

OUR READERS WRITE:

Ross Petty's article in the last issue, "Bicycling in Minneapolis in the Early 20th Century," surprised and delighted readers. Among them, David W. Onan II of Florida shared this history—and a family photo.

"Mr. Petty's story on bicycling hits close to home. At the turn of the century, my grandfather, Ole H. Hoiby, was a bicycle maker. In 1889 his shop was at 2014 Washington Avenue North in Minneapolis. He was just 25, a Norwegian immigrant. He lived just up the street at 2326.

"The photo is the man himself, with the clip on his right pants leg [to protect it from the bicycle chain].

"The bicycle company became the Hoiby Automobile Company in about 1907, the first Ford dealership west of the Mississippi River (by about one-half mile).

"The last of his bicycles we had went into a World War II scrap-metal drive. It was a 'high-wheeler.' Too bad!"



■ The Solon J. Buck award for the best article published in *Minnesota History* during 2009 has been won by Edward J. Pluth, professor emeritus at St. Cloud State University. His article, "A 'Negro Colony' for Todd County," (Fall 2009) begins with an "intriguing fragment"—a 1917 newspaper article recalling recent settler Timothy Ward's 1869 plan to colonize 700 black men and their families in the county. The article meticulously uncovers and then examines evidence to determine whether the plan was legitimate or a trumped-up accusation by political rivals. The result teaches much about historical research as well as the turbulent post-Civil War era in local, state, and national politics.

This year's judges were Jennifer L. Pierce, professor of American studies at the University of Minnesota, and Matthew Anderson, collections curator at the Minnesota Historical Society. The award includes a prize of \$600.

■ *Region: Planning the Future of the Twin Cities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010, 354 p., cloth,

\$39.95) examines what the Twin Cities could do to grow smarter and more efficiently and, perhaps, become a national model for urban growth. Myron Orfield and Thomas Luce Jr. offer several suggestions and share their findings relating to many different issues: more effective public transportation, preventing urban sprawl, ways to fight segregation (especially in schools), and how to protect environmentally sensitive lands from growth.

■ In 1966 young Mike Roberts enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard, little knowing that he would be assigned to one of the country's best-loved sites. In *The Last Keeper at Split Rock: A Memoir* (St. Cloud: North Star Press, 2010, 180 p., paper, \$14.95) Roberts offers anecdotes that add up to a sketch of his four-year enlistment, including search-and-rescue missions, daily chores at the lighthouse, the birth of a son, car troubles, and grocery shopping. The last duty officer at Split Rock Lighthouse (he "turned off the light" in 1969) spent his final Coast Guard year at the North Superior Lifeboat Station in Grand Marais.

■ Another compendium of short pieces set on Minnesota's North Shore, also from North Star Press of St. Cloud, is David P. Holmes's *Salt of the Earth: A History of Howland, Minnesota, and Its People* (2010, 131 p., paper, \$14.95). Illustrated with black-and-white photos of people and places, the volume is a series of vignettes of the Johnson and Schuppel families that settled this small town on Highway 61, just 20 miles south of the Canadian border.

■ In *Beyond the American Pale: The Irish in the West, 1845-1910* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010, 472 p., cloth, \$34.95), David M. Emmons probes the myths and realities surrounding both the immigrants and their American settlements. His evidence, carefully researched and clearly presented, contradicts the cherished belief that the Irish settled in big cities in the East and Midwest while the West was the province of Protestants who reinvented themselves and the nation there. Drawing on examples ranging from St. Paul and Melrose, Iowa, to Montana and San Francisco, Emmons shows how Irish workers, toiling across the West at the hard labor required by an industrializing country, planted their regional, political, social, and religious customs in the so-called Protestant West.

■ A nationally known local institution takes center stage in *Nature and Revelation: A History of Macalester College* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010, 400 p., cloth, \$29.95). Author Jeanne Halgren Kilde details the school's history of serving two masters: nature (empirical knowledge) and revelation (religious conviction) through more than a century's worth of educational, social, and cultural changes. Beyond institutional history, this book sets Macalester's story into a larger one: the sometimes controversial transformation of an evangelical college into a progressive, secular liberal arts school.

■ Sports lovers will welcome two new books from Nodin Press in Minneapolis.

In *The Lindsay Whalen Story* (2010, 170 p., paper, \$19.95) R. S. Oatman follows the career of the basketball phenomenon from Hutchinson, Minnesota, from her early years through her triumphs at the University of Minnesota, her European games, and her 2010 return to Minnesota to play for the WNBA's Lynx. The book includes anecdotes about Whalen from family, friends, and teammates, merging the biography of a hometown girl with the story of a sports star.

Jim Hoey's *Minnesota Twins Trivia* (2010, 208 p., paper, \$19.95) is subtitled *1,069 Questions (and answers, too!)*. Along with these, the book also includes a chapter listing the team's top 10 players in each position.

■ He was born in France and died in Wisconsin, but from 1841 to 1844 served in Minnesota Territory, built a log chapel, and named the city of St. Paul. A biography of the Catholic missionary, *Lucien Galtier, Pioneer Priest*, by Marianne Luban (Ogden, UT: Pacific Moon Publications, 2010, 197 p., paper, \$11.00) pulls from documents and writings of Galtier's

contemporaries to "paint a portrait of a seemingly complex personality on a more intimate level than has previously been done."

■ Nine short chapters capture the people, places, and history of a locale clearly beloved by the authors. Diane Drake's and Gretchen Beito's *Tales of the Secret Earth River: Stories of the Thief River Falls Area* (Thief River Falls: EMg Publishing, 2009, 107 p., paper, \$17.95) begins with a short explanation of the city's intriguing name and goes on to weave personal reflection with the area's history. The result is an engaging portrait of a place through time. For ordering information, visit www.essentialmindgroup.com.

■ Sauna, anyone? The "cultural and hygienic bathing practice that has long served as 'the sign of the Finn'" receives full treatment in *The Opposite of Cold: The Northwoods Finnish Sauna Tradition* by Micheal Nordskog with photography by Aaron W. Hautala (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010,

187 p., cloth, \$34.95). This is a coffee-table book but with substantial text that sets New World practices, including a chapter on immigrant saunas in the Lake Superior region, into the context of historic and contemporary sauna culture in Finland. The introduction by Arnold Alanen nicely frames the topic; among other points, he notes that immigrant Finns seldom left written records of their sauna practices, but their neighbors did, sometimes misinterpreting what appeared to them as bizarre behavior.

■ Nicollet Island, located in the Mississippi River in the heart of Minneapolis, can be considered a microcosm of state and urban history. In *Nicollet Island: History and Architecture* (Minneapolis: Nodin Press, 2010, 196 p., paper, \$19.95) authors Christopher and Rushika Hage document the island's ups and downs, beginning with its earliest Indian visitors through explorers, missionaries, and European American settlers. Like many urban neighborhoods nationwide, this 48-acre island has been home to people of all social strata over the years—including more than a few colorful characters; fortunately, it managed to escape the urban renewal that destroyed many other historic areas. Sprinkled with photos throughout, the volume also contains a chapter describing Nicollet Island's architectural "treasures."

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