



Train Locomotive, from the Society's Frances Lee Jaques collection, a large selection of which is on long-term loan to the Minnesota Museum of Mining, a Society affiliate.

St. Louis County Historical Society 2010 Annual Report

The Society has continued on during 2010 in its mission of collecting, preserving and presenting history to the public, specifically, the citizens of St. Louis County, as well as to visitors to the building in which it is currently housed, the St. Louis County Heritage & Arts Center, popularly known as "The Depot", in Duluth. This is accomplished through its "museum" activities (artifact collections and exhibits), programmatic, educational activities, and archival collection and preservation, through a contractual agreement with the University of Minnesota Duluth's Northeast Minnesota Historical Center, which was established by the University in 1976 in partnership with the Minnesota Historical Society and which began its operations based on the deposit of the archival collections (paper records of many types, photographs and electronic materials) of the St. Louis County Historical Society, which had accumulated since 1922, the inception of the Society. The University, MHS, and

the St. Louis County Historical Society have acted in partnership since 1977 in the operations of the Center.

It also continued its ongoing partnership with its six affiliated Iron Range historical organizations: Ely-Winton Historical Society, Hibbing Historical Society, Minnesota Museum of Mining (Chisholm), Sisu Heritage, Inc. (Embarrass), Tower-Soudan Historical Society, and Virginia Area Historical Society.

Collections Highlights

During 2010 1,064 accession records were updated in the Society's PastPerfect database; 54 new objects were added, 2,279 object records were updated, and 500 photos were added.

The highlights of the objects taken into the Society's collection, including the Veterans' Memorial Hall program's section of it, in 2010 are:

- Military artifacts from the family of Pearl Harbor survivor Kenneth Deans
- 1969 wedding dress
- Spanish-American military artifacts from late father of 97-year-old former Duluth resident
- Stained glass window from Duluth's Filiatrault Funeral Home
- Paine family archival materials – approximately 6 – 8 linear feet

Per Society Collections Manager Milissa Brooks-Ojibway:

"To give you some background as to the importance of this collection, know that the Paine family members are long-time residents of Duluth going back to the

late 1800's. Frederic William Paine married Emilie Sargent, the daughter of Gen. George and Mary Sargent. Gen. Sargent was the Surveyor General for Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa in the 1850's and moved to Duluth as a representative of Jay Cooke and Co. Frederic William Paine was a banker and his son Frederic Rodney Paine (referred to as Rodney) was the superintendent of Jay Cooke State Park and was later in charge of Duluth Parks and Recreation and responsible for many of Duluth's beautiful parks. Of note also is that Emilie Paine was artist David Ericson's first patron and art teacher and did much to further his artistic career.

This collection is an extraordinary testament to Duluth's history and includes (but is not limited to) original land grants to both the Paine and Sargent families; letters of introduction to various European investors of Gen. Sargent's as a representative of Jay Cooke and Co. (including a letter from Minnesota Senator Alexander Ramsey); a plethora of family photos which also include other Duluthians of note such as Elizabeth Congdon and Wildey Mitchell; personal diaries; books of original poems; and photos of the children at the Lake Vermilion Indian Boarding School."

Exhibits

Two exhibits that began their existence at the St. Louis County Heritage & Arts Center moved on to other venues, thereby becoming traveling exhibits, and a part of the Society's traveling exhibit program. An exhibit developed by an intern from the College of St. Scholastica, Kristen Belich, in fall semester 2009, opened in January 2010

in the Great Hall, ran for two months, and then moved to the St. Louis County Courthouses in Virginia and Hibbing, where it was seen by a total of approximately (according to County staff at the courthouses) 11,610 visitors total. This exhibit, titled *Preserving the Old Country: The Experiences of Croatians, Serbians and Slovenians in St. Louis County*, moved back to Duluth in the fall of 2010, where it was seen at St. George's Serbian Orthodox Church in Gary, and then at St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church, also in Gary. It was seen by another 950 people at these two churches. This is an illustration of the exposure – and opportunity to provide some historical education to the public – the Society's traveling exhibits enjoy.



Ojibwe Youth, Eastman Johnson, one of 37 drawings and paints, the Society's total Eastman Johnson collection, featured in *Ojibwe Faces and Stories*, the Society's traveling exhibit, completed in 2010

Another traveling exhibit, *Ojibwe Faces and Stories*, was created in 2010 to make the Society's extraordinary collection of (mostly) Ojibwe life themed art work by Eastman Johnson in its entirety to the public. Due to the fragile nature of

many of the charcoal drawings and the high environmental requirements for showing even the oil paintings in the collection, display of these works of art is necessarily severely restricted. A grant was obtained to fund high quality reproductions of the collection. These reproductions were the basis of the new traveling exhibit, which also includes commentary from contemporary Ojibwe elders from all three bands in northeastern Minnesota: Grand Portage, Bois Forte, and Fond du Lac. The exhibit further includes a map of the Ojibwe world, with Grand Portage at its center, at the time of Johnson's creation of this body of work. (This exhibit opened in January of 2011 at the Depot, and is now at the Virginia Courthouse.)

The Society also collaborated with the Duluth Art Institute and the Children's Museum in *Seaworthy: A Celebration of the Tall Ships in the Twin Ports* in September, essentially contributing the exhibit space.

Veterans' Memorial Hall Program

The Veterans' Memorial Hall Program also was active in exhibit production during 2010, primarily through exhibits created by its interns. A POW exhibit, based on the experiences of former prisoner of war Anthony Jurek, and expanded with art work solicited by one of the interns, Steven Nickell, and created by students at the University of Wisconsin Superior, enhanced the exhibit. It opened on April 15, 2010, and stayed on display in the hallway area of the Fesler Gallery for four months.

Uniform Week, as its title suggests, was a week long exhibit, also created by VMH interns, of uniforms donated to the

Society representing various branches of military service, from the Civil War through the current crises in Iraq and Afghanistan. This extensive exhibit was held in the Great Hall of the St. Louis County Heritage & Arts Center (the Depot), from August 11 – 18. A segment of this exhibit (*Selections from Uniform Week*) remained on display in the Fesler Gallery hallway from September through November.

"History in a Pint" began in 2010. This educational VMH program was a series of guest lectures held in Carmody Irish Pub in Duluth that proved quite popular. Four veterans spoke about their experiences in wars from WWII through the Vietnam War. In addition, one presentation was given on the history of the *USS Essex* by a spokesman of Maritime Heritage Minnesota. The concept of holding some presentations elsewhere, throughout St. Louis County did not materialize in 2010 but are still planned.



Korean War veteran Robert Olson, during his "History in a Pint" presentation called "Lifelong Marine" at Carmody Irish Pub, October 19, 2010

On December 9, 2010, the 5th annual Veterans' Remembrance Dinner was

held, netting \$6,500 in profit for the VMH program.

Educational Programs



Singer Songwriter Lee Murdock performing for "Lunch with the History People"

The Society's "Lunch with the History People", a series of free lectures on widely varying topics, generally held at noon in the Depot, continued in 2010. The year's line-up included "stock Car Racing in the Twin ports 1950 – 1962" by Paul Lind; "Stories of Minnesota Children During WWII" by Sharon Schulte; "Resorts of Old Ely" by Michael Jankovec and Mary Cich; "Create an Heirloom Cookbook with More than Recipes" by Hella Buchheim; "The Lester Park/Lakeside Area of Duluth, Minnesota" by Mark Atkinson (A presentation so popular a number of people were turned away); "Iron Range: Minnesota Building America" by Pam Brunfelt; and "Superior in Song: Folksongs from the Age of Sail and Steam" by Lee Murdock.

In 2010 the Society's news publication, *Rootprints*, started the year in the newspaper style format it had been published in for the last four years. However, in fall of 2010, due to budgetary constraints, it continued its life as a newsletter. It is still essentially

the same product, featuring a lengthy and substantive center article; it still fills 16 pages, also. It is still mailed to the Society's and some copies are distributed to Depot visitors and some are mailed to the Society's affiliate organizations for distribution. It is no longer mailed with the *Ely Echo* or distributed free throughout Duluth.

Antique Appraisal also continued every month but December throughout 2010. This event provides free brief appraisals to the public by two professional appraisers, Dan Sershon and Denny Mager. A plan for a scaled up event with many appraisers, entertainment and food, was postponed to 2011.

Membership Meetings

The 88th Annual Meeting of the Membership was held on March 20, 2010, in the Great Hall of the St. Louis County Heritage & Arts Center (the Depot). Author Daniel Lancaster (*John Beargrease: Legend of Minnesota's North Shore*) gave the feature presentation, "Untamed: John Beargrease and the North Shore Anishinabe". Some Beargrease descendants were in attendance.

Larry Sommer, former Director of the Society, Clyde Rogers, former Executive Director of Bethel, and Stephen Vaillant, Trust Executive at North Shore Bank of Commerce, all three of Duluth, were the new Governors elected. Richard Chapman, Independent Appraiser, Cook, Minnesota, former Board of Governors member and President, was also elected to a new term.

A step in a required bylaw amendment process (requiring affiliate

organizations' representatives to be duly elected members of their own boards in order to serve on the Society's Board of Governors) was begun that evening with the collection of signed resolutions.

The culmination of this process occurred on September 13, 2010, at a Special Membership meeting, when the proposed resolution was voted upon. The resolution passed and is now in effect.



Board member and former Society Director Larry Sommer and Society Corporate Counsel Joseph Roby at the Special Membership Meeting held in the Lake Superior Railroad Museum

2010 Staff

St. Louis County Historical Society

JoAnne Coombe, Executive Director

Julie Bolos,
Manager of Administrative Services
Susan Schwanekamp,
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Milissa Brooks-Ojibway,
Collections Manager
Daniel Hartman, Veterans' Memorial
Hall Program Director
Patra McSharry-Sevastiades, Veterans'
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Service Statistics

St. Louis County Historical Society alone served a total of over 111,500 individuals in 2010, through museum visits (52,180 paid and unpaid Depot visitors, as well as 9,950 people attending rental functions in areas enhanced by Society exhibits); archives use at the Northeast Minnesota Historical Center at the University of Minnesota, Duluth (approximately 2,000, per NEMHC Curator Pat Maus); *Rootprints* (Society newsletter) readers – 1,450; website accessing – VMH (8,059 visitors) and Society website (5,230); visitors to Society traveling exhibits (13,760); and attendance at and participation in special events (838). *See inside front page for a more detailed breakdown of these service statistics.*

In addition, our Iron Range affiliated historical organizations report that they served through programs/special events, membership and exhibit visitation totals as follows for 2010:

Ely-Winton H.S. – 299
Hibbing H.S. – 1,457
Minnesota Museum of Mining – 4,849
Sisu Heritage, Inc. – 1,917
Tower-Soudan H.S. – 5,694
Virginia Area H.S. – 3,859
Total Served by Affiliates – 18,075

Financial Statements

A complete copy of the Society's 2010 audited financial statements is available upon request. Key excerpts are provided within this document in center insert. Please call the Society's administrative office at 218-733-7586 or email us at history@thehistorypeople.org with any requests, questions, or concerns.