



Karen Savage Blue, Bittern's Hope, pastel on paper, 18"× 24", ca. 1993

ARTIST AND TEACHER KAREN SAVAGE BLUE (b. 1958), a member of the Lake Superior Band of Ojibwe, finds inspiration for her art in the woods and wildlife of her home on Minnesota's Fond du Lac Reservation. Here, she depicts the bittern, a shy wading bird of the northern wetlands, mimicking the cattails in which it hides. An accomplished beadworker as well as a painter in oils, egg tempera, and gouache, she uses pastels to create strong color patterns in this landscape.

—Thomas O'Sullivan



About the Cover

Equestrian sports have long flourished in Minnesota, but never had the state seen the likes Whiskey, shown here practicing (with rider Raymond T. Seymour and two brave officers) for Fort Snelling's 1930 horse show. Through the 1930s, the fort was an active center for equestrian culture, where civilians and officers joined in riding, fox hunting, polo games, and showing. For more on this flourishing scene and the remarkable horse that became an unofficial fort mascot, see the article beginning on page 336.

Duck and Cover



FOR MOST OF THE PAST half-century, school-children in Minnesota have associated disaster preparedness with tornados. In the late 1960s, when my friends and I were students at North Heights Elementary School in Roseville, our teachers periodically herded us into the halls and instructed us to kneel down and duck our heads under the benches where we stashed our Batman lunchboxes. This, we were told, was the way to protect ourselves if a twister should hit our school. Most of us giggled and snickered as our elevated rear ends formed neat lines down the hallway. The chances that we would ever meet tornadic doom seemed remote at best.

But that was the 1960s. As this photograph reminds us, kids growing up during the previous decade had other potentially deadly threats to worry about—like atomic warfare.

At first glance, this January 1951 classroom scene at St. Leo's school in St. Paul's Highland Park neighborhood looks quaint: well-behaved students with folded hands and properly postwar attire (why don't kids wear sweaters with polar bears and penguins on them anymore?) sit at their all-in-one metal desks. But take a closer look at the headline on the handbills the three men are passing out: "Will You Survive if We Are Bombed?"

Presumably, the answer to this disconcerting question would be yes, but the secrets of atomic bomb sur-



Civil defense lesson, St. Leo's school, St. Paul, 1951 (MHS COLLECTIONS)

vival apparently remained a mystery until the following Monday, when a "civil defense rally" was to be held in the school auditorium. The kids got to ponder the possibilities over the weekend.

More than 500 students and parents ultimately attended the Monday meeting. The topic could hardly have been timelier. The Soviet Union had successfully tested its first atomic bomb a year and a half earlier. The Korean War was in its seventh month. The recently created Federal

Civil Defense Administration was distributing a new instructional film, *Duck and Cover*, to schools throughout the country. The students at St. Leo's and elsewhere had plenty of Cold War lessons to learn. Tornado drills would have to wait.

—DAVE KENNEY

Dave Kenney is the author of numerous books on Minnesota history, including Twin Cities Picture Show: A Century of Movie-going (2007) and The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra: 50 Years of Music (2009).

Justus Ramsey House, St. Paul



A FEW BLOCKS from the Xcel Energy Center, tucked back on the patio of a local watering hole, sits a dollhouse-like stone cottage with fuschia window and door sashes. It isn't a novelty created to attract patrons; the fledgling city of St. Paul grew around it, engulfing the original 35-acre parcel on which the Justus Ramsey House was built in 1851. The two-room structure endured to become St. Paul's oldest extant stone house.

In 1849, 26-year-old Justus Ramsey followed his older brother Alexander from their native Pennsylvania when Alexander was named governor of Minnesota Territory. Justus entered the grocery and real estate business, was elected to the territorial legislature in 1851, 1853, and 1857, and served in other government posts. Prosperity allowed him to commission a sturdy example of frontier craftsmanship, early Greek Revival in style, of locally quarried limestone with a timber-framed gable roof. The front façade is of trimmed (smoothed) stone, while the 18-inch-thick side and rear walls are rough "slag."

There's no evidence that Ramsey ever lived in this house. Two years after the Panic of 1857, he lost ownership of the building. In 1881, suffering from "dyspepsia, heart disease, and depression," he committed suicide at age 58. A *New York Times* obituary described him as "one of



The Justus Ramsey house, 252 West Seventh St., photographed by Jack E. Boucher for the Historic American Buildings Survey, Library of Congress, 1960

the most reliable and opulent men in Minnesota," though other sources differ as to his financial solvency. He is buried in St. Paul's Oakland Cemetery.

For some 70 years the little stone structure was primarily a residential rental property and then, briefly, the kitchen for a neighboring boarding-house. It housed an antiques store from the 1930s through the 1970s, when a proposed widening of West Seventh Street threatened it with demolition. In 2002 it was renovated to serve as a bar for an adjacent brew pub and is now part of a restaurant.

—LAURA WEBER

Minneapolis writer and historian Laura Weber has twice received the Solon J. Buck

Award from the Minnesota Historical Society and also won the David Gebhard Award from the Minnesota Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians. She is communications director at the University of Minnesota's College of Design.

Sources: Justus Ramsey Stone House, National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form, State Historic Preservation Office, MHS; Irvine/Cherokee Park Hike Architecture Notes, Part 2: www.angelfire.com/mn/thursdaynightthikes/irvine_arch2.html; *Star Tribune*, May 31, 2002, p. B4.



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