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From the Bound Volumes of Minnesota History



1916 • 100 Years Ago

The Minnesota Historical Society, by virtue of its own history and its place in the state, is the natural leader in a movement for a state historical museum. The cooperation of many agencies will be necessary. The formulation of a plan . . . [and] the persistence to execute it, should come from that organization in Minnesota to which is entrusted the task of helping to keep the social memory accurate and vivid. . . . For without memory there can be no personality, without an ever-alert sense of the past and its significance, a people cannot maintain its solidarity and translate the experiences of yesterday into the purposes of tomorrow. —“*The Social Memory*,” abstract of an address given at the annual meeting of the Minnesota Historical Society, January 10, 1916, by George E. Vincent, President of the University of Minnesota, Vol. 1, No. 5, February 1916

1941 • 75 Years Ago

The formal conference program was brought to a close with a discussion of “The Local Historical Society and Local Archives,” by Dr. Grace Lee Nute, curator of manuscripts for the state historical society. That the local historical society is better equipped than any other agency for the preservation of the business papers of the county and the township is the contention of Dr. Nute, for she asserts, “it is important not only to save local archives, but to save them near at hand.” First of all, local historical workers should learn where the local archives are, and then they should arouse public sentiment for an appreciation of the need for preserving these papers. Dr. Nute called attention to the need for proof of age, citizenship, and residence that so many people are encountering today. “If local communities preserve their records and organize and index them,” she said, “It will be the simplest thing imaginable to prove one’s age and citizenship.” —Bertha L. Heilbron, “*The 1941 Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Historical Society*”, Vol. 22, No. 1, March 1941

1966 • 50 Years Ago

In 1964, the Minnesota Historical Society undertook a project to evaluate the achievements of Minnesota’s first twenty-nine governors. A panel of thirty-two qualified historians and political scientists was asked to rank in order and to comment on the five governors whom each felt had made the greatest contributions to the state . . . Survey participants cast their votes for only fifteen governors; fourteen of the state’s chief executives received no mention at all. The five judged most outstanding were in order of their rankings: Floyd B. Olson (1931–36), John S. Pillsbury (1876–82), Alexander Ramsey (1860–63), John A. Johnson (1905–09), and Harold E. Stassen (1939–43). . . . Olson led the field by a considerable majority and . . . Mr. Stassen was only one vote ahead of Luther W. Youngdahl (1947–51). —“ . . . on the HISTORICAL HORIZON, *The Minnesota Scene*,” Vol. 40, No. 3, Fall 1966

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