

RAMSEY COUNTY
History
A Publication of the Ramsey County Historical Society

Summer, 1992
Volume 27, Number 2



Members of the Junior League of St. Paul rehearsing for the 1936 Junior League Cabaret, one of the League's more entertaining fund raisers. Left to right are Mrs. John Driscoll, Molly Turner, Betty Evans, Betty Scandrett, Betty Fobes, Edith Shull, Clotilde Irvine, Mrs. Thomas Wheeler, Alice Bartles and Betty Rugg. See article on the Junior League's seventy-five years of service to the community beginning on page 4.

RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORY

Acting Executive Director

Vera Trent

Editor

Virginia Brainard Kunz

RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

William S. Fallon

Chairman of the Board

Joanne Englund

President

John M. Lindley

First Vice President

Anne Cowie Wilson

Second Vice President

Robert O. Straughn

Secretary

James Russell

Treasurer

Thomas Boyd, Joan Grzywinski, Lorraine Hammerly, John Harens, Liz Johnson, Judge Margaret M. Marrinan, Dr. Thomas B. Mega, Laurie Murphy, Richard T. Murphy, Sr., Eileen Roberts, Darrell Roonek, Mark Stein, Richard A. Wilhoit and Laurie Zenner.

EDITORIAL BOARD

John M. Lindley, chairman; Thomas H. Boyd, Thomas C. Buckley, Charlton Dietz, Thomas J. Kelley, Arthur McWatt, Dr. Thomas B. Mega.

RAMSEY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Hal Norgard, chairman
Commissioner Diane Ahrens
Commissioner John Finley
Commissioner Ruby Hunt
Commissioner Duane McCarty
Commissioner Don Salverda
Commissioner Warren Schaber

Terry Schutten, executive director, Ramsey County.

Ramsey County History is published quarterly by the Ramsey County Historical Society, 323 Landmark Center, 75 W. Fifth Street, St. Paul, Minn. 55102. Printed in U.S.A. Copyright, 1992, 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.

Acknowledgements: Photographs with the Junior League article, pages 4-11, and on the front cover are from the League's archives at the Minnesota Historical Society. Those with the articles on weddings, pages 12-15 and 23-24 and on pages 3, 25 and 27 are from the Ramsey County Historical Society's collections. The photographs with *Growing Up in St. Paul*, pages 16-20, are from the author and those on page 25 and the back cover are from the Minnesota Historical Society's audio-visual collections.

RAMSEY COUNTY History

Volume 27, Number 2 Summer, 1992

CONTENTS

- 3 Letters
- 4 The Junior League's First 75 Years
Follies, 'Friendly Visiting' and Women's Changing Roles
Garneth O. Peterson
- 12 Hope Chests and Honeymoons—
Marriages in America Still Wedded to Tradition
Tamara Truer
- 14-15 A Home Wedding for the 'Timid Bride'
- 16 Growing Up in St. Paul
'Father Begged Feed for His Animals'
Margaret Manship
- 21 A Matter of Time
- 25 Books, Etc.
- 27 What's Historic About This Site?
The Cyrus B. Cobb House In White Bear Lake

Publication of *Ramsey County History* is supported in part by a gift from Clara M. Claussen and Frieda H. Claussen in memory of Henry H. Cowie, Jr., by a contribution from Reuel D. Harmon and by grants from The Saint Paul and F. R. Bigelow Foundations.

A Message from the Editorial Board

In the early 1960s, a few schools on the cutting edge of higher education began to give special attention to the issue of race relations, and the contributions of racial and ethnic groups in national and local history. By the early 1970s, the contributions of women and the lives of average citizens, aside from those in the labor movement, were also singled out as subfields deserving special focus in the curriculum. However, those fields have long been recognized by state and county historical societies as worthy of attention. When the Editorial Board set about to expand the size of *Ramsey County History* and enhance its scholarly depth and breadth, the magazine already had a tradition of articles in these fields, which we determined to continue.

This issue contains three articles which contribute to the field of women's and family history. Scheduled for future issues are two articles in the areas of minority and ethnic history: the contributions of the Mexican and Jewish American communities to the history of St. Paul, as well as an article on the High Bridge, that vital link to the West Side, a neighborhood that was home to both communities.

—Thomas C. Buckley, member of the Editorial Board

Letters to the Editor

A "First" in the Park

The St. Anthony Park Branch Library, the historic site featured in your Spring, 1992, issue, is historic for another reason. About 1938, Perrie Jones, the St. Paul city librarian, and my wife, Nancy Loehr, assistant city librarian, decided the time had come to place an African American in a professional post within the library system. They planned carefully because they wanted it to succeed and they selected the site carefully for the same reason. The St. Anthony Park branch was chosen because it was located near the University's St. Paul campus and its clientele was heavily University faculty and employees. Perrie and Nancy also formed a Friends of the Library association, partly to create a friendly backstop. Then they asked the group if they would accept an African American. They would, and their candidate also was carefully chosen. She was a trained librarian, attractive, quiet and friendly. The plan succeeded, and she became one of the first black women to hold a professional position in the Twin Cities. Again, the librarians had led the way, just as they did later when they were the first to stand up to Senator Joseph McCarthy and tell him, "You cannot burn our books."

—Dr. Rodney Loehr, Bloomington, professor emeritus of history, University of Minnesota.

Where Was the Graveyard?

I was particularly interested in your article on the 150th anniversary of the naming of St. Paul and the account of Father Galtier and his log cabin church. Reference was made to a small graveyard that was laid out near that church. I'd like to know on what modern spot that graveyard stood, how many people were laid to



The Chapel of St. Paul, but where was the cemetery?

rest there, who were they (if you know), and what became of the graveyard and its post-mortem occupants. Were they exhumed and reburied in another gravesite? And if so, where? Could it possibly have been Oakland Cemetery?

—Philip J. Markert, Lakeshore, Minnesota.

We think the graveyard lay behind the chapel, below Kellogg Boulevard on what then was Bench street (now Second Street) and between Cedar and Minnesota streets. How many were buried there is uncertain, but St. Paul's population in 1849, when Minnesota became a territory, was less than 1,000, and not all were Roman Catholic. By the 1850s the Catholic burial ground had been moved up St. Anthony hill to the site today of St. Joseph's Academy on Marshall Avenue. Construction on the Academy began in the early 1860s and a new Catholic burial ground, Calvary cemetery, was opened. Presumably, the occupants of the earlier gravesites were exhumed and reburied

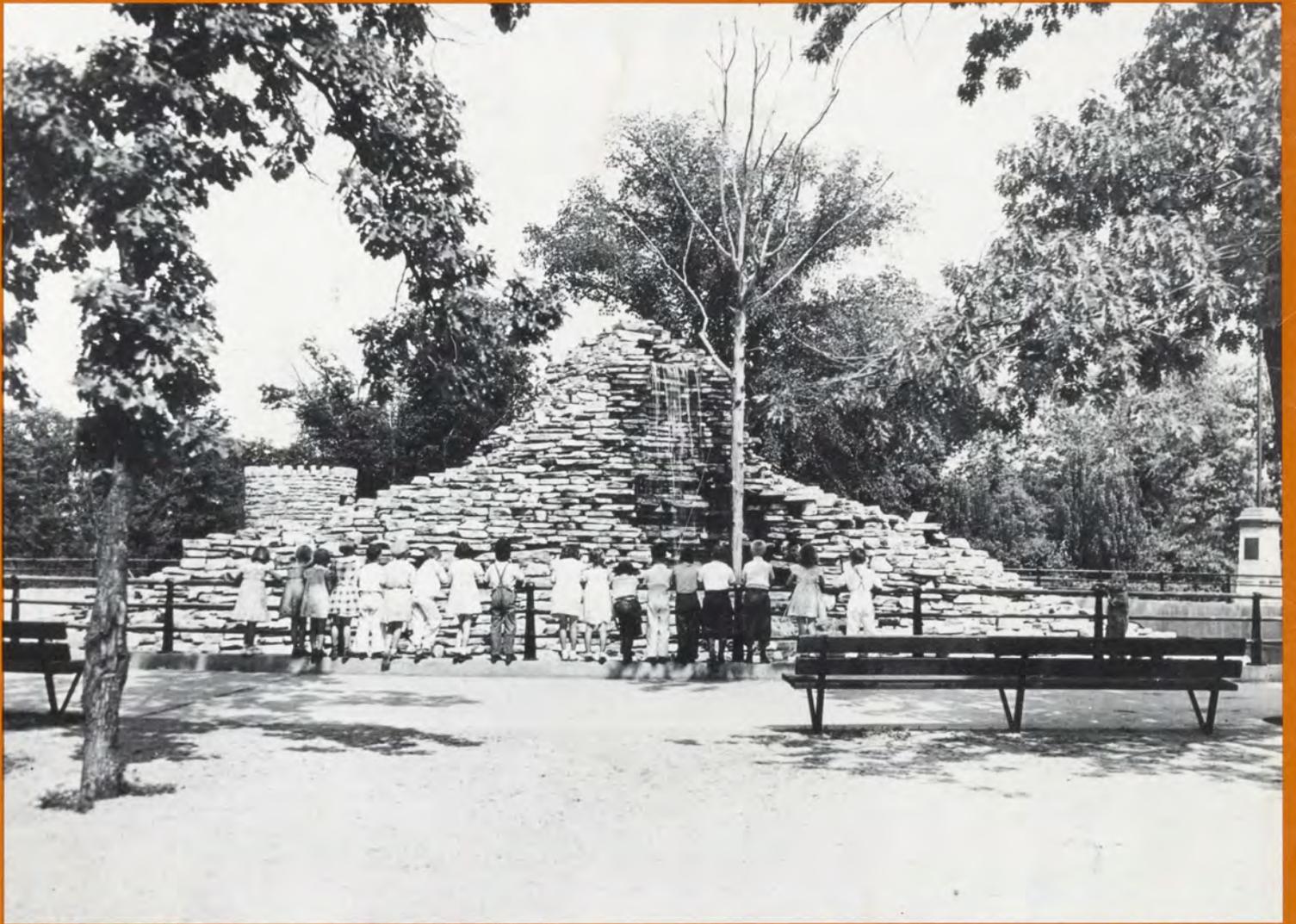
there, rather than at Oakland, but burials tended to be informal in frontier towns, and the graves of early settlers and their remains are not easily located. Reports still appear periodically of old graves that are turned up in the course of construction work.

The County and the Poor

I understand that the big barn on White Bear Avenue in Maplewood and the Ramsey County Nursing Home next to it used to be the old "poor farm." True?

—E. Louise Nelson, St. Paul.

True, but this is its fourth site. In 1854 Ramsey County bought 282 acres in Mounds View Township for a "pauper farm." Next, the county bought land at Pig's Eye, again for a "poor farm," but moved the farm later to Snelling and Como avenues. In 1885, that site became the Minnesota State Fairgrounds and the "poor farm" moved to Maplewood where it grew into the present nursing home.



Visitors lining the railing at Monkey Island, the Como Zoo's enduringly popular attraction. This photograph was taken around 1940. See the article on *Growing Up in St. Paul*, beginning on page 16.

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

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
St. Paul MN
Permit #3989