

WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

News Release

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History, Past to Present, Takes Center Stage at the 2008 Washington County Fair

**Learn about the new, soon-to-be-released, commemorative *Washington County History*
written and updated by author Robert Goodman**

Remaining Washington County medallions and mugs to be available

Stillwater, Minn. – In this Minnesota sesquicentennial year, local history will be the theme for the Washington County Historical Society's exhibit, at the 137th Washington County Fair, July 30 to August 3 in Lake Elmo.

The WCHS exhibit and booth in *Building C* will be open from 10 a.m. until 10 p.m. daily.

Residents will learn more about the soon-to-be-released, new and updated *Washington County History*, authored by Robert Goodman, a Stillwater resident and WCHS board member. The new local history book, only the third comprehensive edition to be written, will be available in early August. Visit www.wchsmn.org for the latest information on availability.

Fairgoers can learn more about the extensive WCHS collections on a diverse number of subjects from family genealogy, with extensive photo, yearbook, city directory, rural school, and biographical resources; to collections of textiles, logging industry information, military uniforms, various collections of birth/death/prison and jail records, as well as 3D artifacts from pioneer days, and information on early businesses that have survived in one form or another to the present.

Fairgoers will be able to obtain histories on a number of communities such as Forest Lake, Oakdale, Scandia, Afton, Stillwater, and Newport; and other works on Minnesota ghost stories, Stillwater Prison history, and a whole lot more.

Sesquicentennial Mugs & Medallions

Fairgoers will be able to obtain a limited number of WCHS sesquicentennial mugs and medallions. "If you've not yet gotten your historic souvenirs, the fair is the perfect opportunity," said WCHS Executive Director Brent Peterson.

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The limited edition, sesquicentennial collector's medallion honors Washington County's role as Minnesota's birthplace.

In 1848 a group of area settlers gathered in Stillwater to petition the U.S. Congress for the creation of the territory of Minnesota. The petition was carried to Washington D.C., and in 1849 Minnesota became a territory. That is how Stillwater became "The Birthplace of Minnesota."

The circular bronze medallion, approximately one-and-a-half inches in diameter, carries the slogan, *Stillwater, Birthplace of Minnesota*, with an engraving of the Steamer Ben Hur about to depart from Stillwater. The reverse side is imprinted with the motto *150 years of Statehood 1858-2008* and an outline of the state's shape with a star marking the location of Washington County and Stillwater.

In addition to the collector's coin, a souvenir coffee mug, which bears an image of the medallion engravings is available, too. Mugs are \$9 apiece and medallions are \$15.

Please visit www.wchsmn.org throughout the year for the latest exciting news about sesquicentennial activities commemorating our shared heritage.

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Founded in 1934, the Washington County Historical Society is a donor-supported, nonprofit organization with more than 700 individual, family, and business members. WCHS is supported by individual gifts, memberships, earned income, and foundation grants. For more information, please visit www.wchsmn.org.