

# WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## News Release

Contact: Kirsta Benson  
651-439-5956

### **New Site Manager at Hay Lake Museum Complex in Scandia**

Scandia, Minn. – The Washington County Historical Society (WCHS) has hired Amanda Schmidt as the new Site Manager for the Hay Lake Museum Complex in Scandia, Minnesota.

Amanda, a museum certified Public Historian and native of Minnesota, holds a Bachelor's Degree in History from the University of Wisconsin – Superior and a Master's Degree in Public History and Museum Studies from the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee.

“Despite all the wonderful job opportunities available to me in the United States,” Amanda said, “I have chosen to return to the place and museums that influenced me as a child in hopes of helping to have the same affect on a new generation of children and adults alike.”

Amanda has held positions at various museums and heritage sites, such as: Superior Public Museums, Old World Wisconsin, and the Minnesota History Center. Most recently, she has been working with the American Swedish Institute coordinating the vendors for this year's Midsommer celebration.

Amanda was excited about the position with the Washington County Historical Society because she not only enjoys working with the public through interpretation and special programming, she also “prefers to work for small local museums, historic homes, heritage sites, and cultural centers.”

“The Washington County Historical Society was happy to find such a knowledgeable and energetic person to fill this position,” said WCHS Historic Sites Supervisor Kirsta Benson. “Amanda will be a great asset to our organization and to the Hay Lake Museum Complex.”

When she is not working, Amanda likes to read, knit, try new recipes, and take her basset hound for a walk. She is also currently planning her wedding, set to take place this fall in the Twin Cities.

## Background

The Hay Lake School Museum Complex is comprised of the 1896 Hay Lake School and the Johannes Erickson Log House. The school was once rural school district #2 and was used to educate children in first through eighth grade. It closed as an active school in 1963. The Washington County Historical Society started operating the building as a rural school museum in 1974 and purchased the building from the Forest Lake School district in 1978.

The Johannes Erickson Log House was constructed in 1868. The log house typifies homes constructed by early Swedish immigrant farmers in the Midwest. Both properties are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The museum complex is open Saturday and Sunday from 1 - 4 p.m. in May, September and October and Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 1 - 4 p.m. in June, July and August.

Get out and explore local history this summer, visit WCHS's historic sites!

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*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](http://www.wchsmn.org).*

WCHS is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary during 2009.