



# The Carnegie Courier

Newsletter of  
the Mitchell Area Historical Society (MAHS)  
& Mitchell Area Genealogy Society (MAGS)

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Summer 2018

## Genealogy Corner

Family traditions and memories go hand in hand. The tradition of wishing on the first robin in the spring brings back wonderful memories, most of all the wonderful smell of flowers. I'm sure many of you share this memory. To "stamp" the first robin in the spring you first lick your thumb, press it into the palm of your other hand followed by a "stamp" with the bottom of your fist. Then you make your wish. I have been told that this is sometimes followed by a stomp of your feet and called "stamping and stomping." My mother only taught us the stamping part. I suspect we did enough stomping without being prompted.



Harmes-Sindt

Congratulations to Mary Buchholz of Belle Fourche, S.D., who was recently named the Genealogist of the Year by the South Dakota Genealogical Society. The Society will again be hosting a booth at the South Dakota State Fair on Aug. 30 through Sept. 3 in the Arts and Education Building. The board has selected the theme of "Houses" for this year. Do you have a photo of an old or interesting house? Photos with captions/history can be sent to Pam Riley, 1808 Indiana Ave. SE, Huron, SD 57350 or emailed to sdgs@midco.net.

These photos are placed on a 12x12-inch scrapbook page and displayed on the wall during the fair, after which they are assembled into a scrapbook. Programs called "Genie Breaks" are given each day and volunteers are available for genealogical help.

Our local society is doing a study of all rural school houses in Davison County. We welcome any pictures, history or stories you may have. Most rural schools have now closed and those who attended are gone or aging. Help us to capture the warm memories of those "days gone by." Stories may be mailed or sent to [info@mitchellcarnegie.com](mailto:info@mitchellcarnegie.com).

We begin our summer programs with an evening of "Grave Witching" at Graceland Cemetery on the evening of June 4 at 6:00 p.m. We will meet at the cemetery office. There is no science to the "art" of grave witching and not everyone can do it, but based on interest, random polling and follow up scientific studies, believers with metal rods can locate bodies in unmarked graves and determine the deceased's gender. This is done by holding a wire rod loosely in each hand with both arms and rods parallel to the ground and rods parallel to each other. This is always a popular event and the public is welcome. In case of rain we will have a program at the CRC and hold the grave witching the following Monday evening.

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## Corn Palace stained glass a unique addition

In 2014, a South Dakota native made a unique piece of art to memorialize the Corn Palace.

Stephen Schaefer grew up in Orient and Polo, near Redfield. When Schaefer died in 2017, his family decided to donate many of his stained glass works of art. His son, Patrick, said it only made sense to donate the Corn Palace stained glass piece to an entity in Mitchell.

Patrick spoke with his cousin and her husband, Josie and Kevin Ries, when they visited Chicago. The Rieses live in Watertown and agreed to take the piece home with them to donate.

Kevin said he first called the Mitchell Chamber of Commerce to ask where he could donate the unique item.

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*The Carnegie Resource Center received this stained glass depiction of The World's Only Corn Palace in late 2017 from the family of Stephen Schaefer, a former South Dakota resident. The piece can be found on display in the room dedicated to Corn Palace memorabilia.*

## ***Corn Palace stained glass***

*Continued from Page 1*

“They put me in touch with the Carnegie,” Kevin said.

Kevin brought the piece to the Carnegie Resource Center in October 2017. It is now displayed in the room dedicated to Corn Palace memorabilia. As you enter the room, motion-activated lights turn on, including the bulbs that light the stained glass.

Stephen began creating stained glass in 2002 when he retired from his job as a stationary engineer who worked on high pressure boilers. Stained glass became a steady hobby for Stephen, who worked in his basement, said Patrick.

Stephen moved to Chicago in the 1960s where he found work and his wife, Mary. They married and settled in the Windy City where they raised their two children, Patrick and Ellen. Mary and Patrick remain in Illinois, but Ellen moved to Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

“Ever since we were little kids, we’d always stop in Mitchell on our way to visit family in South Dakota,” Patrick said. “We liked to see how the Corn Palace was decorated. We still stop every time we go out there.”

In 2014, Patrick and Stephen took a pheasant hunting trip to South Dakota and stopped through Mitchell to take pictures of the Corn Palace.

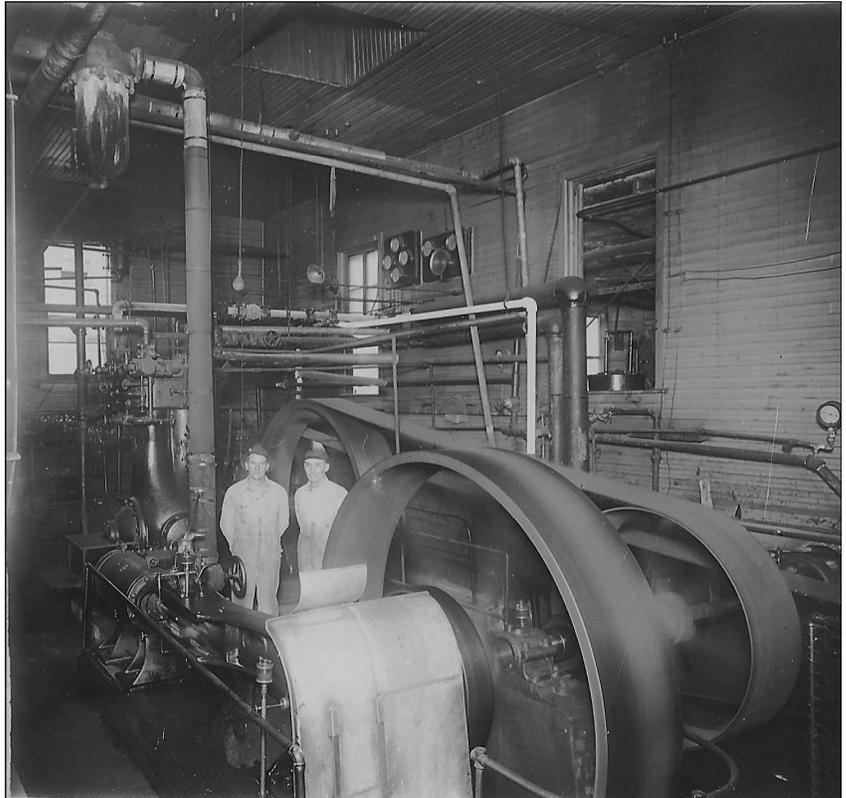
“He wanted to make a stained glass of the Corn Palace,” Patrick said.

Stephen finished the piece in 2015 and it hung in his basement. Patrick said because his dad worked in his basement and it was dark, many of his stained-glass pieces were backlit, just like the Corn Palace piece on display at the Carnegie Resource Center.

It is certainly an interesting and beautiful addition to the Carnegie Resource Center collection.

“When I plugged it in, I was in total awe. It is absolutely beautiful and I couldn’t wait to show it off!” said Lyle Swenson, president of the Mitchell Area Historical Society. “We had just the right place to put it. It makes a great addition to our Corn Palace room.”

## **Who, What, Where, When?**



*This is a new section of The Carnegie Courier dedicated to labeling our “unknown or partially unknown” photographs or items in our collection. We will list known information when possible. We have no information regarding this photograph. Do you recognize this facility? Or the men in the photo? If you do, please contact The Carnegie Resource Center at 605-996-3209 or email at [info@mitchellcarnegie.com](mailto:info@mitchellcarnegie.com).*

## ***Genealogy Corner***

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MAGS programs are held the first Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. Our business meetings are held the fourth Monday evening beginning at 6:30 p.m. All are free and open to the public. Program suggestions are always welcome.

Our “Dash” workshop has ended but the memories shared with family are priceless. Too often we let the

days fly by without taking time to pause, reflect and honor the journey we’re on. Children and grandchildren all deserve to know how you became the person you are and what situations shaped you.

**It’s easier than you think! Pick a subject and then write a few lines or a few pages. Your grandchildren will thank you.**

**See a great example in William Harmes’ story on page 3.**

*~ Andie Harmes-Sindt, Secretary*

# *Medical Advancements in My Lifetime*

## *South Dakota native recalls coping with Polio, treatment*

*By William Harmes, Arlington, VA*

In 1945, I was 3 years old and diagnosed as having Polio. My family was living in Igloo, S.D. Igloo was a city of steel Quonset huts built on 21,000 acres in 1942 by the Army Corps of Engineers as an ammunition depot and prisoner of war camp to support the WWII war effort. In 1945 the population was 4,200 people and it was one of the largest towns in South Dakota.

My father was the head electrician for the facility and an employee of the Army Corps of Engineers. We lived in one of the Quonset huts which was a duplex. The other family in the duplex was my Aunt Edna's family. It was called the Black Hills Ordinance Depot and was located in a very remote part of southwestern South Dakota between the towns of Edgemont and Provo.

It was a totally self-contained community with a grocery store, bowling alley, roller rink, community center, basketball courts, schools for all grade levels and a large beautiful swimming pool. I suspect that swimming pool was the source of my Polio, although my parents always thought I picked it up because my dad took me to the Corn Palace Week Festival in Mitchell.

Polio is a short-cut name for Poliomyelitis. It is an infectious disease that has caused paralysis and death for much of human history. The disease is depicted in Egyptian paintings and carvings. The Roman Emperor Claudius was stricken as a child. Sir Walter Scott and Franklin Delano Roosevelt had it.

Major Polio epidemics began to occur in Europe and the United States around 1900. In 1916, there were over 27,000 cases of Polio and more than 6,000 deaths due to it in the United States. Two thousands of these deaths occurred in New York City alone. The names and addresses of individuals with Polio were published daily, their houses

marked with red placards and their families quarantined. It was a plague.

One day you had a headache and then you were paralyzed. People fled the cities. Swimming pools and movie theaters were closed. People were warned not to drink out of water fountains. They avoided amusement parks and beaches. I can recall that at the beach at Lake Mitchell in the 1950s they made us leave the water every hour while the life guards drove around in a powerboat treating the water with chlorine. The epidemics occurred each summer from 1916 onward. The most serious epidemics occurred in the 1940s and 50s.

***“It was a plague.”***

*- William Harmes*

The reason the major epidemics started to occur in developed countries in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was because improvements had been made in community sanitation. Sewage disposal had been improved and

technology to provide clean water had been developed. With better hygiene, babies and young children were not exposed to the disease and did not develop immunity to it. When they were exposed later in life, the disease caused paralysis. The worst Polio epidemic was in 1952 with 57,628 cases reported, 3,145 deaths and 21,269 left with disabling paralysis.

There were many attempts to develop a treatment for Polio including hydrotherapy, electrotherapy and vitamin C therapy. Surgical treatments such as nerve grafting, tendon lengthening and tendon transfers were used extensively. Massage and passive motion exercises were used. Patients were treated with braces, crutches, wheelchairs and iron lungs. The common treatment for Polio at the time I contracted it was to rest the affected muscles by applying braces to prevent tightening of muscles, tendons and ligaments. This resulted in atrophy of both affected and unaffected muscles.

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## ***Medical Advancements***

### ***Continued from Page 3***

In 1940, Sister Elizabeth Kenny migrated to the U.S. from Australia. She objected to this treatment method. She developed a routine that relieved pain by the use of hot, moist packs to relieve muscle spasm and physical therapy activities and exercises to maximize strength of the unaffected muscle fibers.

This promoted strengthening the remaining nerve cells that had not been killed by the virus.

She was opposed by the U.S. medical establishment and was forced to move out of the civilized East Coast to the hinterlands of Minnesota. Kenny's treatment eventually won acceptance and in the 1950s became the preferred treatment of paralytic Polio.

My father was deeply involved in all aspects of the Masonic Order including the Shriners. One of the Shriners' ministries is the nationwide network of Shriners Crippled Children Hospitals, now called Shriners Hospitals for Children.

He called the medical director of the program and was told they were not having much success treating Polio victims. He said that Sister Kenny was the only one having any good results in treating Polio and they were in the process of sending a group of people to study what she was doing.

He recommended Dad take me to Sister Kenny's Rehabilitation Institute in Minneapolis.

Dad was in Mitchell purchasing an Electrical, Heating and Air-conditioning Contracting business (Dakota Electric) at the time I was diagnosed.

He drove the 360 miles back to Igloo, picked up my mother and me, and drove us the 660 miles to Minneapolis.

One story he told was that he blew out a tire on that trip. Tires were being rationed because of war time shortages. He had to threaten a garage owner with a tire iron to force him to sell my father a new tire.

I was totally paralyzed from my right arm through my back to my left leg. My recollections of that time are of begging my parents not to leave me and of being in a heated swimming pool with many nurses. I remember the white wings of their hats.

I don't know how long I was under treatment at Sister Kenny's, but by the time I was released my brother and sister had no idea who I was.

The family had moved from Igloo to Mitchell and were living in a house that Dad had purchased and completely rebuilt, restored and refurbished and his business was up and running. I started kindergarten that fall.

I retained very little residual damage from my bout with Polio. I have lived an almost normal life. I am missing a muscle in my right shoulder extension that makes me weak in the right arm and restricts my ability to do a few things. And I have very restricted range of motion due to

shortness of tendons and muscles in my leg.

But, for the most part, I escaped with very little damage.

I attribute this to three facts:

- I was so young when I contracted Polio that my immune system was able to adjust to fighting the disease;
- The wonderful treatment I received at Sister Kenny's Rehabilitation Institute; and
- My father, who researched the best treatment on his own without depending on doctors' conventional wisdom at the time.

The Jonas Salk Polio vaccine for the treatment of Polio was first tested in 1954 and a mass immunization campaign was started in 1957. The number of Polio cases dropped from 58,000 to 5,600 that year.

By 1961, only 161 cases were reported in the U.S. In 1962, the Sabin oral Polio vaccine was licensed and administered on a sugar cube.

The last case in the U.S. was in 1979 in the Amish community. Today, the disease has been totally eliminated from the world except for three countries – Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria.

In 2017, eight cases were reported in Pakistan, 13 in Afghanistan and none in Nigeria and all three countries have a very aggressive program of inoculation. Over my life time tremendous advances have been made to eliminate this disease that affected me directly.

# Celebrating Oscar Howe and his contributions to South Dakota



Approximately 40 people attended a birthday party for Oscar Howe on Friday, May 11 to celebrate his life, work and contributions to not only Mitchell, but the entire state of South Dakota. Howe was born on May 15, 1915, and would have been 103 this year. The event also served as the official unveiling of three original Howe paintings that Dick Weller donated to the Carnegie Resource Center earlier this year.

At left, Lyle Swenson, president of the Mitchell Area Historical Society, cuts a ribbon to dedicate the paintings while Donna Lang (left) and Linda Oster (right) hold the ribbon. Below, left, is a nice arrangement of information about Howe that visitors could read before getting cake. Below, right, visitors enjoy some cake and good conversation to celebrate Howe.



## Lyle's Corner

With age, often comes reflection of where we have come from and what a journey it has been and continues to be. Dorothy Malde, Clyde Goin, Jim Hunt and I met in the Davison County Courthouse basement along with several others to start a historical society in 1988. We started with absolutely nothing except a strong desire to succeed in collecting the history of the area. In November 1988, the paperwork was completed and we officially became the Mitchell Area Historical Society, Inc.

We met in the courthouse basement for some time, then later at Wesley Acres and as we started to accumulate items, we met at the Mitchell Public Library and stored them in the basement of the library. A few of the members who were able to meet one day a week in the library started clipping newspapers, filing and getting it all together to start the filing system we have today. I'm not sure about anyone else, but I certainly never dreamed we would be where we are today!

Thanks to all of you for helping to make it all happen for it would have been impossible without you.

Clyde Goin deserves so much credit. He collected much of our Corn Palace memorabilia. If the items were not donated, he bought them out of his own pocket, because the society



**Swenson**

had little money. He often came to my office to show his latest "find" and after the "oohing" and "aaahing" was over, wrapped it up and stored it. Many of those items I did not see again until we moved to our current location and started to unpack.

I believe that over half of our Corn Palace collection was received from Clyde. Thank you Clyde Goin!

Twelve years ago, Mitchell's then-Mayor Alice Claggett helped convince the City Council to turn over ownership of the old Carnegie Library to us for the grand sum of \$1.00! From that day forward – May 16, 2006 – we have tried our very best to serve you in every way, historically that is.

Again we thank you for your very generous support over the years and of course ask for your continued support.

In addition to the usual donations and dues, we have also benefitted from contractors' work done at little or no cost and from grants from foundations including the Daughters of the American Revolution, the South Dakota State Historical Society, the Mitchell Area Charitable Foundation, the Sam F. Weller Family Foundation, the Deadwood Fund, and others.

Our history is great but if we don't continue to collect items, donations and your support, we will fail. Without you, we will be just another organization that was.

Thanks for your outstanding support!

*Lyle W. Swenson, President*

## Bailey Metal Fabricators reinstalls 90-year-old fence

The almost 90-year-old original wrought-iron fence and the flower beds dating from the Oscar Howe Art Center in the 1970s are continuing projects that grace the Carnegie Resource Center grounds.

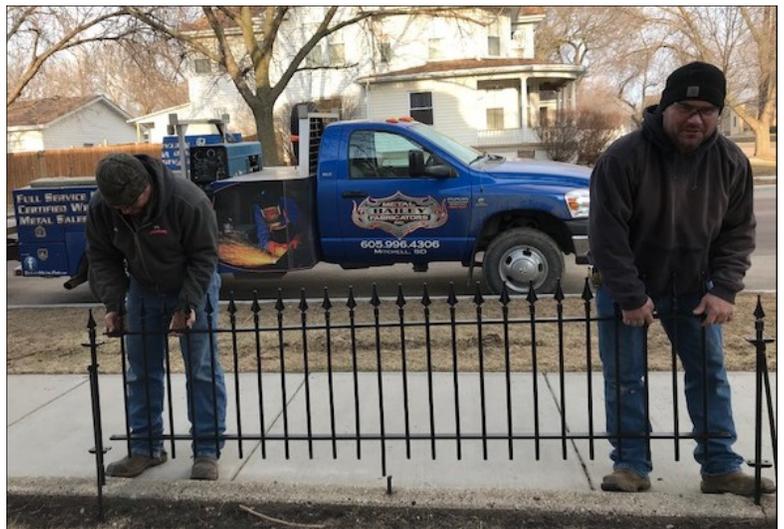
The fence is being repaired and painted with rust preventing paint by Bailey Metal Fabricators, Inc. A large portion of the fence has been restored and reinstalled around the Carnegie.

Greg Bailey is contributing \$1,313 to reduce the cost to the Mitchell Area Historical Society. The Sam F. Weller Family Foundation has awarded \$3,000 and MAHS is matching with \$2,577.63.

The flower beds that are inside the fence will be cared for by members of the Mitchell Area Garden Club.

The Darwin tulips have been planted and add color each spring. In late spring, petunia seedlings emerge and provide blossoms until autumn. The petunia seeds were from plants given in 2006 by James Valley Nursery to the Garden Club to plant at the Carnegie.

The Garden Club received national recognition for this Community Beautification Project.



*Ryan Schaller and Matt Lingemann reinstalled a good portion of the Carnegie's nearly century-old fence in April.*

MAHS members have tended the beds over the years and are so grateful to Garden Club President Linda Mortimore and other members for taking on this responsibility for future years.

## Upcoming Events at the Carnegie Resource Center

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| <p><b>Mon., June 4, 6:00 p.m.</b><br/>MAGS Program<br/>Meet at Graceland Cemetery</p> <p><b>Sat., June 9, 2:00 p.m.</b><br/>Daughters of the American<br/>Revolution Monthly Meeting</p> <p><b>Mon., June 18, 7:00 p.m.</b><br/>MAHS Program<br/>Prehistoric Indian Village<br/>Dr. Adrien Hannus &amp;<br/>Dr. Alan Oatram</p> <p><b>Thurs., June 21, 7:00 p.m.</b><br/>MAHS Business Meeting</p> <p><b>Mon., June 25, 6:30 p.m.</b><br/>MAGS Business meeting</p> <p><b>Mon., July 9, 7:00 p.m.</b><br/>MAGS Program<br/>Early Dakota<br/>Territorial Records</p> | <p>for Genealogy Research<br/>Virginia Hanson<br/>Government Records Archivist<br/>from Pierre</p> <p><b>Sat., July 14, 2:00 p.m.</b><br/>Daughters of the American<br/>Revolution Monthly Meeting</p> <p><b>Mon., July 16, 7:00 p.m.</b><br/>MAHS Program<br/>Mitchell Area Garden Club<br/>Linda Mortimore</p> <p><b>Thurs., July 19, 7:00 p.m.</b><br/>MAHS Business Meeting</p> <p><b>Mon., July 23, 6:30 p.m.</b><br/>MAGS Business meeting</p> <p><b>Mon., Aug. 6, 7:00 p.m.</b><br/>MAGS Program<br/>Q&amp;A – Bring your genealogy<br/>questions!!</p> | <p><b>Sat., Aug. 11, 2:00 p.m.</b><br/>Daughters of the American<br/>Revolution Monthly Meeting</p> <p><b>Thurs., Aug. 16, 7:00 p.m.</b><br/>MAHS Business Meeting</p> <p><b>Mon., Aug. 20, 7:00 p.m.</b><br/>MAHS Program<br/>Return to Vietnam<br/>after 50 years<br/>Dick Muth</p> <p><b>Mon., Aug. 27, 6:30 p.m.</b><br/>MAGS Business meeting</p> <p><b>Mon., Sept. 10, 7:00 p.m.</b><br/>MAGS Program<br/>German Research – Ancestry<br/>Webinar</p> <p><b>September – Annual Dinner</b></p> <p><b>Thurs., Sept. 20, 7:00 p.m.</b><br/>MAHS Business Meeting</p> |
|---|--|--|

### ***VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!***

**Tour Guides** – We need a number of friendly volunteers to help give tours (training provided) and answer the phone at the Carnegie Resource Center. Please consider giving of your time to help us. Tourist season will soon be here and we need your help!

**Mitchell History Enthusiasts** – We are always looking for people with a broad knowledge of Mitchell and the surrounding areas. Volunteers can help

with a number of things, including: tours, identification of photos, research, inventory, helping with displays, programs, etc.

**Research Volunteers** – The Mitchell Area Genealogical Society is looking for people interested in genealogy and willing to help on a volunteer basis. Research requests are received often and help is needed to complete these. We can help train but an interest in genealogy is a big plus!

### **Items needed by the Mitchell Area Historical or Genealogical Societies**

- 3 speed turntable for records
- Douglas County Atlas
- Douglas and Hutchinson County Farm Directories / Plat Books
- Area County History Books

Please contact The Carnegie staff at **605-996-3209** or [info@mitchellcarnegie.com](mailto:info@mitchellcarnegie.com) if:

- (1) You want to receive the *Carnegie Courier* postal mail or by email, or
- (2) You have a different address in June or December. The post office charges MAHS 70 cents per bulk mail newsletter returned to MAHS, or
- (3) You change your postal or email address.

Find Mitchell Carnegie Resource Center on Facebook and [www.mitchellcarnegie.com](http://www.mitchellcarnegie.com).

**The Carnegie Resource Center is open  
Monday through Saturday 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.  
Call 605-996-3209 for additional times**

## **Volunteers needed to help with Woolworth Caramel Apples**

Want to lend a helping hand? The CRC will be needing volunteers to assist in the Woolworth Caramel Apple Project on Aug. 22 to 26, during the Corn Palace Festival.

To volunteer to polish apples, call Kathryn Crockett 605-996-2723 or if you would like to dip and serve apples and food, call the CRC 605-996-3209 and leave a message.

Last year the event raised more than \$9,000 and shared with Mitchell Main Street and Beyond.

We would appreciate your help to do even better this year!

## **Mitchell Area Charitable Foundation awards MAHS grant for computers *\$1,500 will replace 9-year-old equipment***

The Mitchell Area Historical Society received a \$1,588.93 grant from the Mitchell Area Charitable Foundation recently to replace five outdated computers.

Mel Pooley, technical supervisor for MAHS, said updating the computers will allow MAHS and Mitchell Area Genealogical Society to keep current. The new computers will feature Windows 10, will be faster, easier to maintain and have greater storage capacity.

The current computers are nine years old, Pooley said.

The new computers will all be Dells and come to the Carnegie Resource Center through Tech Soup, a company that negotiates deals with major companies, like Microsoft, to provide significant cost savings to nonprofits.

Pooley ordered a sample computer and it arrived the last week of May. He and a

couple of volunteer technical helpers installed the computer and are in the process of testing it out. The rest of the computers should arrive within 30 days. The same helpers will also donate their time to install the other four computers, Pooley said.

MAHS will keep the same flat screen monitors, as they are fairly new. But each new tower computer will come with a keyboard and mouse.

Kathryn Crockett wrote the grant, assisted by Karen Pooley, and submitted it to the Mitchell Area Charitable Foundation in March. MAHS received the grant in April.

The grant will cover approximately 75 percent of the cost of the computers.

"We are grateful for this award and all their support in the past years," Karen Pooley said.

**Mitchell Area  
Historical Society**  
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