



# THE SARTELL HISTORIAN

June 2008

Volume 1 Issue 1

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Paul Brenhaug



Why am I excited about starting a Historical Society here in Sartell? I am fascinated with history, but it is more than that. It's the connection that I have to this community. It's my hometown.

While I was not born here, my parents (and I) moved here the day after my first birthday. After the birthday party my family finished packing and the trailer home that we lived in was moved to the Fischer Garden Mobile Home Park. We lived there for a year then moved to our house at Seventh Street on the east side.

I have many fond memories of what it was to grow up here in Sartell. Like when I was playing in the backyard with my brother and friends and a train whistle would blow. I would stop to watch the train thunder by and wave at the conductor in the caboose. Or the times when my brother and sister and I would make the trip across the bridge to get candy from Dairyland Grocery.

I would cling to the outside railing in fear of the large holes in the walkway where the bridge supports passed through the deck. Seeing the river water rush past under your feet made you respect that bridge. Of course the reward of the trip (candy) far outweighed the fear of the bridge crossing.

When I had children of my own and my family was outgrowing our bungalow in St. Cloud my wife and I looked into building a new home and Sartell was where I wanted to be. Sartell is where I wanted my boys to grow up and go to school. I wanted my hometown to be their hometown.

Over the past couple years I have spent literally hundreds of hours digging into the history of Sartell. It has been an exciting journey. In 2006 a group of people got together to write a history book for Sartell's Centennial. After the project was completed I hosted a dinner at my home to celebrate this accomplishment. It was the consensus of the group that we press on to preserve the history of this town and share it with others.

It's exciting to see this "hometown" organization come together.

## COMING EVENTS:

June 12-14 Summerfest

September 13 Country Manor Fall Fest

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

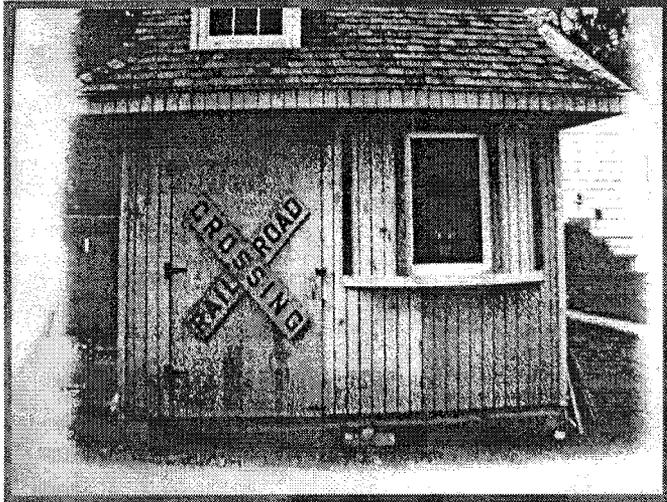
Steve and Wendy Hennes

Ron and Sandy Hurd

Ron Zurek

# TRAIN DEPOT REPLICA

# HISTORY BOOK



This 8 ft. by 12 ft. storage shed is a replica of the Sartell railroad depot taken down in 1970. The replica was constructed by members of the Sartell Historical Society to be sold as a fundraiser for the society.

## WEBSITE:

[www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mnsartel](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mnsartel)

As our website develops it's location may change, so we suggest accessing it with a search for

Sartell Historical Society

## OFFICERS:

President	Paul Brenhaug 259-8003
Vice President	Ron Euteneuer 253-8022
Secretary/Treasurer	Kaye Wenker
Board Member	Marcella Dingmann
Board Member	Joyce Gelle
Board Member	Robert Pogatshnik

## SARTELL HISTORIAN

The official publication of the Sartell Historical Society is published 4 times per year for the benefit of its members. Articles are the opinions of the authors. We do our best to ensure accuracy but cannot be held responsible for errors and omissions. Contributions are welcome on any subject related to the history of Sartell, Minnesota. Material from the newsletter may be reprinted provided reciprocal article use permission is granted.

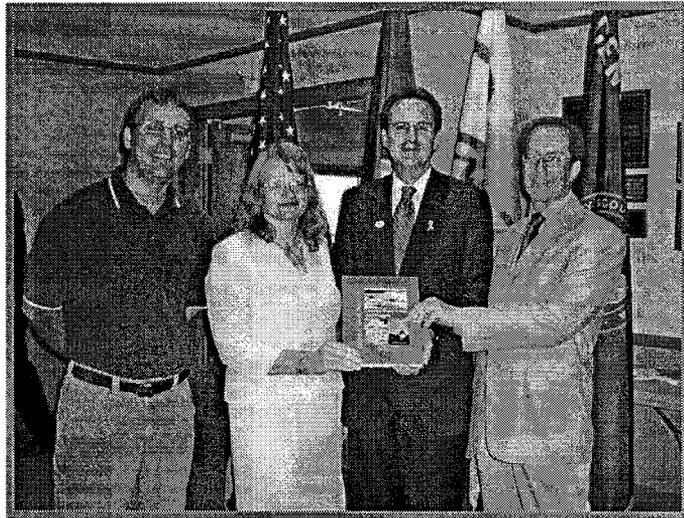
*Lumber, Paper, Valves and Progress, History of Sartell, Minnesota* was published for the 2007 Sartell Centennial.

The 258 page hardbound book consists of over 90 short stories and articles about the history of Sartell, Minnesota written by past and present residents of the city.

Every household should have a copy.

The book is available for \$35 from:

Sartell City Hall 320-253-2171  
and Sartell Walgreen's



*Paul Brenhaug, Kaye Wenker and Jeff Sartell presenting a copy of Lumber, Paper, Valves and Progress to Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty*

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY FUTURE:

A permanent site for the Sartell Historical Society has not yet been determined. Presently we are using the old Shay house (Heritage House) on Riverside. Meanwhile donated photographs, books, correspondence, stories, artifacts and other items related to the history of the town are being organized in preparation for the move to the permanent location.

**DONATIONS:** Contact Paul Brenhaug  
320-259-8003

**SUGGESTIONS** for future historical society events are welcome.

**ARTICLES** for publication in this newsletter should be sent to the Sartell Historical Society, P.O. Box 1907, Sartell, MN 56477-1907

# Sartell Historical Society

P.O. Box 1907

Sartell, Minnesota 56377-1907

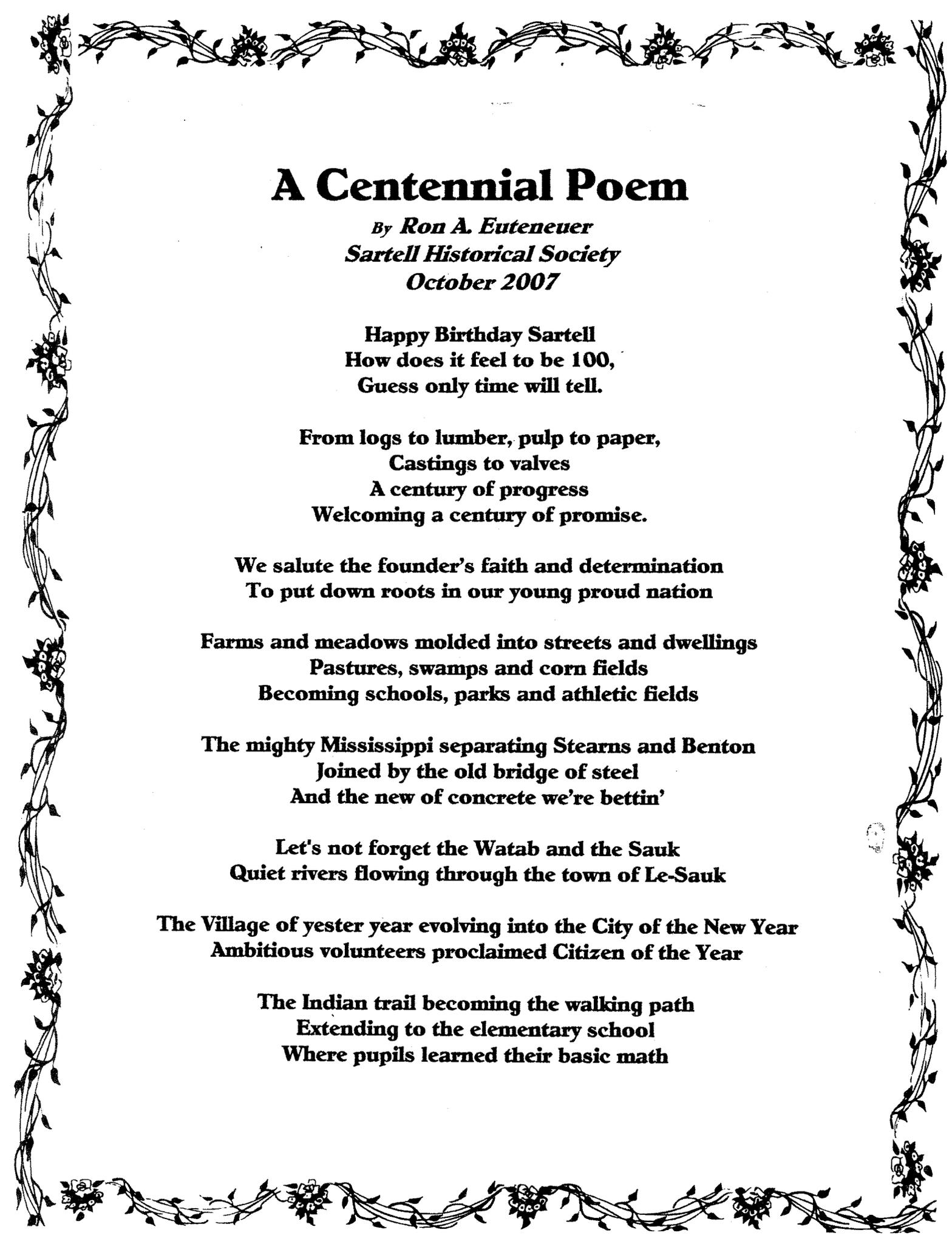
*For the collection, preservation, study and presentation of the history of Sartell and neighboring townships.*



The Sartell Historical Society was incorporated in 2007. It is a nonprofit organization with an Institutional Membership with the Minnesota Historical Society. Currently, the Sartell Historical Society is collecting memorabilia, photos and documenting peoples stories and memories of Sartell. We are working toward regular newsletters and ultimately would like to have a Heritage Center with a museum and research center.

## Who We Are

A group was formed in 2006 as part of the Sartell Centennial Committee to write a history book. Through the process of writing the book we agreed to continue on with the passion we have for our community by organizing a Historical Society to preserve and share Sartell's history with others.

A decorative border of grapevines with clusters of grapes and leaves surrounds the text.

# **A Centennial Poem**

*By Ron A. Euteneuer*  
*Sartell Historical Society*  
*October 2007*

**Happy Birthday Sartell  
How does it feel to be 100,  
Guess only time will tell.**

**From logs to lumber, pulp to paper,  
Castings to valves  
A century of progress  
Welcoming a century of promise.**

**We salute the founder's faith and determination  
To put down roots in our young proud nation**

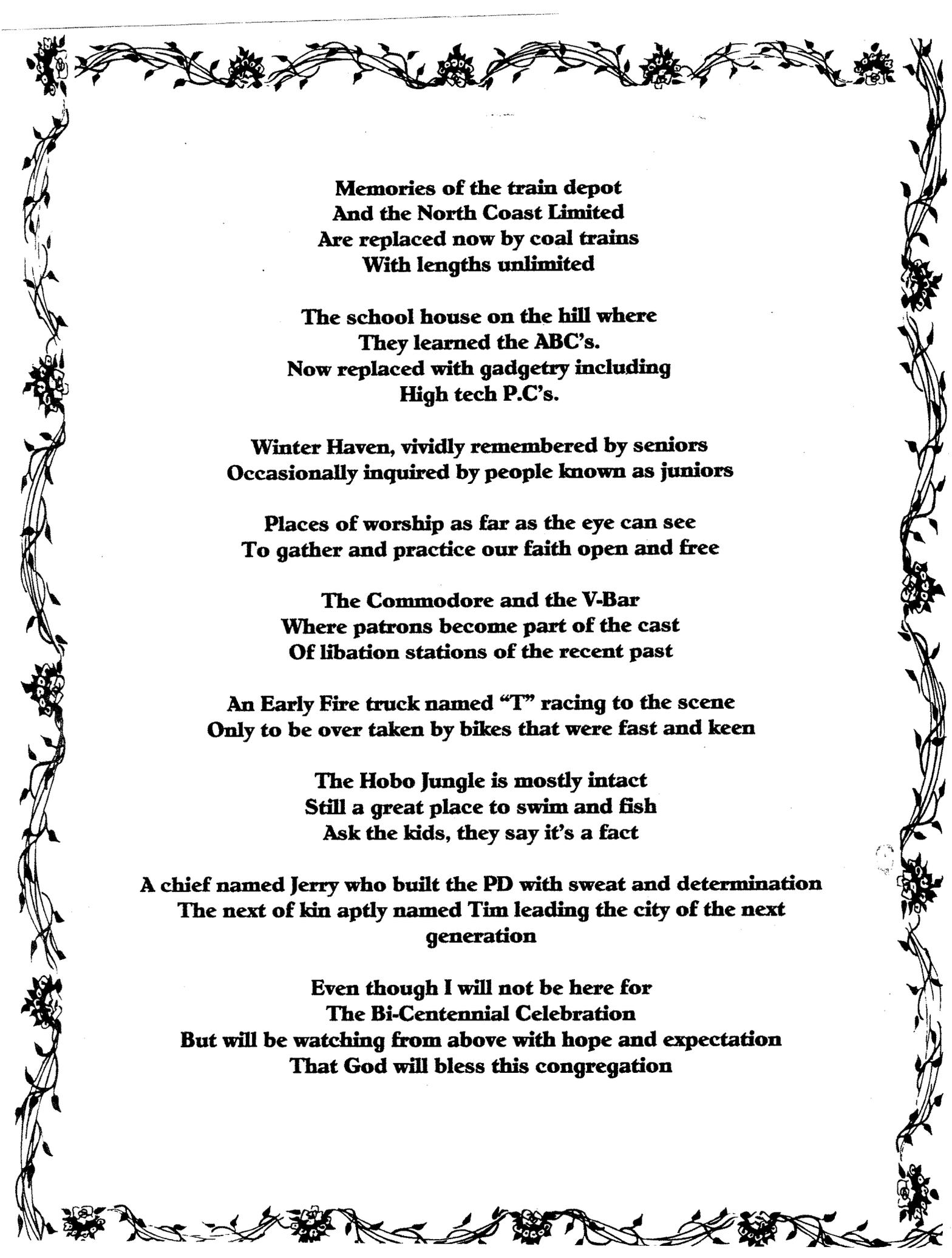
**Farms and meadows molded into streets and dwellings  
Pastures, swamps and corn fields  
Becoming schools, parks and athletic fields**

**The mighty Mississippi separating Stearns and Benton  
Joined by the old bridge of steel  
And the new of concrete we're bettin'**

**Let's not forget the Watab and the Sauk  
Quiet rivers flowing through the town of Le-Sauk**

**The Village of yester year evolving into the City of the New Year  
Ambitious volunteers proclaimed Citizen of the Year**

**The Indian trail becoming the walking path  
Extending to the elementary school  
Where pupils learned their basic math**

A decorative border of grapevines with clusters of grapes and leaves surrounds the text.

**Memories of the train depot  
And the North Coast Limited  
Are replaced now by coal trains  
With lengths unlimited**

**The school house on the hill where  
They learned the ABC's.  
Now replaced with gadgetry including  
High tech P.C's.**

**Winter Haven, vividly remembered by seniors  
Occasionally inquired by people known as juniors**

**Places of worship as far as the eye can see  
To gather and practice our faith open and free**

**The Commodore and the V-Bar  
Where patrons become part of the cast  
Of libation stations of the recent past**

**An Early Fire truck named "T" racing to the scene  
Only to be over taken by bikes that were fast and keen**

**The Hobo Jungle is mostly intact  
Still a great place to swim and fish  
Ask the kids, they say it's a fact**

**A chief named Jerry who built the PD with sweat and determination  
The next of kin aptly named Tim leading the city of the next  
generation**

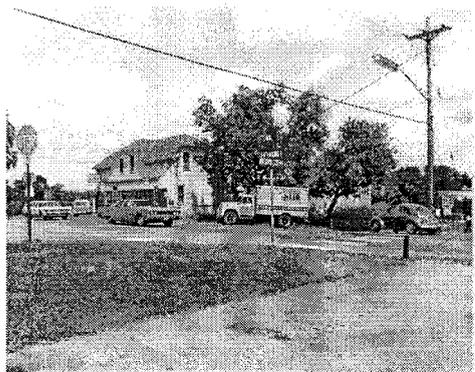
**Even though I will not be here for  
The Bi-Centennial Celebration  
But will be watching from above with hope and expectation  
That God will bless this congregation**

# THEN AND NOW

.....a look back at our city

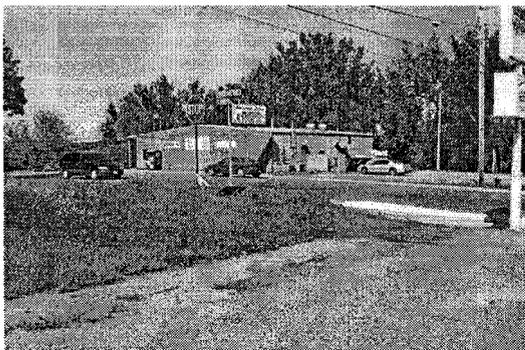
Paul Brenhaug

This photo is from the mid. 1970's. The two story Sartell Grocery Building has seen a lot of changes over the years. It was built around 1890 as a store and offices for Sartell Brothers Lumber Company. Behind the trees you can see the lettering "Dairyland Foods" on the addition to the building that is now the Riverboat Depot. Dairyland acquired the store in 1973. In 1979 the two story portion of the building was torn down.



A truck for the Minneapolis Star is pulling off the approach to the Sartell Bridge as a Volkswagen Bug cautiously turns onto it. They are probably looking to see that no trucks are coming. Because the bridge was so narrow trucks crossing the bridge usually took the middle covering both lanes. The bridge was closed in 1984. Soon after the approach was removed the land was filled in. In 2007 the framework of the bridge is still standing across the mighty Mississippi River carrying utility lines from the east side.

Family vehicles have changed also. A station wagon comes to a halt at the three way stop at the intersection of Sartell Street and Riverside. In 2007 a mini van cruises down Riverside Avenue.



The Riverboat Depot 2007

# MEMBER PROFILE:



**Marcella Dingmann**

Kaye Wenker

Marcella Zinda was born on January 26th, 1926 in Sauk Rapids Minnesota to Roman and Clara Zinda. The family moved to a Mill house in Sartell located at 26 Riverside Ave S when she was 3 days old and has lived in Sartell all of her life.

She went to school thru the 8th grade in Sartell and then attended Tech Junior and Senior High, graduating in 1944. As a young teenager, Marcie and a friend went before the Mayor and City Council to seek out permission to use the Sartell Village Hall as a place for teenagers to get together for socialization and events while chaperoned.

Marcie worked as a secretary at the Watab Pulp and Paper Mill after graduation until she married her husband Claude Dingmann in 1946. They lived in several houses in Sartell throughout the years, building some of them themselves. She and Claude have six children: Ted, Teresa, Susan, Claude Jr., Linda, and Mary Jo. In 1969 her husband Claude was diagnosed with lung cancer and passed away in June of that year. After that Marcie worked as a housekeeper and went to Vocational School and earned her degree in nursing as a LPN. Marcie worked as a nurse at the St. Cloud Hospital for 20 years.

Marcie's love of the Sartell Community is evident by all of her involvement, time, and talent she has shared over the years. She has always been very active in a variety community organizations. She has been an election judge for many years, active member of St. Francis Xavier Church, Retired Nurses Association, SALT, Seniors And Law Enforcement Together, which is a group of residents that meet to discuss ways to better the community for everyone. She also enjoys meeting with the Red Hat Grams group at Country Manor. In 2006, Marcie volunteered to help with the writing of the Sartell Centennial History Book. The amount of knowledge, information, and memories was essential to this book. In 2007, Marcie, along with six other writers

(member profile continued)

and residents formed the Sartell Historical Society to preserve history for future generations.

Marcie has two favorite ways to relax. One is playing cards (she has belonged to the same card group since the 1950's). She also enjoys an occasional trip to the casinos.



## THE PLANING MILL

Thomas Sartell

Aside from the many favored spots along Watab creek, perhaps the most pleasant area in town to visit was that of the Sartell Brothers' planing mill complex, especially that part near the mouth of the creek. A cool and comfortable place outside in summer, the tool room became a warm haven in less hospitable seasons.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow could just as well have had the planing mill in mind when he wrote *The Village Blacksmith*. Just substitute a huge cottonwood tree for a spreading chestnut and a planing mill boiler room for a blacksmith shop and the conditions and atmosphere are similar. Sweat-drenched men, clanging tools and, in quieter moments, good, common-sense conversation and guidance in solving small mechanical problems of one's own. Many a man – and boy – stopped by to ask questions, exchange ideas or just to sit and visit awhile. Everyone was welcome, not only for sociability but to make use of tools if he so minded. In fact, should he wish to make use of the tools kept there after hours, he could feel free to go and do so. The place was not kept locked, until sometime in the 1920s when too many tools and other items seemed to 'walk' away."

First recollections of the planing mill on this spot are of the "old one", constructed about 1910 to take place of the old sawing and planing facilities a few hundred yards down river that were being abandoned. Steam powered, its boilers were heated by burning the shavings from the planer, those shavings having been sucked into vacuuming conduits at the points where they fell, carried from there overhead to the boiler end of the mill and deposited into a roof-top hopper, then drawn from there as needed to ground level, where they were shoveled into the furnace. Thus the mill made its own fuel. The resulting steam turned the driveshaft which drove the planer and other machinery.

That mill burned on May 1, 1928, and was replaced on the same spot by a similar set up, except that the whole new arrangement was driven by a huge electric motor. That was an advantage over the old mill in that all or a portion of the machinery could be activated at a moment's notice, instead of waiting for a head of steam. It was in this new mill that I was broken in to the hard work involved in processing rough into finished lumber.

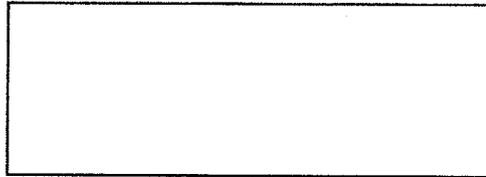
New or old mill, the atmosphere under the old cottonwood didn't change. People still stopped by. The advice and counsel was just as readily and freely asked for and dispensed and even the characters didn't change much. C. S. Sartell and Joseph S. Sartell looked after the basics of the operation and hired others to help when needed. Norris Sartell ran his automobile repair service out of the river end of the tool room in the late 1920s and early 1930s. And the addition of sawing equipment on the south end of the mill consolidated all manufacturing function of the declining activities of the Sartell Brothers.

This article is one of many stories written by Thomas Sartell (1914-2002), most of which were published in the history of Sartell book *Lumber, Paper, Valves and Progress*

More articles from Thomas Sartell and members of the Sartell Historical Society will be printed in this publication.

Sartell Historical Society  
P.O. Box 1907  
Sartell, MN 56377

First Class Postage



# SARTELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Membership Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (      ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Levels

Individual \$15

Family \$30

Business \$100

Donations \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable  
to: **Sartell Historical  
Society**

Send form and payment to:  
**Sartell Historical Society P.O. Box 1907 Sartell, MN 56377**