



**Rosemount Area Historical Society (RAHS) 2023
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RAHS 2023 Second Quarter Newsletter

<https://www.rosemountevents.com/rahs-events>

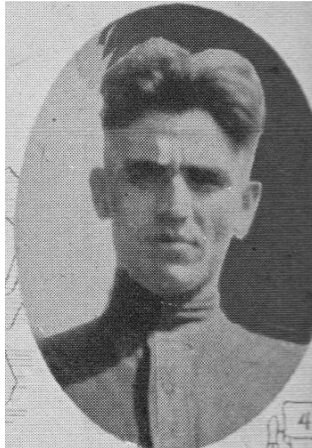
Contact Email: rosemounthistory@charter.net

John Francis McDermott

On Saturday, May 27, 2023 Rosemount Police Sargent Jeremiah Simonson, with other police officers laid flowers at John McDermott's tombstone in St. Joseph's Cemetery in memory of his death 100 years ago. In this Newsletter, A Look in History the articles from the Dakota Tribune of May 25, 1923 and June 1, 1923 provide the details of how John McDermott died.



Rosemount police officers at John McDermott grave

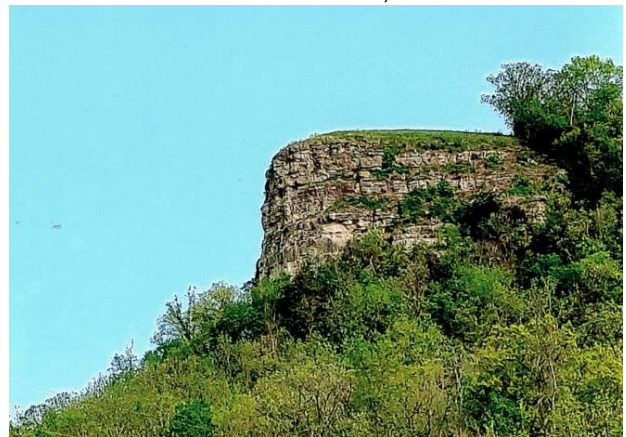


John McDermott WW I

FREE AIR

The play, "Free Air" that is being produced by the Rosemount Area Arts Council (RAAC) has been rescheduled from August 17th, 18th, 19th, and 26th to November 10th, 11th, 17th and 18th. Auditions for the play will be August 28th and 29th from 6 PM to 8 PM at the Steeple Center, Rosmeount, MN. Auditioning information is available at www.rosemountarts.com.

The play script that was written by John Loch is based on the Sinclair Lewis novel "Free Air" that was published in 1919. In 1921 two young Hamline University students, produced a silent black and white movie based on the book. Part of the movie were filmed in Rosemount, MN. There also is a scene in the movie where a Teal automobile goes over a cliff which was filmed on Skidmore Bluff near Diamond Bluff, WI.



Skidmore Bluff

The current property owner of the bluff contacted the RAHS after hearing about an RAHS newspaper article about "Free Air." He was interested in learning more about the movie. He gave permission for RAHS representatives Jerry Mattson, John Loch, Ann Loch and Charlotte Kodner to climb the boulder filled bluff at the base of the cliff. They were forewarned to wear sturdy shoes for the hike up bluff as rattlesnake protection. The land owner offered to guide members to the site which he had last visited 40 years ago. His grandfather and many

others from the local area were present when the scene was filmed 102 years ago. Everyone in the group including the guide were over 70 years old, but very determined to find remains of the car. During the climb the group became separated but eventually they were all able to gather at the site of the wreck. Only a few badly rusted body parts remained. RAHS was given permission to take what they wanted. A piece of the hood that was salvaged was compared to stills from the film and was definitely identified as part of the "Teal" automobile. The recovered hood piece will be on display at the RAAC performances of "Free Air."



Jerry Mattson, John Loch and Charlotte Kodner with salvaged Teal automobile parts. Photo taken by Ann Loch

For additional information about the filming of "Free Air" you can visit the RAHS display in the Community Center and at the Robert Trail Library. There are 33 pictures on display at the library that are all still images from the movie. Each picture has a footing that explains what the picture is about. In the library front lobby display case are some of Sinclair Lewis' personal items on loan from the Sinclair Lewis foundation in Sauk Centre, MN where Harry Sinclair Lewis was born and raised.

Feedback Wanted: Let us know how to improve this newsletter. Text [651-470-8905](tel:651-470-8905) or join us at a meeting.

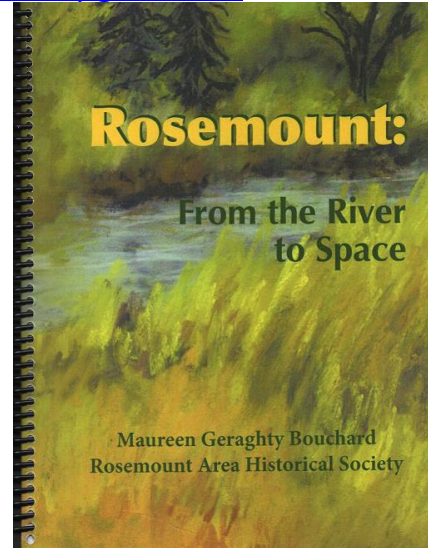
RAHS Meetings

Meetings are the first Wednesday of every month at **7 PM** in the **Rosemount Community Center**. Check

the video screen when you enter the building for the room number. Upcoming meeting date is Wednesday, Apr 5th. There are no meetings in July and December.

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



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 meeting is 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 to just hear the comments. Spread the word to your friends and neighbors. Email questions rahsbookclub75@gmail.com or contact John Loch at 952-255-8545.

Upcoming Books

August 8: Prisoners of Geography by Tim Marshall

September 12: Fascism; A Warning by Madeleine Albright

October 10: In Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

November 14: Lies my Teacher Told Me by James W. Loewen

December 12: Catherine de Medici by Leonie Frieda

A Look Back in History

Articles & Ads From the Dakota County Tribune

The text in italics, are comments from the RAHS Newsletter editor. The date shown in the title is the date the article was in the Dakota County Tribune.

Rosemount 125 Years Ago

April 14, 1898: Rosemount Department

The following five pupils of the seventh grade in the Rosemount School have received high state certificates for the examination taken last December. Joseph, John and William Walsh, Michael Kelly and Marie McDonough. Teacher and pupils are pleased with the results.

June 16, 1898: Rosemount

The School picnic held at Crystal Lake Sunday, given by the teachers of Dist. No. 19 with the assistance of some others, was one of the largest that has ever been held at the lake, a number from surrounding districts being present and all were welcome. A large float, prepared for the occasion, with seats, and decorated with flags and bunting, drawn by four horses, left here at 9:30 a. m. with the teachers and scholars, over sixty in number. The ban in another float drawn by four horses took the lead.

There were several small schools districts in the Rosemount area that included district 19 and 92.

Rosemount 100 Years Ago

April 6, 1923: Yeggs Again Try Rosemount; Fail

Burglars pierced Rosemount's Hindenburg line early Monday morning and were in the act of carrying away supplies store in Geraghty's store basement when they were repulsed by Nighwatchmen Joe Heinen and Al Weiderhold who were watching from the secret garrison of the Rosemount gun squad. The instant the Nighwatchman Heinen opened fire the burglars dropped eggs and canned goods in the streets, jumped into their auto and sped toward the cities. Had not the secret bell alarm system refused to work, the burglars, as one member of the squad said Wednesday: "Would now be looking like a punched up meal ticket."

About three o'clock Monday morning Heinen heard an auto come into town and parked in from of Hubert Geraghty's residence. Later the men went into the business section of Rosemount and loitered around the east side of Geraghty's store. Suspecting trouble, he

quietly turned in the alarm to the other members of the gun squad. The alarm failed to function and he was to arouse only Al Weiderhold who came and stationed himself in the secret garrison. Not sure of the intentions of the burglars, the two waited. Soon two of the men walked toward automobile, started it, and drove to the post office where they turned around and came back to the rear of the Geraghty store and stopped.

Three of the men began carrying goods they had taken of the basement toward the car, while the other sat at the wheel waiting for the word to "give'er the gas."

Joe Heinen opened fire. The burglars dropped their booty, jumped into their car and sped away. Heinen emptied his revolver of six shots and it believed he wounded one of the burglars. Al Weiderhold's shotgun failed him and he could not fire.

The pistol shots aroused William Hagenmeister, who with Joe Heinen and Al Weiderhold, tracked the bandits on the Jefferson highway, to the town hall near West St. Paul where tracks in the mud showed they went to South St/ Paul. Before leaving Rosemount, the nightwatchman notified Twin City police and all the bridges were put under guard. But no trace of the burglars was found beyond South St. Paul.

It is believed the burglars turned again Tuesday night but they didn't stay long.

Just a year ago this month Rosemount repulsed another gang of holdup men.

May 25, 1923: Rosemount Police, Mistaken for Burglar, Is Shot---Near Death

Mistaken for a burglar by his comrades whom he called out of bed to investigate suspicious prowlers, John McDermot, night watchman at Rosemount, was shot and seriously wounded while running across the street from the First National Bank to Geraghty's store Monday night. He is lying in Sanford hospital here in a critical condition with several gunshot wounds in his head and about the body.

Two men, according to McDermot, stopped their car near the creamery and walked into town, arousing suspicion. Knowing that three men had threatened to "get" the Rosemount "cop" and being warned of this by Joe Heinen, the regular watchman who was lying in Sanford hospital, Mr. McDermot took no chances. (*Joe Heinen was in the hospital due to an auto accident*). He aroused three of his companions and then concealed himself near the First National Bank.

Not long after, a car drove up to the Hynes filling station. Thinking they were the same suspicious trio, Mr. McDermot started running across the street to investigate. One of the gun squad who was called, spied McDermott, cried halt, and shot up in the air. His mind set on the suspicious trio, McDermot failed to stop, where upon one of his companions shot at him. The nightwatchman dropped to the ground. On investigation it was found that the nightwatchman had been mistaken for a burglar.

The bandit trio, on hearing the shots, fled.

The wound man was taken to Sanford hospital where physicians found several b. b. shots had pierced his lungs and several were lodged in his head.

Joe Heinen was John McDermott's friend, who had been orphaned and also served in WWI was living with the Heinen family. Joseph was working as a machinist and John as a carpenter and both were employed by the Rosemount Police Department as night watchmen.

Note, the name McDermott in this article is spelled incorrectly as McDermot.

June 1, 1923: SHOTGUN VICTIM DIES; IF GIVEN MILITARY FUNER

John McDermott, Mistaken for Bandit by Friend, Dies Here Sunday.

John McDermott, the Rosemount nightwatchman who was accidently shot and severely wounded by one of his companions while attempting to catch burglars Tuesday morning of last week, died at Sanford hospital here Sunday morning. The young man who was an ex-service man, was given a military funeral Tuesday morning. It was the largest and most impressive funeral every (*should be ever, but article had a typo*) held in Rosemount.

John Francis McDermott, the son of Mr. and Mrs. James McDermott, was born in St. Paul, Nov. 7, 1895. As his parents died when he was a youngster he found it necessary to make his own way in the world. For several years he lived with Tom Connelly in Mendota, and when sixteen years old he came to live with the Mrs. Mary Hogan family two and half miles west of Rosemount. The family came to love him as one of their own. He worked as a carpenter in and near Rosemount.

He answered the call of his country and served overseas with Fourth Anti-aircraft Machine Gun Battalion. On his discharge from the army he was employed with Contractor Herman Erler until his death.

Om Sunday, May 20 he was initiated into the Knights of Columbus of Farmington, and the next day he was

asked to substitute as nightwatchman for Joe Heinen who had been injured in an auto accident. At two o'clock the next morning three men stopped their car near the creamery and two of them walked into town arousing the suspicion of the nightwatchman. He immediately called three of his deputies, one of whom when he arrived on the street, saw McDermott running across the street. Thinking he was a burglar, the deputy called 'halt' but when the moving figure did not stop, he shot up in the air. As this did not bring him to a halt, the deputy shot with a shotgun, several shots lodging in his head and about the body. He was picked up and taken to Sanford Hospital but the wounds proved too severe and he died six days later.

Paying deep respects to one whom they loved and honored, the Rosemount and Farmington posts of American Legion and Auxiliary united in a military funeral Tuesday morning. Lieut. John E. Slater, formerly of Mendota had command of the military rites. The funeral procession started at the Herman Erler home where the remains lay in state, and proceeded to St. Joseph's cemetery, led by the Farmington band playing dirge. Albert and Charley Ratzloff were the horsemen; the color bearers were Al Schmitz and Lousi McDonald; guards, George Bernier and Wm. Scott; active pallbearers were the following Legion men: Wm. Hagemeister, Frank Cuniff, Ed McDonald, Clearance Hogan and Raymond Sieckert; the following Knights of Columbus were active pallbearers: Herman Erler, Al Weiderhold, Thos. Hyland, Frank McMenemy, Patrick McCarthy and Hubert Geraghty. The Rosemount and Farmington post of the American Legion and auxiliary and Knights of Columbus marched in the parade.

At the grave Rev. Father Moran, of Farmington, said a few words. A firing squad of soldiers from Farmington fired salute over the grave, and Orville Nelson blew "taps".

The young man is survived by three brothers James, Charles and Hubert McDermott of St. Paul; and two sister, Mrs. Eugene Anderson, of White Bear, and Mrs. Joseph Horsch, of St. Joseph, Minn.

June 1, 1923: Work on Hospital Starts Tuesday

Excavations on the basement of the new Community hospital will start next Tuesday, it was announced by hospital authorities today.

Promoters of the stockselling drive have met with success during the month of May and sold \$8,715. worth

of shares in a short time. "Most of shares have been sold outside of Farmington" Mr. Osborne said Monday.

It is my assumption that Joe Heinen and John McDermott were hospitalized in Farmington's old Sanford hospital. In the book Rosemount From the River to Space there is a Dr. J. A. Sanford mention who was involved organizing the Star Telephone Company who also may have been the founder of the Sandford hospital in Farmington.

June 1, 1923: SIX RECEIVE DIPLOMAS AT ROSEMOUNT SCHOOL.

Six seniors of the high school of the Rosemount Consolidated school were given diplomas at the graduating exercises held in the school auditorium last Friday. Those receiving diplomas were. Mary Doyle, valedictorian; Joseph Farrell, salutatorian; Helen Geraghyt, James Corrigan, Adella Moeller, and Joseph Mullery.

The following program was given at the commencement exercises:

Senior march.

Invocation..... Rev. L. Carey

Salutatory—Future Demand of American

Youth....Joseph Farrell

Address..... Rev. John Dumphy

Valedictory—Out of School Life Into Life's

SchoolMary Doyle

Selected Music

Presentation of Diplomas...A. J. Ward, Sr.

Benediction....Rev. L. Cary (*spell different than invocation*)

May 14, 1948: Rosemount Wins International Bookkeep Test

The bookkeeping class of Rosemount High School has been awarded honorable mention in the 11th annual International Bookkeeping contest conducted by the Business Education World magazine. An impressive superior achievement certificate was awarded to the class which is under the direction of Miss Wimmer.

Miss Wimmer's students competed with more than 15,000 students in the schools throughout the United States, Alaska, Canal Zone, Canada, Hawaii, Philippine Islands, and Puerto Rico. The award was made on the basis of the percentage of the class membership that took part, as well as on consistent excellence of the solutions submitted.

Catherine Shields, a senior student, was awarded a \$1.00 cash prize for entry in the contest (*\$1.00 in 1948 would*

the equivalent of \$12.62 in 2023). From approximately 15,000 solutions submitted the judges of the contest selected her papers as one of the most outstanding and therefore entitled to this cash award. Two hundred \$1.00 prizes were awarded in the contest. Catherine was also the winner of an honorable mention scholastic Achievement certificated for her entry in one of the monthly contests conducted by the Business Education World.

Each student in the class received a two-color certificate of achievement for entering a satisfactory solution to the bookkeeping problem. The following students had their papers rated as superior and were in the final competition for each of the wards:

Helen Ahern, Esther Cliff, Mary Connelly, Dolores Erikstrup, Rosemary Evans, Jeanne Gash, Jane Harpster, Helen Heuer, Bernice Johnson, Doris Kirchner, Lucillie LeMay, Loretta Martin, Helen Oster, Ester Pedersen, Ellen Peron, Violet Pivec, Patricia Rhymer, Catherine Shields, Beverly Vought, Marcella Yetzer.

Students in other commercial classes have been winning awards also. Three more senior stenography students have received gold pins for dictation & transcription at 100 words a minute. They are Ions Kirchner, Majorie Bester and Marcella Yetzer.

All the junior stenography students won membership certificates in the International Order of Gregg Artists contest (*International Order of Gregg Artists is for shorthand*). Lois Rueger, in addition to receiving a membership certificate, was also awarded a gold pin and a superior merit certificate. The class received the coveted gold seal superior merit certificate for its entries this year.

In typewriting Muriel Nelson was awarded a gold competent typist pin for her speed and accuracy on the competent typist test. Typing students who have already attained a speed of 40 or more are:

Barbara Christian, Margaret Fitzgerald, Dolores Haroldson, Dorothea Krichner, Muriel Nelson, Ruth Ostermann, Darlene Petter.

The following additional typing students received competent typist certificates:

William Geraghyt, Cecelia Martin, Ernest Pedersen, Elroy Sell, Harry Weinkauf, Rebecca Ucland, Beverly Steffen, Mary Alice Tousignant, Patricia Wagner, Irene Wilde, Mary Jane Warweg, Mary Schmitz.