



December 2003

Volume XXV

Number 2

Old Fashioned Christmas

On Sunday, December 7th from 2-5 pm, the Plymouth Historical Society and the Plymouth Park & Recreation Department are co-sponsoring the 17th Annual "OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS IN PLYMOUTH". The purpose of the event is to provide some old fashioned Christmas spirit and activities for families in Plymouth. Children can visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus will be right there to help the Elves hand out candy canes. A hay ride pulled by Belgian horses with bells jingling will be giving rides (50 cents per person), hot cider, cookies and cake will be provided, carollers and making Christmas decorations are other activities for the children.

This year we again have our great story teller back. Bob Gasch will be telling holiday stories, something you don't want to miss! Also the Armstrong

Chamber Singers will be singing holiday songs and delighting the children young and old.

On Saturday, December 6th, starting at 9 am, we will decorate the two old fashioned Christmas trees and the building. We are looking for help in decorating and bringing items that could be borrowed for the day to add some more old fashioned Christmas spirit.

If you can help to bring decorations, please call Gary Schiebe, 763-473-4889.

So bring your friends, relatives, neighbors and kids ages 9 months to 90 years young. The annual event has attracted large crowds with some families having a perfect attendance record with their children since it started in 1987. We had a great time last year as we do every year!

Activities include:

Visit with Santa

Old Fashioned Hay Ride

Hot Cider, Cookies and Cake

Old Fashioned Xmas Decorations

Old Toy Train Display



Wood Carver

Crafts

Story Telling by Bob Gasch

Music Groups

Armstrong Chamber Singers

Messiah Recorder Ensemble

Student Piano Players

Get Christmas Wishes

FAMILY HISTORIES

The Plymouth Historical Society has quite a few family histories on file. We welcome people to come and look at them, which may help you trace family roots. The following is a copy of one of the histories on file.



Jacob and Catherine Mengelkoch

Jacob Mengelkoch, according to his citizenship papers arrived in the United States on or about November 20, 1854, from his native home in Daun, Germany. He was born in the village of Daun on April 20, 1830. He went to school there and judging from a report on his school work which he got when he was 13 years old, he was considered a "good" and "very good" scholar. At 21 he was enrolled in the German army and served from October 1, 1851 to September 29, 1853 when his release was signed in the City of Coblenz.

Then it was evidently that the golden opportunities of America beckoned to him as it did to so many central European people of that period, and he

heeded the call and came to the United States the next year.

After coming to Minnesota by way of St. Paul and St. Anthony Village in 1860, he homesteaded 160 acres, the S. 1/2 of the S.E. Quarter of Section 27, Township 118, North of Range 22. This farm lay in Plymouth Township along the old Watertown Road where that road joins the Perkinsville Road. There he lived until a few months before his death in 1893. (Note: The farm was located south of County Road 6 and east of Xenium Lane, south of the Carlson Companies and Fire Station #1).

In approximately 1859 or 1860 he married Catherine Brooks who was then residing in St.

Anthony Village but who was also a native of Germany. To this union were born nine children. The children in the order of their birth were: Margaret, August 9, 1861; Mary, December 6, 1862; Caroline, September 8, 1864; Henry, March 19, 1866; Anthony, May 1, 1868; John, March 17, 1870; Joseph, April 7, 1872; Mathias, April 14, 1874; and Frank, September 26, 1876.

The family was a member of the St. Joseph's Catholic Church of Medicine Lake, for which there was no resident pastor then, but in which services were conducted on Sundays and Holy Days by priests from neighboring parishes. This situation created hardships for the pioneers when wishing their children to receive religious instructions as it meant walking many miles to neighboring parishes to do so. However, walking to church on Sunday and visiting with their neighbors while walking along or sometimes topping off at one of the homes was a pleasure that all looked forward to.

The school, then known as District 95 of Hennepin County, lay adjoining the farm on the northeast corner so that the children were luckier than many of that day because they did not have so far to walk to school. All nine children received their elementary education there in the log school house and in the first frame one-room building which was built after the community started growing. (This was the one room school before the Beacon Heights school was built in 1942.)

The monotony of every day farm work and other duties was periodically broken up for the family when farmers from herds of cattle and haul other farm produce down to the young but even then thriving markets in the newly organized City of Minneapolis. The journey being a long one by foot and ox cart, the farmers would occasionally stop at homes en-route such as Jacob Mengelkoch's for a meal, fresh drinking water and sometimes even to stay overnight.

Other diversions were, of course, fishing and hunting. Most of the fishing was done in Medicine Lake, Faue's Lake, a little lake lying south of Medicine Lake, or in Parker's Lake. Fish were

plentiful in those lakes then, either in summer or winter and different members of the family would go for a few hours or an evening of fun. Catherine especially liked the sport and even in later years after Jacob's death, she would pack a lunch and walk down to Faue's Lake to spend the day fishing. After she was unable to walk, she would hitch up her old horse and drive down in her buggy to son, Mathias's, place at Medicine Lake to spend the day so she could do some fishing. Small game was abundant in those days and Jacob and the boys didn't lack opportunity to enjoy hunting in the woodlots surrounding their home. There was one tract especially that Jacob tried to keep as much as possible in its natural state for the good hunting that it afforded.

House parties and barn dances were about the only forms of recreation that the community offered. If the young people wished to attend these affairs, they had to walk which meant several miles sometimes but no one seemed to mind. The Jacob Mengelkoch farm was the scene of quite a few barn dances and house parties as might be expected in a family of that size.

Farm implements and tools were rather scarce in those days and some had to often be made by hand. Jacob must have instilled in the boys the love for that type of work as several of his sons in manhood carried on in occupations involving the use of tools and machinery. Henry and Math became carpenters and carried on that trade for many years. Henry and Anthony went into partnership and ran a threshing machine for many years. These same two also built a sawmill on Henry's farm and ran that for as many years. Joseph later started a thresh machine route himself and carried on until his health began to fail.

Jacob also participated in community affairs. In 1861 he was appointed Constable of Plymouth. In 1863 to 1867 he served as overseer for roads and in 1868 he was again appointed Town Constable.

Jacob later purchased some property lying in Section 26, Township 118 and Range 22 which included the west shore of Medicine Lake, the "island" and the surrounding area and the greater

part of Faue's lake. After Mathias married, he lived on the north strip of the shore land for several years, until it was subdivided into small parcels and sold to summer lake dwellers. Math's son still retains a few acres and a home on the original piece. Henry received the south portion of lakeshore property and the Faue's Lake property from the estate of his father, about 10 acres of which is still owned by his daughters. The "island" became John's and which he later sold when he decided to take up residence in Montana.

In 1890, Jacob received his final citizenship papers. He and his wife were still living on the original farm but his health was gradually failing due to an asthmatic condition. In 1893 when Henry married and took over the farm, Jacob and Catherine has purchased a home in Minneapolis on what is now known as Glenwood Avenue. Jacob lived only a few months after moving away from the farm and died June 6, 1893. He is buried in the Cemetery at St. Joseph's Church, Medicine Lake. Catherine then moved back again to the farm and lived there for several years until 1913 when Frank, who was then living on the farm, decided to sell the property after the Luce Line had bought a right of way through the farm cutting up much of the good farm land. It was then that the farm passed into the hands of a real estate dealer and has since been subdivided into small lots. Catherine again moved back to the city to live in the house which she and Jacob had bought. It was there she died on February 1, 1915 and she was buried beside her husband in St. Joseph's Cemetery.

The children have since passed away. Margaret married Joseph Becker of Golden Valley, lived on a farm there for a few years and then moved to Minneapolis where she lived until her death on November 19, 1943. She is buried at Crystal Lake Cemetery in Minneapolis.

Mary married Mathias Spurzem and moved to Crystal Village where they ran a dairy farm for many years. Later they moved to Robbinsdale. Mary died October 3, 1933 and is buried at St. Mary's Cemetery on the Rockford Road.

Caroline married Paul McCann of Montana. Her husband owned a ranch near Chinook where they lived until their son's married when they moved into the town of Chinook. Caroline died there on February 16, 1942 and is buried at Chinook.

Henry married Anna Ernst of Plymouth Township. He lived on his father's farm for a few years, then he bought a part of the Ernst farm to which he moved and where he lived until his death on July 22, 1952. He was the sole survivor of the Jacob Mengelkoch family for three years. He also is buried in St. Joseph's Cemetery.

Anthony married Nellie McGowan also of Plymouth Township. They lived on a farm in Minnetonka Mills Township. He was still living there at the time of his death on July 20, 1918. St. Joseph's Cemetery is also his burial place.

John went to Montana as a young man. He married there and lived on a ranch for a while. He then went into business in the city of Gilt Edge where he died July 16, 1919. There also is where he is buried.

Joseph shared the farm in Minnetonka Mills with Anthony. Joseph married Theresa Hipp of Golden Valley. They lived on his farm until about 1920 when he sold that place and bought the Nicholas Bofferding farm in Golden Valley where he resided until his death on October 29, 1947. St. Mary's Cemetery of Minneapolis is his burial place.

Mathias married Elizabeth Morris of Crystal Village and lived at Medicine Lake for several years when he bought a farm in Plymouth Township and bordering on Medina Township. He lived there until his death on June 3, 1947. He is buried in Holy Name Cemetery in Medina.

Frank married Clara Eckes who lived on a neighboring farm. After his marriage, he stayed on the home farm until 1913, when he sold the land to a real estate company as before mentioned. He bought the Frank Hamel farm on the Rockford Road near Hamel. He continued residence there until his death on October 20, 1935. Holy Name Cemetery is also his burial place.



Current Officers

The following are the present officers:

President	Vern Petersen	763-559-2317
Vice President	Vern Doseth	763-559-3777
Secretary	Mable Swanson	763-545-7705
Treasurer	Harvey Schiebe	763-545-6127



Meetings

The monthly meetings are held on the 4th Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in the Plymouth Historical Society Building, located at 3605 Fernbrook Lane North, Plymouth, MN.

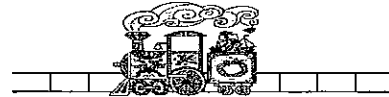


Mailing and Membership List

If you are not a member and want to sign up or if you have any questions, please call Alberta Casey, 763-559-9366.

The annual dues are:

Individual	\$7.50
Family	\$12.00
Individual Lifetime	\$100.00
Family Lifetime	\$150.00

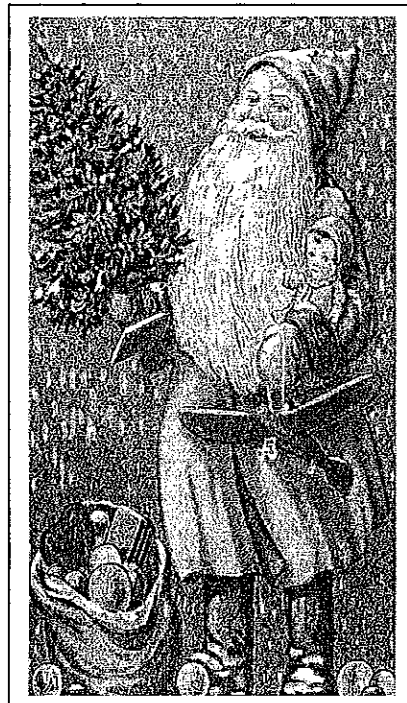


Old Toy Trains

Do you have any old Lionel or other toy trains? If you do, please contact Gary Schiebe, 763-473-4889.

See you at the Old Fashioned Christmas

Merry Christmas

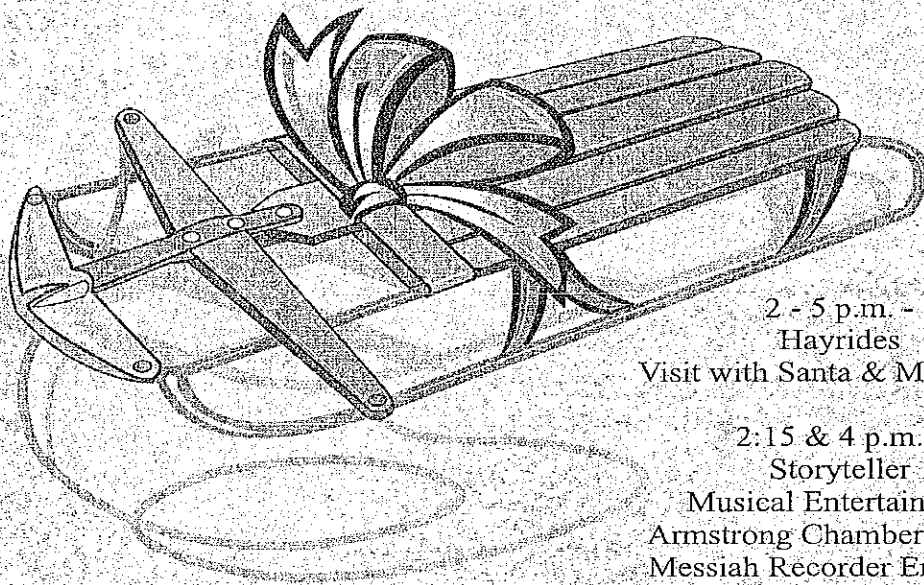


Step back in time, join us for an...

Old Fashioned Christmas in Plymouth

**Sunday, December 7, 2003
2 - 5 p.m.**

Plymouth Creek Park, 3625 Fernbrook Ln.



2 - 5 p.m. -
Hayrides
Visit with Santa & Mrs. Claus

2:15 & 4 p.m. -
Storyteller
Musical Entertainment
Armstrong Chamber Singers
Messiah Recorder Ensemble

Admission is *free*.



Co-Sponsored by Plymouth Historical Society and
City of Plymouth Park & Recreation Department.
For more information, call 763-509-5200.