



### And the winner is . . .

*Minnesota History* authors Robert M. Frame III and Richard E. Mitchell have won the biennial David Stanley Gebhard Article Award for “Constructing Suburbia: The Hidden Role of Prestressed Concrete,” which appeared in the Winter 2014–15 issue. Granted by the Minnesota Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians (MNSAH), the award considers articles published between July 1, 2013, and June 30, 2015, that focus on some historical aspect of the built environment.

In “Constructing Suburbia,” Frame and Mitchell celebrate Minnesota’s prestressed-concrete pioneers who stepped up in the years following World War II to produce “structures ranging from a small prestressed-concrete picnic shelter to major parking ramps and the elevated roadways at Minneapolis–St. Paul International Airport” and explain how, while “often visible yet unrecognized, prestressed concrete became a key structural material in buildings of all types.”

An MNHS Press book was also a Gebhard Award winner. *Minnesota’s Own: Preserving Our Grand Homes* by Larry Millett, with photos by Matt Schmitt, took the prize for best book. Both awards were announced at the MNSAH annual meeting on March 16, 2016.



### Our readers write . . .

Frequent contributor Moira F. Harris shared a tidbit related to Jack K. Johnson’s “Our United Effort: Hamline University’s World War I Ambulance Company” (Winter 2015–16).

“In John Rood’s Bridgman Memorial Court sculpture, one of the vignettes is the Hamline ambulance company, with soldiers, in the trenches.”

*The court, on the Hamline campus near Snelling Avenue, was constructed in 1954. Through sculpted vignettes of Hamline history, it honors university president (1883–1912) George Henry Bridgman and his wife, Mary Elliot Bridgman (parents of Rood’s wife, Dorothy), and commemorates Hamline’s 100th anniversary. Recently conserved, the memorial will move to a new campus location near the former law school building.*

Linda Anderson of Minneapolis responded to Dave Simpkins’s article, “Sinclair Lewis: Suffragent,” also in the Winter issue.

“In case you ever wonder about the value of what you all do at the MNHS, last night at my book club the book for discussion was *Main Street* by Sinclair Lewis. I had just received my latest magazine with the article about Lewis and his support of women’s suffrage. I brought it with me to the club . . . another person in our group ALSO had brought the same magazine to share! That article proved to be an integral part of our discussion about the characters in *Main Street*—being able to see Carol through the history of the strong women in Lewis’s life. So thank you as always for the reminder that history is not past—it lives here in the present waiting to enlighten and educate.”

**From the editor:** After this issue, stewardship of *Minnesota History* passes to Laura Weber. My 37 years with MNHS Press have spanned the transition from electric typewriters and pasted galley proofs to digital editing, design, and production. While some topics remain perennial favorites, new research areas, methods, and interpretations continue to energize and expand our field. The constants through all of this change have been great authors, great research, great colleagues, and engaged, outspoken—yes, great—readers. As *Minnesota History* enters its second century of publication, I look forward to joining that audience.

—Anne Kaplan

**From the publisher:** The entire staff of the Minnesota Historical Society Press and a wealth of authors wish Anne the very best—and thank her for her years of service to the magazine and to the field of Midwest history. Historian Dave Kenney wrote us about his work with Anne: “Anne is a wonderful person, immensely talented and generous in the extreme. I feel so fortunate to have worked with her.” Anne, we salute you!

The Minnesota Historical Society Press (MNHS Press), publisher of the *Minnesota History* magazine, is pleased to announce the hiring of Laura Weber as the new magazine editor, effective March 16, 2016. Weber’s association with *Minnesota History* began with the 1991 publication of “‘Gentiles Preferred’: Minneapolis Jews and Employment, 1920–1950,” which won the Solon J. Buck Award. Her second *Minnesota History* article, on the National Register of Historic Places, received the David Stanley Gebhard Award from the Minnesota Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians (MNSAH). Weber went on to serve MNSAH for ten years as a member of its board of directors. She was awarded her second Buck Award in 2005 for “The House That Bullard Built,” the story of a turn-of-the-century St. Paul African

American union bricklayer. She has also contributed numerous “Landmarks” features and book reviews to *Minnesota History*.

After earning a BA degree in journalism and MA degree in U.S. history at the University of Minnesota, Weber worked as a communicator in the non-profit arts sector before returning to the university as an editor in 1991. In her twenty years at the “U” she also served as communications director for two of the university’s colleges. During that time she pursued an independent public history practice that included writing, editing, public presentations, and walking tours. A recent highlight was being engaged by the Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest from 2012 to 2015 to create a Legacy-funded series of 32 articles on Minnesota Jewish history for MNopedia.

Laura joined the Minnesota Historical Society in April 2014 as communications manager in the Marketing & Communications department.

—*Pamela J. McClanahan*  
*Publisher, MNHS Press*

**From incoming editor Laura Weber:**

Following an editor as beloved and respected as Anne Kaplan will be daunting in many respects! I feel fortunate, however, to have a long-standing and warm professional relationship with Anne, first as a contributor to *Minnesota History* and, for the past two years, as MNHS colleagues.

Our working relationship began as I was making my first tentative steps as a public historian. Anne sought me out after reading about a presentation I made to the Minnesota Independent Scholars Forum on the topic of my master’s thesis. It’s not an overstatement to say that working with her at that crucial juncture in my career, turning the thesis into my first published scholarly article, was a high point in my life. Being edited by Anne made me a better writer, and a better editor. After the initial sting of seeing extensively marked-up copy subsided, I would return to the manuscripts she edited to scrutinize and admire how she tamed my passive voice, wordiness, and awkward constructions. More importantly, she gently challenged me to

go beyond a dutiful presentation of facts to actually draw my own assessment of the topic at hand! Thank you, Anne, for being a mentor to me, and to many others.

As new *Minnesota History* editor I am committed to actively networking and listening to as many individuals in as many communities as possible to ensure that the journal’s scope and content continue to reflect the stories of all Minnesotans in a stimulating, thought-provoking, and appealing format.

Minnesotans of all ages and origins have demonstrated in many ways their abiding interest in the shared stories of our past and how these stories contribute to our understanding of our present and future. As it has been for over a century, *Minnesota History* will be at the center of that ever-evolving conversation. I am thrilled to be part of it.

—*Laura Weber*

■ Back in print: University of Minnesota Press has reissued David Backes’s 2001 collection of Sigurd F. Olson’s lesser-known writings, *The Meaning of Wilderness: Essential Articles and Speeches* (Minneapolis, 2015, 185 p., paper, \$17.95). Short notes preceding each piece of Olson’s set the context and provide dates, making the volume a document of how the beloved environmentalist’s thinking evolved over his long career.

■ Lifting up the Luxembourgish history of southeastern Minnesota’s Whitewater River valley, *Adella’s Diary: Life at the Marnach House in 1894* by Mary E. Nilles (Winona, MN, 2015, 100 p., paper, \$15) traces a year in a farmer’s daughter’s life as she reports on school and work, food and crafts, celebrations and tragedies. The Marnach House, constructed in the 1850s near Elba, MN, is on the National Register of Historic Places. To order a copy of the book, write to [mnilles@citytech.cuny.edu](mailto:mnilles@citytech.cuny.edu).

## Minnesota HISTORY

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