THE HISTORY MYSTERY

On the Street Where you Live

Whodunit?

by Cecelia Watters McKeig

Several local personalities will be suspects in the History Mystery on Saturday, Dec 30th at the Depot Museum in Bemidji. Who could have perpetrated the dirty deed of murder in this lovely town? To help you judge, you might want to know more about the suspects who were at the Depot at the night of the murder.

Our Master of Ceremonies Deputy Sheriff Jim Cahill is, of course, above suspicion. James Cahill was born about 1866 in Janesville, Minnesota of Irish parents. He was the father of John Joseph Cahill who was Sheriff for 28 years and grandfather to Marie Cahill Luoma. He arrived in Bemidji in the fall of 1900 and established himself as a pioneer in Bemidji. Cahill was appointed warden for the State Game & Fish Commission in October 1908. He had previously been a cruiser for several local lumber companies and had much practical experience in the woods. In 1910, he and his family lived at 817 Minnesota Avenue.

Our third suspect is Sam Cutter, his family, who lived nearby at 1011 Eighth Street. Our third suspect is Sam Cutter, his family, who lived nearby at 1011 Eighth Street, for at least 25 years. They spent the summer months at their summer cottage at Waville across the lake. After retirement, they lived at 915 Dewey Avenue.

Your memberships and tax-deductible donations preserve collections of manuscripts, textiles, maps, photographs, and artifacts. BCHS is a 501(c)(3) organization. All gifts are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Federal EIN: 41-1484638 / State of Minnesota Tax ID: 6530934

Thank you for supporting the Beltrami County Historical Society!
It's also the season of gratitude, and it’s the perfect time of year to make history part of your day. We often overlook things that are right in our own neighborhoods. While people from all over America (and foreign visitors) come to the old Great Northern Depot in Bemidji to visit our museum and to use our research facilities, many people who have lived in the area their entire lives have never stopped in. We hope you take the time to stop in and visit the museum in downtown Bemidji. We also love to hear about other museums you’ve visited recently. Send us a picture or two and a paragraph about your visit to a museum, and we will share your information in our newsletter and/or on our website. And if you’ve never visited the museum closest to where you live, there’s no better time than now.

The mission of the Beltrami County Historical Society is to provide connections to county history through public archives, collections, interpretive exhibits, and programs that educate, invite dialogue, and inspire self-reflection.

**President’s Report**

*by Sharon Geisen*

2017 has been a year of change for us with our past Executive Director, Dan Karalus, moving west to Montana and the arrival of our current director, Gary Rozman, via New York City. Executive Director Gary Rozman and the board have contributed to the success of our many programs, fundraising events, WWI exhibit, and our major fundraiser in October throughout 2017. We will be closing out the year with the “History Mystery” event December 30th that has become a huge family fun event to learn about individuals from Bemidji’s past and enjoy playing the game of Clue. Watch for information about getting tickets.

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**From the Desk of the Director**

*by Gary Rozman*

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operated the first bus line in the city. He
was fascinated with the folklore about
the first Paul Bunyan Winter Carnival on
Lake Bemidji. Foley owned a livery sta-
bble with Claude McIver, whom he later bought out. Foley owned the first auto-
mobile in Bemidji. At first, he couldn’t
buy out. Foley owned the first auto-
diesel ready to go to war his girlfriend Myrtle arrived in Mallard about 1902. There
were lots of stories about the Mallard
madam. She worked seasonally, and
when she left in the spring, the ladies of
the town burned her place down. Ray
Wastewell recalled pulling her car out
of the Mallard Swamp. She had lost
control of her Model T. He remembered her as “being dark eyed, buxom, about
5’7”, 140 pounds and good looking in a
hard sort of way.” Her place of business
in Bagley was destroyed by a group of
disgruntled lumberjacks after she gave a bump of them a drink called “a Mickey
Finn.” They were laid out like cordwood
sticks outside of her house. When they
came to, they took their revenge by
sawing and cutting her house into kin-
dling. Could she have encountered an
old acquaintance while passing through
Bemidji again? Visit us at the History Mystery at the
Northern Depot opens in 1912 but
time to solve a crime! The Great
Northern Depot opens in 1912 but
the depot agent is found murdered
soon after! Six local historical
figures are the prime suspects.
Was it the active socialist?
The respectable business man?
The postal clerk?? Help Deputy
Sheriff Jim Cahill as an Assistant
Detective for this live whodunit
that combines the classic game of
Clue with local history. Enjoy
refreshments, interview Suspects,
and explore the Depot to uncover
cues. Solve The History Mystery and win! Prizes for 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place!
Doors open at 4:00 p.m. &
game starts at 4:30 p.m. Tickets
are $20 for non-members and $15
for members.
One free child admission with
paid adult. Get tickets at the His-
tory Center or by calling 444-3376!
Hurry, space is limited!

3rd

2nd

1st

In 1918 my Uncle Orville was on the
farm family just south of Lake Mills,
Iowa, which is just south of Albert
Lea, MN. He received his draft
notice from the Armed Services for
World War I. When he went to the
railroad station to get on the train
to go to war his girlfriend Myrtle
came to see him off. Orville told Myrtle that if he survived this
case and came home they would have married very prom-
lately as “leisure.” She appears to have
during regular business hours, 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. (members always enter free).
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Past Events

Fall Fundraiser with Clay Jenkinson as Theodore Roosevelt

Semi-Annual Meeting at the Historic Saum School

Recreating photo memories

Lefse fest

Fur Trade exhibit

Anthony Swann, keynote speaker/poet at the First City Reads poetry event

Andy Mack and board member Leo Soukup presenting at the GIS Conference in October at the Sanford Center

CALLING ALL COLLECTORS!

The History Center is looking to expand its collection of Beltrami County Platt books. Please contact us if you possess any you’re willing to part with.

Thank you Georgia Erdmann for creating a new, searchable index. She spent months cataloging all of our past newsletters—they are now cataloged by subject, author and date, and will make research for our visitors much easier.

HELP!

We need a new copier! Please donate to help us with this purchase.

Call Gary at 444-3376 to get your logo here!

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Bemidji—218-751-2430

Keith’s Old River

Sanford Health
1300 Anne St NW
Bemidji—218-751-5430

Northern Psychological Services
759-2825

Raphael’s Bakery Café
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Our fifth suspect is Tinnie Pendergast, another independent woman, teacher, homesteader and daughter of Judge Pendergast. The Pendergasts lived in the same neighborhood as our other suspects. The Pendergast family once lived at 1002 Bemidji Avenue. In 1906, Tinnie and her friends made up a jolly party at Al Hazen’s summer home on the north shore of Lake Plantagenet, east of the outlet into the Schoolcraft river. They had all kinds of fun, fishing and boating. In the party were Misses Dora and Dottie Hazen, Misses Alice, Florence, Tinnie and Bernice Pendergast, Misses May and Duria McCaney. Mrs. Hannah Pendergast was with the young ladies for a time. The Hazens had a large summer cottage, surrounded by a comfortable veranda, but they also set up a good-sized tent for the accommodation of the party. As a widow of Judge Pendergast, Hannah Pendergast lived with the Hazens. In 1906, the Hazens had an old acquaintance while passing through Bemidji. It was a charter member and an officer in the Paul Bunyan Association that staged the first Paul Bunyan Winter Carnival on Lake Bemidji. Foley owned a livery stable with Claude McIver, whom he later bought out. Foley owned the first automobile in the Northwest, having arrived in Bemidji about 1902. There were lots of stories about the Mallard madam. She worked seasonally, and when she left in the spring, the ladies of the town burned her place down. Ray Wastweel recalled pulling her car out of the Mallard Swamp. She had lost control of her Model T. He remembered her as “being dark eyed, buxom, about 5’7”, 140 pounds and good looking in a hard sort of way.” Her place of business in Bagley was destroyed by a group of disgruntled lumberjacks after she gave a bunch of them a drink called a “Mickey Finn.” They were laid out like cordwood sticks outside of her house. When they came to, they took their revenge by burning and cutting her house into kindling. Could she have encountered an old acquaintance while passing through Bemidji again?

In 1918 my Uncle Orville was on the family farm just south of Lake Mills, Iowa, which is just south of Albert Lea, MN. He received his draft notice from the Armed Services for the War that World War I. When he went to the railroad station to get on the train to go to war his girlfriend Myrtle came to see him off. Orville told Myrtle that if he survived this situation and came home they would get married very promptly. Myrtle said “You betcha.” A few months later a lot of people came running down the street yelling “The War is over!” Orville got off the other side of the train and walked home. Orville didn’t rush into things, and it turns out that he and Myrtle were engaged for 50 years. They went out every Friday night that entire time. For the 50th anniversary of their engagement all the relatives had a big party for them. This embarrassed them to the point where they went to the little brown church in the vale and got married. Myrtle then moved into the farmhouse and took care of Orville and his brother Leonard, who were the archetype bachelor Norwegian farmers.

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by Sharon Geisen

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From the Desk of the Director
by Gary Rozman

A new year is almost upon us and we’re turning over lots of new leaves. Our newsletter has a brand new look, courtesy of the very talented Jackie Pechin. We’re also hosting a new traveling exhibit: Fur Trade in Minnesota (but it won’t be up for much longer, so make sure to stop by before February). Once that comes down we’ll be working to fill the space with a new retrospective on Bemidji State University’s upcoming centennial. If you’re working towards a new you, consider our mindfulness meditation class: Saturday, January 20th, 9a.m.

It’s also the season of gratitude, and we have much to be thankful for. Thanks to our many members and volunteers who give us purpose and direction. Thanks to the many sponsors and supporters who help underwrite our programs and events. And thanks to you, dear reader, for taking the time to make history part of your day.

Finally, we’d like to express our thanks to the participants in our upcoming History Mystery. One of our most popular events, it also happens to be one of the most important fundraisers, and the gifted actors who bring Bemidji’s past to life make it an affair you won’t want to miss: Saturday, December 30th, 4p.m.

p.s. Still looking for that perfect stocking-stuffer? Check out our online store: squareup.com/store/beltramihistory

There’s No Better Time to Visit a Museum
by Sue Brun, BCHS Board Member

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RAILROAD MUSEUM OF MINOT

In September, my husband Gary and I spent a few days in Minot, N.D., where our daughter and her husband live. We’d never checked out downtown Minot before, but one of the most interesting things we discovered was its Railroad Museum. During our visit to the museum, we learned the city was named for Henry Davis Minot. In 1886, the Manitoba Railway (later the Great Northern Railway) was expanding west. A “tent city” for railway workers in the valley of the Mouse River became a permanent village that sprang up, like magic, overnight – giving it the nickname, “the Magic City.” In 1887, young Henry Minot was named by James J. Hill as second in command of westward railway expansion. Many believed Minot was destined to step up in Hill’s role, but he died tragically in a railroad accident in 1890, when the train in which he was riding was crushed into by another train, killing him instantly. He was 30 years old.

The Railroad Museum of Minot is a tribute to the early days of westward expansion, to the man whose name the city bears, and to the railroad that became the Great Northern Railway. The exhibit includes photographs, communication systems, baggage carts, model trains, memorabilia, uniforms, four cabooses, and more.

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STAFF
Gary Rozman, Executive Director

NEWSLETTER DESIGN
barebone DESIGN

If your New Year’s resolutions included volunteering more, please consider donating your time to the Beltrami County Historical Society. We are in need of docents, writers, the computer savvy and anyone with clerical/office skills.

Giving back feels great, and you’d be making a positive impact on your community.

Thank you!
The History Mystery

On the Street Where you Live

Whodunit?
by Cecelia Wattles McKeig

Several local personalities will be suspects in the History Mystery on Saturday, Dec 30th at the Depot Museum in Bemidji. Who could have perpetrated the dirty deed of murder in this lovely town? To help you judge, you might want to know more about the suspects who were at the Depot at the night of the murder.

Our Master of Ceremonies Deputy Sheriff Jim Cahill is, of course, above suspicion. James Cahill was born about 1866 in Janesville, Minnesota of Irish parents. He was the father of John Joseph Cahill who was Sheriff for 28 years and grandfather to Marie Cahill Luoma. He arrived in Bemidji in the fall of 1900 and established himself as a pioneer in Bemidji. Cahill was appointed warden for the State Game & Fish Commission in October 1908. He had previously been a cruise for several local lumber companies and had much practical experience in the woods. In 1910, he and his family lived at 817 Minnesota Avenue from about 1904 to 1918. Before 1904, he owned the two lots at 922 Dewey Avenue, which leads us to our next suspect.

Cahill was active in the Episcopal Church and was very active in the neighborhood social life. She was very close to her brother Scott Stewart and his family, who lived nearby at 1111 Beltrami Avenue. Cahill worked as a clerk at several shops including Berman Emporium, the Bazaar, and finally for Wilson’s on Third Street. Her talent was as a milliner. In the 1930’s, she had her shop at 311 Minnesota Ave., in the building currently occupied by Raphae’s, and in the 1940’s, she worked for Wilson’s. How could such a respectable woman ever be suspected of such a crime?

Living nearby was our second suspect, Earle Barker. He and his wife Mina lived at 109 Eighth Street for most of their married life. Who would ever suspect this fine gentleman? Earle Barker was a member of the Thirteenth Minnesota Infantry during the war with Spain, and went with that regiment to the Philippines. On June 28, 1903, Mr. Barker purchased the Mayo drug store and immediately began building up a nice drug business in addition to his already large jewelry and watch repairing trade. E. A. Barker was prominent among the young businessmen. Barker Drug operated on 922 Dewey Avenue in Bemidji. His daughter, Vera, married Harold Naylor who was a postal worker. He was frequently mentioned as the genial and good-natured money order man at the Bemidji post office. He was a postal employee for 35 years. Sam was also a musician. Sam enjoyed a good square dance and was an excellent fiddle player. Vera Cutter, his daughter, attended McPhail School of Music. Vera married Harold Naylor in 1934, and continued a Bemidji music tradition. Sam and Minnie Cutter lived at 1111 Beltrami Avenue for at least 25 years. They spent the summer months at their summer cottage at Waville across the lake.

After retirement, they lived at 915 Dewey Avenue, and after Mrs. Cutter’s death in 1954, he lived at 1409 Bemidji Avenue. Robert and Gloria Tibbetts lived there in the 1970s and ’80s. Tibbetts was active in the Episcopal Church and was very active in the neighborhood social life. She was very close to her brother Scott Stewart and his family, who lived nearby at 1011 Bemidji Avenue. Tibbetts worked as a clerk at several shops including Berman Emporium, the Bazaar, and finally for Wilson’s on Third Street. Her talent was as a milliner. In the 1930’s, she had her shop at 311 Minnesota Ave., in the building currently occupied by Raphae’s, and in the 1940’s, she worked for Wilson’s. How could such a respectable woman ever be suspected of such a crime?

Our third suspect is Sam Cutter, another resident of the neighborhood. Samuel Cutter was a pioneer Bemidji postal worker. He was frequently mentioned as the genial and good-natured money order man at the Bemidji post office. He was a postal employee for 35 years. Sam was also a musician. Sam enjoyed a good square dance and was an excellent fiddle player. Vera Cutter, his daughter, attended McPhail School of Music. Vera married Harold Naylor in 1934, and continued a Bemidji music tradition. Sam and Minnie Cutter lived at 1111 Beltrami Avenue for at least 25 years. They spent the summer months at their summer cottage at Waville across the lake.

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