



**RAHS 2024 First Quarter Newsletter**

Website: <https://www.rosemountmnhistory.org>

Contact Email: [rosemounthistory@charter.net](mailto:rosemounthistory@charter.net)

As the editor of this newsletter I would greatly appreciate feedback from the readers to help me improve the newsletter. Send your comments to [rosemounthistory@charter.net](mailto:rosemounthistory@charter.net).

**NAVSOC Detachment B**

In 1962 the U.S. Navy leased 18 acres of land from the University of Minnesota that was formerly part of the WWII Gopher Ordnance Works to build a Naval Satellite Operations Center (NAVSOC) that was part of the Transit Satellite system.

On March 16, 2024, at the Rosemount Writer's Festival, I met Bob Richardson, originally from Pennsylvania. In 1963, he joined the U.S. Navy. After completing basic and technical training at the Great Lakes Naval Station near Chicago, he was assigned the NAVSOC Detachment Bravo in Rosemount, MN.

He arrived by train in early 1964 and was billeted at the Naval Reserve Base by the MSP airport. They would be transported to the Rosemount facility for three days each week. The station was still under construction, and there was no work for technicians like Bob, so they mustered in the morning and then sat around all day doing nothing. They had five days off each week. On their days off some sailors would travel to their hometowns, sometimes hundreds of miles from Minneapolis. Bob was there for the site commissioning which by Navy tradition makes him a "plank owner" even though he never received a plank. Back in the day when the Navy still had wooden ships, a plank owner was a sailor who was part of the commissioning crew of the boat, and he would get a piece of the wooden deck.

About the time of station commissioning, the sailors moved from the Naval Reserve to the Rosemount area to

**Rosemount Area Historical Society (RAHS) 2024 Board Members**

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**Trustees:** Kate Mattson, Marty Jo Bruyer & Ghislain Devlaminck

**Newsletter Editor:** Ghislain Devlaminck

**RAHS Meetings**

Meetings are on the first **Wednesday of every month at 7 PM.** There are no meetings in July and December. Due to remodeling at the Rosemount Community Center, we are now meeting at the Robert Trail Library, 14395 S Robert Trail, Rosemount, MN.

live in apartments or rented rooms in houses. They could rent a room for approximately \$25 a month. Later, the Navy put several mobile homes on the site where sailors and their families could live.

The station commander, LCDR Richard Dodge, encouraged all personnel to buy a car. Through the Minneapolis Credit Union, they could get a Navy-authorized loan for their car. Bob bought a 1959 Triumph TR3.



Bob Richardson and his 1959 Triumph TR3

Bob's job when stationed in Rosemount was to help maintain the transmitters and antennas at the station.

The Transit satellite system sponsored by the Navy and developed jointly by the Defense Advanced Research Project Agency (DARPA) and the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory, under the leadership of Dr. Richard Kershner, was the first satellite-based ge positioning system, which was the predecessor to the Global Positioning System (GPS).

When the system became operational, the Rosemount Detachment Bravo Station was one of five NAVSOC Detachments. NAVSCO was headquartered at Point Mugu, CA, with other stations in Prospect Harbor, ME; Laguna Peak, CA; Wahiawa, HI; and Finegayan Bay, Guam. This radio navigation system was initially used by the U.S. Navy to provide accurate location information to its Polaris ballistic missile submarines, but later also used as a navigation system for Navy surface ships and commercial ship.

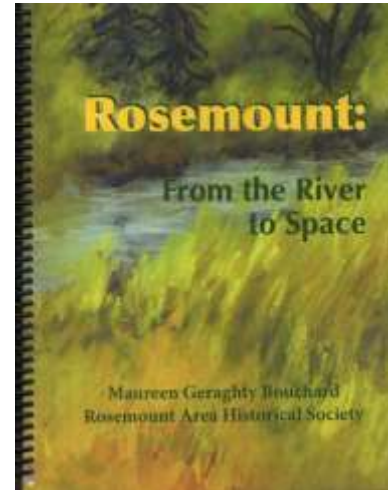


NAVSOC Detachment Bravo, Rosemount, MN located a little less than a half mile south of County Road 42 on the east side of Akron Ave. behind Dakota County Technical College.

The signal received from the satellites is relative to the satellite's position, but the satellite's position is not exact because it drifts while in orbit. The NAVSOC stations were in fixed locations. They received the satellite's signal and adjusted it for shifts in the satellite's position. About every two minutes, NAVSOC station transmitted a corrected position that the ships could use to determine their exact location. Without the NAVSOC adjustment the ships location could be off by several miles.

This is also true for GPS the deviation will be 30 feet or less. If you go to the map app on your phone and expand the map entirely, the blue dot showing your location will randomly move around due to the drift of the GPS satellites' orbits. For example, I stood at the end of my driveway for a few minutes and did not move. During that time the blue dot on my phone map app moved across the street, to the left of the driveway, to inside my garage, to the right of the driveway, etc. With precision GPS there is a station at a fixed location that sends out a message that the precision GPS device uses to adjust the exact location, plus or minus three centimeters.

By 1968, a fully operational constellation of 36 satellites was in place. Transit Satellite operated until 1996 (28 years), when the Defense Department replaced it with the current GPS. The Rosemount station operated until the system was shut down in 1996.



### **Rosemount: From the River to Space**

A reprint of the book *Rosemount: From the River to Space* by Maureen Geraghty Bouchard is now available as a spiral bound book with tax included for \$30 each. To purchase a copy call 651-423-4603 or send an email to: [rosemounthistory@charter.net](mailto:rosemounthistory@charter.net)

### **RAHS History Book Club 2023**

The RAHS history book club meets at 6:30 PM on the second Tuesday of every month at the Robert Trail Library, 14395 S. Robert Trail, Rosemount, MN.

The book club meetings are open to everyone. If you are not a regular attendee, but see a book that interests you come to the meeting. If you have not read the book you can come just to hear the comments. Spread the word to your friends and neighbors. Email questions [rahsbookclub75@gmail.com](mailto:rahsbookclub75@gmail.com) or contact Gish Devlaminck at 651-470-8905.

### **RAHS Book Club 2024 Reading List**

- Apr 9: *The Revolutionary: Samuel Adams* By Stacy Schiff
- May 14: *Wise Gals* By Nathalia Holt
- Jun 11: *The Romanov Sisters* By Helen Rappaport
- Jul 9: *The Wager* By David Grann
- Aug 13: *The Shattering* By Kevin Boyle
- Sep 10: *A Peace to End All Peace* By David Fromkin
- Oct 8: *The Pope at War* By David I. Kertzer
- Nov 12: *The Soul of America* By Jon Meacham
- Dec 10: *The Infidel and the Professor* By Dennis Rasmussen

### From the Dakota County Tribune Archives

*The articles and ads are from 125, 100 and 75 years ago of events and ads from the Rosemount area that were in the Dakota County Tribune. The text in italics, are comments from the RAHS Newsletter editor regarding the article presented. The date shown in the title is the date the article was originally published in the Dakota County Tribune.*

#### Rosemount Area 125 Years Ago

##### Jan 27, 1899: A Rosemount Idyl.

*This poem caught my interest but left me with many unanswered questions and that is why I put it in the newsletter. In the book Rosemount: From River to Space by Maureen Geraghty Bouchard, there is a picture on page 217 circa 1905 with a Steve Ryan standing in front of the Geraghty & Hynes store with several other persons. In the poem the date of September 32, Nineteen Hundred and seventy-eleven, and the age stated are strange. Maureen Geraghty Bouchard researched and found a Stephen Ryan, the son of John and Ann Ryan. He was born in 1880 in Ireland. They immigrated to the U.S. about 1891. The 1900 census records state that he was single and lived at home with his parents and two sisters in Rosemount, MN. He was a clerk at the Geraghty & Hynes Mercantile store. He died in 1907 at 27 and is buried at St. Joseph's Cemetery. Was the Geraghty & Hynes Mercantile store where somebody found the poem on the counter? Is this the same Steve Ryan who worked in that store? Since the poet's name is unknown, did Steve Ryan write this poem? The Steve Ryan in the obituary Maureen found died in 1907, and the poem appeared in the paper in 1899, and went back to library to make sure I had the article date correct. Was it a different Steve Ryan? Was this a friend's prank? If you have any answers to these questions, please email [rosemounthistory@charter.net](mailto:rosemounthistory@charter.net).*

Here's a poem, evidently by one of the local poets, that was found on the counter of a store in Rosemount recently.

STEVE RYAN,  
DIED.

September 32, Nineteen Hundred and seventy-eleven,  
Aged 119 years 13 months, 6 weeks and 47 days.

And o'er his long forgotten grave  
We humbly raise the barrel-stave.  
And on it write, in language clear.  
The deeds of one whom we loved dear.  
He had a fertile brain and fluent tongue,  
And like all good people, died young,  
His aim in life we never knew  
His usefulness was quite uncertain too,

He aimed at ducks upon the wing,  
But never did kill anything.  
He never cursed but often swore  
For he used to clerk in a country store,  
He gave honest weight what e'er he'd sell,  
And weighed in bag and string as well.  
Elastic he sold by the yard  
And always pulled it good and hard,  
In order that his customers might see  
That it was what he represented it to be.  
Though running loose, he never got tight  
But he tried to stay out late at night,  
He often went to church to pray  
But just as often went astray.  
That he had faults we don't deny,  
But on the large ones we'll dilate  
That other may not imitate.  
Upon a bicycle he used to ride  
And claimed the road four rods wide,  
If you chanced to meet him on his wheel  
He took the road and you the field.  
Through town he took some reckless whirls.  
But his greatest fault was kissing girls,  
But it greatly mitigates the wrong  
To know the temptation was so strong  
And with the dangerous occasions ever near,  
That Steve should fall does not seem queer,  
The transgression is very hard  
And always meets a like reward,  
But such fate we do not believe  
Could befall our dear friend Steve,  
He safely passed the golden gates  
For he had on Hyland's roller skates.

(Poet's name is unknown)

##### Feb 10, 1899: POOR HOUSE BURNED

A Destructive Fire at the County Farm Last Friday.

About noon last Friday a heavy volume of smoke was discovered coming out of the basement of the County Poor House, about two miles and half north of Farmington. An immediate alarm was given and the superintendent, Joe Heinen assisted by inmates, made a heroic effort to subdue the flames. However, the basement was so filled with smoke that anyone would have been suffocated had they gone down. Besides there was no adequate means at hand to fight the fire, as there was neither water or hose on the premises in shape to use. The flames spread so rapidly that only a few blankets were about all that was saved.

The building was a two-story brick structure, erected about three years ago at cost of \$12,000 and it was totally destroyed. There was \$5,000 insurance on it, carried by the St. Paul Fire & Marine Ins. Co. The local agent was Jacob Horn of Hampton.

There were twenty inmates at the time of the fire. These brought to Farmington and Mr. Scott, the Landlord of the Phoenix hotel kindly consented to care for the unfortunates until proper provision could be made for them.

The chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, Wm. Mather, came up on Friday evening, to make arrangements for the future care of the inmates.

The loss is a heavy one for the county.

When a new Poor House is erected proper means of fighting a fire will undoubtedly be put in. It seems queer that such an important matter was overlooked when the one destroyed was built.

On Monday the board of county commissioners met at Hastings to consider the care of the poor until a new building is erected and to decide upon the location of the new poor house. There was considerable discussion of the matter, but no decision was reached. The board, with the exception of Peter Endres, came to Farmington on the afternoon train and on Tuesday morning rented what is known as the Squires house, near Feely's elevator, for temporary use. Mr. Endres, came over from Hampton early in the morning and the entire board, viz: Lewis Gilbertson, Wm. Mather, Mathew Kreech, William Strathern and Peter Endres were here.

### **March 7, 1924: Mendota Bridge Contract Is Let at \$1,650,000**

*With more people owning cars the path to Minneapolis and St. Paul was via roads instead of railroads. There was a competition between Minneapolis and St. Paul to route traffic from one of the busier highways to their city. The Jefferson Highway which is now known as Highway 3 or Robert Trail ran through Rosemount. The Mendota Bridge would give those traveling the Jefferson Highway and the residents from Rosemount and the surrounding area direct access to Minneapolis. In 1924 the bridge cost roughly \$2,250,000, in 2024 dollars that would be \$22,684,650.*

### **Hennepin County Considers Bid Low – Will Tap Jefferson Highway**

With only \$1,800,000 left of the Mendota bridge bond issue, the Hennepin county board this week let a contract that will make the bridge cost \$2,250,000. The board hopes that the Legislature will authorize and additional

bond of \$500,000 before the bridge is completed so that it can be paid for, according to the St. Paul Pioneer Press.

The contract was let to the Koss Construction company of Kansas City for \$1,685,000, which is an exceptionally low figure engineers in St. Paul and Minneapolis agree. But in addition to this Hennepin county must furnish the reinforcing steel for the bridge at a cost of \$150,000, paving of the bridge at \$35,000, grading of the Fort Snelling approach at \$30,000, paving approaches, \$250,000, and contingencies and engineering expenses of \$70,000 or a total above the contract price of \$525,000. At present that county lacks sufficient funds to pay the contractor, buy the reinforcing steel and pave the bridge roadway.

With the Mendota bridge, Hennepin county hopes to tap St. Paul's trade territory to the south. Originally it was planned to cross Pike island and that location, permitting a shorter span would have been less expensive, engineers say. But the Hennepin county board decided the western terminus of the bridge was too near St. Paul, and the site was changed so that bridge angles away from St. Paul.

St. Paul was particularly interested in the bid received on the bridge because bids on the Robert street bridge were received by the Ramsey county board Monday.

### **FEBRUARY 22, 1924: POTATO CAMPAIGN IS NEARING GOAL**

**More Than 1312 Acres, Representing 148 Contracts, Have Been Signed Up**

### **ROSEMOUNT AND RICH VALLEY SHOW UP WELL**

**By Tonight Many More Will Have Been Signed—Quota Is 1612 Acres**

Potato growers representing 1312 acres have joined the Dakota county unit of Minnesota Potato Growers' Exchange. This represents 148 contracts. Dakota county's quota which is 1612 acres must be reached by March 1.

The territory east of Rosemount including Rich Valley and Coates is especially well represented, having 76 contracts and 630 acres. So. St. Paul territory has 182 acres in the organization. Eagan Town and Mendota have three contracts representing 22 acres. The territory between Farmington and Lakeville has six contracts with 172 acres. These figures are of contracts actually recorded February 18. By tonight, some of these territories will have a much larger acreage. It has reached

a point where those who always wait to see if it is going over, can come in.

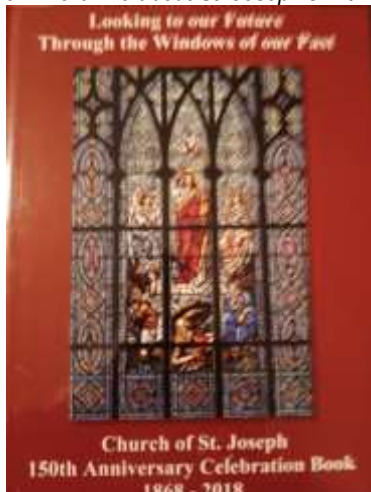
*The Minnesota Potato Growers Exchange was started in March, 1923. It was an organization to sell potatoes cooperatively. The Exchange had a subsidiary corporation that owned the warehouses to store, hold, grade, load, and ship the potatoes. Each county had elected board and 55 trustees representing the counties elected six members to an executive board. By July, 1924, 156,900 acres were under five year contracts in 33 counties, but by September 1925, the executive board took steps to release members from their contracts for the 1925-26 crop year and the Minnesota Potato Growers Exchange became history. The primary reason this Exchange discontinued operations was that members were dissatisfied with the results. The advances made were small because of the unfavorable market and the final total price received was not good.*

*Potato warehouses arose from farmers' need to preserve the potatoes for the best market possible. Improvements in production in the early 1900s increased the potential to glut the market. To avoid this problem, warehouse were needed that could protect potatoes from post-harvest elements such as cold, sprouting, mold, shrinkage, rot and rodents. The interior of the warehouse needed to be sufficiently cool (34 to 38 degrees) to keep the potatoes dormant but warm enough to avoid freezing.*

*The warehouses were generally two-level structures with the potato storage below-ground level. The upper level typically was an insulated wooden section. A wagon could drive through the above-ground portion to unload potatoes through the holes in the floor into the storage bins below-ground.*

**March 14, 1924: Church Contract Let at \$67,995**

*The \$67,995 cost of this new church in 2024 dollars would be \$1,233,954. The old church was located roughly where the Robert Trail library is now located. The Church of St. Joseph was established in 1868. The old church that this new church is replacing was built in t 1881. More info about St. Joseph's in this book*



**Second bids on Rosemount's New Catholic Church Opened-Work Starts Soon-To be Completed November 1.**

The contract for Rosemount's new Catholic church was let at a total of \$67,995 at a meeting of the church committee last week.

Work on this new edifice will begin as soon as the frost is out of the ground and will be completed by November 1, according to the terms of the contract.

The general contract was let to Tapagar Construction Co., of Albert Lea, at \$61,972. This is for the main building.

The heating and plumbing was awarded to M. J. McGrath of Minneapolis at \$4,590—heating, \$3,626 and plumbing, \$970.

Electric wiring was awarded to Elite Electric Co., St. Paul at \$1027.

The hardware work went to Daly Hardware Co., at \$400.

The sum of \$33,000 has already been raised for the new structure

Bids to sell the old church will be opened Saturday (tomorrow).

The new church will be erected just north of the old one and 40 feet from the road.

Lenten services are being held in the old church Friday and Sunday nights at 7:30 and Sunday masses at 8:30 and 10:30.

**February 25: Otto Holz Jr. of Rosemount, Suffers Compound Double Fracture of Right Leg; Hospitalized Here.**

*Holz Farm, originally an eighty-acre parcel, located at 4665 Manor Drive was settled in the 1870s. The property remained in the family until 1993 with the passing of Otto and Ella Holz.*

*A picturesque farm, with charm and character, would soon become one of many residential developments in Eagan. Interested residents initiated a grassroots campaign to save the site as a living history farm and Eagan City Council Members illustrated great vision by purchasing the farm in 1995 for that use and is now Holz Farm Park.*



Picture of the barn at Holz Farm Park. The cowyard mentioned in the article below is on the left side of the barn.

A Rosemount farmer, Otto J. Holz credits his wife for the fact he is alive.

After the 42-year-old man had been injured by a mad bull Sunday afternoon, he lay helpless in the cowyard, watching the animal paw the ground, preparing to finish him off.

His wife, who was nearby at the time, grabbed a pitchfork and drove back the 1350-pound animal.

Mr. Holz who sustained a compound fracture of the right leg, was able to get on his knees. He finally got ahold of the ring in the animal's nose, slowly and painfully, he led the bull to the fence, and the farmer then crawled to safety.

Taken to Sanford hospital, Mr. Holz underwent surgery by Dr. Field. The leg was fractured so badly above the ankle that the bone protruded through the skin. The leg was also fractured just below the knee.

At 2 o'clock Sunday afternoon Mr. Holz let the cows out into the cowyard while he cleaned the barn, at his 78-acre farm, three miles north of Rosemount. He and his wife were hurrying their Sunday chores as they planned to visit Mrs. Holz's mother, Mrs. Esther Trapp, ill at her home in St. Paul.

Finishing the barn cleanup, Mr. Holz herded the cows back into the barn. The bull didn't follow.

The farmer who carried a claw hammer approached the three-year-old "Milking Shorthorn strain" bull coming within five feet.

Without warning and without being prodded, the bull lowered his head and caught Mr. Holz in the legs, rolling him over in the snow. The farmer couldn't get up.

That was were(*where misspelled in article*) Mrs. Holz stepped into the picture. She held the animal back with the pitchfork until he could lead the bull to the fence.

Just then Otto Holz, Sr. the injured man's father, drove into the yard. He helped his son into the car and drove to the hospital.

The bull had always been quiet and well behaved, and had never made one false move. Mr. Holz said the animal was shipped to South St. Paul market Wednesday of this week.

The farm work is being taken over by Otto's brother, Hugo, nephew Wilmer, and some of the neighbor's.

### **March 18, 1949: Rosemount School**

*How many of these kids who are roughly 90, are still living in the Rosemount area? I know that Rosemary Diffley and Jerry Fluegel are still around. I had some difficulty reading*

*some of the names in the Dakota County Tribune archive image and may have misspelled some of the names.*

### **HONOR ROLL**

The Honor Roll for the Fourth Six Weeks are as follows.

Seniors—Laverne Boesel, Arlene Bartelt, Joan Thor, Joseph Fox, Raymond Holz, Lois Kueger, Francis Schuller, Bernice Johnson, Lucille LeMay.

Juniors—Barbara Christian, Alice Jensen, Dorothea Kirchner, Beverly Staffen, Rich Kirchner, Theresa Connelly, Ophelia Flores, Leo Martin, Cecelia Martin, Rebecca Urland.

Sophmores—John Reisler, Doris Wachter, Sandra Sachs, Joan Christian, Klolsa Franzinmeier, John Georg, Lois Hauck, Joyce Jensen, Rosemary Diffley, Carol Jorgenson, Richard Kingen, Kilien Sheilds, Donald Holz, Patricia Lucking, Mary Ann Doebel, Chas Maluren, Fred Wachter.

Freshmen—Verna Kirchner, Donald Kohls, Delores Millard, Lawrence Rahn, Ofelia Flores, Bernice Kirchner, Joanne Moeller, Jerome Fluegel, Delores Heuer, Fae Kohls, Louise Ratslaff, Prudence Reisinger, Vivian Wilde,

Eight Grade—Joanna Erikstrup, Shirley Millard, David Tombs, Elizabeth Wachter, Glenn Uitdenbogerd, Francis Sieckert, Charles Urland, Iriene Boesel, Mary Brand, Robert Daly, Mary Lou Geronime, Gail Johnson.

Seventh Grade—Barbara Wachter, Beverly Genz, Darlene Ohmann, Arlene Englert, Stuart Weierke, Marie Yetzer, George Ostertag, James Rahn.

### **PERFECT ATTENDANCE**

The pupils that had perfect attendance are as follows.

1<sup>st</sup> Grade—David Newman, Mary Carole Waskosky, William Shirley.

**Feedback Appreciated:** Let us know how to improve this newsletter. You can also text me at 651-470-8905 or join us at a meeting. The Rosemount Historical Society Newsletter editor, Ghislain Devlaminck.