

# **THE COUNTY CHRONICLER**

**Polk County Historical Society**

September

2004

JLW

## **HINCKLEY FIRE September 1, 1894**



Hinckley, Minnesota was a lumbering, industrious, prosperous town in the summer of 1894, but it all changed on the first day of September.

With blowing winds, low humidities and less than two inches of rain from May until September, the area was prime target for a fire.

Jeanne Coffey, Director of The Hinckley Fire Museum for 24 years will be the speaker for our

**Tuesday, September 28<sup>th</sup> meeting at the  
Community Room in the New Polk  
County Justice Center  
At 7:15**

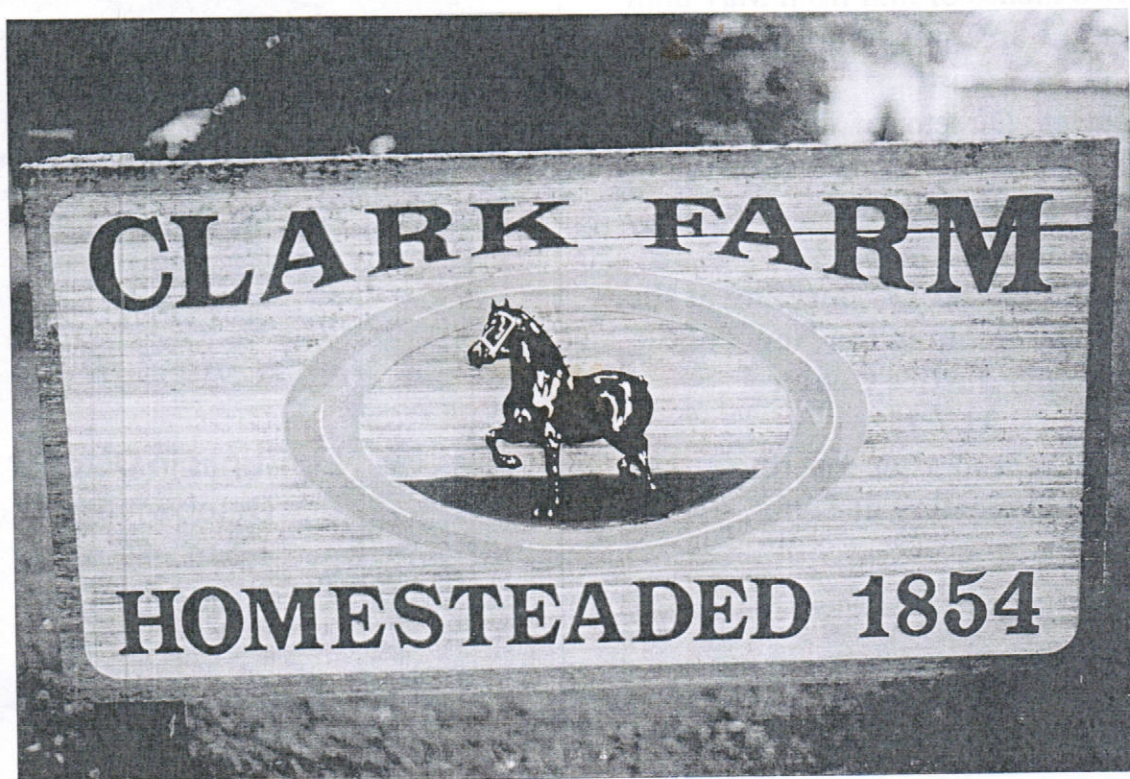
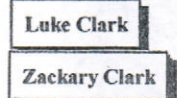
**Lunch served after meeting.  
Board meeting at 5:45.**



**Eighth Generation on  
150 Year Old Farm  
Charles & Eliza Clark –  
Luke & Zachary Clark  
See Page 2**









## OSCAR ALLEN CLARK

Oscar Allen Clark was born February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1834, at the town of Milton, in Vermont. Died February 26, 1901, at Perkins, Oklahoma Territory, of Ulcerative Laryngitis. **He was the fourth son of Charles and Eliza Clark.** He attended school at the Swanton Falls Academy, Vermont, where he took a course in Higher mathematics and Civil Engineering. The latter occupation was followed during the greater part of his life.

In the spring of 1851 he came to Columbia County, Wis., where he taught school, and worked at civil engineering. Later **he came to St. Croix Falls, and was elected to fill the office of county Surveyor of Polk county, being the first to fill that office in Polk county.**

**In the spring of 1853 his father and mother, with the rest of the family, came from Vermont to St. Croix Falls, soon after moving their home on Osceola Prairie.**

In 1862 he joined the 10<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Light Artillery Battery as Lieutenant. His last visit at home was in 1864, when he came home on a furlough. He went with Sherman on his march from Atlanta to the Sea.

### W. H. C. FOLSOM SAYS OF HIM IN HIS HISTORY PUBLISHED IN 1888:

**Oscar A. Clark** came to Taylors Falls in 1851, settled on a farm in Osceola in 1852, and brought hither his parents from Vermont, both of whom have since died. Oscar was a surveyor. He engaged also in the lumbering and commercial business. He was of the firm of Clark Brothers. He enlisted in a Wisconsin regiment during the Rebellion, and served till mustered out, but never returned to his home, and as nothing has since been heard from him, his friends have concluded that he must have been murdered after his discharge, possibly on the way home.

### THE POLK COUNTY LEDGER PRESS

**Oscar A. and Andrew J. Clark** in 1858 started a store in the house where Hans Michaelson now lives. They afterwards moved their goods to the building now used as a drugstore and held forth there until the war began.

The Osceola Sun, December 18, 1975

## THE CLARK FAMILY OF DRESSER, WISCONSIN

"They called it the Upper Osceola Prairie, and that's about all it was in the early 1850's, a peaceful meadow of tall grasses..." Next Stop – Dresser Junction

The first settlers, the Charles Willis Clark family, were from Vermont. Their son, Oscar Allen was a surveyor in Polk County in 1851 and probably influenced the move of his parents, Charles and Eliza Clark. Charles and Eliza and their family are reported to be living in the Osceola area around 1852.

Charles and Eliza had 7 children: Charles W., Leamon G., Cornelius, Oscar A., Amanda, Andrew J. and George. Charles and Eliza died in the spring of 1867.

George S. had land south of the homestead and was married to Eunice Godfry, daughter of John S. Godfry. When George S. died in 1876 another brother, Cornelius, married his widow.

Amanda, the only daughter of the Charles Clarks, married Barnabas Pitman in 1855. Barnabas and Amanda had 6 children.

Andrew J. Clark worked with his parents in their store in Osceola. In 1862 he married Emily Salsbury and had two sons. Andrew died in 1873 at age 35 years. In 1875, Emily married David W. E. Mears. This marriage bore one daughter, Emily. This is the Emily Olson Home owned by the Osceola Historical Society.

Charles and Eliza's son, Leamon G. has his name on the abstract next, so he must have taken over after his parents died. Leamon had a trading business on the river near St. Croix Falls. He was married to Elizabeth Ivory Wood. Leamon and Elizabeth had 11 children. Elizabeth succumbed to T. B. in 1876 at only 47 years of age, her husband died four years later, at age 54, of inflammation of the heart.

Four of the children of Leamon and Elizabeth married four McClean siblings, George F. Clark to Ida McLean, Mary Clark to Isaac McLean, Katherine Clark to David McClean and Joseph Clark to Mira McLean.



At age 20, George Fremont Clark, known as "Monte", was left in charge of the farm and the younger members of the family.

Two years later Monte married Ida McLean and they had 9 children: Elizabeth, Guy Lehman, George F., Eugene, Glenn, Fred, James, Charles and Admiral, nick named "Dot". The present home (picture page 1) was built about 1903 for Monte's large family.

Monte served as a member of the county board for about 30 years and as a member of his school district board for over 40 years. He was keenly interested in civil and political affairs. His cheerful personality won him thousands of friends.



In 1973 Monte's grandson, Lehman, bought the farm. The farm is now owned by Robert Eugene Clark and his wife, Connie (Larson) Clark. Bob is the sixth generation of the patriot, Charles, who came from Vermont, one hundred and fifty years ago. Bob's father, Lehman Otis Clark passed away in 1993. Bob's mother, Juanita Lucille (Reiter) Clark owned a dress store in Osceola for years. Her health is well and she now lives in St. Croix Falls.

Bob has two brothers and one sister as follows: Steven Lehman married Nancy Hoverman, Steve and Nancy live in Dresser, Randall Willis Clark married Sandra Jackson and live north of St. Croix Falls, Phyllis June Clark is single and lives in Albania and works for the U. S. Embassy.

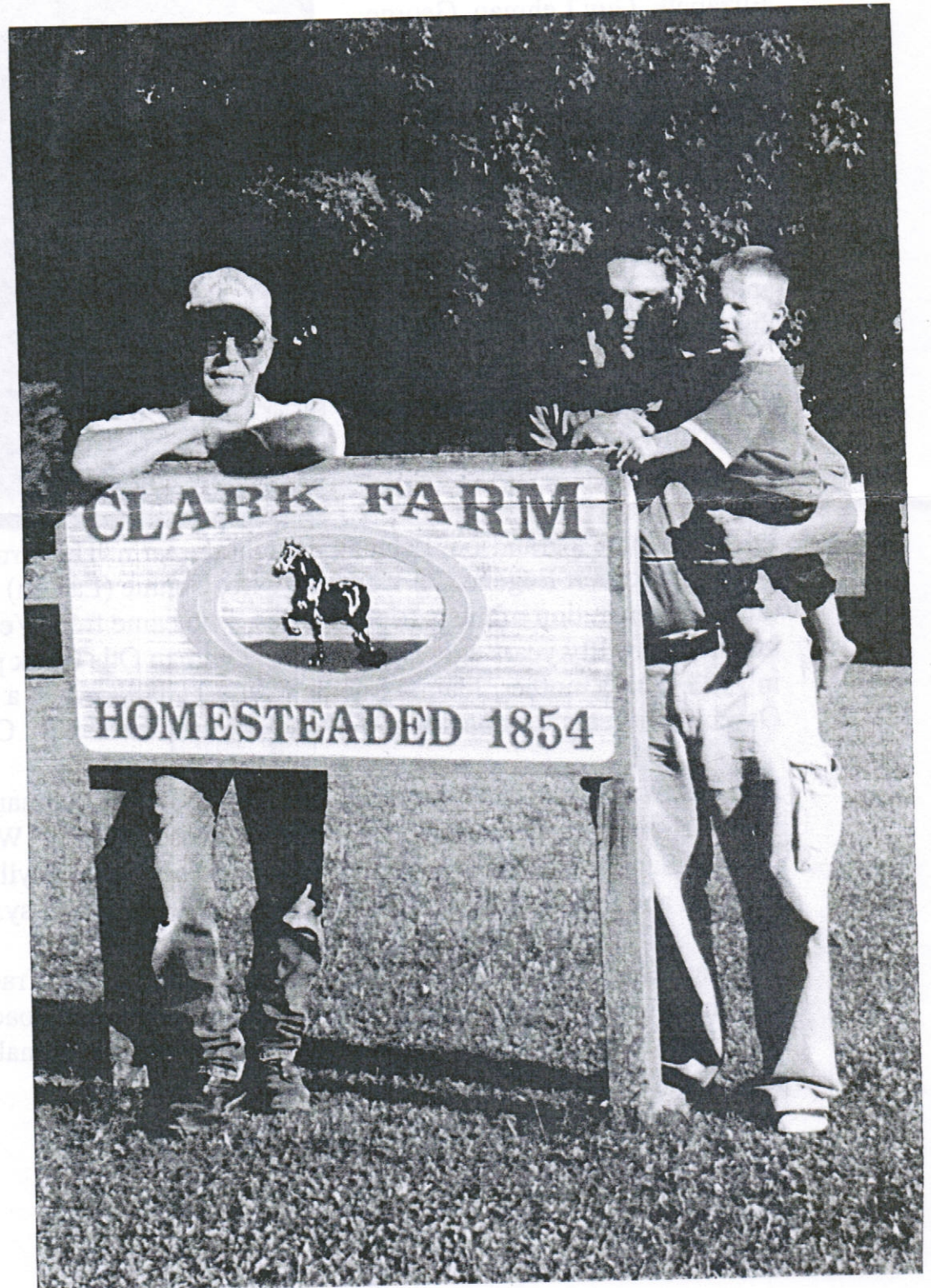
Bob and Connie have two children: Daniel Robert married Tracey Joy Luchinger, Dan teaches fourth grade at St. Croix Falls and coaches wrestling. Monica recently married Mike Carlson and they make their home in Tucson, Arizona.



**Luke**

**Bob**

**Dan & Zack**







***You are invited to an afternoon***

***Of High Tea***

***Featuring a Hat Style Show-***

***60 Hats of by-gone years!***

***Thursday, October 7<sup>th</sup>***

***1 p.m. to 4 p.m.***

***at Paradise Landing***

***Co-sponsored by the Polk County Historical Society***

***And***

***The Old Bats in Red Hats of Amery***

***You are encouraged to wear a hat!***

***Admission: \$15.00***

***Please contact Muriel Pfeifer at 71-268-6578***

***Or e-mail at***

***[mpfeifer@amerytel.net](mailto:mpfeifer@amerytel.net)***

***by September 27<sup>th</sup>.***



Polk County Historical Society  
Board of Directors Meeting      Polk County Museum, Balsam Lake  
August 24, 2004

**Directors Present:** Merle Bergren, Diane Dueholm, Phyllis Gabrielson, Jim Gisch, Carl Johnson, Rosalie Kittleson, Rey Lark, LeRoy Schwann, Art Young and Ted Zinn. Jerry Freitag was also in attendance. **Absent:** Ralph LaDuke and Judy Wester.

**Call to Order:** President, Rosalie Kittleson called the meeting to order at 5:50.

**Secretary's Report:** Minutes were mailed in the newsletters; motion to accept made by Merle, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rey, passed.

**Treasurers Report:** Disbursements for July were \$1505, deposits were \$1097; checking account balance is \$2454. Motion to accept by Phyllis, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Diane, passed.

**Directors:** An answering machine will be purchased for the museum. The cost will be about \$25.

There were cracks in the wall by the front door; the cost to repair was \$100, which came from the county budget.

\$1500 has been budgeted to fix the sidewalk that runs between the two doors. (This is included in 2005 request.)

Bremer Bank will donate 4 hours of appraisal for the Robert Gallon painting.

On August 17, several members of the County Board toured the museum before their evening meeting. We appreciate them taking the time to come and visit us.

**Curators:** Linnea and Larry Phillipson have been cataloging items in the large storeroom upstairs.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Lanesdale School:** Jim reported that he has some touchup work left then all will be done except for the south end. We are still in need of a boom truck to reach the peak on that end. He invited members to drive by and look at the job that's been done. Jim would like to cover the screens with plastic before winter. The small roof in the front should be reshingled as it has moss growing on it.

**Budget:** Rosalie presented the 2005 budget request to the County Board on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. The amount of the request was \$19,800. She received good comments and compliments on the museum from board members.

**Elevator:** Meetings between Chuck Haslured, representing the elevator company, Eugene Krueger, the architect and Joyle Anderson representing the PCHS have been very productive. The proposed elevator would be in the NE corner and would come through storage rooms on the first and second floors and through the laundry room in the basement. Doors have been measured and they are wide enough for wheelchairs. A letter will need to be written to the National Registry of Historical Places to get permission to build the addition. Before any work could begin we would need to have a compression test done; cost would be \$1500.

**CD:** Merle reported that the CD, which had matured on Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>, has been renewed for three years at 3.56%.

**Water Problem:** There is water leaking into the large storage room behind the Law Library in the NE corner of the new addition. The rubber membrane in that area is torn and has come away from the wall. Rosalie has talked to Debbie Peterson and the County will cover the cost of repairing or replacing the rubber membrane.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Grants:** We have an application ready to send to the Deaver Foundation to request \$100,000 as a matching grant for the elevator. We've applied for a \$400 matching grant from Wal-Mart for our Vintage Hat Style Show. A \$700 matching grant may be available from the Wisconsin Historical Society; a motion by LeRoy that we send an application for these funds, was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Diane, passed. We will also apply for federal grants to help with the elevator. Rosalie has talked with Darrell Van Amber about the getting pledges from small co-ops and taking those commitments to their main offices where they are matched.

**Corporate Sponsors:** Rosalie and Marilyn Reiten have drafted a letter that will be presented to businesses asking for pledges; this will not be the same as a membership.

**Sarah Lund:** Rosalie asked if the board would consider giving Sarah a gift for her service to the museum this summer. She provided Rosalie with 100 hours of valuable help and has been involved in every aspect of running the museum. Motion made by Diane to give her \$100, was 2<sup>nd</sup> by LeRoy, passed. Sarah has indicated that she plans to give more time next summer.

**Donor Forms:** Tom McKay sent us a copy of the donor form used by the Wisconsin Historical Society and also a copy of the Written Collection Policy to use as a guideline. Motion by Phyllis, 2<sup>nd</sup> by LeRoy to use this form in the future, passed.

**Bylaws:** The Bylaws need to be updated in a couple of areas, namely: Section 2a, categories and Article X, the names and types of various Funds. Merle will work on rewording these sections and Patty will type them with the proposed revisions for the next meeting.

**Alarm System:** A fire at a local business prompted Rosalie to call our alarm company regarding the reliability of the system. A check on the alarm is done every two years to be sure it is functioning properly.

**September Meeting:** Jean Coffey will be speaking about the Hinkley Fire at the general meeting on September 28<sup>th</sup>.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patty Young, Secretary



#### Notes from the President:

Looking back, the last nine months have been busy with numerous interesting programs, special events, and over nine hundred visitors and five hundred students at the museum. Our season ended September 6<sup>th</sup> with doors locked and the open signs Removed. But the scurry of busy hands work on. We continue to have volunteers making a difference in the museum. Jim Gisch and Dave Knutson hurry to pick up the most recent acquisition a Ben Franklin Sign from St. Croix Falls donated by Carol Olson & family. The Fines Arts room is receiving a face lift, removal and cleaning of china and glassware and new back drops for the displays. The Law Library and storage rooms have been completed for organizing and now the task of cataloguing has begun by Linnea & Larry Phillipson. The Lanesdale School House will be completed after Jim builds plastic covers for windows. The East Farmington School will have the belfry put up next spring by Larry Behne. The roof over the North addition in the museum has been repaired and replaced. We now stand dry in the upstairs storage and in the basement areas. Council of Local History coordinator, Tom McKay visited our museum September 10<sup>th</sup> Judy, Marge, Rosalie & Darrell were present for questions of do's and don'ts of storing and receiving artifacts. Tom remarked of how nicely the layouts of displays and the the clean atmosphere of the museum. Thanks to the many volunteers for all of their help in making the museum look grand and our visitors remarks were A\* for this museum. The next day D and I traveled to the Northwest Regional Convention. We were given a presentation of the Railroads of Douglas County and a tour of the Depot, Museum and VFW Buildings.

The latest update of the Elevator/addition Project: Darrell, Rosalie, Joyle Anderson met with Walter Brager from the Marion Park Deaver Foundation in July. We discussed plans of the location and cost of the elevator/addition. Mr. Brager suggested that we apply for a matching grant of \$100,000 to be receive by the year 2007. I received and completed the grant application in August. The second and third meeting was held with architect Eugene Krueger from Cameron and Elevator Rep. Chuck Haslud from Superior Joyle Anderson, Rosalie, Darrell Kittleson and Jim Gisch were present. The outcome of these meeting were positive of location and the addition of the handicap elevator. The following steps will be needed before we go ahead a letter to the National Historical Registration of Historical Sites and a soil test for the new addition. A special account at the S & C Bank in Balsam Lake is in place, remember all donations to the PCHS is a tax deductible.

Up coming events: Radio History Series, WPCA 95.7 FM,, featuring History Regions Clear Lake, Amery, Marge Hallquist; Osceola, John Jenkins; Frederic, Emory Giles; SCF, Durand Blanding; and SEL Eureka, Betty Jenkins sponsored by Polk County Historical Society

Oct. 16<sup>th</sup> Christmas in October; Polk County Museum 1-4:00pm Featuring Artisans Kristen Martin, Rug weaving, Amery Weavers, Marilyn Reiten wood carving, Betty Bergstram, quilting, Mavis Kittleson, Victorian flowers arrangements, decors and dry flowers & grasses. & more Music and refreshments.

Oct. 26<sup>th</sup> All member meeting Elections and Program Speaker Tony Jenson "Fur Trading of the Early Wisconsin. 7:00pm. New Justice Center, Community Room Balsam Lake, Intersection of County Rd. I and Hwy 46. President Rosalie