

The Center Piece

Special Interest Articles:

- Restoring our
Historic
Auditorium
- From the Past.
- Veterans'
Corner

Individual Highlights:

Special Thanks	2
Local Student	
Involvement	2
Wanted	4
About Our	
Organization	4
Mission Statement	4

Brandon History Center

Winter Fundraising Event – February 21

Mark your calendars! Our historic Auditorium will be the location of a winter fundraiser on Saturday February 21 beginning at 6 p.m. The proceeds from the fundraiser will be put toward restoring the 72-year-old structure.

Matching funds have been applied for from Thrivent .

The total proceeds from the fundraising event will be used to match the very generous \$50,000 gift from Joan Fjoslien this past fall. The Brandon Fire

Department Relief Association has already provided a portion of the match with their very generous gift of \$10,000.

BBQ's, chips, pie, and ice cream will be served throughout the evening. Activities include a silent auction, entertainment provided by Bob and Joanie Piotriowski, dancing, board games, and the unveiling of new displays.

Donated items for the silent auction would be greatly appreciated. Food

items, gift certificates, hand-made items, quilts, antiques—let your talents and imagination be your guide! We already have some wonderful items in the works for the silent auction.

Join your neighbors and friends on the 21st for an evening of food, fun, and fundraising!

Watch for posters advertising the event.

Restoring our Historic Auditorium

Since the Brandon Auditorium was built in the 1930s, it has served many functions in the Brandon community. It has been the gathering place for most of us and still is today.

The 70+ year-old structure is showing its age and is in need of major repairs and renovations. In 1985, when community leaders went through the process of having it placed on the National Register of Historic Places, some necessary repairs were made at that time.

Windows were replaced and other minor repairs were done.

An architect has looked at the auditorium, and we are waiting for estimates as of this time. However, we do know that there are things that need to be done soon, and things that need to be done in the future. More immediate renovations include:

The chimney has to be replaced; exterior tuck pointing needs to be done to stop moisture from seeping in; the sidewalk

on the south side needs to be replaced; the interior gymnasium walls need insulation and resurfacing; heating and ventilation should be made more efficient; sewer connections should be upgraded; wood flooring needs attention.

Eventually, the kitchen needs upgrading; and the main entrance flooring needs to be redone.

Our community pulling together can get it done! Repairs will be made as funds become available.

Special Thanks ...



Relief Association President Tim Grabow presenting \$10,000 check to Mayor Doug Johnson and Brandon History Center Board Member Chris Korkowski

A very special thank you is in order to the Brandon Fire Department Relief Association for their generous donation of \$10,000 to be used toward renovation of the Brandon Auditorium.

The Fire Department has been a major part of the Auditorium's history and remains so today.

The History Center has some Fire Department

memorabilia on display. Please take the time to visit the displays and to say "Thank you!" to the brave volunteers who protect our community each and every day.

It is comforting to know that our firefighters are there to put out fires, to provide emergency medical assistance, or even rescue your child's kitten.

Thank you again ...

Welcome to Donna Toft and Lucille Fjoslien as lifetime members of the Brandon History Center! Thank you very much.

Also thank you to to Frederick and Wakako Nootnagel and Jim and Mae Eichelberger for their generous contributions. Their names will be added to our contributor plaque.

Thank you again to Joan Fjoslien for donating the pies for our February 21st fundraising event. Joan said that whenever they had company for meals, they always had pie; so she is helping us to continue that tradition—'cause company's comin' on the 21st of February!



Brandon School Students Involved in Local History

The Brandon High School Industrial Arts Class is in the process of building an item of furniture for the Brandon Auditorium Renovation fundraising event. Their project promises to be a beautiful addition to the silent auction.

The Brandon Third and Sixth Grade classes have visited the History Center and are in the process of drawing pictures and writing essays about the auditorium which will be on display on February 21st.

Mae Eichelberger and Lila Hanson visited with the students about the history of the auditorium. Thank you, ladies, for the history lessons!

From the Past: Brandon in 1890

In 1881, Brandon became a legally incorporated village. By the year 1890, Brandon's business community consisted of four elevators, three saloons, three general stores, two hotels, two livery barns, two blacksmith shops, an implement shop, and a flour mill.

The village population at that time was approximately 225 (dogs and cats excluded). It then became necessary to build a town hall to hold public meetings and to serve as headquarters for the Brandon Fire Department.

Some of the early pioneers and their business interests were:

Halvor Engemoen, General Store Owner

Nils Holmgren, Blacksmith

Johanes Hanson, Furniture Dealer

L. Johnson, General Merchandise

K. Knudson, Hotel Owner

P. Lier, Hardware Owner

Hugo Lundbohm, Drug Store

Emil Larson and Christ Peterson, Dry Goods-Boots-Shoes

O. F. Olson, Hardware & Implement

August Swenson, Sample Room Liquor

Pete Bjerken, Saloon

P.J. Seidlinger, Harness Shop

Ole Stenberg, Photographer

Otto Johnson, Lumber Yard

Berndt Tronbol, Elevator

Andrew Rosengren, Blacksmith

Eric Snar, doctor

Mr. Olson, Shoemaker

Wigo Werner, Postmaster

Veterans' Corner

The Earl C. Sletto Memorial Park in Brandon is the site of three memorials commemorating the lives and supreme sacrifices of three local men.

The first memorial dedicated May 27, 1996, honors Earl C. Sletto, for whom the park is named. Earl was the first casualty from Douglas County during World War II. He was killed in action when the battleship USS Arizona sank in the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii,

by the Japanese on that fateful Sunday morning, December 7, 1941. After the Arizona was hit by a torpedo, it reportedly sank in less than ten minutes with four-fifths of its crew losing their lives.

Machinist Mate 1st Class Sletto remains entombed in the Arizona, along with his 1,176 comrades.

Earl was the son of Emil and Sara Lea Sletto and was born March 20, 1917, in Moe Township. He was baptized at West Moe Lutheran Church and

confirmed at East Moe Lutheran Church.

Earl graduated from Brandon High School in 1935 and enlisted in the Navy in 1936.

He is survived by many nieces and nephews in the Brandon area and beyond. His name is among the patriots of our nation.

Our next two issues will remember the two other individuals: Roy H. Christenson and Vernon D. Smedstad.

"... a day that will live in infamy ..."

*Franklin D. Roosevelt,
President of the United
States of America*

Brandon History Center

105 Holmes Avenue
Brandon, MN 56315

PHONE:
(320) 524-2260

E-MAIL:
brandonhistory@gctel.net

BOARD MEMBERS:

Hilda Bettermann
Florence Bitzan
Marcia Bolin
Christella Korkowski
Janet Nelson
Ruth Plaster
Carole Severson
Karen Thoennes

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.brandonmn.com

BRANDON HISTORY CENTER

105 Holmes Avenue
Brandon, MN 56315

Check Us Out

About once a month, we try to post new history pictures on the Brandon website. Go to:

brandonmn.com and click on the Brandon History Center link.

Brandon History Center Mission Statement

To collect, preserve and display articles, pictures and memorabilia from Brandon, Millerville and the surrounding area for future generations.

To assist in the preservation of the Historic Brandon Auditorium and other local historic sites.

About Our Organization...

The Brandon History Center changed from a dream to a reality on August 28, 2007, when it received its 501(c)(3) non-profit status.

Because we are a non-profit organization, contri-

butions are tax-deductible. Consider making a contribution of \$100 or more. Your gift will be recognized by name on our contributor plaques.

Also make use of our

three membership options: Individual or family one-year memberships or single life membership.

Wanted: Pictures/Memorabilia

Please consider letting us scan some of your pictures to add to our collection.

We are still looking for older high school annuals so that we can scan graduation pictures.

If you wish to donate any items of memorabilia to display, bring them in with a description. Your name will appear as being the one donating it.

