



BARNES COUNTY QUARTERLY • Winter 2024 • Volume 28, Issue 4 • 701-845-0966

Standing Board Meetings are held the 2nd Thursday of the month at 5PM at the Barnes County Museum.



Valley City Is A National World War II Community!

Way back in March of this year, BCHS friend, Ron Martin, of Fargo, sent our museum curator Wes Anderson an e-mail cluing him in that the National Park Service was accepting submissions for communities to become a WWII Heritage City, and North Dakota wasn't represented yet. But the deadline for submission was fast approaching - May 31st!

Only one American World War II Heritage City can be designated in each state or territory. This National Park Service program honors the contributions of local towns, cities, and counties, as well as commemorates the stories of the men, women, and children whose bravery and sacrifices helped shape the US home front during WWII and still impact our country today.



(Above) Valley City's volunteer Home Guard unit 'Company F' was the first Home Guard unit formed in North Dakota; they were assigned to guard the Hiline Bridge, considered a critical infrastructure.

Back in 2004, the Barnes County Historical Society (BCHS) hosted the Smithsonian's Museums on Main Street traveling exhibit "Produce For Victory: WWII on the Homefront." Ander-

Continued on page 2 -

BRIDGE BUILDERS - \$1000

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WWII Designation, continued from page 1 -

son went all out at that time in his research and local exhibit earning a very positive reputation with the Smithsonian. The museum has all of his voluminous information on file as well as everything Allison Veselka gathered as part of her 'Women at War' research, so select BCHS Board members took it upon themselves to pare it down succinctly for the application. Sandy Hansen took all of that distilled information and combined it with historical and contemporary photos into an impressive final application that was submitted just under the deadline wire.

Valley City has many major and unlikely connections to WWII to be proud of -

Our National Guard Unit, Company G of the 164th Infantry "Americal Division" was the first Army Unit to engage the Japanese on the offense during WWII, distinguishing themselves at Guadalcanal, and Bougainville; they received recognition as the "Americal Marines," and earned a Presidential Unit Citation.

Battery D of the 188th Field Artillery went to Europe and was a part of D-Day, and a part of the Battle of the Bulge as well as the liberation of Nordhausen Concentration Camp.

We were home to Herman Stern, known as North Dakota's Oscar Schindler, who used his own money and influence to bring over 120 German Jews to America, many of them to Valley City. We've worked with the National Holocaust Museum on their exhibit about him working with ND Senator Nye as well as his use of North Dakota honey to sweeten the deal with the Nazis to get as many out as he could.

The Valley City College (now State University) was a hub for many women who joined the military; we have many of their stories thoroughly documented. The college also hosted the Navy's V-12 program for training deck officers. And the Cadet Nurse Corps at our Mercy Hos-

pital worked in partnership with the College at that time for training.

On December 8, 1941, the HiLine Bridge, a major East-West connection for the Northern Pacific Railroad, was guarded by Home Guard Company F - the first of its kind established in North Dakota.

Our local families suffered losses on the Arizona with Winston Hammerud, as well as the Bataan Death March.

Resident of VC and Barnes County, Clifford Klein, was "kidnapped" by the Manhattan Project to work on the detonator for Little Boy at Oak Ridge, Tenn.

Sisters from the local Maryvale Convent were once POWs in France during the war.

Local artist Paul Fjelde created the bust of Abraham Lincoln, North Dakota's gift to Norway in 1914, that became a rallying point in Oslo's Frogner Park for silent protest against Nazi occupation.

We even surrendered three beloved historic cannons to the scrap drive!

There is so much to tell about how WWII affected our community of 7,000 on the plains of North Dakota, and we continue to honor those men and women to this day for their service and sacrifices.

Thanks to Valley City's Mayor Dave Carlsrud, who submitted the application on behalf of the City of Valley City, and ND Governor Doug Burgum, Senators Hoeven and Cramer, and Representative Armstrong who also supported our application.

On Oct 21st, we were informed Valley City had been awarded the designation of WWII Heritage Community! It is an extreme honor for our community to be North Dakota's WWII representative. We'll be working with the City of Valley City to ensure this designation is given the proper attention it deserves. We're humbled to have been chosen. Thank you to everyone who helped make this happen - it truly is a feather in Valley City's cap!



A WWII monument in Veteran's Park on Main Avenue.

PILE DRIVER - \$500 +

Rotary Club
Valley City, ND

Prairie Frame Shop

Hoff & Jan's Upholstery
316 Central Ave N
Valley City, ND

DECK LAYERS - \$250 +

SONS OF NORWAY

Nearly Nu

Jeffrey A. Nathan
251 Central Ave S
Valley City, ND
845-2414

Daffodils for Peace Project Now in Place

Back in August, Jerry Klinger, with the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation (JASHP - the same folks who gave the historical marker in honor of Herman Stern in Veterans Park), proposed another opportunity for Valley City to become the first community in North Dakota to participate in the "Worldwide Daffodil Project."

Resilient, bright, and filled with hope, these daffodils return with a burst of color each spring. They are part of the Worldwide Daffodil Project in memory of the 1.5 million Jewish children who perished in the Holocaust and for all children who suffer in humanitarian crises around the world today.

The project donates the daffodil bulbs and a plaque but required

a place to plant the bulbs as well as a large rock suitable for the plaque. Lacking a yard, the Society partnered with the Valley City Barnes County Public Library to make this living, blooming monument to peace a reality.

BCHS Board Member Lewie Legge donated a large rock and placed it for us. Wes Anderson took it upon himself to plant no less than 250 daffodil bulbs gifted by JASHP in the northwest corner of the Library's yard, purchasing a digger tool for a hand drill and marking each bulb with a stick of spaghetti so he knew where he had been.

We look forward to spring

and the yellow blossoms to come in both remembrance and hope for peace. Thank you Jerry/JASHP, the VCBC Library, Lewie, and Wes.



February 20th, 2025, Lecture: Valley City - an American World War II Heritage City

Join us this February to get the complete story behind Valley City's recent nationally-recognized honor! Last spring, the Barnes County Historical Society Board applied for and received recognition from United States National Parks Service designating Valley City as a World War II heritage Community, one of eight to received this recognition for 2024. Dr. Steven King of Valley City State University, and current president of the Barnes County Historical Society, will present to the community why Valley City received this recognition, what it means for our community, and future plans to tie in with the upcoming 80th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Season 24 BCCHS Lecture Series Continues in January

Mark your calendars for these upcoming presentations!

January 16, 2025 - TBA

February 20, 2025 - Dr. Steven King (VCSU): "Valley City: A National WWII Heritage Community"

March 20, 2025 - TBA

April 17, 2025 - Gail Pederson: "Mid-century Farm Life in Barnes County - An 8mm Film by Peggy Pederson"

May 15, 2025 - TBA

June 19, 2025 - (Annual Meeting) - TBA

If anyone has something they'd like to present, please let us know!

The new and improved Season 24 Presentations come courtesy of AARP's Community Challenge Grant which allowed for a new AV system upstairs. Come SEE and HEAR the improvements!

DECK LAYERS


Legge
Portable
Milling



721 W Main St
Valley City, ND
701-845-3071



RIVETERS - \$100 +



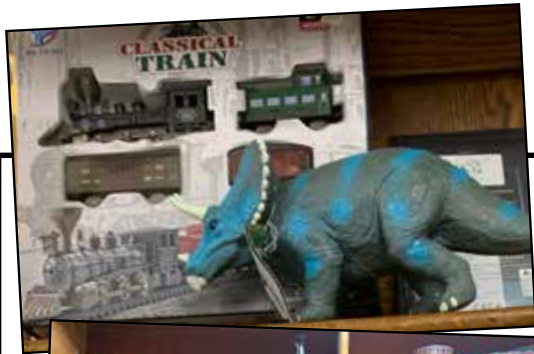
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Remember the Museum's 'Timepiece Gift Shop' this Gift-Giving Season!

When you're holiday shopping downtown this Christmas season, remember the Timepiece Gift Shop located right inside the Barnes County Museum doors. The gift shop is an ongoing extension of museum fundraising where all proceeds go back towards helping the museum's continued operations. Staying within the confines of our 501c3 determination for history, our

fundraising activities (sales) must reflect our mission. We've gone out of our way to seek out and stock some really unique items that are not easily found anywhere else or for a better price! You'll find items for any age range and interest: train, plane and dinosaur paraphernalia, local pottery & jewelry, specialized tees, hats and sweatshirts, rocks, books, and items from the past to add to your own collections or to spark treasured memories. Come take a look and know your purchases help our Historical Society. And remember to get a copy of the Barnes County 150th book while supplies last!

Oh, Deer! Joe Lahlum's 'Unlucky Threesome' on Display Now

Joe Lahlum (shown right) from Green Valley, Ariz., has a unique item of curiosity he's loaned to the museum for a short time. It is the unlikely mounted specimens of three deer bucks who got their antlers inexorably entangled in combat which ultimately resulted in their deaths.

Discovered south of Woodworth, North Dakota, in 1961 by hunters (one of whom was from Valley City), the recently deceased threesome was mounted as found. Lahlum purchased the mount in 1978 but is now downsizing his collection. He has plans to donate it someplace where it will be appreciated for the unique story it tells.



RIVETERS - \$100 +

Pizza Corner



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North Dakota



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Kevin Klein Prop.
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ND Museum of Art Tour, 'The Great Open, Photographs from North Dakota' Showing Dec. 5th - Jan. 2nd

The Barnes County Museum will be hosting a touring photography exhibit from the North Dakota Museum of Art for the month of December. This exhibition by creative partners Alex Webb and Rebecca Norris Webb brings together two linked yet distinct photographic visions of our state.

As a fellow Dakotan, Rebecca Norris Webb takes a poetic and intimate look at the natural world of North Dakota. Her work often explores those places where the natural world and one's inner landscape meet, especially during times of change, upheaval, and shifting weathers—both meteorological and metaphysical. Her storytelling serves as a map for when one's loss seems to have its own geography, most notably with her book and NDMOA exhibition, *My Dakota: An Elegy for My Brother Who Died Unexpectedly*. Drawn to the great openness of the grass prairie and the surreal beauty of the South Dakota badlands while grieving, Norris Webb began photographing in the North Dakota badlands. As she continued traveling across the state in August 2022, she was guided by North Dakota's ever-shifting light and weathers: from the dark stormy skies over a luminous yellow canola field near Starkweather—to the



Sunflowers, South of Lake Sakakawea, ND, 2022 by Rebecca Norris Webb

Gumbo Lilies near Medora, which bloom at night from the crevices of the badlands.

Meanwhile, Alex Webb, raised predominantly in New England, has been described as a "shadow sociologist" by writer Pico Iyer. The author of some 20 books, he has photographed in more than 50 countries and 200 cities around the world, sometimes commissioned by museums and other cultural institutions as well as such magazines as

National Geographic and The New York Times Magazine. Webb takes a more global and urban approach to North Dakota. During two trips to the state in August 2019 and August 2022, he photographed in the parks, neighborhoods, and flea markets of the more populated cities and towns of the state. He also photographed at various festivals and other events across the state, as well as neighborhood celebrations.

In order to create a more multi-layered portrait of North Dakota, the creative couple have interwoven their work in this exhibition—powwows and sunflower fields, rodeos and buffalo herds, twilight street scenes and badlands nightscapes. The Great Open is their seventh collaboration.

BCHS 3rd Annual Pancake Feed January 20th



It's our annual Pancake feed/fundraiser to benefit our local museum. This year, funds will be focused on exhibits and ways to highlight our WWII Heritage Community designation; it is also in memory of museum benefactor Lowell Busching. Please join us at the Valley City Eagles Club (Riverside Room) from 4:30-7:00Ppm. Swedish pancakes, traditional hot cakes, sausage, toppings, Lewie's homemade Boxelder syrup, and coffee/water on hand. Members of the VCSU Phi Alpha Theta History Club will be there to assist. Bring the family, bring a friend, big kids & little kids, grandmas and grandpas ... all are welcome! Suggested donation is \$10 per person but most important, it's your presence that matters because it truly takes a village.

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Lions Club

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Welcome Our New Employees, Marley and Reed!



My name is Marley Peterson. I'm originally from Jamestown, ND, but I relocated to Valley City to attend Valley City State University (VCSU), where I am majoring in History and minoring in Library Sciences. I chose these fields of study because I have my heart set on becoming an archivist one day. In the Barnes County Historical Society (BCHS) I currently work as an assistant at the Barnes County Museum, for Wes Anderson. In this role, I have a variety of responsibilities, including cataloging artifacts, filing documents, helping to create displays, and maintaining the museum's cleanliness. Recently, I've been receiving training in cataloging for the library portion of the BCHS from Lorna Olson, which has been an amazing opportunity that I have been quite enjoying. I genuinely enjoy my job at the museum, as it is an environment where I can gain hands-on experience in my field while still in college, it can be pretty quiet which is also splendid. It also has opened the opportunity to learn more about museum operations, which I have found fascinating. Most would find the quiet of the museum relatively boring, but there are moments I find quite amusing and entertaining. On a personal note, I especially enjoy the self-playing piano at the museum—it's a delightful feature that adds a unique charm to the space that I have seen many people enjoy using.



My name is Reed McConnaughey, and I am currently a junior at Valley City High School. I've lived in Valley City for the last 7 years, moving from the small town of Fessenden in Wells County. History has always been a very large

passion of mine, and I plan to further my understanding and knowledge of it by majoring in History Education. I was brought into the museum in August, becoming an assistant to Wes, and it is an opportunity I'm nothing short of grateful for. I assist in creating displays, finding and reading through our various documents, general upkeep with the cleanliness, and the various projects that Wes does to keep the museum in good shape. I could not ask for a better opportunity to assist in my future than the one I am given, and I can say that I find enjoyment in working at the museum every day I'm there.

Busching House Sold, Completing One of Our Largest Donations

Museum benefactor Lowell Busching passed away Oct. 2023, leaving much of his estate to the Society, including his house full of a lifetime of collecting. The Museum picked a few things to add to our collections, mostly about his time in the service and with NASA, and as a citizen of Valley City. The Nearly Nu had 2nd pick, and from there others stepped in to help.

Servicemaster did a heroic job of cleaning the place top to bottom and James Jensen of ReMax stepped in to help sell it going so far as to personally trim up the overgrown outside landscaping for better immediate curb appeal (thank you, James!). A buyer made a cash offer and a sale was made for \$92,000; this with his life insurance policy of \$16,000, makes Lowell the 2nd larg-

est donor behind Orville and Eva Barber with the donation of The Fair Store building in 1996.

What will the Society do with this donation? Great question. There are NO grants anywhere for the humdrum daily/yearly expenditures for staffing, building maintenance, or general upkeep. Looking forward, Lowell's donation will go towards keeping the museum staffed and fully functioning with what it physically needs to succeed. While it's not a flashy designation, it is definitely what is truly needed for us to stay open. He supported us in life with his volunteerism and he now continues to generously support us hereafter. Thank you, Lowell. This is a deserved legacy for a kind and gentle man we're proud to call friend.

RIVETERS - \$100 +

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MEMORIALS THE LAST TWO QUARTERS -

- Bruce Schmidt - *In memory of Lola Bruns*
- Gene & Noreen Smestad - *In memory of Lorraine Fornes and Darlene Fjelstad*
- Harvey & Carol Hochhalter - *In memory of Paul Vangerud, Don Nelson and Avis Klinkhammer*
- James Jensen - *In memory of Kathy Hanson and Richard Birkliid*
- James Jensen Realty - *In memory of Lowell Busching*
- John & Sonia Langemo - *In memory of Harvey Hochhalter and Carol Peterson*
- Jon & Lori Jury - *In memory of Lowell Busching*
- Juanita Baumgartner - *In memory of Rosemary Heinze Odegaard*
- Lonney & Jodie Scherr - *In memory of Harvey Hochhalter*
- Lori Ann Lahlum - *In honor of Howard & Audrey Lahlum*
- Martin Warborg - *In memory of Bob & Elaine Beyer, and Lorny & Gerry Behm*
- Mary Hagen - *In memory of Harvey Hochhalter*
- Robert & Faye Bubach - *In memory of Harvey Hochhalter*
- Beverly Velure - *In memory of Harvey Hochhalter*

THANK YOU to these volunteers! -

CURRENT MAIN FLOOR HOSTS: Emmie Fieberger, Cindi Malsam, George Dutton, Arleen Andrus (she helps keep the place clean too!), Bill Cochran (also works on the Hi-Line), Jeff Matson, Jeff Bergner (works on Hi-Line/helps with visitors).

Sandy Hansen has come to sit a spell in an emergency as has **Madeline Luke**. Sandy also helps with the newsletter and board minutes and helps Wes with writing projects once in a while.

Craig Ranum comes to vacuum regularly each Monday morning for a while. **Tom Overn** helps on a few projects now and again. We're glad he's back after his fall last April. **Becky Heise** is still the "Museum Researcher" who can find just about anything.

Dean Colville is still with us through the NICOA program. He's been painting and painting everywhere. It's a job that needed doing! Looks great Dean! **Karen Winkler** was with us through NICOA for a time as well, but has moved on to elsewhere.

Lila Bemis turns 105!

Lila Bemis was born on March 18, 1920, which means she will be celebrating 105 years on this earth very soon. Lila was an integral part of the operations of the Barnes County Historical Society when it was in the West Main location. She served as docent many weekends, did research, compiled and indexed photo albums, and sewed linen garment bags for clothing items in the collections. She took part in archival workdays, participated in workshops on conservation of artifacts and photographs, and helped set up exhibits and displays. Overall, Lila donated hundreds, perhaps thousands of hours over the years to help the BCHS. Cards can be sent to her at SMP St. Raphael 979 Central Ave N, Valley City, ND 58072.

James Stiles - Generous Donor

The name James Stiles may not ring any local bells, because he isn't from here, he's from Enderlin. If you've been on the Society's Facebook page or on "Valley City, What do you remember?," you can see many of the interesting photos James has been finding on ebay related to the area. He's been purchasing these items, colorizing and then posting his creations for all to enjoy. He then sends the real objects to the museum for our collection!

Thank you James for your creativity and kind generosity!

Farewell to Harvey Hochhalter



Former BCHS President, Harvey Hochhalter, passed away on October 21, 2024. He was 85. Harvey was president for several years and oversaw many improvements to the museum, including the extension of the balcony and stairway railings. He and his wife, Carol, were constant attendees at museum lectures and events and always supportive of the museum in many ways. Our condolences to Carol and their family for their loss.

RIVETERS

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museum
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**Dear Barnes County Historical Society
(and Wes especially!),**

THANK YOU so much for hosting us for another round of local history speeches. We appreciate the space, time, resources, and hospitality. We are amazed at what our museum offers to families, students, and residents. Thank you especially to Wes for his seemingly infinite background knowledge about anything we ask of him! We look forward to coming back next fall!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Shanenko & COMM 110 Students

Barnes County Historical Society
315 Central Ave. North
Valley City, ND 58072

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BCHS MEMBERSHIP FORM

_____ I am enclosing membership support at the following level:

- Bridgebuilders (\$1000)
- Pile Driver (\$500)
- Deck Layers (\$250)
- Riveters (\$100)
- Business Supporter (\$50)
- Family (\$35)
- Individual (\$20)
- Sustaining Member (At least \$5 monthly by automatic withdrawal)

Name _____

Current Address _____

Phone or email _____

_____ I am interested in serving as a volunteer.

_____ Please have a board member contact me with additional information regarding the Barnes County Historical Society Endowment Foundation.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT
OF THE BARNES COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

315 Central Ave N • Valley City, ND 58072
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Barnes County Historical Society