

ANNUAL REPORT June 2018 - July 2019

RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



THE MISSION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY:
Preserving our past, informing our present, inspiring our future

R.C.H.S.
RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

The past year at your Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) has been marked by growth and change, and I am pleased to report that we presented more public programs than ever before while maintaining a balanced budget. In fiscal year 2018-2019, 37 *History Revealed* programs were attended by 1,176 individuals and at Gibbs Farm, we hosted 24 adult and family programs. We are pleased with the growth of the *History Revealed* programs and added Waldmann's Brewery & Wurstery, East Side Freedom Library, and programs at other sites to our existing locations – Roseville Public Library and Landmark Center. In the next year we expect to present more than 50 *History Revealed* programs, and I encourage you to attend – they cover a wide variety of topics and range from lectures to walking and bus tours. If you would like to learn more, have a presentation you think we might want to see, or would like to sponsor or host a program, please contact Robyn Priestley who leads this effort and was recently promoted to Membership Experience & Marketing Manager.

At Gibbs Farm we welcomed back virtually every kindergarten student in Saint Paul Public Schools thanks to the support of the 3M Foundation. All told, we reached more than 18,000 students at Gibbs Farm last year, many taking advantage of more than one tour experience at the farm. It took the hard work of a 22-person education team and the creative leadership of Sammy Nelson, Site Manager, as well as Program Managers Janie Bender and Clare Holte to accommodate these additional students who filled virtually every minute of the program days in the spring and fall.

Collections at RCHS continued to grow as more and more individuals and community organizations entrust their history to RCHS. Recent additions include 143 cubic feet of archival material from the Riverfront Corporation as it closed down after 33 years of helping lead the evolution of the downtown Mississippi riverfront from an industrial zone to a more accessible and resident-friendly amenity. Combined with our Lowertown Interpretive Plan assemblage of materials and our extensive building permits collection, the history of St. Paul is increasingly well-preserved. For questions about collections, the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center, or exhibits, please contact Mollie Spillman, Curator & Archivist, or Rich



Arpi, Research Associate.

John Lindley retired after 13 years as Editor of *Ramsey County History*, our flagship magazine and one of the finest local history publications in the country. John's tenure was marked by a constant elevation of the content and quality of the magazine. His legacy is now in the hands of the incredibly talented and experienced Meredith Cummings who has helmed *Ramsey County History* since January. If you are an author with a story to tell, please don't hesitate to reach out to Meredith with your ideas.

Last fall a film we created in partnership with TPT was nominated for a regional Emmy Award. *North Star: Civil War Stories* is the first documentary film to explore the service of Minnesotan African Americans in the Civil War. Designed both for a general audience and for use in classrooms, the film has been seen by more than 30,000 households and airs regularly on TPT or can be streamed from the TPT website.

As some of you may have noticed around the end of last year, RCHS was asked to help address a challenging situation involving historic artwork in the St. Paul City Hall/Ramsey County Courthouse building. Located in the council chambers, four John Norton murals that were created in the 1930s for the chambers no longer accomplish their original purpose and exclude the contributions of many of the wonderful people who make up St. Paul. Balancing a respect for the historic nature of the murals with their shortcomings in a space that is used every week to conduct the people's business, RCHS is leading an effort to add additional art to the space. Themed to accomplish the original murals' goals of celebrating the development and progress of our Capital City, the new artwork will be displayed alongside

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President's Letter continued from page 2

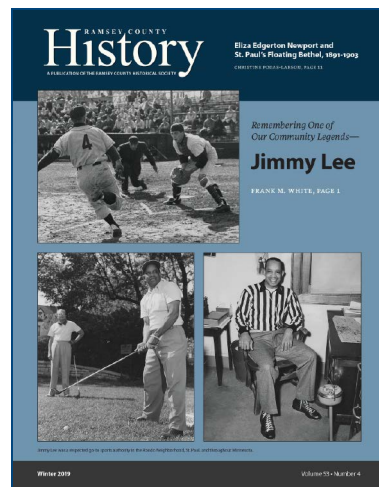
the original murals. In 2020 visitors to the council chambers will be able to view two original murals and two new murals concurrently, and the artwork will rotate at a schedule determined by the City and County.

RCHS believes strongly in the importance of serving every person in Ramsey County. As the County continues to grow and become more diverse, it is important that we be thoughtful and purposeful in reaching out to our more recent immigrants as their stories are added to those of the immigrants and indigenous people who have been here longer. You will have noticed that we have been publishing more stories that highlight communities and people of color, and our programming continues to expand to do the same. One of the steps we have taken as an organization to recognize the value of everyone's history in creating a stronger community is adopting an Equity & Inclusion Statement:

History informs us, inspires new choices, brings people together, and builds community. Likewise, it can be misused to inspire fear, create division, and perpetuate racism and other injustices. We resolve to present history in accordance with our values of Authenticity, Innovation, Inspiration, Integrity, and Respect. We believe that by doing so our community will be more informed, more engaged, and will become stronger.

Just as we have expanded our programming to engage more people and better preserve and present a more complete history of Ramsey County, we have been working diligently to expand and diversify our board. This effort is getting a big boost over the next two years as RCHS was selected as one of 51 museums nationwide to participate in a *Facing Change: Advancing Museum Board Diversity & Inclusion* program. This initiative is being led by the American Alliance of Museums, and we are honored to participate in the first cohort. *Facing Change* provides RCHS with resources and counsel from across the country that will strengthen our ongoing efforts to be an organization recognized not just for local history excellence but for being inclusive of everyone's history.

In our Capital County, there have been some historic firsts in the past year. Melvin Carter was elected Mayor of Saint Paul, our first African-American Mayor. Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flannigan is the first Ojibwe person to hold statewide office. Attorney General Keith Ellison is the first African American to hold that position as well as being the first Muslim to do so. We live in an increasingly diverse community, and these firsts reflect that diversity. It is our hope that as time goes on, race, gender, and



religion become unremarkable in our consideration of firsts and important milestones, replaced by incredible performance across our education system, elimination of hunger, record growth in employment, and poverty reduction on a scale that has not been seen before. All of these things would make for far better history as they reflect advances that improve our entire community and world.

RCHS will continue to do its part to make Ramsey County a vibrant community where all are valued and thrive through our core education programs and through the innovative *Investigate MN!* summer school program. We will continue to ensure that our history is preserved and the documents and artifacts that illustrate our past and present are accessible to all. We will publish history new and old and offer you and your neighbors programs that bring to life our history every day.

Everything we accomplish is because people like you believe in the power and value of history. Thank you for supporting RCHS and making all that we do possible.

Warmest regards,

Chad P. Roberts, President

ENDOWMENT FUNDS

The Ramsey County Historical Society has been fortunate to have donors contribute funds to create an endowment. The endowment is carefully invested to both grow and preserve its principal assets while providing ongoing support for RCHS. Last year the endowment provided \$145,000 for programs.

To all the donors that have made visionary gifts to help ensure history is well preserved and presented in Ramsey County, thank you!

If you have a particular passion for history and would like to help ensure the future of RCHS through a gift to our endowment today or as a planned gift as part of your estate, please contact Chad Roberts, President at chad@rchs.com to learn more.

Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Fund

Established in memory of two remarkable philanthropists and supporters of RCHS, the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Fund helps ensure RCHS collections are well preserved and accessible to the public. This fund helped preserve 14,000 artifacts and more than 2.2 million pieces of archival material, while allowing RCHS to address more than 1,400 research requests.

Crystal Clift Fund

Established through an estate gift to RCHS by a long-time volunteer, this fund supports the operation of Gibbs Farm. The Katherine B. Andersen Fund of the Saint Paul Foundation has made a challenge-matching grant to RCHS to grow this fund to \$500,000, and we are 95% of the way to this goal. Last year this fund provided funds to subsidize visits for 2,000 students to Gibbs Farm.

Robert Bruce Farnham Fund

Created to honor Robert Bruce Farnham, the fund was established to strengthen the three core program areas of RCHS: publishing, preservation, and Gibbs Farm. Last year this fund helped pay for full-color printing of the *Ramsey County History* magazine and the processing of a dozen boxes of new archival donations, and it sponsored several school visits and outreach programs at Gibbs Farm.



Thomas. G. Mairs Fund

This recent addition to the endowment fulfills the donor's desire to support core operating needs and helps RCHS do great work across all its programs.

Virginia B. Kunz Fund

Created in honor of Virginia B. Kunz, the Founding Editor of *Ramsey County History*, this fund provides the money for the Virginia B. Kunz award made every other year to the author of the best article published in *Ramsey County History*.

Lindley-Kunz Fund for Editorial Excellence

Created last year to recognize the contributions of Virginia B. Kunz (Founding Editor) and John Lindley (Second Editor) to the field of history publishing. Recognizing their work to elevate *Ramsey County History* into the top ranks of local history publications, this fund will provide support for all aspects of producing the magazine.

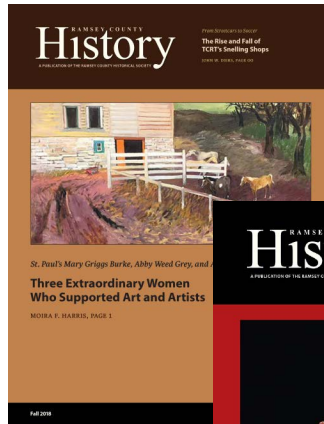
Howard Guthmann Fund

Established many years ago and more recently named after the person who inspired its creation, this is a working capital fund. What this means is that RCHS draws on it as necessary throughout the year to address operational costs when revenue slows down. As you might imagine, RCHS sees several periods of increased revenue every year and several relatively slow times. This fund allows RCHS operations to continue apace during those slower times.

PUBLISHING

There was a changing of the guard with the Editorial Board this past year with the retirement of the exceptional John Lindley, our editor since 2006. Before his departure, Lindley led a redesign of the magazine to give it a fresh new look, updated our author agreements, and advanced several future book projects to the planning phase. His thirteen-year tenure was marked by several award-winning books, a constant elevation of editorial quality in *Ramsey County History*, a year as interim executive director, and the production of two documentary films.

In January, we welcomed Meredith Cummings to the editor role. Cummings arrives with excellent credentials from around the country, including experience at *National Geographic* magazine, in higher education, corporate America, and most recently at the Kurt Vonnegut Museum and Library, where she has worked as the editor-in-chief of the organization's



literary journal. She has jumped into the county history scene with enthusiasm and is expanding our network of historians and authors to bring new stories and voices to *Ramsey County History*.

This past year, we have added several new podcasts and expanded our popular *History Revealed* programs. Further, our donors and members committed funding to support publishing in two new ways. The Lindley-Kunz Fund for Editorial Excellence honors

the tradition established by Lindley and founding editor Virginia B. Kunz by supporting production of the magazine. The new Driscoll Fellowship Fund assists with research and author expenses. We look forward to another successful year!

Lindley-Kunz Fund for Editorial Excellence

In celebration of John Lindley's 13 years as Editor of *Ramsey County History* magazine and many other books and publications, we recognize the new heights we've achieved in recent years. Therefore, RCHS established the Lindley-Kunz Fund for Editorial Excellence.

The purpose of this endowed fund is to maintain and enhance the tradition of publishing excellence established by John Lindley and Virginia Kunz at RCHS by supporting the production of the *Ramsey County History* magazine.

Lindley and Kunz elevated the Ramsey County Historical Society to the top tier of local history publishers in the nation through their devotion to publishing high-quality, insightful materials that explore and preserve the history of our community.



RCHS committed to establishing a fund named in their honor for the purpose of supporting continued excellence in publishing at the society.

We thank all of the donors who have contributed so generously to the Lindley-Kunz Fund. For more information on the fund, or to donate, please contact the RCHS office at 651-222-0701.

RECOGNIZING OUR DONORS

SUPPORT BY INDIVIDUALS

Thank you to our generous members and supporters. We strive to include everyone in the correct categories. We apologize for any error or omissions. Please let us know if you believe our records are in error.

*Loyalty Circle** members have supported RCHS for more than 10 years and are designated with an asterisk (*) on the lists. *The Ethel Stewart Heritage Society* recognizes donors who have provided for RCHS in their wills with a planned gift, or with cumulative contributions of \$10,000 or more. These members are acknowledged in **BOLD** type.

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The Legends Society recognizes those who have donated \$1,000 and above in the past year.

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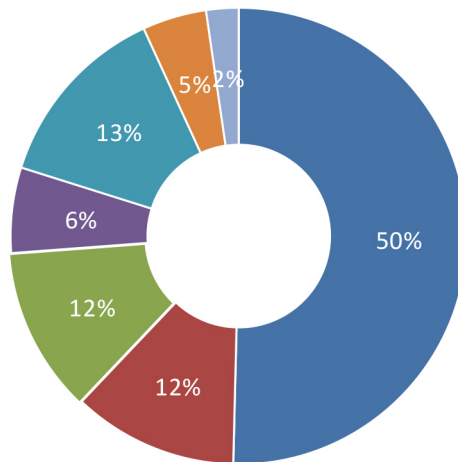
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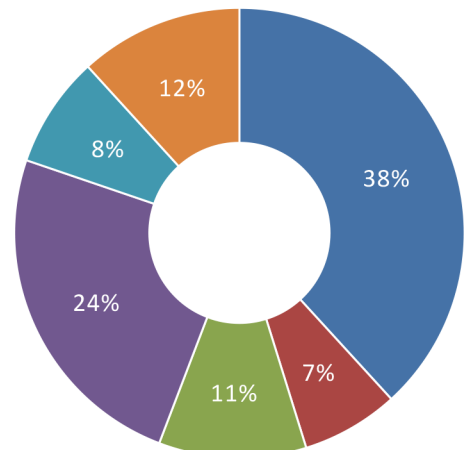


FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019 REVENUE

- Contributions
- Investment Income
- Ramsey County
- Legacy/ACHF
- Gibbs Farm
- Memberships & Events
- Merchandise & Other

FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019 EXPENSES

- Gibbs Farm Programs
- Publishing Programs
- Membership & Programs
- Preservation & Research
- Administration
- Development



DONATE & SUPPORT RCHS & GIBBS FARM

Your gift to the Ramsey County Historical Society and Gibbs Farm enables us to preserve and present the history and stories of Ramsey County.

Publishing:

The publishing program at RCHS is committed to the highest standards of research to ensure that all our publications are accurate and tell the stories of Ramsey County in engaging and informative articles, books, films, and podcasts.

Our award-winning magazine, *Ramsey County History*, is made available to schools and libraries throughout Ramsey County and the US and is available online.

North Star: Civil War Stories, a documentary on the experiences of African-Americans in Minnesota during the Civil War, was created in partnership with TPT and was nominated for a Regional Emmy.

Recently *Custom House* and *Fort Snelling and the Civil War* have garnered critical acclaim and awards. These will be joined by new publications in 2020 and beyond.

\$100 allows us to supply a year's worth of *Ramsey County History* magazine to 3 local libraries.

\$350 enables a writer to research and produce an article for *Ramsey County History* magazine.

Gibbs Farm:

Gibbs Farm: Pathways to Dakota & Pioneer Life creates innovative programs and history presentations for students and adults, bringing to life the stories of the Dakota people and the pioneers and immigrants who shaped the history of Minnesota.

Gibbs Farm educates over 18,000 students and adults per year, inspiring every visitor to learn about the history of our community.

RCHS and Gibbs Farm partners with many organizations that enhance our programs at the Farm, including the Bell Museum, The Good Acre, Dakota Wicohan, the Minnesota Master Naturalist program, and others.

\$75 will support 10 student visits to Gibbs Farm for hands-on learning.

\$500 provides 10 classroom outreach programs reaching 250 students.

\$240 provides free craft activities for 160 students at Gibbs Farm.



\$50 saves an additional box of historic documents and photographs.

Collections:

RCHS preserves and exhibits thousands of artifacts and makes available millions of documents, photographs, and images to researchers worldwide.

The Mary Griggs Burke & Mary Livingston Griggs Research Center provides access and research assistance to collections of important documents and archives.

The Collections program also curates and makes available artifacts and items that enhance the experience at Gibbs Farm, providing a taste of the objects that made up the daily lives of the Dakota and the pioneers.

\$150 sponsors a *History Revealed* presentation or author talk.

Outreach & Member Programs:

RCHS provides programs and access to historical education at Gibbs Farm, the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center and to classrooms across the region. RCHS also provides author and historian presentations to other locations across the County with our *History Revealed* programs. We partner with the County and other organizations to provide walking tours, including at the Ramsey County Courthouse/Saint Paul City Hall and the Union Depot.

Our exhibition space in the Landmark Center presents innovative exhibitions that reach thousands of visitors every year, and we have developed traveling exhibitions that reach thousands more.

Your gift allows us to do all this and more!

MEMORIALS & GIFTS OF APPRECIATION

Thank you for the gifts in memory or honor of the following individuals:

In honor of Janie Bender, Samantha Bossman, Clare Holte, Sammy Nelson, Robyn Beth Priestley, and Mollie Spillman
Chad Roberts

In honor of Jeanne Cummings
Michael Sebek

In honor of Jo Anne Driscoll
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Mary Jo Driscoll
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Gibbs Farm provided on-site or outreach programs for 18,000 students from 196 schools.



FOUNDATIONS, CORPORATIONS, & ORGANIZATIONS

Thank you to the foundations, corporations, and organizations that supported RCHS in 2018-2019.

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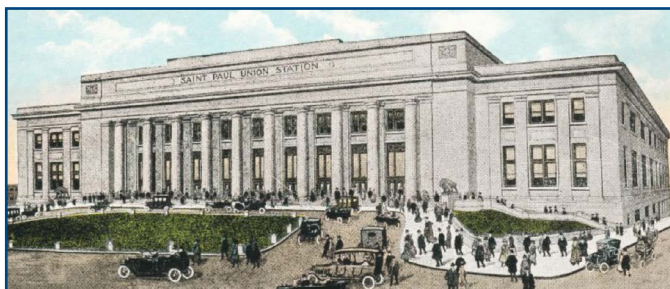
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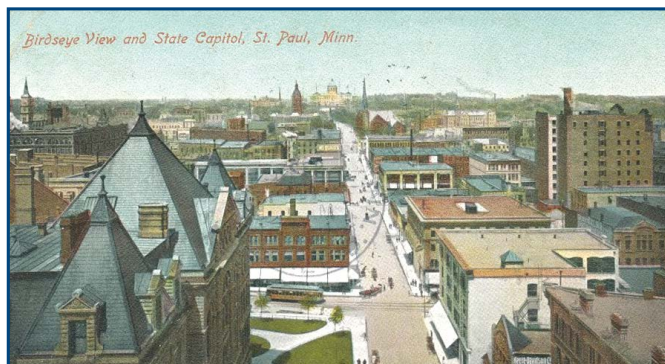
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Over 1,900 people took tours of the Union Depot and the Ramsey County Courthouse/ St. Paul City Hall led by RCHS volunteers.



RCHS assisted 1,445 researchers by phone, email, or in person, and volunteers scanned and uploaded 11,899 images.

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Funds provided by the State of Minnesota through the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund administered by the Minnesota Historical Society.



Projects were made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

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Over 30,000 visitors attended RCHS and Gibbs Farm programs, events, and exhibitions.

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 Andrea Doane, Gardener
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VOLUNTEERS IN 2018-2019

We would like to thank the following volunteers for their outstanding service to RCHS in 2018-2019.

Group Volunteers

AFSA High School
Augeo
Como Zoo and
Conservatory Youth
Engagement Program
Scout Troop 297

Individuals

Kristin Anderson
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Frank White
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Mary Lethert Wingerd

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Bridgette Bell
Gretchen Bell
Amelie Brazelton
Madeline Brazelton
Penelope Brazelton
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Christina Solle
Erin Strege
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Gabiella Townsend
Izzy Truscio
Mercede Truscio



Volunteers spent over 14,500 hours helping RCHS and Gibbs Farm run smoothly.

COLLECTIONS, EXHIBITS, & RESEARCH

The Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center

RCCHS staff assisted 1,445 researchers through the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center. Providing access to 641 linear feet of archival and photographic collections, the research center is the permanent home to about 2.8 million pieces of paper. These collections include St. Paul Building Permits, St. Paul City Directories, plat maps, and 141 varied archival collections.

Last year, RCCHS made 11,899 images from its photo collection available online and is uploading more every few months. See <http://rchs.pastperfectonline.com> to view and search them.

Access to these collections is supported by members and the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Fund.

Acquisitions

RCCHS collects and cares for artifact, archival, library, and photograph collections, including the materials donated by 73 donors last year. Some new acquisitions include the book, *Walk on the East Side: Pictures and Stories from Residents of St. Paul's East Side* (2017), an egg grading scale made by The Specialty Mfg. Co. in 1924, a directory: *Calvary Cemetery v. 1-3* (1841-1896), programs and maps of *Peanuts on Parade* (2000-2004), a collection of Fisher Nut containers, and a sewing machine with paperwork and invoice from the Payne Avenue Singer store (1957). Another significant collection is Steve Madole's Architrave reference book collection from his 30+ years of work as an historically minded architect. This book collection, currently being processed, includes reference books for preservation architects, homeowners, house renovators, contractors, and anyone interested in historic methods and how to adapt that knowledge to modern work.

Preservation

With the support of the Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund, RCCHS continues to improve its preservation and access to collections. The Tellstar News broadcast tapes, as well as many films from the Griggs Burke family, The House of Hope Presbyterian Church, Peace United Church of Christ, and Rotary Club of Saint Paul and Saint Paul Jaycees were digitized and are being processed.

Exhibitions

With the support of the Arts & Cultural Heritage Fund, RCCHS worked with The Museum Lady, Claudia

Nicholson, and Dr. Barbara Scott to create a plan for *We Persisted*, an exhibition scheduled to open in September 2020. The exhibition will explore local suffragists who worked to pass the 19th Amendment in Minnesota and nationally, as well as their philosophical activist descendants. Original artwork will be created for this exhibition and added to the RCCHS permanent collection.

2018-2019 Donations to the RCCHS Collections

RCCHS thanks the following organizations and individuals for their donations to the RCCHS object and archive collections:

Linda Ahrens	Jean Kogl
Melodee Beckman	Lake City Historical Society
Mary Ann Berglund	Kay Larson
Roy Close	Seale Lea
Dakota City Historical Society	Mike Lovett
Alida Decoster	Steve Lydon
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Hugh Huelster	St. Clair County Historical Society
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Irene & Gene Josephs	Scott Van
Patti Katzmark	Ann Walton
John Kerwin	Rick Wilhoit
Elli King	Winona County Historical Society
John King	John Wolak
Greg Kishel	Kent Zoya

GIBBS FARM IN 2018-2019

Gibbs Farm reached 18,000 students from over 40 school districts in Fiscal Year 2019. These children learned about Dakota and pioneer life in the 1800s through field trips to the site and outreach programs. Gibbs Farm field trips and outreach programs are unique in that they offer students hands-on experiences focused on the early Minnesota pioneer Jane Gibbs, her family, and her relationship with the Dakota of Cloud Man's Village (located at present day Bde Maka Ska). For the 2018-2019 school year, Gibbs Farm also welcomed over 2,000 kindergartners from St. Paul Public Schools to the site (funded by a 3M grant to SPPS).

Gibbs Farm offered 7 hands-on summer day camps this past year. These were attended by over 700 children ages 4-15. This summer, we debuted a new camp, Pioneer Survivor. This camp, for middle-school children, tested the campers' pioneer life skills by having them compete in 19th century farm chores, household tasks, and one-room-schoolhouse exercises. Campers also took an in-depth look at early pioneer life in Minnesota.

Last year, we introduced adult-only programs at the Gibbs Farm site. These programs were started in partnership with The Good Acre, a local community food hub for farmers and chefs alike. Chef Yia Vang of Union Hmong Kitchen led three open-fire cooking

sessions for over 40 guests at each event. This summer, Vang returned for a sold-out Kamayan Feast, and two more chefs will present open-fire demos later this summer. We also have had several successful evening tours of the Gibbs Historic Farmhouse, providing a detailed look at the Gibbs family and their home.

Once again Gibbs Farm had the opportunity to work closely with Dakota Wicohan and the Bell Museum. Dakota Wicohan (an organization with a mission "to revitalize Dakota as a living language, and through it, transmit Dakota lifeways to future generations") attended Prairie Festival and hosted their Allies Event in the fall. Gibbs Farm and the Bell Museum hosted students from The Blake School for a dual-museum day in the spring. Students started at the Bell Museum for a tour and planetarium show then experienced a Dakota tour at Gibbs.

Ramsey County helped preserve Gibbs this past year, managing two roof replacements and replacing an HVAC system. We are grateful to Ramsey County for 70 years of support and their continued commitment to RCHS as we work to remodel the Red Barn.

A big thank you to our wonderful staff, volunteers, and partners in the community! You are an irreplaceable part of what makes Gibbs Farm a fun education destination.



Gibbs Farm hosted over 4,800 visitors and over 700 day campers for summer programs.

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) has been selected by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) as one of a cohort of 51 museums across the country to participate in a new initiative, *Facing Change: Advancing Museum Board Diversity & Inclusion*. This unprecedented national initiative to diversify museum boards and leadership is taking place across 5 US cities and includes a cross-section of museums of all types and sizes.

Supported by three foundations (The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Alice L. Walton Foundation, and Ford Foundation), this initiative will provide the framework, training, and resources for museum leaders to build inclusive cultures within their institutions that more accurately reflect the communities they serve.

“Building a more inclusive museum field is achievable only with museums, trustees and leaders committed to long-term change and improvement,” said Laura Lott, president and CEO of the American Alliance of Museums. “Museum boards, in particular, set the tone for their institutions and are well positioned to be agents of change.”

The Ramsey County Historical Society has been trusted to preserve the history of the people and institutions in Ramsey County for seventy years. Enhancing our leadership to ensure inclusive representation of everybody who calls this community home is a strategic priority that RCHS has been actively and strategically pursuing, including developing an Equity and Inclusion Statement and a Task Force charged with actively implementing the statement. The full Equity and Inclusion Statement is available on our website at: <https://www.rchs.com/about/initiatives-projects/>.

The *Facing Change* program will bring more resources from across the country to help elevate and accelerate this important work and enable RCHS to learn from the efforts of other museums. We are looking forward to working with our peers and colleagues to help address this nationwide challenge through our efforts here in Minnesota’s capital county.

We are honored to be included in this national effort that is so important to the future of museums and communities across the country. When museum leadership is inclusive of the community that the

institution serves, it helps ensure the community’s ownership and participation in the museum’s mission, goals, and programs.

In 2017, AAM and BoardSource examined museum board leadership and found a disconnect in the area of diversity and inclusion. The survey revealed that nearly half (46 percent) of museum boards are entirely white, and 77 percent of museum directors believe expanding the racial and ethnic diversity of their boards is important to advancing their missions, but only 10 percent of museum boards have developed a plan of action to become more inclusive.

A recent survey by the Mellon Foundation demonstrated that employment in the US museum sector does not reflect the makeup of the communities these institutions serve, despite decades of local and national efforts. Participation in the *Facing Change* initiative will help RCHS address both of these concerns.



RCHS and Gibbs Farm partnered with many organizations to provide quality programs for adults and children, including Dakota Wicohan, who performed at Prairie Festival.



GIBBS FARM

Pathways to Dakota & Pioneer Life
Experience | Understand | Grow

2097 W Larpenteur Ave
Saint Paul MN 55113

R.C.H.S.

RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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