“Gnome for the Holidays”
Come visit the museum during the 9th annual Brainerd Christmas event Saturday, November 26th
The museum will be open from 1-5 pm
Purchase goodies at our Bake Sale
Enjoy hot apple cider and cookies

Hope to see you there!
More information on page 3
President’s Report

It’s hard to believe another year is slipping by. The Crow Wing County Historical Society has had a real busy year. Working to improve the museum and the ongoing challenges of maintaining 5 buildings at the fairgrounds takes a lot of time. Right now we need help from volunteers or organizations that would be willing to paint the schoolhouse. If we don’t keep these buildings up to par, they will deteriorate to the point that they will have to come down. It’s a shame we can’t think of having them available to the public more than just once a year during fair time. If you have any ideas, it would be appreciated. The next project is preservation of our museum building, that is being done by the county. They have applied for a state grant for this project. We love our volunteers and could use more. If you have a couple of hours to donate, please contact Pam at the museum (829-3268). We are in need of Saturday greeters, as well as light housekeepers and someone with carpenter and painting skills.

Don Samuelson  
Board President

Greetings

From Pamela Nelson,  
Director/Administrator

The museum building which once was the county’s third jail and sheriff’s residence is in need of fixing-up as it approaches 100 years old next year! For a brief reference, in 1917, the United States began its involvement in World War 1 with Woodrow Wilson as President. Some of the famous people that were born that year were, film actress Jane Wyman, (President Ronald Reagan’s first wife), actor Ernest Borgnine, baseball player Dom DiMaggio, and John F Kennedy, 35th President of the United States, to mention a few. A birthday celebration is in the planning stage.

I often get asked the question, “What items are you in need of or want?” Usually, we don’t want newspapers as they take up a lot of space, deteriorate over time, and we already have them on microfilm. If you have an artifact that is something you feel is unique, and it pertains to Crow Wing County, has a known story or, better yet, photos that go with it, that is what we are “wanting.” We have limited space for storage, so large items are difficult to take. Just give us a call and let us know if you are interested in donating something, and we will be happy to let you know if it is something we can include in our collection.

The society maintains several buildings at the fairgrounds, and this process is never ending. The former District 3 schoolhouse needs painting both inside and out. We are looking for volunteers to help us with this painting project, which would take place in the late Spring or Summer. Another building at the fairgrounds that needs renovation is the Wohl House. The inside walls need patching and painting. The house’s exterior has already been painted. There has been some residing and a brick look added for the foundation. Please consider helping the society by contacting us at the museum (218-829-3268).

Andy Walsh’s Facebook page “Share history and stories about Brainerd Lakes Area” has over 7,000 members and continues to quench the thirst for history-minded folk. This page is bringing long-forgotten pieces of history out into the light and rekindling memories of many of the readers.

John Van Essen, our webmaster, has added a link to the Historical Society’s website that will bring you to the National Geographic tourism page for the museum. The page features a short video and information about the society and museum. The Mississippi River Geotourism Program recognized the museum for its valuable contribution to the program, and support in sustaining and enhancing the unique geographic character of the region through its commitment to aesthetics, culture, environment, heritage, and the well-being of the region’s residents.

Wishing everyone a safe and wonderful Holiday Season!!
**“Gnome for the Holidays”**

Downtown Brainerd Event will be held on **Saturday, November 26th**.

As you search for the hidden gnome, stop in and visit us at the **museum**. We will be open from **1-5pm**.

You will be greeted by Mrs. Claus. Enjoy hot **apple cider & cookies**!

The sheriff’s residence will be decorated for the holidays. The “Brainerd” book is available to purchase and a large selection of beautiful black glass from the late Mayor James Wallin’s collection that was donated to the society to sell will be available to purchase.

**A bake sale will be held as well!**

*See you there!*

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**Museum Wish List:**

1. New used copier for the research library (approximate cost $800)
2. A hand held scanner
3. Monetary donations to purchase archival boxes for storage

If you would like to donate, please indicate which one and your donation will be designated towards that wish list item! We appreciate your support! Donations are tax deductible!

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**NEWSLETTER SPONSORS**

The Historical Society is seeking sponsors to defray our newsletter costs. Currently the society publishes 2 newsletter yearly. This is an advertising opportunity for businesses! Please contact the museum at 218.829.3268 and ask for Pam or Margaret, if you would like to have us save you a spot for $50. Thanks!

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**Yearbook**

The Historical Society’s research library has almost all of the Brainerd High School year books (Brainonian). We are only missing the following years: 1990, 1991, 1993, 2015, and 2016. If you have one to donate, please let us know.
cards, handkerchiefs, black parasols, veils and especially mourning jewelry.

The creation of hair jewelry was a feminine thing. Magazines had articles and instructions. Groups of family and friends met to work together much like a knitting group or quilting group might today.

What would be a more lasting tribute, a tangible way to remember a loved one?

Hair does not decay. It could be made into many different items---wall decorations in the shape of wreaths and crosses, various pieces of jewelry such as broaches, bracelets, and bows. For men it could be woven into a fob for a pocket watch. Items such as these could contain hair from various generations of a family.

There was an attempt to commercialize this art. Mail order catalogs offered to weave and sell items made from a family's hair. Commercialization was not a success. Too many people were afraid that they might receive someone else's hair.

A surprising number of hair art pieces remain in museums today. I've seen hair art in other museums in our state. There actually is a hair museum in Independence, Missouri. Leila's Hair Museum boasts of a very rare piece of hair art---a lock of hair that belonged to Daniel Webster. It is in a mourning broach with thirty-two pearls around his woven locks.

If you walk into the parlor in the sheriff’s residence and look at the wall to your right, you will see a framed artifact. It is not colorful. It is rather nondescript. “What in the world is it that makes it worth framing?”, you wonder. Your tour guide will tell it is an example of hair art.

This art form became very popular during the Victorian era. We might even think that it is rather creepy. Not at all---it’s a very interesting type of decoration or jewelry. From the hair art of the period, we learn a lot about the way Victorian women understood love family and death.

During Victorian times hair was regarded as a woman’s “crowning glory.” Exchanging locks of hair began to be popular as early as the 16th century France and in England especially between dear friends and family whom they did not expect to see again. As an example, in *Anne of Green Gables*, Anne asks Diana for a lock of her hair when they believe they will be parted forever. Anne promises to sew the lock into a bag and wear it around her neck forever.

One can easily understand how it became popular to make wreaths and jewelry from hair. To save a lock of hair from a recently deceased love one was a typical way of remembering that person. Today we do not make jewelry or ornaments, but parents will often save a lock of hair from a child’s first hair cut and put in a baby book with other mementos.

Popularity of hair jewelry escalated during the Civil War. There were millions of families in mourning. This was a time of black mourning clothes and long periods of mourning. Women were the chief mourners in the household. Hair jewelry was considered appropriate since it was not gaudy or showy.

Many of the mourning traditions were set by Queen Victoria who went into a very long period of mourning when Prince Albert died. Not only clothes but mourning essentials included black edged-paper and note
On March 31, 1895, a girl named Bertha Lehmann was born in Lotzwil, Kanton Bern, Switzerland where she was one of several children in the household. She had a normal childhood, and as a teenager, she worked as a waitress. At the age of 17, after having completed her high school education, she decided to travel to the United States to visit a sister, Marie Zembrunnen, who lived in Central City, Iowa.

On August 12, 1913, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, she married a man named John Zimmerman. In 1914, they had a child, Elmer. Unfortunately, John died during World War I. She and her son wound up moving back in with her sister and family. By around 1916, the whole family had moved to Pequot Lakes. It was there that Bertha met a man named Carl Luhrs. In 1917, she and Carl were married in North Dakota, where they remained for four years. Eventually, the couple would have another son and four daughters.

In 1921, they moved back to Pequot Lakes and settled on a farm southwest of town, where they raised their children. She stayed here for her remaining years.

On December 5, 1967, Bertha passed away at the St. Joseph’s Hospital in Brainerd and was buried in the Wildwood Cemetery in Pillager.

Now, you may ask: Why is the life of Bertha Luhrs being related here? What might be special or noteworthy of this farmer’s wife?

Well, for her trip to America, that young teenager held a 2nd Class ticket, and at Cherbourg, France, she boarded a ship named the Titanic!

As it turns out, Bertha is the only known survivor of that shipwreck disaster to have ever lived in Crow Wing County.

So, with a nod to the late Paul Harvey, you now know... the rest of the story.

This artifact was just recently donated. Some of you may recognize what it is. If you lived on a farm you may have used one similar to this. It is a barn pulley used to lift hay bales up into the hay mow in the barn. This one belonged to a Norwegian settler, Jacob Oleson Nesheim (1824-1910). His farm was located east of Brainerd on the 5 mile road. Jacob’s sons, Ole, Knut and Nels were farmers as well and farmed the adjacent land. The pointed object is a lightning rod that is also from the farm.
## Long—Time Members   Thanks!!!

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We thank you for your support!!

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Maurice Olson

Sustaining
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Jim & Sue Knudsen

Supporting Individual
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City of Baxter  Crow Wing County

*Townships:
Crow Wing  Long Lake
Daggett Brook  Nokay Lake
Fairfield  Platte Lake
Garrison  Oak Lawn
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Thanks!

*(Donations were designated for the restoration of our fair buildings.)

Thank you for donations

Monetary
Dick Ashmun

In kind
Minna Wallin
( for a new power drill)

Memorial
In Memory of:
Pete Humphrey
Given by:
Douglas Birk
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PHONE: 218-829-3268   FAX: 828-4434   E-MAIL: history@crowwing.us
WEB: http://www.crowwinghistory.org
HOURS: TUESDAY THRU SATURDAY   10 AM - 3 PM (Closed Major Holidays & Holiday Weekends)
Call the museum to schedule appointments or tours after hours.

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To become a member of the Society, send your name, address, and telephone number along with your membership dues to the Crow Wing County Historical Society, P.O. Box 722, Brainerd, MN 56401. If you would like to give a gift membership to the Society, please send the name and address of the person for whom the membership is intended. Memorials of loved ones are also accepted. Donations can be sent to the same address and are tax deductible. Membership forms are available on our website or at the Museum. You may also choose to pay online using our website PayPal account.

VOLUNTEERS
THANK YOU!

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