

RAMSEY COUNTY
History
A PUBLICATION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Setting the Record Straight

**The Scoop that Helped Save
a St. Paul Landmark**

LINDA KOHL, PAGE 10

Architect of St. Paul's West Side

H. Emil Strassburger

NICOLE FOSS, PAGE 1



By the Numbers . . .

When researching the built environment, building permits and related materials are invaluable. These documents provide addresses; building specifications; filing dates; names of owners, contractors, and builders; project costs; and other details. In this issue, all three authors focused on the built environment. Two writers—Nicole Foss and Krista Finstad Hanson—spent hours reviewing permits at the Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center—the only location where early city permits are housed.

Thanks to support from the Dietz Family Foundation of the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation and a Legacy Grant, RCHS is now creating a web-based portal providing online access to our nearly 2 million pages of permits and other documents by year's end. This project has been financed, in part, with funds provided by the State of Minnesota from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the Minnesota Historical Society. Check out the stats below to learn more:

Year the City of St. Paul's License, Inspection, and Environmental Protection Office donated its building permits from 1883 to 1975 to RCHS:
2003

Year our Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center opened:
2010

Number of St. Paul building permits housed at RCHS:
385,000

Number of pages of permits that will be available online by end of 2024:
Nearly 2 million

Number of research requests received at RCHS in 2023:
1,429

Please visit our Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center for building permits or other research needs in the lower level of Landmark Center, 75 W. Fifth Street.

SOURCE: RCHS Director of Collections and Exhibitions Mollie Spillman.

ON THE COVER



Architect H. Emil Strassburger spent about fifteen years making his mark on St. Paul's West Side. Photo and name plate courtesy of John Riley; Architectural tools courtesy of Dmitry Makeev (compass) and the Collection of Auckland Museum Tamaki Paenga Hira (ruler) via Wikipedia Commons.

Contents

- 1 *Architect of St. Paul's West Side*
H. Emil Strassburger
NICOLE FOSS
- 10 *Setting the Record Straight*
The Scoop that Helped Save a St. Paul Landmark
LINDA KOHL
- 19 *It Takes a Village*
Building Community in the Hamline Midway Neighborhood
KRISTA FINSTAD HANSON
- 30 **Book Reviews**

Message from the Editorial Board

A city boasting a variety of architecture, St. Paul is a testament to both change and preservation. Economies boom and bust, peace follows war, buildings stand or fall. An architect's work endures or gets scraped by a bulldozer. Most often, the prevailing styles and civic leaders of the time dictate what stays and what goes. Architect Emil Strassburger is a perfect example of this, as Nicole Foss reveals to us. His work is much admired and played a big role in developing St. Paul's West Side, but most of it is gone today. Linda Kohl tells us that sometimes there is only a serendipitous series of events that spares landmarks, like our own Landmark Center. And sometimes, modest well-built homes endure far longer than their bigger, flashier counterparts, as Krista Finstad Hanson details for us in her piece on the Hamline Midway neighborhood.

Whether your home, your office, or your favorite cultural landmark looks like the ornate layers of a wedding cake or a sleek functional design of steel and glass, the common denominator is people. Regardless of the architectural styles of the day, the buildings of our city belong to the citizens who make up our businesses and neighborhoods. As immigration ebbed and flowed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, so did the prevailing styles of architecture across the city. To follow the threads of these structures is to discover the tapestry of St. Paul.

Anne Field
Chair, Editorial Board

Publication of Ramsey County History is supported, in part, by a gift from Clara M. Clausen and Frieda H. Clausen in memory of Henry H. Cowie Jr., and by a contribution from the late Reuel D. Harmon.

Ramsey County History has revised its numbering system. At the start of each calendar year, the first issue will be labeled No. 1. This issue is Winter 2024, Vol. 59, No. 1. Note that with this change, Vol. 58 includes only three issues for 2023.

Building Community in the Hamline Midway Neighborhood

KRISTA FINSTAD HANSON

Henry Schaettgen, 77 years old, 754 North Hamline [A]venue, for the past 40 years associated with the development of the Midway district, died Saturday night at his home after a month's illness.

Mr. Schaettgen was born in Germany and came to St. Paul 48 years ago. Shortly after coming here, he entered the real estate and contracting business.

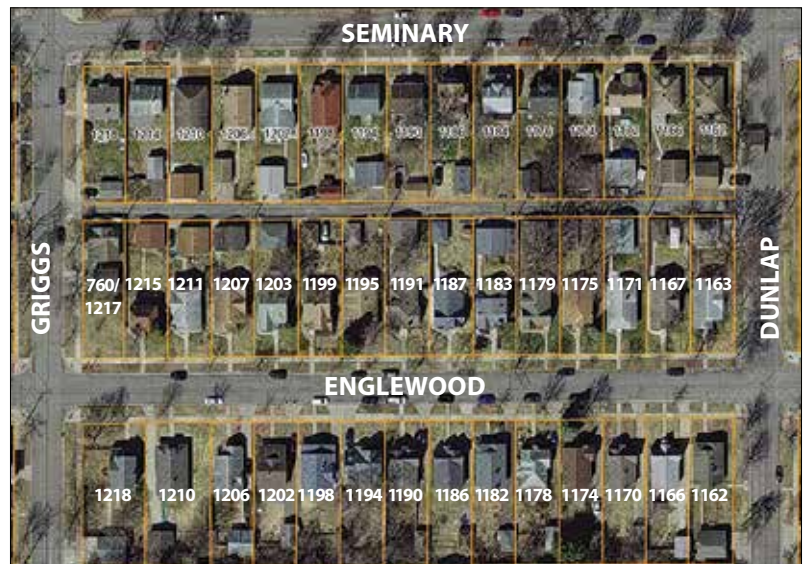
He was a Mason and a member of United Commercial Travelers. Surviving are his widow, Annie Dora, and two daughters, Dora S. and Mrs. Theodore H. Mertens all of St. Paul. . . .¹

Henry Schaettgen's 1935 notice of death was brief—as most obituaries of regular, everyday people tend to be. But there's also usually something extraordinary about most people, as was the case with Mr. Schaettgen. You see, over decades, he helped create an ordinary, everyday neighborhood in St. Paul's Midway—a place that ordinary residents called and continue to call home.

Welcome to Hamline Midway

St. Paul's Hamline Midway is a vibrant neighborhood that makes up Planning District 11 (Hamline Midway Coalition) bordered by University Avenue and Pierce Butler Route on the south and north ends and Lexington Avenue to Transfer Road to the east and west.²

In 2024, Hamline Midway is filled with historic schools, a library, churches, commercial properties, and parks. Public buildings display a variety of architectural styles with designs by recognized architects including Charles A. Bassford, Emma F. Brunson, Carl H. Buetow,



Barry Byrne, Fred Slifer and Frank Abrahamson, Charles Hausler, Warren Hayes, Clarence H. Johnston, Sr., Clarence “Cap” Wigington, and others.³ The neighborhood is centered around Hamline University. All told, this built environment displays many different architectural styles from the last 150 years.

Hamline Midway is also filled with modest houses—bungalows and cottages constructed mostly by local contractors in the nineteen teens and 1920s through the heart of the Great Depression. This includes the 1162-1218 “block” of Englewood Avenue (Capitol Avenue when most were built), between Griggs and Dunlap Avenues.

This section of the street features fourteen houses on the north side of Englewood and fourteen on the south side. It also includes an alley house at 760 Griggs Avenue (also referred to as 1217 Capitol), which was built in 1916, making it the oldest house on the “block.”⁴

These houses were originally owned and built by contractors and some of the work crew

The 1162-1218 section of Englewood Avenue in the Hamline Midway neighborhood is the setting for this short history. *Metro Regional Parcel Dataset, 2024, distributed through Minnesota Geospatial Commons and The Minnesota Geospatial Image Server, 2020 7-county Twin Cities imagery, provided by Minnesota Geospatial Information Office.*

who lived near this new development.⁵ Early on, the homes belonged to immigrants or the children of immigrants from Germany, Italy, Norway, Scotland, Sweden, and Switzerland—people who had come to St. Paul to start their lives anew.

In the second and third decades of the twentieth century, developer Henry Schaettgen owned much of the land and many of the houses on the 1162-1218 “block,” which his son-in-law, Theodore Mertens, helped build. The two German immigrants lived just two blocks away, next door to one another on Hamline Avenue.

Turning an eagle-eye toward the development of this section of Englewood Avenue specifically will highlight how immigrants worked together with American-born city leaders and across ethnic groups to build not only blocks of buildings but, most importantly, community.

Early History

The Hamline Midway neighborhood is located on the ancestral lands of the Dakota and Anishinaabe people—land stolen through a series of broken treaties as a new territory and eventual state evolved.

In the 1830s to '50s, European and Métis fur traders drove oxcarts loaded with furs and supplies through the area from the Red River Settlement and Pembina. Their final destinations? Fort Snelling and awaiting riverboats on the Mississippi in the town that would soon become St. Paul.⁶

On March 3, 1849, Sen. Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, proposed adding Minnesota as a territory. It was soon established, and St. Paul became its capital. President Zachary Taylor appointed Alexander Ramsey, a native Pennsylvanian and two-term US representative from that state as territorial governor.⁷

The ninety-acre plat of “Saint Paul Proper” was entered that same year, after which blocks and lots were deeded to early owners. Wealthy, East Coast businessmen bought the original land patents from the federal government and made, or sometimes lost, a fortune, speculating in land development.⁸

From the Abstract of Title for the home at 1198 Englewood Avenue, the original plat for Township 29, Range 23 was surveyed in 1847 by Deputy Surveyor Isaac N. Higbee. The east half

of the southeast quarter of Section 27, Township 29, Range 23 was sold by the United States to “Justice C. Ramsey” [sic] on October 18, 1849.⁹

Justus sold the patent to his brother, Alexander, on July 17, 1854. Various deeds and mortgages were bought and sold over ensuing years. History buffs will recognize the names of some owners, including Horace Thompson (capitalist), William L. Banning (president of the St. Paul and Duluth Railroad and namesake of Banning State Park), William R. Marshall (fifth governor of Minnesota), Greenleaf Clark (associate justice, Minnesota Supreme Court), and others.¹⁰

In 1857, St. Paul’s population was close to 10,000. On May 11, 1858, Minnesota joined the Union as the thirty-second state. Soon, a railroad cut between St. Paul and Minneapolis, across the northern part of today’s Hamline Midway neighborhood. An 1867 map of Ramsey County indicates this area was then part of Rose Township.¹¹

The land where 1162-1218 Englewood Avenue is located was a 240-acre plot owned by Alexander Ramsey, Jones, Sharp, Hewitt & Coffey. The men also owned 160 acres due south of that plot and another thirty-acre plot southeast of Como Lake.¹²

In 1854, a group of Methodists had established Minnesota’s first university in Red Wing, naming it Hamline University. Because of the Financial Panic of 1857 and loss of enrollment due to the US Civil War, among other reasons, the school closed in 1869. It eventually moved its campus to St. Paul, thanks, in part, to a gift of eighty acres located between St. Paul and Minneapolis from attorney Girart Hewitt. Hamline University first platted fourteen blocks of the neighborhood, where Methodist ministers and professors established their homes. The school then sold much of the gifted land to finance construction of the new campus, opening the neighborhood to more development.¹³

Hamline University opened in St. Paul in 1880 with sixty students. Englewood Avenue, which runs along the south edge of Hamline’s campus, was known briefly as University Avenue. It was then renamed Capitol Avenue. Most of the homes constructed by Schaettgen and Mertens forty years later were on Capitol.¹⁴

On May 4, 1882, former Governor Marshall (1866-1870) and his wife, Abby, sold a warranty

deed of forty acres, which was the southeast quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 27, Township 29, Range 23, to Celestia B. Gilbert and Newington, her farmer husband. The new “Gilbert’s Addition” spanned eight blocks and included the 1162-1218 section of Capitol (Englewood) Avenue. The Gilberts came from New York but had been living in Washington County, Minnesota, as early as 1860.¹⁵

In 1885, the city annexed and incorporated the Hamline Midway area.

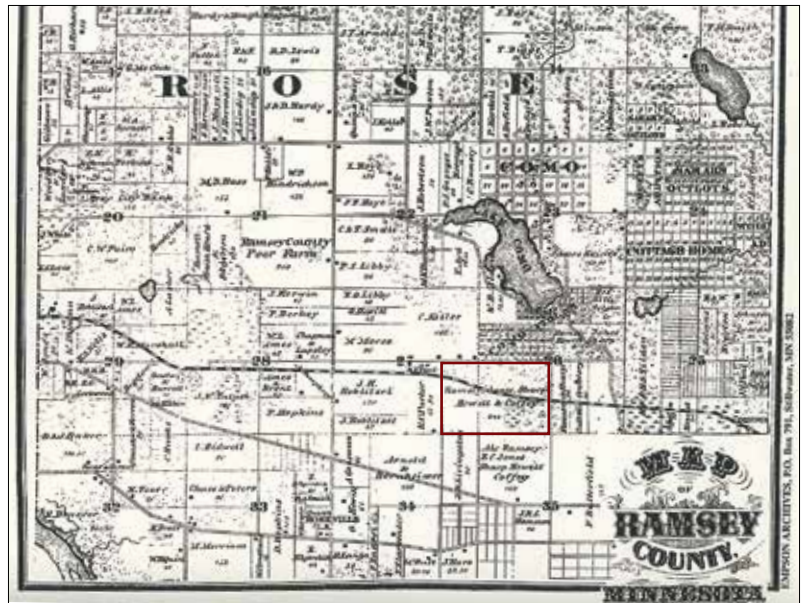
The streetcar lines helped put in place St. Paul as it is today. Suburbs that had sprung up beyond Lexington Avenue, St. Paul’s western boundary until 1887, were linked to the city by both streetcars and railroads’ ‘short lines.’ Surrounded by groves of trees and rolling farmlands, real estate developments clustering around commercial cores grew into separate villages, and then expanded into city neighborhoods.¹⁶

Once the land was subdivided and platted, new residents moved in. The waves of immigrants coming to America peaked and fell as the wars and famines in Europe peaked and as US politics dictated who could come for however long the window of opportunity to immigrate was open.

Residents of Hamline village banded together to form civic and cultural groups to support each other and their new neighborhood. Members of the Hamline Commercial Club, the Freemasons, and the Hancock School Mother’s Group were key players.¹⁷

The first two churches—Hamline Methodist and Knox Presbyterian—were housed on the Hamline University campus until they secured their own locations in 1900 and 1914, respectively, through the fundraising efforts of their separate Ladies’ Aid Societies. Annie Schaettgen with the Ladies’ Aid Society of the Knox Presbyterian Church was an active member.¹⁸

From 1902 to 1908, neighbors linked to the Hamline Improvement Association worked with the city and the Norwegian Lutheran Seminary to vacate lots to create Horton Park, bordered by Minnehaha and Capitol Avenues and Albert and Hamline Avenues.¹⁹



A section of L. G. Bennet’s 1861 map of Ramsey County shows the part of Rose Township that became the Hamline Midway neighborhood. In the southeast corner is the 240-acre plot owned at that time by “Ramsey, Jones, Sharp, Hewitt & Coffee.” This is the current location of 1162-1218 Englewood Avenue. *Courtesy of Donald L. Empson Archives.*



In 1908, villagers started a lending library at a millinery shop on Snelling Avenue. This shop later moved to the basement of Florian’s Pharmacy at the corner of Snelling and Minnehaha. By 1920, residents and members of the Hamline Commercial Club (including Henry Schaettgen) had raised \$3,000 to purchase three lots at this corner to build a bigger library.²⁰

As advocates continued to press city leaders toward their goal of a new library, an “Exhaustive Library Survey” was conducted to learn more about area dwellers:

According to the census of 1920 the population of this district is 17,700. . . . It was

This early image of Hamline University’s Ladies Hall and University Hall shows the open prairie when the school was first built. *Courtesy of retired Hamline University Archivist Candice Hart.*

found that most of the residents could read the English language; that the Germans and their descendants predominated, with the Swedish second and the Norwegian third. Other foreign-born people in the district were Danes, Bohemians, Scotch, Irish, English, Jews, Russians, Italians and Dutch.²¹

It would take another decade, but in 1930, Hamline Library opened its doors, becoming the center of the burgeoning and diverse community.²²

A Closer Look at Henry Schaettgen

On December 16, 1876, eighteen-year-old Heinrich (Henry) Schaettgen immigrated to New York from the German port of Hamburg.²³

The Baden-born Schaettgen eventually made his way to Guttenberg, Iowa, where, as a twenty-three-year-old, he lived with G. F. and Philippine Wiest. He worked as a store clerk.²⁴

In a late-May wedding in 1885, Schaettgen married Wisconsin-born Annie Dora Daacke—a daughter of German immigrants—in Grant County, Wisconsin. Within three years, they were parents to two daughters—Dora Sophia, born March 30, 1886, in Iowa, and Rose Marie, born July 4, 1888, in St. Paul.²⁵

Schaettgen worked about twenty-five years as a traveling salesman selling crockery for Wemott Howard & Co Agents at 358-387 Jackson Street. The company sold wholesale china, glassware, and crockery. The Schaettgen family resided at 1271 Capitol Avenue near the north corner of Syndicate Avenue through 1906.²⁶

Around 1907, the Schaettgens, including two grown daughters, moved to 754 Hamline Avenue on the northeast corner of Capitol. Contractor and developer Joseph Sweitzer built the home, which stood across the street from the newly developed Horton Park and the Norwegian Lutheran Seminary.²⁷

Between 1910 and 1920, Schaettgen changed professions. Still listed as a salesman in the 1910 US Census, he's noted in the 1920 document as a "builder" in the industry of "houses." He was also listed as a cement contractor.²⁸

The Schaettgen women—Annie, Dora, and Rose—were active and involved in the community. Mother and daughters were musical and

often performed piano and violin recitals, organized fundraisers, and hosted dinners, as noted in "Hamline Society" blurbs, which appeared in the *Saint Paul Daily Globe* and the *Star Tribune*. As an adult, Dora joined the music faculty at Macalester College.²⁹

At some point, Schaettgen began getting involved in real estate development. He worked with builder Herman Elmer to construct nine houses (possibly rental properties), all except two—from 736 to 776 Hamline Avenue between Minnehaha and Seminary—from 1906 to 1922.³⁰

Schaettgen also owned or developed twenty-two of twenty-nine properties along 1162-1218 Capitol Avenue (among others). He personally built four houses including 1202, 1206, 1210, and 1218, all in 1920, on the south side of the street.³¹

Not counting the first house at 760 Griggs and the houses built at 1198 and 1194, the remaining twenty-two houses were built by "Theo H. Mertens for H. Schaettgen." Mertens, who came to the US from Cologne, Germany, in 1925, married Schaettgen's daughter Rose. He was thirty-seven; she, thirty-nine. The couple lived next door to her parents at 762 Hamline Avenue.³²

Schaettgen and Mertens hired a set construction crew. Harold R. Olson, the son of Swedish immigrants, worked for Eureka Electric Fixture Company. Frank J. Sapletal, the son of a German



Newspapers included legal mentions of properties and contracts concerning Henry Schaettgen but no images of the contractor. The Schaettgen women, however, were noted more frequently in the society pages for their community service and musical talent. Here, Mrs. Schaettgen, at eighty-four years old, performs a duet with daughter Dora. In *Pioneer Press*, February 27, 1944.

immigrant, did the plastering. Leo E. Peyer, whose father was Swiss and mother Austrian, served as the plasterer. He and his wife lived in the neighborhood. Neighbor George Diebel was a painting subcontractor.³³

It appears that by about 1930 Schaettgen stepped back, and Mertens became the primary contractor.³⁴

A Peek Inside

By the late 1920s before the stock market crash, homebuilding was on the rise. An article in *The Hamline Tribune* noted the construction of six new homes on Capitol Avenue by a Hamline builder.³⁵

These houses were small and modest yet made of quality materials. They were designed in either the bungalow or Tudor Revival cottage style. Most included unique designs with a couple of bungalows and the one or one-and-a-half-story cottage styles repeating on the street. All were likely originally finished with exterior stucco.³⁶

Today, most of these homes have original oak floors on the main level, oak doors and trim in the front of the house, and fir doors and trim in the bedrooms. A few feature oak floors upstairs, as well.

Some follow the typical bungalow layout with a rear corner kitchen and bedrooms along one side of the house—a bathroom in between. The stairs to half or second stories are accessed through the dining room. Some homes feature a center kitchen on one side, with bedrooms in the rear. These include a staircase located in a central hallway near the bathroom.

Built-ins are not found here, save for one home. Plaster archways are common between the living and dining rooms. Some homes feature original fireplaces. Some include piano windows. The 1199 Englewood home has a larger kitchen with a breakfast nook. The house at 1203 boasts a front sunroom.

These may or may not be plan book houses, but they generally do not appear as if they were part of a 'tract development' with row upon row of cookie-cutter homes. Some have finished basements; some have bumped out attic spaces. As of 2024, most of these homes have not been significantly upgraded or flipped to any extreme degree.³⁷



A contemporary view of the kitchen and dining room at 1199 Englewood Avenue in 2021. Both images courtesy of Marsha Burgeson, Edina Realty.



Around the Block

1930S

In the 1930 US Census, twelve households were listed between 1162 and 1218 Capitol Avenue. Nine were owner occupied with property values between \$4,000 and \$7,000. Rent ranged from \$32.50 to \$35 a month.³⁸

The Andersons lived at 1191, the Lindgrens were at 1195, and the Mathias Diebels at 1198. The Cooks resided at 1202, the Bordenaves at 1203, the Hays at 1206, the Steins at 1207, and the Senlachs at 1210. The Schuler family lived at 1211, the Hedtkes at 1215, the Smith and Aitchison household at 1217, and the Heglunds at 1218 Capitol Avenue. (Mr. Hedtke and Mr. Aitchison were carpenters who may have contracted with Schaettgen and Mertens.) A census study found that the three adults living at 1217 Capitol Avenue (760 Griggs) were Scottish immigrants. Thirty-six residents of the block were born in Minnesota, with one person born in South Dakota and one in Wisconsin. The parents of some of these household members hailed from Austria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland.³⁹

1940s

By 1940, 1162-1218 Capitol Avenue was filled in and built out, save for one vacant lot. The census that year listed ninety-four people living in twenty-seven homes; the majority born in state. Four households included at least one immigrant—two from Canada, one from Norway, and a married couple from Switzerland/Italy. There were also people born in Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, New York, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. On this census, participants were no longer asked about their parents' place of birth.⁴⁰

Shortly after the 1940 US Census was completed—likely late 1940 or 1941—Capitol Avenue was renamed Englewood Avenue. According to Donald L. Empson, author of the indispensable book, *The Street Where You Live: A Guide to the Place Names of Saint Paul*, “Englewood is a city in California. Many of the street names changed in 1940 were borrowed from more romantic places in that state.”⁴¹

After World War II, available pockets of land in the larger Hamline Midway neighborhood filled in with small one-story ranch homes in the post-war building boom. However, individually rebuilt or remodeled homes are rare in this largely intact neighborhood.

1950s

By 1950, most residents were born in Minnesota. The only outliers were spouses from Iowa, Illinois, North Dakota, Ohio, Utah, Wisconsin, and one child born in Oklahoma. This may reflect the movement that occurred during and after the war. Only one household—1171 Englewood—included an immigrant family with a Swiss husband and an Italian wife—the same couple living there in 1940.⁴²

A Tale of Three Properties

1198 Capitol/Englewood

One of the earliest structures on the block was not a house but a cement factory. According to the Abstract of Title for 1198 Capitol Avenue, Charles G. and Emma Johnson sold a warranty deed for Lots 9 & 10, Block 7, in Gilbert's Addition to “Gust Albert Johnson and Gust B. Carlson” on September 23, 1914. A 1915 building permit indicates that Burt A. Johnson constructed a small

one-story factory—32 feet wide, 20 feet long, and 12 feet high—at an estimated cost of \$125.⁴³

Johnson was the proprietor of Capitol Cement Works at 1198 Capitol. A quarry/gravel pit owned by Johnson was located on the northwest corner of what is now Griggs Park. It is likely that cement and other materials from this factory were used in the construction of homes on Capitol and surrounding blocks. The factory operated about eight years. Johnson and his family lived next door at 1196. That original home was not there long, and Lot 9 remained vacant for years. As for the factory, in 1923, a house would replace it.⁴⁴

A 1923 building permit on the 1198 Capitol lot where the factory once existed indicates a residence would be built by “S. Ostermann” [sic]. The dwelling was one story with a width of 26 feet, length of 30 feet, and a height of 12 feet at the estimated cost of \$2,500. This appears to be the home at 1198 Englewood that stands today.⁴⁵

On June 21, 1926, Albert and Marie S. Osterman sold their two lots to George E. Diebel. Diebel, originally from Ontario, Canada, married Minnesota-born Josephine Gaspard in Stearns County, where they lived from 1895 through at least 1920. They moved to St. Paul in the early 1920s and eventually made their home at 748 Hamline in one of the houses Schaeffgen and Elmer built in 1910. The Diebel and Schaeffgen families were across-the-street neighbors and friends for decades.⁴⁶

Family history suggests Diebel, a painting contractor and business associate of Schaeffgen, bought the Osterman lots for his sons. In fact, the 1930 US Census indicates that son Mathias and his wife, Myra, were living with two children at 1198 Capitol. A third child would eventually join them.⁴⁷

George and Josephine officially sold the two lots on Capitol to Mathias and Myra in 1938. Mathias was a druggist, working first at Como Park Pharmacy then owning his own business at Dale and Thomas.⁴⁸

1194 Englewood

In 1941, Mathias had a new home built on the previously unoccupied second lot next door. The address would become 1194 Englewood, a rename of Capitol Avenue a few months prior.

They sold their 1198 house to Raymond and Bernice Faschingbauer. The family remained at 1194 until 1952, when Mathias and Myra sold the home to his youngest brother Clarence (Clare) and Clare's wife, Fern.⁴⁹

So, who were these next occupants of 1194 Englewood? Fern Fay Monette was born in Michigan in 1920. Her family moved frequently, making stops in St. Paul, New York, Indiana, and Kentucky, before returning to St. Paul in 1935. By then, Fern was a junior and enrolled at a Catholic girls' school—St. Joseph's Academy at Iglehart and Western. She graduated at sixteen in 1937.⁵⁰

Her family attended the Church of St. Columba at 1327 Lafond Avenue, where Fern would meet Clare. Fern attended and graduated from the College of St. Catherine, majoring in English with a minor in education. By this time, the US was headed to war.⁵¹



The George and Josephine Diebel family in 1924, including (L-R): Claudia, Clarence (Clare), Josephine, Catherine, George, Cecilia, Aloysius, Bernard, and Mathias. Courtesy of the Diebel Family Archives.

Clare served as a technical sergeant with the US Army Air Corp in World War II from 1942-1945. He and Fern married March 18, 1944, at Westover Field, Massachusetts. After the war, the couple lived at the Diebel family home on Hamline from 1945-1947. Looking to get out on their own, they moved to a Quonset hut at Dale

Homes (and one Factory) Built in the 1162-1218 Block of Capitol/Englewood Avenue (1914-1941)								
Permit	Date	Type	Address	Original Owner	Extant	Builder	Cost	Comments
64481	1914-11-24	Dwelling	1196 Capitol Ave	Albert Johnson	No		\$100	10 x 12 x 12; 1 story
65112	1915-04-09	Factory	1198 Capitol Ave	Burt A. Johnson	No		\$125	32 x 20 x 12; 1 story
68483	1916-07-03	Temp Dwelling	760 Griggs/1217 Capitol Ave		Yes	M. Wasserschied	\$200	16 x 16 x 17; 1 story
77487	1920-04-07	Dwelling	1218 Capitol Ave	H. Schaettgen	Yes	H. Schaettgen	\$3,200	22 x 27; 1.5 story; 1.5 lot (no 1214 lot)
77659	1920-10-16	Dwelling	1202 Capitol Ave	Henry Schaettgen	Yes		\$3,200	24 x 31.5 x 18; 1 story
77660	1920-10-18	Dwelling	1210 Capitol Ave	H. Schaettgen	Yes		\$3,800	24 x 34; 1 story; 1.5 lot
77662	1920-10-18	Dwelling	1206 Capitol Ave	H. Schaettgen	Yes		\$3,800	22 x 36; 1 story
3791	1923-01-24	Dwelling	1198 Capitol Ave	A Ostermann[sic]	Yes	S. Ostermann [sic]	\$2,500	26 x 30 x 12; 1 story
29145	1927-10-17	Dwelling	1211 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes	T. H. Mertens	\$3,500	24 x 34; 1 story
30908	1928-04-12	Dwelling	1207 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes	Owner	\$3,750	26 x 34; 1 story
31227	1928-05-02	Dwelling	1203 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes	Owner	\$3,750	25 x 42; 1 story
32024	1928-06-09	Dwelling	1215 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes	T. H. Mertens	\$4,500	24 x 22; 2 story
33514	1928-09-06	Dwelling	1199 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes	Owner	\$4,000	34 x 41; 1 story
35319	1929-03-25	Dwelling	1195 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes		\$3,750	26 x 34; 1 story
36429	1929-05-11	Dwelling	1191 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes		\$3,750	26 x 34; 1 story
38120	1929-08-07	Dwelling	1179 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes	T. H. Mertens	\$3,750	26 x 36; 1 story
38121	1929-08-07	Dwelling	1183 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes	T. H. Mertens	\$3,750	26 x 36; 1 story
37289	1929-08-19	Dwelling	1187 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes		\$3,750	27 x ?; 1 story
39448	1929-10-25	Dwelling	1175 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes	T. H. Mertens	\$3,500	26 x 34; 1 story
39664	1929-11-12	Dwelling	1171 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes		\$3,750	24 x 36; 1 story
40108	1930-03-05	Dwelling	1167 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes		\$3,500	24 x 34; 1 story
40342	1930-03-20	Dwelling	1163 Capitol Ave	Theo H. Mertens	Yes		\$3,500	24 x 34 x 20; 1 story
43742	1930-03-30	Dwelling	1170 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes		\$3,500	26 x 34; 1 story
41194	1930-05-07	Dwelling	1162 Capitol Ave	Theo H. Mertens	Yes		\$3,500	24 x 36; 1 story
41459	1930-05-23	Dwelling	1166 Capitol Ave	Theo. H. Mertens	Yes	Theo H. Mertens	\$3,500	46 x 34
43576	1930-11-18	Dwelling	1178 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes	T. H. Mertens	\$3,500	26 x 34
43736	1930-11-28	Dwelling	1174 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes		\$3,500	28 x 34; 1 story
43740	1930-12-03	Dwelling	1190 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes		\$3,500	26 x 34; 1 story
43741	1930-12-03	Dwelling	1182 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes	T. H. Mertens	\$3,500	24 x 36; 1 story
43845	1931-01-02	Dwelling	1186 Capitol Ave	T. H. Mertens	Yes		\$3,500	26 x 34; 1 story
86016	1941-07-25	Dwelling	1194 Englewood Ave	M. H. Diebel	Yes	Conrad Hamm	\$5,000	32 x 33 x 19; 2 story

This chart assembles information retrieved from St. Paul Building Permits for 1162-1218 Capitol/Englewood Avenue. The highlighted sections are featured in more detail in the article. Data from Ramsey County Historical Society St. Paul Building Permits Collection.

Fern Monette and Clarence (Clare) Diebel married in 1944. Courtesy of the Diebel Family Archives.



and Arlington—the site of today's North Dale Recreation Center. There, they lived for five years and had four children. Clare supported the family as a pharmaceutical salesman and a crew leader for the US Census Bureau. He also enrolled at the University of Minnesota hoping to become a pharmacist like his brother but didn't finish.⁵²

By 1952, Clare and Fern were more than ready to say goodbye to the Quonset hut. That's when they purchased 1194 Englewood—a decision they never regretted. At this home, the couple welcomed three more children.

The neighborhood was perfect. Fern remembered ten to twelve youngsters on their side of the street, with another eight to ten on the other side—built-in friends who spent hours at nearby Griggs Park playing baseball and softball in the summer and ice skating in the winter. The kids would put on shows in the family's garage, attaching a makeshift curtain over the entrance. Neighbors gathered on the lawn to watch the entertainment.

The house featured a rare attached garage, the only one on the street. Two bedrooms were situated over the living room/dining room and one over the garage. The four Diebel girls slept in one bedroom with the boys above the garage. The children kept toys in the unfinished basement. The family of nine shared one bath upstairs and a toilet and shower in the basement.

In 1959, Fern began teaching at St. Columba's K-8 elementary school, where their seven children were enrolled. She was a lay teacher. The other instructors were Sisters of St. Joseph

Carondelet. Fern managed forty to fifty children in her classroom and taught all subjects. About 900 pupils attended the school, with two to three grades of each.⁵³

Fern stepped away from teaching in 1976 to serve as the parish secretary for nine years, retiring in 1985. Over the years, the Diebels doted on sixteen grandchildren, several of whom attended St. Columba before the school closed in 2004. Clare passed away in 1990. Fern followed twenty-two years later on October 16, 2012.⁵⁴

After Fern's death, daughter Mary and Mary's husband, Mike Munion, moved into 1194 Englewood Avenue, where they live still today. Diebel family members have resided on this street for nearly a century.

1199 Capitol/Englewood

Then there's 1199 Capitol on the opposite side of the street from the two Diebel homes. On a 1928 building permit, Mertens is listed as the builder of 1199 Capitol Avenue. The 1930 city directory lists Ferruccio (Fred) and Catherine Cardelli as the first occupants. The couple married on October 26, 1926. Fred was born in Ponte Bugianese, Italy, on November 14, 1895. Catherine Eva Romani, the daughter of Italian immigrants living in St. Paul, was born in Ramsey County on October 4, 1902.⁵⁵

Cardelli is first noted in the 1915 city directory living in a boarding house at 315 E. Ninth Street with other Cardellis, likely relatives. He was a terrazzo worker. The couple and their first child Joyce (b. 1927) lived at the Capitol Avenue house a few years. It is unclear if their second daughter Sylvia (b. 1933) lived there before the family moved to 1219 Blair Street that same year. By 1935, they'd relocated to San Antonio, Texas, where Fred became a US citizen in 1936.⁵⁶

Other occupants followed the Cardelli's including Ray J. Short (1934-35), Norman and Lois Robinson (1936-46/7), and Edward and Marjorie Mauseth (1948-82). The house sat vacant (1983-84). Steve Bray occupied the home (1985-86), followed by Nancy and William Towle (1987-91). For a year or so, Chad Collman lived there before the Scott Woker family (1994-97).⁵⁷

In 1997, Paul and Krista Hanson, the author of this article, purchased their first home together at 1199 Englewood. They joined the community there and raised two children to



This 1931 view of homes on Capitol Avenue, including 1199 (front left), shows the neighborhood in its early years. The second image of 1199 Englewood was taken from the same angle in 2017 when owned by Paul and Krista Hanson. *Courtesy of Krista Finstad Hanson.*

adulthood in that house. With heavy hearts, they sold the property in 2021 and moved outside the neighborhood.

It Takes a Village

While the Hamline district originally rose up around Hamline University, it was soon populated with residents moving from downtown rentals into their very own homes. Ordinary homes, but *their* homes—simple homes built by Henry Schaettgen and his son-in-law Theodore Mertens.

Some were immigrants to the US. While, at first, there was ethnic diversity, there wasn't much, if any, racial diversity.⁵⁸ But that has changed a bit. In the twenty-four years the Hanson family lived there, Latino and African American families also called this street home. In 2017, when 1198 Englewood Avenue went up for sale, a refugee family from the Democratic Republic of Congo purchased the property. Today, Annie and Joe Curtis Nelson are raising their children at 1199 Englewood Avenue, and Mary Diebel lives in her childhood home at 1194.

This ordinary, everyday section of Englewood is active, with elders and young parents raising babies to teenagers. Neighbors band together for monthly First Friday Happy Hours (F2H2 events) and other gatherings. An email list and phone tree is put to good use, and residents keep up-to-date via a neighborhood Facebook page in addition to front stoop and backyard fence conversations.

A 1929 issue of *The Hamline Tribune* once noted that “[t]he principal attraction of the [Hamline] community, aside from its parks and

general good appearance is the proximity to schools, churches, and lines of transportation.”⁵⁹ This remains true in this very walkable and convenient neighborhood.

The Hamline Midway Library has been a longtime gathering spot and will be again when it reopens in its new iteration. Favorite hangouts include Groundswell and Ginkgo Coffeehouse. Griggs and Horton parks are open from dawn to dusk for children to play and walkers to rest and watch the world go by. This Hamline Midway neighborhood has been and still is a lovely place to call home. Henry Schaettgen—and his son-in-law Theodore Mertens—would be pleased.

Acknowledgments: Thanks to my compatriots with the Hamline Midway History Corps: Nancy and Steve Bailey, Anne Levin, Philip Reinhardt, and all who attended events at Hamline Midway Library and our Saturday gab sessions at Ginkgo Coffeehouse. We inspired and educated each other and the community. Appreciation to Paul E. Hanson and to historians Donald L. Empson, Paul C. Larson, and Brian McMahon, who offered their wisdom and research. Thanks, also, to former neighbors who shared stories, especially Mary Diebel Munion, the late Fern Monette Diebel, and Mary Pranke Ramos, who shared the abstract of her home at 1198 Englewood Avenue.

Krista Finstad Hanson is an English teacher, writer, and historian. She is the author of three books and over 200 freelance articles. This is her third article for Ramsey County History magazine.

NOTES

1. "Henry Schaettgen, 77, Here 48 Years, Is Dead," *Pioneer Press*, January 27, 1935, 6.
2. "District 11 Hamline–Midway Coalition," City of Saint Paul, <https://www.stpaul.gov/residents/live-saint-paul/neighborhoods/district-councils/district-council-directory/district-11>; Donald L. Empson, *The Street Where You Live: A Guide to the Place Names of St. Paul* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 117, 183–184. "Hamline-Midway Development," in *Hamline-Midway Neighborhood Historic Resources Reconnaissance Survey, Saint Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota, Summit Project No. 2152-0002*, sponsored by Saint Paul Heritage Commission and the Department of Planning and Economic Development, June 2018. 4. Today's Hamline Midway began as Hamline village and was eventually incorporated into a once larger Midway district, so called because of its location between St. Paul and Minneapolis. Hamline Midway is sometimes hyphenated. District 11 does not hyphenate the name, so it is not hyphenated here.
3. "Architects and Builders in the Hamline-Midway," in *Hamline-Midway Neighborhood Historic Resources Reconnaissance Survey*, 20–23.
4. St. Paul Building Permits 65112 and 3791, on file at the Ramsey County Historical Society Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center (hereafter, RCHS). Note: when referring to present day, we call the street Englewood Avenue; when referring to the time when most of the houses were constructed, the street was Capitol Avenue.
5. "Architects and Builders in the Hamline-Midway," 24.
6. "Norman Kittson and the Fur Trade," *Ramsey County History* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1969): 20.
7. Theodore C. Blegen, *Minnesota: A History of the State*, 2nd ed (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1975), 162–163; Jayne Becker, "Ramsey, Alexander (1815–1903)," *MNopedia*, <https://www.mnopedia.org/person/ramsey-alexander-1815-1903>; "Minnesota Governor's 1849–Present," Minnesota Legislative Reference Library, <https://www.lrl.mn.gov/mngov/gov>; "Alexander Ramsey," Alexander Ramsey House website, <https://www.mnhs.org/ramseyhouse/learn/alexander-ramsey#:~:text=Several%20Dakota%20alleged%20intimidation%20and,Paul%20in%201855>. Alexander Ramsey was later charged with fraud in his dealings with the treaties made with the Dakota and Anishinaabe. He was exonerated by the US Senate.
8. Virginia B. Kunz, *St. Paul: The First 150 Years*, 1st ed (St. Paul: Saint Paul Foundation, 1991), 27.
9. "1198 Capitol Avenue," Abstract of Title, St. Paul Abstract and Guarantee Company, 2.
10. "1198 Capitol Avenue," Abstract of Title, 2-4, 7, 9, 12–13, 15.
11. Kunz, 35, 44; L. G. Bennett, *Map of Ramsey County*, 1867, copy from Donald L. Empson Archives, Stillwater, 1995.
12. Bennett.
13. David W. Johnson, *Hamline University: A History 1854–1994*, 2nd ed (St. Paul: Hamline University Press, 1994), 4, 14–20; Frederick L. Johnson, "Origins of Hamline University," *MNopedia*, <https://www.mnopedia.org/place/origins-hamline-university>; "Hamline University," in *Hamline-Midway Neighborhood Historic Resources Reconnaissance Survey*, 49.
14. "Hamline University: Opening of the School–Large Attendance of Students," *Saint Paul Globe*, September 23, 1880, 2; David W. Johnson, 21; Empson, 11, 68, 90, 204, 211.
15. "1198 Capitol Avenue," Abstract of Title, 13; Newington Gilbert, "1860 US Federal Census, Woodbury, Washington County, Minnesota, 164, ancestry.com.
16. Kunz, 53.
17. Hamline Midway library scrapbooks and unpublished histories, archived at George Latimer Central Library.
18. "Our Heritage," Hamline United Methodist Church, <https://www.hamlinechurch.org/about/our-heritage/>; Frederick Melo, "Declining numbers forcing churches to face new futures," *Pioneer Press*, November 28, 2013, <https://www.twincities.com/2013/11/28/declining-numbers-forcing-churches-to-face-new-futures/>; "Hamline," *Saint Paul Globe*, September 27, 1903, 9.
19. *Park Board Minutes*, St. Paul Park Board Records, Minnesota Historical Society, boxes 1 and 3, vol. 4, 151 and vol. 2, 107, 179, 182.
20. "Three Lots Given St. Paul: Hamline Commercial Club Donates Land for the Library Site," *Pioneer Press*, December 17, 1920.
21. "Study of Future Expansion, Aim," *Pioneer Press*, June 3, 1923; June Denning Holmquist, ed., *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1981).
22. Hamline Midway library scrapbooks and unpublished histories. According to neighbors, the Commercial Club met at the Masonic Temple, 1544 Capitol Avenue. This building is no longer extant; a brick apartment building was moved to the site; "Three Lots Given St. Paul."
23. "Henry Schaettgen," in *United States Germans to America Index, 1850–1897*, FamilySearch.
24. "Henry Schaettgen," *Tenth Census of the United States–1880*, Iowa, Clayton, Guttenberg, enumeration 137, sheet 41, ancestry.com.
25. "Annie Dora Daacke," *Wisconsin, US, Marriage Records, 1820–2004*, ancestry.com; "Dora Sophia Schaettgen," *Iowa, US Births, 1880–1904*, ancestry.com; "Rose Marie Schaettgen," *Minnesota, US Births, 1840–1980*, ancestry.com; Schaettgen, Henry," *St. Paul City Directories* (St. Paul: R. L. Polk & Co, 1889–1908), 1172, 1481.
26. "Schaettgen, Henry," *St. Paul City Directories* (1889–1906), 1154, 1195, 1207, 1223, 1225, 1196, 1202,

1188, 1188, 1191, 1244, 1342, 1338, 1408, 1465, 1468, 1493, 1598, 1646.

27. "Sweitzer, Joseph S," *Thirteenth Census of the United States-1910*, Minnesota, Ramsey, St. Paul, enumeration 138, sheet 6a, ancestry.com; "754-754 1/2 N. Hamline Avenue, Saint Paul, Minnesota," Placeography, https://www.placeography.net/754-754_1/2_N_Hamline_Avenue,_Saint_Paul,_Minnesota.

28. "Schaettgen, Henry," *Fourteenth Census of the United States-1920*, St. Paul, enumeration 120, sheet 5a, ancestry.com.

29. See various articles in *Saint Paul Globe* and *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. The Diebel and Schaettgen families were close. According to Diebel family history, some of Clare and Fern Diebel's children took piano lessons from Dora Schaettgen. Before Dora died in 1961, she willed her house to Claudia and Catherine Diebel, two of Clare's sisters who never married.

30. Review of various building permit index records, RCHS.

31. St. Paul Building Permits in order of house number 77659, 77662, 77660, 77487, RCHS.

32. "Mertens, Theodore H. and Rose M.," *Fifteenth Census of the United States-1930*, St. Paul, enumeration, 62-136 sheet 16a, ancestry.com; St. Paul Building Permits 89152 and 33514, RCHS.

33. "Harold Rodney Olson," family tree and census records, FamilySearch; "Olson, Harold," *St. Paul City Directory* (1930), 1093; "Eureka Electric Fixture Company," *St. Paul City Directory* (1930), 1282; "Frank Josep Sapletal," family tree and census records, FamilySearch; "Sapletal, Frank," *St. Paul City Directory* (1930), 1148; "Leo Emil Peyer," family tree and census records, FamilySearch; Mary Diebel Munion, email correspondence with author, December 30, 2023.

34. "Mertens, Theodore H. and Rose M.," *Fifteenth Census*, St. Paul; "Schaettgen, Henry," *Fifteenth Census of the United States-1930*, St. Paul, enumeration 62-136, sheet 15b, ancestry.com.

35. "Home Building Increases Here," *The Hamline Tribune*, June 28, 1929, 1. *The Hamline Tribune* was "an independent newspaper published every Friday at 1238 Thomas Street" in St. Paul beginning in 1925.

36. "Homes in Hamline-Midway," in *Hamline-Midway Neighborhood Historic Resources Reconnaissance Survey*, 26.

37. Descriptions based on observations from author, who lived in the neighborhood from 1997 to 2021.

38. "Capitol Avenue Residences," *Fifteenth Census of the United States-1930*, St. Paul, enumeration 62-136, sheet 19a-b, FamilySearch.

39. "Capitol Avenue Residences," *Fifteenth Census*.

40. "Capitol Avenue Residences," *Sixteenth Census of the United States-1940*, St. Paul, enumeration 90-224, sheet 2b, FamilySearch.

41. Empson, 90.

42. "Englewood Avenue Residences," *1950 Census of Population and Housing*, St. Paul, enumeration 90-407, sheets 6-8.

43. "1198 Capitol Avenue," Abstract of Title, 18; St. Paul Building Permit 65112, RCHS.

44. *Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from Saint Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota*, Sanborn Map Company, 1927; "Capitol Cement Works," *St. Paul City Directory* (1915), 402. Because of the common names of Albert and Gust Johnson, the author could not determine which of the two Johnsons in the city directory was the correct Johnson.

45. St. Paul Building Permit 3791, RCHS. The name Osterman is spelled with one and two "n's." It is most frequently spelled with a single "n." That is the spelling used here.

46. "1198 Capitol Avenue," Abstract of Title, 18; "George Diebel," *Fifteenth Census of the United States-1930*, St. Paul, enumeration 62-136, sheet 21a, FamilySearch.

47. Fern Diebel, interview with author, April 19, 2007. "Mathias Diebel," *Fifteenth Census of the United States-1930*, St. Paul, enumeration 32-127, sheet 23a, FamilySearch.

48. Fern Diebel interview; "Mathias Diebel," *Sixteenth Census of the United States-1940*, St. Paul, enumeration 90-224, sheet 3a; "1198 Capitol Avenue," Abstract of Title, 18-20.

49. Fern Diebel interview; "1198 Capitol Avenue," Abstract of Title, 22, 23.

50. Fern Diebel interview.

51. Mary Diebel Munion, email correspondence with author, December 28, 2023.

52. "Clarence Arnold Diebel," Find a Grave; "Diebel, Clarence," *1950 Census of Population and Housing*, St. Paul, enumeration 90-517a, sheet 29, FamilySearch; Clare Diebel military information gleaned from photos, registrations, and clippings in Diebel family scrapbook.

53. Fern Diebel interview; Mary Diebel Munion, email correspondence.

54. Mary Diebel Munion, email correspondence.

55. "Fred Cardelli," *St. Paul City Directory* (1930), 1607; Ferruccio, "Fred" Cardelli family tree records, FamilySearch.

56. "Cardelli, Ferruccio," *St. Paul City Directory* (1915), 403; "Cardelli, Ferrucio" [sic], *Texas Naturalization Records 1906-1989*, FamilySearch.

57. Data compiled through an extensive search of many US Census records, *St. Paul City Directories*, and telephone books.

58. "Maps and Data/Ramsey County," University of Minnesota Mapping Prejudice Project, accessed January 17, 2024, <https://mappingprejudice.umn.edu/racial-covenants/maps-data>. Research on racial covenants in Ramsey County continues as of January 2024, and while it appears there were no racial covenants placed on the properties in the 1162-1218 block of Capitol/Englewood Avenue, one was included for the property across from Horton Park at the corner of Minnehaha Avenue and Hamline Avenue on March 5, 1927.

59. *The Hamline Tribune*, June 28, 1929, 1.

RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORY

President & CEO

Chad P. Roberts

Editor

Meredith Cummings

Editor Emeritus (2006-2018)

John Lindley

Founding Editor (1964-2006)

Virginia Brainard Kunz

RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Board of Directors

Mari Oyanagi Eggum

Chair

Robert W. Mairs

First Vice Chair

Elizabeth J. Keyes

Second Vice Chair

Lorraine Griffin Johnson

Secretary

Marc J Manderscheid

Treasurer

Jo Emerson, Stephanie Fastner, Jim Fleming, Tim Glines, Judy Kishel, Debbie Lee, Joe Lutz, Alison Midden, Dr. Megan Morrissey, Dixie Nelson, Peter Nguyen, Chad P. Roberts, Šišókaduta (Joe Bendickson), Ellen Turpin, Joe Twomey, Glenn Wiessner, Helen Wilkie, Mark Williamson, Lee Pao Xiong, July Xyooj

Directors Emeriti

W. Andrew Boss, George A. Mairs, Richard T.

Murphy Sr., Paul A. Verret

Editorial Board

Anne Field, *Chair*, Thomas H. Boyd, Anne Cowie, John Diers, Kate Dietrick, Renoir W. Gaither, John Guthmann, Lisa L. Heinrich, Kyle Imdieke, Laurie M. Murphy, Paul D. Nelson, Richard H. Nicholson, Jay Pfaender, Chad P. Roberts, Linda Schloff, Mark Taylor, Steve Trimble, Mary Lethert Wingerd, Matthew Wright

Honorary Advisory Board

William Finney, George Latimer, Joseph S. Micallef, Marvin J. Pertzik, James Reagan

Ramsey County Commissioners

Commissioner Trista Martinson, *Chair*

Commissioner Nicole Joy Frethem

Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire

Commissioner Rena Moran

Commissioner Rafael E. Ortega

Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt

Commissioner Mai Chong Xiong

Ryan T. O'Connor, Manager, Ramsey County

Ramsey County History is published quarterly by the Ramsey County Historical Society, 323 Landmark Center, 75 W. Fifth Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102 (651-222-0701). Printed in U.S.A. Copyright © 2024, Ramsey County Historical Society. ISSN Number 0485-9758.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reprinted or otherwise reproduced without written permission from the publisher. The Society assumes no responsibility for statements made by contributors.

RAMSEY COUNTY History

A PUBLICATION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Preserving our past, informing our present, inspiring our future.

The Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) strives to innovate, lead, and partner in preserving the knowledge of our community; deliver inspiring history programming; and incorporate local history in education.

The Society was established in 1949 to preserve the Jane and Heman Gibbs Farm in Falcon Heights, which the family acquired in 1849. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974, the original programs told the story of the Gibbs family. In 2000, with the assistance of a Dakota Advisory Council, RCHS also began interpreting Dakota culture and lifeways, now telling the stories of the remarkable relationship between Jane Gibbs and the Dakota people of Ĥeyáta Othújwe (Cloud Man's Village).

In 1964, the Society began publishing its award-winning magazine *Ramsey County History*. In 1978, the organization moved to St. Paul's Landmark Center, a restored Federal Courts building on the National Register of Historic Places. An expansion of the Research Center was completed in 2010 and rededicated in 2016 as the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center.

RCHS offers public programming for youth and adults. Visit www.rchs.com for details of upcoming History Revealed programs, summer camps, courthouse and depot tours, and more. The Society serves more than 15,000 students annually on field trips or through school outreach. Programs are made possible by donors, members, corporations, and foundations, all of whom we appreciate deeply. If you are not a member of RCHS, please join today and help bring history to life for more than 50,000 people every year.

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, & Inclusion

RCHS is committed to ensuring it preserves and presents our county's history. As we continue our work to incorporate more culturally diverse histories, we have made a commitment to diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion that is based on this core idea: RCHS exists to serve ALL who call Ramsey County home. To learn more, please see www.rchs.com/about.

Acknowledging This Sacred Dakota Land

Mnisóta Makhóche, the land where the waters are so clear they reflect the clouds, extends beyond the modern borders of Minnesota and is the ancestral and contemporary homeland of the Dakhóta (Dakota) people. It is also home to the Anishinaabe and other Indigenous peoples, all who make up a vibrant community in Mnisóta Makhóche. RCHS acknowledges that its sites are located on and benefit from these sacred Dakota lands.

RCHS is committed to preserving our past, informing our present, and inspiring our future. Part of doing so is acknowledging the painful history and current challenges facing the Dakota people just as we celebrate the contributions of Dakota and other Indigenous peoples.

Find our full Land Acknowledgment Statement on our website, www.rchs.com. This includes actionable ways in which RCHS pledges to honor the Dakota and other Indigenous peoples of Mnisóta Makhóche.



In Memoriam

In recent months, Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) said goodbye to two admired members of the RCHS Board of Directors—Carl Kuhrmeyer (1928-2023) and Roxanne Sands (1940-2023)—and to David Riehle (1946-2024) a member of our editorial board.

Carl Kuhrmeyer grew up on St. Paul's East Side and loved the city of his childhood. He enjoyed a forty-two-year career at 3M, first in the role of mechanical engineer and later as executive vice president. Kuhrmeyer was an experienced board member in the East Metro, collaborating on many boards, always with the goal of improving people's lives. He brought humor and tremendous talent to the RCHS board from 2012-2022, serving as second vice chair and member of the Gibbs Farm Transformation Task Force. He and his wife, Janet, were generous contributors to RCHS, providing leadership in the renovation of the Red Barn.

Roxanne Sands brought positive energy to the work of RCHS and made the projects she was involved in more fun for everyone. In her professional life, she was a graphic designer and editor. Civically, she was a member of the Junior League of Saint Paul and City of Lilydale Planning Commission. She joined the RCHS board in 2016 and served as secretary from 2018-2021.

David Riehle was a beloved member of the RCHS editorial board. Over twenty years, he shared his expertise and love of birding, labor, politics, social justice, and railroading in the many fascinating articles he wrote for *Ramsey County History* magazine. Committee members were always eager to learn history through Riehle's unique perspectives.

RCHS is grateful for the diligent work and thoughtful collaboration that Kuhrmeyer, Sands, and Riehle brought to RCHS and the community. They are missed.



The poster features a large sun in the top left, a purple butterfly, and the Gibbs Farm logo (a red barn and a black teepee) in the top right. The main text is 'GIBBS FARM SUMMER CAMPS' in large, stylized letters. Below it, it says 'CAMPS FOR KIDS AGES 4 TO 13' and 'REGISTER AT RCHS.COM'. At the bottom, there are two circular images: one of a child in a blue hat looking at a horse in a field, and another of a child in a baseball cap holding a bunch of carrots. A green banner at the bottom lists the camp activities.

GIBBS FARM

SUMMER CAMPS

CAMPS FOR KIDS AGES 4 TO 13

REGISTER AT RCHS.COM

- PeeWee Mini Camps
- Kids on the Farm
- Dakota Camp
- Life of a Gibbs Girl
- Nature Detectives
- Victorian Ladies
- Minnesota Time Travel Camp
- Farm Survivor



Published by the Ramsey County Historical Society
 323 Landmark Center
 75 West Fifth Street
 Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
 U.S. Postage PAID
 Twin Cities, MN
 Permit No. 3989

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

It Takes a Village

Building Community in the Hamline Midway Neighborhood

KRISTA FINSTAD HANSON, PAGE 19

INSPECTOR'S COPY

CITY OF SAINT PAUL
 DIVISION OF BUILDING INSPECTION
 ROOM 219, CITY HALL, SECOND FLOOR

PERMIT No. 33514

TOTAL FEE COLLECTED \$ 2 25

DOUBLE FEE COLLECTED

TO: BUILD ERECT INSTALL ADD ALTER REPAIR MOVE WRECK

ACCOUNT ORDINANCE VIOLATION MARK SQUARES WITH

9-7 1928
 owl

PERMISSION IS HEREBY GRANTED:

OWNER Theo. H. Mertens ADDRESS 762 W. Mannesha

CONTRACTOR _____ ADDRESS _____

To carry out the work indicated above on the following described property, upon the express condition that said persons and their agents, employees and workmen, in such work done, shall conform in all respects to the ordinances of the City of Saint Paul, Minnesota. THIS PERMIT DOES NOT AUTHORIZE ELECTRICAL, PLUMBING, INTERIOR, OR EXTERIOR PLASTERING, HEATING, or any work not fully described herein. Permits for the use of public property, such as streets, sidewalks, alleys, etc., must be secured from the Department of Public Works.

NUMBER	STREET	SIDE	BETWEEN WHAT STREETS
1199	Capitol	N	Guggis & Dunlap
WARD	LOT	BLOCK	ADDITION OR TRACT
10	21	6	Gilberts

FRONT OR WIDTH Feet	SIDE OR LENGTH Feet	HEIGHT Feet	NUMBER OF STORES	CONSTRUCTED OF	CONTENTS Cubical or Square Feet	COST OF WORK Covered by this Permit
34	41		1	Frame		\$ 4000

DETAILS OR REMARKS

COMMISSIONER OF PARKS,
 PLAYGROUNDS, AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS
 Ex-Officio Building Inspector

BY [Signature]

PENALTY: FOR VIOLATION OF ANY OF THE PROVISIONS OF BUILDING CODE, ORDINANCE NO. 5580: FINE OF FROM FIVE (\$5.00) TO ONE HUNDRED (\$100.00) DOLLARS OR IMPRISONMENT FOR FROM FIVE (5) TO NINETY (90) DAYS.

FORM C80-16 19M 11-26

On September 6, 1928, Theodore Mertens applied for a permit to construct a modest home at 1199 Capitol Avenue (Englewood Avenue today). Mertens signed the application "Theo. H. Mertens for H. Schaeffgen," also a local contractor and Merten's father-in-law. The pair worked together to build most of the houses along the 1162-1218 section of this street. The next day, this permit was issued. As Krista Finstad Hanson conducted research for her Hamline Midway article, she relied heavily on St. Paul Building Permits to understand how and when the twenty-nine homes built here came to be. Author Nicole Foss also made use of these permits for her cover story. The permits are archived at Ramsey County Historical Society and will be available online by the end of 2024. *Courtesy of Ramsey County Historical Society.*