

# New Brighton Area Historical Society Newsletter

## New Brighton: Traveling Through Time ... Way Back When

The public is invited to join the New Brighton Area Historical Society on Sunday, October 15, at 4:00 PM at the New Brighton Community Center, 400 10th St. NW, for a scintillating presentation of New Brighton's history.

The Society will present a slide show of how the City of New Brighton developed from the 1880s to 1950. The second part of the story from 1950 to the present will be presented at our Annual Meeting in April. Wayne Searles & Fred Behrens will be presenting the program. Wayne is the great-grandson of early New Brighton founders, Frank & Sadie Searles, who came to New Brighton in 1889. Fred is the son of the second fire chief in New Brighton (1963-1971), Herman Behrens. Both have great memories of growing up in New Brighton.

New Brighton Mayor, City Council, City Staff, and New Brighton Ambassadors have been invited to attend.

Refreshments will be served. Questions can be addressed to (651) 633-4070 or nbahs@me.com.



Ramsey County Parks & Recreation workers after removing the stump from the huge tree in our front yard, are then seen preparing the area for grading and seeding. Thanks, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation!



Wayne Searles presenting local history at a previous NBAHS event.

## Letter From the President



Once again, another wonderful summer seems to have slipped away. We view this with a certain sense of sadness, in that on October 1 our vibrant “Depot Season” came to a close until next June.

However, the 2023 season was an active and productive one. As usual, we kicked off the season with our popular “Rhubarb Festival” on the first weekend in June. Our crew of volunteers harvested some 600 lbs. of rhubarb on Saturday—half of it destined for Keys Restaurants which baked fresh pastries for our Festival the next day; the other half was sold in fresh bundles to our guests.

On Sunday the weather was good, the visitors were plentiful, and we essentially sold out our delicious offerings. This included fresh rhubarb jam made that weekend by Board member, Mary Burg. We wish to especially thank Dave Nathe (Riverside Farms) for allowing us to harvest his Rhubarb, Keys Restaurant for the pastries, and the many volunteers who helped make this event happen.

As the season progressed, we once again welcomed hundreds of curious guests to the Depot, including two from Russia. It’s also gratifying to greet repeat visitors, especially “history buffs” who seem to discover something different each time.

For Stockyard Days in Mid-August, we were pleased to welcome Dan Kuch, a masterful and creative trumpet player, featuring blues and swing music. Along with his crew, their performance was an entertaining crowd pleaser. Thank you Dan!

Despite the Depot closing for the season, the Society’s activities go on. This fall we are working with the Lions Club pursuant to the celebration of its 75<sup>th</sup> year in 2024. We are also planning to host a “History of New Brighton” presentation this October 15 at the Community Center. We will focus on the town’s history from the 1800’s to 1940. This will provide a fascination insight on the origin of the town, as well its colorful past.



And finally, as we wrap up 2023, we at the Society are most fortunate to be blessed with a diverse and active 10-member Board, who generously devotes so much time and energy to furthering our mission. Our organization remains in sound financial condition, and looks forward to many years of service to our community. We thank all of you for your support!

See you at the Depot,

Fred Behrens, President  
NBAHS

## A Brief History of New Brighton Care Center Celebrating Sixty Years of Caring in the Community

In 1963 two brothers and their spouses came together to create a nursing facility in what was then known as "Downtown New Brighton." It was located on two residential lots on Highway 8 (before I35W) and the main transit to western Wisconsin. At the time, the area location included a small shopping center with a grocery store, pharmacy, café, and of course, a liquor store just across the street.

New Brighton Care Center, Mike & Jacalyn Chies, center, recognized by Chamber of Commerce officials in 1999.



The Chies family has a long history of residency in the northern suburbs, having grown up with 11 children just over in Columbia Heights. Edward Chies had an expanding construction business and developed the plans for a sixth-four (64) resident facility, considered a good size for the time.

The first administrator was Blanche Chies, the spouse of the brother John. Blanche has a business background, and no licenses or credentials were required at that time for the position. She was the administrator till 1976 when the second generation of the Chies family took over the leadership of the facility and a sister facility operation nearby in Coon Rapids.

The new administrator was Michael Chies, one of Edward's three sons. Michael led the facility for the next 44 years and took the facility into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with the major construction project in 1996 and Medicare certification with private rooms for rehabilitation services.



During those years, the city and neighborhood changed with building I 35W and I 694. Highway 8 became "Old Highway 8," and the shopping center gradually declined with the lack of traffic. In the early 1990s, the City of New Brighton took action to redevelop the area and created an opportunity for the New Brighton Care Center to acquire additional land for development on the site. The application was made to the Minnesota Department of Health to expand, and in 1996 the first significant addition to the campus was constructed and occupied.



This new addition created a transitional care unit with 14 private rooms, a new dining room, office space additions, a new entrance, and space for several senior living suites. Michael retired in 2019, and new leadership came on board to continue to focus on quality care and services to New Brighton and the surrounding community. The Care Center is celebrating sixty years of family ownership, which is a rarity in the senior care sector today.

The New Brighton Area Historical Society congratulates the New Brighton Care Center on 60 years of service to our community

The Care Center, located at 805 6th Avenue NW, will having a Fall Fest on Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, from 4:00 - 6:00 PM and the community is invited.



**Registration Form**  
**New Brighton Area Historical Society**  
**For new and renewing members.**

Mail to: NBAHS, Box 120624, New Brighton, MN 55112

The New Brighton Area Historical Society preserves our history and operates our New Brighton History Center, located in Long Lake Regional Park. Your membership supports our all-volunteer organization and allows us to showcase our history and honor our heritage for years to come. Help us preserve and share the fascinating history of the New Brighton area by becoming a member today and/or making a donation to our cause!

**Our Society's Future Depends on Your Support. We Thank You!**



Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State and Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Options (Check One)**

Single \$10.00     Family \$15.00     Business/Club \$100.00

Please consider an extra donation for museum maintenance

**• A Great Gift Idea for Your Family •**  
**Four NBAHS Historical Books**

*A CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF NEW BRIGHTON, MINNESOTA (1987)*  
*A PICTORIAL HISTORY: NEW BRIGHTON AREA, MINNESOTA, FROM THE 1880s - 1950s (2002)*  
*A PICTORIAL HISTORY: NEW BRIGHTON AREA, MINNESOTA, FROM THE 1950s - 2000s (2005)*  
*HISTORICAL SNIPPETS FROM THE PAST*

**Available at:** • New Brighton Community Center • City Hall • Beisswenger's Hardware  
• New Brighton History Center (summers) or by mail

Mail form below to: **New Brighton Area Historical Society, PO Box 120624, New Brighton, MN 55112**  
Payable to: **New Brighton Area Historical Society.**

Each hardbound book, including tax **\$25; Snippets \$12** - Packaging & Mailing (per book) \$6.00

Book(s) and number(s) requested: Snippets \_\_\_\_\_ 2005 \_\_\_\_\_ 2002 \_\_\_\_\_ 1987 \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

## New Brighton Area Historical Society 23rd Annual Rhubarb Fest Results!

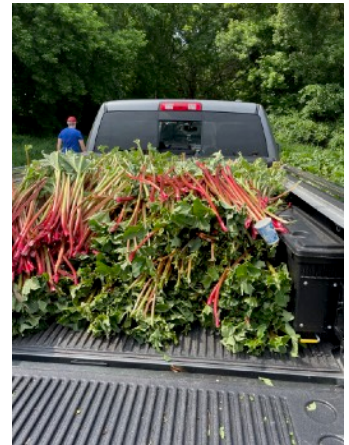
The New Brighton Area Historical Society had another successful Rhubarb Fest on June 4, 2023. The day before the fest, a stalwart crew pulled six hundred pounds of rhubarb at David & Joe Nathe's Riverside Farms in Elk River. Dave Nathe was one of the original workers at Joe Hipp's Lakeside Berry Farm in Long Lake Park for years, and when the truck farm was closed, rhubarb and strawberries plants were transplanted to Riverside Farms. Each year he allows the Society to pick rhubarb gratis.

We served over 200 guests a sample plate of three rhubarb desserts, prepared by Keys on Lexington Avenue, sold 115 bags of rhubarb stalks (3# for \$5), 34 rhubarb plants (\$10), \$243 in rhubarb jam sales (thanks, Mary Burg), many Rhubarb Cookbooks, plus donations. This is always our most successful fundraiser of the year, and we thank you for your continuing support.



Thanks to these loyal rhubarb pullers!

A portion of the pulled rhubarb piled in the back of the truck - hundreds of pounds of rhubarb pulled and packed each year for our Rhubarb Fest.



Crew bagging up the rhubarb Saturday afternoon.



Treasurer Wayne Searles, Secretary Joyce Kloncz, Ramsey County Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire, President Fred Behrens, and Director Mary Burg in our freight room during the Rhubarb Fest.



Left, Director Mary Burg cutting rhubarb squares and Directors Lori & Jim Nebel showing the types of rhubarb desserts prepared by Key's - rhubarb crumble, rhubarb pie squares, and (not shown) Key's signature rhubarb cake with cream cheese. Yum!



### NBAHS Facebook Postings

The lovely photo below of our caboose at Long Lake Park was posted on Facebook's "That's So Minnesota" page this past summer. Thanks, Al!

This is a good time to remind you that the NBAHS also posts Facebook photos at "New Brighton Area Historical Society," "Neighborly New Brighton, Minnesota," "If You Grew Up in New Brighton, You Remember . . .," "Friends of Arden Hills History and Future," and "Shoreview Historical Society."

Join us on these Facebook sites as we tell the New Brighton area's colorful history!

### Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Plate Collections

As a part of the New Brighton Area Historical Society vintage collections are eight commemorative Burlington Northern/Santa Fe plates. The plates were donated to the Society by Hugh Brace of Overland, Kansas. These plates were given to the Burlington Northern/Santa Fe employees. The back of each plate has info such as this: "Burlington Northern Santa Fe salutes its people and their superior commitment to safety. As a tribute, this limited edition plate featuring a prominent painting, from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe art collections, was manufactured for distribution to all employees who worked injury-free in - (different dates for each plate - 1987, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2004, and 2005.) These will soon be part of a display at the New Brighton History Center in Long Lake Park.

