluth Cathedral stunned the local sports world by downing the Vikings, 13-12. The upset was astounding considering the Vikings' recent lopsided victories; that they had never lost a football game to Cathedral. A 105-0 win against Denfeld in the next game salved the sting. somewhat. Nevers scored a touchdown and nine extra-point field goals against the West Duluth squad.

Next, a powerful Virginia team featuring Nevers' future Eskimos teammate Joe Rooney came to Superior. The teams played to a 0-0 tie. The Vikings then took down Duluth Central, 20-0.

When taking on the Mechanic Arts High School at St. Paul, Superior hung on for a 7-0 win after a 70-yard touchdown run by Ted Whereatt and a point-after kick by Nevers. The host team treated their visitors to a banquet and dance that evening, and the

Vikings attended the Illinois vs. Minnesota football game the next day. Whereatt had a successful coaching career at UW-Superior and became an assistant football coach at Indiana University. The Indiana football program's annual *Senior Academic Excellence* award is named for him, as is the UW-Superior baseball field. Superior returned home to take the Northwest Wisconsin championship by beating Ashland, 26-20.

The Vikings traveled to La Crosse for their final game. Despite taking a 13-0 lead, Superior fell, 37-20. Bob Fitz-

ke scored 23 points for the home team. Nevers scored on two extra-point kicks in what ended up being his last football game for Superior.

Like Nevers, Fitzke played in the NFL and Major League Baseball. Nevers got his revenge when Stanford rolled over Fitzke's Idaho Vandals, 17-7, on November 17, 1923.



With first wife: Ernie Nevers married Mary Haegerty of Oakland, California, in San Francisco on Feb. 16, 1926. She died from pneumonia at age 33 in 1943. He married Chicagoan Margery Luxem Railton in Chicago in 1947.

The Vikings captured the state basketball championship and participated in a post-season interstate tournament during Nevers junior year in 1920; both playoffs were held at the University of Wisconsin. Their only losses in 17 games were to Duluth Central and Cedar Rapids, Iowa. All victories prior to the interstate tournament were blowouts. In the state championship game, Nevers tallied 14 points in the 36-13 victory over Menominee. He earned all-state honors and was selected to the all-state tournament first team after leading all scorers with 32 points in three games.

It took double overtime for Superior



to defeat Madison, South Dakota, 26-22, in the first game of the interstate tournament. The teams played to exhaustion. Sioux Falls Argus-Leader wrote that a player for Madison broke his collar bone, and "...[Heleard] Smith of Superior received a bad blow on the head and Nevers of the Badger five was also laid cold." Nevers and Hancock led Superior with eight points apiece. Later that same day, Superior narrowly defeated

Bloomington, Illinois, 19-18. Nevers managed just one basket.

The banged-up Vikings lost to eventual tournament champion Cedar Rapids, 23-4, but bounced back to defeat Canton, Illinois, 25-11, for third place. Nevers earned a spot on the all-interstate tournament second team. Superior finished the season with a 15-2 record. Nevers' teammates chose him as team captain for his senior year, but he moved to California.

In 1919 Prohibition caused George Nevers to sell the inn in Allouez: he moved to California's Rincon Valley to begin a new life as a prune rancher. Ernie reluctantly joined his parents after receiving a letter from his father. Now playing fullback as a senior in 1920, he led Santa Rosa High School to an overall record of 7-3 and to decisive playoffs wins over Napa, 40-2, and Tamalpais Union,

25-3; Nevers scored seven points) before losing to Berkeley High School, 61-0. According

to the Santa Rosa Press Democrat, he scored 108 of his team's 170 points. Amazingly, Superior compiled an undefeated record and

two of Babe Ruth's 60 home runs in 1927.

won the state football championship without Nevers in 1920. They still had Hancock, who went on to star for the Iowa Hawkeyes, and Paul "Puddy" Nelson, who became a star player for the Wisconsin Badgers.

Nevers began the 1921 basketball season for Santa Rosa and scored 32 points in a 42-30 win against Petaluma on January 28. A letter from a friend - or Superior's coach, accounts differ -convinced him to return to try to recapture the Vikings' dominance. Despite a 65-4 win against Morgan Park to start the season, losses to Duluth Cathedral (in overtime) and Denfeld (by one point) caused someone to reach out to Nevers. He scored 15 points - including all six of his team's second-half points - in his first game back on February 4, but it wasn't enough to keep pace with Duluth Central. The Trojans won, 24-21. "On the day of the Duluth Central game a fire was lighted

under the thermometer of our hopes, by the return of Nevers from the wild and wooly west and from this day on there was a distinct change in the scores of our games," The Echo reported.

Two weeks later, Nevers led with 10 points as Superior handed Duluth Central its first loss, by a score of 22-17. But that was preceded by another loss to Duluth Cathedral, 15-11.

Luckily the Vikings would not have to contend with the

Duluth schools in their playoffs. First, they crushed Hawkins, 35-6. Next up was Ashland, and that score went in Superior's favor, 49-7. Bayfield gave a fight in the region title game, but Superior successfully defended its crown by winning, 29-25.

Nevers potted five points as the Vikings downed Madison, 13-8, in the state quarterfinals at the University of Wisconsin. Hancock, the team's top offensive player, suffered a knee injury toward the end of the game. With Hancock sidelined, Menominee took down the defending state champions in the semifinals, 20-12. Nevers scored all 12 points. He earned all-state tournament second team recognition. The Vikings finished the season with a 9-5 record.

After graduating from Superior Central in 1921, Nevers moved back to California. He attended Santa Rosa Junior College for one year before going to Stanford. His Major League Baseball career lasted three years, 1926-28. He also played two years for the Mission Reds, a minor-league team in San Francisco. He played in the NFL for five seasons: 1926-27 for Duluth, and 1929-31 for the Chicago Cardinals. His 40 points against the Chicago Bears on November 28, 1929, is still an NFL record. Among his many coaching jobs, he assisted head coach Irl Tubbs at the University of Iowa in 1937 and '38. His World War II Draft Registration

Card, signed February 2, 1942, states he was 38-years old, 6' tall and 206 pounds, and worked at the Seagrams Distillery in San Francisco. In September 1942, Nevers enlisted at age 39 in the United States Marine Corps; he was a Captain during WWII and served in the Pacific Theatre from 1943-1944. In December 1944, while at Naval Station Treasure Island in San Francisco. Nevers was promoted to the rank of major. In February 1945, he became the athletic officer at the Marine Corps base in San Diego. Nevers became a charter member of both the Pro Football Hall of Fame and the College Football Hall of Fame. He died in Greenbrae, California, on May 3, 1976.

Thank you to Teddie Meronek and Jenny Tahtinen



Baseball: Nevers pitched for the St. Louis Browns (now the Baltimore Orioles) in 1926, '27, and '28. He allowed

NEWS FROM OUR AFFILLATES

Ely-Winton Historical Society

By Margaret Sweet

Winter seems particularly long this year and wherever you look there is another mountain of snow. It makes it difficult to move ahead with plans for spring and summer, but so far, the Ely-Winton Historical Society is forging ahead! During the winter, we are open Tuesday through Friday, Noon to 4 p.m. Summer hours are Tuesday through Saturday, Noon to 4 p.m. from Memorial Day until Labor Day.

Our Annual Meeting and Dinner is Tuesday, June 11, and will begin with a social hour and dinner in the Vermilion Community College cafeteria. Our guest speaker is Pam Brunfelt who is always a welcome and engaging speaker. Mark your calendars now!

Our Summer History Nights programs are taking shape with three of the five programs booked to date. They include a genealogy workshop on Wednesday, June 12. This will be broken into two segments, an afternoon session from 1 to 4 p. m. and an evening session from 6 to 9 p. m. The presenter is Bobbi Hoyt from the Duluth Public Library, and the Twin Ports Genealogical Society. The program is free and open to the public. Other programs include one on Co-op Point on Eagles Nest Lake. The presenters are Sally Koski and Val Mynti. David Kess will present his new program on Ethnic Diversity, or how the Finns and the Slovenians learned to co-exist. Two more programs are still under development.

The Blueberry Arts Festival will be July 26, 27 and 28 in Whiteside Park and Ely will be bursting at the seams with shoppers. Come and be one of them!

Hibbing Historical Society & Museum

By Mary Keyes

It might be cold outside, but on Saturday, February 23, the Hibbing Historical Society's newest event warmed everyone's hearts. Held in the Hibbing Memorial Building's dining hall and Little Theatre, over 125 members and friends attended a potluck, followed by films from Hibbing in 1950-'51-'52.

The potluck was a great success with a variety of appetizers, salads, main dishes, and desserts. People visited, laughed, and enjoyed "seconds" because there were so many contributions to the meal. As attendees finished eating, they walked to the Society's museum to view the 1:00 PM start of the "Saturday Matinee" in the building's Little Theatre, located between the dining hall and the museum.

The afternoon event, the brainchild of Board member Mike Hukka, grew from his learning about the Society's collection of 16-mm films. A generous donation from Society member Lisa Rosatti allowed these films to be digitized onto a disc, making for easy projection onto the stage's movie screen. The

topics covered in this first batch of films were Hibbing neighborhood playgrounds and the children enjoying themselves in dungarees and saddle shoes, the St. Louis County Fair in its original location in Hibbing, a Fair parade through downtown Hibbing, a farm family preparing for the Fair, and some softball, baseball, and basketball games – including a visit by the Harlem Globetrotters!

These old movies were in color and silent so the audience was encouraged to exclaim, laugh, and point out anyone they might recognize in the films! People cheered when their playground was shown. It was wonderful to hear the crowd burst into laughter as they watched children on swings and slides, girls modeling their dresses, people enjoying a hot dog roast. Afterwards, one attendee wrote to a Board member, "This afternoon was pure delight! Thanks to all who put it together. Kids today don't know what they're missing. Such simple joys."

The event was free and open to the public. The free-will donations collected will be put into a restricted account to fund more film digitizing. Obviously, nothing beats the winter chills like going back to long-ago summer afternoons.

Minnesota Museum of Mining

By Matthew Marolt

This year, the Minnesota Museum of Mining has received recognition for its work in mining education from the Society of Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration. The national award for MEC Partnership Appreciation was accepted by Vice President Mary Bovitz at the National SME Conference held in Denver, Colorado. Also, the Minnesota Museum of Mining continues to move forward with the large production truck. Painting and glass work were done last summer, and now with the freezing of the ground, heavy equipment can be brought in to lift the truck and install some "new to us" tires.

The Museum had 6,409 visitors in 2018.

Sisu Heritage Inc.

By Marlin Bjornrud

Sisu Heritage, Inc. in Embarrass begins the summer season with the opening of the Nelimark Homestead Museum, May 30-June 1. The museum will be open every Thursday-Saturday, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM through the end of September. Enjoy hospitality from the Farmstead Artisans, have a cup of coffee, view the historical exhibits, shop for unique gifts, and walk the grounds to see a number of Finnish log buildings. Friday is "bread day," and on Thursday is Finnish conversation time at 1:00 PM with Gary Rantala.



Sisu Heritage, Inc. acquired the Embarrass Finnish Apostolic Lutheran Church building two years ago. This year we begin offering programs and concerts in this historic venue. The first concert presented by "Whirled Muse," a folk trio featuring Eli Bissonett, will be on Sunday, June 2, at 3:00 PM.

National Sauna Day will be celebrated on Saturday, June 8, on the Nelimark Museum grounds from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM There will be food, music by Bill Maxwell, demonstrations, games, and a line-up of saunas from around the area. The museum will be open also. Come celebrate the "sauna" with us!

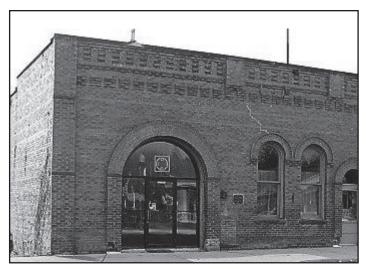
Visit sisuheritage.org for more information and news.

Tower-Soudan Historical Society

By Linda Folstad

Tower-Soudan Historical Society is moving ahead with plans to preserve Tower's historic fire hall located at 504 Main Street. The building, which is the oldest public building north of Duluth, housed the 1891 horse-drawn Ahrens steam fire pumper James Tippet while it was in service at the turn of the last century. TSHS owns the hall which is on the National Register of Historic Places. It is undergoing a multi-phase restoration process to make it usable for public functions, and to display the James Tippet and other historic memorabilia.

Total material and labor costs for the project are estimated at \$550,000. Historic restoration, energy efficiency, and handicap accessibility grants are expected to cover 90% of the project cost. Community financial support is a requirement for many grant requests, so TSHS has launched a capital campaign with an annual goal of \$10,000 for five years to support and strengthen our grant requests. \$4,400 has been received to date, with the money placed in a dedicated fund for fire hall restoration. One-time donations and multi-year pledges for any amount are appreciated. Please contact Linda Folstad, at tshssecretary@gmail.com or 218-753-5021for more information or to donate.



The historic Tower Fire Hall, the oldest building north of Duluth.

Virginia Area Historical Society

By Mary Erickson

Virginia Area Historical Society meetings are held on the first Friday of each month, 2:00 PM, at the Columbia Apartment Building Community Room, 600 N Third Avenue in Virginia. Planned upcoming speakers include March 1, Jim Korpi - Early Iron Range Autos, and April 5, Ed Roskoski - Test Pits. Coffee and dessert will be served. The public is welcome. Our Annual Meeting is planned for April 26th.

Current Exhibits include WPA and the New Deal, at the St. Louis County Court House Exhibit, Virginia. Of special interest are several wood carvings which are labelled Carved by Duluth WPA Crafts, Little Gallery, St. Louis Coun-ty Schools. They were stored in individual handmade boxes stamped, Property of the Leisure Education Department, St. Louis Co. Schools, Virginia.

Also on display is a painting, *Tear Station 40 Below* by Arthur Kerrick. This painting was hanging in a Virginia school classroom. Teacher Chris Homes learned on Antiques Roadshow (PBS) that there are many WPA art-works which are "lost" and he realized that this painting was one of the "lost" and part of the Federal Art Project. Once it was documented by the govern-ment, that believes the artwork should stay in the community where it is found, the painting was returned to Virginia. The VAHS has agreed to be the caretaker of this painting.

Arthur Kerrick was a Minnesota artist and among a group of painters sent to Alaska. A mural painted by him, *Alaskan Landscape*, hangs behind the judge's bench in the Federal District Courtroom in Anchorage. Kerrick's paintings are also part of the Smithsonian American Art Museum collection. One exhibit is, *Downtown Virginia in the 1960's*, reflects a time when the downtown was a "destination" and a vibrant commercial district. It features local businesses and merchandise available in the 1960s.

The second exhibit is *Buddy LaLonde on Ice* tells the story of a Virginia native and his Ice Capades skating career. On display are his skates, with 26-inch-long blades, which he used to jump more than 18 feet over barrels.



A VAHS exhibit displayed at the Courthouse in Virginia.



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Receive membership appreciation coupons for these local attractions when you purchase a new or renewing membership in the St. Louis County Historical Society.







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A number of newsletters are sent to out-oftown members. Makes sense – they are separated from their roots and want to stay connected. Connection is cheap - only \$.58 a week for Individuals! That's only \$.38 a week for New Individual Memberships!

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