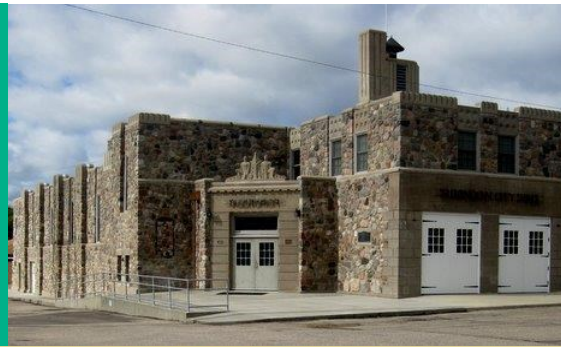


The Center Piece

Summer 2021

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Military Service by the Mahan Family



First Lieutenant
Lawrence
Mahan



Colonel Nancy
Mahan August



First Lieutenant
Jeanette Mahan
McGillicuddy



Chief Master Sgt
Mary Beth Mahan
Minter

It's not often that three daughters in a family go off to serve in the same branch of the military as their father did but that was the case with the Lawrence J. and Marie Mahan family.

1st Lieutenant Lawrence Mahan was a pilot in the US Army Air Corp (later became the US Air Force) during WWII from July, 1942 to November, 1945 and served primarily in England and Europe. He completed 1,847 hours of flying time of which 763 hours were flying the twin engine C-47 ferrying cargo and personnel. He also served as a pilot instructor completing 800 hours in instructing student cadets.

After the war, Lawrence and Marie farmed in South Dakota before moving to Brandon, MN in 1956 where they continued farming. Lawrence also served as the Brandon Postmaster from 1964 to 1970 and Marie was a secretary for the Brandon School District from 1970 to 1983.

Nancy was the first daughter to enlist in 1967. After serving in the active duty US Air Force for about 5 years and reaching the rank of Lieutenant, she then went on to serve another 36 years in the Ohio Air National Guard

where she achieved the rank of Colonel. She was the first woman in the Ohio Air National Guard to receive a squadron command assignment.

Jeanette was the second to enlist in 1968. Jeanette served for 3 years and achieved the rank of 1st Lieutenant as a Communications Officer. She was one of the first two Women Officers to instruct at the Communications Office Course at Keesler AFB Mississippi.

Mary Beth was the third to enlist in 1977. After serving for 5 years in the active duty US Air Force, she then went on to serve another 28 years with the Air National Guard in both California and Arizona where she achieved the rank of Chief Master Sargent.

The three sisters served in the military for a combined total of 77 years.



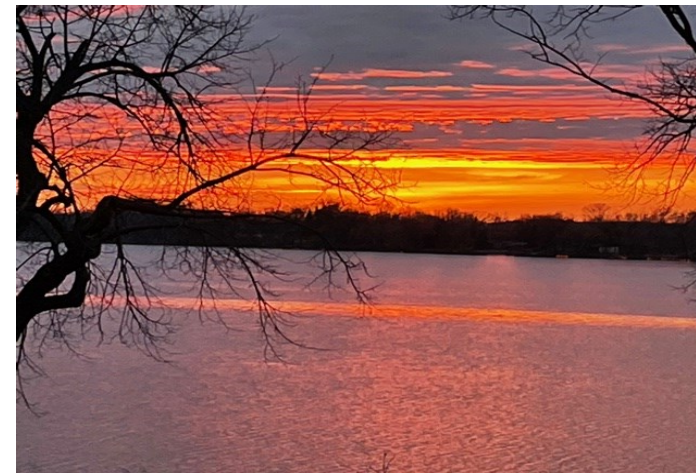
Brandon's Memorial Park

Brandon's *Earl C. Sletto Veteran's Memorial Park* is the site of three memorials commemorating the lives and 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 morning, December 7, 1941. Machinist Mate 1st Class Sletto remains entombed in the Arizona, along with his 1,176 comrades. Earl was 24 years old at the time of his death.

The second memorial dedicated May 26, 1997 honors Roy H. Christenson. Roy was a pilot based with the Tactical Recon Squadron at Chenkung in southern China and flew a P51 named *Bad Penny*. 1st Lieutenant Christenson received a Bronze Star for meritorious conduct during an enemy attack on his squadron's airfield in Dec, 1944. Roy lost his life in a training mission on March 12, 1945 when his plane experienced mechanical problems and crashed near the Chenkung airbase. He is buried in the Brandon Cemetery. Roy was also 24 years old at the time of his death.

The third memorial dedicated May 26, 1997 honors Vernon D. Smedstad. Navy Seaman Smedstad was assigned to the destroyer USS Plunkett in Sept, 1941 and was on convoy duty for a period of time. The Plunkett then took part in the Allied invasion of North Africa and Sicily and the Battle of Salerno. Vernon became ill after Salerno possible from eating poisoned food. He was hospitalized in several hospitals overseas and finally ended up at the VA Hospital in Minneapolis where he died in April, 1944. He is buried in Brandon. Vernon was 20 years old at the time of his death.



HOW DID OUR AREA LAKES GET NAMED?

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED how our area lakes were named? After learning how the lake on which he lives, Stowe Lake, was named, Mike Cleary's curiosity led him to research other lakes in the area. Here's what he discovered.

Baumbach just north of Brandon was named in honor of Frederick von Baumbach, who was born in Prussia in 1838 and died at his home in Alexandria in 1917. He came to the United States with his father in 1848; served in the Fifth and Thirty-fifth Wisconsin regiments during the civil war; attaining the rank of Major; came to Minnesota settling in Alexandria in 1867; was auditor of Douglas County 1872-1878 and 1889-1898; secretary of State of Minnesota 1880-1887; and internal revenue tax collector for Minnesota 1898-1914. **Lake Mina** was named for his mother, Minna von Scheuk.

Hunt, Stowe, Aldrich and Nelson were all named for homesteaders; Joseph Hunt on section 6 in 1867; Martin Stowe on section 18 in 1862; John D. Aldrich on section 23 in 1868 and John Nelson on section 26 in 1865.

Moses and Aaron were either named Moses and Aaron Dewey, brothers from England who bought a lot of land on Moses and other areas around Millerville, or after the great Hebrew lawgiver and his brother, deliverers of their nation from Egyptian bondage and leaders toward the promised land of Palestine.

Stockhaven and Stockhosen were both named in honor of Hans G. von Stackhausen who filed a homestead claim there in 1870.

Lorsung and Wilken were named for Joseph Lorsung and John and William Wilken. These lakes have been drained and subdivided into the adjoining farms.

Moon, Lobster and Long Lakes were named after their shapes.

Whiskey Lake is rumored to be named after a wagon load of whiskey that sank through the ice one winter.

Does anyone know how **Devils Lake** got its name?

Brandon History Center Research Library Remodeled

With the closure due to the pandemic, the volunteer staff at BHC has been busy remodeling, re-arranging, updating, and cleaning the Research Center. The old unused base-board heaters were removed, giving us back much needed floor space. The walls were patched and repainted. Due to generous donations, we were able to purchase new desks to create 3 work areas and to create a copy center area. We purchased a new larger monitor and reframed with archival quality materials, several of the poster board displays.



Wanted 1953 Brandon High School Yearbook

The Brandon History Center is looking for a copy of the 1953 Brandon High School year book to add to its collection. If you have a copy that you would like to donate, contact Janet Nelson at 320-834-4401.

Thank you!

Gifts and accessions:

- Bitzan, Don & Mildred—newspapers, research items, publications, two unused postcards from times past when postage was only 2 cents. Also, post card photos of a church and a village vista, a plat book from a neighboring county and other items.
- Larson, Kay—items of history and businesses, photographs and more.
- Olson, Violet family—a green glassware item and pin back buttons from years back showing Homecoming slogans: 1965—1970, 1972, and 1974 – 1976.
- Scherrer, Carl family—numerous advertising premiums, invoice book and envelope, news article about Carl and one about the sale of Scherrer Oil to Farmers Union Oil Company.
- Nelson, John—copy of a book he wrote about his mother, Caroline Louise Wilken Hopfner,
- Dean & Ruth Plaster—donated historical items from Firemen's Convention in 1933 and 1939, also a Brandon Meat Market recipe pamphlet.
- Thank you, Douglas County Historical Society for the inclusion of 14 of our Brandon School yearbooks in your yearbook digitization project. We appreciate your generosity.

To everyone who requested research on family members, other Brandon/Millerville research, or other, that we are glad to do. To all who have donated monetarily and by items of history, we are so grateful for your support.

History Center Hours

The History Center hours are Friday 9 a.m.—noon or by appointment. It is open for research or to donate items of historical value such as family pictures and stories. Call Janet Nelson (320-834-4401) or Mike Cleary (320-290-4490) or email brandonhistory@gctel.net. to arrange a time to drop off your items.

We are also grateful for your patience during this time of pandemic.

Membership Information

Annual Memberships are \$10 for individuals, \$15 for family. Life time memberships are \$150 for individuals and \$200 for family.

In addition to renewing you membership, you may want to consider a tax deductible charitable contribution of \$100 more to the History Center. The Brandon History center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

With a \$100 donation, the donation is remembered on the wall plaque with either your own name or in memory of a family member or friend.

Brandon History Center
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BOARD MEMBERS:

Florence Bitzan
Carol Ramler
Mike Cleary
Janet Nelson
Ruth Plaster
Deb Shea
Karen Thoennes

Our 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

Do you recognize this Brandon Saloon?



The Brandon History Center is looking for information on this saloon which was included in the Brandon Centennial Book, 1881-1981. If you have any information, please send us an e-mail.