

BENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

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*Preserving the Past for the present  
and the future*

[ <http://mnbentonhistory.org> ]

Board Members, Staff, Volunteers and Meeting Information

Board of Directors

**President:** Ernie Wollak  
**Vice-President:** Char Dhein  
**Treasurer:** Renee Kampa  
**Secretary:** Jean Stark  
**Director:** Earl “Butch” Bukowski  
**Director:** Pat Gerchy  
**Director:** Randy Schafer  
**Director:** Merle Stowe  
**Director:** Lorane Walsh

Board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month. The meetings start time are 6:30pm unless otherwise posted on the front door of the museum.

Meetings scheduled may be changed by Board motion and approval or due to inclement weather. This information will also be posted at the museum when necessary.

Staff

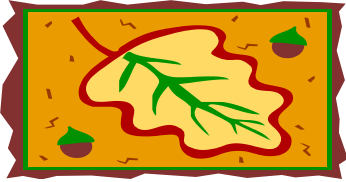
**Jack Toliver**-Military  
**Miles Christie**– Office & Military Support  
**Meredith DePree**-office support  
**Mary Ostby**-Executive Director

Monthly Meetings Scheduled

**October 16, 2012**  
**November 20, 2012**  
**Board cancelled December Meeting – for holidays**

Volunteers & Staff

**Fred Joesting**– Research  
**Marj Keehr**-Research  
**Andy Schwalboski**– Research & Displays  
**Caren Kalenda**– Oral Interviews, BCHS Tour & Data Input  
**Bob Kalenda**– BCHS tour & Data Input  
**Wendy Wheeler**– History Mystery & Photography  
**Jan Rothanburg**-Photography  
**Jenny Josephs**– Displays & Resource Support  
**John Stafney**– Website & Database



October  
2012

BENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

NewsLines

Annual Meeting

We held the Annual Meeting at the Benton County Historical Society and Museum on September 18, 2012.

The past four years the Board has chosen to hold it in our facilities and serve a light supper before the meeting. This has turned out to be very beneficial for attendance! It also has the advantage of our members coming in to see how the displays and facilities have changed.

After supper, we went to the regular Board of Director’s meeting where the general membership participates in the election of Board members and then Board Officer positions are done. There were three Board Members up for election this year: Renee Kampa, Randy Schafer and Char Dhein. All three were nominated to serve a three year term and all three were elected to serve the Board Members positions for the new term. Board Officer’s position were nominated and the members kept the same officer’s as 2011. President: Ernie Wollak, Vice President: Char Dhein, Treasurer: Renee Kampa, and Secretary Jean Stark.

This year we also hosted a presentation from Harold Zosel. Harold has a postcard collection that focuses on St. Cloud area. The PowerPoint featured buildings, transportation and scenery from the area. Harold narrated some history about each postcard shown and the presentation was very interesting for everyone present! The audience had a chance to ask some additional questions about the postcards that were featured on the Power Point as he was going through the pictures. Everyone had a good time!

Membership Renewal Form for 2013

We have put the Membership Renewal Form on page 11 of this newsletter!

In the past couple of years, it has been on the last page so that if you cut out the form, it does not damage any articles or pictures that you may want to see!

Renewals are not due until January 1, 2013, but we have published early renewals through the newsletter. and people have responded Everyone has a chance to renew before the New Year if they choose to. We have had a pretty good response because of the holidays season , travel and family events going on. We save on postage costs by doing renewals using the newsletter too.

If you do not renew by January 1, 2013, we will send you a letter reminding you of renewal! We usually only send one letter for renewal during the month of January.

We have not changed the membership amounts for 2013! We hope that you will renew your membership for 2013!



# Benton County Fair

We were down at the Heritage Building during the Benton County Fair! The Heritage Building was used as a central hub for the celebration of the “100th Anniversary” of the Benton County Fairgrounds. In the last newsletter, we did a little past history on the Fairgrounds. Benton County Agricultural Society bought the land that the Fair is held on today back in 1913. That is not exactly the “beginning” of the history of our local community agricultural fairs. The community held fairs in the City of Sauk Rapids before that time, but the agricultural products were brought to a local hotel for people to see. The Benton County Fair Board is working on a book for release next year with the history of the Benton County Fair.

We had a good time greeting the folks who came to see the items that were on display. We featured a collection of ribbons from as early as 1914, along with some early stock certificates that were issued (see on next page). We also had scrapbooks of early 4-H articles and events. We also featured some of the history of the early buildings and events. The Dance Pavilion was built in 1917 (article on next page) and we had a great deal of fun listening to all the stories of the memories of the people who visited the Dance Pavilion booths that were also in the Heritage building. Many thanks to Fair Board Director **Lewie Stark** for his wisdom in keeping a set of the booths and having them at the Heritage Building! (Pictures below is one of the booths!)

We spent time talking to people about participating in the Book Project for next year. We are still looking for pictures, stories and entries to use for the book. Let us know if you would like to participate with some local history on the Benton County Fair!

Many thanks to the people who volunteer to do demonstrations for us and help us set-up and staff the booth!

Fairgrounds Pavilion Dance Booth at the Heritage Building!



*Agriculture not only gives  
riches to a nation, but the  
only riches she can call  
her own.*

**Samuel Johnson**

Kevin Abfalter and his 1878 Corn Sheller entertained quite a few people at the Fair! (Below)



Anita helped us with Spinning Wool!



Pat Soyka helped us with Felting demonstrations!

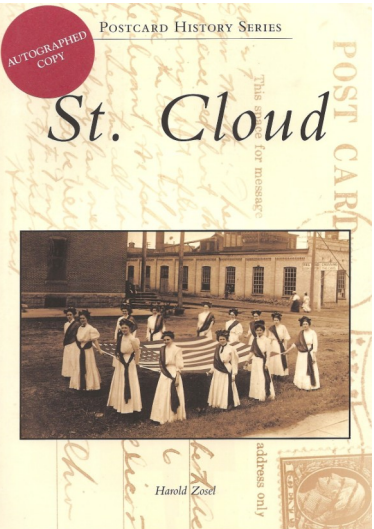


# Harol Zosel's *St. Cloud Postcard History* book is here for sale!

At the Benton County Historical Society Annual meeting this year we were pleased to have Harold do his presentation of the postcards that he has for the St. cloud area.

Harold narrated a Power Point show of these amazing postcards and was a wealth of information! His book shows the postcards of the area, and they tell a story of the growth, changes and historic time-lines of the area.

We are featuring his book as we have copies available at the museum! Harold has autographed all the copies that we have here and there are selling for \$21.99



# Membership Renewal Form for 2013



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL SLIPS 2013

Household	Business	
<input type="checkbox"/> Seniors \$9.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Annual \$50.00	Name: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Single 13.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting 75.00	Address: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Family 18.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintaining 100.00	City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Contributor 27.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Patron 150.00	Phone: _____ 2013Membership Dues!
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporter 50.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor 500.00	Email: _____

Make your check payable to: Benton County Historical Society or BCHS.

Thank you for your continuing support of Benton County Historical Society and Museum!



## Donations July, August, September 2012-Thanks To All!

**David Woolard**– Clayton Uran Memorial Plaque

**Jill Poirier**– Legal notes for the first Maywood township set-up, children's clothes, letter from Jill with photo

**John Johnson**-Nelson family history book

**Cliff Johnson**– Various church cookbooks from Benton county churches, newspaper articles, Wollak construction magnet, Jack Frost Elevator ice scraper, Don Larsen's Camper City deck of cards, Foley Produce Calendar, Johnson's MN. Taxidermy, Len Jaeckels Calendar, Foley Lumber Calendar, Sacred heart Plate, Jarve Flower Painting, St. Augustine's choir Album, Mr. Jim's Cup, large gold N Plump Chicken, Ron's Champion Auto

**Jerri & Ken Neeser**- Bee helmet, Bee keepers Net Face Covering and Billows Sprayer for Bee Keeping

**Charlie & Jean Stark**– weight scale

**Vernon Neils & Delores (Neils) Rehder**– 3 Milk bottles Commercial Atlas of 1930, Census Edition

**Amy Jowers**-Thomas & Tekla Wolak and Family History Book

**Butch Bukowski**– Legislative Manual of the State of MN 1925

**Diane Haffner**– Boxes of Popular Mechanics magazines Biography magazines, variety of maps, house plans magazines, T.V.– VCR combo, office chair

**Ron Svihel**- Ron Leonard Band Poster, Ron Leonard Record, Svihel's Dance Orchestra business card, Svihel's orchestra dance posters, pictures (scanned) newspaper article

**Sherrie Jaeger**– Descendents of Hugh James Casemore & Roseannah May Keppler Family History book

**Darrell & Michelle Watercott**– Basil Watercott's military uniform set of blues and set of whites with information

**Mayhew Lakers 4-H Club**– 75 years of 4-H history since the start of club in 1934

**Foley High School**– Retired school year books documents

**Phil & Barb Neske**- portable sound system



Enjoy the Fall!



Thanks to all who continue to support the preservation of Benton County history of people, places and things!

## Where's Wendy? New Pictures Sauk Rapids Herald



Thanks to the Sauk Rapids Herald for helping with this!

We are starting a new Fall series of Sauk Rapids pictures called "Where's Wendy?" Our photographer, **Wendy Wheeler** went out and about in the Sauk Rapids area and took some time to get some pretty interesting pictures! Will you be able to identify where she is? If you can, we will take submissions of the location and do another drawing like we did in the History Mystery. They will be published in the Sauk Rapids Herald starting in the month of October!

We are hoping that everyone has a chance to participate and as always; Good Luck!

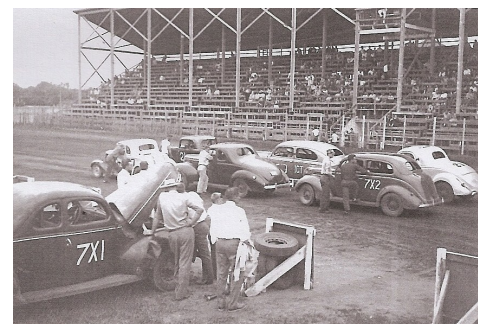
## Benton County Fair (continued)



1915 Benton County Stock Certificate



1950's Fairground Racing (above & below)



ever. Aug 23, 1917

### DANCE PAVILION AT FAIR GROUNDS

BUILDING COMMITTEE TO HAVE  
EQUIPMENT READY FOR THIS  
YEAR'S FAIR.

Arrangements have been perfected for the erection of a dance pavilion on the Benton County fair grounds work to be completed before the opening of the fair this fall. The building as planned, will be 60 by 90 feet and will contain a maple dancing floor 60 by 80 feet, as well as modern dressing rooms and other conveniences.

The committee believes that the pavilion will prove popular during the summer months as well as during the few days of the fair and that the young people of Sauk Rapids and St. Cloud will use it as a place for recreation.

The building will be one of the best on the fair grounds and will be a valuable addition to the equipment already there.

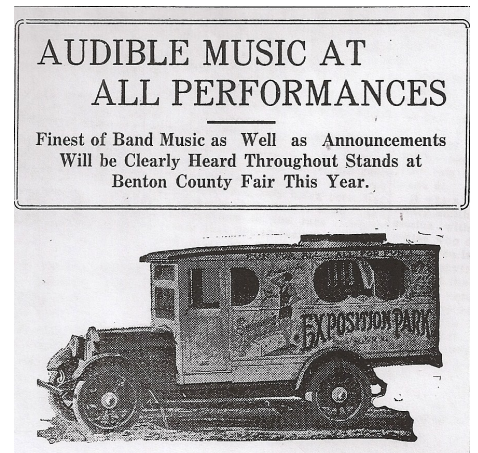
Fairgrounds Dance Pavilion built in  
1917



Graham Booster Booth 1915

*Benton County Fair Book will  
be released at the 2013  
Fair!*

Music was always featured at every Fair



## Museum Tours

Benton County Historical Society and Museum is open 10am to 4 pm, Monday thru Friday and the first Saturday of every month from 11am-4pm. We will be closed on the first Saturdays that fall on holidays or if we have inclement weather. **Saturday Schedules until the end of year:** October 6, 2012, November 3, 2012, December 1, 2012

If you have need for a tour, or need a special time for research, please call the museum at 320-253-9614, stop by and arrange, or contact us by email: [bchsmus@bentoncountymuseum.com](mailto:bchsmus@bentoncountymuseum.com). We do our best to work with the community to accommodate special requests, so if you need extra hours, please contact us!



Happy Halloween!



## Annual Meeting Information

We provided our 2011 –2012 information at the Annual Meeting and we are adding it to the newsletter :

**Programs & Public Events:** Women In History Banquet, Benton county Fair booth, Demonstrations for Public Education at heritage building, Watab District Number 2 Schoolhouse program, 2011 Annual Meeting with Author Alice Mengel Alme *Pioneer Journey*, Completed Restoration on Northern Pacific Flagmen's Shanty project

**Volunteer Report:** In 2011 we had 6004.15 volunteer hours put into our programming at BCHS. Volunteers staff schoolhouse, fair booth, help with research and resources, museum maintenance, are Board of Directors, and participate in public presentations.

**Staffing:** In 2011 **Meredith DePree** was hired part-time for BCHS after being part of the Quality Careers programming. She handles the cemetery information, builds maps of said cemeteries and updates information.

**Miles Christie** continues to work with us as a member of the Quality Careers program and we are fortunate to have such support.

**Public Contacts:** There were 267 email contacts for information during 2011

There were 104 Phone Requests

We had 2200 visitors at the Watab district Schoolhouse

There were 4500 visitors at the heritage Building to our booth

We had a visitor count of 592 from January 1, 2011 thru December 31, 2011. This includes people coming to see the museum, or to do research in areas of family history, churches, and cemeteries.

We had a local visitor count of 383-"local" is defined as within the tri-county area

Our Out of town visitor 209- "out of town" defined as out of the tri-county area.

**Displays & Artifacts :** We are committed to changing the displays in the museum and had a few more personal collections that were shown at the museum. We are also committed to working with the community for donations of historical artifacts and historical documents. We continue to educate about the importance of the Benton County community information and to find ways to share that information with the public. We are also continuing to document and expand the resources within our Benton county Historical Society system.

## Cemetery Updates

Board Member and Volunteer **Lorane Walsh** has been busy working with Staff member **Meredith DePree** on walking the cemeteries and confirming information in our cemetery files. Find-a-Grave website also has people working the Benton County area and we have been working with their volunteers to update some of the records and maps with their information.

We are running into a few glitches in some areas—people know relatives that are buried there and we try to confirm with obituaries, or the older copies of records. If you have someone who may not have a marker, or information on family burials that may not be documented well, please call us! We can make a notation on the cemetery and watch for additional information.

We thank everyone who has been helpful in moving this project forward!

## High School Reunions and Yearbooks

**Fred Joesting**, our resource organizer and master researcher has informed me that we have a lot of information on the class reunions that have been for the Foley Class of 1952. However, we have almost NO OTHER information for Foley Class Reunions for other years of graduates. He wanted me to put out a request for information from the Foley graduates handling class reunions for any information that you may have that you would like to retire or allow us to copy for the files. All Class Reunion information would be appreciated too.



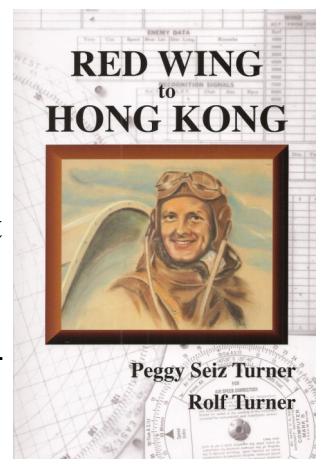
Fall is here!

We also are still looking for missing editions of Foley and Sauk Rapids yearbooks. We have some yearbooks available, but would appreciate it if everyone could watch for early school editions of the publications. (Before 1950's are very hard for us to find) Every little bit of resource information helps preserve the history of the area!

## Red Wing To Hong Kong

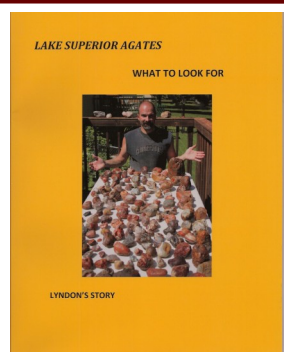
St. Cloud area author **Margaret (Peggy) Seiz-Turner** has written the book: *Red Wing To Hong Kong*.

We featured her in another newsletter and we still have her books for sale at the museum in Sauk Rapids. If you are a family member of a military family, you will enjoy this well written book of her story about family, friends, war, college and the letters that document it all! Margaret has included many pictures, all Don's letters and an amazing viewpoint of an era of that many people remember and will find a common bond with. The book is 20.00 at BCHS Museum.



## Lyndon Johnson Agate Book

We still have copies of **Lyndon Johnson's** Agate Book *What To Look For Lyndon's Story*. If you appreciated Lyndon's Agate collection when it was here, you will love the pictures in this book! The story is well told and very informational as the local agate collector's educates through pictures and words to help the agate hunters find the higher quality agates on their hunt! The book is \$20.00 and available at the BCHS Museum during open business hours.





# Logging Marks– History by Fred Joesting

Logging played a big part in the early development of Benton county. Small lumber mills were common in the second half of the 19th century as lumber was needed for construction of homes, farm buildings and businesses. By 1900 much of the available wooded land had been harvested so the larger lumber mills had to bring in a lot of their logs from northern Minnesota. Logging trains brought in a lot of it, but much was transported by the Mississippi River.

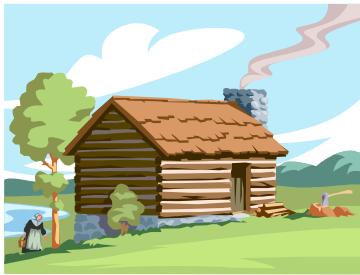
The Neils Lumber company had a large logging operation around Cass Lake, and many logs were floated down the river from Cass lake to Sauk Rapids. In the winter the trees would be cut and the logs hauled to the edge of the Mississippi or some other waterway. Large log drives would begin with the Spring thaw. These drives were much like cattle drives out west and logs were branded or marked with distinct logging markers or brands from each logging company on the ends and/or the sides of the logs. During the log drives down the river, there were often massive log jams so it did not take too long before logs from various companies were mixed up. Companies would register their own lumber mark with the County commissioners. Some of the lumber marks were registered before Minnesota became a State such as the one that is shown below which was registered in 1856.



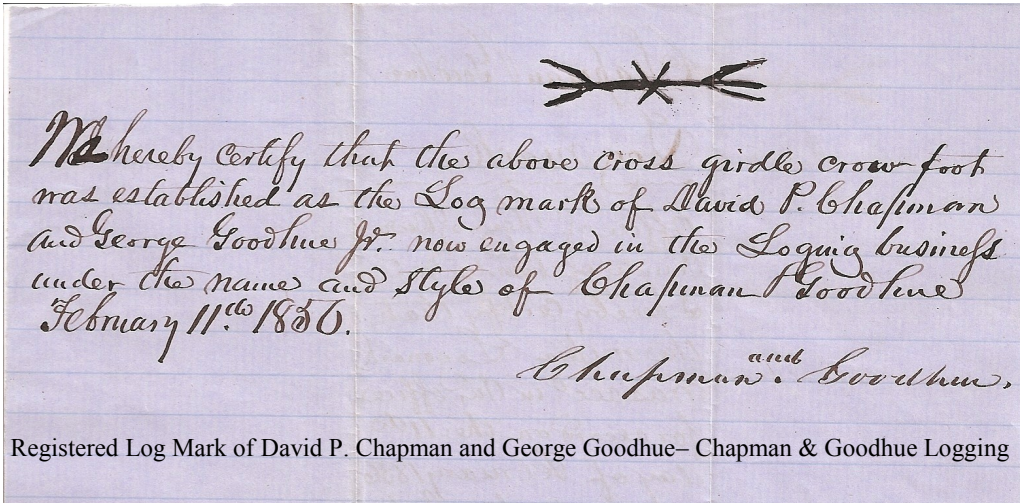
Sauk Rapids Lumber Mill Picture

DAVID TOZER Pitchfork 	E.W. BACKUS B scalp A 	W.D. WASHBURN C double Y reversed H 
CHAS. BRYENTON Reel 	JONATHAN CHASE Cross, cross on two girdles cross 	ERASTUS BYERS Two double darts 
THOMAS CARMICHAEL Snowshoe 	J.S. PILLSBURY & CO. TEL combined girdle twenty A 	J.B. BASSETT & CO. Roof Y girdle twenty 
MCFARLAND & PICKETT New hat 	T.B. WALKER TWB combined 	FARNHAM & LOVEJOY F thirty combined H 
END MARKS	BARK MARKS	END MARKS

Examples of Company Log Marks



Benton County was known for Lumber, Granite and Agricultural in it's early history!



Registered Log Mark of David P. Chapman and George Goodhue– Chapman & Goodhue Logging

# Executive Director Corner

I saw more than a few familiar faces at the Benton County Fair this year! Good to see all of you that were there! I always watch in amazement as the groups of people attending the Fair see old acquaintances and catch up “the news.” I have a couple of people in my life, that come to the Fair looking for me every year!

We had many people in the Heritage Building checking out the 100th year anniversary items! It is an amazing feat that the Benton County Fair has been in the same location for that amount of time! 100 year milestones are a cause to celebrate in our fast-paced world!

Thanks to the demonstrators that were there this year we had people checking in and wanting to learn the hands-on skills of old history! It is good to see the interest in spinning wool, felting, how the old Corn-Sheller worked, bee-keeping and identifying the plants for gardens. Thanks to **Anita Warner, Pat Soyka, Kevin Adelman, Tri County Bee-Keepers, and the Master Gardeners of Benton County** for helping people with information, questions and doing all with smiles!

**Lyndon Johnson** was also at the Fair with us! I am amazed at the people who love those agates! As he always does, he educated and helped the people that wanted the knowledge. More than a couple of people came in with bags and boxes of agates to get his help! What a fabulous resource for the community!

The museum is being re-organized on a small scale again! **Fred Joesting** is shifting the resources around on the shelves so that all the numbered books are actually in order! (due to various sizes, that is an almost impossible job!) Amazing things are also happening in our inventory process as **Andy Schwalboski** is still working on inventory and storage of all the display items. It was a great thing when it came to Fair time and I asked for the Fair items and she could get the organized items we had put away in a tote, labeled, and ready to go! I know, a small thing to some; but HUGE to us around here! **Jennifer Josephs**, who is a volunteer here, helped out in a large way with the Fair display boards. It was busy in the museum and she stepped up to do the poster boards with the early ribbons and premium books. A special thanks to her for that!

All in all, we are moving forward, getting it done and looking forward to keeping this never ending story going~! Thanks to everyone for the support of the organization. Without all the people involved, the Benton County Historical Society & Museum and the history would not exist!

Until next time.... Mary Ostby



Happy Halloween!

# St. Cloud Retired Educators

St. Cloud Retired Educators Association of Minnesota (SCREAM) have volunteered to staff our Watab District Number 2 Schoolhouse at the Benton County Fairgrounds since the 1990's. It has been an amazing cooperative effort to work with this group who is so dedicated to the preservation of the history of the one– room, country schoolhouse legacy!

We had a couple thousand visitors this year to Watab District No. 2 and the Retired Educator's put in 72 hours of volunteer time keeping it staffed and running! We want to thank them for their time and dedication to this project!

Special thanks to **Joyce Wittenhagen** who handles the scheduling for the teachers and does a fabulous job!



Joyce Wittenhagen at Watab District 2

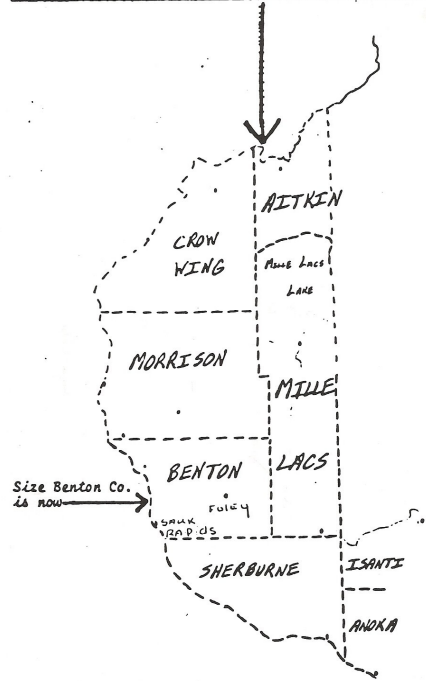


Minnesota Territory from 1849-1851 was originally nine counties. The map at the right show the original nine counties and their locations and borders. They are: Itaska, Benton Washington, Ramsey, Pembina, Mahkahta, Wahnahta, Dakota and Wabashaw.

Benton County's original size is boxed in red.

The Minnesota territory was established March 3, 1849.

ORIGINAL SIZE OF BENTON COUNTY WHEN IT WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1849



To the left we have a larger inset shot of the original Benton County area. (as Boxed in red above) The counties that are listed inside the original county are the boundaries of how that original area was broke down into the counties of today. As you can see, Benton County encompassed a much larger size as an "original territory county." Between 1849-1858 these areas were re-arranged and pared down into the parts that are listed in the left map.

Benton County has a very rich history being established as an original county. Of the original nine, there were only three counties authorized to do "Lawful business". Benton, Washington, and Ramsey were fully organized for all County purposes– (doing lawful business) –these had court and justice seats, established US government land offices and therefore could also perform marriages and law cases. As the legislature modified the map and the process of government moved forward, most of the counties were formed into their borders in 1858.

We have supplied a map of Minnesota 1858 on the next page to see how the breakdown on the counties existed when the Minnesota State was established and made a State by being admitted to the Union as a 32nd State on May 11, 1858.



Above map of Minnesota 1858 after being admitted into the Union as the 32ND State. Map resource out of : Minnesota Historical Society