

WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

News Release

WCHS Master Index Makes Much of Historical Collections Accessible Online

Marking 75 Years of Service 1934 - 2009

Washington County, Minn. --The Washington County Historical Society, which turns 75 during 2009, has taken a major technological step in developing the *WCHS Master Index* which makes much of the society's collections accessible to the public via the Internet.

The *WCHS Master Index*, which includes nearly 100,000 listings contained in 128 sources, is available at www.wchsmn.org.

The major development of this Internet gateway was the brainchild of two Washington County community members who wish to remain anonymous.

"We are so grateful for the expertise in getting the index developed," says WCHS Executive Director Brent Peterson. "The Master Index opens up new avenues of research for authors, scholars, genealogists and others interested in local history," Peterson explains. "Although this is not a complete index of the holdings of the WCHS, it gives the researcher a sense of what WCHS has to offer in terms of primary source material."

"The Master Index will be a big asset for individuals and families with ties to Washington County, regardless of where they currently reside."

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WCHS has a rich treasure trove of historic items: family histories, thousands of diverse photographs, reference books, city directories, plat maps, manuscripts, county and community records, historic uniforms and clothing, textiles collections, information on the county's one-room schools and more. You'll discover many artifacts from pioneer farms and early settlements. Copies of old photographs and documents may be purchased.

“As we expand access to our diverse, Washington County collections, we invite families and individuals to join us during this historic year,” Peterson says. “Explore the past from the comfort of home or library, and discover the amazing relevance history has in our 21st century lives.”

Founded in 1934, the Washington County Historical Society is a private, 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.

WCHS is commemorating its 75th anniversary during 2009.