



# The Carnegie Courier

## Newsletter of The Mitchell Area Historical & Genealogical Societies

Volume X, Number 1

www.mitchellcarnegie.com

Spring 2016

### MAHS and MAGS Programs

#### Annual MAHS Dinner Meeting, September 19, 2016

On page 12 of this *Carnegie Courier* is a list of excellent 2016 programs. As Dave Jorgensen pointed out, we need to give you more notice. Therefore, each month when the MAHS minutes are sent we will remind you of at least the next two monthly program meetings. However, you may want to enter in your calendar the dates of future MAHS and MAGS programs listed in this newsletter on page 12.

Be sure to plan on attending the MAHS annual dinner meeting at Wesley Acres on September 19, 2016, at 6:30 p.m. to hear Jeff Logan, Logan Luxury Theatres owner, tell about the yester-years of Mitchell while he displays images on the large wall screen. Jeff will recount his father's experience as a pilot in World War I when he served in the U.S. Army Air Service and will tell the history of the Air Service which was the beginning of air combat. Jeff will also include information about the early history of an airport in Mitchell.

Even if Jeff were not the speaker, the evening is well worth your attendance since Alice Claggett is preparing a delicious meal and the wonderful ladies at Wesley Acres will bake homemade pies and serve everyone very capably. The charge is \$15.00. Reservations may be made at the CRC or call 996-3209.

#### Help us Keep the *Carnegie Courier* Mailing List Current

Since some names have been on the *Carnegie Courier* mailing list since 2007, we realize that some of you may no longer want to receive the newsletter—by email or postal service. If you wish to be removed from the list, please let us know by phoning 605-996-3209 (between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday), by email to [Pam@mitchellcarnegie.com](mailto:Pam@mitchellcarnegie.com), or by mail: MAHS, 119 West Third Avenue, Mitchell, South Dakota 57301. We don't want to clutter your desk with unwanted paper, but we are glad to keep you on the newsletter mailing list so long as you want to read it. **The MAHS and MAGS mailing address is 119 W. Third Ave., Mitchell, SD 57301.** The PO box has been cancelled.

### Genealogy Corner

As recreation, I enjoy doing ancestry research. Recently I came across a person I had researched before with no knowledge of my connection to the person. You may remember the June 2015 *Carnegie Courier* article about the Pillsbury Doughboy in which we connected early Mitchell resident, Eleanor Lawler, to the Pillsbury family, founders of the Pillsbury Company of Minneapolis. I noticed that Eleanor's mother-in-law was a Stinson but did not dream it was my Stinson line from New Hampshire. I was truly surprised by my far but true connection through my grandmother's family. To be exact, my relationship is first cousin once removed of the husband of first great-grand-aunt of Mary Ann Stinson Pillsbury who was born in 1841 in New Hampshire.

Not every search is successful. Mark Scott came to Mitchell, Dakota Territory, in 1891 with a wife and four children. He received his first naturalization papers on October 22, 1892, in Davison County where three more children were born in 1892, 1894, and 1897. It is believed that the family lived on a farm on the outskirts of Mitchell. In early 1897 he moved his family to Michigan. Mark Scott's grandson, Dean Munroe, has asked us to find where the Mark Scott family home was located in Mitchell. On page two is a picture of the family home taken by relatives when they visited Mitchell in 1953. If you recognize this house and know the location, please call MAGS at 605-996-3209.

We continue to add to our collection of records at the CRC. Our birth database now contains 23,275 records. These records are collected from county, state, newspaper, census, obituaries, cemetery, WWI and WWII registration records, marriage, and hospital records. We also collect and file marriage records, obituaries, and cemetery files. We have file cabinets full of articles and information, Polk city directories from 1890 to the present, and the school annuals. We have just started indexing all students who attended Davison County rural schools. Any information, stories, or pictures on our rural schools would be greatly appreciated.

After several years of discussing a logo and wanting a MAGS banner, we finally have one. Our banner will be displayed on the podium during our events at the CRC.

In December 2015, Ancestry decided to discontinue the Family Tree Maker software genealogy computer program. This is one of the top-rated genealogical programs which the majority of our members use. In January the Mackiev software company announced they would sell the Mac and Windows versions of

(Continued on page 2)

**To the reader:** To conserve space and ink, throughout this newsletter these abbreviations are used:

CRC - Carnegie Resource Center

MAGS - Mitchell Area Genealogical Society

MAHS - Mitchell Area Historical Society

SDSHS - South Dakota State Historical Society

**Genealogy Corner** (Continued from page 1)

the Family Tree software. Keep up with the latest on Family Tree Maker at Mackiev.com.

MAGS business meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each month.

Officers for 2016 are James C. Hunt, president; Karen A. Pooley, vice president; Andie Harmes-Sindt, recording secretary; Pamela Range, corresponding secretary; and Karen A. Pooley, treasurer.

*Andie Harmes-Sindt*



**Is this Mark Scott's home? See paragraph two of the Genealogy Corner article on page one.**

**MAHS and MAGS Facebook Pages**

The Mitchell Carnegie Facebook page is growing. We have over 825 "likes" of people who follow our page. We post the "Back in Time" of *The Daily Republic* on our page every week. The June 13, 2016, photo reached a record 7,500 people. The "Back in Time" feature runs in the Monday editions of *The Daily Republic* newspaper. Rick Geyerman, a long-time MAHS member, administers the page.

**MAHS Wish List - Books and Abstracts**

These volumes of the South Dakota Historical collection are still needed: Volume 5-1910, 7-1914, 8-1916, 9-1918, and 11-1922.

If you have an abstract for your property - residential or business - and are discarding the abstract, please consider donating it to MAHS for the archives. Thank you.

**Wish List - Be a MAHS or MAGS Volunteer**

Many tasks need to be done at the CRC. Call Pam Range (996-3209) if you are interested. Data entry, filing, writing and researching, display arranging, hosting visitors, accessioning, cleaning, vacuuming, tending petunia beds are some of the choices. On-the-job-training is provided. The salary is zero dollars but the intangible benefits will make you rich.

**New Schedule of the Carnegie Courier**

You will notice that this issue of the *Carnegie Courier* is Volume X, Number 1, Spring 2016. There is no issue of the *Courier* for December 2015 since we have changed to Spring and Fall issues each year to mesh with the demands on the time and energy of our volunteers at the Christmas season. We will also, in early December of each year, request the annual dues payment and any donations that you can spare. In contrast to some nonprofits, we will not send you five or six reminders each year.

You responded so promptly and generously in December 2015 and early in 2016 and we are very, very grateful. Please see the lists of MAHS and MAGS members and donors on page 11 and the insert.

Just think! In 2006 MAHS had only 30 members and used the Mitchell Public Library for files and archives. On May 16, 2006, MAHS received the deed to the 1903 Carnegie Library from the City of Mitchell. With your help and many grant awards, we have spent at least \$350,000.00 to not only bring this elderly and beloved quartzite structure up to date but also to equip it with displays and modern computer equipment. Thank you!

MAGS has had a similar growth in members from the seven in 2006. Having a home at the CRC has been a true blessing.

**Welcome to New Volunteers**

Shelby Schrank, a summer intern with Ciavarella Design, Inc., is donating volunteer hours to MAHS by organizing information from the MAHS voluminous Corn Palace files assembled by Lyle Swenson and MAHS volunteers to focus on the designers of the murals and the mural themes over the years. Shelby grew up in Salem, South Dakota, and is an alumna of the University of South Dakota and St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minnesota. This autumn she will pursue graduate studies at the Massachusetts University Amherst for a dual masters degree in architecture and historic preservation. See pages 9 and 10 for Shelby's article about the Holy Family Catholic Church Rectory.

Carol Ragle, D.O.M. (Doctor of Oriental Medicine) is also a new volunteer for MAHS. She is assisting Lyle Swenson with filing the countless items about Mitchell's history. Her grandparents, Sam and Edna Weller, were protectors of Mitchell's memories, particularly of St. Mary's Episcopal Church, the Friends of the Middle Border Museum (now Dakota Discovery), and the art of Oscar Howe. Carol grew up in Colorado and has a B.S. and M. S. She received the D.O.M. from Portland University in Portland, Oregon, and an R. N. from Dakota Wesleyan University. She practices acupuncture in Mitchell.

John Mortimore and Ed Peterson have included the Carnegie petunias when they water the hanging baskets on Main Street. The fertilizer included in the water has resulted in sturdy plants and beautiful flowers. Thank you to the Mitchell Area Garden Club.

### Grant Awards to MAHS in 2015

Thanks to grants requested by MAHS and awarded, three projects were tackled in 2015. The Mitchell Area Charitable Foundation (MACF) gave \$11,229.00 to solve several problems at the CRC: Replacement of very deteriorated cement stairs at the south entrance to the boiler room, removal of and replacement of the narrow and uneven sidewalk at the east side, installation of drainage tile to carry water to drain to the curb on East Third Avenue, and replacement of two ill-fitting and inadequate east- and south-side metal doors. The City of Mitchell coordinated drainage to East Third Avenue and Bailey Metal Fabricators donated \$2,115.84 to provide and install a new metal railing to replace the old railing which dated from the 1930s when the major south addition to the Carnegie was built. Thank you MACF and Greg Bailey!

Thank you, too, to the Mary Chilton of the Daughters of the American Revolution Foundation who funded a mini-grant to purchase \$1,000.00 of archival boxes in which to store MAHS' really impressive collection of newspapers. Lyle Swenson regularly photocopies articles from the old newspapers and then clips them to file under the countless topics in ten large filing cabinets. When persons ask about family or business history or other topics, MAHS or MAGS volunteers can usually provide a great deal of information. This project started in 1988 when MAHS was founded.

A grant from the State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) of \$1,000.00 enabled transcription to CDs of fragile audio tapes from 1976 of a Mitchell oral history project conducted by Dr. James McLaird. Now the task remains of typing transcripts of the content on the CDs.

### MAHS Programs July 2015 through June 2016

If you can, try to attend the very interesting MAHS programs, usually on the third Monday evenings, at the CRC. Persons who have made and are making Mitchell's history present great stories of their ownership of the family business. Others, such as 93-years-young Delmar Strunk, tell of their wartime experiences in WWII. And, each year, as a developing tradition, Dr. Adrien Hannus and Dr. Alan Outram, eminent archeologists at Augustana University in Sioux Falls and Exeter University in the United Kingdom respectively, bring us current with developments in their field and at the Prehistoric Indian Village in Mitchell where each summer about a dozen of their students dig at the Archeodome. To bring each year to a climax, in December the Mitchell Barbershop Harmony Chorus and Wanema Wieczorek, pianist, provide a festive and merry "Christmas at the Carnegie."

In brief, to tell you a bit of what you have missed, in July Dr. Hannus and Dr. Outram spoke about recent finds unearthed at a depth not before attained by the "dig" at the Archeodome. A miniature clay pot, about one inch in diameter, and preserved seeds (protected from insects by ashes) were

(Continued on page 4)

### Lyle's Corner

Is the clock running faster or is it just me? When I was a young-un a day or two ago, it seemed a year was forever. Age surely does change things! Busy is the word around the Carnegie with very little let-up and I'm not complaining, so keep us busy finding your family and family business histories. We love it. When you say WOW! It makes us happy and ready to help the next one.

New doors have been installed on the east and south sides to help keep old man winter out and the heat in. A new sidewalk is now along the east side and the yard has been reshaped to keep water away from the building foundation to drain to the street. Concrete of the entire south entry to the lower level has been replaced and a new railing around the steps has been installed. The concrete was in very bad condition and the rail was broken so we now have a safer entryway to the boiler room. The railing was provided by Bailey Metal Fabricators, Inc as a generous contribution. The Mitchell Area Charitable Foundation provided \$11,229.00 for the major vital drainage project.

We have had great programs each month and have more planned. If you have not attended, please give us a "look see" as I'm sure you will enjoy them as much as we do. Since we record the program on DVDs, you may purchase one for your own viewing. One programs featured Scott Supply which celebrated their 100th Anniversary in 2015. Wally's father started the business in Mt. Vernon and Wally moved it to Mitchell where it has been going strong ever since. On a sad note, we lost Wally on September 16, 2015, at age 99, just before the big celebration of Scotts which is now in the fourth generation.

Our annual meeting in September was a great evening with Cynthia Elyce Rubin's excellent program on O. S. Leeland and his early photography business in our area. Cynthia was able to bring life to each picture so that we were not just seeing the black and white marvel but a true story about South Dakota life that Leeland was trying to capture and portray.

In 2016, we have again been awarded grants for MAHS projects. To remedy the water drainage problems on the west side, proper drainage pipes and new water and sewer lines will be installed. We are working with the City this fall when they improve Rowley Street. The Mitchell Area Charitable Foundation is funding \$6,000.00 of the MAHS \$11,987.82 project and \$5,000.00 is from the Sam F. Weller Family Foundation.

Another project is to install a reliable sound system in the CRC. We greatly appreciate the \$7,500.00 grant from the Sam F. Weller Family Foundation.

The third 2016 grant is the SDSHS SHRAB Re-grant of \$1,333.33 for archival supplies to preserve our collections.

We are truly grateful for grant awards and our generous members and donors (see page 11 and Insert page) who provide matching funds.

So, I'll see you at the MAHS Annual Dinner Meeting on Monday evening, September 19, 2016. Jeff Logan promises a really interesting program and Alice Claggett and the Wesley Acres ladies can't be beat when it comes to a delicious dinner.

Thank you to all.

*Lyle Swenson*

**MAHS Programs July 2015 through June 2016** (Continued from page 3)

found of sunflowers, corn, and grasses. In 2016 the program will be held at the original Boehnen Memorial Museum which has a remodeled and renovated interior.

In August 2015 Julie Brookbank, marketing director at Mitchell Technical Institute, and a team member of the "Intelligent Community" project, presented with Jacki Miskimins, currently the regional workforce coordinator for the Mitchell Area Development Corporation, an informative talk about the really impressive efforts that resulted in Mitchell's being included in the top seven communities internationally.

The MAHS annual dinner meeting on September 21, 2015, at Wesley Acres featured Dr. Cynthia Elyce Rubin, a student of diverse cultures, who told of O. S. Leeland, early photographer of Dakota Territory scenes and life. She displayed Leeland's photographs on the large wall screen. Alice Claggett provided a delicious meal and the Wesley Acres ladies baked an assortment of pies and served graciously and efficiently throughout the evening. As one attendee commented, "It could not have been a more perfect event." This year, Jeff Logan will present the program and Alice and the Wesley Acres ladies will provide the dinner. Much gratitude is due Wesley Acres residents and staff and Cynthia.

October 19, 2015, took us back to World War II and Merrill's Marauders who fought so valiantly in the China-India-Burma Theatre in the 1940s. Randall Dewitt, a Mitchell historian, has written a book about that period and featured Delmar Strunk, a 93-years-old veteran of Merrill's. Mr. Strunk was one of the very few who survived the treacherous jungle fighting. At the Carnegie on that October 2015 evening, he stood for over an hour, unaided, straight as an arrow, microphone in hand, to relate in vivid detail his experiences.

In November, Brett Selland, a Letcher resident, compiled a documentary about Ruskin Park near Letcher which opened in 1882 and closed in 1967. The entertainments at Ruskin Park included dances, roller-skating, car racing, horse racing, and baseball games. Chautauqua meetings and picnics were also held. Cabins and motel rooms could be rented. Brett, among other sources, used the six-inch-thick file of information at the CRC to assemble his documentary. At the CRC presentation, audience members added information about their happy memories of Ruskin Park.

On December 10, 2015, the Mitchell Barbershop Harmony Chorus and Wanema Wiczorek led the "Christmas at the Carnegie" very special evening of Christmas carols in the decorated original interior of the historic 1903 structure with its fine acoustics. Cider and Christmas goodies added to the occasion as did the Christmas carol sing-a-long led by Wanema at the piano. The event raised \$565.00 for the Mitchell Food Pantry including \$250.00 donated by the chorus. Don't miss this event in 2016 on the evening of Thursday, December 8, 2016.

The January 2016 program featured Jeff McEntee, wild-life conservation officer of the State Department of Game, Fish, and Parks, who described the work of the Department to conserve South Dakota's natural resources and his

efforts to assure that the laws are upheld.

Persons attending the February program learned from Dr. Jeff Krall about the history of the Krall Eye Clinic as it evolved over three generations of the Krall family. Dr. Krall also described the eye glasses he has invented and is successfully introducing to treat headaches.

John Bush and Jeff Heppler in March told of their partnership to start in 1980 from "ground zero" the James Valley Nursery (now named James Valley Landscape Solutions) in Mitchell after they graduated from South Dakota State University in Brookings, their home and the site of their recently expanded business operations.

April 2016 brought an interesting and informative account by Arlen and Anne Moke about their business, Photography Unlimited, which they moved from their home to 519 North Main Street when they bought the photography business from Bob Brown. In the basement of 517 and 519 North Main Street are negatives and other photography memorabilia from Bob Brown's days as well as from the Moke business. The Power-Point presentation covered the many types of photography that the Photography Unlimited enterprise now encompasses.

On May 16, the Sons of Norway program by Sherry Stilley, president, included a history of the organization as well as videos and information by Sherry, along with memories by audience members of "Scandinavia - Yesterday and Today." The CRC is filled with display cases of memorabilia and artifacts of the Scandinavian countries - Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and Iceland.

On the next day (Tuesday, May 17, 2016) at the CRC, Sons of Norway members from 1:00 to 7:00 p.m. served lefse and Scandinavian treats to celebrate Syttende Mai (Norway's Independence Day from Sweden on May 17, 1814). Both events were very well attended.

June 20, the longest day of 2016, brought the inspiring program by Dr. Barbara Johnson, South Dakota Humanities stained glass researcher, telling of the restoration of the magnificent stained glass windows in Holy Family Catholic Church at 222 North Kimball. Kruse Stained Glass of Hartington, Nebraska, removed the windows and took them to their workshop to completely clean and reset the individual panes. She also showed a video of stained glass windows in other churches in South Dakota and the State Capitol dome in Pierre. Father Shane Stevens, priest of the Holy Family Catholic Church, was the host.

*Kathryn Crockett*

**CRC Petunia Beds Gardeners**

Mitchell Area Garden Club members - Lorna Peterson, Marie Peterson, and Linda Mortimer - along with Natalie Buckley pitched in this June with Kathryn Crockett to weed the petunia beds and add new plants provided by Harvey and Sharon Beedle. All bloom profusely thanks to almost daily watering by John Mortimer and Ed Peterson.

### The Designs of the 1892 through 1907 Corn Palace Exterior Decorations

In 1892 Mitchell's prominent citizens L.O. Gale and Louis Beckwith led the effort to establish a Corn Palace in Mitchell. They visited Sioux City, Iowa, to learn of the difficulties which had prevented success there. Mr. Beckwith donated his property at the northeast corner of North Main Street and East Fourth Avenue. Almost \$14,000.00 was raised and the first Corn Palace was built by Mitchell's well-respected contractor, A. J. Kings.

Then came the time to select the best qualified designers of decorations for the exterior of this building which would serve as the focus of the then named "Corn Belt Exposition" which would not only recognize the vital role of agriculture in South Dakota but also serve as a 2,000 capacity auditorium for musical and other performances.

Adam H. Rohe of Lawrence, Kansas, was selected because of his excellent reputation of designing large theatrical and similar buildings in the southeastern United States and the Sioux City, Iowa, exhibition structure.

The description of the decorations of the 1893 Corn Palace which, according to photographs, were very similar in style to those of the 1892 Corn Palace, read as follows in the "Corn Belt Exposition Souvenir," Mitchell, S. Dak., Sep. 27 to Oct. 6, 1893, p. 3. by E. C. Johnson, Compiler Publisher.

"Geometric patterns with Roman arabesque style incorporated throughout. Emblems and symbols of the GAR (Grand Army of the Republic), Masons, and other organizations are included.

"The upper part of the towers is finished in Roman arabesque style, with various ornaments on bright red background. The domes of most towers are thatched with oats or flax straw, crowned with a neatly made sheaf of wheat, oats or flax. The fronts show a beautiful border under the eaves of ornamental grain-work on blue background contrasting with the red. The corner tower corbel or support is ornamented with alternate rows of green flax straw and yellow corn, running down to a point on each side. Over this is a large section composed of deep red corn, with white husks between, laid in imitation of brick work, with very striking effect. In the center of this there is a false window, composed of straws and nubbins lay on tar paper, and this makes a fine imitation of stained glass. On each side is a large diamond of yellow tiling, as it were, and over this comes the Roman arabesque work, just above the eaves of the building. The dome of the tower, like the central tower, is made into numerous figures of different colored corn. The principal entrance is arched with different panels, while above are two large sunflowers on a background of black or squaw corn. On each side of the arch there is more imitation of red brick work. On the gable over the entrance there is a large circle composed of flax heads with a border of yellow corn, and with the date, '1893.'"

Because of drought and decorating materials not being available, no new designs were done from 1894 through

1899. In 1900, geometric designs and the feature of an American Eagle design, with the eagle standing there "as lifelike as possible with his wings ready to fly" graced the exterior.

In 1902 geometric patterns and two lyres were used to denote musical entertainment.

In 1906 the towers were painted a rich green to serve as a background for the mosaic decorations with rich color effects according to the Daily Republican, "Col. Rohe in New York," August 21, 1906, and the Daily Republican, "Around the Corn Palace," Sept. 4, 1906.

The "Col. Rohe in New York," article stated the following: "New York may have architects of sky scrapers and Aladdin's palace apartment houses raised overnight, but there is a brand new sort of architect in the city who can make palaces out of corn and grain that beat anything little old New York has ever seen.

"The man who makes palaces out of corn is Col. Adam Rohe, artist and designer, who for the last fourteen years has created the beautiful corn palace at Mitchell, South Dakota, that have made that state famous.

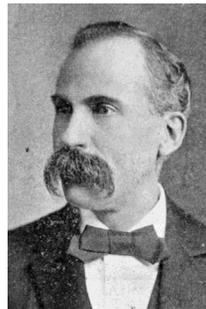
"Col. Rohe's work has been extensively written up in English publications. Aside from the corn palace at Mitchell he has had prominent displays at the expositions. The big corn palace at Mitchell, with its unique decorative features, is no toy. It has a seating capacity of 5,000. The interior is also decorated with corn and grain.

"Those who have never seen a corn palace have no idea of its grandeur. The splendor of nature's coloring is beyond description" says the Colonel. "The luster of the corn is like burnished metal. It ranges from deep red through the light reds, orange, cream to white. Cut in cross sections, lengths, smaller sections and individual kernels, it can be made into mosaic and inlaid effects that for rich tone of color can never be reproduced in any other historical material. The Oriental splendor of color is out rivaled by the natural corn."

"Colonel Rohe's headquarters are in Lawrence, Kan., but he spends his summers in New York prior to his annual trip to the South Dakota Corn Palace.

"In the Civil War Col. Rohe was a war artist for *Harper's Weekly*. Although he served throughout the war he says he received his 'Kernel' through his association with the Mitchell Corn Palace.

#### Leaders of Mitchell's 1892 First Corn Belt Exposition



L. O. Gale



Louis Beckwith



**The 1892 Corn Palace, Mitchell, South Dakota**

### **The 1892 Corn Belt Exposition**

Mitchell residents and businessmen, led by prominent citizens L. O. Gale and Louis Beckwith, undertook the effort to hold a Corn Belt Exposition in autumn 1892. The main feature was construction of the first Corn Palace (then named the Corn Belt Exposition building) at the northeast corner of Main Street and East Fourth Avenue. The building measured 100 by 66 feet. Donations from 195 contributors provided \$5,268.67 and income from other sources was \$8,257.36. The building was constructed by A. J. (Andrew Jackson) Kings, respected local contractor, for \$2,976.48. At the end of the Exposition the committee had a balance on hand of \$1,736.70. The festival, which lasted from September 28 to October 5, was considered a great success.

The above photograph was taken by Lawrence Stair, Mitchell photographer, in 1892.

“Mrs. Louis Beckwith, Mrs. J. D. Lawler and Mrs. Ralph Wheelock assisted by many other ladies of Mitchell decorated the inside of the palace with corn products that were wonders of artistic skill.” (Dunham, N. J., p. 4.)\*

Discussion at a mass meeting on August 1, 1892, of how to organize to launch the enterprise resulted in the formalization of six committees:

Attractions	Mr. L. O. Gale
Agriculture Exhibits	Mr. J. K. Smith
Transportation	Mr. John D. Lawler
Location and Buildings	Mr. Louis Beckwith
Advertising	Mr. T. C. Burns
Treasurer	Mr. N.L. Davison

These committeemen along with R. D. Welch and Charles Champeny, formed the executive committee of which Mr. Gale was made chairman.

\*Source: Dunham, N. J., *History of Mitchell Corn Palace*, pp. 3 - 10. *The Mitchell Gazette*, Mitchell, South Dakota, 1914.



**The 1893 Corn Palace, Mitchell, South Dakota**

### **The 1893 Corn Belt Exposition**

Encouraged by the enthusiastic support given the festival in 1892, the 1893 festival committee determined that seating was inadequate and therefore, a 100 by 42 feet addition was built on the north side at the cost of \$1,437.75. Donations totaled \$5,570.09, income from other sources was \$8,736.00. Emblems and designs were of the G. A. R. (Grand Army of the Republic) and the Masons. Other organizations supplied the decorations of plant materials.

The band standing in front of the building is the Lynn Regimental Band from Lynn, Massachusetts. The Iowa State Band and an Indian band performed in 1892 and 1893 and the Alexandria (South Dakota) Band played in 1893.

Each of the ten days of the Exposition was named for a special purpose: **Day 1:** Dedication by Governor Charles H. Sheldon. **2:** Chamberlain Day. An Indian couple was married by an Indian clergyman. **3:** German Day. **4:** Woman's Day. **5:** Sunday. A sacred concert by the Lynn Band. **6:** Honored traveling men with a parade, speeches and a ball. **7:** Shriner's Day. All day city streets were resplendent with the oriental uniforms of the order. **8:** Old Soldier's Day and Bicycler's Day parades. **9:** Yankton Day. **10:** Parade of German citizens and an Industrial Parade by the Champeny and Bately firm.

The Corn Belt Real Estate Association, which had members from all 21 counties of South Dakota, provided valuable assistance in making the exposition a success.

The committees for the 1892 exposition continued for the 1893 exposition with Mr. L. O. Gale given the work of decorations and attractions and Charles C. Champeny to obtain the music. Mayor R. D. Welch was assigned the committee on receptions.

In August 1894 the Corn Belt Exposition Board met and decided because of extreme drought, low prices, and hard times not to hold an 1894 Exposition. For the next six years, the building remained empty and unadorned with only an occasional event held there.

*\*Source: Dunham, N. J., History of Mitchell Corn Palace, pp. 11-15. The Mitchell Gazette, Mitchell, South Dakota, 1914.*



**Model of the 1892 Corn Palace - Exterior**



**Model of the 1892 Corn Palace - Interior**

### **The Model of the 1892 Corn Palace**

On display in the main gallery of the Carnegie Resource Center at 119 West Third Avenue and owned by the Mitchell Area Historical Society is the to-scale model of the 1892 Corn Belt Exposition building meticulously constructed by Sam Kings, the grandson of Andrew Jackson Kings who, in 1892, built the first Corn Palace.

The model measures 54 by 37 inches and 27 inches high at the roof ridge. The roof has tiny one-half inch wooden shingles. Natural plant fibers were dipped in glue and attached to the exterior and then painted to craft the designs. Tiny hand-built chairs pack the main floor and balcony. Chandeliers powered by a generator in the 1892 auditorium illuminated the space. An opening in the roof permits the viewer to look inside the model at the tiny chairs, the lighted chandeliers, and the stage and balcony. The stage (not shown in the photos on this page) is at the opposite end of the auditorium. Balconies on each side of the auditorium were not included.

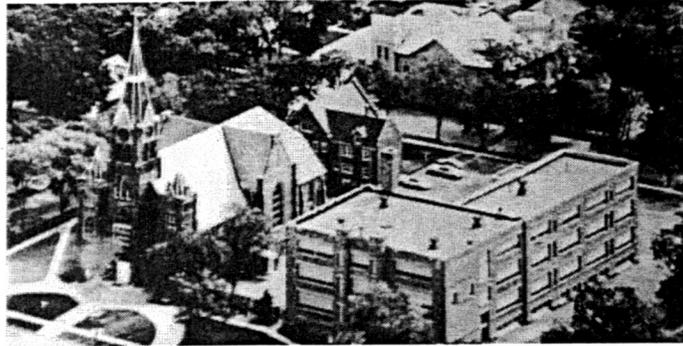
The building had two arched entrances on the south side into the dirt-floored auditorium. A. J. Kings took 59 days to build the 1892 Corn Palace. Sam Kings used over three years to so carefully construct the detailed model.

*Photos by Karen A. Pooley*

## Demolition of the Holy Family Catholic Church Rectory

Located just east of downtown Mitchell, the block of property owned by the Roman Catholic Diocese and known locally as the campus of the Holy Family Catholic Church has been ever-changing throughout its history. The most recent alteration to the campus is the demolition of one of the earliest dated structures, the rectory. The rectory, located at 321 East Third Avenue, was first built in 1914 with construction fully completed in 1923. The building has been home to many priests as they carried out duties for the parish, and has also housed church offices on the first floor. Located just yards east of the sanctuary, the two-story residence and office space has served conveniently to many tenants. (1)

The rectory was added to the National Register of Historic Places on December 22, 1976, and is an example of the Eclectic Revival version of the Jacobethan style of architecture, which is rarely seen in the state of South Dakota. One existing example of the Jacobethan architectural style is the Administration Building at Augustana University in Sioux Falls, which was built around the same time in 1920.



Holy Family Catholic Church - left, Notre Dame Academy - right, and rectory - center rear

The National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form describes in depth the architectural features of the rectory, which were documented at the time of nomination in 1974. Characteristics include: "A red tile roof covers the building made of wine-colored brick on a molded concrete block foundation. Dormers are enclosed in parapets as are all the gable ends. Quoins appear around windows and doors. Ribbon, Chicago, and small rectangular windows constitute the fenestration." (1)

The nomination stated "The rectory, church and school have served Mitchell Catholics since their respective constructions. All of the buildings are in good condition and promise to serve their purposes in the years ahead." (1) An article published in *The Daily Republic* on January 14, 1977, wrote that the rectory, along with other buildings, sites, and resources that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places are deemed worthy of preservation, and are important to the culture of the nation. In conclusion, it should therefore be the duty of every Mitchell citizen to preserve this listing to the best of his/her ability, and to simultaneously advocate saving these places and honoring the purposes they serve. The influences of three different styles of architecture -- Late Gothic Revival, English Medieval, and Jacobethan -- could all be seen in this single block of Mitchell, which is no longer the case. It should be noted that this kind of architectural diversity is hard to find in South Dakota, unless you are in a downtown area or on a university campus. Having that kind of architectural diversity is something worth preserving.

On February 9, 2016, the Mitchell Historic Preservation Commission gave the Holy Family Catholic Church approval to demolish the structure due to "water seepage, black mold (air quality), loosening of the brick veneer from the exterior walls, handicapped accessibility (ADA), and necessary repairs that are required to make the property habitable and compliant with codes." (2) Other issues mentioned by member Lyle Swenson were foundation and roof repairs. The case report from the commission included quotes for renovation costs, which were said to be around one-million-dollars-plus.



The rectory front north entrance- May 2016

The parish put in much effort to explore new ideas on how the building could be used. They also looked into having the building moved to a new location, but the cost was not practical. A letter from the mover included in the case report determined that it was not possible to move the structure intact to a new location. (2) The building may look solid, but there are structural issues in the attic and behind the plaster in the walls that cannot be seen by the ordinary eye.

The parish has no final plans on what will replace the building, but they believe the empty site will enhance the historic appearance of the iconic church. One idea proposed to the commission was to create a garden space with attractive landscaping features. It was also included in the commission's meeting minutes that the church would like to use the resources from the rectory and invest them into the preservation of the church. (2)

The original rectory construction cost was \$30,000. (1) Today we look at preservation as a costly risk and think demolition is the best alternative, when sustainability wise, the cost of repairing a structure usually outweighs the cost of demolition and building a new structure. This rectory was a difficult case where there seemed to be no feasible alternatives to demolition. The majority of the rectory seemed to be in satisfactory condition, with unique interior finishes and woodwork that took valuable resources to produce. However, there were underlying issues that added up too much cost to repair over time. Let us think what can be done throughout Mitchell to promote sustainability and reduce the amount of waste and demolition compost. What can be done to save the next threat of demolition? What simple steps can be taken along the way to make sure a structure remains intact and safe? What steps were not taken on this particular structure?

As a preservation enthusiast, an incoming graduate student studying both architecture and historic preservation, and a lover of all things South Dakota, I encourage you to remember the rectory fondly, and to follow the efforts of the South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office to find out which buildings are currently at risk of demolition in your area, and how to follow simple techniques on how to maintain a historic structure. Demolition can be avoided by avoiding deferred maintenance.

*Shelby Schrank*

Sources:

- (1) Historical Preservation Center. *National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form*, 1974.
- (2) City of Mitchell. *Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes*, February 9, 2016.

Acknowledgment: I would like to thank the Holy Family Catholic Church for letting me utilize their archives and tour the rectory during the early stage of demolition. I also would like to thank Elizabeth Amelie at the South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office, and both Lyle Swenson and Jeff Logan from the Mitchell Historic Preservation Commission for providing additional information.



Father Pierce in office of the rectory - Southeast exterior view from Third Avenue - Staircase to second floor - 1989

### 2015 and 2016 Mitchell Area Historical and Genealogical Society Members

Membership support is vital to the continued success of MAHS and MAGS. The following persons are paid members in 2015 and 2016. Special appreciation is extended to the many members for their generous contributions included with their dues. You truly encourage us to keep working hard to make the CRC an increasingly valuable repository and research source of Mitchell history and genealogy. Inform us of corrections by emailing [Pam@mitchellcarnegie.com](mailto:Pam@mitchellcarnegie.com) or by calling 996-3209.

An asterisk (\*) follows the plus (+) sign if a donation was made along with dues payment for 2015. An asterisk follows the hashtag (#) sign if a donation was made along with the dues payment for 2016. The MAHS donor list includes those persons in 2015 and 2016 who donated but did not join MAHS.

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### Caramel Apple Fundraiser During the Corn Palace Festival, on Wednesday through Sunday, August 24 – 28 at Einstein's Costume Rental, 117 North Main Street

The annual firm and juicy Braeburn apples, coated with caramel, will again be available. Also on sale are walking tacos, chili cheese foot-longs as well as beverages.

If you would like to be a volunteer to join with MAHS/MAGS workers in various tasks, including apple polishing, please call Kathryn Crockett at 996-2723 to be a polisher and Karen Pooley at 996-2233 to do other tasks. Mitchell Main Street & Beyond shares in this project.

#### 2016 Programs

MAHS and MAGS programs are at 7:00 p.m. at the CRC, 119 West Third Avenue, unless otherwise noted. Free admission, all welcome. MAHS programs are on the third Monday and MAGS programs are on the first Monday unless otherwise noted.

#### MAHS 2016 Programs

- Jan. 18** Jeff McEntee, wildlife investigator, South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks Department.
- Feb. 15** Dr. Jeffrey Krall, Krall Eye Clinic, "History of the Krall family and the Eye Clinic."
- Mar. 21** John Bush and Jeff Heppler, "The History of James Valley Nursery, now known as James Valley Landscape Solutions."
- Apr. 18** Arlen and Anne Moke, "The History of Photography Unlimited."
- May 16** Mitchell Sons of Norway, Sherry Stilley, president. "Scandinavian History."
- May 17** Syttende Mai (Celebration of May 17, 1814, Norwegian Independence Day) Norwegian traditional foods. 1:00 to 7:00 p.m.
- June 20** The Reverend Shane Stevens, priest of the Holy Family Catholic Church, will tell of the "Restoration of the Stained Glass Windows" of the Holy Family Catholic Church.
- July 11** At 7:00 p.m. Dr. Adrien Hannus and Dr. Alan Outram, archeologists at Augustana and Exeter Universities respectively. "Update on Archeology Progress" and "Climate Change Impact on Britain from the Ice Age to the Roman Invasion." At the Prehistoric Indian Village Boehnen Memorial Museum.
- Aug. 15** Kenneth Bussmus, "The History of O.L. Bussmus Construction."
- Aug. 24 - 28** Woolworth Caramel Apple Fundraiser at Einstein's Costume Rental, 117 North Main Street, during Corn Palace Festival
- Sep. 19** MAHS Annual Dinner Meeting at Wesley Acres at 6:30 p.m. "The U.S. Army Air Service" by Jeff Logan, owner, Logan Luxury Theaters, L.L.C. Dinner by Alice Claggett and Wesley Acres ladies. Reservations \$15.00.
- Oct. 17** Brad Jamison, owner of Woelfel Jewelry, "The History of Woelfel Jewelry."
- Nov. 21** Larry Thompson, CEO and co-founder, "The History of Vantage Point."
- Dec. 8** "Christmas at the Carnegie," Mitchell Barbershop Harmony Chorus and Wanema Wiczorek, pianist, at 6:30 p.m. Cider and Christmas treats.

#### MAGS 2016 Programs

- Mar. 7** Myrna Hayen, Ben Franklin employee, "How to Scrapbook."
- Apr. 4** George and Michelle Bittner, former owners of Bittner Funeral Chapel, "Death Records and Funeral Requirements."
- May 2** Virginia Hanson, SDSHS archivist, "Genealogical Research Resources Available at the SDSHS Archives."
- July 25** Jim Hunt, MAGS president, "The Use of Sanborn-Ferris Maps for Genealogy."
- Aug. 8** Field trip to Graceland Cemetery.
- Sep. 12** Field trip to 1872 Firesteel site. Jim Hunt and Jon Airhart, "Finding the Foundations." Car pool from the CRC at 5:30 p.m.
- Oct. 3** Genealogy webinar.
- Nov. 7** Jessica Davidson, Davison County veteran's service officer, "Searching Military Records for Genealogy."

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Please contact Pam Range at 605-996-3209 or [Pam@mitchellcarnegie.com](mailto:Pam@mitchellcarnegie.com) if:

- (1) You want to receive the *Carnegie Courier* newsletter by email, or
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