

# Prospect House & Civil War Museum Newsletter

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## PROSPECT HOUSE GARDENS

From the first crocus in the spring to the last hurrah of colorful tree foliage in the fall – the Prospect House Museum offers a magnificent summer display to visitors. Tastefully planted and cared for—the property has several gardens, beautiful trees, and shrubbery to feast the eye upon. Of course, this beautiful yard did not just appear. The current gardens are the result of tireless effort by our volunteers. The first to begin work in the yard was Reba Gilliland. When Reba was contacted by Cathy Belmont, a master gardener, offering help—she gladly accepted. Cathy quickly became the museum master gardener and set to work

recruiting volunteers to realize her vision of what the museum grounds could look like. Volunteers over the years have included, among others, Master Gardeners Judy Brisso, Marilee Weaver, and Alana Kim, and volunteers Carrie Fisher, and Mary Hylden.

Cathy reinterpreted a plan drawn up by Brad Walvatne, owner of Lake Country Gardens in Battle Lake. Lake Country Gardens supplied most of the plants and many people donated hostas, lilies, irises and other flowers over the years. Cathy and her volunteers have worked hard to clear areas and plant. The iris garden contains irises hybridized by Cap's son-in-law Ernest Wilkins. We will soon have a video about Ernest and his gardens on our [YouTube channel](#). Subscribe and get updates on new video postings.

The museum is always on the look-out for volunteers and Cathy would love to have more gardeners join her. You do not need a lot of experience and Cathy would love to teach you about gardening. Please give us a call or email if you are interested. In these very poignant times of social unrest and a worrisome pandemic, here is a lovely quote by Minnie Aumonier:

*“When the world wearies and society fails to satisfy, there is always the garden.”*



## TOURS

Recently we opened the museum to small group tours by appointment only. Visitors are asked to wear a mask, practice social distancing, and sanitize their hands while visiting. ***Please call to schedule your tour today!***

## UPCOMING EVENTS

We are keeping an eye on the COVID-19 situation as we tentatively plan two events: Woodstack in September and the Fall Luncheon in October. *Please keep an eye on our website for updates.*

## VIDEOS

We've been having some fun creating short videos. Recently we produced a video of Jay giving a “mini” tour of the Civil War room. We are working on new videos so please visit our YouTube channel here: <https://bit.ly/33kNVh6>. Subscribe to receive updates.

## MEET AND GREET AND RUMMAGE SALE EVENT

The weather was beautiful, albeit hot, and we had a great turnout for our rummage sale on July 25<sup>th</sup>. We sold a great deal of stuff and received some nice donations. We set up a table under an awning to display mystery artifacts from the museum and visitors had a fun time trying to figure out what they were. Special thanks to our volunteer crew who went beyond the call of duty on a hot day.



## *Industrialization and Minnesota Education Program*

By Valerie Clark

We are happy to announce that we've made great progress with developing our new education program *Industrialization and Minnesota*. This program will address the Minnesota 6th Grade Social Studies subject, 'Development of an Industrial United States.'

We are preparing several learning activities for visiting students, including a bus tour of Battle Lake, where kids can visit the old battlegrounds of the Anishinabe and Dakota as well as the train depot and grain elevator. The goal is to use the town to expand students' awareness of Native American History and show them how technological innovations helped grow the population and financial success of small towns in west central Minnesota. Additionally, we will be asking students to assume the role of a real-life individual from the area. We currently have a total of 38 characters for the kids to role-play, including Anishinabe warrior Chief Wenonga as well as the town's founding fathers, Edmund A. Everts, E.E. Corliss, and J.A. Colehour. This activity is meant to help students connect on a personal level with real individuals of this time period.

We are excited to say that the Education Team, lead by our Education Program Curriculum Writer Julie Fietek, has nearly completed the bus tour route and is currently finalizing their research on the characters for the role-playing activity. Thanks to modern technology, we have been able to find information to reconcile inconsistencies in birth and death records, country of origin, and records of burial, thus allowing us to gain better insight into the lives of these amazing people. Our next step is to bring all aspects of the curriculum together before finalizing and sending the written draft of the tour narrative to the Minnesota Historical Society for approval.

## Moving Forward

We are planning for a soft launch of the new education program by 2021, depending on when schools will be able to reopen. We are also working hard to improve public access to our collection. By this time next year, our goal is to make images of our Civil War collection available online so audiences may look at these amazing artifacts whenever they wish.

While we are counting on state and local grants to fund these projects, none of this will be possible if we cannot cover our operating expenses for this year. Although the museum has reopened, the coronavirus is having a devastating effect on our tour sales, which we heavily rely on to meet basic operating needs. This is why support from our community is needed now more than ever. Even the smallest donation can go a very long way.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Any time you can give will be very much appreciated. We especially need:

- Docets in the school program (training available)
- Event staff (especially for the tea, fall luncheon and Gala)
- Collections Inventory Project volunteers to document and number museum artifacts (training provided)

### HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US

There are many ways to [support us](#). You can donate, volunteer, recommend us to others, or bring your friends to tour the museum. **The museum is a tax-exempt 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization (tax ID #273631846) and gifts are tax-deductible.**

We have recently set up a GoFundMe page here: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/operating-funds-request>.