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9030 Forestview Lane N. Maple Grove, MN 55369 763-494-5983

MAPLE GROVE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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Web page designer: Steve Briggs

<http://www.maplegrovmnhistory.org>

Purpose: To collect and preserve information and artifacts and to educate the community about the history of Maple Grove, MN.

Regular

Events



Open House:

The Maple Grove History Museum hosts an open house the 2nd Sunday of the month from 1- 4 p.m.

Monthly Meeting:

The third Thursday of every month at 6:30 pm at the History Museum. Anyone with an interest in history is welcome to join us!

Quarterly Newsletter: August : Antique toys, Maple Grove Days, & 100 years Osseo Maple Grove Press

History on Display:

- ◆ Ox Cart site and territorial downtown Maple Grove: 15310 Territorial Rd (0.7 mi. w. of Fernbrook Lane N. Maple Grove, MN.)
- ◆ Pierre Bottineau House : Elm Creek Park Reserve: 12400 James Deane Parkway, Maple Grove, MN.
- ◆ 4 History Display Cases at M.G. Government Center: 12800 Arbor Lakes Pkwy N. Maple Grove, MN.

Pay Dues: January

Election of officers : October

Maple Grove History Museum's TOY Display Open House JULY 16th 2023 1-4pm



Remember those toys in the attic? We need your help to arrange, staff and take down the display.

100 years of the Osseo Maple Grove Press coming in to the family home—

We need your help with the timeline and ideas for this display. Call the Museum 763-494-5983 or email Al Madsen.

Is the Kitchen Table the Heart of the Family Home?

At the Maple Grove History Museum, the kitchen winter exhibit depicts a homemaker at the kitchen table cutting out gingerbread men Christmas cookies. As the months change, so will the museum table display, perhaps with valentines in February and Easter eggs in April.

One only needs to look back to years past and relive why the kitchen table was the “heart of the home.” Family histories were made here, as well as ancestral oral histories and legends learned. Generations of families mingled at holiday gatherings, sharing ethnic traditions, food preparation, recipes tested and tasted. Cookies and coffee, storytelling, and “the news” were shared with family and friends at the kitchen table. Problems were solved and many trips were planned with the map laid out on that precious table. The family china was stacked on the table to be washed in the small kitchen sink or in the dish pan washing/rinsing cycle, while the dining room “special occasion” table was off-limits.

Amazing memories leap into the mind, happy and not so happy events that happened here amid the crayon smudges. Remember the family uproar over the spilled milk that threatened to drip through the table cracks unto the floor? The table resounded with laughter and prayers, for the safe return of soldiers, with arguments and debates on life’s political issues. This is the place for homework, crafts, and scouts, writing letters, typing letters in the “old” days. Families used the kitchen table to write mail order deliveries from the Sears Roebuck catalog and sorting the postal deliveries to the home. Now days, the kitchen table is used as a home office or virtual schoolroom.

The kitchen table.... Was there a tragedy needing a mother’s kiss? Maybe a bleeding knee, a newly pulled baby tooth, bruised elbows, or trying to bathe a fussy baby. Perhaps more tears came with a teenager’s chaotic adventures. None-the-less the kitchen table was a prime family gathering post for all and saw more activity than any other piece of furniture in the house.

On many a Maple Grove farm, the kitchen table was re-purposed in many ways. Fruit and vegetables were prepared for canning. Fowl and meat were cut-up, sausage was made and potatoes peeled. Perhaps the food grinder was attached to the table’s edge and at-the-ready to process meat or vegetables. Bread dough was kneaded and set in baking pans to rise. Clothes were sprinkled and rolled-up for ironing. Laundered clothes, fresh off the clothes line, were folded here. Woolen mittens and hats were laid out

to dry. The kitchen table was used as a barber shop. The table top was used for laying, pinning and cutting fabric. Family members and guests, alike spent raucous hours playing cards, Monopoly game and/or a putting together puzzles.

And what would you find beneath the table? All sorts of stuff: puzzle pieces, hair from haircuts, buttons and such. For children, it was the magical hiding spot.



The Maple Grove Museum has a green antique kitchen table in the photo courtesy of Earl and Virginia Hoppenrath. Most kitchen tables do not make it to antiquity. They are worn out by family members before they are passed on to the next generation. May vivid memories of family life at the kitchen table— the heart of the home – remain cherished forever!

Poem From Dad by Marilyn Dondelinger

This is a part of a poem dad wrote me in 1951 when I was 12 years old and visiting relatives in California. I wish I had saved it in his handwriting, or “chicken Scratch” as we called his penmanship.

I don’t remember all of it, but this is part of it—
The dishes are in the sink and on the floor
And stacking forever more.
Mom’s not cooking. We’re eating out of cans.
Instead of forks, we use our hands.
Oh, darling, won’t you please come home
And from us, you will no more roam.
These are our fondest wishes,
Please come home and do the dishes!



The Klapperich Family Kitchen Table had one leaf and 8 chairs. It was the kitchen table in Oakdale, MN prior to the Klapperich family moving to the country in 1971. It was then our kitchen table in our Brooklyn Park apartment that we had while building our house. In December 1971 it was our kitchen table in Maple Grove; but not in the kitchen. We set up house in the basement as we were finishing up our upstairs then it finally became our Maple Grove kitchen table until 2018.



The kitchen table was very well used by the Klapperich family before we donated it in our church garage sale to be well used at a new home.



The table was used for many things during the years from giving us kids a bath, to pumpkin carving, to birthday parties, to adding the leaf and rolling out the dough for Potetia (not sure on the spelling but its dough was rolled out super thin until it covered the until extended table, then a mixture of butter and nuts was spread on top and it was rolled up and then cut and baked for a Christmas delight.)



**Oh the memories
It
brings
back**



The Kitchen Table

By Lois Miller Caswell.

Growing up on the farm, I'm wondering what our kitchen table *wasn't used* for. We did most everything on that table from garden prep canning and freezing prep, pie baking, and on and on as well as cutting out fabric for sewing, sometimes homework, sometimes puzzles and on and on.

I wonder how many of you could remember and say your table was full of frogs? Well



my Grandma and Grandpa could. Let me explain: apparently when I was a little curly headed girl of about four, I asked my mother on Groundhog Day why there wasn't a "Frog Day"? I don't remember being crazy about frogs, so I guess it was just a question.

Mom happened to mention it to her fun-loving dad who immediately decided there needed to be a special day set aside as "Frog Day". April 1 it was, and on that day, I had a bunch of postcards with sketches or pictures of frogs on it saying Happy Frog Day in the mail box that year. Seems grandpa had gotten a bunch of his friends to do as he did and every year thereafter, April 1 was officially "Frog Day".

The cards continued, and then sometimes a little frog made of something or other would arrive. This kept going except now the frogs of every size and shape from photos, to soap shaped like frogs to anything you can imagine in the shape of a frog were sent to Grandpa. He loved it and continued to share it with family and friends.

The local newspaper decided they would do a feature article that April 1 on it and you guessed it: "Frog Day" and with the article was a photo of grandpa sitting by his huge kitchen table completely covered with many of the frogs that he had collected over the years.

I'd love to share the photo, but the newspaper is so old it is faded and would not copy well so you will just have to let your imagination run with it! Now their table was the biggest table I have ever seen. Their kitchen was huge; about half of their first floor, and that table took up a good part of that room. I think grandmas sat 16-18 people around it so you can imagine how many frogs it held.

Fast forward to many years after I had grown up and married when grandpa passed. Grandma returned many of those frogs to the folks that had given them; however there were at least three big boxes remaining that became my legacy from grandpa.

For a number of years when our kids were small, I kept many of them on some shelves we had, but alas, these frogs got dusty, and I got tired of dusting and I didn't have a big kitchen table to put them on, so back into the boxes and into my storeroom they went where they remain today.

A bunch of cousins and friends still send greetings, now usually by email on April 1, but as far as I know none of us is collecting them any longer.

As I think of all the many memories of our kitchen table, I can't help but remember grandpa's table and all his frogs.

To most of us, this is April Fool's Day, but to one little girl now living in Osseo, Minnesota, this is "Happy Frog's Day". A day created for her by her doting grandfather.

"Happy Frog's Day" has spread throughout this community, and who knows, may some day be declared a holiday.

It all started some five years ago, when Lois Miller, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Miller, who was then just seven years old. Lois wanted to know, just why it was that everyone celebrated lots of other days, such as Groundhog Day and the like, but no day was celebrated for her favorite pet, the lowly little frog.

Lois's grandfather, Newt Lan of Moscow, secretly sympathize and agreed with the little girl, for that year on April 1st, he made up a special little card, with a fro

My Uncles playing the card game "Sheep Head" on kitchen table from Dave Hasse



My Kitchen Table Stories



By Jim Sable

There are three stories from our early kitchen table that come to mind. Unfortunately, I don't have any pictures of the gourmet meals that go with this text... which is a good thing. My wife, Sharon, and I have been married nearly 57 years. During the first year of marriage, we had some friends over for dinner. Sharon served turkey, which she had never cooked before. She asked our friend, Bruce Hansen, to carve the turkey, which looked great! Bruce started carving the turkey but hit paper almost immediately. Bruce asked Sharon if she had taken the giblets out of the turkey before putting it in the oven. She replied, what are giblets?

The second story involved Blood Sausage. We had it when we visited friends Richard and Clara Wellnitz and their two kids Ruth and Harold. Clara called one day and asked if I'd like to come out and see how Richard made Blood Sausage. I hopped in my 1941 Plymouth Coupe and went right out to their farm at Delano. Richard was just hoisting the hog by the hind legs and cut its throat. It was the ghostliest site I had ever witnessed. To this day I haven't eaten blood sausage. I practically gag if I even smell it cooking and that was 68 years ago!



My third story was about Sharon making Chow Mein. The recipe called for one teaspoon of pepper. Sharon added a tablespoon of pepper. One fork full told us something was wrong. It tasted like she had added a flamethrower. She put it in a colander and washed it. People ask how I manage to stay so thin? I have more sense than to answer their question.



After reading the February 2023 issue of the MGHPs I decided to stretch the theme of the May issue "The Kitchen Table." My friend Bruce Hansen and I spent a lot of time on the Koehler family farm. The farm was located on a gravel road in Maple Grove. Today it is no longer a farm but the farmhouse and barn which were built in 1885 are located on 93rd and Lawndale, formerly rural route 2, Osseo.

One this particular occasion in about 1951 Bruce and I went into the woods to hunt. We barely got into the woods when we treed two raccoons. We dressed out

the raccoons and put them in the freezer.

About a month later I went upstairs just as Cora Koehler was checking the oven to see how one of the raccoons was coming along. The raccoon was laying on his back with all four legs pointing straight in the air. It reminded me of a cocker spaniel. Apparently, the look of horror on my face was not disguised very well because Cora said "what's the matter, don't you like raccoon?" I said "I don't know, I've never had it." She said "what do you think you ate the last Sunday you were here?"

As we sat down at the table, I was the brunt of humor. I remember Emily Koehler saying "Has anyone seen Shep?" (Emily's dog) Verry Funnny Emily!



Kitchen table Memories

By Pat Kisch

The kitchen table I remember was the gathering place of our home. One of the activities or chores the kitchen table was used for was canning fruits and vegetables. One I will always remember is canning tomatoes. They were dipped in hot water and then in cold water to cool. That made peeling easier. Of course, that made the tomatoes juicy and slippery! The juice would run down my arm and was annoying because it itched. Canning green beans was another chore. The stems had to be cut off, beans cut into pieces, and put in hot jars. Mom would put hot water in the jars and the lids on the top. Next the jars were put in the copper wash boiler filled with hot water. This would cook on the stove for a certain amount of time. All this hot water would heat up the kitchen. The only air conditioning was open the windows with one small fan.

This was an evening chore. Everyone was tired, hot and crabby. We had worked from early morning until late afternoon in the fields harvesting vegetables. It was done so my father could leave with the loaded truck at 3:30 AM for the Minneapolis Farmers Market to sell the vegetables. Vegetable farming was the family business.

I was so happy when my father bought a chest freezer from Sears and Roebuck. At least we could freeze the beans and other vegetables, but of course not the tomatoes.

Our Kitchen Tables Pat Ruffing

As a young child in the 1940's I have one vivid memory of sitting beneath the kitchen table as neighbor ladies visited with my mother. Women wore dresses in those days, and as they sat drinking coffee and gossiping, I had an interesting view of skirts, petticoats, stockings, shoes and unmentionables.

My husband John recalls sitting at his family's kitchen table in the early 1950's doing school homework with his Mom's help and pasting Gold Bond Stamps in a book to be redeemed for merchandise. His dining room table sat with a crocheted tablecloth and a vase of artificial silk flowers welcoming everyone who came through the side house door. The dining room table was used for company. His sister has that table in her house currently.

In the mid 1950's, my Dad had built a sturdy wood kitchen table with four castors on the legs and a red linoleum top. Though I remember many uses for that table, the most memorable for me is on a Friday: We clambered off the school bus- probably youngest five of us, ran into the house. Mom was not at home. This was the only time I can remember, finding Dad in the kitchen ready for us with grilled cheese sandwiches and soup dishes full of Mom's home canned blueberry sauce. In those days Catholics didn't eat meat on Friday, or the sandwich would have been "potted meat". From that day on we joked, about having "blueberry soup" for our 4 pm supper.

While John and I were raising our five children in Maple Grove, we managed to outlive our first 1970's kitchen table oval wood table with leaves and blue padded six chairs with steel legs. Our two older sons had graduated from Osseo High School in 1993. That summer for my 50th birthday my husband decided it was time for a new kitchen table. Oak n Things in Anoka delivered a beautiful oak oval table with 4 self-storing leaves and eight oak chairs. I knew the table was being delivered but what I didn't know was that surprise birthday party with many friends and relatives would christen our new kitchen table right away.

Almost thirty years have passed with many different plates, Melmac, Red Wing pottery, Gibson stoneware, plastic, paper, Corelle ware and china, brought back from Vietnam have adorned the table. Many "Bless Us O Lord and these Thy Gifts" were prayed before the meals. A riot of boisterous card and board games were played on it, with an occasional beer and pop spilling in the excitement.

Today, on an ordinary day, John and I sit at the kitchen table, our only table, or eat in the TV room, watching the news. Hopefully, someday our grandchildren

will gather at our kitchen table with our great grandchildren, but that is looking long into the future in our dreams of still being able to have our kitchen table and remain in our own home.

Fond Memories by Dianne Rowe

I had a great childhood growing up on 4th Street in North Minneapolis during the 1940's. Ours was a large family, my mother, father, and nine brothers and sisters. I was the youngest. Money was not easily had, but every day was an adventure filled with activity that went from early morning to sunset. ..

The kitchen seemed to be where we all liked to gather. It was a big square room with a pantry off one area. In the middle of the room was our kitchen table big enough for six people so it worked well for a while until my three older brothers returned from the war.

Every day a 5:00 pm we all sat around the crowded table, as best we could, for a delicious home-made meal my mother had lovingly made for her large family. Favorite ...her chicken soup, roasts, potato pancakes, potato salad, etc. and, in our own crazy way, we connected with each other over dinner. Conversations were about anything and everything and confusing. Sometimes more than one person would be talking at the same time. You had to be very forceful to get in on a discussion. Of course, with the return of three brothers, our table no longer could hold everyone at the same time, so we had to eat in shifts. My dad would eat first along with my sister, Dariel and I (we were a year apart and the youngest). We would eat and remove ourselves so someone else could sit down. We did have a tendency to play around which often resulted in one of us spilling our milk causing everyone to respond by jumping up and pushing away from the table.

It seemed no one was in a hurry to leave the table except us, and the rule was *we had to stay in the yard while waiting for everyone to finish eating*. Then we were called in to do the dishes.... My older sisters were the washers, Dariel and I the wipers. No electric dishwasher back then. Sometimes we would sing and try to harmonize. The girls helped with the clean-up while the boys simply left the kitchen when they were done. That's how it was in 1943,44, Our roles were defined by male/female and at this time it was just accepted.

It seemed our family thrived on the presence of each other. It was wonderful having the house so full of life and the world in peace. The war was over and my parents had their three sons' home at last. Life was good!

Grandma's Tiny House.

There is a show on television where they build "Tiny Houses". I know of one "tiny house that was built a long time ago. My grandparents had a tiny house (in Osseo). I didn't think it was tiny at the time but now I understand how small it was.

My grandfather, John Baptiste Marchand was a carpenter as was his father, David Marchand. I am sure they built the house around the time Grandpa married Grandma...The house was built on land owned by his father David Marchand, and was situated on the lot right behind the David Marchand residence. Both houses are still there in Osseo.

It never occurred to me that the house was tiny. I loved going to Grandma and Grandpa's house. .. the main floor had four rooms. A small oblong kitchen, a dining room, a "front room" and a bedroom....

When I walked though the front door to Grandma's house, I was in the dining room. It held a round dining room table pushed back into the near corner on the right. The table was surrounded by several straight back chairs. There was a large wooden rocking chair with an upholstered seat. Straight ahead against the wall on the right was an all-in-one metal bread making station. It was almost like a hutch with a flour bin/sifter on the left top with doors to the right. There was a counter for kneading the bread and, if I remember correctly, there was a shelf. There were doors on the lower portion. I believe this was commonly referred to as a type of "Hoosier Cabinet". The unit also served as storage.

Passing though the doorway into the kitchen, there was a small rectangular table straight ahead with a chair at each end right under the window. If I had to guess, I would say the table was two feet by three feet at a maximum. When I walked once a week from school to her house for lunch, I always sat in the chair on the west side and Grandma sat in the chair on the east side She always made hamburgers and Campbell's Vegetable Beef soup... every week. That's what we wanted. She made the very best hamburgers with bread, egg and onion mixed in. They were fried in bacon grease in the cast iron frying pan...

The pantry was to the left of the table. It held the standard pantry items like sugar, flour, other baking goods and baking pans. It also held her "appliances". The electric toaster had fold down sides as only one side of the bread was toasted at a time. You had to open the toaster and turn the bread around to toast the other side. Just inside the kitchen to the right was grandma's two

burner kerosene stove. On the wall opposite the stove and just to the east was the sink. It was the standard porcelain farmhouse type sink with a porcelain drain board. It had two legs and was mounted against the other wall. There was a hand pump for water. Water was heated on the kerosene stove to do dishes. My guess is that this whole kitchen area was four feet by eight feet if that.

I remember my grandpa playing Solitaire on that small table in the kitchen. When the cards got frayed in the corners, Grandpa would get his pocket knife out of his pants and smooth the edges out...the house is still there. It is amazing that so many memories are left in that tiny house. By Cathryn Worden



Hoosier Cabinet

Wikimedia from Saturday Evening Post Oct. 1922



Help us identify this man
Charles Blaine Sheets,
whose trunk full of memorabilia appeared at our museum over a year ago.

“Freed Minnesota prisoner brought home a well-baked German souvenir from World War II

Some soldiers bring home captured flags or weapons as war mementos. World War II prisoner of war Victor Leerhoff opted instead to bring a piece of German bread back to his mother in the northwestern Minnesota town of Fosston when the war ended in 1945.

That 77-year-old bread is now tucked away in a Maple Grove cedar chest, where the Rev. Nancy Carlson, the youngest of Leerhoff's three children, has written "SAVE" all over its box.

"It looks perfect," said Carlson, 59, a retired pastor and chaplain. "It never got mold probably because they didn't use much yeast and the salt dried it out quickly. It is hard as a rock, but still looks fresh as new."

When "CODA" won the Academy Award for best picture last month, Carlson was inspired to write about her dad's ancient loaf and her quest to find the bakery that made it. Leerhoff was a CODA — a child of deaf adults — like the child portrayed in the Oscar-winning film.

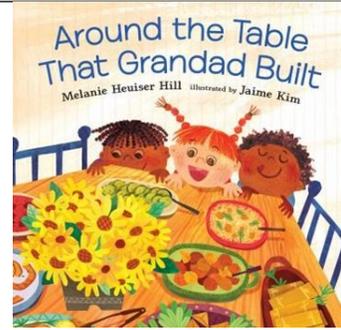
Leerhoff's father, Detmer, was born deaf, while his mother, Amelia, lost her hearing at age 4 when she contracted rheumatic fever on the boat while emigrating from Sweden.

As the oldest of five children, Victor Leerhoff "was the one who would go into town and translate for his dad and who also taught his younger siblings how to speak English," Carlson wrote.

Born in Iowa in 1925, Leerhoff moved in the 1930s with his family to Fosston, where they farmed east of town. He had just turned 19 when he enlisted in the Army in 1944."



This is the first table Connie Langsdorf remembers. Her folks used it in the 30s and 40s. When she married Don in 1957 it became her kitchen table, it was painted white then. Don refinished it. It was in her Maple Grove home until her daughter inherited it.



According to the Osseo Maple Champlin Dayton Press dated 3-2-2023 p. 9 Students at Cedar Island Elementary were visited by Melanie Heuser Hill author of this book, who talked to students in Four STAR though second-grade about her picture book “Around the table that Granddad Built. She read the book and used sign language to sign different parts of the book.

Hill attended school in Osseo Area Schools after she moved to the area in junior high. Hill said her family liked to gather around the table with family and friends.

She asked the children who they liked at their table and what they would like to eat. They said “macaroni and cheese, watermelon, spaghetti, and marshmallows, and invite their baby siblings, parents, friends, classmates and pets.”

MAPLE GROVE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

City of Maple Grove Government Center
12800 Arbor Lakes Parkway, Maple Grove MN 55369-7064

MEMBERSHIP FORM

(renewable each January)

Annual Membership (tax deductible)

- \$15 Individual/Senior
- \$30 Family
- \$100 Supporting Member

I am interested in helping with

- Writing article
- Historic site maintenance
- Displays
- Educational Programs
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