



September 06, 2006

Marcia Ukura,
aka Mrs. Matthews
Newsletter Editor

Vice President's Report

Meeting notes by Sarah French

On November 5th we will be having a Guy Fawkes Day party at Monica Mohn's house in Minneapolis. The accompanying ball will be November 11th. The LHS ball will be on October 28th.

Autumn Masque Ball

Where: Klub Haus, 1079 Rice Street, St. Paul

When: Saturday, November 11th

Cost: \$40 per person

This will be an introduction to a full masque ball. Guests are asked to wear masks.

Your ball committee will be sending out invitations soon with a registration deadline of October 11th. If 60 registrations are not received the ball will be canceled.

A Walking Tour of Irvine Park is being planned with a date yet to be determined.

Evening Soirées: a new and exciting event is being planned by Sarah French and Mary Brown giving our membership an opportunity to socialize and share information. These will be held on the first Friday of the month, period attire always admired, but never required. The format includes, but is not limited to:

- Socialize only
- Show and tell
- Ask and receive
- Discussion theme
- Parlor games

If you have a preference, call your hostess with your suggestion for the evening

Friday, October 6th, 7:30 PM

Hostess: Mary Brown, 3566 Blue Jay Way #206, Eagan, MN 55123, 651-681-9499.

Hosts are needed for: Friday, November 3rd, Friday, December 1st

To volunteer, call Mary Brown at 651-681-9499 or Sarah French at 612-929-0457.

Wearing the Dress: Sarah French and Mary Brown are planning events for creating "the dress" starting with:

When: Saturday September 30th, 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

What: Underwear Seminar – chemise, corset, drawers, and supplies needed to create underwear

Where: Mary Brown, hostess, 3566 Blue Jay Way #206, Eagan, MN 55123, 651-681-9499.

Registration: will be sent under separate cover. Please register for the event, so the planners will know how many to plan for and what your needs are.

Sewing Bees: dates to be determined in October and November for creating underwear

Victorian Fashion Seminar: discussing the silhouettes of each era and accessories. Anyone with original garments is encouraged to bring them. We will be discussing the basic "look" of each era, as well as giving tips on fabrics and patterns. We may be serving a light meal or having a pot luck. Period attire admired, but not required (but our president will be in a much better mood if everybody dresses up).

When: December 9th or 10th, date to be determined.

Where: to be determined.

Sewing Bees:

January – hoops and bustles

February – petticoats

March and April – two sewing bees each month dedicated to creating a dress

Mary Brown and Kit Cusick have volunteered to host the sewing bees.

A man who marries his mistress leaves a vacancy in that position.

Oscar Wilde

VSA Board Meeting Minutes

July 26, 2006

by Ann Randolph, Secretary

Present: Kevin Geraghty, Sarah French, Ann Randolph, Chris Lanyk, Mary Brown, Laura McBeth

Meeting opens at 7:30pm.

Secretary's Report - nothing to report

Treasurer's Report - Currently at \$1276.19.

There was discussion about the Treasurer's Report being put into the Newsletter. The thought was that not everyone needed to know how much was in our coffers. There was confusion as to if it just the Treasurer's Report or the whole of the Board Meeting minutes that was to be omitted from the Newsletter. *addendum - This issue was discussed again on Thurs. August 24th and then tabled until the Sept. meeting.

Old Business

Membership Dues -- There was discussion regarding this issue. A date needs to be set when we will need renewals sent in as well as information for new members. Currently we offer a \$15.00 membership for one person and a \$20.00 membership for a family. Information to be sent in is Name, email, address, and check to Treasurer. This is an outstanding issue and will be brought up again at next meeting.

Insurance -- The board decided unanimously that they were not going to make a concrete decision regarding insurance. National has not contacted use regarding this yet. If the board is pressed, a decision will be made if we wish to continue being a chapter of National VSA.

Web Site -- Laura McBeth showed the Board what she has been working on for the website. It was unanimously approved.

New Business

Events schedule for September Fashion Seminar - kick off on Sept 9th. This is being run by Sarah French, Mary Brown and Virginia Jensen. It is to be the start of a series of seminars in fashion and sewing. Working from the inside out and talking about the various modes of dress.

Eventually working toward having people working on various projects of their own and doing sewing bees.

Sandra Altman of Past Present Patterns -- This is a seminar that is being worked on by the La Duc House and La Duc House Society. They are talking with her to possibly have her come and discuss costuming and working toward an event that is scheduled to happen in 2007 at the House. Mr. Geraghty was to follow up on this.

Ramsey and Sibley Houses have been talking about wanting Dancing. The site manager has voiced both interest in working with VSA and a desire to join. Confusion on who was to follow up regarding this. VSA does not have the people to do this kind of historical re-enactment.

High Tea and Cemetery Tour in Red Wing on Sept. 23rd. There will be a High Victorian Tea at 11am at Tale of Two Sisters. Cost will be \$31.00 for the tea, including gratuities. \$36.00 for non-members. Following the Tea will be a Cemetery Tour. The cost for this will be \$3.00 more. Those interested please send your name, number of those attending and check to: C. Lanyk 1295 Shryer Ave W. Roseville, MN 55113. Check's made out to VSA Northstar Chapter. These are due by Sept 13th or at the very latest, Sept 16th. * Addendum - As of 8-24-06 there were 23 people who have sent in their money to attend the Tea and 22 people attending the Tour.

Fall Ball -- Tentatively scheduled for Nov. 4th. Kevin will talk to LHS to see that this date can be kept free from conflicting dates with them. Possible idea for the ball is a Guy Fawkes Celebration. Guy Fawkes day is celebrated Nov. 5th. Monica Mohn may have a location to hold this event. Kit Cusick will be asked to Chair this event. Debra to be asked to chair decorations. An organizational meeting will need to be scheduled. The major problem with this ball will be that it needs to pay for itself, and there must be contracts. Kevin has decorations from last ball that need to be moved.

Walking Tour in October -- There was an interest in having a walking tour sometime in October. A date was not set in the interest of getting more information. A possible location for this was the Irving Park area near Ramsey House.

Como Park Conservatory Tour with picnic. This was another suggestion. Laura McBeth was going to gather more information to be brought to the next meeting.

Christmas Party -- There was talk of possibly having a Christmas Party. The possible ideas were to have it either at Kevin's house or possibly Ramsey House. More information was to be gathered.

Twelfth Night Ball -- The ball is scheduled for Saturday, Jan 6th.

There was a desire to see more advertising in an effort to attract new members. A Ball Chair person needs to be appointed. Next meeting scheduled for August 10th, 7:30pm at Kevin's House.

Meeting ended at 8:50pm.

VSA Board Meeting Minutes

August 24, 2006

Geraghty Residence

I. Present: Board members: K. Geraghty, L. McBeth, A. Randolph, C. Lanyk, S. French, M. Brown, G. Whitney, M. Ukura,
Ball committee Chairman: K. Cusick
Absent: Board members: J. Curtiss, D. Lundberg, E. Kvarnes

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM by President Geraghty.

II. Secretary's report

In the absence of a written report, highlights of the last meeting were given by A. Randolph with an explanation that written minutes would be emailed to board members later this night.

A motion to accept the report was made by M. Brown, seconded by A. Randolph and voted to accept the report.

III. Treasurers report

There is a \$1,266.19 balance in the account. Motion to accept report by G. Whitney, seconded by A. Randolph and voted to approve the report.

IV. Old Business

The September 23rd Tea and Cemetery Tour – C. Lanyk reported that 25 people are registered for the tea and 24 for the tour. M. Ukura reported that half the cost must be paid

ten days in advance – September 13th and will provide the necessary mailing information to Lanyk via telephone message.

V. New Business

A. Fashion seminar

The proposed September 9th date will be reschedule because:

1. The general membership has not been informed and

2. The project has not been organized.

M. Brown and S. French are responsible for

1. developing a curriculum for the seminar and

2. contacting V. Jensen about a workable date since she is a prominent speaker and having a family wedding soon.

The fashion seminar will feature shapes of the period, suitable fabrics, necessary underpinnings and sources for the same. Monthly sewing bees are proposed through the winter.

M. Brown will host the sewing bees at her home.

B. Le Duc House and Friends of the Le Duc House. L. Geraghty will be at the Le Duc House on Saturday August 26th to explore a VSA contribution to the site. What period they are portraying is the question

C. Irvine Park Walking Tour

Dana Highmark, acting site manager for the Ramsey and Sibley houses will arrange a private tour for our group. Lunch at Forepaugh's will be considered with the event. G. Whitney suggested James Sazevich, local historian, as resource for more detailed tours of lesser known sites. M. Ukura questioned the availability of a house tour, specifically the Wright/Pendergast house.

Sunday, October 8th or October 22nd have been suggested as possible dates. K. Geraghty will contact D. Highmark to secure a date.

D. Harvest Ball

Report by K Cusick, ball chairman

Theme: Autumn Masque Ball, not a costume ball, just masks as a prelude to a

full costume ball

Date: Saturday November 11th

Music: Camptown Ladies Reserved

Venue: Exhaustive research shows all appropriate venues booked well (years) in advance. The Klub House on Rice Street and the German Volkfest House on Summit are available.

An exhaustive and animated discussion ensued with main points as follows:

1. Finances
 - a. The free venue we have enjoyed in the past is not currently an option
 - b. Venue cost averages \$700. Catered food, music, instructors are additional.
 - c. To cap the cost at \$40 per person, 65 people need to attend. We usually draw 50.
2. Does the Society have the energy to do a ball in November and again in January?
3. Can the general membership afford a \$40 ball in November, Christmas expenses in December, and a more expensive ball in January?
4. What is the goal of the Society?
 - a. Do we want to remain a small group with expensive, classy functions?
 - b. Do we want to promote membership for more people to share the cost and reduce ticket prices to our balls?
5. The ball committee has formed a subcommittee for marketing of the ball.

M. Ukura moved and A. Randolph seconded to proceed with the ball. The vote: 6 yes, 1 no, and 1 abstention. Further discussion about finances and the possibility of financially breaking the Society went on.

General discussion lead to the next motion: If K. Cusick can develop a financial fail safe system we will go ahead with the ball. The motion passed with 6 yes and 1 abstention.

E. The website

L. McBeth has a copy of the website so far and the pamphlet.

A mission statement is needed to reflect how we are different than our parent organization – the VSA.

- F. M. Ukura suggested that the fiscal year is ending. Dues statements need to be considered as well as the cost of dues which will need to cover increased expenses for balls and the possibility of buying liability insurance. Due to lateness of the evening and the distance to be driven, M. Ukura departed at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted, M. Ukura newsletter editor substituting for A. Randolph secretary, at her request.

Letter to the Editor

Hi!

Laurie Zaepfel here, singer from the Camptown Ladies. I've enjoyed being on the mailing list for Victorian Society events.

I had an idea which might be of mutual benefit for the Victorian Society and for another local group, the Maud Hart Lovelace Society. The MHLS is devoted to promoting the works of Lovelace, who wrote the Betsy-Tacy series about a girl growing up in Mankato around the turn of the last century.

Many of the MHLS members are interested in Victorian things, and some might be inclined to join the Victorian Society, and/or participate in the events you sponsor. They are also always looking for info. to include in their periodic newsletter.

Perhaps you can make contact and see if information about events can be shared so that events which are of mutual interest can draw more participants! Every year when we perform at the 12th night ball, I think how much the MHLS folks would enjoy being there!

Best to you,

Laurie Zaepfel

Zaepfel@worldnet.att.net

Maud Hart Lovelace -- 1892 - 1980

Maud Hart grew up in Mankato and exhibited the talent for writing early in her life. She attended the University of Minnesota, studying journalism and later married Delos Lovelace, also a journalist.

While recounting stories of her childhood for her daughter, Merian. The idea for a book came, it was called Betsy Tacy a fictionalized version of her childhood and growing up in Mankato around the turn of the last century. It was her intention to write the one book, but her readers were so insistent, twelve more books followed.

Fans of the Betsy Tacy books are members of the Maud Hart Lovelace Society that publishes a quarterly newsletter and holds several yearly events.

Guy Fawkes Day

“Remember, remember,
the fifth of November,
Gunpowder, treason and plot.
We see no reason why
Gunpowder treason
Should ever we forgot!”

Words to Guy Fawkes rhyme

Henry the 8th established the Church of England, divorcing it from the Pope, so that he could divorce, behead, or otherwise get rid of his wives. Needless to say, Catholics did not fare well under the new religious model. His daughter Elizabeth staunchly supported the Church of England as well. Persecuted English Catholics hoped that Elizabeth’s successor, James I (born of a Catholic mother) would be more tolerant. Such was not to be the case.

Thirteen young men, 17th century terrorists, decided violent action was the answer. Ten of the conspirators were Robert ‘Robin’ Catesby, Sir Everard Dugby, John Grant, Thomas Percy, Robert Keyes, Ambrose Rookwood, Thomas ‘Tom’ Wintour, Robert Wintour, John ‘Jack’ Wright, Christopher Wright, Thomas Bates, Francis Tresham, and Guy ‘Guido’ Fawkes.

The group, led by Catesby, thought the thing to do was to blow up the Houses of Parliament. In doing so, they would kill the King, maybe even the Prince of Wales, and the Members of

Parliament who were making life difficult for the Catholics.

After storing 36 barrels of gunpowder in the cellar, under the House of Lords, they began working on the plot. It soon became clear that innocent people would be hurt or killed, including some who had fought for Catholic rights. Someone sent an anonymous letter to Lord Monteaagle warning him to stay away from Parliament on November 5th.

The warning reached the King, whose men stormed the building on November 5th. Guy Fawkes who was with the gunpowder was caught, tortured, and executed. That very night bonfires were set to celebrate the safety of the King. Since then November 5th is known as bonfire night, commemorated annually with fireworks and burning effigies of Guy Fawkes on a bonfire.

The Queen and Parliament still observe the tradition of the reigning monarch entering Parliament once a year on “the state opening of Parliament” after the Yeoman of the Guards searches the cellars of the Palace of Westminster.

Some of the English wonder if they are celebrating Fawkes’ execution or honoring his attempt to do away with the government.

The Year 1906

What a difference a century makes:

The average life expectancy in the U.S. was 47 years.

Only 14 percent of the homes in the U.S. had a bathtub.

Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone, a three-minute call from Denver to New York City cost eleven dollars.

There were only 8,000 cars in the U.S., and only 144 miles of paved roads.

The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph.

Alabama, Mississippi, Iowa, and Tennessee were each more heavily populated than California

With a mere 1.4 million people, California was only the 21st most populous state in the Union.

The tallest structure in the world was the Eiffel Tower!

The average wage in the U.S. was 22 cents per hour.

The average U.S. worker made between \$200 and \$400 per year

A competent accountant could expect to earn \$2000 per year, a dentist \$2,500 per year, a veterinarian between \$1,500 and \$4,000 per year, and a mechanical engineer about \$5,000 per year

More than 95 percent of all births in the U.S. took place at home.

Ninety percent of all U.S. doctors had no college education, instead, they attended so-called medical schools, many of which were condemned in the press and the government as "substandard."

Sugar cost four cents a pound.

Eggs were fourteen cents a dozen

Coffee was fifteen cents a pound.

Most women only washed their hair once a month, and used borax or egg yolks for shampoo.

Canada passed a law that prohibited poor people from entering into their country for any reason.

Five leading causes of death in the U.S. were: 1. Pneumonia and influenza, 2. Tuberculosis 3. Diarrhea, 4. Heart disease, 5. Stroke

The American flag had 45 stars.. Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Hawaii, and Alaska hadn't been admitted to the Union yet.

The population of Las Vegas, Nevada, was only 30.

Crossword puzzles, canned beer, and ice tea hadn't been invented yet.

There was no Mother's Day or Father's Day.

Two out of every 10 U.S. adults couldn't read or write.

Only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated from high school.

Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were all available over the counter at the local corner drugstores. Back then pharmacists said, "Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach and bowels, and is, in fact, a perfect guardian of health."

Eighteen percent of households in the U.S. had at least one full-time servant or domestic help.

There were about 230 reported murders in the entire U.S.A.

Editor's note: I received this as an email from an old friend. I did not check it for accuracy, but pass it on to all of you for your enjoyment.

Trees

On a hot and humid afternoon, I was walking through two rows of Colorado blue spruce that we planted this year. The sun was shining, the birds were singing, the farm was lush and green, and the poem *Trees* came into my mind. Without too much difficulty I remembered most of the poem and even the author, Joyce Kilmer. It was set to music and I remembered that too, merrily singing the tune.

A quick trip to Google gave the poem in its entirety and some other interesting facts as well.

Trees

Joyce Kilmer 1886-1918

I think that I shall never see
a poem lovely as a tree.

A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the sweet earth's flowing breast;

A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;

A tree that may in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;

Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
who ultimately lives with rain.

Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

Joyce Kilmer, much to my surprise, was of the masculine gender and born in the later Victorian era. The poem was written February 2, 1913 in Mahwah, New Jersey, about trees in general.

His granddaughter Miriam Kilmer said, "I am thankful for the popularity of *Trees*, because its captivating lyrical simplicity drives home this profound message: we humans can never hope to surpass the awesome beauty of nature. This is why I think of my grandfather as an early environmentalist. Countless trees have been planted in his honor, and for that alone he deserves to be remembered."

Why Cemeteries are interesting

While he was in school, Mr. Matthews summer job was mowing the lawn at the local cemetery, this led to an interest in cemeteries in general. While we were courting and traveling about the countryside in his 1955 Ford convertible, we always visited the cemeteries of the historic towns we visited. This habit continued after we were married as well. Now that we live in rural Goodhue county we've come across several small cemeteries mostly mowed, but occasionally gone back to nature with the tops of markers barely visible in the vegetation. Did you know that Colonel Colville of the First Minnesota that held Picket's Charge at the battle of Gettysburg, is buried in one of the cemeteries in Cannon Falls?

Of all the cemeteries we've seen, Oakland in Red Wing is the most beautiful. Situated on the top of a bluff, it has an overlook of the Western end of Red Wing. The terrain is hilly and the "streets" have names. Opened in 1854, it has markers spanning 152 years from small granite squares identifying the resting place of "Baby Z" to weathered white stone monuments decorated with orange lichens. Ancient oaks, evergreens, and Pee Gee hydrangeas in full bloom grace the hillsides and shade the burial sites. Oakland is well manicured and its historic ambience welcomes visitors, I hope you enjoy it as much as I do.



Directions to the September 23rd Tea and Cemetery Tour

From I-94 in St. Paul, go South on highway 61 to Hastings, where you will drive past the Le Duc mansion. Take hwy 317, a short cut to Hwy 61 that will take you to Red Wing. When you pass the Red Wing Mall and Target, you will come to County Road 1, a lighted intersection. Stay on hwy 61 and drive 1.5 miles to West Avenue, turn right. Move over to the left lane and drive 0.3 mile to West Seventh Street where you will turn left. Drive 0.3 mile to 204 West Seventh Street The Tale of Two Sister's Tearoom.

If you miss West Avenue, watch for Plum Street aka Highway 58 (three blocks further) turn right on Plum, go three blocks and turn left on West Seventh to 204.

To reach the cemetery, reverse direction and go on West Seventh for three blocks, turn left on East Avenue, follow it up the hill to the cemetery.

To return to St. Paul, go down the hill from the cemetery and East Avenue will take you to Highway 61, turn left and return to St. Paul.



New officers of the Living History Society

President.....Bill Kepler
Vice PresidentVirginia Jensen
TreasurerKit Cusick
SecretaryMike Chyrklund
Past President and
Chairman of the boardHarold Longley

Mail Order Catalogue Review

Old Durham Road

English County Living
Pickering and Simmons LCC
1-866-298-1626

www.olddurhamroad.com

As a person who prefers shopping at the kitchen table (with the exception of estate sales of course) a plethora of mail order catalogues find their way to one's mail box. We moved to the farm eight years ago and the types of mail order catalogues changed, vendors of farm equipment

were prominent. *Nasco* is color coded: red for horse section, blue for pigs, etc.

Old Durham Road, a vendor for country living appeared and I have been pleased with orders received. The summer issue arrived this week and it occurred to me that it would be of interest to other anglophiles.

The Victorian magnifier, used to read, but useful for any close work that requires two hands is on my Christmas wish list. It would have been handy when I was ripping out burgundy stitches in my civil war dress project. Page 8 would appeal to the railroad buffs at LHS especially the steam locomotive tie. *The Wicked Wit* books of famous (infamous?) characters are always appealing and who can resist "Pride and Prejudice The Game"?

Small tables, silver plate, china, the royal collection from Buckingham Palace, jewelry, hair ornaments, and too much more to list insures that the catalogue has something for every lover of things Victorian.



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