



RAHS 2024 Fourth Quarter Newsletter

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

Contact Email: 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.

Living With a Hand Crank Phone

In 1905, telephone lines on wooden poles were run to Rosemount by Star Telephone Company, which was located in New Market. The first telephone office, "Telephone Central," was set up on the north side of the post office building, which at that time was located east of Robert Trail on the corner of Lower 147th St. By 1906, the Rosemount switchboard in the post office building had 27 phones connected. These were all hand-crank phones on party lines. The first dial phone in the U.S. was in Norfolk, VA, in 1915.

All hand crank phones were on party lines. There could be 20 or more subscribers on each party line, and they were all connected to the operator switchboard at Telephone Central.

The operator answered your call by plugging an answering cord into your line's jack, pulling forward the talk key, and saying number, please. From there, she would locate the called party's jack, plug into it, apply the ringing current via a switch for the ring sequence, and then restore the talk key to normal. She'd then move to the next call.

The phones had a hand cranked magneto that generated an alternating current when cranked to ring the bells. The signal would ring all the phone bells on that party line and signal the switchboard. Two turns of the crank generated a long ring, and one turn generated a short ring.

Rosemount Area Historical Society (RAHS) 2024 Board Members

President: Jerry Mattson

Vice President: Ghislain Devlaminck

Secretary: Mike Bouchard

Treasurer: Maureen Geraghty Bouchard

Trustees: Kate Mattson, Marty Jo Bruyer & Jack Gillespie

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.



Rosemount switchboard operators Maude Hayes and Mable Seigert in 1915. The switchboard is on the left.



Wall mounted vintage hand crank phone.



Desk top hand crank phone



Hand crank desk phone with separate subscriber box (not shown) that was mounted on the wall near the phone with the ring bells and dry cell batteries.

The phones also had dry cell batteries to power the carbon microphone that produced speech currents. The batteries connected to the microphone when the earpiece was lifted off the hook. The batteries were usually replaced by the phone company when the switchboard operator noticed weak audio from the caller. Battery life was shorter for those subscribers that eavesdropped regularly on calls to subscribers on the same party line.



Wall mounted hand crank phone with front open

I have no information on the ring code sequence used in Rosemount. The ring code sequences varied. Small systems might only use a maximum three-ring sequence, while larger systems would use a maximum four-ring sequence to allow more users on the same party line.

On the farm in Southwest Minnesota, we had a hand crank phone. The system had 13 party lines designated 1F, 2F, 3F, etc. Our line was 7F, and our number was 7F2112, with 2 designating a long ring and 1 designating a short ring. The call was for us if the phone rang with a long ring, two shorts, and long. All the other subscribers on the same party line would hear the rings, and a late-night call to one of our neighbors would wake us up, but as a courtesy, most people avoided late-night calls, and some systems had no switchboard operator on duty after a specific time, which meant no long distance calls or calls to other party lines.

If one of the other subscribers on the 7F party line wanted to call us, they could crank our ring code without the operator getting involved. Everyone on the 7F party line could pick up their receiver and listen in on the conversation.

The switchboard operator would also occasionally do a general ring. This was an extra-long ring, roughly the equivalent of three cranks on the hand crank, while a regular long ring was only two cranks. The operator would send out the general ring to two-party lines at the same time. Then she would read the message, such as to announce a special event, someone's death, etc. If the system had ten party lines, the operator would have to repeat this procedure five times.

If you called someone on another party line, you would ring one long ring, and the switchboard operator would answer. You would tell the operator the name or number of the person you wanted to call. The operator would then connect you to that party line and ring the call ring sequence. The ring sequence from the operator was always sharper because the operator had a special device to generate the rings. Every subscriber on both party lines could listen to the conversation.

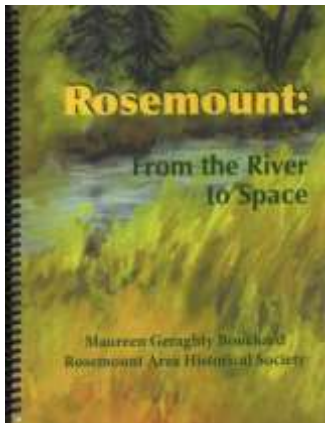
In the rural area of my hometown, three sisters had married local farmers. Their farms happened to be on the same party line. One of the sisters would be designated to call the fourth sister who lived in the twin cities at a specific time. The other two sisters would then get on the phone, and they would have a group conversation while only paying one long-distance call fee.

There was a guy from my hometown who would call his parents every Sunday evening from the Twin Cities. All long-distance calls were routed through the operator. One Sunday, when the operator responded, she said, "Your folks are visiting the Bots. I can ring your folks' phone or Bots because they're on the same party line.

They can answer the call with either ring. Who should I ring?" He let the operator decide.

Based on the research I did, I believe Rosemount started getting dial phones in the late 1940s. I'm sure it was an adjustment for a number of subscribers that liked to eavesdrop. The dial phones were still on a party line, but the ring only came into the phone being called. The others at the same party did not hear the ring, but if they picked up the receiver, they could still listen in on the conversation. In my hometown, Emma had a hard time getting her kitchen work done when she got a dial phone because the rings to others on her party line no longer rang on her phone. She had to keep going over to the phone to check if someone was talking on the phone.

Some subscribers also had two phones. One in the house and one in the barn, but now we can go to barn with our cell phone in our pocket.



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 2024

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 to rahsbookclub75@gmail.com or contact Gish Devlaminck at 651-470-8905.

RAHS Book Club 2025 Reading List

Jan 14, 2025: A History of the World in Twelve Shipwrecks By David Gibbins

Feb 11, 2025: Mercury Rising By Jeff Shesol

Mar 11, 2025: How the South Won the Civil War By Heather Cox Richardson

April 8, 2025: The Deerfield Massacre By James L. Swanson

May 13, 2025: The First Family By Cassandra A. Good

Jun 10, 2025: How the Post Office Created America By Winifred Gallagher

July 8, 2025: Pathogenesis By Jonathan Kennedy

Aug 12, 2025: The Fire Is Upon Us By Nicholas Buccola

Sep 9, 2025: Untold Power By Rebecca Boggs Roberts

Oct 14, 2025: 1177 B.C. By Eric H. Cline & Glynnis Fawkes

Nov 11, 2025: Women in the Valley of Kings By Kathleen Sheppard

Dec 9, 2025: His Majesty's Airship By S. C. Gwynne

A Look Back In History

The articles and ads are from 125, 100 and 75 years ago of from the Dakota County Tribune with connections to the Rosemount area. The date shown in the title is the date the article was published in the Dakota County Tribune. The text in italics, are comments from the RAHS Newsletter editor. If "sic" is in a sentence that means a quoted text includes a spelling or grammatical error from the original source.

Rosemount Area 125 Years Ago

October 20, 1899: Rosemount News Livery Barn Burned & Dance

The livery barn of William Cadzow was destroyed by fire on Tuesday night, together with a cow, several sets of harness and a fine young team of horses owned by A. J. Ward. The building caught fire on the west end and had a good start before it was discovered. Four horses and several buggies that were in the front end were saved by hard work. The adjoining buildings caught fire several times, but the fire engine was in working order for the first time, and with its assistance the hotel and other buildings were saved. There was a small insurance on the barn, but none on stock. Mr. Cadzow feels satisfied that his loss is more and will erect a new barn as soon as possible. How the fire started is unknown.

The dance held in the opera house Tuesday night was well attended and all enjoyed themselves till the early hours of the morning.

October 20, 1899: Company H

James O'Boyle and John Mangan, members of Company H, 13th Reg. Minn. Vol., arrived here on Sunday morning's train from St. Paul. A large crowd gathered at the depot to extend the welcome hand to the soldier boys from the battlefields of the Philippines. Both boys escaped sickness and bullets and have been in many battles and dangerous places while doing police duty in Manilla and on the firing lines. They are pleased to get home and say they have seen enough soldiering to satisfy them for sometime(*sic*). John Mangan is a son of Thomas Mangan of the town of Empire. James O'Boyle is a young man, who has been employed by the late Wm. Steer, in the butcher business in this village, and is a member of the Court Rosemount, I.O.F. We are please to have them return in good health and without a "puncture."

November 10, 1899: O'Boyle Gold Badge

At a regular meeting of the Independent Order of Foresters, Court Rosemount, No. 1135, held Tuesday evening, Nov. 8, a beautiful gold badge was presented to James O'Boyle, late of the 13th Reg. Minn. Vol. This was the first meeting Mr. O'Boyle has attended in eighteen months. It is a very fine badge, costing \$20 (*\$760 in 2024*) and presented by the members of the Court. Mr. O'Boyle is a loyal Forester and was never in arrears during his absence in the Philippines.

November 24, 1899: Geraghty Elevator

J.C. Geraghty is putting in a feed mill in his elevator and in a few days he will be prepared to do all kind of grinding that the farmers should need.

December 29, 1899: Card of Thanks

ROSEMOUNT, Dec. 27, 99 – Thanks to my many friends and acquaintances who have contributed so freely towards helping me to purchase an artificial limb, which I received a few days ago from the Winkly Artificial Limb Co. of Minneapolis, costing \$100 (*\$3803 in 2024*).

Rosemount Area 100 Years Ago

October 3, 1924: ROSEMOUNT IS FIRST TO COMPLETE QUOTA

Drive for Welfare Funds Well Received - \$219
(*\$4043 in 2024*) Collected Here

Rosemount was the first community in the county to fill its quota in the drive for welfare funds made last week throughout the county. Inver Grove was second in competing (*SIC*) its quota.

In Farmington A.H. Sprute and Orville Nelson canvassed the business section and elsewhere and succeeding in collection \$219.95 with pledges of about \$15 more. This will complete Farmington's quota. Those who yet desire to give may leave their money at either bank.

The financial report of the drive will be made in a few days.

November 21, 1924: Old Church Move

Rosemount voted on the question of whether to move the old Catholic church back a block and use it for a city hall, but the project was voted down by a 45 to 5 vote.

December 19, 1924: BURGLARS RAID ROSEMOUNT DEPOT – TRAIL LOST HERE

Depot Safe and Cash Till are Looted While Operator is at Supper

SECTION HAND GIVES ALARM – POSSE FORMED
Burglar Car Races Towards Farmington Pursued by Gun Squad.

A suspicious looking driver who drove his car around Rosemount Tuesday evening, causing the minute men of that village to watch him from the corner of their eyes, proved to be an unwelcome visitor.

While Operator Popejoy of the Milwaukee depot was at supper, about 7:30, the suspicious looking car drove up to the depot where the occupants alighted and went into the depot while his colleague continued to drive the car around town.

The burglar stole \$8.25 (*\$152.29 in 2024*) from the cash till and opened the safe by manipulating the combination and stole \$3.53 (*\$65.16 in 2024*), making a total haul of \$11.78(*\$217.46 in 2024*).

A Rock Island section hand who happened to pass the depot and saw the burglar at the safe and immediately ran and informed Mr. Popejoy who quickly summoned Rosemount's famous gunsquad (*SIC*). In less than five minutes they assembled and surrounded the depot but the burglar had fled.

The burglar car was then seen racing toward Farmington and quickly Joe Heinen and several other took up the chase. Meanwhile Chief McCluskey of Farmington was notified to be on the lookout for the burglar car. The local police was stationed near the Standard Oil station but saw no car of the description given over the telephone.

When the Rosemount posse arrived, the burglar car, which had been in hiding a block north of the Framington

Auto Co., started either toward Rosemount or eastward. The trail was lost and despite a thorough search the car was not located.

Rosemount Area 75 Years Ago

October 7, 1949: ROSEMOUNT FAMILY INJURED – TRUCK HITS CAR – THEN SAME CAR HITS SAME TRUCK, MENDOTA BRIDGE

Mr. and Mrs. Lester Carlisle and 12 year-old son Jim were slightly injured in a freakish double accident Sunday in the heavy traffic on the Mendota bridge.

The trio were taken by ambulance to Anchor hospital where they received treatment.

X-rays were taken of Mr. Carlisle's knee at Sanford hospital later this week. Mrs. Carlisle who was driving the car, received a chin gash, and Jimmy had head bruises.

Mrs. Carlisle said she was driving towards Minneapolis across the bridge, about 3:45 Sunday when her car was hit from behind by an empty Wylie car-transport truck, driven by Wayne Shaver of Minneapolis.

She stopped her car on the bridge, but insistent motorists in the heavy traffic ordered her to drive on. While parked on the bridge she was not able to contact police to report the accident, so she finally continued toward Minneapolis on the 0.9 mile bridge.

Meanwhile the truck passed Mrs. Carlisle's car and stopped in the traffic near the Minneapolis side of the bridge. Mrs. Carlisle attempted to stop behind the truck, but the brakes failed, and this time she rammed into the rear of the truck. It is believed her brakes were damaged from the previous crack-up on the bridge.

The Carlisle auto, a 1939 DeSoto was badly damaged, front and rear.

October 7, 1949: List Occupations Of 1949 Graduates Rosemount H. S.

By DONNA COHOON

The occupations of Rosemount high school's graduating class of 1949 are listed below;

Arlene Bartelt, Minneapolis Honeywell.

Laverne Boesel, Valparaiso College, Ind.

Richard Brand, U. of M. Agriculture School.

Ester Cliff, Teach, In Minneapolis.

Alfred Dal, St. Thomas College, St. Paul.

Dorothy Erikstrup, Business Machines.

Joseph Fox, Farming.

Glenn Gill, Farming.

Bernard Gorvin, Farming.

Raymond Holz, St. Thomas College, St. Paul.
Bernice Johnson, St. Cloud Teachers College.
Lucille LeMay, St. Cloud Teachers College.
Douglas Lood, Mechanic.
Delphia Perton, Telephone Co. California.
Robert Rehtzligel, Farming.
Lois Rueger, Home.
Francis Schuller, Farming
Delores Sell, Home
Marvin Sell, Part-time Giegers Farm Equidp. and Machinery.
Mary Joan Slater, Stenographer, Jackson Graves, St. Paul.
Noel Smith, U. of M.
Joan Thor, Mpl. Business School.
Beverly Vought, Bell Tele. Co,
Roy Wenzel, Farming.

October 14, 1949: Rosemount H.S. To Get Portable School Building

Leo J. Fluegel, president of the Rosemount school board, has announced that a portable school building will be moved to Rosemount within the next week or two, to alleviate crowded school conditions.

The new building, which is being obtained in Minneapolis, will take care of special high school classes. It will suffice, he said, until there is a school district reorganization in the area.

It was previously planned to reuse a building at the University of Minnesota's Rosemount Research Center, east of town.

November 18, 1949: Rosemount P.T. A. Holds First Meeting

The newly formed Rosemount P.T.A. met Thursday evening in the school gym, for the first meeting and reception of the faculty.

Highlight of the program was an informal talk by Mrs. M.W. Knoblauch, of St. Paul, Congress Legislative chairman for the Minnesota Congress of Parents and Teachers. One of her many duties has been working with the Youth Conservation Committee, and she is a very forceful, interesting speaker. Musical selections were given by the Girls' double trio and by Gerald Ratzlaff. Also community singing was directed by Miss Jane Mahlmann, accompanied by Mrs. R. Reeder. The parents attendance(SIC) award of one dollar was presented to the eighth grade.

Climax of the evening was the introduction of the teachers by Supt. Baumgartner, followed by an informal Tea in their

honor. A pleasant social hour was enjoyed, in which parents and teachers became better acquainted.

December 16, 1949: ROSEMOUNT POSTOFFICE RECEIVES 100% RATING

Inspector Makes Unannounced Stop



ROSEMOUNT POSTOFFICE crew sees the notice informing them of the 100% rating. Left to right on above photo are: Miss Leona Carlisle, substitute clerk; Ben Heinen, carrier, route 1; Postmaster Edwin Doyle; Jack McFadden, carried (SIC) Rt. No. 2; Mrs. Lorraine Fox, clerk.

For a post office to receive 100% on their annual inspection is about as rare as a 300 game of bowling-but the 100% rating really happened at the Rosemount post office this fall.

Postmaster Edwin G. Doyle and crew were notified by Inspector W.J. Smith of Minneapolis post office inspection unit that they had received the 100 mark. The inspection took place Oct. 30, 1949 after a two-day period of looking over the Rosemount records and property.

What makes the 100% even more rare is the fact that inspectors never come on a scheduled day or month during that year. They might drop in anytime-they come once a year or oftener.

In looking for irregularities, the inspector checks 33 items. During the inspection, nothing is overlooked.

To show the rarity of a 100% inspection, a class postoffice at Macon Georgia, received a 100% rating and it made an item in the national postmaster magazine.

During the last five inspections, the Rosemount office received the following ratings;

1949 -----	100%
1948 -----	99%
1947 -----	98%
1946 -----	96.5%
1945 -----	99.4%
1944 -----	95.5%

Postmaster Doyle was complimentary towards his staff in receiving the 100% rating. He emphasized the point that it takes plenty of work on the part of everybody in the office to make a high rating.

December 23, 1949: Albert Kirchner Is Near Victim in Fire Wednesday

Twenty Six Head Cattle, 3 Horses Are Saved; Much Feed, Bedding, Consumed With Barn

Albert Kirchner's dog "Rover" performed a courageous deed Wednesday morning which probably saved the Rosemount farmer's life.

When the barn haymow caught fire, Albert ran inside and attempted to save the bull. It became enraged and pinned him to the wall.

Suddenly, "Rover", and ordinary farm dog, sensed the danger, came inside the barn, and lunged for the purebred, three-year-old 1700-pound Guernsey bull.

The maddened animal, many times the size of the dog, reared backwards away from Mr. Kirchner, and dashed out the door.

Mr. Kirchner, who was weakened from his tussle with the bull, continued to release the cows, as the fire roared out of control overhead.

Sometimes the cows would come back in as fast as he'd chase them out, but again Rover came in ready. The dog seemed to know that the animals were to be taken outside immediately, and he chased them out.

Twenty-six head of cattle, and three horses were escorted to safety.

"It wouldn't have been possible without the dog", Kirchner said.

The barn on the farm two miles north of Rosemount was destroyed but the Rosemount Fire department using their tank-trucks, succeeded in saving the silo and feed room on the east side.

The loss is partly covered by insurance.

At 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, Mr. Kirchner called to his wife and said: "Tell the neighbors, I think I hear fire in the hayloft". Then he went back to the barn and found the flames shooting out of the ventilator.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Kirchner telephoned her neighbor, Mrs. Peter Jorgenson, who turned in the fire alarm at Rosemount.

First neighbors to arrive were Pete Schaffer, Arnold Carlson and Mr. and Mrs. Walter Franzmeier. They helped Mr. Kirchner with saving the remaining animals and a few other items.

The barn was filled to capacity with shreadings, hay, straw and feed, and as a result was gone in a matter of minutes. It took the Rosemount firemen several truckloads of water to save the silo.

Cause of the blaze was undetermined. However, defective wiring was suspected. The blaze began in the top of the west end.

Neighbors immediately offered their barn space for housing cattle. The animals were taken to the nearby Elliott and Daly farms.

The farm is located on a side road, just west of highway 218, about two miles north of Rosemount.