



## *Home of the*

Clay County Historical Society  
15 Austin , Vermillion SD 57069  
605-624-8266

[www.cchssd.org](http://www.cchssd.org)

[claycohistory@yahoo.com](mailto:claycohistory@yahoo.com)

**Fall/Winter Newsletter - Nov 2011**

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### **Greetings from CCHS Board President, Gloria Barnes**

The Clay County Historical Society in Vermillion, SD will host their annual Holiday Tour of Homes on Saturday, December 3, 2011 from 3:00 -7:00 pm with the reception at the Austin Whittemore House, 15 Austin Street starting at 4:00 pm. This year's reception will be coordinated by Judy Sullivan. The CCHS Board of Directors will be present to assist guests at this event and cordially invite everyone to enjoy the Tour and Reception. Ann Severson and Gloria Barnes are busy decorating at the House for the Season.

Tickets may be purchased at the Austin Whittemore House, Nook 'n Cranny, Vermillion Beauty Shop and Davis Drug in Vermillion from November 18-until the date of the Tour. The price is \$12.50 per ticket. Hosts will check off their home on the ticket as guests enter their homes. This ticket is to also be used for the reception. You may contact the Clay County Historical Society at 605-624-8266 or [claycohistory@yahoo.com](mailto:claycohistory@yahoo.com) if you have additional questions. This year's featured homes:

Alan & Sarah Wittmuss at 416 South University Street. This is an eclectic revival style home. Many updates have been made since its construction 1925. Come enjoy the historic notes of this South University Street home.

Linda Kogel at 405 South University Street. Linda has a beautiful Dutch colonial revival home on the tour. She has done many improvements to this home over the years.

Reverend Robert & Pauline Grossman at 818 Madison Street. Pauline is displaying her handmade beautiful quilts throughout the house.

Bill Hensley and Gloria Barnes at 102 Forest Avenue. This home is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This home was built as the parsonage for the First Baptist Church in 1881. You will notice the original wood floors throughout the house, the chandeliers and glass door knobs. All of the rooms are large and make a comfortable home for living and entertaining.

CCHS will also have Sweets and Treats on Saturday, December 10 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm at the Austin Whittemore House, 15 Austin Street. You can select your own Christmas treats from our large selection of homemade desserts.

Gloria Barnes  
CCHS President

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### **From the Office of the Clay County Historical Society**

It was a slow summer for visitors this year. Like everyone else, we blame it on the economy and high gas prices. More contact for genealogy questions have been by phone.

Things are changing in the Austin Whittemore House and it is beginning to look more like Christmas each day. The decorating has begun and you will enjoy seeing the beautiful home.

Reservations for Christmas parties are coming in and the Tour of Homes is just around the corner. Remember to mark December 3<sup>rd</sup> as the day of the Tour. Watch for the ads and the posters that will soon be posted around town.

Following the Tour on Saturday December 10<sup>th</sup>, you may come to the "Cookie Walk" at the Austin Whittemore House and purchase your Christmas cookies. This is a real time saver for the busy lady at this time of year.

If you have questions about events we are having, just give us a call at 624-8266. We wish you a Happy Holiday Season.

Cleo Erickson  
CCHS Board of Director

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### **SAVE THE HISTORY OF VERMILLION AND CLAY COUNTY**

Recently the estate of a Vermillion family was sold at auction. That is something that happens often and is a way of disposing of the items the remaining family does not wish to keep.

However, there are instances when an estate is closed, personal letters, baptism, confirmation and wedding certificates and many times family photos are set out on the auction block. The Clay County Historical Society was fortunate in having one of our members attend the auction mentioned above. We now have in our files some old ledgers that list the names of early residents in Vermillion and Clay County. We also received from local Real Estate Company some of the family photos and certificates of the family. These are added to our family files for genealogy purposes.

We are asking you, as a member of the Clay County Historical Society or anyone involved with estates, to watch for local history. Maybe you know someone who is cleaning out a family home and there are old local newspapers, or a box of obituaries that have been saved from local papers, antique clothing, photos or other items that are being discarded. Please tell them about our collections and to please contact us. We don't mind if the items are dusty or a little soiled. We have ways of taking care of those problems. It is with your help that we can continue to preserve the history of our area for future generations. We look forward to hearing from you or your friends that might be working with a family making this kind of a decision. Give us a call at 605-624-8266. We can arrange for pickup.

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### **News From The W.H. Over Museum**

The fall season was celebrated in fine style at the Over Museum. On October 11, the Museum hosted an After Hours event for the Vermillion Chamber of Commerce. A new floor had just been installed in Sletwold Hall and two members visited with guests about their personal collections. Lynn Muller has an extensive collection of World War II memorabilia and Maureen Goddard has a unique collection of Skookum dolls. What are Skookum dolls? Come to the Museum to see!

Then on October 23, the annual Welcome to Fall event took place featuring pumpkin carving in the afternoon and a wonderful musical program by Gordy Pratt in the evening. This was followed by a delicious meal.

Coming up very fast is the annual Christmas event. This will take place on December 4 from 1 until 4:30. This year, we will have 30 tables of exhibits and will feature the Vermillion Area Dance Organization (VADO); Santa will be there and we will also have trees on display, a bake sale, and a beautiful hospitality table in Sletwold Hall. We will also be conducting our annual membership drive. What a wonderful weekend of activities.

Maxine Johnson  
CCHS Secretary

<p><b>The 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebration of the St. Lucia Tradition will be Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. at the Dalesburg Lutheran Church.</b></p>
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### **What Makes a South Dakotan?**

The Austin Whittemore House and Clay County Historical Society will host a Civic Reflection Session on Thursday, December 29, from 7-9 p.m. That evening Norma Wilson will facilitate a group discussion beginning with the reading of a short work of literature. You are invited to come and share your own experiences and stories. Refreshments will be served.

This is one of many such gatherings to be held throughout the state to inspire citizens to share their stories about life in their communities. The South Dakota Humanities Council, which is sponsoring these sessions, is planning to publish a book on “What Makes a South Dakotan” in 2012 to celebrate their 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

You will be provided information about how to submit a story or poem to be considered for inclusion in the book. Please come and be part of this project. For further information, contact Norma Wilson, [Norma.Wilson@usd.edu](mailto:Norma.Wilson@usd.edu), 605-624-9279.

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## Join Us For A White Christmas

Please put the 3rd of December on your calendar! Gloria and myself have been decorating for your pleasure to tour this historical house. This year theme is “White Christmas” There will be four other houses to see at the Tour of Homes. Please get your tickets at the advertised locations. See the homes and then stop by the A.W. historical house for coffee and goodies.

The Tour of Homes and Sweets and Treats are two of our fund raising activities. We also keep the house open for research and visits from travelers to see our beautiful 1882 house. See you there!

Ann Severson  
CCHS Board of Director



**Membership Party!**  
Please join us for a wind-  
down after Christmas, Friday  
December 30<sup>th</sup>-7:00 p.m.  
This event will be hosted by  
Joe Hoffman

*From the Board of Directors*

*Gloria Barmes - President*

*Vice President - Tom Thaden*

*Secretary - Maxine Johnson*

*Treasurer - Luann Duelllette*

*Past President - Joe Hoffman*

*Director - Cleo Erickson*

*Director - Ann Severson*

*Director - Judy Sullivan*

## HISTORICAL RELATED ITEMS AVAILABLE

### **From the River Valleys to the Rising Bluff ... A Pictorial History of Vermillion, South Dakota 1859-2009**

304 pages. This publication was sponsored by the Clay County Historical Society, Inc. for the Vermillion Sesquicentennial in 2009. The book conveys Vermillion's history through pictures and text.

Price \$35.00 + 7.5% tax = \$ 37.64 / add \$ 5.00 shipping & handling to SD addresses

Price \$35.00 + 5.00 shipping/handling to other states

### **History of Dakota Territory** ... originally published in 1869 and 1870. 125 pages

A history of the Territory of Dakota tells about the Homestead land and the towns in the area. It describes the location of timber land, steam mills, water, and the climate and soil. It's a good source for those looking at the area.

Price \$15.00 + 7.5% tax = \$ 16.13 / add \$ 5.00 shipping & handling to SD addresses

Price \$15.00 + 5.00 shipping & handling to other states

### **Dakota's First Lynching** ...

The booklet tells the lively story about James Hogan, a "desperado of the worst character". James Hogan's body was seen hanging from a roadside tree near the mouth of the Vermillion River on 26 February 1866. It's a mysterious little book to read.

Price \$5.00 + 7.5% tax = \$ 5.38 / add \$ 3.00 shipping & handling to SD addresses

Price \$5.00 + 3.00 shipping & handling to other states

### **Hay Country** ...

A history of the Meckling and Gayville SD area makes this a great book for a historian. It also contains the history of many families that settled in Norway and Meckling townships.

Price \$12.00 + 7.5% tax = \$ 12.90 / add \$ 5.00 shipping & handling to SD addresses

Price \$12.00 + 5.00 shipping & handling to other states

### **History of Clay County** ...

The book was written in 1976 by Dr. Herbert S. Schell and tells the "grass-roots" story of Clay County. The author traces Clay County from the pre-settlement period to the 1970's. It has numerous illustrations and a comprehensive index.

Price \$15.00 + 7.5% tax = \$ 16.13 / add \$ 5.00 shipping & handling to SD addresses

Price \$15.00 + 5.00 shipping & handling to other states

### **Clay County Place Names** ...

Names of schools, churches, villages, parks are listed in the book. A map of the county is included showing exact locations of the above name places. Some pictures are included.

Price \$7.00 + 7.5% tax = \$7.53 / add \$ 5.00 shipping & handling to SD addresses

Price \$7.00 + 5.00 shipping & handling to other states

**Clay County Country School CD** ... A history of the country schools in Clay County with many photos of schools buildings and students. The CD contains many Clay County 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Country School graduation pictures. Most have students identified. Would appreciate names of "unknown" students pictured.

Price \$10.00 + 7.5% tax = \$10.75 / add \$ 3.00 shipping & handling to SD addresses

Price \$10.00 + 3.00 shipping & handling to other states

**Clay County Homestead Map of 1884** ... approximate size 17-1/2" x 22-1/2"; shipped in mailing tube

Price \$10.00 + 7.5% tax = \$10.75 / add \$ 3.00 shipping & handling to SD addresses

Price \$10.00 + 3.00 shipping & handling to other states

**1902 Clay County Map** ... compiled and drawn from Special Services and Office Records by E. Frank Peterson, Map Publisher, Vermillion. Approximate size 17-1/2" X 22-1/2"; shipped in mailing tube.

Price free / \$3.00 for shipping & handling to either SD addresses or addresses in other states

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**TO ORDER:**

please make check payable to Clay County Historical Society, Inc.

and mail to 15 Austin St.  
Vermillion, SD 57069

At this time, we do not have the capability to accept debit or credit card charges. We're sorry for any inconvenience this may cause.

**QUERIES**

Questions, such as shipping and handling costs outside the United States, please contact the Historical Society at the address above or

phone 605-624-8266

e-mail [claycohistory@yahoo.com](mailto:claycohistory@yahoo.com)

website [www.cchssd.org](http://www.cchssd.org)

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR BUSINESS**

Check out the [Clay County Historical Society](http://www.cchssd.org) website for upcoming events, links to other interesting historical websites, to order historical books and for new or renewal membership forms.

**Please note that 2012 membership dues are due January 1<sup>st</sup>.**

**Clay County Historical Society**  
**Membership Application / Renewal**  
**Membership Year is January 1-December 31\***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

_____ Individual Member:	\$15.00	_____ Family Membership:	\$ 25.00
_____ Institutional:	\$50.00	_____ Life Member/per person	\$200.00

Please mail check payable to Clay County Historical Society, Inc.  
And mail to  
CCHS  
15 Austin Street  
Vermillion, SD 57069

If you have questions about membership or the Society, please call us at  
(605) 624-8266 or e-mail us at [claycohistory@yahoo.com](mailto:claycohistory@yahoo.com) or write to us  
at the above address.

**\*NOTE:**

The membership year has shifted from April 1-March 31 to Jan 1-Dec 31 since the IRS has  
advised that our "year" is calendar. We hope this does not inconvenience you. Our Annual  
Meeting will continue, at this time, to be in April.

Any news you'd like to share?

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Clay County/Vermillion area surnames of interest to you

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