



# A PIECE OF HISTORY

## *Friends of the Sibley Historic Site Newsletter*

Summer 2024

### FRIENDS OF THE SHS BOARD

- Danielle Faribault Parish, *President*
- DeeDee Edlund, *Treasurer*
- Alice Faribault, *Vice President*
- Lisa Faribault
- Sharon Mason
- Judy Moynihan
- Richard Sandeen

### ***Emeritus Members 2023-2025***

- Bruce Kohn
- Sam H. Fudenburg

**Our sincere thanks to all  
volunteer board  
members, past and  
present, for your service.**



### **WELCOME, KARA!**

We are thrilled to introduce **Kara McGowan** as the new Site Supervisor at the Sibley Historic Site.

Kara graduated from the University of Minnesota-Duluth in 1994 with a Bachelor of Applied Arts in Communication Disorders and from the University of Wisconsin, Superior with a Master's Degree in Fine Arts in 2002. She spent many years working in the mortgage industry before she began volunteering at the LeDuc Estate in 2020.

Kara returned to school in 2021 to earn a second bachelor's degree in History. Between 2021 – 2023 she worked for DCHS as a Site Educator splitting her time between both the LeDuc Estate and the Sibley Site, so she may be familiar to many of you if you visit the Sibley Site. In March 2024 she was hired as the Site Supervisor for the Sibley Historic Site and has spent her time getting to know the site from a different perspective.

In her spare time, Kara loves reading, crafting, and trying new recipes off Pinterest if she's not spending time with her husband and two teenage sons. So far, Kara says she's enjoying her new job.

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### *Welcome to Our Newest Members!*

*Stacy Brand of Bloomington, MN ~ Pamela Paulson of Maple Grove, MN  
Linda Hursh-Foster of Eagan, MN ~ Elizabeth Whetter of Burnsville, MN*

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

June 23 - Fête de la Saint-Jean-Baptiste

June 28 - Mendota After Hours: Untold Stories of Black Baseball in Minnesota

July 19 - Mendota After Hours: Women Who Would be President

Sept. 20 – Mendota After Hours: John Dillinger, Ma Barker, and Me

Sept. 20 to Oct. 5 – Fall River Walk Tours TBA

Oct. 18 - Mendota After Hours: The Montreal Fur Trade and George Bonga of 1837

Late October - Mendota True Crime Tours TBA

Nov. 15 - Mendota After Hours: It Took Courage: Eliza Winston's Quest for Freedom

You can buy tickets for any event or site tour at [DakotaHistory.org](http://DakotaHistory.org). Friends of the Sibley Historic Site get a discount on all ticket purchases.

## NEW IN 2024! SIBLEY HISTORIC SITE INTERNS

The Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) is offering internships at *partnership* sites this year, including the Sibley Historic Site. This program is quite new to MNHS. Last year The MNHS tested this program by placing an intern at the Folsom House in Taylors Falls, MN under the direction of Kayla Stielow who works directly for MNHS. The Sibley Site interns will be directly managed by Kara, who is not an employee of MNHS. Kara stated, "This summer internship and my interns are 'guinea pigs' so to speak since MNHS has never had interns directly managed by the partner site!"

Hello! My name is **Gwen Bailey**. I am a senior at the University of Minnesota majoring in History and minoring in Classical and Near Eastern Religions and Cultures and plan to finish school this fall. I am from Eagan, MN and so grew up in the surrounding cities and neighborhoods of Mendota enjoying all the amazing parks and historic sites Minnesota has to offer. My summer internship at the Sibley Historic Site is my breakthrough into the public history world, so I am thrilled to learn about the Site and all the work that goes into preserving and sharing its history. This summer I hope to learn about collection and curation of artifacts, and to contribute to new exhibits in the house.



My name is **Emmey Harris**. I am from Lincoln, NE and recently graduated from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities with a BA in History. I am excited to learn more about interpreting history for a public audience as an intern at the Sibley Historic Site this summer. In the fall, I plan to start a master's degree in Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois.

## YOUR GIFTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Kara says the biggest highlight to date in her new job as Site Supervisor was giving a tour to a group of enthusiastic third graders. The majority of our membership fees and Friends donations go towards the funding of school trips like this and the Mendota After Hours events.

Kara's wish list for this year includes a 33-star US flag from 1858 to fly on the flag pole located near the gardens by the Sibley house, and also two new picnic tables. Your donations can help us meet these spending goals for 2024. Renew your membership or make a donation today at [FriendsOfSibley.com](http://FriendsOfSibley.com)

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

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Above is an image of the Sibley family home circa 1874 from the *Andreas Atlas* (an illustrated historical atlas). Henry Hastings Sibley and his wife Sarah Steele Sibley left their Mendota home in 1862 to move into this home in St. Paul. As the story goes, there were a number of soldiers about that year due to the Civil War and Sarah Sibley would wake up in the mornings and find drunk soldiers asleep all over her lawn.

(No, thank you!) Hence, the move.

The home was one of many grand homes on Woodward Ave that have all since been torn down and Lafayette Park is now located there.

## BOOK CORNER

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The Sibley Historic Site is featured in many books about Minnesota history. One such book is *Six Miles from St. Paul* by David Grabitske.

In Sarah Sibley's time, six miles challenged all her training and abilities to maintain relationships with family, friends, God, and a rapidly homogenizing culture.

Through it all, she demonstrated her deft skills in managing a demanding household and leading Minnesota's very first historic preservation effort.

David Grabitske gave a presentation on Sarah Sibley as the guest speaker at the Friends of the Sibley Historic Site annual meeting in September 2023.

*Six Miles from St. Paul* fills an important gap in Minnesota's early history by looking at one of the territory's most prominent women.

The social networks Sarah inhabited are key to understanding how society values from the east coast influenced Minnesota politics and culture.

The wife of Minnesota's first governor fully embraced life, and for ten years, endured an infection that ultimately claimed her life. Both for ordinary and extraordinary accomplishments, Sarah Jane Sibley is worthy to be remembered.

The book *Six Miles from St. Paul* is available for purchase in the gift shop at the Sibley Historic Site. You can also order it online at [DakotaHistory.org](http://DakotaHistory.org). Friends of the Sibley Historic Site receive a discount on all purchases.

**SIBLEY HISTORIC SITE  
2024 HOURS**

**May 24 – Sept 2  
Open Weekends  
Fri-Sun, 10–5**

Guided tours leave the Dupuis House at 10 am, 11:30 am, 1 pm, 2:30 pm, and 4 pm. Each tour lasts approximately 60 minutes.

**CONTACT US**

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**SIGN UP FOR OUR E-NEWSLETTER**

To stay on top of news about upcoming events at the Sibley Historic Site, subscribe to our e-newsletter. We typically send one email per month that covers the Mendota After Hours events and other special goings-on at the site.



To sign up, visit [FriendsOfSibley.com/news](http://FriendsOfSibley.com/news) or send us an email at [FriendsOfTheSHS@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsOfTheSHS@gmail.com).

**FIND US ON FACEBOOK**



We love to post pictures and fun tidbits about the site on our Facebook page. You can join in by following us at [Facebook.com/SibleyHouseFriends](https://www.facebook.com/SibleyHouseFriends).

**GIVE A DONATION OR BECOME A MEMBER**

If you need to renew your membership or you'd like to make a donation, you can give online at [FriendsOfSibley.com](http://FriendsOfSibley.com). Or, send a check to the Friends of the Sibley Historic Site using the address at right. Thank you for being a friend!

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**FRIENDS OF SIBLEY HISTORIC SITE**

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