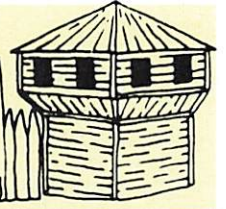


W

WALSH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



APRIL 2013

WALSH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Remembrances of Harald N. Bliss –

Science instructor at Grafton High School,
Grafton, ND – 1942-1960

Compiled by Rosanne E. Bliss – Class of 1961

When Jean Bodmer asked me to submit an article of remembrances of my father, I decided the best way to accomplish this was to contact former students for their input. I received the following wonderful collection of stories and comments. Although each person gives their unique perspective, there are common themes that consistently validate my father's character qualities and teaching skills and the tremendous influence he had on his students, an influence that remains to this day.

John Kerian – Class of 1961

Harald Bliss was respected and appreciated by everyone for many reasons. For me, besides his obvious talent for teaching and inspiring students, he was someone who sincerely cared about me. One time he caught me letting someone copy from my test paper. He didn't speak to me about it until after class and then privately let me know of his disappointment in me in such a way that I knew I could never do anything like that again, and I haven't. I didn't understand until his funeral that his exemplary character was due to his strong Christian commitment. He always inspired you to be the best that you could be.

Jerry Blanchard – Class of 1961

I took biology from Harald Bliss at Grafton High School. We were studying human blood circulation and in the test we had to trace a drop of blood throughout the system. I failed the test with a near zero! Mr. Bliss came to me when the tests were returned and said "I know you can do better because your brother and sisters did. If I let you take the test over, would you promise to study this time?" I did and got a 100! This was a turning point in my life and human anatomy was mine from that day on. As a sophomore at UND I took a five hour junior anatomy class for physical therapists and physical education majors taught by a medical physician and received 100's on every exam and he actually took my grade out of the curve! At chiropractic college I received the award for the highest overall grade point average in anatomy courses over the four years of study. I believe that I am who I am today because Mr. Bliss saw me or who I might be and not for who I was. I made him a promise and am glad I kept it.

Sharon Wilson Martens – Class of 1960

Sharon recalls a dramatic incident when she was in Harald Bliss's chemistry lab carrying out an assignment of making alcohol in a still which had copper components. She evidently gave it too much

heat and all of a sudden there was a loud bang as the still exploded. Principal Larry Panek came running into the room visibly alarmed. Mr. Bliss, on the other hand, calmly turned around in his desk chair to make certain no one was hurt. Then he quietly came over to Sharon and gently said "You need to be more careful" and added as he surveyed the scene, "You probably better clean this up."

Ruthann Mlcoch – Class of 1960

Ruthann remembers chemistry lab as well, but she said it was a subject she just couldn't get at all. She was frustrated and frazzled and worried that she would blow the place up. She recalls how Mr. Bliss was so kind and patient and somehow with his support and encouragement, she passed the course even though she did not go on to major in chemistry!

Joanne Walters Schroeder – Class of 1960

Harald Bliss, my high school chemistry and physics teacher, had a very positive influence on my life. He entered my life when I did not have a lot of academic confidence or a clear direction of where I was headed. He cared for his students and I was blessed to be his student. You could tell that he loved what he did and wanted each of us to go on this learning journey. He knew that there was something to learn from chemistry and physics for everyone whether college bound or not. It was not just learning facts to pass the course but concepts that would enable us to live life and understand the world around us. Mr. Bliss always had time: time to answer our questions, time for us to work in the lab even into the evening. He was willing to let students work together to learn from each other, and gave us fun projects to do that would teach a concept even though we did not always grasp the concept. He gave one such project to me and his daughter, Joy Bliss, who was my lab partner. We were to tie stones along a string and drop

BLISS: See page 2

BLISS: Continued from page 1

the string from the stairwell at Grafton Central. I had no idea what I was doing or why, but I have thought of that project a great deal over the years. Even though I enjoyed his classes, I did not realize how much I was learning until I went on to the University of Colorado School of Pharmacy. There my first chemistry course was a repeat of high school chemistry and I realized I had indeed learned a lot. Yes, Harald Bliss was one of several positive influences in my life. I have a tremendous respect for him. We are all blessed with gifts and talents and are doubly blessed when someone helps us find them and guides us in how to use them.

Delores Mohagen Fast – Class of 1960

How fortunate I was to have Harald Bliss as my teacher in several science classes. He inspired us to think and learn with his gentle, quiet manner. I recall that in physics class he would sometimes make up problems for us to solve. He made them personal by using names of students in the problems. For example, we would picture a classmate or ourselves pushing something up an incline or lifting a rock. He expected us to do well and enhanced our learning experiences by having us keep notebooks with class notes and drawings. I still have some of these notebooks and they bring back wonderful memories.

Susan Countryman Torkelson – Class of 1960

There were many brilliant scientists in our class, but I was not one of them. Yet with Mr. Bliss's patient and gentle manner, he made science classes fun and productive even for me. With the excellent background that I obtained, I actually did graduate from college with a Bachelor of Science degree. An especially fond memory were the science projects my brother Gerry and I did under Mr. Bliss's guidance. Even my dad loved working on them with us, so thanks to Mr. Bliss our family had some very worthwhile memories.

Robert Torkelson – Class of 1960

The quiet, patient and encouraging teaching style I experienced in Mr. Bliss's high school science classes started me on the path that led to 34 years of college chemistry teaching. Whenever I received compliments for my teaching, I always shared the story of my high school chemistry teacher and said "If I can teach half as well as Mr. Bliss, I will have a successful teaching career." I was so pleased to share this with Harold when he and his wife Edna and daughter Rosanne visited in our Cottage Grove, MN home in 1991 (one year before Harald Bliss died).

Rita Williamson Soine – Class of 1960

What a myriad of thoughts and emotions go through my head when I hear that name Mr. Bliss (I could never call him Harald even now at my tender age of 70). He was a man of great dignity who imbued his students with confidence that enabled them to obtain their goals. He respected his students enormously (though not always deserved) and he had a huge reservoir of patience and kindness never to be duplicated by mankind. Mr. Bliss thoroughly knew his subject matter, but he knew the needs of his students more. I remember that he offered two kinds of physics classes: one for students who really wanted to learn physics and one for students who felt they needed that class to help them in college but really did not care that much about physics itself. You can probably guess which one I chose and am I grateful. He gave each of us the opportunity to instruct a one-hour class on a chosen subject matter. Wow! It knocked my socks clean off, for it was then I realized that education was going to be my ballgame. Mr. Bliss, I thank you for the lessons you taught us in being a caring person, for the model of excellence in teaching you exemplified, and for sharing your gifts so very open heartedly. Blessings on your memory.

Lee Kieley – Class of 1960

I have quoted this truism that I learned from Harald Bliss in the late 1950s nearly a bazillion times verbatim in the last 55 years: "You can't count the day a loss IF you learn something, even if it is from a mistake." This statement came from the following incident. Harald

Bliss had given us a chemistry test in which he told us to mix some chemicals to 'point 9 percent' normal. I heard 9 percent and mixed to that concentration. The experiment did NOT work. He told me to come back to the lab at 4:00 and redo the test. He 'walked' me through my hearing/thinking process, and when it worked out right, he gave me the above truism. I have never forgotten it and will keep quoting it for many more years whenever doo-doo happens!!

Darlene Rogalla Dyrud – Class of 1957

I attended school in Grafton until I finished eighth grade and we moved to Grand Forks. I remember Mr. Bliss with fondness. Once when I was doodling in study hall, he asked to see my doodles. He never scolded me, and later suggested to my mom that maybe I could get a job tinting photos during the summer. We moved that summer of 1953, but I would hear many good stories of Mr. Bliss' skill as a teacher. I thought of him when I recently read this in a magazine: "As the blossom can't tell what becomes of its fragrance, we can't tell what becomes of our influence."

Glenn Lykken – Class of 1957

After all has been said about Harald Bliss, it finally dawned on me what the distinguishing and edifying aspect of his teaching was! Through his tireless efforts in leading field trips, directing science clubs and science fairs and allowing students to work on projects in the lab on weekends and after school in the evenings, "he instilled in us THE LOVE TO DO SCIENCE!" And that, in my opinion, says it all! (Glen is professor emeritus from the Department of Physics and Astrophysics at UND.)

Lowell Lykken – Class of 1954

Lowell attended National Science Fairs in 1953 and 1954 and went on to have a career in electrical engineering due to Harald Bliss' influence. He writes the following tribute: "Mr Harald Bliss was a beacon of light in the Grafton community for years. As an accomplished and dedicated science teacher, a science fair pioneer, and a person of the highest character and moral standards, he provided guidance and inspiration to countless high school students during the 1940s and 1950s. Many of these students came from farm and blue collar families and were absolutely clueless about where they were going and what they could become. The dedicated Mr. Bliss exposed them to a new world of science by making it fun and interesting, and taught them to think as educated people and to look at themselves differently. The results are staggering as Mr. Bliss propelled scores of young people into successful careers in teaching, science, engineering and medicine, etc. and prepared them for a better life ahead as they became productive members of society. We owe Mr. Bliss our deepest gratitude."

Marilyn Wralstad Wigness – Class of 1954

Mr. Bliss was a quiet man with an engaging smile who loved to teach. "Patience" must have been his "long" suit. When students got noisy during his lectures, he simply spoke more softly. Very soon the class became quiet so they could hear what he was saying (A life-long lesson for me.). Biology classes were "hands on." My favorite activities were field trips to Leistikow Park to identify trees, learn the shapes of leaves, etc. (Valuable information I have used all my life.) Mr. Bliss showed great interest in his students. Without his encouragement and help, I would not have been a participant in the National Science Fair. In short, he believed in me, encouraged me and helped me to succeed. Mr. Bliss always wanted me to be a teacher, but I chose nursing. Following several years of hospital work as an RN, I taught in a practical nursing program for 10 years. I think Mr. Bliss would have liked that! So much more could be said, but this tribute says it all: He was an excellent teacher!

Russell Lefevre – Class of 1953

As we grow older, we think of those who have had a major influence on our lives. For

BLISS: See page 3

Historic Elmwood



Projects for 2013 include a new front porch floor and stripping the rail spindles to bare wood and prime and paint. After this project is completed the front of the house will be painted. The alarm system has also been updated.

Board members are Gloria Thompson, Ina Raumin, Beth Rose, Mary Jo Olson, Jeanne Monson, Loretta Moe, Bonnie Mohagen, Bonnie Kalbrener, Judy Evens.

**Visit
Walsh County
Historical Society
Website:
www.walshhistory.org**

Website News

The Walsh County Historical Society website (www.walsh-heritage.org) has been up and running with great success. With the addition of a PDF version of the Walsh Heritage books comes an exciting new chapter in genealogical research for Walsh County, making these volumes accessible to anyone in the world who has access to the internet. These volumes are now available for downloading onto your own computer, and you can print the pages for your own use. The disadvantage has been that the files are very large and have required nearly 15 to 20 minutes to download before being able to view them.

We are now engaged in streamlining this process with an upgraded website that will make it possible for the researcher to simply click on a word from the index (say an ancestor's surname or a place name) and they will be connected directly to that page in the volumes. These volumes are available for downloading onto your own computer, and you can print the pages for your own use.

We continue to add new information to the website. Did you know that there is a section that gives step-by-step directions for how to start research on your own family? There is also a section devoted to the fascinating history of every city, town, or hamlet that has ever existed in Walsh County. You can get information and photos regarding places on the county's National Historical Sites Register, or browse the section that lists scores of websites related to this area. It's a great historical reference.

The internet has given us the opportunity to reach so many now, and the society continues to get emails from all over the country asking for more information on their pioneer ancestors in the county. They are very grateful that we're here to answer their questions.

We would surely appreciate any new articles to add to our "Walsh Heritage" volumes. If you have family members who were not published in the first four volumes, now is the time to submit your information to our website for all your family to be able to view and share. Send your one-page article to Walshcountyhistoricalsociety@yahoo.com and we'll get it on the website.

**Submitted by Mary Kovarik
WCHS Webmaster/Historian**

BLISS: Continued from page 2

me the person who was perhaps the most important was Harald Bliss. I studied biology, chemistry and physics under him, and even decades later remember his teaching methods. I have had many teachers in my life, but he was without a doubt the best motivator. He inspired his students to work hard to learn and understand technology concepts that weren't necessarily all that easy. One of his important tools was the science fair. I remember working with other students to prepare exhibits for the fair. I especially remember the year I proposed a science demonstration of converting from one form of energy to another to eventually cause a light bulb to light. He encouraged me to examine the idea even though he knew it wouldn't work. Instead of discouraging me he motivated me to find out for myself and this lesson has stayed with me ever since. As a direct result of his ability to motivate my approach to the future, I went on to pursue a career in science currently holding an appointment as an adjunct professor of physics and electrical engineering at UND.

Darrel Moe – Class of 1949

Darrel was a student in Mr. Bliss' biology class. He does not recall being an outstanding student, but says that Mr. Bliss's quiet demeanor commanded respect from his students and his knowledge of the subject was quite amazing. He adds he will always consider him one of his favorite teachers.

Bob Bliss – Class of 1965

No collection would be complete without the addition of one last person's input namely Harald Bliss' son Bob Bliss. Although he never

had his father for a teacher due to Harald Bliss taking a job with the State Department of Public Instruction in 1960, Bob says "Dad was my favorite teacher who never showed up in my classes! By that I mean I never received a report card from him, but what an influence his instructions have had on my life. My earliest memory of dad's teaching ability is when he introduced me to the world of hand tools. As a young boy, I remember a very large hand wrapped around my small hand guiding me in the proper techniques of swinging a hammer and sawing a board. I was hooked for life. The 'tool room' in our basement was a magical place where I learned the use and care of many tools. I vividly remember the addition of my very own workbench stocked with a supply of wood and my very own hand tools. Dad recognized my passion, provided the atmosphere for learning, and encouraged me to make things that were of interest to me. I give him a lot of credit for the 'Builder Bob' instincts that I carry with me this day! I am indebted to him as a mentor, a teacher, a father and as my best friend."

Although many more people could have contributed to this article, these remembrances from 16 former students and Bob Bliss, his son, are representative and aptly describe what made Harald Bliss so memorable and influential not only in the classroom at school but in the classroom of life.

Walsh County Heritage Village

Heritage Village was closed for the winter, re-opening April 1, 2012. The opening event was an Easter celebration held on Easter Sunday by a local family.

Our next fundraiser was a pancake and sausage breakfast held on April 29, 2012 and from there we continued with the following events: Graduation celebration in May, Schuster Auction Sale in June, SummerFest in June which was a dinner at the village and we also set up concessions at the park. We also would like to thank First United Bank and Insurance, Wells Fargo Bank, and TrueNorth for sponsoring the merry-go-round rides for the children.

Our Landstad Church was used in June for a family get-together. Things were quiet in July as our president, Dr. Harold Blanchard was ill, but we did have a baby shower, rummage sale, and tables were rented out for a rummage sale.

One of Harold's requests while he was in a nursing home in Grand Forks was to get the top part of the main building painted and to work on getting our merry-go-round re-finished. So in August, the top half of our main building was painted and bids were received on repairing the merry-go-round, which will be a spring project in 2013. Nancy Blanchard donated all the memorial monies in memory of Harold to be used towards the repair of the merry-go-round. We were saddened by the death of Harold on August 22, 2012. Our sincere sympathies to Nancy and family. Harold was a go-getter with endless energy and accomplished a lot of things during his time as Heritage Village Board President. We especially are grateful for the new Morton building and the endless hours Harold, Nancy and the rest of the board and volunteers put into getting that building where it is today.

Our new president, Ken Hoffman, was nominated by the board to head the village. In September and October we had a fish fry, and in December the fire department had their Christmas party at the village.

In May 2012 our old John Deere tractor was in need of repairs, and it was decided by the board to trade it in. The snowblower attachment for

the old tractor was sold in October.

We were again saddened by the death of a former board member, Curt Bratlie on November 16, 2012. Our sincere sympathies go out to Diane and family.

For 2013 we plan to put a facelift on our merry-go-round, and a church group that was going to do some painting and repairs for us in 2012 was delayed due to weather conditions and will be done in 2013. Not sure what else we will be able to afford to do in 2013. As always, we are in need of donations.

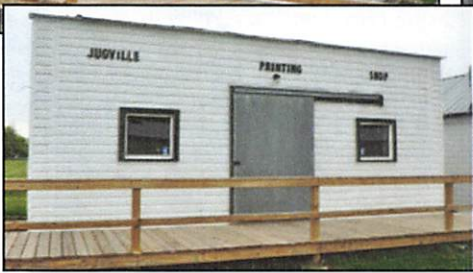
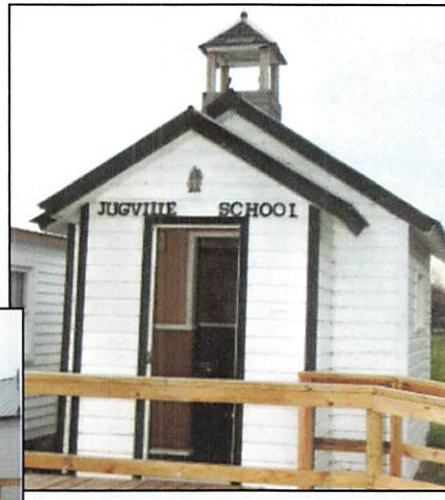
Current board members at Heritage Village are Ken Hoffman, president; Carol Spale, vice president; Pam Johnson, secretary; and Verna Aasand, office manager/treasurer. Board of Directors: Norman Paulson, Marlene Paulson, Gordon Bracken, Vernon Russum, Kathy Nomeland, Brian Weisz and Jean Bodmer, and member at large, Greg Amb from the Developmental Center, Isla. We are in need of four more board members, so if anyone is interested, please contact us by calling Ken at 701-360-0088 or Verna at 701-520-1207.

Our theatre building is always for rent for rummage sales, showers, family reunions, graduation parties or whatever you may wish. No alcohol. To rent the hall without the kitchen is \$50 per event and with the kitchen is \$75 per event. You may call Ken or Verna at the numbers listed above to reserve a date or to find out more information.

Remember!! We are always looking for volunteers. We have a lot of items yet that need to be brought in from Uncle Sig's farm. So if you have any man-power, equipment, etc., please let us know.

Heritage Village wants to thank everyone who participated in any way to carry out this year's activities and to all those who gave donations. Continued support from the community and individuals is needed to continue the perseverance of Heritage Village and Jugville. We hope to have a good 2013!

Submitted by Verna Aasand



Top three pictures to the left: Jugville Saloon, Jugville Printing and Jugville School buildings at Heritage Village.



Bottom three pictures and top right picture: Numerous items at Heritage Village.



Walsh County Historical Museum

The Walsh County Historical Museum in Minto, ND kicked off the summer season on Sunday, May 27, 2012 through September 30, 2012. The board members did their annual Cleaning Bee. There were many school tours, weekday tours, and tours every weekend as well. The museum in Minto, ND is open every weekend from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., and the admission is \$5.00 for adults; \$3.00 for children ages 6-17; and children under 5 are free, as long as they are accompanied by an adult. The museum is located at 323 3rd Street in Minto, ND.

On Sunday, September 9, 2012, Chrissy Kilichowski spear-headed the first Family Fun Day on the museum grounds. There were lots of games for the children, face painting by Kelly Smith; rides for the children on both a homemade train and also the Minto Fire Departments' Hummer; a surprise visit from ELVIS, aka Scott Gerszewski; a dunk tank; horseshoe tournament; and some good food stands. There was also good music provided by both the Prairie Chicks, and also the Valley Chordsmen. Heidi Heitkamp also showed up for a visit.

On Thursday, November 8, 2012, the annual Chili Cook-Off was held at the Minto, ND Community Center. There were a few games for the children, and trophies were handed out for the best chili. Chris Misialek won first place for the judge's choice; John Kirkeby won second place in both the judge's choice as well as the people's choice; and Larry and Cindy Jamieson took first place in the people's choice and third place in the judge's choice.

Winning the raffle drawings was Adin Kilichowski who won the \$200.00; Lee Sobolik won the case of ribeye steaks, and Andy Petersen won the \$50.00. All proceeds went to the Minto museum.

On Monday, December 10, 2012, the board met at the Community Center at 7:00 p.m. Election of officers was held, and plans were started for the 2013 Museum Alive, which will be held in June.



Winners of the annual chili cook-off held Nov. 8, 2012, that supports the museum in Minto are, from left, Chris Misialek, Cindy Jamieson, Larry Jamieson and John Kirkeby.



Barrel train rides were a hit with youngsters at Family Fun Day.



Walsh County Sheriff Lauren Wild visits with Heidi Heitkamp who was campaigning for a U.S. Senate seat at the Walsh County Historical Society's first Family Fun Day held Sept. 9, 2012. Wild was one of the local celebs to take his turn in the dunk tank that afternoon.



Elvis (Scott Gerszewski) made an appearance as well.



The Minto Fire Department offered rides in their Hummer.



Providing live entertainment at Family Fun Day were the Prairie Chicks.



The Valley Chordsmen took a turn entertaining the crowd.

**2013 Walsh County Historical
 Society Officers**

Dennis Markusen President
 Les Jallo Vice President
 Ken Hoffman Secretary
 Joe Koehmstedt Treasurer

Board Members

1-Year Term

Jean Bodmer Wally Ebertowski Charles Stewart

2-Year Term

John Gudajtes Larry Jamieson Keith Shutt

3-Year Term

Doug Weberg Bob Vaudrin Chris Misialek

Jean Bodmer, June Selseth Newsletter
 Jean Bodmer Membership
 Mary Kovarik Webmaster

Membership Rates

For Life Membership:
 74 Years and Younger \$100.00
 75 Years and Older \$50.00
 Annual Regular Dues Per Person \$10.00
 5-Year Membership Per Person \$25.00

CENTURIANS

Christine Hall	Clara Thompson
Verna Gerszewski	Ann Lunde
Joanna Green	Esther King
Daisy Haugland	

2013 Walsh County Museum Officers

Curator/Managers Wally Ebertowski, Kathy Langowski

Officers

Chairman Les Jallo
 Vice Chairman Kurt Kelley
 Secretary June Selseth
 Treasurer Ron Ophaug

Board Members

Chris Misialek	Cindy Jamieson	Doug Ulland
Jared Peterka	John Gudajtes	Tim Nelson
Karen Farder		Larry Jamieson

**2013 Heritage Village
 Board Members**

Ken Hoffman President
 Carol Spale Vice President
 Pam Johnson Secretary
 Verna Aasand Office Manager/Treasurer

Directors

Norman Paulson	Marlene Paulson	Gordon Bracken
Vernon Russum	Kathy Nomeland	Brian Weisz
	Jean Bodmer	

Greg Amb Member at Large

Attention

The membership renewal forms, which are enclosed in this newsletter, go out to all members. If you are a life member, or 5-year membership, please disregard this invitation to join. Thank you.