



# Chanhassen Historian

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Fall 2024

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## Update on Historic St. Huberts Church Building

Probably the most frequently asked questions we get at Chanhassen Historical Society regard the status of the Historic St. Huberts Church building.

Built in 1887, the building is still owned by the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, although it has not been utilized by the parish for several decades. It is listed on the National Register of Historical Places. Contrary to common belief, this does not prevent it from being torn down. It does require that any renovations stay true to the original historic building design in order to remain on the Register.

Currently, the most significant threat to the Historic Church is the roof. After just about every storm with any significant winds, we find more of the church's wooden shingles scattered around the property. So far, the integrity of the roof is holding – but it is getting to be a near thing. When water does start to penetrate the roof, the deterioration of the church will quickly escalate – plaster will become saturated and begin to crumble and fall, along with associated issues of mold and eventually, structural integrity.

Several years ago, Father Rolf Tollefson formed a committee to advise on possible paths forward with the Historic Church including assessment reports and possible repairs and renovations. We at the Chanhassen Historical Society are happy to be partnering with the parish in this project. Since then Fr. Rolf has left the parish, moving on to the Nativity of Our Lord Church in St. Paul.

Last May, a well-attended listening session was held at St. Huberts for members of the congregation. Elisa Armstrong has been doing a wonderful job spearheading this project at the parish, and we encourage anyone who is interested to connect with Elisa via email – [elisa129@gmail.com](mailto:elisa129@gmail.com) or phone – 612-808-0706.

This summer we were excited to hear that St. Hubert's new pastor, Father Ralph Talbot, has recommended reconstructing the committee to reexamine and update the assessment report, etc. We're hopeful that there may be a way forward to preserve and restore this beautiful church, and public interest is vital to its future success. We will continue to update on the status of this project, and anyone interested in being a part of it is encouraged to reach out!



## The Chicken Dinner a short story by Mark Roeser

It was August. Summer magic was waning. All that had felt new in June (baseball, forts in the woods, stealing apples) was becoming routine, getting old. Just one "Big Thing" left before the school year began: The Chicken Dinner! One last bit of summer magic, much anticipated since they hung the banner over Main Street letting us know the time was near.

The fun started on the last Thursday of August. About noon, mysterious trucks showed up at the fields next to St. Huberts, dropping off giant canvas bags & barrels full of big wooden stakes & mallets. We had the good sense not to mess with the barrels, but there were many good games of King of the Hill fought from the tops of the bag piles. This went on till we were called home for supper.

After a hasty meal, we bolted back to the field where things were on the move. Parish men were coming in getting ready for some serious work (I suspect there were a few motivational cases of beer involved). Bags were unloaded & canvas was spread out far as the (young) eye could see. Long poles & ropes were attached. They heaved & the canvas rose – unfolding into the wonderland to come. Here's where us kids finally had a part. We got to hold the ropes while "the Men" pounded the stakes in with amazing precision. Ropes were tied, canvas walls were attached & the stage was finally set. Bedtime for us kids, beer time for "the Men".

(Continues Page 2)

## Chicken Dinner (Continued from page 1)

Friday was Our Day. All the real work was to take place on Saturday, so Friday was a day the tents were empty, open to all. There were ropes to climb & swing from, big canvas bags to tie the little kids into, barrels to walk on & roll each other around in; nothing but danger & fun as far as the eye could see. The fun, fights & general "heck" raising went on till we were called home well after sunset.

Saturday us kids were relegated to the background. The Parish women worked the school kitchen, cutting up chickens & general prep work. I remember hanging around the kitchen door when the chickens were being unloaded. We'd grab chunks of packing ice to suck on – after all it was hot August. In the main tents the hard work was taking place. Beer-stand construction, hamburger-stand construction, bingo tent set-up, etc. Us kids got to help setting up chairs & tables. Sometimes we'd even get paid a quarter! (lots of money for a 10 year old). Saturday ended with a hum of activity & a buzz of anticipation.

Finally the Big Day dawned. Starting with Church (of course), then over to the school hall for the Famous (but underwhelming - to a 10 year old) Chicken Dinner. Roasted chicken, dressing, potatoes, peas, carrots, corn - local farm-town fare. And now with the essentials aside – Let the Fun Begin!

Since Mom was working the kitchen & dining room, we'd look to Dad - he always worked the Bingo tent. He'd hand us a couple bucks (a small fortune) & head in to work. On our own, the first stop would be either the Snow Cone or Cotton Candy stand. After a proper dessert it would be on to the Game tables: the Duck Pond, the noisy Race Car, the Ball Toss, and the Cork Gun. It wasn't long before our pockets were stuffed with whistles, paddleballs, rubber duck calls, and other amazing treasures.

A stop by the Bingo tent to see if Dad was calling the games yet. If not, we'd settle in for a few games of Bingo. "Cards Are 10 Cents each, Three For a Quarter". Waiting for Mutch to howl for the caller to slow down or call louder, watching Aunt Helen win another \$10, waiting for the bad boys outside the tent to holler out "Bingo!" to fool the caller.....

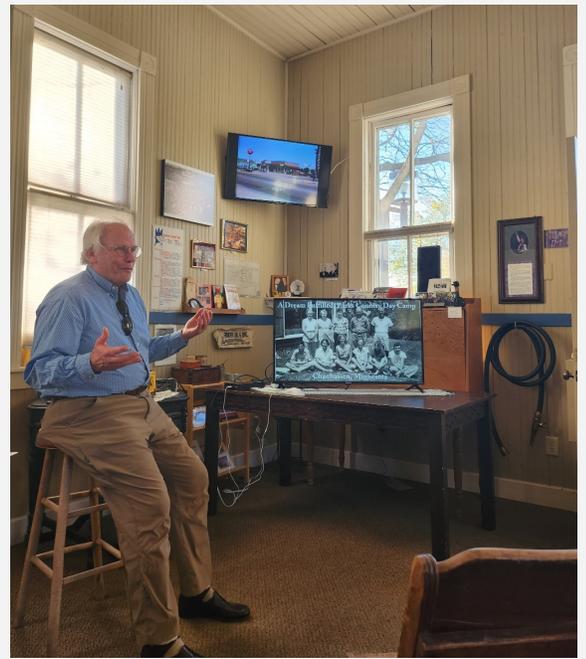
Then Dad would take the stage (some would call it a hay wagon). He'd let us up there next to him – we could even turn the crank & watch the balls fall. We felt pretty special. Our Dad was a star.

After all the hours of fun & games we'd head for the Hamburger Stand & grab one loaded down with fried onions & black pepper – the best burgers ever...then more Cotton Candy & Snow Cones for dessert.

Now it was time for the grown-ups to take over. A polka band would set up by the Beer Stand & the old folks & farmers would settle into their special day. After a couple hours of old-time revelry, the band would take a break & the Big Raffle barrel was put in their place. All us kids would crowd around Father Firmin, hoping to be chosen to turn the "Big Crank," with one of us reaching in to retrieve the winning ticket! (Seemed to us like a Kerber would always win the Big Prize).

After the Raffle, the band would start up again, but our day was done. I remember laying by the open window in my bedroom listening to the distant strains of the Jolly Germans Oom-pah Band, sending another summer on its way.

*The Chicken Dinner, now called the St. Hubert Harvest Festival, still takes place every year. This year's event will be held Saturday, September 28, and the Chanhasen Historical Society will have a table there to discuss the repair/preservation project of the historic church building. Stop by and say hello!*



## Presentation: The Parks Country Day Camp of Chanhasen

**Saturday, September 28**

**2pm - 3pm**

**Chanhasen History Center**

**Light refreshments provided**

The Chanhasen Historical Society will host guest speaker and local historian Mark Kaplan for a presentation on the topic of The Parks Country Day Camp of Chanhasen, which was located on the land adjacent to Lake Ann and Lake Lucy from 1951-1966. Join us!

**Members and nonmembers welcome!**

**ST. HUBERT  
HARVEST  
FESTIVAL**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28**

**MASS 4 PM, FESTIVITIES 5 PM**

**MUSIC, FOOD, BEER & WINE  
FAMILY FUN, BINGO, RAFFLE**

**ST. HUBERT CATHOLIC COMMUNITY  
8201 MAIN STREET, CHANHASSEN**

**WWW.STHUBERT.ORG**

Calling All Trivia Fans! 

## History Trivia Night at Chanhassen Brewing Company

The Chanhassen Historical Society is excited to be sponsoring a special night of History Trivia at Chanhassen Brewing Company, hosted by award-winning radio personality and local resident Dave Ryan, longtime host of the popular KDWB morning show.

**Tuesday, October 29**

**7pm- 9pm**

**[Chanhassen Brewing Company](#)**

**located at: 951 W 78<sup>th</sup> St**

Come with your own team, or join up with others to create a team when you arrive!

While you're at the brewery for a fun night of trivia be sure to check out our newly completed display, featuring photographs of historic Chanhassen as well as many photographs of the history of the Chanhassen Fire Department.

**There's still time to volunteer to help with this event, or submit your trivia question ideas (along with answers) via email or mail!**



## Holidays at the History Center!



### Holiday Boutique & Snow Village Display

Come down to the History Center this holiday season for some gift shopping or simply to enjoy the holiday museum decorations and a seasonal refreshment.

**Friday, November 29**

**Saturday, November 30**

**Saturday, December 7**

**12pm - 4pm**

**Chanhassen History Center, 391 W 78<sup>th</sup> St**

Members and nonmembers welcome!



## Join the Chanhassen Historical Society!

It's more important than ever to join or renew your membership.

Please consider an additional donation as we continue to develop the History Center and community events.

Check your address label for current membership status.

Membership automatically includes subscription to Carver County Historical Society's mailing list!

### Membership Form

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone# ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Individual (\$20)    Family (\$30)    Additional Donation Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Chanhassen Historical Society, P.O. Box 941, Chanhassen, MN 55317

OR PayPal payments to: [contact@chanhistorical.org](mailto:contact@chanhistorical.org)



## Notes from the President

Greetings fellow friends of history!

As summer 2024 comes to an end, I would like to invite you to come visit the Historic Village Hall Museum before our regular season ends. We will be open Saturdays from 11:00 to 1:00 through the end of October, as well as a few later dates for our first Holiday Boutique!

It has been a busy summer season, with many visitors, new exhibits, and a welcoming space for people to do research on their families. In June we hosted local historian Mark Kaplan, who presented an interesting history of the Park Day Camp that was successful in the 1950's and 60's on the site of Lake Ann. We found his presentation fascinating and have invited him back for an encore presentation on Saturday, September 28<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. Join us!

Unfortunately, our plans to participate in this year's 4th of July Parade were scrapped when the parade was cancelled due to bad weather. But a big thanks to Elisa Armstrong and her family for the help in planning our entry, as well as Mark Motzko for his willingness to let us use his Model T Ford as our unit. It would have been grand! We are looking forward to next year.

Please take note in this newsletter of the upcoming events we will be hosting in September, October and November. We are especially looking forward to working with St. Hubert's Parish on ideas for renovation and restoration of the Historic St. Hubert's Church building.



Please visit our newly designed website soon for updates on events and information!

**I would also like to extend an invitation to anyone interested in becoming a board member or volunteer to please submit a resume or request as soon as possible. No direct experience is required and the minimum commitment is just 6 meetings per year. We have many positions to be filled and welcome anyone who is curious to reach out and get involved - there are so many different ways to do so. It's not only a fun way to meet new people and engage with your community, it's also a great way to build your resume and experience!**

Paula Atkins,  
President

Remember!  
Your membership includes access to photo archives  
from the Carver County Historical Society!

[www.carvercountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.carvercountyhistoricalsociety.org)

Username: cchsApr

Passcode: 68ZBBAMRHT63

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## Chanhassen Historical Society

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Chanhassen, MN 55317

[chanhistorical.org](http://chanhistorical.org) 

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