



Old Fashioned Christmas

On Sunday, December 4th from 2-5 pm, the Plymouth Historical Society and the Plymouth Park & Recreation Department are co-sponsoring the 19th 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, carolers 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 3rd 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

The Pioneer House at Medicine Lake and Pat Cronin

September of 1946 the Midwest Council of Alcoholism Inc. was formed and Pat Cronin was chosen as General Manager. He was drafted by the Board of Trustee's because they believed he was living every word of AA's philosophy.

As recovering alcoholic Pat fought a hard battle achieving sobriety by using the twelve steps of the new encouraging phenomenon: Alcoholic's Anonymous. The big book as it is known was written and published by Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob in 1939. Pat Cronin sobered up November 11, 1940 during the Armistice Day Storm. He understood and believed the program could and did work if you followed the twelve principals. He is responsible for starting AA in the Midwest. There were three men at his first meeting. Two years later over 200 people were being awarded pins for sobriety for six, nine and twelve month's sobriety. ***It was only men at the Pioneer House.***

In 1948 Pat Cronin was approached by Ole Pearson, who headed the Minneapolis Department of Public Relief to become director of the New Pioneer House at Medicine Lake. Pearson felt that some of his clients with drinking problems would benefit with treatment. He pointed out in the long run; rehabilitation of alcoholics would save the city taxpayers thousands of dollars. Hubert Humphrey, then the Mayor of Minneapolis threw his influence behind the project.

The city authorized the purchase of Trinity First Evangelical Lutheran Parsonage in south Minneapolis at 1618 Eleventh Avenue South. The purchase price was \$18,500. However a newspaper article with the headline caption "City **Buys a Dormitory for Drunks.**" triggered such animosity and negativity the offer was withdrawn.

The Union City Mission stepped up with an invitation to locate the Pioneer House on their property at **Medicine Lake** owned and operated by Dr, William Paul and his son, Dr. Jerry Paul. They were the first benefactors of the Pioneer House. It was a city facility first, then a county, and in 1987 Hazelden acquired it as a treatment facility for chemically dependent adolescents and their families.

The Pioneer House was opened October 5, 1948 by Pat Cronin and John McDonnell. Three men registered that day. The first center was housed at the "Mother's Inn" at Mission Farms. The room that was used for detoxification was dubbed "The Snake pit." Dr. William Paul disliked the name and referred to it as the "Sunshine Room". The latter name foresaw the many, many hundreds of alcoholics who were to discover at the Pioneer House their illness was treatable and could be arrested. One day at a time.



Their first crisis was when John McDonnell needed eye surgery. They needed another counselor immediately. Someone was needed to be at *Drunk Court* and at the office downtown along with someone caring for the program many miles away at **Medicine Lake**. Chris Neil was chosen with a year and three months sobriety. There were no chemical dependency counselors then, they were all ex-drunks helping each other to stay alive and sober. Chris Neil succeeded Pat as Director in 1962 and retired December 1970. Pat Cronin died May 15th 1965 of cancer.

The Pioneer House was something of an adaptation of the *Bridge House*

In New York City, it became one of America's earliest treatment centers with inpatient period of two to three weeks. The program is based on AA. Pat developed a set of fifteen lectures on the Twelve Steps. How recovery can take place and the various phases of program. Lectures, small group sessions, and individual counseling were all the part of the therapy.

The Pioneer House chose to maintain close ties with Hennepin County General and the Veterans Hospital at Fort Snelling. Through these two facilities the physical, emotional, and mental complications of alcoholism could be diagnosed and treated by able professionals in the medical field.

Pat's Pioneer experience convinced him that alcoholics needed the feeling of acceptance by society. The feeling of rejection is what induced the feeling of self-pity that is so prevalent in the active alcoholic. When they realize they are not alone their confidence returns.

The Pioneer House became known all over in AA circles as a good place to go for the 4th and 5th step in their recovery program. The biggest single factor in recovery is for the alcoholic's willingness to be honest with himself.

Father Clinton Allard of the **Medicine Lake Parish** was among the earliest clergy to assist with the 5th step. It is believed that Pioneer House was first treatment facility to require a 5th step. If a man was Protestant, Father Allard would remove his vestments believing it would make the man more comfortable. When the inventory was completed he would put his vestments on, go to the chapel and serve as a clergyman. Then assist the man to shed his heavy cloak of guilt and despair.



The success rate was believed to be about fifty-five percent with another fifteen percent showing improvement. The Pioneer House name is significant as each Resident is attempting to pioneer a complete new way of living.

A high recovery rate was consistently achieved by the Pioneer House over the years. Researchers from Yale School on Alcohol Studies documented the work of the Pioneer House in its June issue of the *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*. Over a fourteen month period two hundred fifteen men went through the program. One hundred thirty eight or 64.2 % were sober and self supporting.

The *Chicago Times Sunday Magazine Section* carried a major feature in the July 8, 1956 issue. The article was a tribute to Pat Cronin and the Pioneer House Staff. They wrote “what a monumental task to reverse a five, ten to twenty five year pattern of alcoholic thinking and living in a three week period.”

Because of Dr. William Paul’s understanding and generosity the first treatment center for Alcoholics was created in the Midwest and with Pat Cronin’s understanding and commitment to the Alcoholic it was successful,

Author:

Gloria Griffin Hogle

Plymouth, Minnesota

Birchview 2nd Grade Classes

On October 25th and 26th The Plymouth Historical hosted the second grade classes from Birchview Elementary School. The event was organized by Sue Strom – teacher and Bob Gasch – story teller. The children arrived by bus and had two adults for each six students. Their assignment was a history scavenger hunt. They had a checklist with a variety of items that they had to locate in the museum and determine what it was or what it was used for. They were very well organized into groups and toured the museum, carriage house and Bob Gasch took them for a story telling walk in the woods with the maple trees in full color. Vern Dotseth, Kay Bertrand, Gary Schiebe and Harvey Schiebe hosted our young visitors. Before each group left to return to school the 1925 Model T Truck was started up and all the horns tooted to the delight of the kids and adults.



Current Officers

The following are the present officers:

President	Vern Dotseth	763-559-3777
Vice President	Ben Broman	763-559-5721
Secretary	Mabel 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.

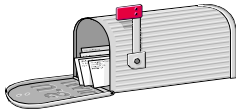


Donations

The Plymouth Historical Society wants to thank the following people for their donations.

- The map and slate board from the District #47 School and a complete Cream Separator.
Donated by: The Deziel Family
- Wooden tool chest with antique tools that were Mr. Frick's.
Donated by: The Frick Family
- Framed Picture of two District #51 Classes
Donated by: Betty Begin

Mailing and Membership List



If you are not a member and want to sign up or if you have any questions, please call:
Kay Bertrand, 763-249-0138

The annual dues are:

Individual	\$10.00
Family	\$15.00
Individual Lifetime	\$100.00
Family Lifetime	\$150.00



*See you at the
Old Fashioned Christmas*



**Merry
Christmas**