White Bear’s Highway 61

What we now know as Minnesota Highway 61 was once known as State Highway 1 and locally for a short time as Stickley Boulevard – named in honor of Warren Stickley, publisher of the *White Bear Press*.

The original highway that ran through White Bear was a meandering route that came into town on the south end near the intersection of present day Highway 61 and County Road E. The road ran just east of its current alignment. It wound along Hoffman Road and meandered over to the western edge of Goose Lake past the 1885 White Bear Town Hall.
AERIAL VIEWS OF THE WHITE BEAR LAKE AREA – CIRCA 1950 – BOTH SHOW SECTIONS OF HIGHWAY 61
before coming back east toward White Bear Lake where it followed what is known today as Lake Avenue along its shore.

This early route continued along Lake Avenue until the intersection with Stewart Avenue where the highway headed north and eventually connected to the route that we know as Highway 61 just north of the downtown area of White Bear Lake.

Many adjustments have been made to the path taken by Highway 61 through the years. After nearly a decade of debate and planning the Minnesota Department of Transportation realigned the route through the business district of White Bear in the mid-1930s.

This large-scale project plotted the main route directly through the downtown area along the path of the Northern Pacific Railway. Significant changes included the removal of several sets of tracks, the construction of a new Northern Pacific Depot and the subsequent demolition of the original 1868 depot in August of 1935. The highway was a physical symbol of the transition from rail travel to automobile.

In the early 1950s, the area near Goose Lake was redesigned and a portion of the lake filled creating Goose Lake and Little Goose Lake. This allowed the highway to be straightened right through the two lakes.
From Our President...Peter Reis

And so it is autumn again. As temperatures drop and the leaves change color it puts extra spring in our step and is uplifting. At the same time, dying foliage sends a quiet message about our own mortality. I will be 72 this month - and I lost my oldest sister Barbara (WBHS Class of 1944) in February. Then in that on-going journey called life, we greeted with joy a new grandson, Liam, a few months later.

Yet another reality of fall is the start of the new school year. In my own personal collections I have discovered a rare interior photo of the 4th and 5th grade classroom in the old Webster School located on the southeast corner of 5th and Stewart. The photo and my recollections of the school will be featured in the next newsletter. If you have images or stories about Webster School that you would like to share, please contact our Executive Director Sara Hanson at 651-407-5327.

This will be my last writing as President of the WBLAHS, my term ends this year. I will continue to write an occasional column in this newsletter about “the way it was”. It has been a high privilege to serve you.

-Peter Reis

A Special Thank You to Our Hometown Business Members

Proudly Serving

The White Bear Lake Area Historical Society is proud to serve the following communities:

- Birchwood
- Dellwood
- Mahtomedi
- White Bear Lake
- White Bear Township

Knutsen Auto
Manitou Station
Matschke Insurance
Mélange
Mortgage Works
Mueller Lake Mortuary
Sunbear Salon & Spa
Ursula’s Wine Bar & Café
Vacation Sports
White Bear Country Inn/Rudy’s
Red Eye Grill
White Bear Eye Clinic

Organizations:
Lakeshore Players
White Bear Lake Lion’s Club

For information on how your business can be a WBLAHS Hometown Business Member please contact Sara at 651-407-5327

Auto Glass Express
Commercial Printing
Hisdahl, Inc.
Hoffman Corner Heating & Air Conditioning
Judy King Estate Sales

ROUOUD OF OUR HISTOY
Proud of Our Community
HOME/TOWN BUSINESS

Proudly Serving

If you have a story, pictures, or any information that you would like to share, please contact Sara at 651-407-5327
The 2010 Historic Photo Calendars Have Arrived!

The ever popular calendar of Favorite Images from the Historical Society’s Archives are available for purchase at the Depot Museum and Mahtomedi City Hall. At just $7.95 they make a great stocking stuffer or hostess gift for that holiday party! Can’t make it to the Depot? We’ll mail one out for a $2 S&H charge. Supplies are limited—call today to order yours at 651-407-5327.

Recent Donations

The Historical Society has been the recipient of several wonderful donations to our collections recently, including:

♦ Original 1960s Amundson Duck Boat
  donated by Scott & Norma Wilson
♦ Pamphlet – “Historic Highlights of the Bald Eagle Women’s Club, 1925-1975”
  donated by Keith Smelser
♦ Three Photos of Beach School
  donated by Donna Hall
♦ 1976 Bicentennial White Bear Flags
  donated by the estate of Margueritte Parker

Donations accepted for the White Bear Lake Area Historical Society’s collections must pertain to the area surrounding White Bear Lake and meet other requirements. For more information on what those requirements are, please contact Sara at 651-407-5327. Without donations like these the collections and resources of the White Bear Lake Area Historical Society would not grow. They are greatly appreciated!

Hometown Business – Manitou Station

The new Manitou Station restaurant at the intersection of Washington Square occupies a particularly historic piece of property downtown White Bear. The first business on the site was the Park Place Hotel operated by Mary Conroy in the last part of the nineteenth century. As White Bear’s booming resort era came to a close, the hotel building was divided and a portion was removed to Banning Avenue and is now the home of Sew What and a larger portion was moved west to its current location as a private residence on Bald Eagle Avenue just north of the intersection with Fourth Street.

In 1919 Jacob and Harold Reed purchased the property and opening J. A. Reed Oil Company. By 1940 the business was doing well and a major remodel was accomplished. That structure was eventually torn down in 1962 to make way for a modern service station. Most recently the site has been home to a gas and convenience store before that building was razed to make way for the new construction.

The following individuals have made a donation in memory of Mary Ann Patterson. Thank you!

Barbara & Steve Judd

Facebook.com/whitebearhistory
Historic House Tour Great Again in 2009!

The White Bear Area Historic House Tour, now in its third year, continues to build community pride and enthusiasm. More than 500 people visited the ten fabulous homes on tour this year during a beautiful September afternoon.

It is with gratitude that we recognize our Signature Sponsor, Sarah Boo, DDS PA and our house sponsors, homeowners and supporters as well as the more than 150 volunteers necessary to make this event a success!
House Sponsors & Event Supporters
Mark Ashby Group
Mainstreet, Inc.
Pat McGrath
Joy Erickson
Kathy Madore
Coldwell Banker Burnet
Press Publications
Jamie Ogden Team
Edina Realty
Auto Glass Express
Flowers By Renee
Veolia Environmental Services
White Bear Country Inn & Rudy’s
Redeye Grill
White Bear Lake Lion’s Club

Kathy Madore – House Sponsor & Event Supporter

Coldwell Banker Burnet – House Sponsor & Event Supporter

Press Publications – House Sponsor & Event Supporter

Edina Realty – House Sponsor & Event Supporter

House Tour Guests Enjoy the Day

Continued on page 8
The following was presented to the WBLAHS Board by Jenni Corbett, current WBLAHS Board Member and owner of a home on the White Bear Area Historic House Tour 2009. It is our pleasure to share it with you!

I want to express my gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the house tour. I had no idea just how special this experience would be for me. I even expressed some apprehension and concern to the tour committee that the tour guests would feel that my house wouldn’t “stand up” to their expectations of something worthy of display on an historical house tour.

My husband and I both believe that every person, every place, every thing has a story worthy of telling and this gave me the opportunity for my house to tell it’s tale. And it allowed us to express our enjoyment and appreciation of craftsmanship, heirlooms and family treasures, our interest in sharing history and listening to the stories and memories of others. I also feel these things are an embodiment of everything that the Historical Society “is” and what I have enjoyed and looked forward to experiencing in these past few years through my participation.

I moved here four years ago without any connection to the area. But I found the history fascinating, the tales enchanting and my own house represented all of that to me. But fearing this would not be as apparent to others I didn’t want to disappoint the ticket holders, I printed off almost 900 pages of a newsletter collection of “The Chautauquan” by Theodore Flood so that I would have “some thing of interest” which might at least bring notice to the historical significance of the area surrounding my home.

On the day of the tour, just 15 minutes into the tour… I realized the story power of my home was keeping people engaged and touring every square foot of my little house! I hid the newsletter pages in a nearby cabinet and then just relished in sharing stories for the next six hours. When the last guest had left, I sat down and looked around and honestly felt my house say thank you, thank you for showing your pride, thank you for telling my story.

P.S. I want to send out a sincere thank you to the person who toured my house that Sunday and later brought an anonymous gift… when I got home from work the next day, I found an old Coca Cola bottle at my front door. Someone visiting my home had seen my very small start to a Coca Cola collection and felt it needed something truly old and special added to it! Thank you!

This summer the WBLAHS had the opportunity to partner with students from White Bear Lake Area High School’s National Honor Society as part of our ongoing photo scanning project. Through partnerships such as these the collections of the WBLAHS continue to grow and the students gain valuable experience through their service hours.

Special thanks to Alexi Wenzel, Samantha Yang and Jessica Starfield!
Jean’s Jottings...from Jean Woodberry, Program Coordinator

The Fillebrown House dressed in her red and green is the perfect venue to take a step back in time for the holidays. Do you long for a chance to slow down from the frenzied holiday pace and savor peaceful moments? We are offering several opportunities to help you quiet your spirit and interact with those you cherish.

Pajama Story Time
Last year’s Pajama Story Time for children was an evening that engaged all of the senses. Attendees tasted cookies and cider, smelled the scent of pine, listened to holiday stories, gazed upon the beautifully lit Christmas tree and felt the warmth of parents and grandparents who had brought them.

Children of all ages came to the house snuggled in their pajamas, sat in front of the tree and enjoyed the dramatic readings by professional actors from the organization, BookPALS. It was a joy for us to see children enjoying an old-fashioned holiday tradition and one we hope to recreate year after year.

Christmas Tea
During the Great Depression, the Fillebrown House, known as the Red Chalet, was the site of a tearoom. In remembrance of this time, take an hour to sip tea, enjoy the decorated house, and listen to live music during our Holiday Tea.

To help prepare the Fillebrown for these events we are inviting volunteers to decorate Saturday, November 28th from 9am to noon. Join us for refreshments, holiday music and socializing while we “spruce” up the House for the season.

Please check the calendar of events in this issue of The Lake Area Preserver, visit our website at www.whitebearhistory.org, join our email list or find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/whitebearhistory for specific information for each of these offerings and much more!

Your Society In Action

The WBLAHS has been busy this fall at several community events including White Bear Township’s 2nd Annual Township Day on September 12th and Mahtomedi’s 1st Annual Zephyr Days on September 26th. At each of these festivities we had the opportunity to participate with a booth allowing us to showcase our many projects and efforts toward preserving the history of the five communities we serve.

Thank you to all of those who stopped by to see us at these great events. If you missed the fun this year, be on the lookout next fall for the 2010 dates! Or better yet, join our email list or become a fan of the WBLAHS on Facebook and get updates sent right to you!

Fireworks cap off the Second Annual Township Day Celebration on September 12, 2009
From the Director’s Desk...

Fall is upon us again and each year during this time the White Bear Lake Area Historical Society holds our annual meeting to reflect on the accomplishments and challenges of the past year and look forward to the coming year and all of its possibilities.

This fall we begin our 40th year of preserving our area’s history for present and future generations. It was in September of 1970 that the White Bear Lake Area Historical Society was officially incorporated. Prior to that formal process there was a cadre of committed volunteers who recognized the importance of the stories this community has to share and spearheaded the efforts to gather and preserve them. For this we thank you!

As we look forward to this milestone in 2010 the WBLAHS is taking stock of where we have been and where we are headed. Our accomplishments are many and our plans for the future are ambitious. There are always more stories, photos and artifacts to collect, preserve and share and in today’s world there are constantly changing ways to do so.

Your Historical Society works hard to connect with our members, our community and our visitors on many levels. We encourage you to check out one of our programs, do a little research on your family, take a tour or your community or pick up one of the many offerings of local history books and enjoy all that we have to offer!

Happy Fall!
-Sara

Mission Statement of the White Bear Lake Area Historical Society

The White Bear Lake Area Historical Society connects the community to its past, fostering an understanding and appreciation for our history. We fulfill our mission by....

- Gathering and maintaining historical information and artifacts. We are safe keepers of our heritage.
- Educating the community about our history. We are the community storytellers.
- Encouraging personal and community responsibility for preserving our physical links to the past. We are advocates for historical preservation.

Have you joined our email newsletter yet?

- Stay up to date on Historical Society happenings
- Help us put your contributions to better use
- And promote a more environmentally friendly community.

Email meg@whitebearhistory.org to join.

DID YOU KNOW...

- The WBLAHS currently has 450+ members – more than any other local historical society in the state?
- We have a growing email contact list that has topped 385 subscribers?
- You can find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/whitebearhistory?
- We have a crew of more than 20 volunteers who commit their time on a regular basis and a roster of over 100 that can be called on for special projects and events?
- Our number of contacts via email, telephone and in person are over 5,000 per year?

Learning from Our Past, Preserving for Our Future.
Join Or Renew Your Membership At The $80 Level Or Higher And Receive A Copy Of The Book

*Tales of the Road: Highway 61*

by Cathy Wurzer!

Join or renew at the Patron level or higher and this free gift is yours! If your current membership expires in 2010, your membership will simply be extended one year from that date. Please complete the enclosed form and return with your check or credit card information to WBLAHS, PO Box 10543, White Bear Lake, MN 55110. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions please contact us at 651-407-5327.

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*WHITE BEAR LAKE AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION*

**NAME**

_________________________________________________________________________

**ADDRESS**

_________________________________________________________________________

**CITY** ___________________________ **STATE** _____ **ZIP** __________

**PHONE** ________________________ **EMAIL** __________________________

DON’T FORGET TO ADD YOUR EMAIL TO RECEIVE OUR E-NEWSLETTERS!

**CHECK LEVEL OF MEMBERSHIP:**

—— INDIVIDUAL $20  —— FAMILY/HOUSEHOLD $30  —— PATRON $80

—— SPONSOR $150  —— PRESERVATIONIST $300  —— AERIAL $500

—— SUMMIT $1000  —— OTHER $________

Send with check to WBLAHS, PO Box 10543, White Bear Lake, Minnesota 55110-0543
Calendar of Events
For the latest info on these events: Visit www.whitebearhistory.org or www.facebook.com/whitebearhistory or call 651-407-5327

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20th**  Tales of the Fillebrown House, free event, call to reserve a seat, 6:30-8pm

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29th**  WBLAHS Annual Meeting at the White Bear Country Inn, 6-9pm, reservations required: 651-407-5327

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7th**  WBLAHS Quarterly Crop Scrapbooking Event at the White Bear City Hall-pre-register at whitebearhistory.org/scrapbooking.htm or by calling 651-407-5327, 10am-10pm

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12th**  Civil War Talk, Fillebrown House, free event, call to reserve a seat, 7-8:30pm

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28th**  Christmas Decorating Party, Fillebrown House, 9am-noon

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4th**  Member's Christmas Party, Fillebrown House, 6-9pm

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8th**  Children's Story Time at the Fillebrown House, 6:30-7:30pm, children ages 2-10, $2 per person

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12th**  Holiday Tea at the Fillebrown House, 1-3pm, call to reserve a seat, $19