

SITZ BICENTENNIAL COLLECTION

Ten Historical Scenes of New Ulm

New Ulm, site of the Dakota Conflict of 1862, and home of Hermann the Cheruscan, is a historic city in any era. But as America celebrated her Bicentennial in 1976, history became of national importance.

To commemorate the role New Ulm played in the annals of America's past, DMLC Professor emeritus and former librarian (1951-1970) Herbert Sitz presented "Ten Scenes of New Ulm" in oil and watercolor to the library. Professor Sitz, who had become blind by 1976, chose the scenes from memory, asking his son-in-law, Jerome Harders, former art teacher at Wisconsin Lutheran High School, Milwaukee, WI, to execute the works. These ten beautiful paintings resulted. They convey the heart of New Ulm's historical legacy to a nation still celebrating a much blessed past.



Prof. Em. Herbert Sitz and son-in-law, Jerome Harders.

1. Hermann the Cheruscan



The 102 foot bronze monument affectionately known as "Hermann the German," is a model of one twice its size in Detmold, West Germany. It commemorates the victory of the "German father of independence" over the Romans in 9 A.D.

Hermann's 100th birthday was celebrated in the summer of 1988. Hermann was removed from his pedestal in Feb. 2003, and underwent extensive restoration. On Nov. 9, 2004, he was returned to his post overlooking the city of New Ulm.

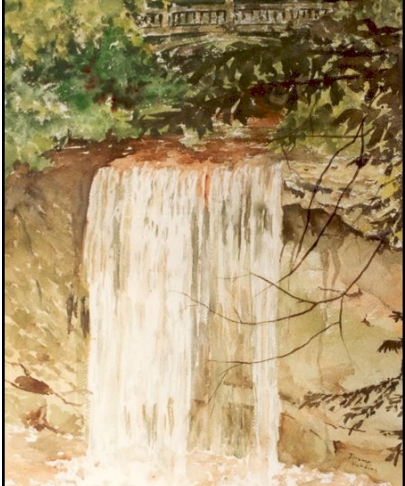
3. Defenders' Monument



"Local artist Anton Gag, father of famous author/illustrator Wanda"

In the boulevard of Center and State Streets, the Defenders' Monument rises to memorialize the 1000 soldiers' and settlers' lives lost in the Dakota conflict of 1862, when much of New Ulm burned and a million dollars worth of property was destroyed by the Sioux tribe under Little Crow.

2. Minneopa State Park



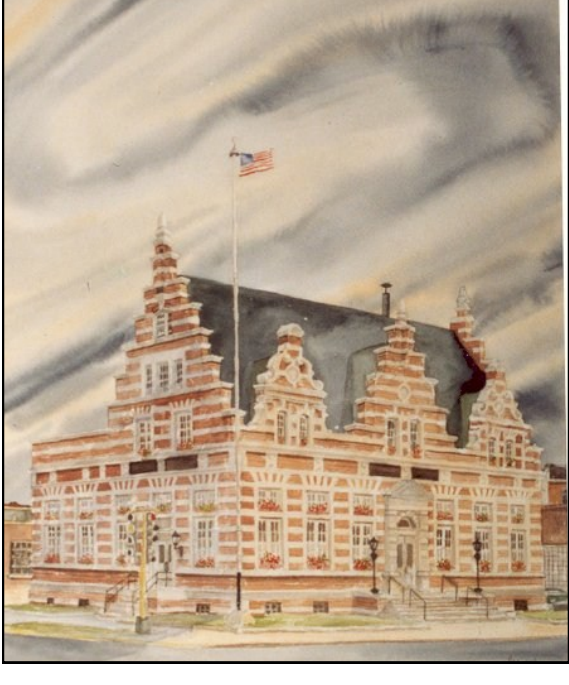
Minneopa State Park's picnic area includes a stunning waterfall capped by a romantic foot bridge, beautifully captured in this scene. Minneopa State Park

4. The Brown County Museum

You could call the former New Ulm Post Office, dominant structure in the downtown area, a real bargain. The deep red brick interlaced with white terracotta stone stands in contrast to the buildings around it, reflecting the origins of the city's first settlers from Württemberg, Bavaria, Bohemia, Hesse, Luxembourg and Switzerland.

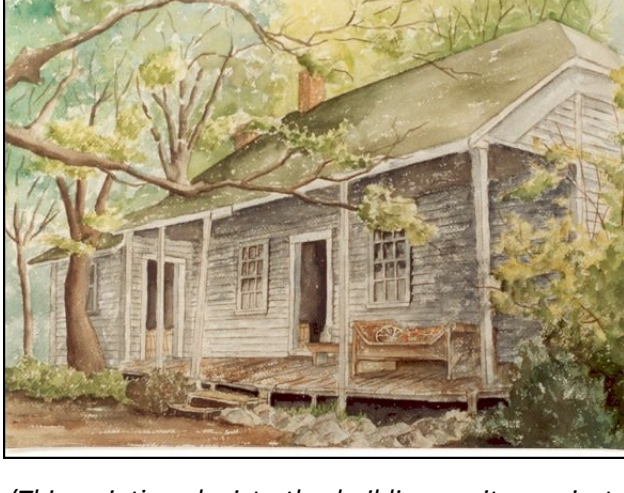
The combination of brick and stone, the decorative design, the steeply pitched roof and the architecture's expressive freedoms convey a sense of low country Renaissance according to its inventory in the *National Register of Historic Places*. Citizens appropriated \$50,000 for their post office, built under the direction of Mr. James Knox Taylor of Washington. The contractors were Stewart and Hager of Janesville, Wisconsin.

New Ulmites were so proud of their new building, which opened in 1910, that no sign was allowed to "mar the exterior" until 30 years later. Then an unpretentious "New Ulm, Minnesota Post Office" was carved around the door. After a new post office was built, the old building was renovated to house the Brown County Museum.



5. Harkin Store

In 1869 one pound of coffee was \$.35 at Alexander Harkin's general store and post office, West Newton, Minnesota, on the Minnesota River. Business boomed at first as river trade, local farmers and those looking for a good game of checkers or the latest gossip all supported the store. But when rural free postal delivery eliminated the need for a post office and the railroad bypassed West Newton in favor of New Ulm eight miles northwest, the town and the store business dwindled. In 1901, Harkin closed its doors with much of the inventory still on the shelves. It was reopened as a business in 1938 by Harkin's granddaughter, but this enterprise didn't last long. The Minnesota Historical Society purchased the store in 1973 and after four years of restoration, the Harkin Store was ready for business. Since 1986, the Brown County Historical Society has managed the real-life museum.



(This painting depicts the building as it was just before the Minnesota Historical Society restored it.)

6. St. Paul's Lutheran Church

St. Paul's congregation was organized in 1865 and built its first house of worship. That building was partially destroyed by a tornado in 1881, the same year in which the pastor died from injuries he suffered when his buggy overturned. A year later the congregation built the present church, which it enlarged and renovated in 1889. Another renovation occurred in 1950 and a large addition was finished in 2001.



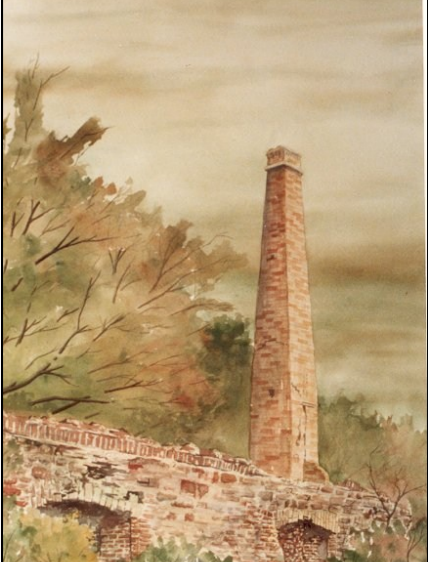
7. Popcorn Wagon



The popcorn wagon was a familiar sight in the past, on the streets of downtown New Ulm. In 2002, the Brown County Historical Society purchased it and completed the process of restoration in 2008.

8. Waraju Distillery Chimney Remains

At the base of Hermann hill is another remnant of history, the remains of a distillery built in 1860, which was occupied and burned by the Sioux during the conflict of 1862.



9. Seppmann Mill

In 1864, Louis Seppmann and his neighbor, Herman Hegley, set out to build a mill. When the timber and stone walls rose too high, they built an inclined roadway to transport their building materials to the top. Nearly all of the mill was handmade, except for two large beveled cogs and the grist stones. For these they traveled to St. Louis with \$600.00 and brought back the large pieces behind a horse.

To get the business going, Mr. Seppmann bought wheat in Mankato, for \$2.75 a bushel in those Civil War days. Since neither man had any experience operating a mill, an expert came to help them. He waited five weeks for a wind to blow and finally left. When the wind came, it was Sunday. Seppmann was faced with a moral dilemma: Could he work on a Sabbath? "If the Lord starts the wind on a Sunday," he thought, "He must want me to run my mill." He pulled on the sails and started the mill. But wheat clogged between the stones and the arms slowed. The inexperienced miller thought he needed more sail. He opened full sail. At the same time, the wind rose and soon the mill was whirling so fast it nearly started a fire! Seppmann threw a chain into the gears - a link broke off and flew up through the rim of his hat, but the mill finally stopped.

Soon Mr. Seppmann knew how to run his mill, and on a day of good wind he could grind 150 bushels of



wheat into flour. Nine years later lightning struck the mill and two of the arms had to be replaced. Seven years after that a tornado tore away two more arms. With the advent of water, steam, and roller mills, wind mills became out-dated but the old mill continued to operate as a feed mill until 1890, when another storm took the two remaining arms.

Heirs of Seppmann, donated the mill's remains to the Blue Earth Historical Society in 1930. The next year the state received the property as an addition to Minneopa State Park. The mill still stands in the park along Highway 68 not far from Mankato.

10. International Multi-Foods



The International Multi-Foods Corporation is pictured here, but the real story lies in the ashes underneath the present structures. The company was first organized by Fredrick Beinhorn (1856) as the Chicago Mill Association, a stock company, which controlled the New Ulm property or the Eagle Mill. In the 1862 Dakota Conflict, the Mill was completely destroyed by fire. Fire again demolished the replacement - the New Ulm Roller Mill Company - in what the April 27, 1957 issue of *The Journal* calls "one of the most disastrous fires since the Indian troubles." The mill was rebuilt immediately and became the International Rye Mill in October 1951. There have been several other fires since. In 1957 a 1911 mill expansion burned down. With its addition the mill had been able to process wheat and rye flour and corn

meal and to produce over 6000 barrels per day, which made the Eagle Mill the largest interior mill in the world. Its products were sold in the southern U.S. and abroad. At one time the Eagle Mill was New Ulm's largest industry. The mill is now owned by the Farmers' Coop of Hanska, which stores grain in the silos.