

# The Record

## Annual Meeting Recap by Mark Bonesteel

Our FHS Annual Meeting took place on October 9<sup>th</sup>. After a nice pizza dinner, each Board member presented a summary of their activity for the year. The Early Fridley History grant is proceeding forward. Internet and email addresses have been added for our society. The Lasagna dinner brought in about \$3,000. Membership is slowly growing and we are extremely grateful to our generous members for their financial donations.

The Board will be looking at future fundraising efforts to address the replacement of the elevator/lift and also the replacement of some of the original electrical wiring in the building. The society will be working with the school district to address the roof replacement. The overhang was discussed and is now fixed.

Rachel Westhoff was voted onto the Board of Directors. She will be taking over the publication of the newsletter. Mary Sue Meyers was voted in for another three year term as Events and Fundraising Chair. The By-Laws were recently reviewed and some changes were suggested. The proposed changes were sent to all members and voted on at the Annual Meeting. The new By-Laws passed and will be printed shortly.

### Upcoming Events

#### Open House

Saturday, November 11  
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

#### Kindergarten Art Fair and Open House

Saturday, December 9  
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## Kindergarten Art Fair at the Fridley History Museum

by Dorothy Gargaro

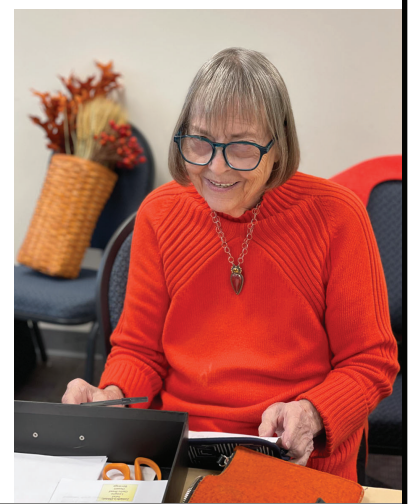
The Fridley Historical Society is very proud to say that we've had more than 20 years of inviting our Kindergarten Art Fair in our 1931 Fridley Elementary School located at 611 Mississippi Street. This year the parents and our Students will arrive on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>; it will be open from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. All kindergarten Students in Stevenson Elementary and in Hayes Elementary work with their Art Specialists in their schools. We're so grateful to have Laura Charles, as Art Specialist in Hayes Elementary and Lindsie Faber, as Art Specialist in Stevenson Elementary. There are almost 100 students in each kindergarten school. All the artwork gets displayed in the 1931 Fridley School. Their parents bring their students to come and see their wonderful art work there.

🌲 Merry Christmas to all! 🎅



# 2023 Lasagna Dinner *by Mary Sue Meyers and Rachel Westhoff*

On October 7<sup>th</sup>, The Fridley Historical Society hosted its annual lasagna dinner. Raffles prizes were drawn and silent auction items were won by lucky bidders. This is our biggest fundraising event of the year and it was a great success! Thanks to everyone who attended, to Rosie Fields for photographing the event, and to Mayor Scott Lund for acting as emcee.



## Grant Update by Mary Ann Hoffman

The Fridley Historical Society received word in September that we are the recipients of a \$10,000 grant through the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund administered through the Minnesota Historical Society. This is great news! The \$10,000 is earmarked to complete Phase One of what we anticipate will be a three-phase project that will culminate in a permanent exhibit in our museum that will interpret the Post-World War II Suburban Development of Fridley. To be more specific, a large part of the grant will be used to hire a company, Amplifier Experience Design, owned by Steve Boyd-Smith of St. Paul, to create an Exhibit Concept in preparation for the permanent exhibit.



A committee has been formed to work with Steve Boyd-Smith on the project, led by Project Director Mary Ann Hoffman and Authorized Officer Mark Bonesteel. The committee will meet with Steve Boyd-Smith periodically during the year to shape the Exhibit Concept, which will form the basis of the permanent exhibit.

The interviews that were collected in 2012, also with a Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund grant, will form the basis of the project. Following is a sample of one of those interviews.

*- sample interview for exhibit-*  
**Harold and Linda Larson**

*Harold and his family moved from California to Fridley in 1953 when he was 11 years old, while Linda and her family moved to Fridley in 1948 when she was only two. Both families moved into houses on Mississippi Street, Harold's east of Central and Linda's on the west side. Harold stated that there was a horse farm near his house, as well as a slaughterhouse nearby. Fridley was largely rural at that time.*

*Linda and Harold met when she was 13 and he 16 and they dated off and on for five years. Some of the places they would go on dates were the Frost Top Drive-In, the Sun Drive-In in Northeast Minneapolis, the 100 Drive-In Theater, Maple Lanes Bowling Alley, and the soda fountain at the Fridley Drugstore.*

*The Fridley Drugstore was part of the Christenson strip mall on the southeast corner of University Avenue and Mississippi Street, established shortly before World War II. The strip mall played a prominent role in Fridley and was talked about in nearly every one of the 15 interviews. Harold described the drugstore as a "hot spot" in Fridley.*

*Harold had a love for cars and got his first one, a '49 Dodge for which he paid \$200, when he was 16. Eventually he raced at both Twin City Speedway and Minnesota Dragways. He often 'cruised the loop' on Central, going into Northeast Minneapolis and then back north as far as Spring Lake Park, presumably with Linda.*

*They became engaged when Linda was a senior, which she stated wasn't particularly unusual at that time, adding, "You didn't, we never considered college or anything. I mean, my parents didn't have the money. That was just out of the question to go. You just, you graduated, you got a job, you got married, that was it." They were married at Redeemer Lutheran Church and had a reception at her parent's house. They moved into an apartment on East River Road and then in 1967 moved into a new house in Andover. Harold passed away in 2018.*

*Harold and Linda's interview includes many more recollections of growing up in Fridley. In fact, collectively the interviews are rich – incredibly rich – in describing Fridley and what it was like to live here in the '30s, '40s, '50s, and '60s. They should make for an exciting exhibit down the road.*

# New Entrance Overhang *by Mark Bonesteel*

Last winter, the overhang at our building entrance took a beating. The heavy snow and moisture made the overhang start to come apart and lean a bit forward. The original overhang was built with the building in 1931. Sometime in the past thirty years, part of it was rebuilt. It had lasted well until last year's winter.

We had an insurance adjuster come out. They advised that the overhang was badly rotted out and it appeared moisture had been leaking in for years. We were further advised that the damage was not covered by insurance. We had a contractor come out and they advised by bid it would cost \$45,000 to repair and replace the overhang. We consulted with two other contractors and we were advised that the repair should not cost more than \$5,000.

In October the Board of Directors voted to go with the low bid of \$4,900. It was imperative that the repair be made before winter so as not to cause further damage to our building exterior. We were also concerned about the possibility of an overhang collapse. With students, teachers, and museum members constantly walking by the entrance, we did not want it to fall down on someone.



exterior damage to overhang



interior damage to overhang



The new overhang!

The contractor was able to remove the rotted out pieces and replace them. As much of the original 1931 material was saved and reused including the two wooden posts holding up the overhang. The original overhang attachment to the building was also saved. New fascia was put in place along with new shingles. The new overhang has a slight increased pitch to help with water runoff and snow melt.

The final total for the repair came to \$3,600 plus \$525.00 in materials. We saved a substantial amount because the contractor was able to use scaffolding instead of renting a lift! The new overhang will last much longer than the last one and it is difficult to tell it is not the original.

# Lost Fridley History *by Mark Bonesteel*

March 1, 1995



## Moon Plaza 1963–2023

Construction began in 1963. The original mall had 40,000 square feet on the main level and 15,000 square feet on the lower level. The parking lot had 200,000 square feet available.



# The Unsolved Murder of Barbara Boyles by Mark Bonesteel

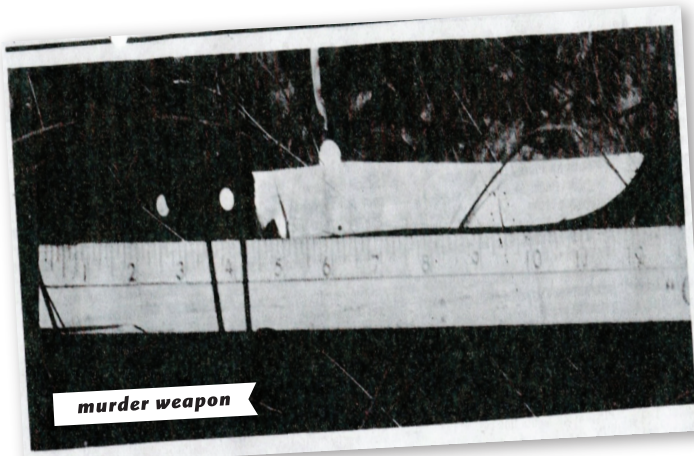
Barbra Boyles was a 17 year old student living in Columbia Heights with her parents. Barbara was about to start her senior year at the Columbia Heights High School. On August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1967, Barbara left her home to walk to a friend's home a few blocks away. Barbara left around noon but never made it to her friend's home. Barbara was reported missing to the Columbia Heights Police Department. Her disappearance occurred between noon and 3 pm.

On August 4<sup>th</sup>, the Fridley Police received an anonymous phone call from a male caller. The dispatcher advised officers that the male sounded like he was between 18 and 25 years old and had possibly disguised his voice. The caller advised the dispatcher that there was a body in Fridley near 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue and East River Road. At that time, that area was heavily wooded on both sides of 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue, East of East River Road.

Fridley Police Officers and detectives responded to that area and located the body of Barbara Boyles. She was naked and had four stab wounds to her body. Her throat was also cut. Near the body, a butcher knife was located with blood on it. The knife and Barbara's clothes were taken as evidence. The blood on the knife was analyzed and found to match the blood belonging to Barbara Boyles. *(continued on page 7)*



Barbara Boyles



murder weapon

- Fridley's first documented murder was in 1917 with the murder of Minneapolis Police Officer George Connery *(featured in the last two FHS Newsletters)*.
- Of the 48 murders in Fridley's history, only five remain unsolved.
- The 1930 murder of Martin Tobin at the Oak Grove Country Club is Fridley's earliest unsolved murder.
- In Anoka County, The Anoka County Sheriff's Office investigates all homicide cases. The local Police Department where the murder occurred assists the sheriff's office to help bring cases to a conclusion.

# The Unsolved Murder of Barbara Boyles...cont.

Police began receiving phone tips and other information on the murder. The Anoka County Sheriff's Office Investigators along with Fridley Police detectives began interviewing people who brought forth information about the murder as well as some suspects. At one point, the Sheriff's Office sent an investigator to California to verify some information that had been received. Yet after several years, the case remained open and unsolved.

Approximately seven years after the murder, The Fridley Police received an anonymous letter in the mail with information about the case. The Anoka County Major Crime Investigation Unit (MCIU) appealed to the public to have the letter writer contact them so they could obtain some more information. There was also a large reward offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrator.

This remains an open and unsolved case. The Anoka County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigation Division (CID) remains active with their investigation of this case along with more than a dozen other unsolved cases from Anoka County.

Someone somewhere knows something that can bring Barbara Boyles' case to a conclusion. Anyone with any information regarding this case or any other unsolved cases are encouraged to contact the Anoka County Sheriff's Office at 763-324-5000. Witnesses or people with information can remain anonymous.

Barbara Boyles is buried in Lakewood Cemetery in Minneapolis. Her family never received the justice they deserved. This brutal murder remains unsolved but someone has the information needed to bring peace and closure to the remaining members of the Boyles family.

## Membership Update by Noreen Rickenbach

My name is Noreen Rickenbach, and I have the honor of being a part of the Fridley Historical Center's Board and Committee, responsible for Membership. Recently, I had the privilege of taking two of my great grandchildren on a tour of the building where I attended first and second grade, which is now the Fridley Historical Society building. I was able to show them the desks, blackboards, bathrooms, and we even ate lunch in the basement lunchroom/gym. My great grandchildren were so thrilled, they asked to go back and visit again soon. I was only able to do this because of all the support we receive from members.

We thank the people who have sent in their 2024 membership dues and encourage others to do so by filling out the form below and mailing it to the Society (or dropping it off), so we can continue to create memories and work to make the future better for Fridley.

**Membership  
Renewal Form  
on other side**  
→



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A name followed by an \* indicates that the renewal was accompanied by an extra donation.

*As always, we thank you for your generosity!*

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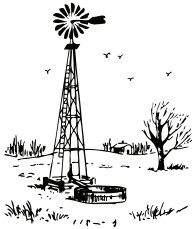


- Rosemary Frauly
- \*Ed and Arlene Hamernik
- \*JoAnn Johnson
- \*Sonja Granlund Johnson
- \*Vicky Paulson
- Margaret Taylor
- Mark Zelenak

**FRIDLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

611 Mississippi Street  
Fridley, MN 55432  
Phone 763.571.0120

RETURN SERVICE  
REQUESTED



*Celebrating Fridley's past  
and securing its future*

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## **Membership Renewal Form**

✂----- clip here ----- clip here -----✂

Dues for the year 2024:  senior dues \$10 <  individual dues \$12.50 <  family dues (2 adults, same household) \$18.50 <

*Please consider making an additional donation to help us reach our goals.*

Dues \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Additional tax-deductible donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check the box to request an IRS donation receipt

*Office Use Only*

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Re _____
AK _____
Mtg _____
NWL _____

— MAIL TO —

**Fridley Historical Society, 611 Mississippi Street, Fridley MN 55432**

*Thank you for your support!*